

MEDIAEVAL SOURCES IN TRANSLATION 36

**The Chronicle of Zuqnān
Parts III and IV**

A.D. 488–775

This is Part Four only, A.D. 578-775

Translated from Syriac
with Notes and Introduction
by

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PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE OF MEDIAEVAL STUDIES

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For Christina and Philip

Contents

Preface	ix
Bibliographic Abbreviations	xi
Maps	xvii

INTRODUCTION

A. Manuscript	1
B. Title	3
C. Identity of the Chronicler	4
D. Position of the Chronicler	8
E. Date of the Manuscript	9
F. Contents of Parts III and IV	17
G. Historiographical Approach	21
H. Style and Language	24
I. Sources of Parts III and IV	28
J. The Present Translation	32

THE CHRONICLE OF ZUGNĪN

Editorial Abbreviations	36
(Third Part)	37
(Fourth Part)	138

Bibliography	335
List of Collations	342
List of Corrections	349
Index of Biblical Quotations	352
Index of Place Names	358
Index of Personal Names	365
Subject Index	374

Preface

This book could not have been written without the help of many friends and colleagues.

My work owes a great deal to Professor Ronald F. G. Sweet, formerly Chair of the Department of Near Eastern Studies (now Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations), who was in large part responsible for the revival of Syriac studies at the University of Toronto. Without his advice, encouragement, and inspiration, this book would simply not have seen the light of day.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Trustees of the Vatican Library, as well as to the Library's Director, Father Leonard Boyle, not only for sending me a microfilm of the *codex* Vat. Syr. 162, but also for allowing me to collate the *codex* against Chabot's edition at the Vatican in the summer of 1995. The following year, I was permitted to examine the manuscript, and it was then that I discovered the notes which the Chronicler had made in the margins of Part IV of the Chronicle, reminding him of the events that he planned to discuss. These notes, which had remained unnoticed by the editors of the manuscript, suggested to me that *Codex Zuqinensis* was in fact an autograph rather than a 9th-century copy, as had been previously assumed. I also thank the Trustees of the British Library for sending me a microfilm of the last six folios of the Chronicle, Add 14665. My collation of the microfilm against Chabot's edition improved his reading, and prompted me to write an article on the martyrdom of Cyrus of Harrān, which is to appear in *Analecta Bollandiana*.

I have been greatly aided by my friend and colleague Albert Pietersma, Professor of Hellenistic Greek at the University of Toronto, who inspired me with his own enthusiasm for, and expertise, in Greek papyrology. I discussed with him at length the nature and significance of certain features which I had detected in the *Codex Zuqinensis*, such as drawings of comets, blank spaces within the text, and notes, and I also benefited from his comments while

writing the Introduction. He also went through my English translation, and encouraged me to bring my project to completion. Professor John W. Wevers, Professor Emeritus of Septuagint at the University of Toronto, was always ready to discuss matters with me, especially the many paraphrased, and often ambiguous, biblical passages. I am grateful to the other members of the Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations for their advice and help.

Dr. Sebastian P. Brock, Reader in Syriac Studies at the Oriental Institute, Oxford University, went through the translation and suggested several improvements, in particular with regard to many obscure passages within the Syriac text. I discussed several Arabisms with my friend, Mr. Abdul-Ahad Hannawi, M.A., and benefited from his familiarity with mediaeval Arabic sources and from his broad knowledge of Arab history. To both these scholars I express my deep gratitude. I also thank Dr. Witold Witakowski, of Uppsala University, who kindly sent me off-prints of his articles on the Chronicle of Zuqnān, which I found invaluable in writing the Introduction. Ms Jill Ruby, M.A., compiled the indices of this volume, a time consuming task for which I am very grateful to her. I also thank Mrs Loretta James, of the Wadi Tumilat Project, University of Toronto, for drawing the maps.

I am indebted to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and to the Humanities and Social Sciences Committee of the Research Board, at the University of Toronto, for their generous financial support, which made this research possible.

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I am very grateful to Father J. K. Farge and Dr. Ron B. Thomson, of the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, for including my volume in the series Mediaeval Sources in Translation.

With love, gratitude, and deep appreciation, I dedicate this book to my children, Christina and Philip, who have always been the greatest incentive for my academic work.

AMIR HARRAK

Bibliographic Abbreviations

For biblical abbreviations not listed below see J. H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*.

I. Ancient Documents

1. Syriac (and Syriac-Arabic) Documents

- Bar Hebraeus, *Chr. Eccl.* Gregorii Barhebraei *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum* (ed. Abbeloos and Lamy)
- Bar Hebraeus, *Chr.* *The Chronography of Bar Hebraeus* (ed. Budge)
- Bedjan, *Acta* Bedjan, *Acta martyrum et sanctorum Syriace*
- Chabot, *Chronicon* *Incerti auctoris chronicon anonymum pseudo-Dionysianum* (ed. I. CSCO 91/Syr. 43, II, CSCO 104/Syr 53)
- Chabot, *Chronique* Chabot, *Chronique de Denys de Tell Mahré*
- Chabot, *Synodicon* Chabot, *Synodicon Orientale ou Recueil de Synodes Nestoriens*
- Chronicon Edess. *Chronicon Edessenum* (ed. and trans. Guidi in *Chronica minora* I, T. CSCO 1/Syr. 1, V. CSCO 2/Syr. 2)
- Chronica minora *Chronica minora* (eds. Brooks, Chabot, and Guidi, T. CSCO SS ser. 3, t. 4, V. CSCO SS ser. 3, t. 4)
- Chronicon 724 *Chronicon miscellaneum ad ann. p. Chr. 724 pertinens* (ed. Brooks, CSCO 3/Syr. 3, trans. Chabot, CSCO 4/Syr. 4)
- Chronicon 813 *Chronicon anonymum ad ann. p. Chr. 813 pertinens* (ed. and trans. Brooks, T. CSCO 5/Syr. 5, V. CSCO 6/Syr. 6)

- Chronicon 819 *Chronicon anonymum ad A. D. 819 pertinens* (ed. Barsaüm, in Chabot, *Chronicon 1234*, T. CSCO 81/Syr. 36, trans. Chabot, CSCO 109/Syr. 56)
- Chronicon 846 *Chronicon ad ann. p. Chr. 846 pertinens* (ed. Brooks in *Chronica minora* II, T. CSCO 3/Syr. 3, trans. Chabot in *Chronica minora* II, CSCO 4/Syr. 4)
- Chronicon 1234 *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens* (t. I, ed. and trans. Chabot, CSCO 81/Syr. 36, CSCO 109/Syr. 56)
- Chronicon ... Persarum *Chronicon anonymum de ultimis regibus Persarum* (ed. and trans. Guidi in *Chronica minora* I, CSCO 1/Syr. 1, CSCO 2/Syr. 2)
- Elias *Eliae metropolitanae Nisibeni: Opus chronologicum* (I. ed. and trans. Brooks, CSCO 62*/Syr. 21, 63*/Syr. 23)
- Frag. account *Historia subiectionis Syriae ab Arabibus effectae* (ed. Brooks, in *Chronica minora* II, CSCO 3/Syr. 3, trans. Chabot, CSCO 4/Syr. 4)
- Guidi, Lettera Hespel, *Chronicon* Guidi, "La lettera di Simeone ..." in ARALM *Chronicon anonymum pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum* (II, trans. Hespel, CSCO 507/Syr. 213)
- James of Edessa *Chronicon Jacobi Edesseni* (ed. and trans., Brooks in *Chronica minora* III, T. CSCO 5/Syr. 5, V. CSCO 6/Syr. 6)
- John of Ephesus, *EH* *Iohannis Ephesini Historiae Ecclesiasticae pars tertia* (ed. Brooks, CSCO 105/Syr. 54. Trans. Payne Smith, *The Third Part of the Ecclesiastical History of John Bishop of Ephesus*)
- John of Ephesus, *Lives* *Lives of the Eastern Saints* (ed. Brooks, in PO 17.1, 18.4, 19.2)
- John bar Qursos, *Vita* John of Ephesus: *Vita Iohannis episcopi Tellae auctore Elia* (ed. Brooks, CSCO 7/Syr. 7, trans. CSCO 8/Syr. 8)
- Kugener, *Sévère* Kugener, *Vie de Sévère par Jean supérieur du monastère de Beith-Aphthonia* (in PO 2.3)
- Land, *Anecdota* Land, *Anecdota Syriaca*
- Lewis, *Codex* Lewis, *Codex Climaci rescriptus, Horae Semiticae VIII*

Liber Fundatorum	<i>Liber fundatorum monasteriorum in regno Persarum et Arabum</i> (ed. Bedjan, in <i>Liber Superiorum</i>)
Martin, <i>Chronique</i>	<i>Chronique de Josué le Stylite</i> (ed. Martin)
Michael	<i>Chronique de Michel le Syrien</i> (ed. Chabot)
Narrationes Variæ	<i>Narrationes variæ</i> (ed. Brooks, in <i>Chronica Minora</i> III, CSCO 5/Syr. 5, trans. CSCO 6/Syr. 6)
Ps.-Zacharias	<i>Historia ecclesiastica Zachariae Rhetori vulgo adscripta</i> (ed. Brooks, I, CSCO 83/Syr. 38, II, CSCO 84/Syr. 39). English trans. F. J. Hamilton and E. W. Brooks, <i>The Syriac Chronicle Known as that of Zachariah of Mitylene</i> , London 1899
Shahîd, <i>Martyrs</i>	Shahîd, <i>The Martyrs of Najrân</i>
Tullberg, <i>Chronici</i>	Tullberg, <i>Dionysii Telmahharensis Chronici liber primus</i>
Wright, <i>Chronicle</i>	Wright, <i>The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite</i>

2. Christian Arabic Documents

‘Amr	<i>Akhbâr faṭārika kursī al-mashriq</i> (ed. Gismondi)
Agapius	<i>Kitāb al-‘Unwān: Histoire Universelle</i> (ed. Vasiliev in PO 7 [1911])
Bar Hebraeus, <i>Tārīkh</i> <i>Chronique de Séert</i>	<i>Tārīkh Mukhtaṣar al-Duwal</i> (ed. Ṣālhānī) Scher, <i>Histoire nestorienne inédite</i> , in PO IV/3, V/2, VII/2, XIII/4
Mārī	<i>Akhbâr faṭārika kursī al-mashriq</i> (ed. Gismondi)
Ṣalībā	<i>Akhbâr faṭārika kursī al-mashriq</i> (ed. Gismondi)

3. Non-Christian Arabic Documents

Ibn ‘Abd-al-Ḥakam	<i>The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain: Known as Futūḥ Miṣr of Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam</i> (ed. Torrey)
al-Azdī	Yazīd ... al-Azdī, <i>Tārīkh al-Mawṣil</i> (ed. Habībah)
al-Balādhurī	al-Balādhurī, <i>Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān</i> (ed. al-Munjid)
Ibn Khaldūn	<i>Tārīkh ibn Khaldūn</i> (published by al-Alami Library)

al-Mas'ūdī, <i>Murūj</i>	al-Mas'ūdī, <i>Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādin al-jawhar</i> (ed. Qumayḥa)
al-Ṭabarī	Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, <i>Tārīkh al-Rusul wa al-Mulūk</i> (ed. Ibrāhīm)
al-Ya'qūbī	Aḥmad ibn Ja'far al-Ya'qūbī, <i>Tārīkh</i> (published by Dār-Şādir)
Yāqūt	Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, <i>Mu'jam al-Buldān</i> (published by Dār-Şādir)

4. Greek and Latin Documents

Ammianus Marcellinus	<i>Ammianus Marcellinus</i> (trans. by J. C. Rolfe, Loeb Classical Library)
Chronicon Paschale	<i>Chronicon Paschale, 284-628 AD</i> (trans. Whitby and Whitby)
Evagrius	<i>The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius with the Scholia</i> (ed. Bidez and Parmentier)
Malalas	<i>The Chronicle of John Malalas</i> (trans. Jeffreys)
Procopius, <i>Anecdota</i>	Procopius, <i>The Anecdota or Secret History</i> (trans. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library)
Procopius, <i>Buildings</i>	Procopius, <i>Buildings</i> (trans. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library)
Procopius, <i>Wars</i>	Procopius, <i>History of the Wars</i> (trans. Dewing, Loeb Classical Library)
Strabo	<i>The Geography of Strabo</i> (trans. Jones, Loeb Classical Library)
Theophanes	<i>Theophanis chronographia</i> (ed. Boor). <i>The Chronicle of Theophanes</i> (trans. Mango)

II. Modern Publications

1. Books and Articles

Abramowski, <i>Dionysius</i>	Abramowski, <i>Dionysius von Tellmahre jakobitischer Patriach von 818-845.</i>
Assemani, <i>BO</i>	Assemanus, <i>Bibliotheca Orientalis</i>
Assemani <i>Catalogus</i>	Assemanus, S. E. and J. S. <i>Bibliothecae apostolicae Vaticanae codicum manuscriptorum catalogus</i>
Audo, <i>Sīmṭā</i>	Audo, <i>Sīmṭā d-lēšānā sūryāyā</i>
Baršaum, <i>Histoire</i>	Baršaum, <i>Kitāb al-lu'lu' al-manthūr</i>
Brockelmann, <i>Lexicon</i>	Brockelmann, <i>Lexicon Syriacum</i> (revised edition)
Chadwick, <i>Church</i>	Chadwick, <i>The Early Church</i>
Costaz, <i>Dictionary</i>	Costaz, <i>Syriac-English Dictionary</i>

Dennett, <i>Conversion</i>	Dennett, <i>Conversion and the Poll-Tax in Early Islam</i>
Drower, <i>Mandaic</i>	Drower and Macuch, <i>A Mandaic Dictionary</i>
Fattal, <i>Statut</i>	Fattal, <i>Le statut légal des non-Musulmans en pays d'Isam</i>
Fiey, <i>Assyrie</i>	Fiey, <i>Assyrie Chrétienne</i>
Fiey, <i>Répertoire</i>	Fiey, <i>Pour un Oriens Christianus novus</i>
Frend, <i>Rise</i>	Frend, <i>The Rise of the Monophysite Movement</i>
Gero, <i>Iconoclasm</i>	Gero, <i>Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Leo III</i> (CSCO subs. 41)
Hatch, <i>Manuscripts</i>	Hatch, <i>An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts</i>
Kennedy, <i>Prophet</i>	Kennedy, <i>The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates</i>
Lane, <i>Lexicon</i>	Lane, <i>Arabic-English Lexicon</i>
Mannā, <i>Dalīl</i>	Mannā, <i>Dalīl al-rāgībīn fī luḡat al-ārāmiyyīn</i>
Margoliouth, <i>Dictionary</i>	Payne Smith (Margoliouth), <i>A Compendious Syriac Dictionary</i>
Margoliouth, <i>Supplement</i>	Margoliouth, <i>Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus</i>
Morony, <i>Iraq</i>	Morony, <i>Iraq after the Muslim Conquest</i>
PLRE	Martindale, ed., <i>The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire</i>
Rahlfs, <i>Verzeichnis</i>	Rahlfs, <i>Verzeichnis der griechischen Handschriften des Alten Testaments</i>
Stein, <i>Bas-Empire</i>	Stein, <i>Histoire du Bas-Empire</i>
von Soden, <i>AHw</i>	von Soden, <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i>
<i>Symposium 1992</i>	<i>VI Symposium Syriacum 1992</i> , ed. Lavenant
<i>Symposium 1996</i>	<i>VII Symposium Syriacum 1996</i> , ed. Lavenant
<i>Thesaurus</i>	Payne Smith, <i>Thesaurus syriacus</i>
Tisserant, <i>Codex</i>	Tisserant, <i>Codex Zuqninensis rescriptus Veteris Testamenti</i>
'Umar, <i>al-Da'wah</i>	'Umar, <i>Tabī'at al-Da'wah al-'Abbāsiyyah</i>
Vööbus, <i>Asceticism</i>	Vööbus, <i>History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient</i> (CSCO subs. 14, 17, 81)
Witakowski, <i>Study</i>	Witakowski, <i>The Syriac Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tel-Mahrē: A Study in the History of Historiography</i>
Wright, <i>Catalogue</i>	Wright, <i>Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum</i>

2. Series and Periodicals

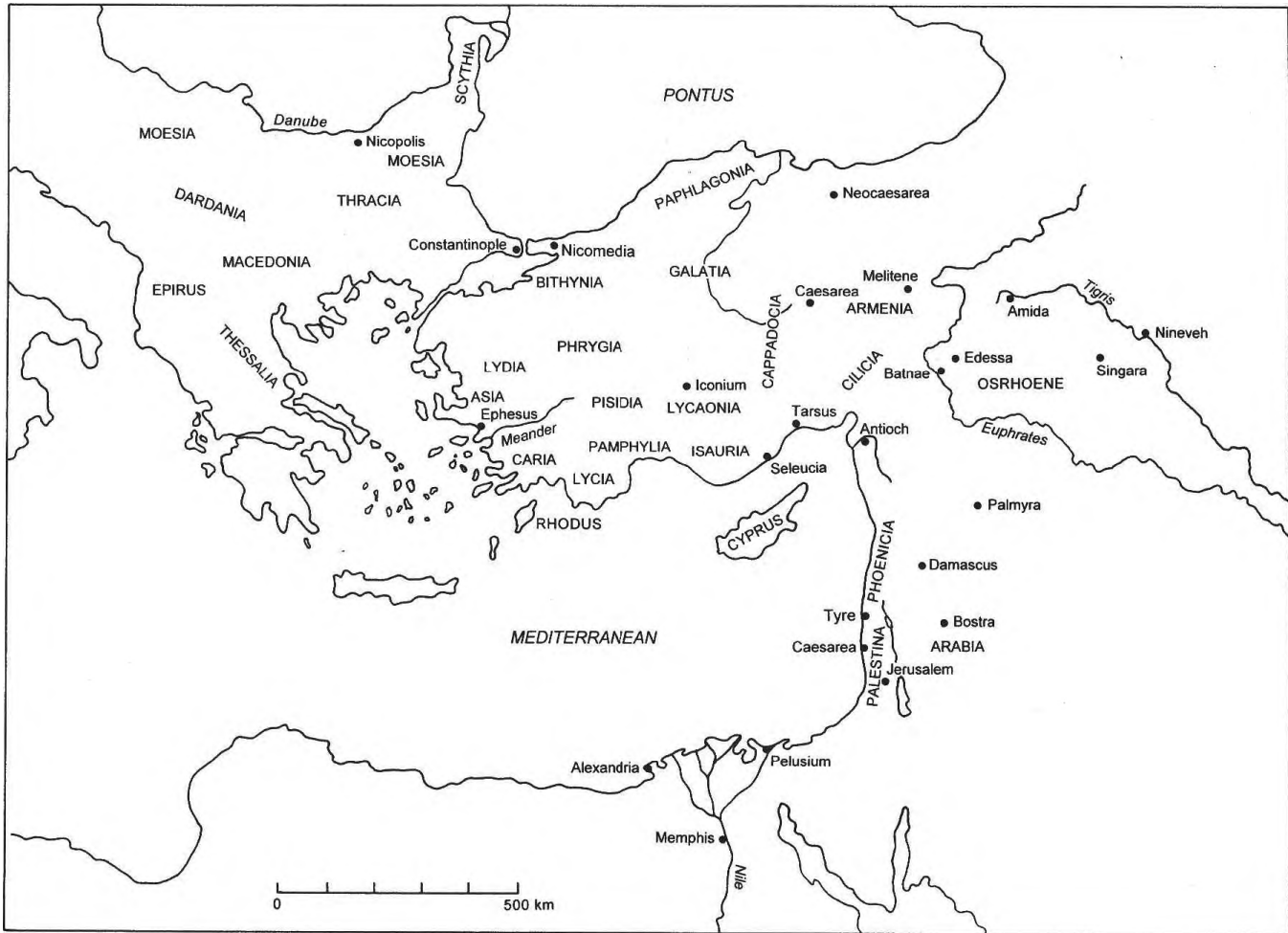
ARALM

Atti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei. Memorie della Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche, Rome

BCSMS	<i>Bulletin of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies</i> , Toronto
BMGS	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i> , Birmingham
BZ	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i> , Leipzig, Munich
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Paris and Louvain
DTC	Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Paris
JIA	<i>Journal of the Iraqi Academy (Syriac Corporation)</i> , Baghdad
JJS	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i> , London
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> , Chicago
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i> , Manchester
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> , Oxford
LM	<i>Le Muséon</i> , Louvain
OLP	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica</i> , Leuven
OrSu	<i>Orientalia Suecana</i> , Uppsala
OS	<i>L'Orient Syrien</i> , Paris (1956-1967)
PdO	<i>Parole de l'Orient</i> , Kaslik
PO	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
ROC	<i>Revue de l'Orient Chrétien</i> , Paris
WZKM	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i> , Vienna

III. Other Abbreviations

BL	British Library
Vat.	Vatican Library
Peshittā	The Syriac version of the Bible
Sūra(t)	Chapter of the Qur'ān (trans. Maududi)



Syria and Anatolia before the 7th century A.D.



The Early Islamic Near East

Introduction

A. MANUSCRIPT

The Chronicle of Zuqnān¹ is a universal chronicle which begins with the creation of the world and ends with the time of writing, A.D. 775-776. The Chronicle is known from a single manuscript of 179 folios, 173 of which are now housed in the Vatican Library (*Codex Zuqninensis*, Vat. Syr. 162), and an additional six are currently in the possession of the British Library (formerly British Museum), labelled Add. 14.665 folios 2 to 7.² Each folio is circa 235 to 255 mm high and 150 to 165 mm wide. The Vatican folios have been bound in 1881 into a single volume, protected by a hard red cover, whereas the six folios in the British Library have been included with fragments belonging to other manuscripts. According to Tisserant's reconstruction of the Codex, it originally comprised at least 190 folios.³

Of the folios of our manuscript 129 are palimpsest—one a double palimpsest (BM fol. 3), the originally inscribed text representing a number of books of the Old Testament in Greek (the Septuagint). In fact, the folios once belonged to six distinct manuscripts with text from five biblical books (Judg, 1 Kgs, Ps, Ezek, Dan), which have been assigned dates ranging from the fifth to the eighth centuries.⁴

In 1715 the famous Maronite bishop and scholar J. S. Assemani found the Vatican portion of the manuscript in the Syrian Monastery of Saint Mary in the Egyptian desert of Naṭrūn, and purchased it for the Vatican Library. The other six folios were acquired by the British Museum between 1839 and 1842. That both were part of one and the same manuscript was confirmed on the basis of the Septuagint texts by Cardinal Eugene Tisserant. Tisserant, however, dated the manuscript to the 9th century in light of the Syriac script.⁵

¹ The reader is encouraged to consult Witakowski, *Study*, for ample and very useful information about the Chronicle of Zuqnān, the Chronicler, and the history of Syriac historiography.

² Wright, *Catalogue* II, xiii-xiv.

³ Tisserant, *Codex*, viii-ix.

⁴ Tisserant, *Codex*, vi, xxxiiiiff.

⁵ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxix, xxxi. On page v Tisserant oscillated between the 9th and 10th centuries.

According to J. S. Assemani the manuscript was written in Egypt by a monk of the Desert of Scete (Wādī al-Naṭrūn) at the beginning of the 10th century.¹ By the time he wrote his Catalogue with his nephew S. E. Assemani, however, he had changed his mind and believed that the manuscript had been brought, along with others, from Mesopotamia to Egypt, by the abbot Moses of Nisibis (died in 944) in 932.² Although this statement is only an assumption, it makes sense, since the manuscript was the product of the monastery of Zuqnīn, located near Amida now in south-east Turkey, judging from a note inserted by a monk of the same monastery. This monk, Elisha by name, was a contemporary of Moses of Nisibis (see below for more details). Tisserant further observed that since the sub-script was Greek and not Coptic, as Assemani had first asserted,³ Syria rather than Egypt must have been the place of origin, seeing that most of the manuscripts in the possession of the monastery of Saint Mary of the Syrians in Scete (of which Moses of Nisibis was the abbot) came from Syria.

As is often the case, the first and last folios of the manuscript of Zuqnīn have been lost. The preface of the work, however, has survived, albeit in a very damaged condition. It was written in S(eleucid) 1087 (A.D. 775-776) "in which (year) Mahdī son of 'Abd-Allah is ruling over Syria, Egypt, Armenia, Azarbayjān, all of Persia, Sind, Kho[rasan], as well as over the Arabs, and over the Greeks Leo son of Constantine, and over the Romans Pepin".⁴ The addressees in the preface are the "spiritual fathers (of the writer), George, chorepiscopus of Amida, the abbot Euthalius, Lazarus the Visitor, the honourable Anastasius, and the rest of the monastic community (of Zuqnīn)".⁵ Unfortunately, the Chronicler's name, and perhaps indications of his status and origin have not survived. Moreover, the manuscript per se is scarcely in a perfect state of preservation, since several folios—especially of its first half—have either suffered erasure or are damaged in varying degrees. For some reason, the second half of the manuscript, which contains Parts III and IV, fared better, even though here, too, many folios have suffered erasure and/or are fragmentary. Furthermore, the folios housed in the British Library are worm eaten, a fact which explains why the last account of the Chronicle—the martyrdom of Cyrus of Ḥarrān—is very fragmentary and comes to an abrupt end.

¹ Assemani, *BO* ii 97f.

² Assemani, *Catalogus* III, 329.

³ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxx.

⁴ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 419:27-31.

⁵ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 420:10-12.

B. TITLE

Since the name of the Chronicler, which presumably appeared on the missing folios of the manuscript, has not survived, his identity has been the subject of scholarly controversy. For no obvious reason, Assemani¹ associated him in 1717 with the early 9th-century west Syriac patriarch, Dionysius I of Tell-Mahrē. Assemani was followed in this erroneous identification by other scholars, such as Tullberg² and (at first) Chabot.³ To be sure, patriarch Dionysius wrote a chronicle known only through excerpts extensively found in *Chronicon* 1234 and in the *Chronicle of Michael the Syrian* (12th century) and in that of Bar Hebraeus (13th century). There are, however, no linguistic or thematic affinities between the Zuqnīn Chronicle and that of Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē. Moreover, Dionysius was a resident in the monastery of Qinnishrīn (on the Euphrates, to the west of Sarūg), whereas we know that the author of our Chronicle lived in the monastery of Zuqnīn, near Amida.⁴ More importantly, the Zuqnīn Chronicler lived, as is clear from his Chronicle, during the rule of Caliph al-Manṣūr (754-775), whereas Bishop Dionysius was patriarch from 818 to 845.

Not surprisingly, many scholars, among them Chabot, when he edited the entire Zuqnīn Chronicle in CSCO, found Assemani's identification unjustifiable.⁵ This explains why the Zuqnīn Chronicle was assigned a new, though uninspiring title, *Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē*. Abramowski, who in 1940 published a study on the real Dionysius, wisely called the Syriac content of *Codex Zuqninensis*, the *Chronicle of Zuqnīn*,⁶ since Zuqnīn was apparently the place where its author had lived. In one passage he in fact mentions that several monks "from our monastery of Zuqnīn," succumbed to a pestilence.⁷ Furthermore, he dedicated his work to the officials and monks of the monastery in question, as is clear from the Chronicle's preface.⁸ Moreover, Zuqnīn as a concrete location seems somehow a more appropriate anchor for the anonymous Chronicle than a

¹ Assemani, *BO* II, 98ff.

² Tullberg, *Chronici*, iff.

³ Chabot, *Chronique*, 1ff.

⁴ See below p. 188.

⁵ Chabot had previously accepted Assemani's identification, as the title given above of his French translation of Part IV of the Chronicle shows.

⁶ Abramowski, *Dionysius*, 11.

⁷ See below p.188.

⁸ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 420:10-12. The Preface does not mention Zuqnīn as such, but the name of "George, chorepiscopus of Amida", the district in which the monastery was located, hints at it. Most importantly, "Euthalius, the abbot," named in the Preface, is also mentioned elsewhere in the Chronicle as the abbot of Zuqnīn; see below p. 219 and note 3.

phantom author dubbed Pseudo-Dionysius. The latter is not only an imaginary person, but his name fosters confusion with the real Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē, who had no connection whatsoever with the Zuqnīn Chronicle. For these reasons, Abramowski's label has been used in the present translation.

C. IDENTITY OF THE CHRONICLER

A more worthwhile attempt at identifying the author of the Chronicle was made over a century ago by F. Nau.¹ This French scholar suggested that the Chronicler was none other than Yēshū' (Joshua) the Stylite, whose name appears in a note appended to an Edessene chronicle, usually labelled by scholars of Syriac as the *Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite*. This brief Chronicle, which has the form of a letter addressed by its author to a priest named Sergius of an unnamed monastery, covers the years A.D. 497-506. The Chronicler of Zuqnīn included it in its entirety in his own Chronicle. The appended note was written in a script quite distinct from the rest of the Zuqnīn Chronicle, and was added on folio 66v by a copyist who copied and replaced a seemingly damaged folio. Interestingly, however, the replaced text on folio 66r and part of 66v measures only about half of what the damaged and replaced folio must have contained. Consequently, the copyist had ample space for his revealing note. In it he wrote as follows:

ܣܠܗ ܗܘܢܐ ܕܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
 ✠ ✠ ✠ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ✠ ✠ ✠
 ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
 ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ
 ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ

Pray for the wretched Elisha, of the monastery of Zuqnīn, who copied this leaf, that he may find mercy, like the thief on the right hand, amen and amen.

May the mercy of the great God and our saviour Jesus Christ be upon the priest mār² Yēshū' (Joshua) the Stylite, of the monastery of Zuqnīn, who wrote this book of records dealing with evil times that are past, and of the calamities and troubles which that tyrant had caused among men.

¹ Nau, ROC 2 (1897) pp. 47-48.

² This Syriac word is a title given mostly to ecclesiastics, "lord".

Before attempting to identify the two names mentioned in the note, Elisha and Joshua, an analysis of the sentence ܠܗܘܘܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ "he wrote this book of records dealing with evil times" is necessary, since it has recently raised questions of interpretation.

Palmer has noted that the verb in the sentence ܠܗܘܘܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ , which has Joshua as its subject, should be translated as "transcribed" rather than as "composed", since "composed" is usually expressed in Syriac with the Aph'el form of this verb.¹ Palmer has asserted further that the second phrase ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ lit. "of this record of evil times" should not be understood as having the same extension as the first phrase ܟܬܒܐ "this book", as it is usually understood, because the demonstrative pronoun ܠܗ "this" is repeated. In other words, according to Palmer, the note speaks of two distinct works, ܟܬܒܐ "book", which refers to the entire codex, and ܕܥܘܠܐ a "record (of evil times)", which refers to the Edessene Chronicle.² Thus, Palmer believes, Joshua copied out the "record" and incorporated it within the "book"; as a result, Joshua cannot have been the author of the "record", namely, the Edessene Chronicle.

Palmer is most probably right in suggesting that Joshua was not the author of the Edessene Chronicle. His conclusion, however, can be supported on other grounds than he gives, as will be seen below. To begin with, contrary to what Palmer alleges, the phrase ܠܗܘܘܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ does seem to refer to the entire codex, and that for two reasons. First, the expression ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ³ (see its parallel ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ) is well-known in Syriac with reference to a single object, namely, a "book of records", a "chronicle". Second, while the first demonstrative pronoun has as referent "the book of records" (that is the whole codex of Zuqnīn), the second one simply recapitulates what was stated before: "namely that of evil times". In other words, ܠܗܘܘܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ is virtually identical in meaning to ܠܗܘܘܬܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ. As for ܠܗܘܘܬܐ , it may well include both "to copy down" and "to compose" in the context of Elisha's note, if we assume that Joshua the Stylite was both the copyist-compiler of the Chronicle (Parts I-III) and the author-composer of its last part (Part IV). In that case, one could scarcely blame Elisha for using one form of the verb to express both compilation and authorship.

Not only is there no good reason for construing the Syriac of Elisha's note in the manner in which Palmer has done, but a positive consideration presents itself as well. If, as we will argue presently, Elisha copied folio 66 of *Codex Zuqninensis* and appended his twofold note (better regarded as two notes: one identifying himself and the other Joshua) in the tenth century, we may well wonder whether it makes sense to posit that he would explicitly have added an

¹ Palmer, "Who wrote the Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite?", p. 272.

² Ibid., 274.

³ See *Thesaurus* 2819. The word ܕܥܘܠܐ can be collective.

identifying label to a subsidiary segment of a larger work. That is to say, the Edessene Chronicle (name suitably suggested by Palmer instead of the so-called Joshua the Stylite) had been incorporated into the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn well over a century before Elisha's time and thus presumably ceased to have an independent existence. That Elisha's first note discloses him as the person who repaired *Codex Zuqninensis* is beyond dispute. It would seem almost as certain that his second note was meant to identify the author of the entire work which Elisha was repairing, namely, the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn. (See below for a possible occasion of Elisha's activity.)

As noted above, Palmer is likely correct in suggesting that Joshua was not the author of the Edessene Chronicle. On the basis of its content, Nau had previously made the same suggestion, arguing that its author was instead a man from Edessa, who must be totally dissociated from Joshua, the stylite of ZuqnĪn. The Edessene author called his city "our city", and its bishop "our bishop". He located Birta, on the Euphrates to the east of Edessa, "in our province". Nau also suggested that Elisha, the author of the note in question, must have seen, perhaps in the (now) very damaged preface of the Chronicle, the name of Joshua, and, therefore, availed himself of the opportunity to mention his name as the writer of the whole Chronicle. Moreover, as Palmer also argued, the whole history is recounted from the perspective of Edessa, even though the calamities described may not necessarily relate to Edessa proper.

One could still argue, against Nau and Palmer, that Joshua, the Stylite of ZuqnĪn, may have been the author of the Edessene Chronicle, and not the compiler of the whole Chronicle of ZuqnĪn. The Edessene Chronicler offered abundant information about Amida, near which the monastery of ZuqnĪn was located, as he did about Edessa, his alleged city. In fact Amida is mentioned side by side with Edessa in the title of the Edessene Chronicle: "A Narrative Concerning the History of the Calamity that Occurred in Edessa and Amida and in the Whole of Mesopotamia."¹ Consequently, the author of the Edessene Chronicle could have lived in Amida—which would explain why he was interested in it. Since we know that Joshua the Stylite of ZuqnĪn did in fact live in or near Amida, he could be the author of the Edessene Chronicle.

Nau's suggestion, however, that Joshua was rather the compiler and author of the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn, is insightful. First, the Edessene Chronicle deals with the history Mesopotamia as a whole, including Edessa and Amida. Since Amida witnessed the siege of Kawad, who captured it and laid it waste in 503, it is to be expected that the Edessene author talked about it. In other words, the author of the Edessene Chronicle did not need to live in Amida to write about it. Second, it is known from the contents of Part IV of the ZuqnĪn Chronicle that the author of this part was a resident of the monastery of ZuqnĪn, just as Joshua the Stylite was. There may even be a connection

¹ Chabot, *Chronicon* I, 235:1-3.

between his former position as “stylite”, as stated in Elisha’s note, and his mention of stylites, who were brought down from their pillars during the violence that befell northern Syria at the beginning of the ‘Abbasid period.¹ Third, Elisha’s note mentions the word ܠܘܝܢܐ “tyrant”, a reference to a man who had caused terrible suffering, and the identity of the tyrant might help establish the identity of Joshua himself.

Wright² understood ܠܘܝܢܐ “tyrant” to be a reference to a Persian king, most likely Kawad, about whom the Edessene Chronicler had much to say. This is also the position of Nau, in his study mentioned above.³ Yet, nowhere in the Edessene Chronicle did its author call Kawad or any other ruler a “tyrant”. Moreover, Kawad, usually referred to as “king” in the Edessene Chronicle, was never vilified by the Edessene author to quite the same extent as were Caliph al-Manṣūr, and, especially, Mūsā son of Muṣ‘ab, the governor of Mosul, by the Chronicler of Zuqnān, their contemporary and critic. In addition, the Edessene Chronicler was much less rhetorical and emotional in describing the consequences of the Byzantine-Persian war, which occurred during the reigns of Anastasius and Kawad, than was the Chronicler of Zuqnān, when he described the overtaxation of Northern Syria by Mūsā. As a result, it seems rather doubtful that “tyrant” describes Kawad in Elisha’s note.

By contrast, “tyrant” was explicitly used by the Chronicler of Zuqnān for both Caliph al-Manṣūr and Mūsā son of Muṣ‘ab. The Chronicler used the phrase ܠܘܝܢܐ ܠܘܝܢܐ “tyrannic ruler” (the first term is not the Syriac substantive for “rule” but an Arabism: *sultān* “ruler”) to refer to al-Manṣūr in the following passages of Chabot’s edition: 211:25-26, 212:1, 214:27, 223:13, 28. As for Mūsā son of Muṣ‘ab, he has been greatly vilified by the Chronicler for all the sufferings which he had inflicted on people of all ranks, through extortions and physical punishments. The Chronicler called him a rhododaphne (295:27),⁴ winding snake (299:27), the root of all evil things (305:26), a harmful root (306:17), and a wicked man (313:11); he spoke of “the evil of the son of Muṣ‘ab” (319:7-8), and his “violence and persecution” (355:26-27). Most importantly, three times the Chronicler dubbed him a tyrant, exactly the same word found in Elisha’s note (289:27, 290:22, 373:26).

Elisha of Zuqnān lived during the end of the 9th century and the beginning of the 10th (see below), probably in Zuqnān itself. He read at least the Edessene Chronicle, since he replaced a missing or damaged folio. One might well wonder why an early 10th-century scribe would call a 6th-century ruler (Kawad) “tyrant”, when the king’s own contemporary, the Edessene Chronicler, had not assigned him the epithet! Moreover, Elisha of Zuqnān must have been familiar with the rest of the Chronicle of Zuqnān, since the

¹ See below p. 294.

² Wright, *Chronicle*, x.

³ Nau, ROC 2 (1897) p. 48 note 2.

⁴ A poisonous tree.

Edessene Chronicle was not only part of it, but the Chronicle as a whole had been produced in his own monastery, before it was sent to Egypt. Perhaps Elisha had found in the preface of the ZuqnĪn Chronicle the term “tyrant”, in connection with “the bad times that passed upon us”, a phrase the Chronicler used both in the preface to the entire Chronicle and in the introduction to Part IV, and repeated by Elisha in his note: “the bad times that had passed”... Elisha must have also been aware of the wickedness of Mūsā, from Part IV of the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn, to have called him “tyrant”, as the author himself had done. Not unexpectedly, the bad press Mūsā son of Muṣ‘ab got was not limited to the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn. Later Syriac sources, such as *Chronicon* 813, *Chronicon* 819, the so-called *Narrationes variae*, *Chronicon* 1234 and Michael the Syrian, all remembered Mūsā as a “cruel and heinous” man.¹

On the basis of what has been said, it seems reasonable that the author of the ZuqnĪn Chronicle was not only the first to apply the term “tyrant” to Mūsā, but also that, from the Chronicle, this epithet found its way into Elisha’s note. If that is so, the author of the ZuqnĪn Chronicle must be identified with the priest Joshua the Stylite.

D. POSITION OF THE CHRONICLER

That the author of our Chronicle was almost certainly a resident in the monastery of ZuqnĪn is suggested in Part IV. He was a priest and formerly a stylite, on the assumption that he is the Joshua of Elisha’s note. But beyond these few intriguing details, nothing more is known about his public life. Witakowski has recently suggested that he was the *ܩܝܘܡܐ* “steward” of his monastery, because, according to Witakowski, only monks in that position could travel² and gather information about the events he discusses in his Chronicle. Indeed, the chronicler did travel, but probably only within the Khābūr region, as he discloses here and there in Part IV of his Chronicle.³ All the same, he seems not have been the “steward” of his monastery, because he explicitly mentions a monk named Dionysius, who held that position until 766-767.⁴ True enough, this Dionysius became the bishop of Harrān the very next year (767-768), as the Chronicler himself informs us,⁵ but he tells us as well that another monk of ZuqnĪn, Lazarus by name, served as “steward” in the year he finished his Chronicle, namely, S. 1087 (775-776). Furthermore, the Chronicler dedicated his work to this monk, as well as to the other fellow monks of his monastery.⁶ To suggest that the Chronicler may have been the

¹ For references see p. 223 n. 2, below.

² Witakowski, *Study*, 92.

³ See for example p. 328 below.

⁴ See below p. 219.

⁵ See below p. 222.

⁶ See Chabot, *Chronicon* II, p. 420:11.

“steward” after Dionysius and before Lazarus would seem to be nothing more than idle speculation.

If Joshua wrote the Chronicle of Zuqnān, as we have suggested, then its author was once a stylite, as the note of Elisha indicates. It follows as well that he must have spent part of his life in prayer and meditation on the top of a column in the open air. In the violence that engulfed northern Syria during the governorship of Mūsā son of Muṣ‘ab, attacks were made on monks, recluses and stylites, as the Chronicler himself notes: “They attacked hermits, recluses, and stylites, bringing down many from their pillars ...”.¹ He may well have been among them. There is clearly no reason to disqualify a stylite from having been a literary author. Palmer has rightly noted² that John, the Stylite of Litarbā, near Aleppo, corresponded with Jacob of Edessa, and wrote a chronography at the beginning of the 8th century.³ Similarly, Joshua too appears to have been both a stylite and an author.

E. DATE OF THE MANUSCRIPT

Elisha’s inserted folio was written in a script distinct from that of the rest of *Codex Zuqninensis*. In an attempt to date the manuscript of our Chronicle, we begin with a consideration of this added folio. Since Elisha, unfortunately, failed to date his note, scholars have come to widely differing conclusions. Martin, for example, suggested the 14th or the 15th century, while Tisserant compared Elisha’s script to that of manuscript British Library Add 14.548, dated to 790.⁴ Evidently, thus far no one has associated “Elisha of Zuqnān”, the scribe of the manuscript British Library Orient. MS 5021, written in 902-903,⁵ with “Elisha of Zuqnān”, the copyist of the damaged folio and author of the appended note. Not only are the names identical, but the scripts of the two manuscripts clearly come from the same pen. Both the general appearance of the respective scripts and individual letter forms lead to the same inevitable conclusion. Particularly the *tēth*, the long *bēth*, the *ṣādē* and especially the *mīm* were formed in identical manner in our note and in BL Orient. MS 5021. Consequently, one can safely date the note of Elisha in *Codex Zuqninensis* toward the end of the 9th century or the beginning of the 10th.

¹ See below p. 294.

² Palmer, in *Abr-Nahrain* 28 (1990) p. 144.

³ Michael II 358, after Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē.

⁴ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxxi. For the manuscript dated to 790 see Hatch, *Album*, Plate XCVI and p. 147.

⁵ See Hatch, *Album*, Plate CXIII and p. 164. About this manuscript see now Brock in LM 108 (1995) pp. 74ff.

As we indicated above, Assemani has suggested that *Codex Zuqninensis* was brought to Egypt by Moses of Nisibis in the year 932. Since Moses and Elisha of Zuqnĭn were clearly contemporaries, it is not improbable that the latter's repair of the manuscript was occasioned by its change in location. To be sure, reparation per se need not spell a change in place, nor is it particularly noteworthy perhaps that the repairer would want to take credit for his meritorious deed—as Elisha did in his first note. But that in his second note Elisha identifies at some length the author of the work he repaired suggests that this information was no longer part of the manuscript, and therefore needed to be re-introduced. (We have noted above that at present the codex lacks both beginning and end.) While residents of the monastery of Zuqnĭn, where the work was composed, might not be in need of such explicit identification, monks in Egypt could scarcely be expected to know its authorship. Consequently, Moses' bringing the manuscript from Zuqnĭn to Egypt might provide a suitable *raison d'être* for Elisha's second note and perhaps for his restoration as well.

But if Elisha's notes were not improbably inserted into *Codex Zuqninensis* when it changed location and ownership, it remains to suggest a likely time and place for his activity. Assemani thought the date might be 932, presumably because in that year Moses is said to have brought more than 250 manuscripts from the East to Egypt. But since Moses fetched others (perhaps fewer) in 906-907, 927, 936, and 943-944 (the year he died), the year suggested by Assemani may not in fact be the most likely one. Perhaps a date closer to Elisha's known floruit is preferable. Thus we would suggest 906-907.

That leaves the question of location. Was it in Zuqnĭn or was it in Egypt that Elisha did his copying and composing of notes? Since, according to Hatch's *Album*, Elisha wrote what is now BL Orient. MS 5021 in Egypt, either location is clearly possible. But in view of the fact that BL Orient. MS 5021 is explicitly said to have been copied in Egypt (more precisely in the eastern desert, in the Monastery of Paul the Solitary),¹ whereas Elisha's first note in *Codex Zuqninensis* makes no such claim, Zuqnĭn would seem to be the more probable place. This would entail, of course, that Elisha returned home at some point after his visit to Egypt, or, less likely, that he executed his repair sometime before he went to Egypt.

In sum, neither the occasion for Elisha's activity nor the location where he carried it out can be determined with certainty, but what we have proposed fits all the currently known facts and provides, we believe, a plausible scenario.

Since BL Orient. MS 5021, written by Elisha the scribe, has escaped notice, many scholars before the turn of this century have dated *Codex Zuqninensis* quite erroneously. Assemani, for example, dated it to the early 10th century,

¹ See the colophon published by Brock, in LM 108 (1995) p. 75.

whereas Martin opted for the 9th-10th.¹ As for Wright, he dated the six folios, now in the British Library, to the 10th or the 11th century.² The 10th century is, of course, too late, since Elisha's note must be dated to that period and apparently by that time the codex was already in need of repair. Chabot, as recently as 1933 maintained that the manuscript was not an autograph³ and, on that basis, might be dated to any time after the 8th century. A more reasonable date, middle of the 9th century, was suggested by Tisserant on palaeographical grounds.⁴ This date has been adopted by many scholars ever since.⁵ Palmer, however, has recently questioned it.⁶

Needless to say, *Codex Zuqninensis* must predate Elisha's note, but the question is by how long. The manuscript is mostly palimpsest, and the originally inscribed texts from the Septuagint have been assigned a range from fifth/sixth to seventh/eighth centuries.⁷ The Syriac text has been written predominately in *Sertō*, though some of the letters, such as the *gōmal*, the *kōf*, the *shūn* and the *qōf* are of the *Estrangelo* type. Although Tisserant admitted that dating a manuscript solely on the basis of palaeography "n'est pas sans quelque péril",⁸ his analysis of the script of *Codex Zuqninensis* is open to question for several reasons. First, the number of dated manuscripts, which Tisserant at the beginning of this century could use as a basis for comparison, was rather limited. Their number has now increased as is shown in Hatch's *Album*, although this invaluable tool for dating un-dated manuscripts is itself not a complete collection of dated manuscripts. Second, although there are many dated *Sertō* manuscripts for the 9th century, only a few of them exist for the eighth,⁹ a fact which hampers our dating of *Codex Zuqninensis*. The earlier of the two bears a date of 731-732,¹⁰ thus forty-four years prior to the Zuqnīn Chronicle (775-776). The second manuscript belongs to 790,¹¹ hence nearer the closing date of our Chronicle by fourteen years. Though both manuscripts are clearly of direct relevance for the dating of the Chronicle of Zuqnīn, a grand total of two furnishes a rather flimsy basis for comparison. Third, Tisserant's palaeographical analysis which led him to date our manuscript to the middle of the 9th century, needs re-examination, as will

¹ Martin, *Chronique*, v.

² Wright, *Catalogue*, 1118.

³ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, vi.

⁴ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxxi-xxxii.

⁵ See most recently, Brock, *JIA* 5 (1979-1980), p. 10; Witakowski, *Study*, 30.

⁶ Palmer, in his review of Witakowski, *Study*, in *Abr-Nahrain* 28 (1990) p. 144.

⁷ Rahlfs, *Verzeichnis*, p. 275.

⁸ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxxi.

⁹ Hatch gives only two.

¹⁰ Hatch, *Album*, Plate XCV and p. 146.

¹¹ Hatch, *Album*, Plate XCVI and p. 147.

become clear in the following discussion.

Tisserant compared *Codex Zuqninensis* with *Codex Climaci rescriptus*, dated by Margoliouth to the middle of the 9th century,¹ and concluded that, palaeographically, the two manuscripts are more or less the same. Margoliouth seems right to have dated the *Codex Climaci* to the 9th century, for it shares with 9th-century dated manuscripts the following features: an *Estrangelo*-type *gōmal* (though the shape of the letter in the *Codex* is closer to *Serto* than to *Estrangelo*), angular *bēth*, *qōf* and final *mīm*, and two vertical parallel lines representing the *lomadh* when it is followed by an *olaf* (**𐌒**). Our manuscript, however, differs from *Codex Climaci* and other 9th-century manuscripts in the following points: final *mīm* and *bēth* are more rounded than in *Codex Climaci*, the *lomadh* and *olaf* do not change form when ligatured (as in **𐌒**), as Tisserant himself recognised, and the *gōmal* has a less than 70° angle, with a low thin tail, reminiscent of the late East Syriac *gamal* (**𐌒**). Although Tisserant also argued that the *tāw*, which ligatures regularly with the *wāw* in the Chronicle of Zuqnīn, is attested in the same shape in a manuscript (BL Add 14.651)² dated to 850,³ he seems to have been unaware that the same feature existed as early as 790,⁴ and perhaps even earlier.

There are, therefore, enough palaeographic differences between *Codex Zuqninensis* and the *Codex Climaci* on the one hand, and between our codex and other 9th-century manuscripts on the other hand, to cast serious doubt on the 9th-century date suggested by Tisserant. Moreover, *Codex Zuqninensis* shares certain features with 8th-century manuscripts. Thus our manuscript notably shares with BL Add 14.548, dated to 790,⁵ especially the *gōmal* as well as the *wāw* ligatured with the *tāw* (among other features), and with Cod. Syr. 115 (Harvard University, Semitic Museum),⁶ dated to 731-732, especially the rounded *bēth*. Given the phenomena we have noted, it would seem eminently reasonable to date the manuscript of Zuqnīn to the 8th century. Furthermore, since the Chronicler wrote the preface to his work in A.D. 776, *Codex Zuqninensis* could well have been his autograph. There are in fact other reasons to support such a conclusion.

To begin with, it should be noted that our Codex is the sole exemplar of the Chronicle of Zuqnīn. Though it is possible, of course, that other manuscripts have simply not survived, the fact that no Syriac author ever cites it or even refers to it strongly suggests that our Chronicle enjoyed limited, indeed very limited, circulation. Further, perhaps it is not purely accidental that the sole copy we do have is a palimpsest manuscript assembled from half

¹ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxxii. Lewis, *Codex Glimaci rescriptus*, xi.

² See Hatch, *Album*, Plate CII, p. 153.

³ Tisserant, *Codex*, xxxii.

⁴ See Hatch, *Album*, Plate XCVI, p. 147.

⁵ Hatch, *Album*, Plate XCVI and p. 147.

⁶ Hatch, *Album*, Plate XCV and p. 146.

a dozen old or discarded Greek Bible manuscripts. In other words, the copy of the Chronicle in our possession was written on little more than scratch-paper, to use a modern analogy.

Curiously, while Parts I, II, and (virtually all of) III were written on previously inscribed leaves—all materials copied from existing sources, the Chronicler's own contribution, Part IV, was inscribed almost exclusively on new leaves. Thus the concluding entries of Part III and the beginning of Part IV appear on folio 121 (the beginning of signature XIV according to Tisserant [see above]), the first of the previously uninscribed leaves which continue to 168 inclusive (= the end of signature XVIII), approximately eighteen folios short of the work's conclusion, at which point our manuscript once again becomes palimpsest. Surely, the inherent symbolism of *used* folios containing *copied* materials and *new* folios featuring *newly composed* writing is apt. We can only wonder whether it perhaps rests on a conscious decision on the part of our Chronicler. But in that case he must have underestimated the precise extent of the tale he undertook to tell by some forty pages or nearly 25%. Not impossibly, his own obvious verbosity caused him to run out of new folios prematurely.

Another indication that the manuscript is an autographon is the blank spaces found in Part IV of the Chronicle. On five separate occasions (folios 135v, 136r, 137r, 138r, and 144v), the Chronicler left these blank spaces, seemingly because the required information was, for some reason, not available at the moment of writing. Thus in the account dealing with the election of George of Ba'althan as Patriarch, the Chronicler left a blank line which presumably was meant to contain the names of the Western bishops involved in the election of the patriarch.¹ Elsewhere, mention is made of Caliph al-Manṣūr but since at the time of writing the Caliph was still alive, a blank space, intended to be filled later with his dates, was left in the manuscript.² It may be noted in passing that the Caliph died in 775, while the Chronicle's Preface is dated to 776. A third blank is encountered in a passage which makes reference to "Zachariah, bishop of Edessa," the name of whose monastery, however, was evidently unknown to the author at the time of writing.³ A fourth blank was apparently occasioned by the fact that, when the author wrote of the Synod of bishops of the Jazīra, which was convened in Sarūg, he did not know or could not remember the name of the village where the Synod was held.⁴ Finally, space was left for the name of the person who succeeded Stephen of Ḥābūrā.⁵

¹ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 213:4.

² Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 215:20.

³ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 221:12.

⁴ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 226:9.

⁵ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 251:27.

Though it is, of course, not impossible that a copyist has faithfully transmitted the text, blanks and all, the likelihood of this seems rather remote, since at least some of the omitted information, for example the year in which al-Mansūr died, would have been readily available. What seems much more likely is that the author himself intended to fill in the blanks at some later date but that for one reason or another he never did. But if what we are suggesting is correct, it ought not be construed to mean that no one except the author himself (and Elisha at a much later date) ever did anything to *Codex Zuqninensis*. The contrary is evidently the case. As will be noted below, here and there in the manuscript one comes upon corrections introduced by a hand different from the original.¹

Yet a third feature of our Codex can be interpreted to favour our autographon-theory. That the Chronicler had great interest in celestial phenomena is patently obvious from Part IV. Thus it comes as no surprise that on six occasions when the text speaks of heavenly portents, pictures appear as well, five of them in the margin (folios 121v, 146r, 150v, 154v, 155v) and one embedded within the text proper (folio 136v). (Only the latter is reproduced in Chabot's edition.)²

Again the possibility cannot be ruled out completely that the illustrations were scrupulously transmitted by a copyist, but one might well wonder whether a copyist would reproduce items that add no information of any kind to the written text. That, in any case, the illustrations derive from the same pen as the written text is virtually assured by the fact that on folio 121v the "star" of the text is not only depicted in the margin but a written label, ܠܘܟܠܐ ܡܠܝܢ ܡܗܘܢܐ "the likeness of the star", is appended as well, and the hand of the label is clearly identical with that of the text proper. Since the six illustrations are very similar in style, one can with reasonable certainty conclude that what is true for one is true for all. Indeed we would take one additional step and suggest that the text and script of *Codex Zuqninensis*, the blanks that were never filled in, as well as the depictions of heavenly portents all derive from the same hand, namely, the hand of Joshua the Stylite.

The strongest evidence of all that *Codex Zuqninensis* is an autographon comes from previously unnoticed notations which its scribe had made on two occasions in the margins of Part IV of the Chronicle. The script of these notes is unquestionably identical to that of the main text, and the yellow and red ink in which they were written is paralleled elsewhere in the *Codex*. Evidently, the notes were intended to help the writer recall topics about which he wanted to write. Since these notes were, apparently, mere *aides-mémoire*, they were penned rather carelessly and lightly, with the result that some words have now become virtually illegible and have had to be partially reconstructed. The relationship of the notes, both in their material and physical aspects, to the text

¹ See below p. 17.

² Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 217.

per se establishes beyond reasonable doubt, we believe, that the scribe of the *Codex* and the author of the Chronicle were one and the same person.

The first of such notes or jottings is found in the right-hand margin of folio 137v, near the bottom of the page. In that folio, the shooting of the stars that occurred in S. 1076 (A.D. 764-765) is discussed. As is known from elsewhere in the Chronicle, Severus, bishop of Amida, died in the same year. The Chronicler, who must have known the bishop of the city near which his own monastery was located, failed, however, to discuss this event, perhaps due to a temporary lapse in memory, at the expected point in his narrative. Instead, he placed a somewhat surprising account about the Manichaeans of Ḥarrān, introduced by the indefinite temporal clause “during this time ...”, immediately following the account about the shooting stars. Evidently, the Chronicler, while writing about the shooting stars, remembered the death of Severus, for he jotted just beside the title of the account about the Manichaeans the phrase ܘܥܡܪܘܢ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ ܕܫܝܘܪܐ “concerning Severus the bishop”.

Directly below the note about Severus, there appears another, two-word, notation: ܘܚܘܫܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ lit. “house of destruction”. Two things are of interest about this second note. First, since it was written with red ink, which the Chronicler elsewhere reserved for titles, it would seem that he penned it when writing the title for the shooting stars episode or, perhaps more likely, when he was inscribing the title for the entry about the Manichaeans. In other words, note two was not written at the same time as notes one and three on folio 137v, since both of these are in black ink. The second item of interest about note two is its contents. That “destruction” refers to the destruction of the Nestorian monastery ܘܚܘܫܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ lit. “house of the ark” which he describes in folio 138v, rather than to the destruction caused by the flood of Mosul, which he relates immediately thereafter, is suggested, on the one hand, by the fact that an *aide-mémoire* for the flood appears in the right-hand margin of 138v (and one doubts that the Chronicler would have written two *aides-mémoire* for the same event) and, on the other hand, by the fact that “house of destruction” represents almost certainly a word-play on the official name of the Monastery “house of the ark”. Not improbably, the phonetic similarity between Syriac ܘܚܘܫܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ and ܘܚܘܫܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ triggered the nickname. In any case, it seems likely that it was a local or regional designation for the ruins of the monastery rather than being a personal, *ad hoc* invention of the Chronicler, though he evidently took great delight in the calamity that befell the hated Nestorians.¹ Yet, newly invented epithets can scarcely be expected to trigger one’s memory.

Note three in the right-hand margin of 137v reads ܘܥܡܪܘܢ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ “concerning the Synod”. The three notes together clearly represent some type of plan the Chronicler wanted to follow immediately after his account about the Manichaeans. Thus, in folio 138r the year S. 1076 (A.D. 764-765) is repeated,

¹ See below p. 204f.

followed by a brief account of the death of Severus (cf. the Chronicler's note one), which is followed in turn by one dealing with the Synod of the bishops of the Jazīra, Mosul and the West, introduced by the phrase "and in this year ..." (138r-138v). This Synod is clearly the event anticipated in note three on 137v. Then comes the destruction of the Nestorian monastery located on Mt. Qardū (138v). Interestingly, the events relating to notes two and three have been described in reverse order to the notes, but this order does, however, correspond to their chronological sequence. The death of Severus and the bishops' Synod occurred in S. 1076, while the Nestorian monastery was destroyed in S. 1077.

Evidently while writing about the destruction of the Nestorian monastery, the Chronicler was reminded of another kind of destruction, namely, that caused by the flood of Mosul. Consequently, he placed a notation in the right-hand margin of folio 138v: ܘܥܠ ܕܠܦܢ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ "(in) the year one thousand and seventy-four, waters ravaged Mosul". The event per se was then described after the destruction of the Nestorian monastery in S. 1077, but, of course, out of chronological sequence. In point of fact, the entry on Mosul should have preceded the shooting stars episode in 137v (S. 1076).

After the Chronicler had written about the events that took place between S. 1072-1077 (A.D. 760-766), one would have expected him to narrate the martyrdom of Cyrus of Harrān, his contemporary, that occurred shortly thereafter in S. 1081 (A.D. 769-770). This event was evidently of great significance to the Chronicler, since he devoted several folios to discussing it, as well as the question of apostasy in the Jazīra. That it was indeed on his mind when describing events of the preceding decade is suggested by the fact that, in the margin near the bottom of folio 138v, just below the note about the flooding of Mosul, he jotted the following words: ܘܥܠ ܕܠܦܢ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ ܕܥܝܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ "in the year one thousand and eighty-one, Cyrus 'died.'" But in spite of his note, he postponed discussing the event till the very end of his Chronicle (in the mutilated folios in the British Library). At least 35 folios separate the marginal jotting about Cyrus and the actual account of his martyrdom. The reason for the Chronicler's delay is not clear. Perhaps the economic conditions in the Jazīra distracted him from writing about Cyrus, seeing that he embarked on a lengthy and verbose discussion of the hardships of that region brought about by the new 'Abbasid governor of Mosul, Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab. In fact, when the Chronicler reached the year in which Cyrus died (S. 1081 = A.D. 769-770), he began with the appointment of Mūsā as governor. This event, described in folio 145r, was immediately followed by the description of the economic situation in the Jazīra. But in spite of that, the Chronicler did not forget the martyrdom of Cyrus, perhaps thanks to the notation he had made in the margin of folio 138v.

In the folios of the British Library, the Chronicler used the martyrdom of Cyrus as a vehicle for speaking, at some length, about the apostasy of large numbers of Christians from the Jazīra to Islam. At any rate, he began the

account about the martyrdom of Cyrus with the same date he had jotted down in the margin of folio 138v.¹

The jottings we have discussed are limited to Part IV of the Chronicle of Zuqnīn, the part which is regarded as the author's chief and original contribution. To be sure there are other notes written in the margins of our Codex. For example in Part IV (folio 123r) the sentence ܘܢܝܢܘܢ ܘܢܝܢܘܢ ܘܢܝܢܘܢ, ܘܢܝܢܘܢ ܘܢܝܢܘܢ "and in Edessa mār James succeeded Cyriacus" was written in the left margin, and in folio 121v the words ܩܘܒܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܒܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܒܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܒܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܒܘܠܘܬܐ "story of Probus and John the Abbot" appear in the right margin. These notes, however, are written in dark ink quite distinct from the yellowish ink used by the Chronicler, and their script too is markedly different. The first note was written in Estrangelo, whereas the second, though, like the Codex itself, written in Sertō, is clearly distinct (the *shīn* of the note is quite different from the one written by the Chronicler). Consequently, both notes must have been added to the manuscript by other scribes, sometime after the Chronicle had been written. It is quite clear, therefore, that scribes other than Elisha of Zuqnīn, who replaced an entire folio sometime in the tenth century, have had access to *Codex Zuqninensis*.

The notations discussed above, which evidently functioned as *aides-mémoire*, quite clearly stem from the pen of our Chronicler. They are found only in the part of the Chronicle that he himself composed. Since he had no ready-made history of the period of his concern at his disposal, as he did for all the preceding periods covered in his universal history, his personal memory (and that of those he interviewed) was his only source of information. But since human memory is limited, the Chronicler, as authors are wont to do, jotted down short notes to prime his memory on the topics he wanted to include. The jottings served their purpose, since all five events noted in the margins of folios 137v and 138v were indeed discussed in the Chronicle.

Though it might be argued that no single piece of evidence proves that *Codex Zuqninensis* is indeed the autograph of Joshua the Stylite, the cumulative weight of all the relevant data establishes this fact, we believe, beyond reasonable doubt.

F. CONTENTS OF PARTS III AND IV

As we have previously noted, the Chronicle of Zuqnīn is a universal chronicle, featuring accounts of world events from creation to the eighth century A.D.

¹ Tisserant, *Codex* xv n. 1, first read the date as "one thousand and eighty-six" (A.D. 774-775), but later admitted that the reading "one hundred and eighty-one" offered by W. Wright, *Catalogue*, 1118f, was correct. The date read by Wright is definitely correct. Both the Chronicler of Zuqnīn and Michael the Syrian wrote that Cyrus was put to death by 'Abbās, who was governor of the Jazīra until S. 1081. Moreover, the date is now corroborated by the jotting in folio 138v.

In the introduction to Part IV¹ the Chronicler mentions his sources for each of the major periods his work covers. The first of these is said to span from the creation to Constantine, the second from Constantine to Theodosius II, the third from Theodosius II to Justinian, and the fourth from Justinian to 774-775. Yet, the Chronicle itself shows no clear signs of this four-fold division. Nothing more than notes giving the author's written sources appear at the beginning or end of a given period. Thus the second period is introduced by the words "also from the history of Socrates" and the fourth is supplied with an elaborate introduction without parallel elsewhere in the Chronicle.² On the other hand, the third period followed the second period without any division. Consequently, the formal division between Parts III and IV, which the present translation makes, is based not on the Chronicle itself but on the introduction to Part IV, even though this introduction itself marks a division of some kind.

The accounts contained in the Chronicle are arranged, year by year, in annalistic manner. In Parts III and IV, the years are consistently calculated according to the Seleucid calendar, named the era "of Alexander" or "of the Greeks". The Seleucid era begins in 312/311 B.C. and was reckoned in Syria from October 1, 312 B.C. The Muslim Hijra calendar, which begins in A.D. 622, is used only once, as a parallel to other systems of reckoning.³ In Part III local eras, such as the era of Antioch (reckoned from October 1, 49 B.C.) or of Laodicea, were also used once each, alongside the Seleucid calendar.⁴ Finally, an indiction ("indiction" was a 15-year cycle, originally used for tax assessment) is attested only once, together with the Seleucid calendar and the era of Antioch, to date an earthquake in which Antioch itself was devastated.⁵

The information found in Part III was borrowed from Part II of the *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, which survived, in large part, through the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn. John was at the early stage of his career a Monophysite monk in the Monastery of John the Urtian near Amida. Between 522 and 530, he led a nomadic existence, wandering from place to place with his fellow-monks, due to the anti-Monophysite persecutions launched in Syria and elsewhere by the Chalcedonians. Between 530 and 542 he travelled extensively throughout the Near East, including Palestine, where the Great Plague broke out in 541.⁶ In 541-542 John was commissioned by Justinian to convert the pagans in Asia Minor, and in Constantinople he enjoyed the protection of the empress Theodora (died in 548) as well as that of Justinian himself before he became hostile to the Monophysites in 571.

¹ Below p. 138.

² See below p. 138f.

³ Below p. 138.

⁴ Below pp. 88, 90.

⁵ Below p. 88.

⁶ Below p. 94.

The life which John led in Byzantium for three decades exposed him to the worlds of imperial and Church politics. His wanderings and suffering, caused by the anti-Monophysite persecutions, as well as his extensive travelling brought him into contact with local people, including monks. All of these experiences and activities are reflected in what is now Part III of the Chronicle of Zuqnān, sometimes in considerable (and personal) detail. John's refusal, for example, to carry out an order by Justinian aimed at gathering Monophysite monks and hermits for a debate on the Faith with the emperor, as well as the emperor's reaction to John's disobedience, are vividly portrayed.¹ The Great Plague of 541-543, which took place during Justinian's reign, was also witnessed in person by John. He observed with his own eyes and on a daily basis the plague's horrible effects on thousands of people, along the long road which he travelled from Palestine *via* Syria to Constantinople. He himself may have been stricken by the epidemic, for he wrote: "Day after day we too used to knock at the door of the grave along with everyone else".²

Other personal traces of John of Ephesus are detected in the accounts of his missionary activities in Asia Minor: "The grace of God visited [the territories of Asia], Caria, Lydia and Phrygia ... through the mediation of our humble self;"³ and "[in the nineteenth year of Just[ianian the emperor, the matter] of the pagans [was examined through the exhortation of our humble self]".⁴ The Letter of Simon of Bēth Arsham, copied by the Chronicler from John of Ephesus, deals with the martyrs of Najrān.⁵ This Letter is also known from other sources and extant recensions in varying lengths, but John appended more details about the Ethiopian-Himyarite war,⁶ and about a boy from Najrān, Bayṣar by name, who managed to escape the massacre that occurred. John later met this boy in Constantinople,⁷ where he had settled and was educated.

The contents of Part IV are disparate and uneven. They begin with short annalistic entries of world events which took place between 587 and 715. The accounts become more developed for the few years thereafter, as more information becomes available to the Chronicler. Then the segments dealing with the period between 767 and 775, a time of economic hardship in Mesopotamia, grow very detailed, even rather verbose in places. These accounts form a major part of Part IV, which may be labelled "a local Chronicle" in its own right. Its main theme is the economic policy of the early

¹ Below p. 133.

² Below p. 199.

³ Below p. 90.

⁴ Below p. 92f.

⁵ Below p. 78.

⁶ Below p. 85.

⁷ Below p. 84.

'Abbasids, especially during the time of Caliph al-Manṣūr. The effects of the overtaxation and extortions practised by the governor of Mosul, Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab, and his numerous agents are described in great detail. The Chronicler did not try to hide his bitter feelings toward Mūsā and Caliph al-Manṣūr, who turned the Jazīra, for centuries a bread-basket of the region, into ruins, due to blatant exploitation of its human and agricultural resources.

At least one scholar has compared the contents of Part IV of the Chronicle of Zuqnīn with that of *Tārīkh al-Mawṣil*, written by the Arab historian al-Azdī (died in 945). Dr. F. 'Umar¹ has called attention to the fact that both histories deal with the political, social, and economic conditions of the same region, Mosul and the Jazīra. He further noted that both authors were opposed to the 'Abbasid central authority, as were the authors of other local histories, such as the History of Ṭabaristān, History of Sijistān, History of Bukhārā, etc. Both authors moreover agreed that overtaxation and extortion of the 'Abbasid agents were responsible for the migration of the peasantry into the cities, a fact which led to the disintegration of the Jazīra, which had an economy based on agriculture. Dr. 'Umar also noted that, while the Chronicle of Zuqnīn concentrated on the economy of the Jazīra, al-Azdī stressed the political history of that region, and sometimes of other regions as well.

There can be no doubt that the Chronicler of Zuqnīn and al-Azdī have certain characteristics in common. In addition to the fact that both wrote local histories, their histories are of an annalistic type, the only difference being that al-Azdī used a lunar calendar, whereas the Chronicler of Zuqnīn used the Seleucid calendar, which is solar. Accordingly, both authors divided the narrations of the events, when these lasted more than one year, into separate entries. In addition to arranging the material in this manner (e.g. "in year such and such, so and so died / or did this and that"), both authors sub-divided the information for a single year, if it proved to be rather long, into sections with titles. Sometimes such short annalistic entries are strikingly similar, even in wording. An example is the parallel event of the shooting of the stars, which are not only dated to the same year (Seleucid 1076 = H. 147 = A.D. 764-765), but also share very similar (in part cognate) wording: *سقطت النجوم = تناءرت النجوم* "the stars were 'dropping'".²

Furthermore, both authors were compilers of existing sources, oral as well as written, but al-Azdī normally identified his sources, whereas the Chronicler typically did not. But they certainly agreed that the people of the Jazīra and Mosul suffered oppression at the hands of the 'Abbasids. Thus, the violence of Hārūn al-Rashīd directed at Mosul as described by al-Azdī³ echoes the same behaviour of Abū 'Awn, an 'Abbasid agent appointed by al-Manṣūr, toward the

¹ 'Umar, *al-Da'wah*, 45.

² al-Azdī 200, Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 222:26.

³ al-Azdī 284.

people of the Jazīra, which our Chronicler describes.¹ Al-Azdī's negative assessment of Yihyah son of Sa'īd al-Ḥarshī,² a governor of Mosul appointed by al-Rashīd, is reminiscent of the generally negative opinion the Chronicler had about Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab, whom al-Manṣūr appointed governor of Mosul and the Jazīra.

Nonetheless, the two authors differ in their aim and manner of writing. Al-Azdī is a writer who made a serious attempt at transmitting historical information he received from his oral sources.³ He seldom let his own bitterness toward people or individuals interfere. The worst of what is reported about the 'Abbasids came not from his pen, but from the lips of an Arab: "By God, a liar is he who claims that these ('Abbasids) are Muslims."⁴ The Chronicler, on the other hand, was an ardent moralist for whom the purpose of history writing was not to furnish information *about* events, but to have his readers participate *in* them, in all their dramatic details. He criticised, not to say vilified, everyone who, in his estimation, had committed wrong, whether Umayyad, 'Abbasid or a cleric from his own church. What mattered to him was not the religious affiliation of the wrongdoer but the wickedness of his actions. Our Chronicler tended to paint in deep black and pure white, with very little in between. Thus, he called al-Manṣūr "a tyrannic ruler" and other choice epithets, as seen above, but he described his brother 'Abbās as a "merciful and peace-loving man",⁵ though both were Arabs and Muslims.

G. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH

The Chronicler had an obvious interest in the books that his monastery had collected over the years, some of which he included, in their entirety, in his own opus. This, for example, is the case with the Edessene Chronicle discussed above, which covers the years A.D. 497-506/7, and Part II of the *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, narrating the years A.D. 489-578/9. Our Chronicler is indebted to both of these authors, and to many others, in his historiographical endeavours and his interpretation of the historical records. Moreover, at times he was excessively dependent on them, even in describing events he himself had witnessed. In his long description of a bubonic plague that took place in Europe and the Near East around the middle of the 8th century A.D., the Chronicler reproduced the outline, leading ideas, and individual expressions, including even the jeremiad of John of Ephesus, from the latter's own description of the bubonic plague which occurred in 543-544.

¹ See below p. 318f.

² al-Azdī 286-287.

³ See al-Azdī 250:5-6.

⁴ al-Azdī 151:13-14.

⁵ See below p. 232.

The borrowing is sometimes virtually verbatim. By way of illustration, one might compare the first statement by John of Ephesus and the second by the Chronicler, to become aware of the degree of dependence of the latter on the former:

כלד (כרכ) אעכא גבדא סכיא אכסנא . [איעא] ספלד דל
מכד כרד : גו עו לסכד עו עגה סס סכסכ . סגל לא דגד
דאלס אהפדס דגסוים קנעא סלכסא נא ח : חל דסכס ,
כרס סלפ דל חכס סל אכ סכסכ סכ סכ איעא סכ סכ
דכסכ : דגכס סכ סכ סכ דכ ¹

(The plague) devoured both slaves and masters, nobles and commoners alike and without partiality, while they were cast out one beside the other, and moaned. For concerning God’s judgment, it was explained as (having the intention) that people should be amazed and end up in astonishment at his upright judgments that they will neither be known nor fathomed by humans, as it is written: *Your judgments are like the great deep.*

גו כלס (כרכ) אעכא גבדא סכיא אכסנא דל מכד כרד .
פלד סכ איעא : עו לסכד עו עגה סס סכסכ . אכסא דל
לא דגד דאלס חל סכס סלכסא סגסכא נא ח . חל דסכס ,
דאלס סלפ דל סכסכ סכ סכסכ סכ סכ איעא סכ סכ סכ .
דכסכ , לע דכסא אכסכא דכ ²

(The plague) devoured both slaves and masters alike and without partiality, common people and nobles were cast out beside each other and moaned, so that everyone may marvel at the sentence of God and keep marvelling and admiring the judgments of God that cannot be scrutinised or comprehended or fathomed by mortals: *The judgments of God are the great deep.*

Furthermore, The Chronicle of ZuqnĪn contains a list of geographical names within the account of the 8th-century plague, which is almost identical to the list given by John of Ephesus, when describing the 6th-century plague. Obviously the Chronicler again borrowed from John, and as a result one is tempted not to give much historical credence to his list. Did the countries mentioned suffer the plague or did they not? Fortunately, other non-Syriac

¹ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 95:17-24.
² Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 183:19-28.

sources (Theophanes, al-Ṭabarī and al-Azdī) confirm not only that a plague occurred during the mid-8th century, but also that it was indeed widespread.¹ The Chronicler may well have adopted the practice of citing fluctuating prices of grain and cattle and harvest conditions from the Edessene Chronicle.² Interestingly, this same practice can be traced back directly or indirectly to Neo-Babylonian chronicles, where the information about market prices was derived from astronomical diaries.³

Sweeping criticism has been directed at our 8th-century Syrian monk and Chronicler by 20th-century scholars. True, our Chronicler was less than careful about chronology, copied ancient sources verbatim, including speech in the first person, lacked historical perspective, and exploited history to satisfy his moralistic bent of mind. Nevertheless, there is no good reason for doubting that he tried hard to convey the truth, as is demonstrated by the fact that, from time to time, he insisted that his informers testify to him under oath. He often repeated his intention not to blame people for the problems he described, but to correct corrupt human behaviour. His concept of a God ready to punish sinners through plagues, droughts, earthquakes, etc., is not unique to him, but it is also an integral part of biblical thought, Byzantine chronography, and above all, Assyrian and Babylonian literature. Since he is the product of his time and of his local monastery, he can scarcely be blamed for not having had the modern concept of scholarship.

As further evidence of his good sense one may point to the blank spaces in *Codex Zuqninensis*, which we discussed above. If our Chronicler was as much of a slop-artist as he has been made out to be by some, he might simply have approximated the truth rather than searching it out for later inclusion. Similarly, his discussion on two occasions in Part IV indicates that he was fully aware of chronological inaccuracies embedded in common computations. On the first occasion, in the introduction to Part IV, he complained that writers shortened or lengthened the years of reigns. This complaint may have originated in the fact that the Chronicler found two conflicting dates for the death of Justinian, both of which he passively included at the end of Part III and the beginning of Part IV. In the first instance the event is dated to S. 885 (A.D. 573-574), and in the second instance the event is dated to S. 898 (A.D. 586-587).⁴ Elsewhere in Part IV he repeated the complaint, and added that writers usually reckon only the time when the king is actually on the throne but ignore times of anarchy.⁵ That he decided to follow the general method

¹ For more on this subject see Harrak, "Literary Borrowings in the Chronicle of Zuqnīn: The Account of the Mid-8th Century Bubonic Plague" (forthcoming).

² See Palmer, in his review of Witakowski, *Study*, 145.

³ Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, 12f.

⁴ Both dates are inaccurate; see below p. 137 n. 1 and p. 139 n. 5.

⁵ See below p. 150.

simply illustrates what he himself states quite openly, namely, that his purpose for writing is not chronographic but didactic.

H. STYLE AND LANGUAGE

The literary style in Part IV of the Chronicle, which constitutes the personal contribution of the author, is perhaps not as deficient as Chabot judged it to be when he wrote, "il serait difficile de trouver un écrivain d'un style plus incorrect et plus bizarre."¹ To be sure, the Chronicler's style is not always polished and flowing, and it suffers from repetition and lack of clarity at times. But all this should probably be attributed to his intense emotional involvement in the events he narrates. A passage describing Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab, governor of Mosul, in which the Chronicler depicts him as "vessel of sin, son of perdition, advocate of the devil, and one who held everything sacred and religious in contempt ...",² tells us more about the writer's personal feelings than about the administrative qualities (or the lack thereof) of the governor. Clearly, this is not the style of the author of the Edessene Chronicle, in describing Kawad, the Persian king who brought similar hardship on northern Syria, as did Mūsā. Perhaps the Chronicler personally suffered the violence that plagued Northern Syria during the second half of the 8th century. This would make excellent sense if he was indeed Joshua the Stylite, as we have argued, since he explicitly states that "stylites were brought down from their pillars." Another reason for his bitterness may have been that, with his own eyes, he witnessed the extreme suffering inflicted on individuals and whole communities.

When all is said and done, however, putting the facts in as charitable a light as possible does not change them. The Chronicler's language contains countless orthographical and grammatical mistakes. Some of the mistakes (and suggested corrections) have been included in the List of Corrections in the present translation. If *Codex Zuqninensis* were a copy of the original, the blame would naturally fall on its scribe. But since it is almost certainly an autographon, these mistakes are directly attributable to the Chronicle's author and would thus seem to indicate that he was scarcely an intellectual of the calibre of Michael the Syrian or Bar Hebraeus. Likely, then, he was the very stylite we have mentioned, who must have devoted most of his life to prayer and meditation, on top of a pillar.

¹ Chabot, *Chronique*, iv. For a contrary view, see Nöldeke in his review of Chabot, *Chronique*, in WZKM 10 (1896), pp. 164f.

² See below p. 242.

Chabot has called attention to many anomalies in the Chronicle, some of which may be mentioned here. First, metatheses are numerous, especially in the $\sqrt{\text{ܥܘܕܕ}}$ “to find” and probably in the loan $\sqrt{\text{ܥܘܕܐ}}$ (possibly for * $\sqrt{\text{ܥܘܕܐ}}$ = from Arabic حَشَرَ “to gather”). Second, phonetic orthography is not infrequent and a serious source for confusion, even for a subsequent corrector who attempted to rectify the author’s mistakes.¹ This is, for example, the case with the word ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ , originally written ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ in the manuscript. The corrector, who added an *olaf* at the end of the first form (the *olaf* is darker than the rest of the word), did not realise that this was the adverb ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ “newly, again”, written phonetically. The correction confused Chabot, who left it untranslated, and Hespel, who gave a rather far-fetched translation of it.² It is questionable that the many mistakes found in our manuscript reflect a deterioration of Syriac perhaps under the influence of Arabic. Later chroniclers, such as Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē and Michael the Syrian, to name but two, wrote in Syriac at a date later than our author, but their language shows no noticeable deterioration. Moreover, the very fact that someone corrected the author’s mistakes suggests that they were of a purely personal nature.

Part IV of the Chronicle contains many Arabisms as well, a fact which may indicate, on the one hand, the influence of Arabic on Syriac in the Jazīra a century and a half after the arrival of Islam, and on the other, the personal familiarity of the Chronicler with Arabic. The following list of Arabisms in the Chronicle, though not exhaustive, underlines the influence of Arabic by the end of the 8th century:

ARABISMS	ARABIC ORIGINALS
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ (also ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ)	أمير “prince, governor”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐܘܠܐ	أمير المؤمنين “prince of the believers, Caliph”
$\sqrt{\text{ܥܘܕ}}$	بايع “to acknowledge as sovereign”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	براءة “contributions”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	جزية “poll-tax”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	مرابطون “garrison’s prince, governor”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	عامل “agent”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	عسكر “army”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	فتنة “discord”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	صلح (III) “to reach settlement”
ܥܘܕܐܘܠܐ	قطيعة “land grant”

¹ Corrections written with dark ink in sharp contrast to the rest of the text are detected in the manuscript. The author of these corrections is not known.

² See below p. 240 n. 5.

ܐܘܨܠܐ	رسول	“messenger”
ܥܘܠܡܐ	سلطان	“ruler”
ܥܘܨܠܐ	جمل	“pay, reward”
ܥܘܨܠܐ	شرطة	“police”

Syriac translations from Arabic are also found, some of which have been discussed by Nöldeke:¹

ܠܗ ܠܚܝܐ ܕܗܘܐ ܠܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ²
 ܚܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ (ܦܘܨܠܐ, ܠܚܘܨܠܐ)³ (elsewhere:⁴
 ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ⁵
 ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ ܕܥܘܨܠܐ⁶

These sentences may have been translations of the following:

لا (ما ، لست...) آخذ الإقليم بالإقليم

“I will not mistake a province for another one”

قطعوا الكيس

“(The agents) used to cut the purses (and take away money)”

و[اتمسك]ون [ببيت] العنكبوت

“[You are holding, [as it were, onto] a spider [web]”

صَلِّ واشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا [شريك] له [أو أن محمداً هو عبد] الله ورسوله ونبيه

“Pray and confess that there is no deity other than God alone [and without associate and that Muḥammad is the serva]nt and messenger and prophet of God”.

The last sentence is the Islamic *tašahhud* formula of the long type, but the Chronicle also contains shorter forms of the *tašahhud*.⁷ The long *tašahhud* formula given above and the sentence prior to it obviously derive from Islamic sources. There are many additional items in Part IV, which delineate

¹ Nöldeke, WZKM 10 (1896) p. 165. See also Harrak, *Symposium* 1996.

² Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 303:13-15.

³ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 303:28.

⁴ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 304:27.

⁵ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 385:11-12.

⁶ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 396:37-38.

⁷ See for example Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 398:13.

the role of Jesus in Islam,¹ that are renderings of Koranic verses, such as *sūrat al-Nisā'*, verse 171, and *sūrat āli 'Imrān*, verse 45.

Given the many Arabisms and translations from Arabic found in the Chronicle, one might wonder if the Chronicler was not in fact bilingual. True, most of the Arabisms we have listed are technical terms (administrative and military), which may have been nothing more than loan-words in Syriac. Moreover, the Chronicler's source for the Koranic verses we noted was not necessarily the Koran itself. Instead, they may simply have been circulating among Syrian Christians, and used in Christian-Muslim apologetics or polemics in the Jazīra. That Christians and Muslims engaged in polemics is suggested by a passage in which the Chronicler claimed that "they (= the Muslims) would bo[ast and look down] on us, saying: 'You are godless and you are hol[ding, as it were, onto] a spider's [web]'.² Elsewhere, the Chronicler states that Muslims were questioned by Christians about the role of Jesus within Islam: "This 'Word and Spirit of God' concerning 'Īsā (Jesus), what does it mean?' ...³

Whatever the case, the Chronicler seems to have used Arabisms intentionally—which suggests that he knew well what they meant. Thus, for example, he never used the Arabism *فتنة* (فتنة) "discord" to refer to discord among bishops, but only to denote civil wars among Muslims. Furthermore, he used other Arabisms where he could just as well have employed familiar Syriac cognates. The following Arabisms and Syriac cognates are a case in point:

ARABISMS	ARABIC ORIGINALS	SYRIAC COGNATES
بغض	بَشَعَ "to hate"	ܠܚܝ
بغض (for بغض*)	حَشَرَ "to gather"	ܠܚܝ
بغض	فَتَنَ "to rebel"	ܠܚܝ
الجزيرة	الجزيرة "Mesopotamia"	ܘܫܬܘܢܝܘܬܐ
جسد	جسد "body, corpse"	ܘܫܘܬܘܬܐ, ܘܫܘܬܘܬܐ
بغل	بغل "mule"	ܘܫܘܬܘܬܐ

The Chronicler may well have communicated in Arabic with speakers of Arabic. To say the least, he seems to have understood what they said. One passage reports that 'Abbasid soldiers "testified before us" under oath about the course of a battle they fought with the Byzantines.⁴ Elsewhere, the

¹ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 388:25-26; 389:13-14; 389:11-12; 389: 14-15.

² See below p. 325 and n. 1.

³ Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 389:6-7.

⁴ See below p. 212. See also Witakowski, *Study*, 94.

Chronicler mocks at Syriac-speaking Christian apostates “who lacked the knowledge of Arabic”.¹ He must have known the literal meaning of Arabic خليفة “successor (of Prophet Muḥammad)” and its theological connotation, since he avoided its usage in reference to caliphs. Instead, he used a secular title ملك “king” applied to both the Prophet and the caliphs. Only once did he transliterate Arabic خليفة (ملكه), not to refer to a caliph but to a governor’s “deputy”, thereby suggesting that he was familiar with the literal meaning of “successor”. All this seems to indicate that the Chronicler of ZuqnĪn knew more Arabic than what scholars have thus far given him credit for.

I. SOURCES OF PARTS III AND IV

The sources of Part III have already been identified by Witakowski,² and they are given in the footnotes of the present translation where appropriate. The second part of the *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus is the major source of Part III.³ Most of this second part has survived in the Chronicle of ZuqnĪn and in two fragmentary manuscripts housed in the British Library (Add. 14.647 and 14.650). The specific accounts gleaned from John by the Chronicler have been identified in the edition of these two manuscripts, published by Land in his *Anecdota*. Probably from the same source the Chronicler derived information originally provided by the Byzantine author John Malalas,⁴ and by Pseudo-Zacharias of Mitylene. Since Michael the Syrian also made use of John of Ephesus, we have called attention in footnotes to parallel information in Michael and the ZuqnĪn Chronicle where such exists. The Chronicler of ZuqnĪn further used the *Chronicle of Edessa*, not in its currently extant form but in its original version, as Witakowski has shown.⁵

Thus in Part III, our Chronicler was a mere copyist, writing down existing statements even in the first person. Not surprisingly then, in the introduction to Part IV, he bemoans the fact that he was unable to find “reliable” sources dealing with the period between A.D. 586, which ends the *Ecclesiastical History* of John of Ephesus, and the year A.D. 775, “apart from some bits and pieces”. Despite the Chronicler’s claim that he used few sources, Conrad has recently suggested that Part IV is a composition of four layers, each composed by a different author.⁶ In support of his conclusion, Conrad noticed two misplaced events within the chronological frame of Part IV, the first being the

¹ See below p. 330.

² Witakowski, OrSu 40 (1991) pp. 252ff.

³ See Van Ginkel, *John of Ephesus: A Monophysite Historian in Sixth-Century Byzantium*.

⁴ See Witakowski, in Jeffreys et al., *Studies in John Malalas*, 299-310.

⁵ Witakowski, OrSu 33-34 (1984-1986) pp. 487ff.

⁶ Conrad, “Syriac Perspectives on Bilād al-Shām During the Abbasid Period,” 24-26.

earthquake in Edessa of 717-718, which was placed after the entry for the year 731-732, and the second being the shooting stars episode of 742-743, which was placed after the account of the year 748-749. In these misplacements as well as in the Chronicler's supposed mistranslations of the Arabism *musawwadah* (even though he knew Arabic),¹ Conrad saw a change of authors.

The reasons Conrad gives for his conclusion that Part IV is comprised of four layers are open to question.² First, misplacing events is a common phenomenon in Part IV, even in the section which has been assigned to the Chronicler by common scholarly consent (see below).³ So, for example, the event of 760-761 (the rebuilding of Malatya of Cappadocia by the Arabs) was placed after an event in 763-764 (epidemic of horses). The flood of the Tigris which occurred in 762-763 was placed after 764-765, the year in which Severus, Bishop of Amida, died. This lack of concern for precise chronological sequence cannot be ascribed to a change of author or authors but must be attributed to the Chronicler himself, who, furthermore, explicitly states in his introduction that he was unconcerned about such trivia: "It is of no consequence to intelligent and God-fearing people if an event is dated one year earlier or one or two years later ..."⁴ This unorthodox practice of our Chronicler is vividly pointed up by parallel accounts in Syriac, Greek and Arabic, which have been noted in the present translation, and which offer dates of events often at variance with the Chronicler's.

Second, the Chronicler clearly understood the Arabism *musawwadah*, despite the fact that he partially mistranslated it. In the passage where we find the Arabism, he writes as follows about the 'Abbasids: "All their clothes were black ... and for this reason they were called *musawwadah*."⁵ Yet, he failed to give a literal translation of this Arabism into Syriac, translating it simply "black" instead of "black-cloaked", as did Theophanes, the 9th-century Byzantine historian, who more aptly translated it as μαυροφόροι.⁶ Near the end of his work, our Chronicler committed a genuine mistake, when he confused an Arabic case ending, by rendering Arabic 'yn fln 'bny flny instead of 'yn fln 'bnw flny "where is so-and-so son of so-and-so?"⁷

Although it is not possible to determine precisely at what point in Part IV we should begin speaking of the Chronicler's uniquely personal contribution,

¹ See below p. 179.

² Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it*, chapter 8, also expressed doubt about Conrad's conclusion.

³ Tisserant noticed the same phenomenon in other parts of the Chronicle; *Codex*, xii.

⁴ See below p. 139.

⁵ See below p. 179.

⁶ See below p. 178 n. 1.

⁷ See below p. 330 and n. 11.

one can start at least from folio 128 onward. In this folio the Chronicler wrote about the death of the Ummayyad Caliph Hishām and the political upheaval that followed it; he dated these events to S. 1055 (A.D. 743-744). He then wrote an account about a famine and a bubonic plague that occurred in Syria in the year Hishām died. It is revealing that in his description of the mid-8th-century plague, the Chronicler used the lengthy narrative of John of Ephesus about the Great Plague of Justinian's reign as a model. Though he had previously copied verbatim the account of John of Ephesus for Part III of his Chronicle, in Part IV, the Chronicler reproduced John's outline, leading ideas, and individual expressions, including even the jeremiad, from John's account of the Great Plague. In other words, John's account was used by our Chronicler as a kind of mould into which he poured his own information about the plague that occurred during his own lifetime.

One theme of John of Ephesus, dealing with the poor, found its way not only into the Chronicler's account of the 8th-century plague but also into his account of another disease (probably meningitis) that killed many people in Mosul and the Jazīra in A.D. 772-773. John believed that there was a divine plan in the fact that the poor were struck first, so that they might be appropriately buried by the rich, and in the fact that, by the time the rich were struck, there were no survivors to bury them, so that they might rot in streets, houses and palaces—as in fact happened. The Chronicler's dependence on John strongly suggests that he had no written source about the 8th-century plague at his disposal, and consequently had to compose an account of his own.

Beginning with folio 135v we notice the first blank space left by the Chronicler, seemingly because the required information was not available to him at the moment of writing.¹ The other blank spaces are found in folios 136r, 137r, 138r, 144v. Since all these blanks indicate unavailable information, they suggest that the Chronicler was not copying written sources at those points.

Folios 137v and 138v contain the jottings which the Chronicler had scribbled in the margins. As seen above,² the jottings referred to the death of Severus and the Synod of the bishops of the Jazīra, Mosul, and the West, both of which took place in S. 1076 (A.D. 764-765), the destruction of the Nestorian Monastery of the Ark on Mt. Qardū that occurred in S. 1077 (A.D. 765-766), the flood of Mosul in S. 1074 (A.D. 762-763), and the martyrdom of Cyrus of Ḥarrān dated to S. 1081 (A.D. 769-770). The jottings indicate that the Chronicler did not have a ready-made history of the period from A.D. 762 to 770, and that his memory served as the sole source for this period. The jottings proved to be effective *aides-mémoire* since the events to which they referred were all discussed in the Chronicle. The fact that the events are not

¹ About this issue see above p. 13.

² See pp. 14ff

placed in strict chronological sequence could be a further indication that he wrote from memory and not on the basis of a written text.

Following the account of the flood in Mosul written in folio 138v, the Chronicler dealt with various events related mainly to the history of the Jazīra. In folio 145r he wrote about the appointment of Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab as governor of Mosul, and from this point to the end of *Codex Zuqninensis*, that is, to folio 173v, the Chronicler wrote at length about the hardship that befell Northern Syria as a consequence of 'Abbasid economic policies in that region. The damaged folios that are now in the British Library, six in total, deal with Christian apostates who converted to Islam in large numbers, driven, among other reasons, by economic hardship. The subject of apostasy is directly connected with another event found in the BL folios: the martyrdom of Cyrus of Harrān, who, unlike the Christian renegades, resisted apostasy at the cost of his own life. The thematic link in all of these folios suggests that the material, beginning at least with folio 137, stems from the Chronicler of Zuqnīn.

In light of the various pieces of information we have been able to uncover, the Chronicler seems to have composed the history of the period between 743 and 775. The fact that in 775 A.D. he wrote from memory about events dated as early as 743 A.D. means that his contribution covered the history of at least 32 years, using oral and personal information. This span of time is well within the range of human memory. The early section of Part IV, comprising events dated to the 7th and early 8th centuries, may well be based on written sources of some kind, as well as on oral tales about holy men. The written items were mostly lists of dates that furnished the Chronicler with conflicting data, about which he himself complains, as we have noted above. Palmer has given some indication as to the nature of the sources from which the Chronicler drew information about the 7th century,¹ but nothing more can be said about their authors.

The oral (or written?) accounts about holy men may have included the tale about mār Ḥabīb, bishop of Edessa, and the miracle he had performed to rescue a monastery in the Jazīra from Arab hands, a tale the insertion of which was occasioned by the account about Maslama's failed expedition against Constantinople.² The story of Cosmas, bishop of Amida, and the fate of a village that acted impudently toward him, is another case in point.³

In addition to the scant written sources and oral traditions used in the early portion of Part IV, the Chronicler had recourse to "old people" and other eyewitnesses, including himself, as sources of information for most of Part IV. This explains why his information is so plentiful and often very detailed.

¹ See Palmer, *The seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, 69f.

² See p. 150ff.

³ See p. 156ff.

Sometimes he explicitly refers to his oral sources¹ and at least on one occasion hints at his personal skepticism, when he valiantly attempts to justify their testimony. Such is the case of the rainbow reported to have been seen by some, turned upside down. The Chronicler felt obliged to add the note: "If someone does not want to believe this matter, let him search in the preceding chapters where he will find an occurrence just like it."² He also discloses when and where he was himself witness to an event, as in the following passage dealing with Christians who apostatised to Islam: "I was in Edessa at this time for some event that took place there ..."³

Some 58 folios out of the 179 of *Codex Zuqninensis* were devoted to the writing Part IV of the Chronicle. To write his own personal contribution, the Chronicler filled 51 out of the 58 folios of Part IV. In other words, nearly 29% of the entire Chronicle and almost 88% of Part IV is the author's own contribution.

J. THE PRESENT TRANSLATION

There are currently available one Latin translation of Parts I and II of the *Chronicle of ZuqnĪn* by Chabot, *Chronicon* (1949), and two French translations, one of Part IV by Chabot, *Chronique* (1895), and another of Parts III and IV by Hespel, *Chronicon* (1989). While working on our own translation of Parts III and IV, Part III was concomitantly translated into English by Witakowski, and the events dated to the 7th century were translated into the same language by Palmer in his *West-Syrian Chronicles*. Our translation of the extensive Part IV of the *Chronicle of ZuqnĪn*, of interest mainly to Middle Eastern Studies, is, however, the first of its kind in English. With the translation of Parts III and IV now finished, we plan to translate in the near future Parts I and II, so as to make the entire *Chronicle of ZuqnĪn* available to English-speaking readers.

We have tried to make the present translation from Syriac into English as literal as is reasonably possible, though minor liberties have been taken. For instance, long sentences, with multiple relative clauses, have usually been made into shorter English sentences, in order to enhance clarity. Similarly, at times, pronominal references (used aplenty by our Chronicler) have been rendered explicit, when doing so might prevent misunderstanding of the text. Certain technical terms were not literally translated. This is the case of the word *malkō* "king" translated as "emperor" when it referred to Byzantine kings, and as "caliph" when it referred to Muslim rulers. The annalistic divisions in the

¹ See below p. 212.

² See below p. 213. The earlier information is found in Chabot, *Chronicon* I, 263:20-21 and *Chronicon* II, 4:7-12 (below p. 39).

³ See below p. 328.

Chronicle have been retained in our translation, and each entry has been introduced with an A.D. (Gregorian) date (in **bold**), converted from the Seleucid date given in the Chronicle. The Seleucid new year, as noted earlier, began on October 1, 312 B.C. in Syria but in Babylonia on *Nisān* (April) 1 of 311 B.C. Thus, the corresponding A.D. date will necessarily overlap two years. When the Chronicler divides his material into sections with titles, these titles have been given in italics. In the *Codex* they have been written in red.

Our translation has been based on the edition of Chabot (*Chronicon* II). We have collated this edition against microfilms of the entire manuscript, both the Vatican folios and those in the British Library. The collation has not been easy, since many folios have suffered erasure, and in some the Greek subscript interferes with the Syriac text. Although we consulted the original manuscript in the Vatican Library for the purpose of verifying points that appeared problematic, we do not claim to have solved all difficulties. As a result of our endeavours, we have appended to our translation several pages of textual corrections to Chabot's edition. Nonetheless, Chabot's edition has generally proven to be reliable, and one can be very grateful to this fine scholar who served Syriac Studies, particularly Syriac chronography, with a life-long devotion. Our list of collations includes correct words in the manuscript that were misconstrued or overlooked by Chabot, as well as questionable words in the manuscript corrected by Chabot, but without mentioning them in his footnotes.

The List of Collations is followed by a List of Corrections, that is to say, selected corrections of mistakes in the manuscript itself. As we have already mentioned, the Chronicler often wrote phonetically. Accordingly, a masculine plural verb in the perfect without final *wāw* might in principle not be considered a mistake, since this *wāw* is silent in any case. The problem is, however, that the Chronicler was not consistent, and for that reason such verbal forms must be considered errors.

As we said earlier, Syriac and other ancient sources which offer accounts parallel to those in the Chronicle are mentioned in footnotes to our translation. We make no pretence of having consulted all possible sources, nor are those noted necessarily fully parallel to the Chronicler's accounts. Searching for parallels, verifying their dates, and comparing their details with those in our Chronicle is a research project in its own right. What we have included in the footnotes is meant to serve the interested reader as a first step.

The Chronicle of Zuqnīn

(Third Part)

(Fourth Part)

Editorial Abbreviations

A. D.	<i>anno domini</i>
Ant.	Antiochene calendar
H.	Hijra (Muslim calendar)
Lacuna	Major portion or uncertain number of folios missing
Lit.	Literally
MS	Manuscript of the Chronicle
n.	Note
S.	Seleucid calendar
Syr.	Syriac
Z.	Zuqnīn
(—)	Enclosed portion is a Seleucid date converted into A.D.
()	Enclosed portion is a supplied word or words
.....	Blank intentionally left in MS by the Chronicler
[...]	Small portion of uncertain length missing
[... ...]	Long portion of uncertain length missing
[]	Enclosed portion is a reconstruction.
	In footnotes enclosed portion refers to modern translation of ancient sources
/p. — /	Enclosed portion refers to the page number in Chabot's edition
⸀	Enclosed portion partially missing from the original
†	Preceding word erroneously appears in Chabot's edition
† †	Enclosed portion erroneously appears in Chabot's edition
⸀ †	Enclosed portion incompletely appears in Chabot's edition
*	Preceding word erroneously appears in the original
* *	Enclosed portion erroneously appears in the original
!	Conjectural reading (caution must be used)
⸀	Enclosed portion discussed in a footnote
√	Root of a word

(Fourth Part)

(Introduction)

This account, that is, this history, commences with the beginning of creation, and takes us to the birth of Abraham and the reign of Ninos, who built Nineveh and reigned there for fifty-two years. In Ninos' forty second year, Abraham the patriarch was born. Eusebius testifies to this, and it is from him that we have taken the contents of this history, up to the years of Constantine the Believer. From here until Theodosius /p.146/ the Younger, the material is from Socrates of the sect of Novatian.¹ From Theodosius to Justinian the Emperor, that is the year eight hundred and eighty-five (573-574), the contents are from the holy John, Bishop of Asia. But about the course of events from the latter date to the year in which we are today, that is the year one thousand and eighty-six of Alexander (774-775), and one hundred and fifty-eight of Hijra (774-775), we did not find a reliable source like the previous ones. Nor did we find any history dealing with the time of afflictions and bitterness that came upon us and our fathers, or an author who wrote anything about the bad and bitter times that came upon us on account of our sins, when we were delivered into the hands of the Assyrians and the Barbarians.

Therefore, we decided to leave a record of this evil time and bitter affliction, which the land suffered in our day and in our time, at the hands of the Assyrians, whom the prophet described: *The Assyrian is the rod of my anger, and the stick of my punishment is in his hand; I will send him against an idolatrous nation and I will command him against a malicious people.*² This rod or stick of the Lord that he stretched forth and gave to the Assyrian in order to chastise the earth, was also seen ascending in the sky, and was

¹ The sect is named after Novatian, Bishop of Rome (martyred in 258 A.D.), who favoured a harsh policy against penitent apostates, and founded a schismatic church; see Chadwick, *Church*, 118-119.

² Isa 10:5-6.

visible for many days.¹ Perhaps those who will come after us into the world will listen, tremble, fear the Lord, and walk before him with integrity, lest he should deliver them too, as is the case with us, into the hands of this rapacious wolf.

It is written: *Command (them) to your children,*² and *Ask your father and he will show you and your elders and they will tell you.*³ Now after /p.147/⁴ we had wandered about in many places, unable to find reliable† written sources, apart from some bits and pieces, we decided to include, at appropriate points in this book, the information we obtained from very old people, who had witnessed and experienced the events, as well as from our own recollections. Nevertheless, if someone reads this and wants to reject it, he should realise that just as events and occurrences of various kinds do not occur in one place or in one single kingdom or region of the world alone, so too is the case here. If he comes across a history that is not similar to this one, he should understand that even former writers do not agree among themselves. One shortens while another lengthens. One writes about the Church while another about other matters. It is of no consequence to intelligent and God-fearing people if an event is dated one year earlier or one or two years later. It should suffice them to realise the punishments of the former generations and they turn away from iniquity lest these punishments should befall them as well. Hence, be careful and fear the Lord your God lest *he bring* these punishments upon you, too!

We begin with the year eight hundred and ninety-eight (586-587).

586-587 The year eight hundred and ninety-eight:⁵ Justinian (I) the Emperor died and †Justinian Fourth⁶ and †Tiberius (II) Caesar⁷ reigned.

¹ Probably a reference to a comet. Comets and other unusual celestial phenomena were considered bad omens in ancient Near Eastern and Byzantine sources.

² Deut 32:46.

³ Deut 32:7.

⁴ An English translation of Chabot, *Chronicon* II, pp. 147-160, is found in Palmer, *The Seventh-Century in the West Syrian Chronicles*, 54-65.

⁵ On Justinian's death and its correct date see p. 137 and n. 1.

⁶ ܐܘܨܬܐܢܐ ܕܝܘܨܬܐܢܐ: Mistake for Justin II, who reigned for thirteen years and not three as claimed by the Chronicler of Z. (see the next entry).

⁷ ܐܘܨܬܐܢܐ ܕܝܘܨܬܐܢܐ: Tiberius was elevated to Caesar by Justin II on Friday, 7 December, S. 886 (574) to assist the latter because he was ill; John of Ephesus, *EH* III 5 [171ff], V 13 [350]. Same date in Elias I 123 and Michael IV 363-364 [II 334-335]. *Chronicon Paschale* 689 [138]: 7 September, 8th indiction (574).

589-590 The year nine hundred and one: Justin (II) died and Tiberius (II) ruled the kingdom.¹

590-591 The year nine hundred and two: Holy ʿPeter,² Patriarch of Antioch, died.

/p.148/ **593-594** The year nine hundred and five: Tiberius (II) died and Maurice replaced him, for eight years.³

600-601 The year nine hundred and twelve: Great darkness occurred at midday. The stars came out and were visible as if it were night; they remained for about three hours. Then darkness dissipated and the day emerged as before.⁴

In this year Maurice died and another Maurice reigned with his son Theodosius for twelve years.⁵

602-603 The year nine hundred and fourteen: Narses, commander of the Persian army, attacked Edessa and invaded it.⁶ He seized Severus, Bishop of the city, and stoned him to death.⁷

603-604 The year nine hundred and fifteen: Holy Athanasius (I) became patriarch of Antioch.⁸

604-605 The year nine hundred and sixteen: Edessa was liberated.

¹ John of Ephesus, *EH* III 6 [176f], Elias I 123: Justin died on 4 October S. 890 (578). *Chronicon Paschale* 689 [138]: Tiberius was crowned emperor on 26 September, 12th indiction (578) and on 5 October of the same year Justin II died.

² **ܨܘܝܬܘܢ**: Added in the margin. He was a native of Callinicum; see John of Ephesus, *EH* I 41 [81f]. Elias I 123: Same date as above. Michael IV 387 [II 372]: 22 April S. 902 (591), in Gubbā Barrāyā.

³ John of Ephesus, *EH* V 13 [350]: On 5 August S. 893 (582) Tiberius elevated Maurice to Caesar, and one day before he died crowned him emperor. Similar account in *Chronicon Paschale* 690 [139]. Same Seleucid date in Elias I 123 and Michael IV 378-379 [II 358-89]. On the reign of Maurice see note 5 below.

⁴ Elias I 124: Friday 10 March S. 912 (601).

⁵ There is only one Maurice who, during the 8th year of his reign (590 A.D.), crowned his son Theodosius emperor. Maurice and his family were slain by the rebellious Phocas on 27 November 602 A.D. See the misplaced but correct account of the year 601-602 just below.

⁶ Michael IV 390 [II 379]: The date is the year in which Phocas reigned (602-603). Narses was a Roman general who rose up against the tyrant Phocas by taking Edessa and by allying himself with Chosroes, King of Persia; see Theophanes 291-292: A.M. 6096 (603-604). James of Edessa 324 [248].

⁷ James of Edessa 324 [248]. Michael IV 387 [II 373-374].

⁸ James of Edessa 324 [248]. Michael IV 387 [II 374]: Correct date of S. 906 (594-595).

601-602 The year nine hundred and thirteen:¹ Maurice and Theodosius his son were assassinated and Phocas reigned for eight years.²

616-617 The year nine hundred and twenty-eight: Phocas the Emperor ordered that all Jews under his authority be baptised.³ He dispatched George, the prefect, to Jerusalem and all of Palestine, to force all the Jews to be baptised. When George arrived, he gathered all the Jews who were in Jerusalem and *in the vicinity*, and when their leaders came into his presence, he said to them: "Are you the servants of the Emperor?" They said: "Yes!" He said to them: "The Lord of the Earth ordered that you be baptised!" They kept silent and did not answer him. He said to them: "Why do you not answer?" /p.149/ One of the leaders among them, whose name was Jonah, answered and said: "Everything the Lord of the Earth orders we will do and obey, but we are not able to execute this order because the day of the holy Baptism has not yet come!" When the prefect heard this he became extremely angry. He stood up, slapped Jonah in the face, and said: "If you are servants, will you not submit to your lord?" Thus he ordered them to be baptised, and they were baptised whether they wanted to be or not.

At this time James the Jew,⁴ Athanasius, Patriarch of Antioch, John, Bishop of the Arabs, Simon, (Bishop) of Harrân, and Cyriacus, (Bishop) of Amida were well-known.

620-621 The year nine hundred and thirty-two: The Arabs⁵ conquered the land of Palestine and the land as far as the great river Euphrates.⁶ The Romans fled and crossed over to the east of the Euphrates, and the Arabs held sway over them. The first king⁷ was a man among them named Muḥammad, whom they also called Prophet because he turned them away from cults of all kinds and taught them that there was only one God, creator of the universe. He also instituted laws for them because they were much entangled in the worship of demons and cult of idols, mainly the cult of trees. Because Muḥammad showed them that God was one, because they vanquished the

¹ ✕ "13" was written in MS over ح "24"; Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 148 n. 5.

² Elias I 124: Maurice and his family were assassinated on 23 November S. 914 (602). Same Seleucid date in Michael IV 388-389 [II 374-375]. Phocas was crowned on 23 November of the same year; *Chronicon Paschale* 693-694 [142-143], *Chronique de Séert* 517 [197].

³ Michael IV 413 [II 414]: Heraclius. Michael IV 457 [489-490], Elias I 162, Theophanes 401, and Agapius 504: Leo.

⁴ ܝܚܝܝܡ ܕܥܕܝܣܫܐ: Read "James of Edessa".

⁵ ܥܘܪܒܝܢ: This term originally referred to one tribe among the Arabs, the ܥܘܪܒܝܢ.

⁶ Impossible date since the first year of Islam corresponds to 622 A.D., when the flight of Muḥammad from Mecca to Medina took place.

⁷ ܡܠܟܗ: Same title in Agapius 457: ܡܠܟܗܡ "Muḥammad) became their king".

Romans in war through his direction, and because he instituted laws for them according to their desire, they called him Prophet and ‘Messenger¹ of God.

This nation is very lascivious and sensual. Every law instituted for them, be it by Muḥammad or by any other God-fearing person, is despised and dismissed if it is not instituted according to their sensual pleasure. But a law which fulfils their wishes /p.150/ and desires, even if it is instituted by a nobody among them, they accept, saying: “This has been instituted by the Prophet and Messenger of God. Moreover, it was commanded to him in this manner by God!”

Muḥammad ruled them for seven years.

621-622 The year nine hundred and thirty-three: Phocas, the Roman Emperor, died. Heraclius reigned in his place for thirty one years.²

622-623 The year nine hundred and thirty-four: Mār Cyriacus, Bishop of Amida, died.³ He was succeeded by Mār Thomas.

625-626 The year nine hundred and thirty-seven: ‘The stars of the sky fell⁴ in such a way that they all shot like arrows toward the north. They provided the Romans with a terrible premonition of defeat and of the conquest of their territories by the Arabs. This was in fact what happened to them almost immediately afterwards.

626-627 The year nine hundred and thirty-eight: Muḥammad, King of the Arabs—that is their Prophet—died, and Abū-Bakr ruled over them for five years.⁵

628-629 The year nine hundred and forty: Heraclius, the Roman Emperor, began to build the great church of Amida.

631-632 The year nine hundred and forty-three: Abū-Bakr, ‘Caliph⁶ of

¹ ܙܥܘܩܢܝܐ: Arabic رسول with the Syriac emphatic ending. On the loan-words from Arabic into Syriac see Harrak in *Symposium 1996*.

² James of Edessa 325 [249]: S. 920 (608-609). Elias I 125: S. 921 (609-610). Michael IV 403 [II 400], IV 390 [378] and Agapius 449: Heraclius began to rule in S. 922 (610-611). *Chronique de Séert* 527 [207]: Heraclius began to rule on 1 September (for October) S. 922 (610). *Chronicon Paschale* 698-701 [149-152]: Phocas was killed and Heraclius was crowned emperor on Monday 6 (for 5) October, 14th indiction (610). Same indiction in Theophanes 299: Monday 4 October A.M. 6102 (610).

³ About this anti-Chalcedonian bishop see Michael IV 390-391 [II 379-380].

⁴ ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܡܘܬܐ: Compare this sentence with ܩܘܡܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܡܘܬܐ in al-Azdī, 147 and 200.

⁵ Prophet Muḥammad died in June H. 11 (632) and Abū-Bakr ruled for two years: Elias I 130, al-Ya‘qūbī II 127, 136ff, al-Ṭabarī III 199ff.

⁶ ܩܘܢܝܐ: Lit. “king”. When this word refers to caliphs, it is translated as “caliph” for convenience.

the Arabs, died and 'Umar succeeded him, for twelve years.¹

632-633 The year nine hundred and forty-four: Heraclius, the Roman Emperor, marched down to Edessa.² The battle of 'Gabīthā³ took place.⁴ The Persians 'were routed⁵ and they retreated from Mesopotamia.

636-637 The year nine hundred and forty-eight: The Arabs crossed over to the 'Jazīra,⁶ and the Romans were routed; 'Iyād⁷ invaded Edessa.⁸

640-41 The year nine hundred and fifty-two: The Arabs besieged /p.151/ Dara⁹ and attacked it. Many people from both sides were killed, but more among the Arabs. In the end, the Arabs promised the citizens of Dara security, and they captured the city. From that time onward no one was killed. In the same year, they besieged 'Dvin,¹⁰ in which many people—up to twelve hundred among the Armenians—were killed.

641-642 The year nine hundred and fifty-three: The Arabs captured Caesarea of Palestine.¹¹

643-644 The year nine hundred and fifty-five: The commander of the Roman army, the patrician Valentinus, came to battle with the Arabs. He was terrified before them and fled, leaving all his money for the Arabs to take

¹ Michael IV 414 [II 417], Elias I 131, al-Ya'qūbī II 138 and al-Ṭabarī III 419ff all date the event to (August) H. 13 (634).

² Theophanes 336-337: A.M. 6125 (633-634). Michael IV 415-416 [II 420] dated the event to the 5th year of 'Umar (638-639).

³ **جابهة**: Greek Γαβιθᾶ (Theophanes) and Arabic الجابية, a town located near Damascus (Yāqūt II 91), north of the Yarmūk battle field.

⁴ See Frag. account (on the capture of Syria by the Arabs) 75 [60]. The battle of Gabīthā is associated with the battle of Yarmūk that took place in H. 15 (636); al-Ya'qūbī II 141; Elias I 131-132.

⁵ **كسرتهم** (sic): Arabic هزم, Ethpa. form.

⁶ **جازيرة**: Arabic الجزيرة "the island" with the Syriac emphatic ending. The term refers to Upper Mesopotamia from Osrhoene in the West to Mount Sinjār in the East.

⁷ **عياض**: عياض (بن غنم) in al-Ṭabarī IV 53ff, 'Iād in Theophanes 340.

⁸ Elias I 132: S. 948 (636-637). Theophanes 340: A.M. 6130 (638-639). Michael IV 420-421 [II 426]: S. 951 (639-640). al-Ya'qūbī II 150: H. 18 (639). al-Ṭabarī IV 53: H. 17 (638) or H. 19 (640).

⁹ Dara was attacked in the same year Edessa was taken: Theophanes, Michael, and al-Ṭabarī; for the references see the previous note.

¹⁰ **Դուբն** (DBYN): Arabic دوين and Greek Δούβνος (Procopius, Wars II xxv 1-3), located some 20 km south east of modern Erevan in Armenia. See Yāqūt II 491.

¹¹ Theophanes 341: A.M. 6133 (641-642). Michael IV 423 [II 430] and Elias I 133: S. 951 (639-640). al-Ṭabarī IV 53: H. 17 (638) or 19 (940). al-Ya'qūbī II 151: H. 18 (639). al-Balādhurī I 167-168: A Jew named Joseph led the Arabs to an entrance to the city.

away.¹ In the same year, Procopius and Theodorus marched out and in a great fury invaded Baṭnan of Sarūg. They pillaged and plundered it, and carried off as much as they wanted when they returned to their land.

After Athanasius (I), the Patriarch, his disciple the holy John (II) became patriarch.² During this time the holy John (II), Patriarch of Antioch, John Bishop of the Arabs, Simon of Edessa, Matthew of Aleppo, and Mār Thomas, Bishop of Amida, both of the holy monastery of Zuqnīn, were famous.

644-645 The year nine hundred and fifty-six: ‘Umar, Caliph of the Arabs, died.³ He was succeeded by ‘Uthmān who reigned for twelve years.

648-649 The year nine hundred and sixty: Mu‘āwiya invaded Cyprus.⁴ In the same year, ‘Arvad⁵ was captured.⁶

649-650 The year nine hundred and sixty-one: The holy Mār John (II), Patriarch of Antioch, died and was buried in Amida in the holy temple of Mār Ze‘ōrā.⁷ In the /p.152/ same year, the holy Mār John, Bishop of the Arabs, died and was buried in the Church of Saint John the Baptist in Amida. In the same year, the holy Mār Simon, Bishop of Edessa, also died in Amida and was buried in the church of Mār Ze‘ōrā.⁸

650-651 The year nine hundred and sixty-two: The holy Mār Theodorus became Patriarch of Antioch,⁹ and ‘Cyrriacus¹⁰ became (Bishop) of Edessa.

651-652 The year nine hundred and sixty-three: A battle between the

¹ Michael IV 428-429 [II 443-444]: detailed account.

² Michael IV 414 [II 419], Elias I 130: S. 942 (630-631).

³ Michael IV 422 [II 430]: The assassination took place in S. 955 (643-644). al-Ya‘qūbī II 159 and al-Ṭabarī IV 190ff dated the event to (November) H. 23 (643).

⁴ Michael IV 429-430 [II 441-442]: S. 960 (648-649). Theophanes 343-344: A.M. 6140 (648-649). Elias I 136-137: S. 959 (647-648), H. 28 (648-649). al-Ṭabarī IV 258: H. 27/28/33 (647-648/648-649/653-654). Agapius 480: 3rd year of ‘Uthmān (646-647).

⁵ ܐܪܘܕ: Arabic ارواد and Greek Ἄραδος, an island off Phoenicia that did not surrender to the Arabs but was later so devastated by the conquerors that it became uninhabitable. See Michael and Theophanes in the following note. See Conrad, “The Conquest of Arwād...,” in Cameron et al., *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East (I)*, pp. 317-401.

⁶ Theophanes 343-344: A.M. 6141 (649-650). Michael IV 430 [II 442]: S. 960 (648-649). Agapius 480-481: 3rd year of ‘Uthmān (646-647).

⁷ Michael IV 428 [II 443]: John died on 14 December S. 960 (648). About the stylite mār Ze‘ōrā see John of Ephesus in Land, *Anecdota* II, 21-22.

⁸ Michael IV 428 [II 443]: S. 960 (948-949).

⁹ Michael IV 428 [II 443]: S. 960 (648-649).

¹⁰ The name was added in the margin.

Arabs and Romans took place in Tripolis.¹

652-653 The year nine hundred and sixty-four: Ḥabīb invaded the Jazīra and Procopius came to make peace with the Arabs.²

653-654 The year nine hundred and sixty-five: Heraclius, the Roman Emperor who reigned for thirty one years, died. He was succeeded by Constantine (III) the Younger, for one year.³

654-655 The year nine hundred and sixty-six: Constantine (III the Younger) died and was succeeded by another Constantine (Constans II), for twenty seven (years).⁴

655-656 The year nine hundred and sixty-seven: ‘Uthmān, Caliph of the Arabs, died.⁵ ‘Civil war⁶ broke out, the land was troubled, and the Arab people were confused. Evils increased in the land and the Arabs were responsible for much bloodshed among themselves, because they did not want to submit to one single leader†. Rather, each one of them sought after the leadership, because each one of them wanted to rule.

In the Western Region, the military commander, Mu‘āwiya by name, wanted to be leader; furthermore, the people of the West liked him, ‘pledged their allegiance⁷ and submitted to him.

Nevertheless, the Eastern Region and the Jazīra rejected this man and submitted to another military commander whose name was ‘Abbās.⁸ They acknowledged him as /p.153/ Caliph. This is why from this time onward wars and bloodshed between both parties began to take place. Not only did they shed the blood of each other, but they saturated the ground with it. The many battles which they fought in every region against each other lasted some five years, all marked by quarrels and conflicts.

¹ Elias I 138: S. 965 (654-655) H. 34 (653-654), preparation by Mu‘āwiya to invade Roman territories by sea from Tripolis. Theophanes 345: A.M. 6146 (654-655).

² Theophanes 344: Negotiation of Procopius in A.M. 6142 (650-651).

³ Heraclius died in March 641 and his son Constantine III became emperor for four months; Theophanes 341. Elias I 133-134, Michael IV 421 [II 426]: S. 952 (640-641).

⁴ Constantine III was succeeded by Heraclonas (the Chronicler of Z. omitted his name). The Senate deposed Heraclonas and set on the throne the son of Constantine III, Constans II; see Theophanes 341, Michael IV 421 [II 426].

⁵ (June) H. 35 (656) in Elias I 139, Michael IV 433-434 [II 449-450], al-Ya‘qūbī II 176ff, al-Ṭabarī IV 415. Theophanes 346-347: A.M. 6147 (655-656).

⁶ **حروب**: Arabic **فتنة** with the Syriac emphatic ending.

⁷ **حجته**: Arabic **بيعه** (III) with the Syriac plural ending and pronominal suffix.

⁸ **عباس**: **عباس**. The person in question is ‘Alī, son-in-law of Prophet Muḥammad. The Chronicler of Z. confused him in this and the following accounts with possibly the founder of the ‘Abbasid dynasty, ‘Abbās, the uncle of the Prophet.

656-657 The year nine hundred and sixty-eight: The battle of Ṣiffīn¹ between Ṣ'Abbās² and Mu'āwiya took place. Much blood was shed on both sides.³

661-662 The year nine hundred and seventy-three: Ṣ'Abbās⁴ was assassinated by his nobles in a plot on a Friday at prayer time, while he was prostrated for prayer.⁵ Mu'āwiya ruled alone for twenty-one years, including the five years⁶ during which he kindled civil war, and its resulting confusion, between him and Ṣ'Abbās.⁷

664-665 The year nine hundred and seventy-six: The holy Mār Theodorus, Patriarch of Antioch, died.⁸ He was succeeded by the holy Mār Ṣ'eveurus, son of Mashqē.⁹ Ṣ'And in Edessa, Mār James replaced Cyriacus.¹⁰ †During this† time Aaron the Persian—the Persian Commentator—was famous.

676-677 The year nine hundred and eighty-eight: Mu'āwiya, Caliph of the Arabs, died. He was succeeded by Yazīd, for three and a half years.¹¹

678-679 The year nine hundred and ninety: On the third day of the month of *Nīsān* (April), a Sunday, a powerful and severe earthquake took place in which Baṭnan of Sarūg collapsed, as well as the old church of Edessa in which many people died.¹²

680-681 The year nine hundred and ninety-two: Yazīd, Caliph of the

¹ صفين: تی رفك, plain between al-Raqqā and Bālis (Βαμβαλισσός of Theophanes, 347, modern Meskene Qadīmeḥ). Yāqūt III 414.

² See p. 145 and note 1.

³ al-Ya'qūbī II 187ff, al-Ṭabarī V 1ff, and Elias I 140: (Spring and summer) H. 37 (657). Michael IV 434 [II 450]: S. 968 (656-657). Theophanes 347: A.M. 6148 (656-657).

⁴ See p. 145 and note 1.

⁵ al-Ṭabarī V 143ff, al-Ya'qūbī II 212, and Elias I 141: January H. 40 (661). Michael IV 434 [II 450]. Theophanes 347: A.M. 6151 (659-660). 'Alī was assassinated in Kūfa.

⁶ Michael IV 434 [II 450], al-Ṭabarī V 324: Mu'āwiya ruled for twenty years.

⁷ See p. 145 and note 1.

⁸ Michael IV 435 [II 453]: S. 978 (666-667).

⁹ Michael IV 435 [II 453]: S. 978 (666-667); see also IV 436-437 [II 456-457].

¹⁰ Written in the margin.

¹¹ Elias I 146f, al-Ṭabarī V 323f, and al-Ya'qūbī II 238: H. 60 (680). Theophanes 356: (6 May) A.M. 6171 (680). Agapius 493: Sunday 6 May S. 991 (680); same Seleucid year in Chronicon 846 p. 231: 19-20 [175]. Michael IV 444 [II 468]: S. 992 (680-681), H. 63 (682-683).

¹² Michael IV 437 [II 457]: Easter S. 990 (679). Chronicon 846 p. 231:15-19 [175]: 3 May S. 990 (679). Theophanes 356: A.M. 6170 (678-679). Agapius 493: نيسان بيسان (April)? 17th year of Mu'āwiya (677-678). Mu'āwiya ordered the rebuilding of the church of Edessa according to Theophanes and Agapius.

Arabs, died, and Marwān ruled for one year.¹ In this same year, Constans (II), the Roman Emperor, also died /p.154/ and was succeeded by another Constantine (IV), for sixteen years.²

681-682 The year nine hundred and ninety-three: Marwān, Caliph of the Arabs, died.³ He was succeeded by 'Abd-al-Malik, who ruled for twenty-one years. In his time, civil war broke out lasting nine years because the Arabs did not want to submit to one single leader. During these nine years, they did not cease from battles and evils.

682-683 The year nine hundred and ninety-four: The holy Mār Severus, son of Mashqē died.⁴ Because of a dispute among the bishops, the patriarchal see remained vacant for five years.

687-688 The year nine hundred and ninety-nine: The holy Athanasius (II) became patriarch.⁵

690-691 The year one thousand and two: There was peace while 'Abd-al-Malik sat on the throne, because the entire country submitted to him.

691-692 The year one thousand and three: 'Abd-al-Malik made a 'census (*ta'dīl*)⁶ among the Syrians. He issued a swift decree stating that every person† must go to his country, village and paternal house to register his name and that of his father, as well as his vineyards, olive trees, cattle, children and all that he owned. From this time, the 'poll-tax⁷ began to be levied on the

¹ Elias I 148, al-Ṭabarī V 499 and al-Ya'qūbī II 252: (November) H. 64 (683). Michael IV 444-445 [II 468]: Yazīd died in S. 995 (683-684). Agapius 494.

² Theophanes 351-352: Constans II was assassinated in A.M. 6160 (668-669) and Constantine IV became co-emperor with his brothers in A.M. 6161 (669-670). Michael IV 436 [454]: Constantine IV began to rule in S. 981 (669-670).

³ Elias I 148-149, Agapius 497, al-Ya'qūbī II 257, al-Ṭabarī V 610: Marwān died in (July) H. 65 (685) after nine months of rule. Michael IV 444-445 [II 468-469].

⁴ Chronicon 846 p. 231:21-22 [175]: Same date as above. Michael IV 447 [II 470-471]: 995 S. (683-684).

⁵ Chronicon 846 p. 231:24 [175], Michael IV 447-448 [II 474]: S. 995 (683-684).

⁶ ܬܥܕܝܠ: From Arabic تعديل, lit. "adjustment"; جباية بالتعديل (lit. "levying through adjustment") in Ibn 'Abd-al-Ḥakam; see Cahen, *Arabica* 1 (1954) p. 137. For Dennett, *Conversion*, 45 n. 9, it is a *kharāj* based not on a fixed and immutable tribute, but on a "careful survey and assessment of lands and people."

⁷ ܘܫܘܠܝܢ: Arabic جزية "poll-tax" paid by non-Muslim subjects in Islamic lands; see the following note. The word is not attested in early Aramaic but Middle Persian has the form *gazitāk* referring to the land tax; Morony, *Iraq*, 531. The term ܘܫܘܠܝܢ translated "tribute" shortly below is Akkadian *maddattu* and Aramaic *mindā* and *middā* "(land) tax". The Chronicler of Z. used the latter term in contrast to the "poll-tax".

male heads,¹ and all the calamities began to emerge against the Christian people. Previously, kings used to levy tribute on land, not on men. From this time onward the Sons of Hagar began to reduce the Sons of Ārām to Egyptian slavery. But woe unto us! Because we sinned, the ‘slaves² ruled over us! This was the first census (*ta’dīl*) the Arabs had made.

/p.155/ **702-703** The year one thousand and fourteen: ‘Abd-al-Malik, Caliph of the Arabs, who ruled for twenty-one years—including the nine years in which the civil war broke out—died.³ He was succeeded by Walīd, for nine years.

703-704 The year one thousand and fifteen: The holy Athanasius (II), Patriarch of Antioch, died.⁴ He was succeeded by the holy Mār Julian (II).⁵

704-705 The year one thousand and sixteen: A pestilence arose in the country⁶ so powerful and severe that there were not enough of the living to bury the dead. It was particularly grave in the region of Sarūg. It was in this pestilence that seventy-two people from the monastery of Mār Shilā died.

696-697 The year one thousand and eight†: Constantine (IV), the Roman Emperor, died. He was succeeded by Justinian (II), for ten years.⁷

705-706 The year one thousand and seventeen: A synod was convened in the monastery of Mār Shilā.⁸ Its renowned leaders were: Julian (II) the Patriarch, Thomas of Amida, and James of Edessa, Commentator of the Scriptures. This holy Mār James, Bishop of Edessa, was famous.

706-707 The year one thousand and eighteen: Justinian (II), the Roman

¹ **ܠܗܘܢ ܕܘܫܘܟܢܗܘܢ ܕܗܘܢܐ ܕܘܫܘܟܢܗܘܢ ܕܗܘܢܐ ܕܘܫܘܟܢܗܘܢ** : This Syriac sentence corresponds almost literally to the Arabic phrase *جزية على رؤوس الرجال* “tribute per capitation” or “capitacion tax” found in Ibn ‘Abd-al-Hakam, 152.

² **ܘܚܘܕܝܢܗܘܢ** : Descendants of Ismael son of Hagar, maid of Sarah; see Gen 16:1-15.

³ Elias I 157, al-Ṭabarī VI 418, al-Ya‘qūbī II 281, Theophanes 374, Michael IV 451 [II 478]. These sources date his death to October 705 A.D.

⁴ Michael IV 447-448 [II 474]: S. 998 (686-687).

⁵ See Michael (previous note) for more details about Julian II. Michael IV 752 [III 449]: accession of Julian II in November S. 999 (687); same Seleucid year in Chronicon 846 p. 232: 1-2 [175].

⁶ Elias I 154: H. 79 (698-699), S. 1009 (697-698): Bubonic (**ܐܘܨܬܘܢܝܬܗܘܢ**, طاعون) plague. Chronicon 819 p. 13:25-27 [9]: S. 1011 (699-700). Theophanes 371: A.M. 6192 (700-701). Michael IV 449 [II 480]: S. 1016 as above.

⁷ Not only is this subject out of chronological order, the dates are also incorrect. Theophanes 361: A.M. 6177 (685-686).

⁸ Chronicon 846 p. 233: 3-5 [176]: S. 1018 (706-707).

Emperor, died. He was succeeded by Leontius,¹ who reigned for (four)² years.

707-708 The year one thousand and nineteen: The holy Mār Julian (II), Patriarch of Antioch, died,³ and was succeeded by Mār Elijah.⁴

708-709 The year one thousand and twenty: A census (*ta'dīl*) similar to the first one took place.⁵ The first one was confirmed, although it greatly added to the misfortunes.

709-710 The year one thousand and twenty-one: The holy Mār /p.156/ James, Bishop of Edessa, died.⁶ He was succeeded by Mār Ḥabīb.⁷ During this time the holy Mār Thomas, the Stylite of Tella, was famous.⁸

710-711 The year one thousand and twenty-two: Leontius, the Roman Emperor, died. He was succeeded by Tiberius (III) Apsimaros, for seven years.⁹

711-712 The year one thousand and twenty-three: Walīd, Caliph of the Arabs, died†. Sulaymān ruled after him for two and a half years.¹⁰

712-713 The year one thousand and twenty-four: The holy Mār Thomas, Bishop of Amida, died.¹¹ He was succeeded by Theodotus.

After Apsimaros, the Roman Emperor, Justinian (II) ruled for six years, and after him, Philippicus reigned for three years; and after the last named, Anastasius (II) reigned again for two years, and after him Theodosius (III) Constantine reigned for one year. Theodosius was on the throne when

¹ Michael IV 447 [II 473]: S. 1007 (695-696). Theophanes 369-370: A.M. 6186 (695-696). Chronicon 846 p. 232:6-11 [176]: S. 1006 (694-695).

² Omitted in MS; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 155:23. Leontius reigned in 695 A.D. and was dethroned in 698 A.D.

³ Chronicon 819 p. 14:21-22 [10], Elias I 158, Michael IV 448, 752 [II 476, III 449]: Same date as above.

⁴ Chronicon 819 p. 14:23-24 [10], Chronicon 846 p. 233:10 [176], Michael IV 450 [II 480]: S. 1020 (708-709).

⁵ Chronicon 846 p. 233:10-12 [176]: Date as above.

⁶ Michael IV 448 [II 476]: 5 June S. 1019 (708). Same Seleucid year in Elias I 158. Chronicon 846 p. 233:5-9 [176]: S. 1018 (706-707).

⁷ Michael IV 446 [II 472].

⁸ Chronicon 846 p. 232:17-18: Correct date of the death of Thomas in S. 1010 (698-699).

⁹ Theophanes 370-371: A.M. 6190 (698-699). Michael IV 447 [II 473]: Apsimaros deposed Leontius in S. 1010 (698-699).

¹⁰ Michael IV 452 [II 483]: S. 1026, and Theophanes 384: A.M. 6207 (714-715). al-Ṭabarī VI 495-496, 505, al-Ya'qūbī II 291, 293: Walīd died in (late February) H. 96 (715).

¹¹ Thomas was present at the synod of Mār Shīlā; see the year 705-706 above.

Maslama invaded the Roman territories.

The remaining years of these Roman emperors add up to twelve years. As I mentioned earlier, one writer shortens while another lengthens (the years of reign).¹ Similarly, the Arabs reckon only in lunar months, not in solar months as the Syrians do. Furthermore, these writers usually write only about the time when a king sits on the throne, ignoring times of turmoil. 'Although I have done the same, I have done so in this Section only so as not to confuse the reader.'²

716-717 The year one thousand and twenty-eight: Maslama (son of 'Abd-al-Malik) invaded the Roman territories.³ When countless Arab forces gathered and set about to invade the land /p.157/ of the Romans, all the (inhabitants of the) territories of Asia and Cappadocia fled from them, as did those of the whole region of the sea coast, the region near the 'Black Mountain,⁴ Lebanon as far as 'Melitene,⁵ and the region near the 'Arsanias river⁶ as far as Inner Armenia. This whole land was blessed with many human settlements and densely planted with vineyards, green crops, and all kinds of delightful trees. It has since been devastated making these regions no longer inhabitable.

When the Emperor (Theodosius Constantine) saw that a host was marching against him and that his military commander, Leo by name, had negotiated with them, his heart quaked and his hands shook. He resigned the empire, put down the crown and shaved his head. For there is a custom among Roman emperors, if one of them resigns the empire, he shaves his head and stays in his house, having from that time on no entourage.⁷ This one acted likewise. Even when Leo, the military commander, 'sent him a message', saying:

¹ See above p. 139.

² The Syriac is not entirely clear. The Chronicler complains that writers ignored interregnal periods in chronological calculations. He seems to admit that he followed suit, as he indeed did when he wrote that Mu'āwiya "ruled alone for twenty-one years, including the five years during which he kindled civil war (between him and 'Alī)"; see above p. 146.

³ Long accounts in Theophanes 387-391 and Michael IV 452-453 [II 483-486]. Agapius 500-501. al-Ṭabarī VI 530ff, 553. al-Ya'qūbī II 299. Elias I 158. For these and other sources and a comprehensive study and date of Maslama's invasion, see R. Guilland, "L'Expédition de Maslama ..." in id. *Études Byzantines*, 106-133.

⁴ ܡܫܘܪ ܩܝܐܢܐ: Mountain near Antioch.

⁵ ܡܠܝܬܝܢܐ: Ancient city known in Hittite and Assyrian sources at the earliest. Modern Malatya on the west bank of Upper Euphrates, south of the confluence of Murad Su (Arsanias) with the Euphrates, opposite Arsamosata.

⁶ ܐܪܫܢܝܐ: Assyrian *Ar-ša-ni-a* near Enzite, Arabic ارسناس (Yāqūt I 151), and modern Murad Su, a tributary of the Euphrates.

⁷ Michael, Theophanes: Theodosius shaved his head and became cleric.

“Strengthen yourself and *fear not*!” he was not persuaded, and firmly resigned the empire.

As for Leo, he was courageous, strong, and warlike. He was also of ‘Syrian¹ extraction, a native of border lands, and because of his intrepidity, he was made a military commander. Thanks to his wisdom, he promised Maslama to introduce him to Constantinople without any battle, preventing the ground from being drenched with human blood. Abiding by this promise, the last-named neither fought nor took anyone into captivity, but with determination he headed toward Constantinople, marched and besieged it.

When Leo entered the capital /p.158/ and realised the hands of the Romans were shaking, and the emperor had resigned the empire, he emboldened the Romans, saying to them: “Fear not!” When the Romans realised his courage, fearing that he might still rely on the one who had become emperor, they took him and made him emperor. And as he put on the imperial crown, he was invested with power and valiance. ‘He strengthened² the wall of the city (Constantinople) and sent forces to cut the roads by which provisions were brought to the (Arab) army from Syria. He also destroyed the bridge which had been made with ships, cutting it off, and the Arabs and all the forces with them were confined as if in a prison.

At this point, Maslama gave orders to plant a vineyard, but a powerful and severe famine came upon them so that they ran out of bread throughout the camp and had to eat even their beasts of burden and horses. Maslama asked Leo: “Where is the oath that you swore to me by God that you would introduce me to Constantinople without a battle?” Leo answered pleasantly: “Wait for a few days until the nobles of the empire submit to me.” On the strength of these words, the Arabs remained outside and the Romans inside without any battle for about three years.³ The famine became so severe for the Arabs that they ate their sandals and even the flesh of their dead. They even attacked each other with the result that a person was afraid to walk alone.

Maslama continued to protest to Leo every day: “Either live up to your promise or I will wage a battle.” News reached the Arabs that Sulaymān, Caliph of the Arabs, had died, and that ‘Umar (II) was his successor. ‘Umar sent them a letter, /p.159/ saying: “Come out of there lest you and all those

¹ $\text{L}\iota\omega\omega$: In *Chronicon* II, p. 157 n. 7, Chabot corrected this gentilic to $\text{L}\iota\omega\omega\kappa$ “Isaurian” (of Isauria, in Lycaonia) on the basis of the phrase $\text{L}\acute{\epsilon}\omega\nu\ \acute{\omicron}\ \text{I}\sigma\alpha\upsilon\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ “Leo the Isaurian” in Theophanes 391:3. But the Chronicler of Z. seems correct since recent studies have suggested that Leo was from Germanicia (Mar’ash in Syria); see Gero, *Iconoclasm*, 1ff.

² $\text{o}\iota\iota\chi$: Sic. Read $\text{i}\iota\chi$.

³ The sources mentioned in p. 150 n. 3 suggest that the Arabs spent only one winter (that is three months, not three years as claimed above) near Constantinople.

with you should die of hunger!" When they received the letter, Maslama asked Leo if he might enter the city to see it. He entered it with thirty cavalymen, walked around for three days, and saw the imperial achievements. Dismissed, they came out of there, not having achieved anything.

When the Arabs arrived at a city named 'Tyana'¹ and the governor of the city saw them hungry, exhausted and weak, he underestimated them and wrote to Leo: "Send me an army: I will attack them by surprise." But this ambush did not stay hidden to the Arabs. When they became aware that an army was pursuing them, one of the military commanders, whose name was 'Abbās—one among the famous in the caliphate—asked Maslama: "Give me an army and I will go to confront them before they come and surround us and chase us away from the land; for then our end would be worse than all that has come upon us in this expedition." So he took a large army and marched against them. While the Romans were marching loosely, not yet prepared for battle nor knowing that an Arab army was marching against them, 'Abbās preceded them to a large meadow in which the Romans were intending to pitch camp that same day. He placed the whole army in ambushes, ravines and reed-islands that were there.

When the Romans arrived and descended into the meadow, neither knowing nor perceiving what the Arabs had done, they pitched camp and sent their beasts of burden out for pasture as was the custom /p.160/ of any army. The Arabs came up out of the ambushes and holes in which they had hidden themselves around the whole meadow. Following a signal on which they had agreed, they came down upon the Romans, surrounded and slaughtered all of them with the blades of their swords. Not one among the Romans who were about sixty thousand strong escaped. The Arabs pillaged the dead and returned to their fellows.

When another Roman army that marched against them heard about what had happened to the first army, they turned back frightened. As for the Arabs, they captured and plundered everything they found before them. They then departed and arrived in Syria.

720-721 The year one thousand and thirty-two: It is the first year of 'Umar (II),² Caliph of the Arabs, and the fourth year of Leo, the Roman Emperor. Maslama left the Roman territories, completely destroying the land between its boundaries, turning it desolate like an empty steppe. So as not to

¹ **توانا**: *Tóana*, modern Kilissa-Hissar "below the Taurus at the Cilician Gates;" Strabo xii 2.7; index s.v. Arabic الطرانة "a city in the region of Mopsuestia in Cappadocia;" Yāqūt IV 45f. About the military expedition against Tyana see Theophanes 377: A.M. 6201 (709-710); al-Ṭabarī VI 434: (May) H. 88 (707).

² al-Ṭabarī VI 550ff, al-Ya'qūbī II 301: H. 99 (717). Since the Chronicler of Z. claimed that Maslama's invasion lasted three years, he was compelled to date 'Umar II's accession three years after the beginning of the siege.

prolong this account with many details, I am leaving out other events that happened to them on this expedition.

During this time, Elijah the Patriarch, Mār Ḥabīb of Edessa, Simon of Harrān, and Theodotus of Amida were famous.

*Concerning the miraculoust sign that occurred
at the hands of the holy Mār Ḥabīb, Bishop of Edessa*

*At this time one ought to hide the secret of the king, but one ought to announce and reveal to every one the marvellous actions of God.*¹ It should be neither strange nor hurtful to the ears of the listeners if we record in this chapter the miracle which God has performed in our days at the hands of one of his apostles.

There was in the same army (of Maslama) an Arab man /p.161/ who came to stay at the monastery of Mār Abel in the region of Edessa, when the Arabs wanted to invade the Roman land. When this Arab realised that the doorkeeper of the monastery was a God-fearing man, humble, sweet and adorned with all spiritual virtues, he entrusted him with much gold: "Keep this for me. If I return alive, I will take what belongs to me; if you learn that I am dead, distribute it among the needy." Then he departed. As for the monk, after taking what had been entrusted to him, he dug a hole in the ground and hid it, without divulging this information to anyone with him. It took the Arabs the span of about three years² to leave from there, and as they were leaving the Roman territories, it happened, by a decree of the Creator, that the doorkeeper left this troubled world without ever telling anyone about his secret.

When the owner of the trust came, he asked (the monks) about the doorkeeper and they told him [that] he had died. He then said to them: "Give me what I have left with him." They replied and said† to him: "We do not know anything at all of what you are talking about, nor did he talk about these things to any one of us or notify us, saying: 'Someone has left something with me!'" The man, because he was among the notables, harshly pressured the monks: "Either give me what belongs to me or I will destroy your monastery!" Because the amount of gold was not little, they were severely distressed. The 'governor'³ called† upon them to sell all the property of the monastery and pay the man, and if that would not be enough in itself to

¹ Cf Tob 12:7.

² The Chronicler is insistent that the expedition of Maslama lasted three years and not three months.

³ ܡܠܝܚܐ: Lit. "authority, governorship" but here and in many places below the word is an Arabism: سلطان "governor, ruler", with the Syriac emphatic ending.

compensate him, some of the monks of the monastery would then have to be sold, thus compensating him in full. When all the people of the city and of the region realised this cruel judgment† issued against the chaste monks, they experienced bitter pain because of the fact that they wanted to sell their brothers and sons /p.162/ into slavery, thus lowering them from the rank of apostleship in the world to the rank of slavery among pagans.

When Mār Ḥabīb, the venerable bishop of the same city, saw his brothers on the verge of slavery, he went to the Saviour in bitter pain and sad tears. He then mounted (a horse) and went to the monastery with a large group of notables of the city and the region, so as to beg that man. They begged him at length to wait until they collected and gathered the ‘money¹ for him from everywhere, but the Arab man was not persuaded: “My possession is with them; let them give me what is mine and I will go!” Although *they were telling* him under many oaths and with sad tears that they were unaware of his gold, he did not believe them. The holy Ḥabīb† was constrained from† all sides, because the monks were saying: “We do not know anything,” and the man was not consenting. Mār Ḥabīb attired himself with the firm cuirass of the true faith in his Lord, and followed in the footsteps of the one who asked in Bethany about Lazarus: *Where have you laid him?*² Taking in his hand a censer with incense, he went to the cemetery of the monastery, not letting anyone accompany him. As he stood on the grave in which that blessed (monk) had been laid, he kneeled down, prayed, stood up, and using incense, made fragrant the sweet odour of his heart’s tears before the Saviour. He stood near the entrance of the grave with an unshakable faith—that which also produces miracles, like God—and shouted: “So and so: Rise in the name of our Lord!” At this order, that one immediately stood upright and sat before him with a joyous face as if he had never experienced the corruption that is in the graves. He said to him: “My son, tell me if Sir so and so, an Arab, deposited something with you when he was about to enter the Roman land.” He said: “Yes, my lord!” Mār Ḥabīb said: “How much?” The monk replied: /p.163/ “Property worth so many thousands (dinars).” “Where is it?” The monk replied: “I buried it in the atrium of the monastery, underneath such and such a bench. If you order, I will go and give him what belongs to him.” Then Mār Ḥabīb asked him: “Is there anyone in this monastery who knows where it is, besides you?” He said: “No, my lord.” The holy man said to him: “The resurrection of the dead has not arrived yet. Rest until your Lord commands you with a gesture to wake up!” And he immediately returned to his former condition.

¹ ܡܢܐ: Arabic مال “property, possession, money ...” with the Syriac emphatic ending.

² Jn 11:34.

After the Bishop had learned all the truth from the dead man, he went down and ordered (the monks) to bring him an axe. Then he went and stood at the place indicated to him by the dead man, and ordered them to tear down the bench and dig underneath it. They executed his order. Thus Mār Ḥabīb uncovered that gold, gave it to his owner, and ransomed his holy monastery.

722-723 The year one thousand and thirty-four: ‘Umar (II), Caliph of the Arabs, who ruled for two years and four months, died. After him Yazīd (II) ruled for four years.¹

723-724 The year one thousand and thirty-five: Yazīd (II) ordered that all images be destroyed wherever they were found, whether in a shrine, church or house. Thus people among his agents went out and destroyed all images wherever they were found.²

724-725 The year one thousand and thirty-six: The same Yazīd (II) also ordered that white dogs, white pigeons and white cocks be killed.³ Thus a swift order was issued and dumb animals that had done no wrong were destroyed, causing stench in the streets of the cities and villages. Instead of: *Be fruitful and multiply /p.164/ and fill the earth and tread it down, and let birds fly across the firmament and let the animals multiply on the earth,*⁴ they made themselves the adversaries of creation. And through their cruelty, they sought to destroy what was formed and fashioned inside the womb under the laws of creation and according to God’s will; they wanted to stop the order of the Creator so that the world could not progress according to the laws set for it by the Creator.

Then he ordered that all blue-eyed people be killed, but he was stopped by God-fearing people and did not kill anyone.

Then he ordered that the testimony of a ‘Syrian⁵ against an Arab not be accepted, and he set the (blood) value of an Arab at twelve thousand (dirhams) and that *of a Syrian* at six thousand (dirhams).⁶

¹ Elias I 162, al-Ṭabarī VI 565, 574, and al-Ya‘qūbī II 308-310: (February) H. 101 (720). Theophanes 401: A.M. 6212 (719-720). Chronicon 846 p. 234:24-25 [178]: S. 1031 (219-220). Michael IV 456 [II 489]: February S. 1034 (723).

² Chronicon 846 p. 234:26-28 [178]. Michael IV 457 [II 489]. Theophanes 401-402: A.M. 6215 (722-723).

³ Chronicon 846 p. 232:21-23 [176]: In S. 1015 (703-704) an order was issued “and all the pigs were killed”.

⁴ Paraphrase of Gen 1:22-24.

⁵ **ܣܘܪܝܝܐ**: Quite often in Part IV the Chronicler of Z. used the term “Syrian” not in its gentile but religious-linguistic sense: “Syriac-speaking (hence “Christian”) people”. The term **ܐܪܒܝܝܢ** “Arabs” refers to Muslims. Neo-Aramaic speaking Christians still use the term **ܣܘܪܝܝܐ** *sūrāyē* to refer to Christians in general. See p. 182 and n. 1.

⁶ Michael IV 456 [II 488-489] as well as Theophanes 399 relate these measures to

This is the origin of these corrupt laws.

Then he ordered that the arm of the thief be amputated instead of his hand. The Arabs despised him and his regulations.

726-727 The year one thousand and thirty-eight: Yazīd (II) died.¹ His amīrs of the Jazīra were first Aburin and then Mardas, after the former was dismissed; then Mardas was dismissed and Aburin returned.

727-728 The year one thousand and thirty-nine: Hishām, son of ‘Abd-al-Malik, ruled over the Arabs for nineteen years and four months.²

728-729 The year one thousand and forty: The holy Mār Ḥabīb, Bishop of Edessa, died, and Constantine succeeded him. During this time the holy Mār Elijah the Patriarch, Simon of Ḥarrān, Constantine of Edessa, and Theodotust of Amida were famous.

Concerning Theodotust, Bishop of Amida

This holy Theodotus, Bishop of Amida, grew up in the silence /p.165/ and with the humble labours of monastic life for which he was constantly striving and which he desired earnestly. He was also a kind and gentle man adorned with all spiritual virtues. Because of this, he resigned the episcopate of his city, relinquished his see, left the city, and went down to the region of Dara, between the territories of Dara and Amida. There, he built a pillar for himself and mounted it, imitating (the Stylite) Mār Thomas of Tella. He also built there a monastery that still stands by the side of the village called Qaluq, and it is there that he ended his life.

The holy Mār Cosmas then received the episcopate.

Also concerning the holy Mār Cosmas, Bishop of Amida

This holy Mār Cosmas was also a great monk, zealous for all good things; moreover, he performed marvellous miracles like Elijah the Tishbite³ and the first apostles. But because he was zealous, he used to rebuke the great and the

‘Umar II. See Fattal, *Statut*, 117f, for a chart showing fluctuating blood values according to different Islamic traditions.

¹ al-Ṭabarī VII 21, al-Ya‘qūbī II 314, Agapius 505, and Elias I 163: (January) H. 105 (724). Chronicon 846 p. 235:9 [178]: S. 1035 (723-724). Michael IV 457 [II 490]: S. 1037 (725-726).

² Hishām began his rule in the same year (724) in which Yazīd died, according to all the sources included in the previous note.

³ 2Kgs 1:3.

small alike. He showed no mercy toward the chiefs of the city in question, but used to scold them severely in direct language, without duplicity, because of the corrupt deeds they kept doing. They feared him lest he should open his mouth and curse them, for he was a stern man. Since they were afraid to defy him publicly, they instead stirred up some villagers not to welcome him when he happened to visit them; in this, they would have a reason to keep him away from their city. But this scheme was of no avail to them or to those who yielded to them.

It happened, following /p.166/ the tradition that was set by the ancients, that this Mār Cosmas went out to visit a place, unaware of the plot which was set against him. When he arrived at the village in this region called Tella-d-Kūm—the inhabitants were also ‘contemptuous’¹—and struck the ‘semantron’² as was the custom, people gathered, but its chiefs refused to receive him. They did not even consider him worthy of words from a man, and sent him a message via an old woman: “Pack up with dignity and go on your way; otherwise, know that you shall leave the place very badly!” But these wretched ones *neither knew nor understood—because they were walking in darkness*³—that the word that was said† by our Saviour to his disciples could not be revoked: *He who will receive you will receive me, and he who does not receive you, shake off the dust of your feet against him as testimony, and there will be more rest for Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for that place.*⁴

As for the bishop, when he realised their insolence from that old woman, he ordered his disciple to draw the vehicle in which he was sitting and drive it from the southern side of the village. For the miserable ones, upon whom the prophetic word *The madman does not know and the stupid one does not understand*⁵ has been fulfilled, one sin was not enough thus far. Rather, they climbed the gate of their church which was located on a hill, and stood to deride him and to see, with evil intent, what he would do. But this strong man was not dismayed when he realised their total contempt, but armed with faith and trust in his Lord, he moved along and crossed their village. When he arrived at the east end of the village, he ordered that his vehicle be halted. He pulled off his shoes, turned them toward the village and shook them off,

¹ ܠܩܘܡܐ: Is this a corruption of ܠܩܘܡܐ (Pe’al part.) “contemptuous, scornful” that occurs later in the form ܠܩܘܡܐ (Pa’el part.)? Chabot suggested ܠܩܘܡܐ “despisers” *Chronicon* II, 166 n. 1; he was followed by Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 57.

² ܠܩܘܡܐ: A thick board that produces sounds when struck with a mallet; *Thesaurus*, 2466.

³ Ps 82:5.

⁴ Paraphrase of Mt 10:14.

⁵ Ps 92:6.

saying: "Since you, 'idol Kūm,¹ do not receive /p.167/ your bishop, soon and without delay the wrath of God shall befall you!" He then marched off hastily and went to a village to their east, the name of which was Great Ṭarmal, as he was coming from the latter's west side.

It was the time of the barley harvest and there was not one speck of cloud in the sky on that day. But quick[ly] and without delay, the wrath of God befell the wretched village that had wanted to become a wicked advocate for its notables. Instead, it became the object of fear and terror to the entire region as well as to all those who sought to show contempt for their bishops, and was a lesson for the generations to come.

As the bishop entered Ṭarmal, clouds gathered over the village, and while the villagers were returning from here and there, a storm and winds, capable of removing mountains, blew against it (=Tella-d-Kūm). Hail, like stones, fell on it, destroying their vineyards as well as their fig trees, breaking the trees of their territories, ruining every green plant in their fields, and turning their grains into dust so that they could not be recognised. The clouds scattered even their shocks and they could not be collected, and the entire hope of their lives vanished from the face of the earth.

When the scorers saw what had happened to them, that *while their word was still in their mouths the wrath of God rose up against them*,² and as they also suspected that the wrath targeted them, they woke up as if from a deep sleep, like a drunk who regains consciousness. They then remembered what they had done to their bishop, and understood too that these (punishments) befell them because they had despised him. They were especially certain about this because of the fact that the wrath had not crossed over the boundaries of their village. Thus they came out, small and great, and went /p.168/ barefoot and exhausted to the village in which he was, while weeping bitterly and shamefacedly. Now when the bishop saw them, he deeply grieved over them, as Elisha did over the boys whom the bears had devoured,³ especially because of the fact that the wrath had destroyed all their possessions. And thus he returned with them and prayed for them. Because of this, God cast his fear and terror on every region, as well as on the notables of the town (=Amida) itself, with the result that before leaving any village in which he was residing, all the rest, both great and small, would come to him with petitions.

The holy Mār Elijah, Patriarch of Antioch, was followed by the holy Athanasius (III).⁴

¹ ܡܪܘܨ ܟܘܡܐ : Word play involving the second part of the toponym Tella-d-Kūm and the name of an idol. Could this be ܡܪܘܨ (ܡܪ) "(Mal)kūm" mentioned in Amos 5:26?

² Cf Ps 76:30.

³ 2Kgs 2:24-25.

⁴ Elias I 163-164; S. 1035 (723-724). Chronicon 846 p. 235:7-9 [178] and Michael IV 456 [II 491]: Elijah died in 3 October S. 1035 (723). Michael: Athanasius became patriarch

730-731 The year one thousand and forty-two: Maslama invaded the Gate of the land of the Turks.¹ The Huns, who are the Turks, marched out and caused considerable damage in the land of Armenia and in the whole northern land. Then Maslama invaded them with innumerable forces because they used to march out in this way every year and commit many evils. When he invaded them and they came out to confront him, he waged a battle against them, killing numerous people among them. As he terrorised them, they came to his feet and asked him for peace. He granted it to them, hoping that the agreement would last.

It was in this year that Maslama tore down the Gate of the land of the Turks, because they waged a battle behind this Gate and also because they used to fortify themselves in it. He feared that if his forces should go to a land they were unaware that it belonged to the Turks, then these Turks would gather against them and drive them away from it /p.169/ because they were a godless nation and Magians. Because of this, Maslama was pressed and ordered that the Gate of the land of the Turks which had been built by Alexander of Macedonia be destroyed. First, all the camels were released and left, then the donkeys, after these the labourers, and at the end the Arabs themselves came out, while throwing thorn bushes over the whole road behind them.

731-732 The year one thousand and forty-three: The same Maslama gathered a large crowd of craftsmen, carpenters and labourers and prepared everything necessary for building. They went in and rebuilt the Gate of the land of the Turks that he had torn down. After he had rebuilt it he made a treaty under an oath by God with the Turks that no one of them should cross over the boundary of his neighbour, and then he left. But the Turks, not knowing God nor understanding that they were his creatures, nor realising that there was a God in Heaven, did not abide by his treaty, but despised God and rejected his word. Scornfully, they crossed over and committed numerous evils in the whole land extending beyond their boundaries. Hishām sent (al)-Jarrāḥ,² the military commander, against them with a great number of

in April S. 1035 (724).

¹ **باب الجرجان**: αἱ Κασπίας πύλαι "Caspian (or Iberian) Gates" in Theophanes and **باب اللان** "Allān's Gate" in the Arab sources in reference to the passes of Derbend on the Caspian Sea. The Turks are the Khazars from the steppes of Southern Russia. During Hishām's rule, they represented a major threat with which Maslama dealt first; after 732 A.D. Marwān, the grandson of Caliph Marwān, dealt with the threat; see Kennedy, *Prophet*, 108f.

² **جرجان**: الجرجان son of 'Abd-Allah al-Ḥakamī was appointed governor of Armenia by Hishām in H. 111 (729-730); al-Ṭabarī VII 67. On the campaign of al-Jarrāḥ and his defeat and death, and on the return of Maslama to Allān see al-Ṭabarī VII 70-71: H. 112

cavalrymen. (Al)-Jarrāḥ invaded the whole land, and during his invasion inflicted considerable damage because it was harvest time. He was not a moderate man nor was he just† in using his forces. He destroyed the entire crop of the peasants and caused the poor along his way to suffer many other troubles. Although all of them came and complained before him, no one of them received any respite by him. And as everyone suffered /p.170/ because of his invasion, all prayed with one accord that he meet his deserts.

When al-Jarrāḥ marched in and waged a battle with the Turks, they killed most of his army and captured many others whom they took into their land. At this point, al-Jarrāḥ sent a message to Hishām to dispatch help for him. Maslama marched after him with a huge army, and while he was on the march, al-Jarrāḥ and his army were put to the sword. The Turks outnumbered them on all sides and slaughtered them all with the blades of their swords. Not one of them escaped. The Lord treated the evil doer in a manner that exactly befitted him, and requited him with all the evils which he and his army had committed toward the peasantry, for wherever he arrived, the Lord inflicted his army with all of them at once.

Nevertheless, when Maslama invaded (the land of the Turks), they trembled before him out of fear, afraid more of his reputation than of his person. He waged a battle with them, shed their blood like water on the face of the earth, and filled the birds of the sky and the beasts of the steppe with their flesh. After he had defeated them, he appointed Marwān son of Muḥammad, who later ruled over the Arabs, governor over Armenia. He departed, leaving with the man a great force. As for Marwān, he destroyed the Turks more than any other before him.

717-718 The year one thousand and twenty-nine: A powerful and dreadful earthquake took place and destroyed many places, shrines, churches and great buildings, particularly in (Bēth) Ma'dē,¹ as well as the Old Church of Edessa.² Large and high buildings collapsed on their inhabitants. The earthquake left marks on even the ones that remained standing, so that their inhabitants †might tremble† before the Lord, whenever they would see the earthquake's marks.

/p.171/ At this time, Hishām dug the Zaytūn canal on which he built towns and forts as well as many villages, and adorned it with plants of all kinds. Then he dug the Bēth Balish canal on which he built a fort and adorned

(730-731). Same Hijra date in Elias I 165.

¹ כַּסְיָא : For כַּסְיָא , a village in the Ṭūr-'Abdīn, between Tella and Amida and to the north of them.

² Same date in Theophanes 399 (A.M. 6210) and Michael IV 457 [II 490]. Chronicon 846 p. 234:19-21 [177]: Friday, the 3rd hour, 24 [December] S. 1029 (717). Elias I 162: (January) H. 99 (718).

it with plants of all kinds. Then he dug the Hanī canal on which he built forts and gardens of all kinds.¹ Then, Maslama, his brother, dug the Bēth Balishf canal and he too built forts and villages on the canal which he dug and adorned it with all beautiful things.²

728-729 The year one thousand and forty: Maslama conquered Neocaesarea.³ He took all its citizens into captivity and sold them into slavery like cattle, except for the Jews who surrendered the city.⁴ For they went out secretly to Maslama, made an agreement with him, and treacherously directed him to the entrance of the city. These he took into captivity and did not sell them. So they went with him.

733-734 The year one thousand and forty-five: Sulaymān (son of the Caliph Hishām) invaded the Roman land, conquered 'Palozonium'⁵ and took all its people into captivity.⁶ Artabas, the son-in-law of the Roman Emperor Constantine, usurped power, assuming control of the capital Constantinople as well as wearing the imperial crown. Because Constantine the Emperor was fighting† many enemies with his whole army, he had left this rebellious

¹ Canals: Zaytūn near Zaytā (or al-Zaytūnah, Yāqūt III 163) on the Euphrates below Circesium. Bēth Balish, Arabic بالس (modern Maskene Qadīmeḥ), was a town near the confluence of the Balīkh with the Euphrates. Hanī, Arabic الهني, is located opposite al-Raqqā dug by Hishām along with al-Marī المري; Yāqūt V 419.

² Yāqūt I 32: Maslama dug a canal near Bālis which had borne the name of the digger.

³ Not all of the following sources necessarily deal with the campaign discussed above: Michael IV 457 [II 490] and Chronicon 846 p. 235: 14-16 [178]: S. 1037 (725-726) — Neocaesarea of Pontus (on the Black Sea, north of Cappadocia). Agapius 506: 3rd year of Hishām (726-727) — Caesarea of Cappadocia as in Elias I 164: H. 107 (725-726) and Theophanes 404: A.M. 6218 (726-727). al-Ṭabarī VII 43: H. 108 (726-727) — "Caesarea next to al-Jazīra," that is Caesarea of Cappadocia.

⁴ al-Balādhurī I 167-168: A Jew named Joseph showed the Arabs the secret entrance to Caesarea of Palestine. The Chronicler of Z. may have mistakenly inserted this detail in his account of the conquest of Neocaesarea, because of the similarity in names.

⁵ قلعة (elsewhere قلعة): Fortress; *Thesaurus*, 3145.

⁶ The usurpation of Artabas took place not in 733-734 but during the first years of Constantine V's reign. (Constantine V was the son of Leo and the brother-in-law of Artabas.) It was Constantine who gouged out the eyes of Artabas and not Leo, who was dead when Artabas usurped the throne. The invasion of Sulaymān may have taken place during the struggle for power in Byzantium. Both al-Ṭabarī VII 199 and al-Ya'qūbī II 329 mention summer incursions by Sulaymān that took place in H. 124 (741-742), although al-Ya'qūbī claimed that Sulaymān met both Leo "the tyrant and Artabas" (Leo in al-Ṭabarī). Sulaymān must have met Leo's son (as claimed in Elias I 169: H. 124), or the Arab invasion must have occurred near the end of Leo's life. Such an early date makes sense since the event of the following account (the siege of Synnada by Mālik and Baṭṭāl) is dated by Theophanes 411 to A.M. 6231 (739-740), that is to the end of Leo's reign.

Artabas in the capital so that he might protect it with a great army from Palozonium. When Artabas took control of the capital, he seized the opportunity to claim the empire for himself, not remembering the pact he had made with Leo before the Lord. After he had assumed control of the city, the imperial army as well as the emperor besieged the capital from the outside, whereas the whole army /p.172/ of Palozonium was fighting against the emperor from the inside. At this point, Sulaymān marched and Leo (sic) sent him a message: "Do not come to me lest you escape badly from my hands! Rather, go to Palozonium, capture it, take captives, and do whatever you wish, because there is no one to resist you!" Thus Sulaymān went and captured Palozonium and pillaged it as he wished. He carried off more spoil than any other person before him. As for the usurper, Leo (sic) captured him and gouged out his eyes; he also deprived the army that was with him of their pay.

734-735 The year one thousand and forty-six:¹ Mālik, son of Shabīb, the amīr of Melitene (Malatya), and 'Abd-Allah al-Baṭṭāl marched in and besieged Ṣynnada.² While they were camped in a meadow in Synnada, numerous troops that could not be counted gathered against them so as to take vengeance on them for the blow the Arabs had inflicted on Palozonium the year before. As these Arabs, who were about fifty thousand strong, were camped without worry, the Romans suddenly surrounded them on all sides, and slaughtered them all with the blades of their swords. Only a few Arabs remained alive, as the day declined to sunset, though they to were wounded by the swords, lances and bows. They fled in this condition and marched the whole night. Barely five thousand out of the fifty thousand strong who came, escaped. Even their leaders fell along with them in the battle. Such a disaster had never befallen the Arabs before.

*During this time an impostor appeared
in the West and seduced and killed many among the Jews³*

From the beginning, Satan was the destroyer and corruptor of all the children of Adam. Accordingly, his opposition was a threat not just to a single nation or tongue or person, but to all of them /p.173/ alike. In the case of any given nation or tongue, if Satan knows the object of its desire, that very object turns into its downfall. Satan's name derives from his deeds, for Satan means "the Adversary". He did not stop or let up on confounding and misleading all nations in all ages, since he never tires of or abates from his first evils which

¹ Theophanes 411: A.M. 6231 (739-740). See the previous note.

² ܩܘܢܝܢ: In Phrygia, east of Lydia; Strabo V 505.

³ Theophanes 401: A.M. 6213 (720-721). Agapius 504: S. 1025 (713-714). Michael IV 456 [II 490]: S. 1031 (719-720). The Chronicle of Z. offers the most detailed account.

he devised to harm the ancestor of our race.

At this time, he (=Satan) stirred up a man from the region of 'Mardē¹ in a village named 'Polḥat,² [. . .]³ and brought him to the West, to the territory of the Samaritans. He was introduced to the house of an important Jew, and while there, he impregnated the daughter of that Jew. When the Jews learned about this matter, they beat him to the point of death, applying to him various tortures because he was a Christian. When he found an opportunity, he fled from them, 'and set his mind⁴ on all evil doings against them. †He went down † to the land of 'Bēth Ārāmāyē⁵ that was immersed* in all the evils of sorcery, and devoted himself to sorcery† and all diabolical tricks. He was trained in all evil doings and was perfected in them. Thus he left and went up to that land, and said before them: "I am Moses,⁶ who in the past brought out Israel from Egypt, and who was with them in the sea *and in the desert* for forty years. Now I come †to rescue† Israel and to bring her out to the desert; then *I will introduce* her afresh to inherit this promised land as your forefathers inherited it in the past when the Lord had destroyed all the nations which were there before them. †And now too† he will destroy all of them before you, and you will enter it and inherit it as in the past, /p.174/ and all the scattered of Israel will gather as is written: *He will gather the scattered of Israel.*⁷

As the man was making them hear such statements every day and was also amazing them with his magic all the time, all of them erred after him. Sometimes he made them wander on mountains, pushing them from their peaks, killing them. Sometimes he confined them in caves and clefts in the ground and destroyed them. Only after he made them suffer great evils, did he kill and destroy many of them. He also took limitless gold away from them through his sorcery and trickery, making all of them believe that he would take them to the desert. When he had had enough of the evils that he made them suffer every day through his sorcery, he deceived them by taking away from them all the gold, cattle and goods which he appropriated; then he fled and returned home.

When the Jews came to themselves, realising the evils that he had done to

¹ מרדן: Another form of Mardīn. Michael: The man was named Severus.

² פלחא: Unidentified; read perhaps פלחא "(village named) such and such".

³ Erasure but the traces of כס are still visible. The phrase may have originally been כס כחבא "this one (=Satan) brought him (to the West)".

⁴ (סכאן): A parallel idiom is known in Akkadian: *libbu* (or *uznu* "ear") + *šakānu*.

⁵ כבא ארמא: See p. 43 n. 2 for its location. Southern Mesopotamia (ancient Chaldea) was renowned for astrology, magic, exorcism and sorcery.

⁶ Agapius, Theophanes: The man claimed to be "the Christ" (Theophanes adds: "Son of God").

⁷ Ps 147:2.

them, all of them went out after him to the four corners, asking about him and searching for him. When they found him, they brought him to Ḥishām,¹ ḤCommander of the Faithful,² who delivered him to them. After they had made him suffer all kinds of tortures and injuries, they crucified him on a stake and he died. Thus the Lord remunerated him as he deserved.

735-736 The year one thousand and forty-seven: ḤAtīq rebelled and joined the sect of the ḤHarurites.³

When ḤAtīq rebelled and joined the sect of the ḤHarurites, he did what the Arabs who joined this sect had the custom of doing in Ḥgiving up⁴ their wives and all their possessions. He went with twenty of his colleagues to below ḤSinjār.⁵ When Hishām learned about him, he sent a message to ḤQaliū⁶ and Zuhayr, commanders of the cavalry in Sinjār, to wage battle against him. /p.175/ When they received the order, they gathered numerous troops and marched out against ḤAtīq. When they reached him in the steppe of Sinjār, he asked them to wait until the morning, at which time they would fight against each other. Because of the fact that they were a great army and ḤAtīq's people were few in number, they underestimated him. Moreover, they were tormented by thirst because water was lacking in that desert and the day near declining. Whereas they underestimated him in every regard, ḤAtīq—a powerful man, as were those who followed him—did this to trick them. When it became dark, and as the army (of Hishām) ate, drank and were sleeping without worry, ḤAtīq and his followers armed themselves and fell upon them in the first watch of the night, killing them all. The Lord had turned the sword of one man against another⁷ and the partisans of ḤAtīq had gone through them *like stone cutters and like plough-men in the field*.⁸ If a few had not been riding fast horses and had escaped, not one among them would have remained without being killed with the blades of their swords. Even the military commanders, Qaliū and Zuhayr, fell with the other victims in the battle.

¹ ܐܘܩܝܢ: Agapius has “Yazīd son of ḤAbd-al-Malik”; Michael has “the prince”.

² ܐܡܝܪ ܐܠܡܘܢܝܢ: Syriac transcription of Arabic أمير المؤمنين. For a different spelling of the title see p. 247 n. 8.

³ ܫܢܝܢܗܘܪܝܬܝܢ: From Arabic حرورية from Ḥarūrā' (district near Kūfa in southern Iraq; Yāqūt II 245) where the Khawārij (seceders) rebelled against ḤAlī in 658 and set ḤAbd-Allah al-Rāsibī as Caliph. See also pp. 177, 181, and 183.

⁴ ܥܘܩܘܒܝܢ: ܥܘܩܘܒܝܢ, from Arabic طلق “to divorce” (instead of Syriac ܥܘܩܘܒܝܢ).

⁵ ܥܝܠܝܘܢ: Cuneiform Singāra and Arabic سنجار, a city located at the foot of Mt. Sinjār in northwest Iraq.

⁶ ܩܠܝܘܢ: Spelled ܩܠܝܘܢ below, but the wāw was added above the line; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, p. 175 n. 5.

⁷ ܕܥܝܢܝܢ ܕܥܝܢܝܢ that follows ܥܝܢܝܢ may have been intentionally deleted in the MS because only its traces are visible. Chabot preserved it in the text although it does not fit the context.

⁸ 1Sam 14:14.

740-741 The year one thousand and fifty-two: Leo (III), the Roman Emperor who reigned for twenty-five years, died. His son, Constantine (V), reigned after him for thirty five years.¹

During this time Hishām, the Caliph, built a bridge over the Euphrates opposite Callinicum.

741-742 The year one thousand and fifty-three: A powerful and violent earthquake took place on a Sunday.² During the whole night of Sunday it roared, and a noise, like the terrible noise /p.176/ of a bellowing bull, was heard. When the time of the Liturgy came and all the people went into the church, the church of 'Maraq³ collapsed as a consequence of the severity and intensity of the earthquake that suddenly took place. All the people inside the church were crushed. No one survived except for the priest who was offering the Eucharist at that time. Even the hill upon which the church of Maraq had been built kept roaring and rumbling for about thirty days.

742-743 The year one thousand and fifty-four: The large bridge across the Tigris near Amida was destroyed.

Due to the severe winter that took place and the heavy snow that came down from the sky and accumulated considerably on the ground for many days, every living thing, particularly animals and birds, almost perished. Afterwards, a strong and violent wind, as well as rainstorms occurred for many days. When the snow melted, the ground became saturated with the melted snow and abundant rainfall.

Then all the rivers swelled, especially the Tigris which flooded and seriously overflowed. The flood killed many people and ravaged countless places. Tall, heavy, and massive trees were carried away in it, in such a way that huge walnut trees became stuck against the large bridge beside Amida. They piled against the bridge on top of each other for five or six miles upstream. Thus, because of the large and heavy trees as well as the powerful flood, the bridge broke loose and collapsed before the water. It was not rebuilt thereafter, for when Hishām gathered labourers, craftsmen and all the equipment to rebuild it, and while he hastened to do so, he met his end and the bridge remained in ruins.

At this time /p.177/ Edessa was also devastated.⁴ Abundant and heavy rain made the river called Dayṣān, which runs through the city of Edessa, overflow. The mighty waters flooded (the city), and the exit in the eastern

¹ Theophanes 412-413: (18 June), 9th indiction A.M. 6232 (741). Elias I 168-169: S. 1052, H. 123 (740-741). Michael IV 463 [II 502 and n. 1]: S. 1053 (741-742).

² Cf Michael IV 463 [II 504]: Sunday, November S. 1040 (728).

³ مرق: حنا، a town and caravan station between Nisibis and Mosul; Yāqūt V 109.

⁴ A brief mention in Theophanes 412: A.M. 6232 (740-741).

side of the wall became blocked. And the waters dashed against it,¹ receded, then rose up, flooding the streets of the city. The flood ruined all the merchandise belonging to shop owners, and numerous houses collapsed. Because of the fact that this happened during the day, people were able to abandon their houses and flee and thus they were not harmed. The breach of the waters' exit also caused considerable damage throughout the plain of Edessa and Harrān.

743-744 The year one thousand and fifty-five: Hishām, Caliph of the Arabs, died,² and Walīd (II) ruled after him for eight months.³ The usurpers Yazīd (III, son of Walīd I) and the brothers 'Abbās and Ibrāhīm, together with 'Abd-al-'Azīz son of Ḥajjāj their father,⁴ rebelled against Walīd near the town of Qurā,⁵ and killed him with the sword.⁶

Yazīd (III) ruled after him for six months, but the country did not submit to him nor did he establish governors in the Jazīra. Yazīd died and his brother Ibrāhīm replaced him.⁷

During this year civil war broke out in the whole country because of the rebellion which 'Abbās and his brothers had instigated against Walīd (II). They killed him with the sword and held power even though the caliphate was not rightfully theirs. The Arabs, particularly the people of the Jazīra, did not submit to them, but instead each remained in his place on guard. Civil war and depredation reigned in the whole country, in such a way that no one was able to leave his place.

*Concerning the drought and powerful
famine that occurred in the whole land at this time*

At this time the Lord sent upon us all of the following bad and harsh blows, because of our sins and the evils committed by our hands: sword, captivity,

¹ *ܫܚܘܒܐ* √ *ܫܚܘܒ*. The meaning above is on the basis of Arabic *خَبِلَ* (same root as also Akkadian *habābu*).

² al-Ṭabarī VII 200, 209ff: (February) H. 125 (743). al-Ya'qūbī II 328, 331.

³ al-Ṭabarī VII 252, al-Ya'qūbī II 334: (February/March) H. 125 (743). Theophanes 418: 16 April A.M. 6235 (743).

⁴ *ܥܡܪܘܢ ܕܥܒܕܐܠܐܙܝܙ ܕܗܗܝܗܝܐ ܕܗܗܝܗܝܐ ܕܗܗܝܗܝܐ*: Lit. "with 'Abd-al-'Azīz their brother, the sons of Ḥajjāj". The Chronicler of Z. confused the identities of the persons involved.

⁵ *ܩܘܪܐ*: *ܩܘܪܐ*, on the road leading to Hijāz via Palmyra; al-Ṭabarī VII 248.

⁶ al-Ṭabarī VII 252: (April) H. 126 (744).

⁷ Theophanes 418: Yazīd *λειψός* (= *النائف* as in Arab sources), A.M. 6235 (743). al-Ṭabarī VII 298ff: Yazīd died in (October) H. 126 (744). Ibrāhīm ruled for four months and was deposed in January/February 744 by Marwān II; see al-Ṭabarī VII 299. About Marwān see below p. 174.

famine and pestilence. (The Lord) said: *"If Moses /p.178/ and Samuel stood before me, my soul would not delight in this people. Send them out of my sight and let them go! If they say to you, 'Where shall we go?' (you shall tell them:) 'Thus says the Lord: Those who are for death to death, and those who are for the sword to the sword, and those who are for famine to famine, and those who are for captivity to captivity.' I will order over them four blows," says the Lord: "The sword to slay, the dogs to tear, and the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. And I will make them a horror!"*¹ Jeremiah, a great visionary, left us these words. And it is he again who says: *The *painful cry* of Jerusalem came up before me. Their nobles sent their poor ones for water; they came to the cisterns and did not find water; they returned with their vessels in vain. They were ashamed and confounded and they covered their heads. For cultivation there was no rain. The farmers were ashamed and they covered their heads. Even the hinds gave birth in the steppe and abandoned their young because there was no grass. The wild asses stood on the roads and sniffed the wind like jackals; their eyes darkened because there was no grass.*²

All of these words said by the prophet were indeed fulfilled at this time. Behold the sword of the forces of the Arabs that cut through each other! They saturated the ground with their blood, and birds and animals, including dogs, fed themselves with their flesh. People also devastated each other and pestilence fell upon them, so that if one went out to the desert the sword restrained him, and the man *who remained at home* was struck by pestilence and famine. One used to hear about afflictions and violence from all sides.

First, rain that usually fell in the winter was withheld and did not fall. All vegetation dried out and did *not grow at all*. A severe famine arose in the whole land to the point that eight /p.179/ or even seven *ṣefīzā*³ of wheat were sold for a dinar, when it was available at all! People holding power sent (agents) in search of wheat and wherever they found it, whether in houses or in the field, they seized it and stamped it. People, especially the wheat owners, were afflicted with death because of the famine. They were not confronted unexpectedly by the severe famine, but when the ruler confiscated their wheat they perished of hunger. At this point famine gripped rich and poor alike, overtaking all lands without distinction, so that there was not one region that was better off than another. Rather, affliction ruled everywhere. Even the beasts of the steppe as well as grass-eating domestic animals perished because of lack of grass. People and all other beings were greatly tormented because of the famine that has had no parallel in our time or in that of our fathers. Even sources and springs stopped flowing and rivers dried up.

¹ Jer 15:1-3.

² Jer 14:2b-6

³ *صَفِيْزًا*: Arabic *سَفِيْز*, a solid measure, one tenth of a *جَرِيْبًا* *gerībā*; see below p. 186 nn. 2 and 3.

At the death of Hishām, the country suffered many evils,¹ and all the calamities, particularly pestilence and famine, gripped us on account of our many sins.

Also concerning the severe pestilence that occurred at this time²

Here Jeremiah the prophet was of great 'use³ to us, because he was exceedingly knowledgeable about lamenting over the afflictions *that surrounded us* on all sides. He said: *Would that my head were waters and my eyes fountains of tears! I wept day and night over the wound of the daughter of my people.*⁴ He also said: *I will take up weeping and wailing for the mountains, and lamentation for the settlements that are in the wilderness which became desolate without people passing through.*⁵ *Let our eyes run down with tears and our eyelids gush with water.*⁶ *Because of this, O women, hear the word of the Lord and let your ears receive the word of his mouth! /p.180/ Teach to your daughters laments and each woman to her neighbour a dirge. For death has come up into our windows, it has entered into our palaces to remove the children from the streets and the young men from the squares.*⁷ *The dead bodies of men are falling like litter upon the face of the earth and like the hay after the harvester, and there is no gatherer.*⁸

He should come now and cry*, not over one single nation or one single city, Jerusalem†, but over all nations and many cities which Wrath, so to speak, turned into wine presses, in which it treaded and squeezed all the inhabitants without mercy, as if they were ripe grapes; over the whole earth

¹ The evils were caused by the short and troubled reigns of Walīd II, Yazīd III and Ibrāhīm.

² Theophanes 422-424: A. M. 6238 (746-747). Michael IV 464 [II 506]: 1056 (744-745). al-Ṭabarī VII 401: H. 130 (747-748), al-Azdī 118: H. 131 (748-749), in Baṣra (Iraq). In describing the plague the Chronicler of Z. borrowed many ideas and expressions found in the account of the bubonic plague by John of Ephesus; see pp. 94-113 above.

³ **ܐܘܨܐ**: Probably to be corrected into **ܐܘܨܐ ܘܨܐ** if we take into consideration the fact that the Chronicler of Z. borrowed the first passage above, along with the form under discussion, from John of Ephesus; compare with Chabot, *Chronicon* II, p. 79:19f. The Chronicler may have wanted to write **ܐܘܨܐ ܘܨܐ**, in which case the translation would be "(Jeremiah) is of great use". In any case, there is no need to take the problematic word for **ܐܘܨܐ** as Chabot suggested in *Chronicon* II, p. 179 n. 1.

⁴ Jer 9:1.

⁵ Jer 9:10.

⁶ Jer 9:18.

⁷ Jer 9:20-21.

⁸ Jer 9:22.

because the (divine) decree went out like a harvester to standing crops; it cut down and removed people of various statures, distinctions and ranks together and without exception; over the stinking corpses that burst open in the streets, everywhere—their pus running down like water into the streets and there was no one to bury them; over large and small houses, pleasant and attractive, that suddenly became graves for their inhabitants, in which both servants and masters fell suddenly together, and no one remained to remove their corpses from inside the houses; over deserted roads and many villages whose inhabitants vanished all at once; over the palaces which used to roar against each other, and over the adorned quarters of the brides, who were suddenly discovered dead inside them; over the virgins who were kept in private rooms, looking forward to the joy of their weddings, but were suddenly carried off into the grave; and over many (scenes) like these that are beyond the speech and narration of all eloquent speakers. Therefore, the prophet would have to cry over them and say: Woe unto me, not on account of *the wound of my people's daughter*¹ but on account of the destruction of the entire inhabited world and on account of /p.181/ the entire universe, which the pestilence had destroyed because of its sins.

He would also have to make use of the prophetic words of his colleagues, cite them and say to the remnant of people who survived: *Mourn and lament, O ministers of the altar, go in, pass the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God,*² *not because flour is consumed in the house of the Lord,*³ but over the people whom (the pestilence) had wiped out in the world; moreover, *the earth shall sit in mourning and all its inhabitants shall lament;*⁴ *call for the mourning women and for the skillful women to come that they may raise a wailing together*⁵ not over an only son or over one corpse alone, but over nations and kingdoms; *the earth shall totter exceedingly, the earth shall quake vehemently, the earth shall shake violently, the earth shall be utterly laid waste and the earth shall be utterly despoiled, and it shall quiver like a hut and its transgression will prevail over her;*⁶ *it will return and become subject to fire like the terebinth whose leaves have dropped and like the acorn that fell from its cup.*⁷

All of these (prophecies) were fulfilled at this time: severe tremors, powerful earthquakes, together with armies, wars, quarrels of the Arabs among themselves on account of leadership, famine that afflicted people in

¹ Jer 8:21.

² Joel 1:13a.

³ Joel 1:13b.

⁴ Cf Isa 24:6-7.

⁵ Cf Jer 9:17.

⁶ Isa 24:19-20.

⁷ Isa 6:13.

such a manner that all the southern and eastern peoples moved from their lands and settled in the North and in the West, and civil war along with all other evils: *I shall send after them the sword, despoliation, famine and pestilence*, says the prophet.¹ All of these things happened in our days without any omission. Behold the war of the Arabs among themselves! Behold the despoliation to the extent that no one was able to walk †without being pillaged † and having his possessions taken away! Behold the famine that afflicts inside and outside! If a man goes inside the house, famine and pestilence face him; if he goes out to the steppe, sword and thieves attack him. /p.182/ Therefore, there was bitter affliction, painful grief and troubling pain on all sides.

*They are drunk but not with wine and staggering but not with fermented drink.*² People started to wander and roam from one city to another and from one region to the next one, confused as though drunken, begging for bread but it was not available, as the prophet said. First, people were stricken by ulcers and abscesses, and most of the heads of households died. This was the case during the whole winter, when people were not able to bury them. People were discarded in streets, porches, towers†, shrines and all the houses, suffering from the severe disease as well as from the very harsh famine. Victims of famine outnumbered the victims of the disease. Those who had bread to fill themselves suffered from this disease more than anyone else. When the weather started to warm up, the bubonic plague was discovered in those who were ill. They began to collapse in the street like litter over the face of the earth and there was no one to bury them.

This pestilence started with the poor people, who were discarded in the streets. They were given funeral rites and were buried, appropriately, by everyone with respect and honour. When the poor people had almost all vanished, the †pestilence³ prevailed and took a turn for the worse with the notables of villages and cities, in such a way that when the priests wanted to go to one litter, fifty, sixty and up to ninety and one hundred litters were gathered in the same spot. The litters were gathered in one place in the morning, each containing two, three or even four youngsters. Thus during the entire day, there was no rest or pause from removing human corpses.

The Arabs dug holes all over the ground, /p.183/ and so did the Jews. As for the graves of the Christians, they were all filled with the result that they had to dig holes in the ground too.⁴ People would bring more than five

¹ Jer 24:10.

² Isa 29:9.

³ *ܩܘܠܘܢ*: Lit. "death", for *ܩܘܠܘܢ*.

⁴ The Chronicler of Z. distinguished between "holes" (*ܫܘܚܘܬܐ*) in which Muslims and Jews used to bury the dead in contact with earth, and "graves" (*ܫܘܚܘܬܐ*), being burial vaults in which Eastern Christians laid their dead. For the Christians to lay the dead in "holes" was not a tradition but a necessity.

hundred litters a day out of a single gate. All day long they went in and out of the gate, carrying corpses, bringing them out, and casting them away. Then they returned to fetch others, performing funeral rites only for a few. This was due to the rapidity of the deaths, the small number of priests, and the high number of litters that were beyond count. In the morning, the priests used to order anyone who had a deceased relative to bring the deceased one to the nearby *tetrapylai*. The dead of each place or street were to be gathered in one spot. Thus the priests used to divide themselves in the morning and go to all sides to perform the funeral service and bury the victims 'group by group.¹ More than one hundred litters used to be removed in one single 'convoy,² and in these litters there were more than two hundred or two hundred and fifty people. Litters met litters without interruption during the whole day.

In the place (where they were gathered), the servant was not different from his master, or the maid from her mistress, or the son of the employee from the son of the employer*. One single 'wine press of perdition and wrath³ was mixed for everyone. Both servants and masters were devoured alike, without partiality. Common people and nobles were discarded beside each other, and groaned, so that everyone might wonder at the sentence of God and keep on marvelling at and admiring his judgments, which to mortals are inscrutable, incomprehensible and unfathomable: *The judgments of God are the great deep.*⁴

Then the Destroyer struck those in positions of power, /p.184/ who were renowned because of their wealth, and took delight in their own greatness. Moreover, the houses of many among them remained without heir since neither servant nor master survived in them. They suddenly left their possession, wealth and fields, as well as their splendid houses to their friends! How many families, large and famous in wealth, and how many tribes perished, without leaving even one heir!

Indeed, the human tongue is incapable of describing the horrors and wonders that happened in the land extending from the Euphrates to the West, and in the cities of Palestine, the North and the South and the region up to the

¹ **ܡܠܬܐ ܡܠܬܐ**: The meaning given above is not attested in Syriac sources but suggested by the context. Brockelmann, *Lexicon* 669, read **ܡܠܬܐ** as **ܡܫܬܐ**, a word occurring later in the Chronicle. Nonetheless, the lexical root **ܡܠܬ** is both attested in Arabic and employed by the Chronicler himself; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 221:19-20, 241:16. Its meaning "to pluck out, send away" would seem to be viable here, if taken in a distributive sense as our translation reflects.

² **ܡܫܬܐ**: See the previous note.

³ **ܡܫܬܐ ܡܫܬܐ ܡܫܬܐ ܡܫܬܐ**: The "press" is used figuratively to denote what comes out of it; compare with **ܡܫܬܐ ܡܫܬܐ** "the (mixed) cup of wrath".

⁴ Ps 36:6.

Red Sea, as well as those of Cilicia, Iconia, Asia, Bethynia, 'Lusonia',¹ Galatia and Cappadocia. This painful and bitter anguish reigned over the entire world. Just as the rain falls down on the whole earth, or as the rays of the sun spread out over everything equally, so did this plague at this time spread out over the entire world equally. Nevertheless, it was especially severe in the territories which were singled out earlier.

In these territories, numerous villages and places suddenly became desolate, without people passing by them or settling in them. The stricken bodies, stretched out on the ground like litter on the surface of the earth, were groaning; and there was no one to bury them since not one of them survived. Thus people were discarded inside those places, swollen, putrid and stinking. Their houses were open like graves, and inside them the owners were rotting from putrefaction. Their furniture, gold, and silver were thrown away, and all their goods were discarded in the streets but there was no one to collect them. Vile was gold and silver there! Their possessions, scattered everywhere, had no owners! What is more, old men and women with honourable white hair, /p.185/ who had looked forward to being buried in great splendour by their heirs, were discarded in the streets, houses and palaces, burst open, stinking, and with their mouths open. Graceful virgins and beautiful young girls, who looked forward to bridal feasts and elegant and precious garments, were discarded, exposed and rotting together. They became a pitiful lesson for onlookers. If only it had occurred inside graves! Rather, it occurred in houses and market-places! Handsome and cheerful young men turned dark, were discarded and rotted with their fathers. These events occurred in these regions as everywhere.

The very few who survived endured. During the whole day they used to remove (corpses) without interruption and go out to cast them away. They were like a person throwing a stone onto a heap, then returning to take another one, and going out to throw* it in the same way. Many of the victims lacked relatives; one could see them discarded in the street, *being devoured* by dogs, with none to bury them. Because each (survivor) could only take care of his own family members, many people were hired for the sole purpose of collecting corpses from houses and streets because of their putrefaction. These prophecies were fulfilled: **I made them smell* the stink of their putrefaction with their nostrils,*² and: *the earth mourned and lamented.*³

¹ ܠܘܣܘܢܝܐ: Unidentified and probably corrupt form of a toponym. All the toponyms listed by the Chronicler of Z. are also found in the account of the bubonic plague given by John of Ephesus (see p. 99 above), except for one: ܠܘܣܘܢܝܐ of the Chronicler of Z. replaces ܠܘܣܘܢܝܐ (Moesia in Pontus) of John of Ephesus. The Chronicler of Z. must have misspelled the latter toponym!

² Amos 4:10b.

³ Isa 24:4.

From this point onward, there was no cry nor grief nor sadness (over the others) because everyone was already knocking at the door of the grave. Gold and silver were despised like litter. So if there were gold or silver or precious jewelry on married women or on virgins, no one extended his hand to take anything away from them—not even fathers from their children; on the contrary, they believed that they would go into Sheol along with them, and that they would join them in putrefaction. With what tears should I have cried at that time, O my dear ones? What sighs would have been enough /p.186/ for me? What heartbreak, what mourning, what lamentations, what dirge and what pains would have been enough, at the sight of old men and people of various statures and distinctions, who collapsed and were discarded like cedar trees?

(God's) great mercy was seen even in this plague as it descended first upon the poor, who were discarded in the streets of the cities, since the plague everywhere started with them. But when they vanished, this fearful plague turned against all the rich and the lords in the cities. Two things happened and were executed through God's mercy so that both sides could assist each other in the events that took place. The first one concerns the inhabitants of the cities, who showed in themselves zeal for righteousness, and gathered great profit for their souls through their care for the poor; for they took care of them, clothing them, bringing litters for them, escorting them, and burying them with great pain as well as with diligence, fear and zeal. The second one (concerns the poor), who were deprived of care-takers; for if Wrath had mixed them with the rest, how could it be that despite their putrefaction and bare bones they were taken away from the streets? Yet, *they were taken* first of all, when everyone was healthy, standing and diligent; people carried, escorted and buried those who were deprived of grave-diggers. Then those who looked forward to graves and grave-diggers were left without burial with the result that no one of them had a funeral service. And when the poor vanished, the plague passed on to the wealthy— as long as those whom death could seize were still around—from the small to the great, and no remnant of them ever survived.

Moreover, /p.187/ those who survived this affliction moved outside the city, as many as they were. But in the end, those who did not die were struck with a terrible disease: 'the swelling of the groins,¹ some in one and some in both. This took hold of those who were dying as well as of those who survived. As soon as the swelling of the groins struck a man, at that point he gave up hope accordingly. What is more, the one who escaped from death suffered a pain worse than a cruel death; for his groins swelled, became distended and burst open, giving way to large and deep abscesses that discharged blood, pus, and water, day and night like a spring. Afterward,

¹ About this disease and its Syriac and Greek names see above p. 104 and n. 6.

patients suffered exhausting fatigue, some for one month, others for two or five or six months, and up to a year—for many others up to two years—in such a way that many of them never recovered.

Therefore, the prophetic words were fulfilled: *All knees will discharge water,*¹ *every man's heart will rot,*² and *on every one of their heads there will be baldness.*³ It so happened at this period that whoever survived his family or his tribe suffered this degrading condition. Sometimes, both knees discharged water in addition to blood and pus, to the point that the head too became bald. Afterwards, the few who survived could not be recognised. Unless by their garments, they could not be recognised or distinguished. No one could distinguish the monks from the priests, because all of them grew bald. Moreover, as the groins swelled so did the armpits and the neck too. Most were slowly released from that† (disease), after some time, but others /p.188/ never completely recovered.

While this affliction, like the labour pain for a pregnant woman, was hitting the country from all sides, the Arabs did not refrain from waging wars and evils against each other. At that time Marwān left the 'Gate⁴ of the Turks while the whole country was troubled and agitated.

745-746 The year one thousand and fifty-seven: Marwān left the territory of the Turks. It is written in Jeremiah the Prophet as follows: *Because of this, thus says the Lord, I shall lay before this people stumbling blocks, fathers and sons together shall stumble against them, and the neighbour and his friend shall perish.*⁵ All of these things happened to the Arabs, for brothers and nephews stumbled against the stumbling blocks of leadership: The partisans of 'Abbās and those of Hishām, and the sons of Walīd (II) and those of Marwān (II), who are brothers, nephews, neighbours and friends.⁶ They fought each other and killed and destroyed many people along with them. Jeremiah also spoke of the departure of Marwān: *Behold, a people is coming from the northern land, a great nation is moving from the ends of the earth, they are armed with bows and spears, they are cruel and have no mercy, their voice is like the agitated sea, they ride upon horses, ready like mighty*

¹ Ezek 7:17.

² Isa 13:7.

³ Isa 15:2.

⁴ **رأس**: Probably a mistake for **أرض** "territory" as is suggested in the following account. "Territory of the Turks" refers to Armenia over which Marwān was governor. See also p. 159 and n. 1. The following account deals with Marwān's bid to avenge the murder of al-Walīd II and to seize power.

⁵ Jer 6:21.

⁶ The Chronicler of Z. seems to refer to the 'Abbasid and Umayyad strife, but the name in the phrase **ابن** **ابن** refers in fact to the Umayyad 'Abbās ibn al-Walīd (I), brother of Ibrāhīm, mentioned shortly after.

*men for battle. We have heard the report of them, our hands faltered, anguish has taken hold on us, pain as that of a woman giving birth. Do not go out into the field, nor take the road, because of the sword of the enemies!*¹ Also Isaiah spoke of them as follows: *I stirred up one from the North to come from the rising of the sun and he shall call on my name; the rulers will come and they will *be trampled* like the clay that the potter treads.*² And also: *From the North evil shall invade all the inhabitants of the earth.*³

After Marwān marched out to the Jazīra, which surrendered to him,⁴ he appointed governors for it in all the cities, /p.189/ including Mosul. He gathered a great army and rushed (to the Jazīra) along with labourers and craftsmen. Then he crossed over to the West against the partisans of ‘Abbās. Yazīd (II), who killed Walīd (II), died six months after, and Ibrāhīm, his brother, replaced him. When the last-named learned that Marwān had crossed the Euphrates, accompanied by numerous troops, and that the Jazīra surrendered to him, he trembled before him: *They reeled and staggered like drunken men.*⁵ Ibrāhīm first sent against him Nu‘aym son of Thābit—it was reported about him that he had seventy sons—along with numerous troops. When they faced each other and waged the battle, the entire army of Thābit was massacred and he was put to flight before Marwān. When the partisans of Ibrāhīm realised that Marwān had vanquished them in the first battle, they trembled. So they massed troops so numerous that they could not be counted and even gathered villagers to fight with slings.

Then the armies marched toward each other, and pitched camp facing one another at ‘Ayn Garrā.⁶ After waging many battles against each other, countless victims falling from both sides, in the end Marwān vanquished them and put them to flight, although Ibrāhīm and his brothers, as well as Sulaymān son of Hishām, fled. A battle like this had never been seen in the world, nor did blood overflow in any other place as it did there. More than five thousand villagers were also killed. After his victory, Marwān besieged Emesa, subdued it [and] destroyed its wall. He exhumed Yazīd (II) from the grave and crucified him, head down, on a stake. He took gold from one Jew, worth four hundred thousand (dinars).

¹ Jer 6:22-25.

² Isa 41:25.

³ Jer 1:14.

⁴ Agapius 513ff. Theophanes 418-419: A.M. 6235 (743-744). Elias I 170, al-Ya‘qūbī II 337, al-Ṭabarī VII 300ff: H. 127 (744). The course of events differs in all of these sources, including the present Chronicle.

⁵ Ps 107:27.

⁶ **تل غرا** : **عين الجر** in Arabic sources (Agapius: **تل غرا**) and **Γάρις** in Theophanes, a site in the vicinity of Damascus; see al-Ya‘qūbī referred to just before.

*Concerning the pastors
of the church who were famous at this time¹*

The holy Mār Yōhānīs succeeded the holy Athanasius, patriarch of Antioch. In Edessa the holy Constantine, the bishop, was famous; in Ḥarrān, the holy Mār Simon of the holy monastery of Qartmīn†; /p.190/ in Samosata another Constantine; in Maipharqat, the holy Mār Athanasius who was nicknamed “Sandēlāiā”² and who later also† became Patriarch; in Amida, Mār Sābā, of the holy monastery of Zuqnīn which is in the district of this city, succeeded the holy Mār Cosmas, and after he completed about twenty years in office he died; he was succeeded by Severus, of the same monastery, who also succumbed to the plague about a year after, while on a pastoral visit; he was succeeded by another Severus of the same monastery†.

Also during this time, a little trouble took place in the church, because of the holy Mār Yōhānīs (the Patriarch), for not everyone wanted to approve him.³

*Concerning the transfer
of the caliphal treasure from the West to the Jazīra⁴*

Marwān, being aware of the hostility which the people of the West harboured toward him, decided to bring† the caliphal treasure to the Jazīra. The people of the West strongly opposed him and started to plot against him. When he realised that they would not give the treasure to him without war, he tricked them, saying: “I want to transfer it to Damascus not to the Jazīra, because the caliphal court is there.” This being done, they allowed him to bring it to Damascus, accompanying it. Thus Marwān brought it to Damascus and sent everyone home a few days later. He remained there for two or three months, after which he stole it without the knowledge of the people of the West and brought it to Ḥarrān, where he himself came and settled.⁵ Since then, he was not free of wars during all the days of his rule.

¹ Bar Hebraeus, *Chr. Eccl.* I, 306ff.

² *سندليّة*: Gentilic “of Sandalia” the latter being a town near Tell-Bashmay, in the region of Ra’s-al-‘Ayn in Northern Syria; *Thesaurus*, 2673. Baršaum, *Histoire*, 25, translated النعال “shoemaker” or “horseshoer”.

³ Michael IV 464ff [II 506ff] offers more details about the conflict that existed between the Patriarch and Athanasius Sandēlāiā.

⁴ al-Azdī 68: Marwān transferred the treasury to the Jazīra; H. 128 (745-746).

⁵ Ḥarrān became the unofficial capital of Marwān; al-Ṭabarī VII 312: H. 127 (744); al-Mas‘ūdī, *Murūj* III 297. After the transfer of the treasure to the Jazīra, al-Azdī 68 wrote that Marwān settled in حران. This must be a corrupt form of حران.

746-747 The year one thousand and fifty-eight: ʿḌaḥḥāk¹ joined the Ḥarurites in the Jazīra.² After Marwān came to the Jazīra, /p.191/ misfortunes did not abate for him. Furthermore, a bad thorn sprang up for him in the land of the Jazīra, for at this time the usurper Ḍaḥḥāk of Mount Izlā, Yaʿqūb, ʿKhaybarī,³ as well as Saksakī appeared on the scene. They marched out and launched several battles against Marwān, killing many of his people. As they engaged in many battles everywhere, in the end Marwān launched a ferocious and mighty battle in ʿTell-Mashrīthā,⁴ in which Ḍaḥḥāk was killed along with all his army. Those who survived were put to flight and they escaped.

747-748 The year one thousand and fifty nine: A powerful and terrible earthquake took place in the Western region: *The earth shall shake violently, the earth shall move exceedingly, and it shall swing like a hut.*⁵ The iniquities, sins and evil doings that are done by us everyday bring about these things, similar ones, and others which are much worse. Where can we show the causes of the earthquakes if these were not brought on by the sins of people? Is it the case that the earth becomes feable, and then, when she quakes and quivers, does she call upon her Maker to come and strengthen her? I do not believe so! But that she cries for help as she quakes, it is because of the wicked deeds that are on her, as she clearly indicated once in the following event.

A tremor took place during the night, and something like the noise of a roaring bull was heard from a great distance. When the morning came, the bishop emphatically ordered that all must gather and go out for prayer, saying that this happened because of sins. When everyone came to the prayer, they went out of the city altogether to a shrine called "Church of the Mother of God," which was located outside the city of Mabbug in the West.⁶ Those people were also Chalcedonians and their bishop marched before them. When

¹ ضحاک : ذسم son of Qays al-Shaybānī who died in H. 127 (744-745); al-Yaʿqūbī II 338f. According to al-Ṭabarī VII 344, 346, his slaying and that of al-Khaybarī (see the following note) took place either in H. 128 (745-746) or in H. 129 (746-747).

² aṭ-Ṭabarī VII 323ff, Yaʿqūbī II 338: H. 127 (744-745); Elias I 170f: H. 128 (745-746), S. 1057 (745-746), Agapius 518ff; Theophanes 421: A.M. 6236 (744-745). See also pp. 164, 181, and 183.

³ سحاک : الخیري (Saʿīd son of Bahdal), officer under the Ḥarurite al-Ḍaḥḥāk; al-Yaʿqūbī II 339, al-Ṭabarī VII 346.

⁴ ائل صحنه : Located between Kefar-Tūthā and Raʿs-al-ʿAyn. Agapius and al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj* III 291, placed the last battle between the latter two cities, whereas al-Ṭabarī VII 345ff placed it at Kefar-Tūthā. The Chronicler of Z. seems to have pinpointed the battle spot.

⁵ Isa 24:19-20.

⁶ Elias I 172: Same date as above. Michael IV 467 [II 510].

they arrived, they all went inside the shrine /p.192/ like goats inside the fold. As they cried out together in prayer, a tremor suddenly occurred. The church collapsed on them, crushing them to death, along with their bishop. None came out alive; all were abruptly crushed in fatal and horrifying fashion, as if in a wine-press. The righteous perished alongside the sinner.

748-749 The year one thousand and sixty: 'The Persian people¹ invaded the land of Syria, subdued the Arabs and ruled over the land in their place.² †Isaiah too† formerly prophesied about these ones, saying: *Ah the Assyrian is the rod of my anger, †and the stick† of my punishment in their hand, against an idolatrous nation I will send him, and against a wrathful people I will command him.*³ He also said: *It will happen on that day, the Lord will whistle for the flies that are at the sources of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bees that are in the land of Assyria, and they will all rest in the valley of Yathuth and in the rocky clefts.*⁴ Indeed, the Persians were "the rod of anger and the stick of punishment in their hand," as the prophet said. They used to hold with their hands sticks, each studded with iron spikes† at its end; and they looked like those who go out to kill dogs. Then he called them "flies and bees"; indeed as the buzzing flies settle on everything and breed and produce a foul smell, so did these who were sorcerers, thieves, adulterers, and bloodthirsty individuals. Wherever one of them went, he caused† evils, in addition to disputes and agitation. They rose up in their land, moving in a large crowd, like a swarm of mean-looking bees that do not turn back. It was in this manner that they gathered and invaded the land.

The Arab army marched down against them near 'Āqūlā,⁵ but it could not withstand them, for they destroyed (most of) it and the rest fled /p.193/ and dispersed. The Persians took away their weapons, horses and a great fortune, because they were all on foot and did not possess anything, except for the sticks they held in their hands.

Joel too said the following about them: *Like the early dawn spread upon the mountains, so is a great and powerful people, their like has never been from of old, nor will be after them until the end of generations. Fire devours before them and behind them a flame burns. The land is like the garden of*

¹ **كردية**: The term "Persians" in Part IV of the Chronicle of Z. refers to the 'Abbasids of 'Irāq, the Umayyads being the "Arabs" (**كندية**). The term "Persians" was coined probably because the 'Abbasid movement started in formerly Persian (Sassanian) territory. Theophanes 424 called the 'Abbasids Χωρασανῖται "people of Khorasan" and Μαυροφόροι "clad in black"; see also Chabot, *Chronique*, p. 43 n. 2.

² Theophanes 424-425: A.M. 6240 (748-749); Agapius 526; Michael IV 465 [II 505ff]. Elias I 172, al-Ṭabarī VII 437ff, al-Ya'qūbī II 344ff: H. 132 (750).

³ Isa 10:5-6a.

⁴ Isa 7:18-19.

⁵ **كوك**: Ancient name of Kūfa in Southern Mesopotamia.

*Eden before them, and like a desolate wilderness behind them and nothing escapes from them. Their appearance is as the appearance of the horse, and like horsemen, so they run.*¹ The prophet rightly invoked the appearance of the horses: just as the horse has a mane on the head and the neck, they too had long hair like the mane of the horse. He also said: *Like horsemen, so they run and like the noise of chariots that rumble on the tops of the mountains, and like the crackling of a fiery flame that devours the straw, and like a powerful nation arrayed for battle. Before them peoples tremble and all faces darken like the blackness of the pot. Like mighty men they run, like men they climb up the walls.*² Also: *They attack the cities, they run upon the walls, they climb upon the houses, they enter through the windows like thieves. The earth shook before them and the heavens trembled.*³ Nahum also said: *Their appearance is like burning torches, they run like lightning, they lay hold on their rulers, they stumble as they go, they hasten to the wall, the battlements are set up.*⁴ Also: *The faces of all of them are black like the blackness of the pot.*⁵ Not only were their faces black but all their clothes were also black. Because all their clothes were black they were called /p.194/ *ʿMusawwādā*,⁶ translated into the Syriac language as *ʿūkāmē*⁷ (“black ones”).

After the conquest of the lower land (by the Persians), Marwān dispatched ʿthe son of Hubayrah⁸ to Nisibis against them. He could not resist them either, and they routed him. Then ʿAbd-Allah, son of Marwān, went against them but he too was vanquished. Then Marwān went too. After waging many battles, the result was numerous casualties on both sides. In the end, they fought such a ferocious and mighty battle that the ground between ʿthe two Zāb rivers⁹ was saturated with the abundant blood which was shed on it. Marwān was routed and fled; his army was scattered and he himself fled and crossed the Euphrates. But all the cities were closed to him, and even the people in the West wanted to fight against him. At this point, he and his followers disappeared and could not be found. Some of those who had been captured were put to death, but the others were held in prisons.

¹ Joel 2:2-4.

² Joel 2:4b-7a.

³ Joel 2:9-10a.

⁴ Nah 2:5b-6.

⁵ Nah 2:10b.

⁶ ܡܫܘܘܕܐ: From Arabic *مُسَوَّدَة* “the black ones”.

⁷ ܡܫܘܘܕܐܝܢ. Theophanes 224: Μαυροφόροι “Black-cloaked”.

⁸ ܝܘܢܢܐ ܒܢ ܗܘܒܝܪܐܗ: Yazīd ibn ʿUmar ibn Hubayrah was the governor of Marwān in Iraq; al-Yaʿqūbī II 341.

⁹ ܝܘܡ ܙܒܐ: According to Yāqūt III 124, the battle took place (in 25 January 750; al-Tabarī VII 435) on the Upper Zāb, hence the expression: *يوم الزاب* “The day of the Zāb”.

As for the Persians, after they had routed Marwān, they flew across the land like evening wolves and like eagles hungry for food, about whom Habakkuk also prophesied, saying: *For lo, I am raising up the Chaldeans, a bold and violent nation, who march through the breadth of the earth to seize habitations that are not their own. Strong and terrible are they, their justice proceeds from themselves.*¹ Indeed they used to march through the breadth of the earth! *Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves, they fly like the eagle hungry for food. They all come for the plunder.*² This prophet rightly likened them to the evening wolves, because the wolf is not visible and cannot be found by people and dogs during the whole day. By the evening time he is hungry, because he does not eat during the entire day. *When the sun rises they are restrained /p.195/ and lie down in their dens. Man goes forth to his work and to his labour until the evening.*³

As wolves howl* when they are hungry, so did the Persians howl, and as the eagle screams when he is hungry, so did they scream. Hence, wherever they arrived, they plundered the property of people like wolves, as it is said: *They all come for the plunder,*⁴ and *at kings he scoffs and rulers he mocks and he laughs at all the fortresses.*⁵ How is it not appropriate that the prophecy says: *He laughs at fortresses*, since all the walls of the cities were torn down with their own hands? What had been built by strong and wise kings at the cost of much gold for protection from enemies was destroyed by the Persians! It says: *He scoffs at kings and rulers he mocks.* How could he scoff and mock if not through destroying their fortresses?

The first 'governor⁶ of the Jazīra was 'Akkī.⁷ An order was issued that all Muslims be clad in black.

742-743 The year one thousand and fifty-four:⁸ The stars in the sky fell at the beginning of Latter *Kanūn* (January), on a Friday, and they were seen like fiery balls flying in all directions. They predicted the calamities, sword, and plague that were to occur in the land afterward, as well as *the advent* of the Persians.

¹ Hab 1:6-7a.

² Hab 1:8-9a.

³ Ps 104:22-23.

⁴ Hab 1:9a.

⁵ Hab 1:10.

⁶ **حاجل**: Arabic **عامل** "agent" with the Syriac emphatic ending.

⁷ **حجج**: Muqātil ibn Ḥakīm al-'Akkī was in fact the second governor of the Jazīra (753), the first being none other than 'Abd-Allah (later Caliph al-Manṣūr), whose governorship was between 749-752. See below p. 189 and al-Ṭabarī VII 447-8, 460, 465, 467, 470.

⁸ Michael IV 465 [II 507]: January S. 1056 (645).

749-750 The year one thousand and sixty-one: The Arabs (in Syria) 'put on white.¹ When the Arabs realised the evils that the Persians (= 'Abbasids) were making them suffer, and that they did not refrain from slaughtering them like sheep, and from looting their possessions, they could not restrain themselves anymore and put on white. For the prophet said: *They scoff at kings and rulers,*² and *the mean ones shall rule over the great ones and the infamous over the honourable ones.*³ Now the Arabs put on white /p.196/ and killed many people among the Persians, chased them, and marched against their land before they had even ruled for one full year. Civil war broke out when 'Buraykah⁴ joined the Ḥarurite movement.⁵

750-751 The year one thousand and sixty-two: The Arabs of Maipharqat rebelled against their own region and started to cause great harm to the people of the mountain and of the plain. For Qurra, son of Thābit, marched against 'the district of Qulab,⁶ captured its chiefs, and killed seven of them. When this happened and the slaughter became known, 'the allies⁷ (of Qulab) in 'the district of Pheis(on)⁸ restrained themselves lest they should suffer more harm than their allies. Nevertheless, a courageous, faithful and God-fearing man named John, son of Daddī, a native of the same village of Pheis(on), gathered all the citizens of the district of Pheis(on), and spoke to them: "Today you know that there is no king to avenge our blood on these people. If we ignore them, they will gather against us to remove us from the land along with all that we have!" The citizens quickly gave in to him, followed him and made him their chief. He also took them into a holy shrine, and they swore by the holy sacraments to obey all that he would order them and not to disobey his command nor to betray him in any way. As for him, he grew exceedingly strong since he made God his own chief. He took his band and appointed over it military commanders, officers of a thousand, officers of a hundred, officers of fifty, and officers of ten; he also placed guards* at all the passes leading to the mountain.

¹ **سوا**: Translation of Arabic بَيْض. In contrast, the people of al-'Iraq put on black; on the event see al-Ṭabarī VII 446f: H. 132 (750). See also p. 196.

² Hab 1:10.

³ Cf Isa 3:4-5.

⁴ **بريكة**: The head of the Rab'ā tribe in Dara and Mardīn, whom Abū Ja'far (later Caliph al-Manṣūr) fought and killed; see al-Ṭabarī VII 447 and below pp. 206-207.

⁵ See also pp. 164, 177 and esp. p. 183.

⁶ **كولاب** (= إقليم كولاب): City in Sophanene near Pheison.

⁷ **كشمة**: Lit. "their brothers". In a political-military context the term "brother" means "ally". This is also the case in Biblical Hebrew (Amos 1:9), Sumerian (ŠEŠ), Akkadian (*Ahū*), and neo-Aramaic.

⁸ **كشمة**: Town in Sophanene, a little less than a one-day march from Maipharqat; Procopius, *Buildings* III iii 1.

Then a man by the name Sawāda came and promised all the Arabs of /p.197/ Maipharqat *that he would bring* the severed heads of the chiefs of the mountain, and fetter the others. After he made such promises, he led a large troop and marched out toward the people (of Pheison) as if he were asking for peace. They, being aware of his treacherous plan, suddenly fell upon him and killed many of his people. The others mounted horses, escaped, and entered the city. On this account, a great enmity arose† between the two parties.

Both the Arab and Christian parties agreed that the governor, who had been residing in the fortress of Qulab for two years, must come down from the fortress. He did not agree, and so they rebelled against him. The Arabs wanted him to bring him down from there lest he should rebel alongside the people of the mountain, and the 'Syrians¹ also wanted him to come down lest he should act perfidiously toward them. As for him, resisting both parties, he strengthened his position inside the fortress itself. He also gathered malicious people and set himself as their chief. Furthermore, he led the whole band and came down to capture villagers and bring them up to the fortress. Thus he suddenly fell upon (the villages) Elul and Pashpasha† in which he and his army committed all abominations, fettering all the inhabitants and pillaging all their possessions. But while they were having evils done to them, the villagers secretly sent a message to John: "Hasten to us lest we should be driven into captivity!" When John learned about the distress of his allies, he became alarmed and hastily led his army, marching down toward them. It was still night when they surrounded the village in which the band was. He sent a message to the band: "Come out of the village and go in peace!" Nonetheless, the governor was not persuaded and led his armed band, marching out to fight against them. But John fell upon the governor, killing him /p.198/ along with his band. The Lord turned the wickedness of the governor onto himself, caused his defeat before John's army, and he died.

In the same mountain, there was among the chiefs a man named Stephen, son of Paul; he was a native of the mountaint†, a villain and a treacherous man. Stephen, breaking the oath which he had sworn to John before the holy sacraments, acted perfidiously against him all the time, his mind being in agreement with the Arabs. He treacherously sent a message to the Arab army, and 'Awf came to him in a village called 'Hazrō² with a great army. He treacherously made an agreement with them that they might bring John and deliver him into his hands; this he did and carried out according to his mind. But God did not give the wicked man his desire; the plan that he conceived

¹ ܡܫܝܝܢ: Reference to the "Christians"; for the term see above p. 155 n. 5.

² ܐܝܘ: The toponym is added in the margin. Chabot located it between Maipharqat and Amida; *Chronique*, p. 48 n. 2. For the form of the name see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 198 n. 2.

against the innocent man turned against himself and his fellows, and the pit that had been dug by them was filled with their own bodies.

Stephen brought 'Awf and two of his colleagues inside a house and hid them in a room. He made an agreement with them that when John had been brought and was introduced to him inside the house, they would themselves exit the room and kill him. He then placed the army in ambush around the village (of Ḥazrō). He hastily sent a message to John: "Hurry up! Do not fail to come! Let us see what we may do, for an army is surrounding us on all sides." Out of innocence, John promptly came like a lamb to the slaughter, unaware of anything. Just before he entered the house in which the ambush had been set for him, as if by the will of God, a faithful and God-fearing man, who was aware of this secret agreement, turned up and divulged to him the conspiracy, and so he went back hurriedly. While Stephen's army was expecting him to come to fulfil upon him /p.199/ their wish, John secretly sent an army against theirs, surrounding them on all sides. They were shot with spears, and none of them escaped. Neither Stephen nor 'Awf, their military commander, were yet aware of anything. When they did learn what had happened to their army, they mounted fast horses they had and sought to escape. They were not able to escape because people pursued them quickly, overtook 'Awf and massacred him as well as his men with the sword, and they died. As for Stephen, when he realised that his conspiracy and that of Satan his father had been exposed, he escaped to the 'city',¹ saved himself and lived. He never again went to the mountain out of fear.

From this point onward, evils dangerously increased between the people of the mountain and the Arabs, for they committed murder against each other every day without end. The people of the mountain seized all the passes; not one Arab was seen in the whole mountain. But another thorn emerged for the mountaineers from their own party: an Urṭian man named Grigor. He marched out against them with a great army and fought with those that dwell along the river Ḥarē,² killing many people and capturing others. Their body members were severed: ears were amputated; noses were cut off; and eyes were gouged with a hot bar. Nevertheless, all the inhabitants of the 'Ṣahiā² mountain restrained themselves and became allies with John.

In the eastern regions, Buraykah joined the Ḥarurite movement.³ In the region of Edessa, 'Ubayd-Allah, son of Bukhturī, appeared and caused many

¹ ܩܪܝܐ: Is it ܩܪܝܐ "to Amida" or ܩܪܝܐܐ "to the city"? The abbreviation of the latter word should not include an *olaf*.

² ܩܪܝܐ ܩܪܝܐ: "The arid mountain" was located on the Tigris near the city of Balad. The name also referred to the southern part of the Taurus mountains; Chabot, *Chronique*, p. 49 n. 2.

³ al-Ṭabarī VII 447: H. 132 (749-750). About Buraykah see p. 181. About the Ḥarurites see pp. 164 and 177.

calamities to numerous people, namely at Bēth-Ma'dē. He seized its notables for their gold, and roasted them with fire like /p.200/ fish. He killed many and pillaged and destroyed all the monasteries which were located in the regions of Edessa, Harrān and Tella; he destroyed them and took away all their possessions. He also killed their abbots by roasting them with fire.

The following are the monasteries and the many villages that he destroyed: The 'monastery of Qūbē,¹ the 'monastery of Rishmat in Ṭishpa,² the 'monastery of Qetrē,³ the great monastery of Ḥesmē, the monastery of Mār Lazarus and Bēth Ma'dē, the 'monastery of Mār Abel,⁴ the 'monastery of Mār Miles,⁵ and the 'monastery of Sinnīn,⁶ along with many villages. Now this impious man directed all *his enmity* against the monasteries, but Satan stirred him up against churches too. Moreover, he threatened the eastern and northern monasteries everyday to take the vengeance of his father the Devil on them.

*Concerning three consecutive hard winters,
the abundant snow that fell, and the destruction of cattle, animals
and birds that perished because of the severe cold*

In the year in which the rebellion took place (750-751), abundant snow fell and accumulated on the ground up to five spans. It remained on the ground for ninety days and in the open country for seventy days, until fall flesh† almost perished. Many people who had cattle and wheat brought out the wheat and gave it to the cattle, when their supply of fodder had been exhausted, lest they die of starvation. But when the wheat ran out, their cattle came to be at risk and all died like locusts, their meat not even being eaten by people. There was excessivē† cold, ice and thick hoarfrost, and† /p.201/ for

¹ The "Monastery of the domes", at the foot of Mt. Edessa, was built in the early fifth century. It was rebuilt after its destruction; Barṣaum, *Histoire*, 513.

² ܩܘܒܝܐ ܕܪܝܫܡܬ: Read ܩܘܫܝܐ (RḤMT) in *BO* ii 109. Ṭishpa was located near Amida; see Land, *Anecdota* II, 119:10 = John of Ephesus, *Lives*, 214:7.

³ This monastery was carved in the mountain that dominated the monastery of Za'farān; Barṣaum, *Histoire*, 513.

⁴ It could not be the monastery of Mār Abraham and Abel located near Midiāt since that was built around 763 according to Barṣaum, *Histoire*, 508. Or it could be the one located in the region of Edessa; see above p. 153.

⁵ ܩܘܩܝܢܐ ܕܡܝܠܝܐ: Assemani read ܩܘܩܝܢܐ as transcribed above; Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 200 n. 5.

⁶ A monastery near Edessa mentioned in the years 512 and 565; Barṣaum, *Histoire*, 511.

several days fog¹ grew so denser over the land that a person could barely see the path ahead of him. It settled, like the snow, on trees, vineyards, and olive trees, so that they were all damaged, trees, vineyards, olive trees and gardens, all alike. In fact there was hardly anything that was not seriously damaged by heavy ice and hoarfrost. Rivers froze to the point that horses could cross them vigorously*, and the ice would not break beneath them. The Tigris too became so hard that a big caravan of camels crossed it and the ice did not break beneath their hooves. Nevertheless, all the animals of the steppe and the birds of the sky died. Thus snow, cold, hoarfrost, as well as famine, rebellion, disease and pestilence occurred for three consecutive years, until the whole southern region almost perished.

*Concerning the famine that took place
in these years, and concerning the Armenian and Urtian
peoples that invaded Syria²*

As the snow accumulated on the whole land for a long time and time passed while the surface of the ground was not cleared, all the planted seeds perished under the snow, for they rotted and were uprooted by the frost and dried up. After the snow was cleared, nothing sprang up other than briars and thorns. Therefore, the statement of the prophet was fulfilled upon us: *Cursed is the ground because of you, thorns and thistles it shall sprout for you,³ and when you shall work it shall not yield to give you its power.⁴* Another one says: *Sow wheat and harvest thorns, be tired and you will profit nothing. Be ashamed of your crops.⁵*

The land produced for us thorns, thistles and briars. Instead of wheat, darnel grew up, instead of barley, thistle sprouted, /p.202/ and instead of beans, lentils and chick-peas, thorns sprang up. When the seed did happen to grow, at times to some height, mildew and sultry wind attacked it and destroyed it. And if it escaped cold, ice and sultry wind, the weevil attacked it head-on and the locust⁶ ravaged it. For if you took ten ears (of wheat) and rubbed them with your hands, not a single grain could be found in them. Thus because of the sultry wind, many fields were left unharvested. If the crops

¹ Կռօք: Lit. "darkness".

² In this section nothing much is said about the movement of the Armenians and Urtians. This issue is discussed in a forthcoming section; see below p. 211.

³ Gen 3:17-18.

⁴ Cf Gen 3:17-18.

⁵ Cf Jer 12:13.

⁶ Կռօք: A kind of locust; Margoliouth, *Dictionary*, 510. Not all the names of insects here and below can be identified with certainty.

looked red and tall, it was because the poison that came down on them was red. It came down and settled on them like the hoarfrost that settled on the trees in winter. The colour of wheat changed into red too.

It is over these things that Amos the prophet called upon us, saying: *I smote you with sultry wind, mildew and hail-stones. The locust devoured the multitude of your gardens, vineyards, fig trees and olive trees, yet you did not return to me, says the Lord. I sent among you a pestilence, I slew your young men along with your old men with the sword, and I made you smell the stink of your putrefaction with your nostrils.*¹

During this year for one dinar one *gerībā*² of wheat was sold, but this was lowered to seven *qefizā*³ (homers) per dinar.

*Concerning the locust and weevil
which the land had bred during these years*

When harvest time drew near and every one looked for the sheaves, the ground bred many insects that climbed up over the wheat, barley and all vegetation. The ears of barley which they attacked were completely destroyed, and therefore, their feeding spot could not be identified. When these ears of barley were almost ripe, they would suddenly /p.203/ dry up and nothing would be left of them except for the husk, a clear indication to knowledgeable people that insects had sucked all the juices from the ears, thereby robbing them of their vitality. Soon they changed their colour.

People named them locusts and weevils because they were not of the same nature and shape. If the insect was round and colourful, they called it locust. The weevil was similarly round but small, and its proboscis was long like that of a mosquito, and speckled with various colours (like) a gadfly. As wise men think, this was the same plague that was sent to the Egyptians at the hand of Moses⁴ because it was the same locust, the same grub, and the same gadfly. Nevertheless, this plague destroyed only the wheat, as the insect attacked the ears of wheat or barley from the root up to the top, including the leaves.

¹ Amos 4:9-10.

² **جرīb**: Arabic جريب, a measure of capacity equal to four or ten *qefizā* (homers), depending on times and countries. The term also refers to the size of the field sown with that measure; Lane, *Lexicon* I, p. 403. In the Jazīra and at the time of the Chronicler, the value of the *gerībā* must have been ten *qefizā*, as is suggested in the passage above and elsewhere in Part IV of the Chronicle.

³ **قفيز**: Arabic قفيز, measure of capacity, one tenth of a *gerībā*; see the previous note.

⁴ Cf Ex 10:14.

Concerning the creeping locusts

There were also many creeping locusts that damaged vineyards and trees, as well as all the fruits. Because of their multitude, they moved along the ground, covering all the places, for the ground itself used to spew them up, throwing them out. Thus vineyards, trees, fruits, and vegetables were all damaged, which were all the livelihood of people.

Concerning the locusts

It is written in the prophecy: *He gave their crops to the locust and all their labour to the hopping locust,*¹ that is, the walking locust that has no wings to fly and go. Its harm was enormous and far worse than that of all the plagues of wrath.

It is said about the weevil: If it settles on a heap of wheat it destroys it. This is confirmed by the fact that /p.204/ when the weevil settled on a ripe field that was ready for harvest, the wheat would be destroyed. And while the wheat would seem ripe and beautiful from the outside, the inside, when one crushed it, it would disintegrate into powder. Even if it was sowed, it would not grow because it had been spoiled. Nor did the lower land escape this calamity. The entire land ejected locusts and they spread out, damaging the green crops, vineyards, gardens, trees and all the green grass. Therefore, the prophecy pronounced by Joel the prophet was fulfilled upon us: *Hear this, O you aged men, give ear all you inhabitants of the land! Has such a thing happened in your days or in the days of your fathers? Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. What the creeping locust left, the flying locust has eaten, and what the flying locust left, the crawling locust has eaten, and what the crawling locust left, the cricket has destroyed.*² Then even additional woes came upon us, surpassing those in the prophecy: snow and hoarfrost that destroyed all the trees, and what escaped from that, sultry wind, mildew, locusts, crawling locusts, crickets, gadflies and creeping locusts attacked until famine prevailed against people beyond measure.

↑Wheat began to disappear from granaries, and was lowered down from one *gerībā* for a dinar to seven *qefīzā* (homers) for a dinar, when it was available at all.³

¹ Ps 78:46.

² Joel 1:2-4.

³ The same information is given above p. 186.

*Concerning the Armenian and Urṭian peoples
who invaded the Syrian territories because of famine, and
concerning the abscesses, fever, pestilence, and various sicknesses that
invaded the country on their arrival*

God sent several plagues against the wheat, barley and vineyards, as well as against all the livelihood of people, because of the sins and iniquities that were being committed every /p.205/ day. Famine grew severe in the land, especially in Armenia and in the 'land of the Urṭians,¹ because all their crops were destroyed and nothing remained for their sustenance: When He wants, He dries up with the cold, and then when He wants, He softens with the heat. Look! Here He dried up with the cold!

The whole of Armenia moved away because of the famine that struck the inhabitants, and marched out to Syria, fearing they would die along with their children in the famine. But they did not escape Wrath in this way either: *I will give them bitter water to drink and I will feed them with wormwood. I will scatter them among the nations whom they have not known, and I will send after them sword, captivity, famine and pestilence, until I have consumed them.*² The Spirit said these words and all of them were applied to these people.

They marched out and filled the entire land: cities, monasteries, villages and fields. They sold all they possessed and bought for themselves bread, causing famine in the land. Moreover, abscesses, diarrhoea, and then ulcers overpowered them. Wherever 'they arrived,³ 'they used to occupy⁴ porticoes, shrines, churches, towers, and every other place. Pestilence also overpowered them and most of them died to such an extent that people were not able to bury them. Wherever they went, the hand of the Lord was upon them to harm them.

The affliction of famine, abscesses and ulcers overpowered the Syrians too and exterminated them. The victims of the famine were more numerous than the victims of the diseases. In this year, from 'our monastery /p.206/ of ZuqnĪn,⁵ forty-two people—not counting the strangers—died of ulcers, for this disease and the pestilence prevailed everywhere.

751-752 The year one thousand and sixty-'three:⁶ The Persians ('Abbasids) returned to the country with many forces. They fought and

¹ ܐܘܪܬܝܢ ܕܥܝܢܝܬܝܢ: The region of Anzitene; see p. 40 and n. 6 above.

² Cf Jer 9:15-16.

³ MS: "... one of them arrived".

⁴ ܥܥܡ ܥܝܢܝܢ: For ܥܥܡ ܥܝܢܝܢ?

⁵ ܥܥܡܝܢܝܢ ܕܥܝܢܝܢ ܕܐܘܪܬܝܢ: An indication that the Chronicler of Z. was a monk of this monastery. ZuqnĪn was located near Amida (Diyār-Bakr).

⁶ ܕܠܝܬܝܢ: Corrected in MS from ܕܠܝܬܝܢ "two"

vanquished all those who resisted them in war. They caused a great massacre among the Arabs of Mosul¹ and 'Āqūlā, slaying the great as well as the small.

'Abd-Allah, son of Muḥammad,² the brother of the Persian ('Abbasid) Caliph, came up and fought with Buraykah near Dara and routed him. Buraykah fled before him.³ When 'Abd-Allah learned about all the evil committed by the Arabs of Maipharqat against the Syrians of their region, and about what the Syrians had also done, he sent messengers to John, who came down to him in Ḥarrān. He received him joyfully, honoured him with gifts, and made him chief over his region whereto he sent him back.

Nevertheless, Ṣāliḥ,⁴ son of Ṣubayḥ, came up, and while he was entering Armenia, he took hostages from the whole mountain and placed them in Maipharqat. This took place before John came up from Ḥarrān, where he was with 'Abd-Allah, from whom he brought up a decree that the hostages must be handed over to him. When he went up, Ṣāliḥ freed all the women among the hostages. Because the Arabs of Maipharqat had bribed Ṣāliḥ, so that he would take revenge on their behalf on John and his men, Ṣāliḥ put John off with promises, saying: "Today or tomorrow I will free the rest." But they remained in prison for a long time, where various diseases overpowered them and many of them died. Thus Ṣāliḥ put John off with promises for many days, seeking an opportunity to kill John, as well as the hostages, so as to appease the Arabs of Maipharqat.

But John dispatched /p.207/ messengers to 'Abd-Allah, the amīr of the Jazīra, and on the day Ṣāliḥ was going to crucify John on the stake early in the morning, a messenger⁵ came after him and released him from prison. Then John and Stephen, son of Paul, went down to Ḥarrān, where the Lord struck Stephen and he died. Thus the Lord turned onto him his own evil. As for John, he sent a decree and quickly freed all those who were detained by Ṣāliḥ as hostages.

749-750 The year one thousand and sixty-one: Constantine (V), the Roman Emperor, marched out with numerous forces, tore down Melitene, and

¹ حَمِيد: al-Ya'qūbī II 357: H. 133 (750-751); the people of Mosul revolted against their governor and as a consequence they were punished by al-Saffāḥ. It is said that so much blood was shed in Mosul that the water of the Tigris turned red.

² حَبْدَلَةُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ: He is Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr and brother of 'Abd-Allah Abul-'Abbās known as al-Saffāḥ, first 'Abbasid Caliph.

³ al-Ṭabarī VII 447: Buraykah was killed in the battle initiated by Abū Ja'far.

⁴ سَالِحٌ: Here and below the name is written *Ṣalīḥ* for Ṣāliḥ (ibn Ṣubayḥ). This man was appointed governor over Armenia in 133 H. (750-751) by al-Saffāḥ but was removed by the last-named from that post in the following year; al-Ṭabarī VII 460, 465.

⁵ رَسُولٌ: Arabic رسول with the Syriac emphatic ending. This Arabism is used probably because the messenger was of the "Arab" amīr. In other contexts familiar

razed it.¹ He ousted its inhabitants, without killing anyone or taking any of their possessions. He simply brought them out and sent them away. All of them went to the Jazīra. He then destroyed Melitene's wall down to its foundation and burned its houses, after which he took his army and returned to his land.

752-753 The year one thousand and sixty-four: The Persians ('Abbasids) destroyed the cities to their foundations. After the Persians returned to the country for the second time, subdued it, strengthened it and ruled in it, they destroyed all the walls of the Syrian cities to their foundations at the order of the Caliph. Many labourers and workmen gathered and tore down all the walls, burned their gates and took away their plated copper and iron. 'What strong and wise kings had built at high cost for the protection †from enemies†, the Persians tyrannically destroyed and threw on the ground.² Therefore, the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning them was fulfilled: *The broad walls shall be completely destroyed and her high gates shall be burned with fire. The nations shall labour in vain.*³ He also said: *The Lord planned* to destroy the walls of the daughter of Zion; /p.208/ he stretched out the line and did not withdraw his hand from destroying it; he caused its forces to sit in mourning and its walls became desolate altogether.*⁴ Jeremiah, the Prophet, should come now† and mourn over not one single Zion whose walls have been torn down, but over all the cities of the Jazīra and the West. Ezra, the Scribe, also wrote about the destruction of city-walls,⁵ and about this winding snake that demolished them: *He lowers the walls that did not sin, †for one builds and another destroys.*⁶

753-754 The year one thousand and sixty-five: The whole northern land was laid waste by Kushan,⁷ an Armenian man from Fourth Armenia. When Marwān was routed and he fled, Kushan took away all his possessions and people and entered the Roman territories. Because he was a bold and powerful man, Constantine (V) appointed him as a military commander. In this year, he marched out with a great army and attacked the whole Šahiā Mountain.⁸ He

كوسان is used instead.

¹ Elias I 172-173 and al-Ya'qūbī II 362: 133 H. (750-751). Michael IV 472 [II 518]: S. 1063 (751-752). Theophanes 427: A.M. 6243 (751-752). al-Ṭabarī VII 497: H. 138 (755-756). Agapius 531. For the location of Melitene see p. 150 n.5. See also p. 201.

² Similar statement in p. 180.

³ Jer 51:58.

⁴ Lam 2:8.

⁵ Ezra 4:12, 16; 5:3, 9.

⁶ Sir 31 (34):23.

⁷ Agapius 531: كوسان.

⁸ For the location of the mountain see above p. 183, n. 2.

spoiled and pillaged all the villagers who inhabited it, taking away all their possessions and everything which they owned. He left nothing he did not take, with the exception of the lives of the dispossessed people. These he spared and let be. Then he carried away everything and entered the Roman land.

754-755 In the year one thousand and sixty-six: Kushan, the Armenian, marched out again to the land of Anzitene with many Roman and Urṭian forces. When 'Akkī, who was the amīr over the Jazīra at this time,¹ heard about this, he gathered many forces made of Persians and Arabs to go against him. And he appointed over them his son as chief and sent him to fight with Kushan. Now when the young man marched with pride and a greatly excited spirit, and both armies faced each other, he underestimated the enemy. For youth is akin to disorder, and because it is not /p.209/ experienced, nor is it docile, it falls into an abyss of misfortunes. Old men trained in battles and knowledgeable about numerous tactics that occur in war as well as its courses, advised him verbally not to rush to fight with Kushan because the last-named was experienced in battles, powerful, and a man who would not retreat; what is more, he was familiar with the land and its routes, being a native who had grown up in it. He, then, disregarded the counsel of the old who counselled him—a second Rehoboam, the foolish son (of Solomon) who followed the counsel of the young men who had grown up with him.² As he rushed quickly to make a name for himself through victory, he quickly acquired for himself an infamous reputation, full of shame and ignominy for many generations to come.

So he marched in haste, wanting quickly to fall upon Kushan and exterminate him, and all those who were with him, from the earth, take into captivity the rest, pillage, spoil and win a great victory. When Kushan witnessed the young man's behaviour, he stamped the ground with his foot, thrust out his lips, shook his head, and said: "This is the day that the Lord has prepared to take revenge on my enemies. Come and let us exult and rejoice in it!"³ When he advanced to do battle, and casualties began to fall on both sides, Kushan tightened his grip on the Persians and they started to flee before him. Then he fell upon all of them with the blade of his sword, capturing many and spoiling and plundering the dead. At this point, the son of 'Akkī fled, with only his life, mounting a fast horse. Thus he escaped, leaving all his belongings in the hands of the Romans. If it had not been for the few among them who were riding horses, and who also abandoned all that they possessed and fled†, no one among them would have remained without being slain by Kushan's army. While the young man hastened to acquire fame and victory, he brought

¹ Correct information; see al-Ṭabarī VII 470: H 136 (A.D. 753-754).

² 1Kgs 12:8.

³ Cf Ps 118:24.

forth for himself and for the house of his father a foul name. And instead of his determination /p.210/ to plunder, spoil and take many into captivity, he was plundered, spoiled, fettered†, and exiled.

During this time the Orthodox pastors known in the church were: the holy Mār Yōhānīs, Patriarch of Antioch, the holy Mār Michael, Patriarch of Great Alexandria, the holy Mār Timothy, (Bishop) of Edessa, Constantine, Bishop of Samosata, Dionysius, Bishop of Harrān, Sargūna, Bishop of Mardē (Mardīn), David, Bishop of Dara, who also became Patriarch later.

In Maipharqat, Athanasius (IV), nicknamed Sandēlāiā, was known. He built a famous monastery on the mountain of Tell-Bashmay, called monastery of Mār Athanasius and also became patriarch later.

In Amida the holy Mār Ābay of the monastery of Mār Habīb in Arzanene was known. The holy Mār Severus of the monastery of Zuqnīn, whom we mentioned above, resigned while he was alive from the administration of the city because his vision grew weak, and he could not see well. The holy Mār Ābay replaced him.

John, Bishop of Callinicum, was also known. He caused many troubles in the church, which we will discuss in due time.¹

After the holy Mār Yōhānīs, Patriarch of Antioch, a monk named Isaac of the monastery of Qartmīn became patriarch, and established his residence in Edessa.² But because he was practising alchemy of silver and gold, he won the friendship of ‘Abd-Allah, the amīr of the Jazīra, who †later also† became Caliph (al-Manṣūr). As ‘Abd-Allah sought to honour this friendship, he appointed Isaac patriarch of Antioch after Mār Yōhānīs. But ranks, /p.211/ which are acquired outside the rule, are very bad. For after ‘Abd-Allah greatly elevated his friend, he quickly extended the noose of Judas and gave it to him. People did not love Isaac much, and his leadership did not last long, because the same one who elevated him, dethroned him and even killed him. People did not know what happened to his body. It did not even deserve burial by people.³ This is the fair reward that Satan is accustomed to give to those who follow him in this world.

Isaac was followed by the venerable Mār Athanasius (IV) Sandēlāiā, Bishop of Maipharqat.⁴ He did not live long either, because he too quickly perished

¹ Cf p. 193ff.

² Chronicon 813 p. 243:1-244:22 [185-186], Chronicon 819 p. 18 [13], Chronicon 846 p. 236:18-21 [170], Elias I 174-175 (mentions the death of Yōhānīs only), and Michael IV 473-474 [III 523]: S. 1066 (754-755). The accounts in Chronicon 813 and Michael are detailed.

³ According to Chronicon 813 and Michael, the body was thrown in the river.

⁴ Chronicon 813 p. 244:23-245-11 [186]. Chronicon 819 p. 18:23-25 [13] and Chronicon 846 p. 236:22-29 [179]: Athanasius became patriarch in S. 1069 and died in 11 June of the same year (758). Michael IV 475 [III 524-525].

and died. Other people say other things. As for us, we dare not say anything about concealed things, but we leave them to God before whom all is manifested and exposed. He was taken from Ḥarrān up to his monastery¹ where †he was buried†. After him came the holy Mār George of the holy monastery of Qinnishrin.

*Concerning the council
that was convened for the election of George as
patriarch of Antioch in Mabbug, a city on the Euphrates river,
in the shrine of Mār Thomas the Apostle
which is outside the city²*

There were many reasons behind the appointment of Isaac and Athanasius (IV) Sandēlāiā, patriarchs that caused the believers to stumble. Many among the members of the church stumbled because of them, especially because both were appointed †by †the decree of a tyrannic ruler.³ There were also other† charges that followed them, but there is no need to include these in the present book.

After the death of the venerable Athanasius, all the shepherds of the holy church wanted to appoint over them a leader, before Satan laid in them the love of /p.212/ leadership, in which case they would fall into the hands of the tyrannic ruler.⁴ Such †an end† would be worse than the beginning, for schism, controversy and confusion that would take place in the holy church would mark their own tenure. This is what happened to them, as it †is stated† by the righteous one: *The thing that they feared came upon them,*⁵ for †they neither kept still nor did they settle down, but trouble came⁶ and the thing that they feared befell them quickly.

All the shepherds of Mosul, the Jazīra and the West unanimously decided to meet quickly of one accord†, one good mind and one understanding.

¹ Monastery of Athanasius near Tell-Bashmay.

² Chronicon 813 p. 245:11-246:1 [186-187], Chronicon 846 p. 237:1-5 [179], Elias I 176: S. 1070 (758-759). Chronicon 813 p. 245: 11-16 [186] and Michael IV 475 [II 525-]: *Kānūn* (December/January) S. 1070 (758-759).

³ *ܩܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ ܕܥܝܣܝܐ*: Chabot emended the second word into *ܩܘܪܝܢܐ* (from Arabic أمير); therefore the sentence could be translated: “They were appointed by an amīr of tyrannic power”. Chabot’s emendation is unnecessary, since *ܩܘܪܝܢܐ* is an Arabism: أمر “decree, order ...”. *ܩܘܪܝܢܐ* is not the Syriac substantive for “rule” but an Arabism: سلطان.

⁴ This was the case of Isaac, who became patriarch through the interference of Caliph al-Manṣūr; see above p. 192.

⁵ Cf Job 3:25.

⁶ Cf Job 3:26.

Therefore, all the bishops, together with respectable people and the faithful, decided (to meet) in the city of Mabbug, in the shrine of Mār Thomas. After they had met for one or two days, and many issues had been discussed between them about many (candidates), and after this one praised that one and another came and criticised, several days had elapsed, and at the end this is what happened.

There was one man in Ba'althan*¹ in the holy monastery of Qinnishrīn, who lived chastely† in this place, and who excelled in devotional practices. He was also well-known and famous, as well as learned and zealous for all good things. His name was George, and he was ordained Deacon in his monastery. All the bishops, unitedly and in common agreement and accord, selected him and confirmed him in his absence. They quickly selected local respectable people, whom they dispatched to bring him to them. They all went in and greeted him. They also wrote their consent, stamped the written document with the thumb and gave it to him. Prominent among them were John of Callinicum, Timothy of Edessa, David of Dara, Ābay of Amida, Sargūna of Mardē, Stephen of Ḥābūrā,² Constantine of Samosata, /p.213/ Cyriacus of Ṭ(ū)r-'Abdīn, Dionysius of Ḥarrān and Elijah of Sinjār. From Mosul, Paul of Takrīt, Zakkay of ḤKarma,³ Jonah of ḤBēth Nūhadhra,⁴ along with many others. Also from the West, the following:

5

After the bishops wrote the document, approved it and sealed it, they were all ready to lay on George the hands, according to the rule existing in the church. But Satan realised that peace was about to settle in the whole church. He did not neglect this matter, nor did he keep quiet, stay still or relinquish it. Rather, he quickly summoned a monk, brought him there, and made in him his abode, because he could not be publicly seen troubling them, disturbing them and creating divisions among the bishops. As with Eve he was not able to speak in person lest his fraud be manifested and he be exposed, so here too he acted in the same manner and did it thoroughly. There he selected a snake, in which he entered and made his abode, and through which he fulfilled all his desires. Here he selected for himself a monk as advocate, and achieved

¹ ܫܠܬܢ (sic): For ܫܠܬܢ a village in the district of Emesa; Michael IV 475 [525].

² ܫܚܘܪܐ: For the location of this city on the middle Euphrates see Harrak, in *Symposium 1992*, 449-456.

³ ܫܫܘܪܐ: ܫܫܘܪܐ opposite Takrīt; Yāqūt IV 457.

⁴ ܫܫܘܪܐ: Also known as ܫܫܘܪܐ ܫܫܘܪܐ, Arabic باهدرا، باهدرا، باهدرا. This West Syriac diocese was located in East Syriac territory, the boundaries of which shifted in times; see Fiey, *Répertoire*, 66. The centre of the West Syriac diocese was either the Monastery of Nardos (modern Dayr Jundī) or Ma'althāyā; *ibid.*, 178.

⁵ One blank line was left in the MS probably intended to be filled with the names of the bishops of the West.

through him all his desires.

The name of the man was John and his home was in the 'black ruins of (Mount) Ayshūmāt,¹ where he had been living a wandering life of (eremitic) exile for a long time. Like someone who knew George, he approached the bishops of the Jazīra, especially the Qartmīnites, saying: "How do you want to make patriarch over yourselves a man who threatened your monastery when he said: 'If I will have power in the Church, I will destroy the name of Qartmīn*² and that of the monastery of Athanasius from earth!'" After he confused them and provoked them at length, they believed in his speech—even though they did not know venerable George—and did not understand that its whole purport originated in Satan himself. Then they quickly mounted their horses, and secretly /p.214/ departed to their region.

When those who remained realised that their colleagues had departed, they greatly trembled and grew afraid: on the one side, lest they should create division and trouble in the Church in case they made George patriarch in the absence of their colleagues; and on the other side, because they had brought the man. And it was on the point of becoming a disgrace and scandal in the world—for the matter was not told by the aggressors as it really was, especially in far away places. Those who remained, while they were rebuked by the good ones as well as by the bad ones, but especially by their conscience because of what they had done to the man, brought George and made him patriarch. The famous ones among those from the Jazīra were: Timothy of Edessa, Ābay of Amida, Constantine of Samosata, John of Callinicum, along with all the bishops from Mosul and the West.

Those who previously departed turned every stone. When every one moved to go to his region, Satan did not keep quiet even then, nor did he rest *from causing* trouble among them. But he so excited them that many among the Jazīrites gathered and made over themselves a Patriarch, John of Callinicum of the holy monastery of 'Qarqaftā.³ After he transgressed the agreement, obligations and his own signature (concerning George), he fell in love with leadership and became patriarch. From this time onward, the whole honourable and venerable monastic order suffered insults, outrage and abuse, as many declared one patriarch as well as all his followers anathema, and many others did the same to the other patriarch.

Thus this trouble still goes on in the Church. And from this time onward, what are the insults, shameful language, accusations and evils that the bishops

¹ ܩܪܩܝܩܩܐ ܩܪܩܝܩܩܐ ܩܪܩܝܩܩܐ : Perhaps the first word derives from /ܩܪܩܩܐ/ "to be black". Yāqūt I 56 mentions that the old buildings of Amida (where Mt. Ayshūmā was located) were built with "black stones".

² For its location see p. 124 , n. 5.

³ ܩܪܩܝܩܩܐ : Between Ra's al-'Ayn and Majdal in the upper Jazīra; Baršaum, *Histoire*, 513.

did not use against each other, until they were subjected to imprisonment at the hand of the oppressive ruler? Here are the evils that befell the Church and its shepherds at the hand of this evil monk, who fulfilled the role of the treacherous and winding snake /p.215/ in bringing into the Church trouble through his speech and counsel.

753-754 The year one thousand and sixty-five: ‘Abd-Allah son of Muḥammad (Abūl-‘Abbās), the Persian Caliph, died,¹ and at this point, ‘Abd-Allah (Abū Ja‘far) his brother, and the other ‘Abd-Allah, son of ‘Alī, ‘his cousin,² aspired to the leadership. From that time onward, there was only bloodshed and numerous assassinations among them.

All the people of the West and the Arabs of the Jazīra favoured (‘Abd-Allah son of) ‘Alī, to whom they submitted and whom they wanted as Caliph. Therefore, all of them put on white³ and followed him. The Persians and the Khorasanians favoured ‘Abd-Allah son of Muḥammad (Abū Ja‘far). After waging numerous battles in many places and spilling on the ground much blood on both sides, they fought a final battle by the ‘Mashē⁴ river below Nisibis.⁵ The battle was fought for several days and many fell on both sides, and in the end ‘Abd-Allah, son of ‘Alī, was defeated before the Persian Abū-Muslim. He was put to flight and he fled and disappeared on the twenty-sixth of Later *Tiṣrī* (November), on Tuesday, when Wednesday was dawning. The son of ‘Alī was vanquished and ‘Abd-Allah, son of Muḥammad, ruled for years.⁶

In the same evening of the defeat of the son of ‘Alī, God made a great miracle. A large, terrible and dreadful star flew,⁷ broke through the sky and

¹ Abūl-‘Abbās died in June H. 136 (754): Elias I 174, al-Ya‘qūbī II 364, al-Ṭabarī VII 470ff, Agapius 533. Michael IV 472 [II 518]: S. 1065 (753-754), H. 135 (752-753). Theophanes 428: A.M. 6246 (754-755).

² ܟܘܢܘܢܐ : One should read ܟܘܢܘܢܐ “his uncle”. ‘Abd-Allah, son of ‘Alī, was the uncle of both al-Saffāḥ and al-Manṣūr; he claimed the caliphate but was defeated by Abū-Muslim (in November 754) as described below.

³ In contrast, the people of al-‘Irāq wore black; see above p.181 n. 1.

⁴ ܟܘܢܘܢܐ : Most probably Assyrian *Harmiš* and Arabic الهماس , the Macius and modern al-Jaghjagh. In Agapius 535 original نهر ماسی was twice corrected by the editor into نهر الهماس. The original Arabic phrase is not incorrect but the rendering of Syriac ܟܘܢܘܢܐ , another form of ܟܘܢܘܢܐ .

⁵ al-Ṭabarī VII 474ff: (November) H. 137 (754).

⁶ Blank space in MS. al-Ya‘qūbī II 389, al-Ṭabarī VIII 62: 22 years.

⁷ Agapius 536: Appearance of a comet dated to the time of the insurrection of ‘Abd-Allah, son of ‘Alī (754).

the air, and came down at sunset in the middle of the 'camp¹ of the son of 'Alī, in the likeness of a fiery ball. When the Arabs saw this thing, their hope was shattered and lost. Their eyes were blinded and they could not hold out anymore because they clearly knew that this thing came from the Lord, and therefore they could not bear it any longer.

/p.216/ **754-755** The year one thousand and sixty-six: Trees produced apples, plums and all other fruits in the month of *Tiṣrī* (October/November), as if it were the time of *Nīsān* and *Iyyār* (April and May). During this year, there was an abundant harvest in the whole country.

755-756 The year one thousand and sixty-seven: In the month of *Ādār* (March), on the third day—a Tuesday—a powerful, terrible and dreadful earthquake took place in the middle of the night in the land of the Jazīra. Three villages on the Khābūr collapsed, and many people perished inside them, like grapes in a wine press. Many other places were also destroyed by this earthquake, brought on by the great number of our sins: *The earth shall totter exceedingly, the earth shall shake violently, and it shall sway like a hut.*² This is what our sins are able to do: to shake the ground beneath us!

758-759 The year one thousand and seventy: Lent was confused.³ Some of the Easterners introduced Lent on the eighteenth of *Šebāt* (February) and ended it on the sixth of *Nīsān* (April). Others introduced Lent on the twenty-fifth of *Šebāt* (February) and ended it on the thirteenth of *Nīsān* (April). Thus all the Christians were confused, when in one place they celebrated Easter, in another place Palm Sunday; in one place it was Passion week, in another place Easter. This (practice) was also done in cities: in one church they celebrated Easter, in another Palm Sunday. Many among those who were inclined toward gluttony fasted only six weeks, since they began (Lent) with the later group and broke the fast with the earlier one. Now there were many others who were kept in the middle, being fooled because of the confusion that took place among them; for they began (Lent) with the earlier group and broke the fast with the later one.

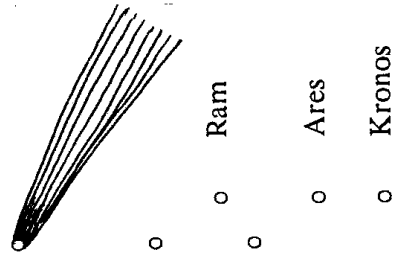
¹ *حصن* : Transcription of Arabic *عسكر*.

² Isa 24:19-20.

³ Compare with the brief mention in Theophanes 431: A.M. 6252 (760-761). See also another account dealing with the same issue originally written by John of Ephesus, above pp. 120.

/p.217/ **759-760** The year one thousand and seventy-one: In the month of *Ādār* (March), a shining sign was seen in the sky¹ before dawn on the northeast side which is called Ram in the Zodiac, to the north of the three most shining stars. Its shape resembled a broom. On the twenty-second day of the month, it was still in the Ram at its head, in the first degree (of the Zodiac circle), the second after the wandering stars Kronos and Ares,² somehow slightly to the south. The sign remained for fifteen nights, to the eve of the Pentecost feast. At one of its ends, which was narrow and more shining†,³ a star was seen and was turning toward the North. The other side, which was large and darker, was turning toward the South. The sign was moving little by little toward the Northeast. This was its form:

On the eve of the third day after Pentecost†, the sign was seen again in the evening in the Northwest, and it remained for twenty five evenings. It moved little by little to the South and then it disappeared. Then it reappeared in the southwest, where it remained in this way for many days.



During this time, many schisms took place in the church because of leadership. The eastern monasteries made John Patriarch, while neither the cities of the Jazīra nor all the monasteries approved him. The people of the West and Mosul approved George. Because of this the entire Church became troubled.⁴

/p.218/ **760-761** The year one thousand and seventy-two: The holy Mār Timothy, Bishop of Edessa, died. He was replaced by a certain monk named Simon, a recluse who used to live in a village in this region called Bēth Qēdūnā. The whole faithful party among the Edessenes, unanimously and agreeably, wanted him to become their own shepherd because of his chastity and excellence, and because he was adorned with all virtues, namely, love of strangers and the poor†. Therefore, they forcibly broke open his cell, pulled him out and brought him to George the Patriarch to establish him as their leader.

Because this honourable Simon loved the silent, virtuous and quiet labours of monasticism more than the affair of becoming a bishop and a leader, he did not want, or accept, this burden of leadership. Even though the venerable

¹ A brief mention in Theophanes 431: A.M. 6252 (760-761).

² Following Ptolemy, the ancients believed that there were seven "wandering stars", Syriac ܠܘܚܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ, (i.e. planets): The Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars (=Ares), Jupiter and Saturn (=Kronos), all revolving around the earth.

³ <ܠܘܚܘܬܐ>: See Manna, *Dalil*, 54, for its meaning.

⁴ See above pp. 193ff and 216ff.

George pressured him very much and the Edessenes wept before him, he did not want it, or accept it. At this point they seized him by force and made him bishop against his will. Moreover, the venerable George adjured him by Heaven, Earth and God and his Angels not to leave his city and diocese and move anywhere. Thus placing him under many anathemas so that he might not move or flee, he was taken and brought to Edessa. All the Edessenes came out in a great procession and welcomed him.

After spending one or two days in the same city, abstaining from bread and water, to the extent that he greatly harmed himself, he asked the Edessenes to allow him to go and live in one of the monasteries on the mountain of Edessa, because he said: "The air of this city is heavy for me." /p.219/ Thus he settled in a monastery to the south of the city, named "Monastery of the Mother of God." Although every day clerics and notables went up to the place and begged him to return and administer his city, he never agreed to this at all, saying: "If I had to die or be crucified, I would not do this ever. Now leave me alone for God's sake! Make for yourself a bishop anybody you like!" But the Edessenes did not want even to hear of this, out of love for him. The entire winter passed, and he could not be persuaded to return to the city or do for them ordination or celebrate a feast with them. Nor did they allow him to leave them because they were very attached to him. Even the Arabs and heretics of the city loved him.

At the end, realising that they had gained nothing, they begged him: "Search for a God-loving person for us to replace you and to fulfil the episcopal office; as for you, you shall not leave us." He did not agree to this either, saying: "You are a difficult people! Select for yourself a bishop and do not give me any trouble!" Because they did not want him to leave them, they placed on him this task, but he never agreed to it. But when he realised that he could not gain anything nor could he escape from their hands, he said to them: "Swear to me that you will accept whomever I bring, while I will not leave you." All of them came in and swore to him.

There was a man, meek, gentle, quiet* and graced with all spiritual virtues, /p.220/ in the holy monastery of Zuqnān in the region of Amida, whose name was Anastasius the Kushite. Simon preferred to entrust his see to this one more than to anyone else. Simon made a guarantee on his behalf and testified concerning him while Anastasius was far away: "There is nowadays no one like him among the monks." This is the testimony which this holy man gave about this virtuous monk, though he never saw him physically. He undertook writing letters to this honourable monk and to all the senior monks of his monastery in a skillful manner as if he wanted to see him and chat with him. Then he dispatched some of his respectable people to him. But when Anastasius received the letters, he realised that they were full of tricks, and he did not want to leave, nor did the members of his monastery allow him to. As a consequence, the messengers went up and came down many times in vain. Finally, the members of his monastery persuaded him (to go), because Bishop

Simon did not cease from sending letters and requests, and they did not want to humiliate him.

Anastasius came down with his disciple to Edessa, and went to the mountain where Simon lived. Simon came out and welcomed him with great joy. Then Simon quickly and in secret sent word to the members of the church and to the notables of the city—the honourable Anastasius remained totally in the dark—saying: “The man I promised you has come.” Consequently, all of them, young and old, hurried up to him, saw him and greatly rejoiced in him. But before all else, they altogether bound him so that he might not go anywhere before they won his consent.

When the chaste Mār Anastasius heard these things, he trembled from fear and the colour of his face changed, turning, as it were, into a corpse. He placed great blame on the members of his monastery, who had advised him to come down for such a reason as this, but especially on Bishop Simon. After Simon implored him /p.221/ for many days without winning his consent, they planned a wile to forcibly kidnap him and bring him to the Patriarch so as to ordain him. Nevertheless, when Anastasius learned of the wile which was planned against him by the Edessenes, he rose *during the night*, took his disciple, and went back to his monastery. Even Bishop Simon gave up on them when he realised that the honourable Anastasius had left, saying: “What you had asked me for I did for you. Now leave me alone!” At this point he left them and went to the mountain in the region of Samosata, where he lived to the end of his life, welcoming strangers and stricken people who turned to him, for he was the refuge of all the afflicted.

Zachariah, of the monastery¹ became bishop in his place. He too was brought down from his pillar.²

763-764 The year one thousand and seventy-five: A severe plague among horses took place in the whole land.

This plague spread throughout the whole land, starting from the borders of the country and then gradually moved, spreading throughout the whole land. Horses perished in the twinkling of an eye. So devastating was this destruction that, if herdsmen ‘would drive³ herds of three hundred ‘horses⁴ down to a

¹ Blank space in MS.

² He was a Stylite, like the author of the Chronicle of Z.

³ ܒܥܠܡܐ : ܐܠܡܐ is not normally used in Syriac in connection with animals, though it is attested elsewhere in the Chronicle in the sentence ܘܡܠܝܚܐ ܘܡܠܝܚܐ ܘܡܠܝܚܐ ܘܡܠܝܚܐ “they (=Roman soldiers) sent away the men and the donkeys (after pillaging them)”; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II: 214:16-17 and below p. 215 n. 1. In both cases the Pe'al form is involved. The subject of ܒܥܠܡܐ (for ܐܠܡܐ) is ܥܘܠܡܐ “herdsmen” and the direct object is ܠܥܘܠܡܐ (with its marker of the direct object).

⁴ ܠܥܘܠܡܐ : This word, lit. “mares”, interchanges with ܠܥܘܠܡܐ “horses” in this account.

watering place, as many as twenty or thirty of them would collapse there and die. As a result, streams, mountains, valleys and roads were filled with stinking carcasses. This epidemic was similar to the bubonic plague that inflicted humans, for it struck its victims in the neck, and no animal could work, even for an hour, once the disease had taken hold. If a victim got the disease and remained alive for a couple of hours or half a day†, it might escape death. But scarcely one in a hundred of the animals afflicted survived. /p.222/ 'Horses,¹ as well as mules and donkeys died of it, one by one. This disease spread throughout all the nations and kingdoms of the earth, to the point that people were left without horses. The effect of "the broom" seen a short while before,² was clearly seen in reality, as it swept the world like a broom that cleans the house.

It seemed to the wise and God-fearing ones that this severe plague was sent upon people, but God, through his mercy and abundant graces and love for humans, diverted it from people to animals, as the following testifies for us: "Animals did not sin, nor did they provoke the Lord through their actions and sins." Amos says: *I slew with the sword your young men together with your captured horses, and I made you smell the stink of your putrefaction with your nostrils; yet you did not return to me, says the Lord.*³ Micah also said: *In that day, says the Lord, I will kill horses among you, and I will destroy your chariots.*⁴ Indeed, horses and chariots disappeared from the earth as the prophets said. That speechless creatures be stricken on our behalf is the outcome of our sins.

760-761 The year one thousand and seventy-two: 'Abd-Allah, son of Muḥammad, the Persian Caliph, sent the son of Wahhāb, along with numerous troops and craftsmen from the whole Jazīra, to rebuild Melitene of Cappadocia,⁵ which had remained in ruin for eight years.⁶ People and army were brought in and it became more inhabitable and prosperous than before.

764-765 The year one thousand and seventy-six: The stars of the sky 'fell⁷ in the month of Later *Kānūn* (January), the fourth day of it—a Friday. When it started to become dark and the stars began to rise, two stars came out from the middle of the sky, fighting with each other, *like people*

¹ **كسالى**: See the previous note.

² Reference to a comet; see p. 198.

³ Amos 4:10.

⁴ Micah 5:10.

⁵ Michael IV 473-474 [II 522]. Agapius 538. al-Ṭabarī VII 500 and al-Azdī 171: H. 139 (756-757).

⁶ See above p. 189f.

⁷ **كسالى** **كسالى**: Parallel expression, **تناثرت النجوم**, and same date, H. 147 (764-765), in al-Azdī 200.

who fight or engage in a contest with /p.223/ each other. Thus they moved forward, while fighting, and fell down toward the East. When they fell down and vanished, all the stars in the sky began to fall, shooting like fiery balls that fly in all directions. Thus they fell during the whole night, and the following statement of our Saviour was fulfilled: *The sun will be darkened and the moon will be turned into blood; the stars will fall from the sky and the powers of the heavens will be shaken,*¹ *but the end is not yet.*² *Let the reader understand*³ and comprehend the things that occurred afterwards in the world, either because of the agitation and divisions that took place in the church on account of George and David, the patriarchs, that caused all the Christians to abuse one another, or because of the afflictions which people suffered at the hands of the tyrannic ruler, including the flight from one city to another, from one place to the next one, and from one village to another.

Our Saviour also says: *And there will be great affliction such as has not happened from the beginning of the world until now. Pray that your flight may not be in winter. And woe unto those who will be pregnant and unto nursing mothers in those days!*⁴ Intelligent one, read about, view and see the kind of wrongs that took place afterwards in the world. Behold! we are recording them in due time: Afflictions, evils, divisions and tortures and blows, flights, spoliation, dragging,⁵ renunciation of sons and daughters and separations of wives from their husbands, famines, diseases and pestilences! O intelligent one, grasp all of these things that have happened following the fall of the stars, along with the fact that all the peoples and nations and kingdoms have been humiliated and they have collapsed before this tyrannic ruler whom no one among the humans could resist!⁶

*/p.224/ At this time the doctrine of the Manichaeans
in Harrān, a city in Mesopotamia, was subjected to ridicule*⁷

The Manichaeans had a monastery located to the east of Harrān, about a mile away from the city. In this monastery, where their impious bishop used to live, they used to celebrate once every year a great and violent feast during

¹ Mk 13:24, Acts 2:20.

² Mt 24:6.

³ Mt 24:15.

⁴ Cf Mt 24:19-21.

⁵ People who failed to pay taxes were dragged away by agents.

⁶ A reference to either Caliph al-Manṣūr or rather Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab, whom this Caliph appointed as governor of Mosul, as will be discussed later.

⁷ Illegible words are written on the margin of folio 138 r. *Chronicon Anonymum* ... Persarum: 33:14-34:2 [22]; a brief mention in Mārī 75.

which they used to offer sacrifices. During this great feast, moreover, celebrated in the monastery, they used to practise divination. As their feast approached, they had the custom of grabbing and imprisoning one man for one year, to slaughter in their feast. They used to take off the head, put a coin in its mouth and place it in a niche, to worship it and practise divination with it.

When the day of their wicked feast approached, they decided to bring a man, whom they were ready to confine so as to sacrifice him in the feast following the one that was approaching. The Manichaean leaders wrote a letter and went out to the public place of Harrān. When they found a man as they wanted, they grabbed him and said to him: "Take a wage as much as you desire, and go to bring this letter to such and such monastery, to the superior of this monastery†." Unaware of Satan's treachery that aimed at killing him, the miserable one cunningly¹ hurried to go like a lamb to the slaughter. When he quickly arrived at the monastery in question, he came to the door and asked whomever he encountered about their superior and even persuaded them to call him. They hurriedly went in and informed their superior, who, upon hearing the news, came out quickly and welcomed the man with respect and great joy, saying: "Come in, rest a bit and eat bread; you shall take the reply to your letter and go /p.225/ in peace."

They brought the man into one, two, three, and more, six and seven rooms one inside another, until they arrived at the man who had been imprisoned the year before the present one, and whom they prepared to bring to the slaughter in the forthcoming† feast. They ordered him: "Sit down here beside this man." When he sat, that man said to him: "Woe unto you! What happened to you?" He replied: "Why?" He said: "They did the same thing to me. When I came here I found another man sitting, but they slaughtered him in their feast. Here is his head in this niche; they kindle a candle before it, worship it and practise divination with it. Behold! They are also preparing† to slaughter me in this feast; then you will also sit †in my placet† until the next feast, and at that point you will also come to the slaughter. But if you want to escape from here, listen to me and it will be good for you. Look! As soon as they are ready to kill me, stand at my side. When my head falls on the ground, take it quickly, and while it sheds my blood spray with it the door. If they will call upon you, beg you, and increase gifts for you, do not put it down, and if they want to grab you, sprinkle them with that blood and they will flee from you."

The man took to his heart with great ire what had been said to him and fulfilled the plan without failing. After they killed the first man, the second man took the head and ran toward the door. They begged him and cried out, saying: "Lay it down!" But he wanted neither †a gift† nor begging†, nor was

¹ ܡܐܘܪܝܢܐ: In the margin, the more appropriate word ܡܐܘܪܝܢܐ "foolishly" is written.

he intimidated by his fear of them. They could not come close to him, and with a fast pace he took it away and went into the presence of ‘Abbās, who was the amīr of the Jazīra at that time. Upon learning about what had happened, ‘Abbās sent men to capture them. Then he imprisoned all of them—men, women and children—and confiscated all /p.226/ their assets; he made them suffer various tortures and took away from them the sum of more than four hundred or five hundred thousand (dinars).

764-765 The year one thousand and seventy six: In the month of *Ādār* (March), on the fourteenth—a Friday—the venerable Severus, Bishop of Amida, left this world, and was buried in his monastery.

In the same year¹ a Synod of the bishops of the Jazīra, Mosul and the West, was convened in Sarūg, in the village of² It made peace and unity with George, the Patriarch, after John, Bishop† of Callinicum, whom the Jazīrites had made patriarch, died.³ In the same Synod, all the bishops who were established by John the Patriarch were deposed from the episcopal rank; it was not because of faith, but because they were not consecrated according to the rule or law of God. Nor did the regions over which they were established accept them, and I may say, nor were they worthy of the bishopric rank because they were wicked clerics and rapacious wolves who did not spare the flock. Paul the Apostle previously warned us about these ones,⁴ who were bad trees that bore bad fruit⁵ and gave† it to the church †for consumption†. We will talk about their deeds in due time.⁶

In this Synod, the bishops of the Jazīra, Mosul and the West, as well as their monasteries and towns submitted to George. Its leaders and famous members were: George, Patriarch of Antioch, David, Bishop of Dara, Ābay, Bishop of Amida, Sargūna, Bishop of Mardē, and Constantine, Bishop of Samosata.

/p.227/ **765-766** The year one thousand and seventy-seven: A huge and dense gathering of Nestorians took place in the monastery of Bēth Kewelā (=the Ark) on the mountains of Qardū. They celebrated a feast as they had

¹ Michael IV 476-478 [II 527-529]: Same Seleucid date as above. Chronicon 813 p. 246: 11-15 [187]: S. 10[7]8 (766-767).

² Blank in MS.

³ Michael IV 476 [II 525] and Elias I 177-178: John died in S. 1074 (762-763). Chronicon 813 p. 246:6-9 [187], Chronicon 819 p. 19:6-7 [13], and Chronicon 846 p. 237:6 [179]: John died in S. 1073 (761-762).

⁴ Acts 20:29.

⁵ Mt 7:17.

⁶ See below p. 216.

custom to do in the place where the ark (of Noah) came to rest.¹ As a huge crowd gathered there in the middle of Later *Tiṣrī* (November), lightning occurred in the sky and fire came down from high and consumed that shrine and burned it, together with the people inside. Fire turned its stones into lime and even the people who were outside it did not survive this conflagration. It consumed all of them and no one escaped.

More than seven hundred or eight hundred persons perished in this fire, in addition to a multitude of animals. The stench of that place spread out as far as two miles, and people were not able to approach its vicinity for two years. The place that had been a refuge from the waters of the flood for people, cattle, animals and reptiles, became a place of destruction for people as well as for their animals, through the flame that came down from the sky. And as the ark of the Covenant did not save Hophni and Phinehas the priests, sons of Eli, or itself,² here too the ark did not save the shrine which was built to commemorate it, or the priests, or the vessels of the liturgy, or those who were inside the shrine, or those who were outside. All of them perished in one press of perdition, and no one among those who were present on that mountain and in that crowd was saved.

One could see the clouds and the wind, bringing down fire and sulphur from the sky, just as the Lord had done over Sodom.³ Thus that mountain looked from afar like a smoking furnace, /p.228/ in such a way that hardly anyone was saved alive in it. And if one did escape, he escaped half burned. Also the smell of sulphur which those clouds were raining down and the stinky smell of that conflagration spread out as far as two or three miles away. All of this was done by our Lord to the Nestorian† people in our own time.

762-763 The year one thousand and seventy-four: In the month of *Ādār* (March), a great flood occurred in the Tigris river, that cuts through the border region, and caused severe damage along its both banks. It carried away houses, millstones, villages, peoples, animals, as well as numerous objects. It caused havoc especially in Mosul, because it reached it during the first watch. Water went up and inundated three streets, carrying away houses, property, people and everything else. Boats and rafts were seen floating over the dry land, and even gardens of high palm trees in that place were covered by the flood, and boats glided over them. The flood did the same to all the lower regions there.

¹ The same monastery (spelled *Qardū*) is mentioned in *Liber Fundatorum* No. 7. In the *Peshīttā*, as well as in the various Targums and rabbinical sources, the mountains of *Qardū* correspond to the mountains of *Araraṭ* of the Hebrew Bible, where the ark of Noah is said to have rested; see Gen 8:4. Syriac *Qardū* or *Bēth Qardū* refers to the region east of the Tigris, opposite *Jazīrat-ibn-Umar*.

² 1Sam 4:11.

³ Gen 19:24.

766-767 The year one thousand and seventy-eight: All the Persian and Arab forces moved and attacked the northern land.¹

‘Abbās, who was the amīr of the Jazīra at this time and the brother of the Caliph, attacked Edessa, (Ṭūr-)‘Abdīn and Tella-d-Kūm. Ḥasan, son of ‘Qaḥṭaba,² the other military commander, and another military commander named son of ‘Ash‘ath,³ who was appointed over the army of the caliph, attacked cities along the Tigris, as well as Amida, with numerous troops that could not be counted. While they were besieging the Mesopotamian city of Amida, /p.229/ the military commander of the caliph, the son of Ash‘ath,⁴ died.

In this army there were various nations, different in look as well as in religions of all kinds. Some of them ‘worshipped fire⁵ and others the sun, rising up early in the morning and worshipping toward the East. In midday they used to worship toward the South, and in the evening they used to worship toward the West. Others worshipped the moon, others the stars and others horses. Some made other types of idols of different kinds, carried them and worshipped them. Thus everyone among them held fast and venerated the same error which his country and his people adhered to it even now. Because this army was a mixture of all nations, it was called “the Caliph’s ‘clients.”⁶ It included people from ‘Sind⁷ and ‘Allān,⁸ ‘Khazars,⁹ Medes, Persians, people of ‘Āqūlā (= Kūfā), Arabs, people of Kho(ra)san and Turks. Therefore, we have to say that it was made of all kinds of locusts!¹⁰ They also committed many sins of all kinds which could not be numbered, because of their impiety and impurity that was beyond measure. But in order not to soil the tongue of the reader and the ears of the listeners, we shall avoid them, because talking about them is filth for the mouth.

¹ al-Ṭabarī VIII 28: H. 149 (766), summer campaign (*ṣā’ifa*) of al-‘Abbās, Qaḥṭaba and the son of Ash‘ath in Roman territories; the son of Ash‘ath died on the way.

² قحطبة : محطبة . Arabic *ḥā* shifted to ‘*ayn* in the Syriac form of the name, probably because of its position beside the emphatic *ṭā*.

³ أشث : اثث . Arabic *thā* shifted to *dōlath* (not to the expected *tāw*) in the transcribed name.

⁴ See the previous note.

⁵ سحرهم : سحرهم : Zoroastrians are meant.

⁶ حهلهم : From Arabic (ولي/لى) “to follow, be close ...”.

⁷ سندهم : Gentilic, “of Sind” (a region in the lower Indus valley).

⁸ اللانهم : Gentilic, “of Allān”; for this toponym see p. 159 n. 1.

⁹ حانهم : People living in the Caucasus region.

¹⁰ A parallel analogy of an enemy army is found in Sennacherib’s 8th campaign: *kīma tibūt aribī ma’di* “like the invasion of countless locusts;” see Borger, *Babylonisch-Assyrische Lesestücke*, 49:56. Nevertheless, Joel 1:4 may have been in the mind of the Chronicler of Z.

But I think it was God who moved them and brought them out of their land, because they made a substitute for God who had created them, and gave worship, which ought to be for God alone, to various types of creatures like them. Because they did not know God their maker, they did not understand either that he was the God of all nations, whose name existed before the sun, /p.230/ who ordered light to be,¹ and who also commanded that there be *two great lights in the firmament, one to rule over the day and another to rule over the night.*² He also gave fire useful for human life. Nevertheless, they turned these things, as it were, into deities, whom they worshipped: *They provoked him (= God) to jealousy with strange gods and they made him angry with idols. They sacrificed to demons that were not gods, to gods whom they knew not.*³

God brought them between the mountains of the North to strike them with various illnesses as well as with sword, pestilence and famine, and to give their flesh to the animals of the steppe and to the birds of the sky. So they marched and went in the direction of the Roman territory. They found the border land magnificent and productive of fruit of all kinds—it was the season of fruit—and although the land was not inhabited, it was rich in fruit, many trees and vineyards. When these lawless people found these things, they attacked them much beyond the limits of necessity, and consumed them with gluttony. Then all of them fell victim to various sicknesses, especially† dysentery and haemorrhoids, in such a manner that wherever they settled or fled, unburied corpses of people could be seen alongside roads and high places and valleys, discarded and being devoured by animals. All their beasts of burden died too, especially the camels that followed them into the land; out of fifty or sixty that accompanied a man, not even five or six—and sometimes not even one—came out.

After the whole army marched in, they besieged a fortress called ‘Qamḥ,⁴ that was located on the borders.⁵ But among the many craftsmen /p.231/ from all of the Jazīra who marched in with the army, some were left by ‘Abbās to rebuild a fortress called “Ziād”,⁶ while the others marched with the

¹ Gen 1:3, 14.

² Gen 1:16.

³ Deut 32:16-17.

⁴ **قَمَح**: Greek Κάμαχον, Theophanes 377:21, and Arabic كَمَح or كَمَاخ. The fortress of Qamḥ was located on the Euphrates, north-east of Melitene, a one-day march from Arzancan; see Yāqūt IV 479. On the rebuilding of the fortress by al-Manṣūr, see al-Ya‘qūbī II 372.

⁵ Theophanes 444: A.M. 6261 (769-770), ‘Abd-Allah besieged Kamakhon during the whole summer but then withdrew in disgrace.

⁶ **زِيَاد**: Arabic زيَاد (حصن) “(Fortress of) Ziād”. Arabic rendering on the ancient name Enzite (عَنْزِيَّة); for the latter and its location see p. 70 n. 1.

army. 'Abbās brought Armenian waggons in which he pulled numerous cedar beams. He ordered carpenters to make ṛmangonels¹ with them, which he placed on a peak facing the fortress so that they might hurl stones with them inside the fortress. The Romans, who were inside the fortress, also mounted mangonels against them.

Nevertheless, the besieged Romans devised for themselves an invincible weapon and built for themselves an impregnable wall—I mean God their creator—saying: “There is no salvation outside the Lord. It is better for us to trust the Lord than to trust a man or a ruler. Verily, all the nations *surrounded us* but the name of the Lord our God will destroy them.”²

The leader† who was in the fortress at this time was named Sergius. This man was gentle, calm, God-fearing, and compassionate toward the poor. This is the testimony about this man of all the villagers who used to go into the land, looking for ṛmadder.³ It happened that they were captured by the Romans who brought them into the fortress and were presented to him. They experienced his compassion, goodness and kindness. They themselves testified about the man before us and before everyone. For during this time, the tribute of the Syrian people weighed heavy beyond measure, and they did not have work, because their lands had been sold to the Arabs. The Arabs, with the usual poll-tax not paid to them, bought for themselves lands and yokes and became peasants themselves. Because of this, the trade of the villagers ceased, and they used to gather /p.232/ in large groups and enter ṛEnzite⁴ looking for madder.

Often they used to cross over and penetrate inside the borders, either because of the negligence of the agent in charge of the guard, or because of the tithe which was mercilessly imposed on them out of greed, and used to be captured and brought into Qamḥ by the Romans. When the man in question would see them, he treated them with a great deal of compassion, saying: “If you want, stay with us, or if you want, leave and go home in peace.” But if they left, he would send along provisions for them. Truly, my brothers, God has rewarded this man in that he saved him, together with all the people who were with him inside the fortress, from the hands of the Assyrians!

Sergius saw the numerous troops that surrounded him on all sides, the fact that they were themselves small in number, and that the enemies, like the cup-bearers (of Sennacherib),⁵ were deriding those who were standing on the wall, saying: “Who, among all the nations, has escaped from the hands of 'Abd-

¹ **ܡܘܢܘܢܝܘܬܝܢ**: This and Arabic **منجنیق** are renderings of Greek **μαγγανικόν**; see Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 196.

² Cf Ps 3:2, and 107: 8-10.

³ **ܡܕܕܝܢܝܢ**: Plants given to animals and consumed by the poor in time of need.

⁴ **ܐܢܘܢܝܬܝܢ**: Arabic **حصن زياد**; see pp. 70 n. 1 and 207 n. 6.

⁵ See 2Kgs 18:28-35 and Isa 37:10-13.

Allah son of Muḥammad? Did you not hear what he did to Marwān and to the family of Hishām, that he made them disappear from earth?¹ Where is the King of Egypt, Africa, the Nubians and the Moors? Where are the Kings of Armenia, Baishān,² Media and Persia? Did you not hear what he did to the kings of Sind and India? Who, among all the kings of the earth, was able to deliver his land from his hands, in order that you might escape from his hands?" But this faithful man, like Ezekiel, put on him a helmet of faith and girded himself with great hope in his Lord. He rushed to the refuge of prayer to the point that the sound of his people's supplication saddened even the outsiders. Nonetheless, God, good as he was, did not disregard their prayer, but /p.233/ through their faith they heard: *He will not invade this town,*³ but *I will put a ring in the nose of this Assyrian and I will cause him to return with shame by the way in which he came.*⁴

As the Persians were fighting with all means, all their tricks proved failing. They made mobile wooden houses with which to fill the ravine beside the city-wall with dirt and stones, but this trick failed. The Romans were shooting stones from inside, and because they were shooting them accurately, they killed numerous people outside and even destroyed the mangonels of the Persians. Because there was only one side of the fortress which could be scaled, the Romans brought long and strong beams, tied up big round stones to their top ends, and placed them in the 'opening.⁵ When the Persians gathered to climb up, the Romans released 'these⁶ beams and they swept all of them, driving them down before them and tearing them into small pieces.

One night the Persians noticed that the noise of the Romans had calmed down. Thinking that they were in a deep sleep, a countless number of the Persians climbed up against them. When the first ones began to go up, out of their joy 'they shouted: *Allāhu Akbar,*⁷ for they thought that they had already conquered the fortress! The Romans in charge of the guard woke up and boldly killed them. They also sent down those beams tied up with stones, and they swept before them all of those who were coming up and turned them into one heap of corpses. Thus all the actions of the Persians proved futile because the helper of the Romans was the Lord.

At this point, two military commanders pulled out and invaded the Roman

¹ Reference to the annihilation of the Umayyad dynasty by the early 'Abbasids.

² بيسان: Arabic بيسان "between Palestine and (the) Jordan;" al-Ṭabarī III 434. It was conquered by the Arabs early in their invasion of the Near East.

³ Isa 37:34.

⁴ Cf Isa 37:29.

⁵ سبيل: For سبيل. The opening made that side of the fortress accessible.

⁶ . . . لسان: Lit. "one of (these beams)", but the three verbs governed by "one beam" are all in the plural.

⁷ كبر: From Arabic كبر.

territory with a great army, about /p.234/ fifty thousand strong, to pillage, attack and destroy all the Roman territories. They marched in, but because they were not familiar with the territory and did not have a guide who knew it, they feared marching through a 'settled land,¹ lest the Romans learn about them and gather against them and obliterate them from earth. But what Job had said also happened to them: *For the thing that I feared came upon me and what I was afraid of befell me. They were not at ease nor were they calm.*² The wrath of God befell them, and God lifted them up as the stack (of hay) is lifted up at the right season and *like the acorn that falls from its cup.*³

First, while wind tormented them, their provisions were completely exhausted, so they suffered hunger. Then, they found themselves between arid mountains and they were tortured by thirst. As they and their animals almost died of thirst, and they were about to perish without a sword or a blade being unsheathed, they marched down and found a moist meadow. They dug with their lances and found water nearby, so they drank and were delivered along with their animals from death by thirst. Because they penetrated far inside a deserted and empty land, located between the Roman and Armenian territories, rather than a settled plain, and after they had roamed on mountains for many days, they marched toward Caesarea. They found a prosperous land, and in villages a whole population, walking or sitting without being molested by any one. Suddenly they fell upon them and no one was there to oppose them whatsoever. They went deep beyond Caesarea and fulfilled all their desires in that region. They laid waste, pillaged and destroyed the land, and took its inhabitants into captivity, and drove all the cattle before them. They took away a valuable and massive spoil of people, animals, /p.235/ objects, vessels, as well as gold and silver, in a very large quantity.

Nevertheless, their joy did not reach its climax, for *with the same measure with which they measured they were measured,*⁴ and the pit which they dug they filled with their own bodies, and the net that they spread caught them. Thus God *rewarded them according to their actions:*⁵ Because they had despoiled they were despoiled, because they had pillaged they were pillaged, because they had wanted to possess slaves and maids, they themselves became slaves, and because they had wanted to destroy the lands, they themselves were destroyed. They became food for the animals of the steppe and the birds of the sky, and satiated with their own blood that ground. What happened was something like this.

After they had attacked that land, because of its great fertility, they

¹ רֶגֶל רֶגֶל: Lit. "trodden land."

² Cf Job 3:25.

³ Isa 6:13.

⁴ Cf Mt 7:2 and Mk 4:24.

⁵ Mt 16:27.

pitilessly and mercilessly pillaged it and carried away its inhabitants into captivity. Then they wanted to march out to Syria with the valuable and massive spoil, as well as with a widespread reputation of having won a mighty victory. And in accordance with their wish, they had already acquired considerable wealth, in addition to slaves and maids! But the wretched ones did not know that they were walking in darkness and that soon they would themselves become captives. Indeed, one is able to recite the Psalms and say: *The Lord delivered the poor and the weak from the one who seized him by force,*¹ and: *I will pluck them from between the teeth and I will bring them back from the depths of the sea.*² While the Persians were thinking that they had already arrived in Syria, and that they were in no fear, they came across a great meadow and decided to pitch camp in it and rest. This meadow had a narrow entrance and was surrounded on all sides by a stream that emptied inside it. After camping and resting† a bit, they sent their animals out to pasture. Because they were not familiar with the roads of the land, they decided to settle down there.

Then God, who does not neglect those who call upon him, summoned one Roman commander, accompanied by †almost twelve† thousand cavalrymen and brought him there. /p.236/ For this Roman army was returning from another place and another battle, marching* in great victory. When they arrived at that meadow outside the entrance by which the Persians had settled down, they too wanted to pitch camp and take a rest in it, not aware of the evil that was inside, or knowing what had happened to their land and people, for they were coming from far away. After they pitched camp, some of them went up a hill and saw the great army camped below them, as well as the captives and massive spoilt of their land. Trembling and terrified†, they came down quickly to inform their colleagues. The commander did not disregard what he heard. Rather, he sent others—almost three hundred armed cavalrymen—in order to verify the matter, to see whether it was true or perhaps some apparition seen by those men through hallucination. When those who were dispatched went up and distinctly† saw the other army, they informed the one who dispatched them, and he went up with four or five thousand men.

When the Persians saw the Romans standing at the entrance from which they wanted to come out, and that they were confined as in a prison, their hearts trembled and shook inside them; their hands were paralysed, *and they reeled and staggered like drunken men, and all their wisdom disappeared.*³ The Persians sent emissaries to judge the size of the (enemy) army and whether they were ready for battle, because a high hill and a narrow entrance

¹ Cf Ps 35:10.

² Ps 68:22.

³ Ps 107:27.

separated both groups. When the emissaries¹ returned and told the truth, namely that they were a great army prepared as if for battle, the Persians wished to talk peace with them, using pleasing language. First, they freed all the captives whom they had led away, as well as the animals and all the spoilt /p.237/ which they had pillaged, saying (to themselves): "Let them leave us only alive, and as we came in we would get out with nothing more." Nevertheless, the Romans did not abide by this, but quickly sent to notify the cities and the other military commanders of the matter. They dispatched a great army against them and divided it into four divisions†. They attacked the Persians from the front and from the rear, and from this side and from the other side. Because it was still night*, they gave to each other a signal: After they would come down all †prepared†, they would sound the trumpets and the whole crowd would shout at the same time 'Kyrie eleison!² When they went down and were ready, *they sounded* the trumpets and the crowd shouted like thunder: *Kyrie eleison!* The Persians heard their voices and trembled, becoming like the dead and the slain ones lying in graves. Their eyes darkened and they were not able to see. Their hands were paralysed and the entire hope of their lives disappeared. They considered themselves dead before the onslaught of the sword. At this point, they wanted to escape but they were not able to, because the Romans surrounded them like a ring. The Lord thundered from heaven against them and confused them before the Romans.

Here one can see that the Lord stood up and openly caused salvation. The snare broke up and those who fell in it escaped and even chased those who had set it. And those who an hour ago considered themselves lords of slaves, were now seen as prisoners and slaves. Their end was bad, *because they did not remember to act kindly but persecuted the poor and needy and those whose heart is saddened to death.*³ Thus they fought during the whole day, and the Persians were defeated before the Romans, who smote them with a great and deadly blow. The Persians themselves, who escaped the battle while injured, testified /p.238/ before us under great oaths that they never saw or heard of so much blood in one single place as there; they said that the blood and the corpses rose up as high as a horse's belly on that meadow. Since the meadow was very damp, the blood could not be absorbed. Indeed here it is right to say with the prophet: *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, and all the statues of her gods are broken and they did not help their worshippers,*⁴ and to add: *Fear, the pit, the snare, and the sword are upon you O Assyrian! He who*

¹ ܐܘܨܠܐ: This singular word is Arabic رسول with the Syriac emphatic ending. The Arabic word alternates with its Syriac cognate ܐܘܨܠܐ in this account.

² For the meaning see above p. 72 n. 2.

³ Ps 109:16.

⁴ Cf Isa 21:9.

*flees from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up out of the pit shall be caught in the snare, and he who escapes from the snare, the sword shall withhold him.*¹

When the day was about to decline, only a few among the Persians survived; some were captured and others were consumed by the sword. Radād, the military commander, fled on his horse dispossessed, leaving all his belongings in the hands of the Romans. Only about one thousand strong escaped with him, even though injured, and thus taking refuge in Melitene. But ʿI pass over² another battle that faced Radād, in which he was wounded by the sword three times but did not die. As for Mālik, son of ʿTawq,³ the other military commander, he fled toward ʿQalinqala,⁴ with five thousand men. Thus they returned with dishonour and great shame to the one who had sent them, having lost all their belongings;† none of those who had been preserved alive left the place without having been stripped of everything†.

Let us also show what had happened to the ones who (besieged) the fortress, what they did and how they lost and left in even more shame and dishonour than their colleagues. The villagers, /p.239/ who used to bring them wheat and flour from Syria, realised the great loss which they suffered from this expedition that was devoid of any little advantage. For, as we said above, this journey was full of harm and losses, especially because all the beasts of burden had died. Because of this, they gave up and did not bring up wheat and flour for the Persians. A great famine occurred among the Persians to the point that they all were near death* because of lack of food. The *qefizā* (of grain) went up to three and a half *zūz*, when it was available at all. This condition continued for about twenty days. At this point, ʿAbbās sent messengers to Syria, who went into a big marketplace. When the villagers learned about the matter, because of lack of work, ʿthey all gathered⁵ from the Jazīra, the West and even Inner Armenia, and headed toward there.

¹ Cf Isa 24:17 and Jer 48:43-44.

² ܥܘܡܪܐ (phonetic spelling of ܥܘܡܪܐ): Written in the margin.

³ MS ܬܘܩ "Tawf".

⁴ ܩܠܝܩܠܐ: Armenian Karnoy-Kʿalak "city of Karin" and Arabic قاليقلا associated with Erzerum (Arzan-al-rūm of Arab sources), between the Euphrates and the western reach of the Araxes river; see Yāqūt IV 299 and above p. 40 n. 4. Procopius, *Buildings* III v 2 claims that it was built by Theodosius I, hence its other name Theodosiopolis.

⁵ ܥܘܨܐ: This ʿ literally means "to be black" and is never attested in the sense given above. It may be a loan-word from Arabic حَشَرَ "to gather, assemble, crowd ..." with metathesis. Metatheses and unnecessary doublings of sounds in words containing *hēt* and *šīn* abound in the Chronicle of Z.: ܥܘܨܐܘܨܐ for ܥܘܨܐܘܨܐ (Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 271:13), ܥܘܨܐ for ܥܘܨܐ (*ibid.* 13:16, 50:7), etc. In Mk 15:21 ܥܘܨܐ occurs in the sense "to press into service", but the many passages in the Chronicle of Z. where the same root appears do not require the latter meaning.

Everyone brought what he could until everything became abundantly available. Traders, shopkeepers, 'textile dealers,¹ and others like them sold wheat, barley, flour and products necessary† for human life. They accumulated them abundantly in heaps, thinking to gather for themselves a great wealth. Because the eyes of their minds were blinded by the love of money, the wretched ones did not know that soon they would lose even the things that they owned, and that this whole expedition would be filled with loss and devoid of any profit whatsoever.

Moreover, as the Persians used to attack the fortress, day and night, using many military devices, everyday the villagers earned nothing but their own destruction, for many among them used to be killed daily by the Roman mangonels. But 'Abbās, because he was a compassionate man, granted a favour to these poor people who joined this labour. When he saw that many of them were killed by the stones of the mangonels which /p.240/ the Romans were shooting from inside, he gathered his military commanders and ordered that everyday someone among them should appoint men to shoot stones from mangonels, and that the villagers should be assigned to other works far away from the deadly danger. Although the Persians remained there for a long time, 'Abbās said: "Even if I have to stay here for ten years, I will not leave from here until I have captured it*!"² People from all places still gathered and went over there. After using all battle tricks and achieving nothing, the Persians considered threats, saying: "Perhaps the Romans *will tremble* and open it for us." But the Romans were like the eagle that flaps the air with his quick wings and fears nothing on earth. Finally, they approached them with flattery and begging so that they might leave the fortress and move away from it in peace. This did not occur and the Romans stood up mocking them.

At this point, winter came and it started to become cold in that land. The Persians feared lest snow should overwhelm them and lest they should be cut off from the roads. They would then perish from hunger† and cold. They also feared lest military forces should gather against them and remove them from the land; they would then suffer more than their colleagues, of whom, out of fifty thousand that came in, only five or six thousand came out, and even these were injured. As they were not able to do anything, the herald suddenly shouted that they must mount and get out. So traders, shopkeepers, buyers and sellers, quickly lost the entire sum of their merchandise, because they had bought and accumulated wheat, barley and flour in abundance, and because they could not find beasts of burden to hire and carry all their goods. /p.241/ Since the terrain was difficult for the movement of beasts of burden, the villagers carried their loads to the ford of a river called Salqaṭ, from where

¹ قوام : Arabic بزّاز with the Syriac emphatic ending

² Reference to the fortress.

they returned (to Syria). They did not make their own beasts of burden cross to the north of the ford except for one or two out of one hundred. And often enough it would happen that they would hire beasts of burden, whereas their own they did not bring across! Because of this, beasts of burden †were in want † there. After the herald loudly shouted that they must carry away (their goods), the Persians realised that the entire merchandise of the traders had been abandoned. They came and set it on fire lest it should be left, in which case the Romans would come down and benefit from it. Despite what they did, much of it still remained.

Then another army marched out against Qalinqala. Wherever soldiers encountered all those who carried cheese, oil, honey, vessels and other things to bring for the army, they unloaded their loads and †sent¹ the men and the donkeys away empty-handed. Thus in one hour the poor people used to lose all they possessed in such a way that everyone incurred losses and damages in this expedition. Moreover, when †Abbās left, he ordered all the agents working under his authority, to take away from the labourers the wage which they had received when they used to come into (the camp), as well as (a fee) on the(ir) donkeys, and in this way they were dismissed. At this point †Abbās left and †returned by the way he came, with disgrace, shame, and considerable and endless losses.²

The other forces came down to Amida and the Tigris. They left for the Persian territories, in want, hungry and weak†. Not even half of them came out, chiefly because their beasts of burden and their slaves had escaped and entered the Roman territories. One could see how haughty and proud they were in their invasion and how humble and despicable they were in their expulsion; /p.242/ they lowered their heads and were disgraced and dispossessed from absolutely everything. But the expedition of this army was a great benefit for the whole North, because they funnelled in it coins, and, more importantly, because these were new. Henceforth, whoever wanted to fabricate coins could fabricate them without fear. The new coins, namely, the false ones, increased and because of them people suffered losses.

Now the whole land of the Jazīra was rich in vineyards, fields, and much cattle. There was not one single poor and miserable man in any village who did not possess a plough, donkeys and goats. There was not a place more or less cultivable which was not planted, or where a vineyard could not be seen. This was the case for the whole mountain; wherever the plough could† cut in, vineyards were planted.³ Greed grew so strong that people seized whatever

¹ **طلىح**: For the √ and meaning see above p. 200 n. 3.

² Cf Isa 37:29, 34.

³ Northern Syria was the breadbasket of the Near East since the time of the Assyrians and Hittites who fought for centuries to control it. The same condition seems to be confirmed by the Chronicler of Z., not only in the passage above, but also throughout the

the ancestors had offered to the churches and the monasteries. Wheat and wine were in abundance. As a result of the abundance of the crops, conflicts, disputes and quarrels about boundaries were frequent to the point that murders were often committed. Even the governors of cities were in despair¹ because of the lawsuits which people had against each other. The land was full of shepherds of cattle because of the many pastures.

We write these things now because we want to show what affliction the land came to: *This people that grew fat and kicked, abandoned God who made them; they also reviled God the giver.*² People were lowered from such a magnitude, wealth, and possession of cattle, yokes, and slaves and maids, to such a misery! The man who had one thousand goats and one thousand sheep, as well as yokes, camels, horses, slaves and maids, and who used to ride Arab horses /p.243/ and (whose) slaves rode mules and cleared the way³ before him like pagans: these and others like them were seen carrying their children on their shoulders, bent, naked, hungry, thirsty, begging for a piece of bread from one door to another, and driven from one region to another and from one location to another; and so were housewives, dispossessed, pale, carrying their children on their necks, exhausted, going from one region to another and from one city to another.

In this year, after the army had left, twenty-five or even thirty *gerībā*⁴ of wheat were sold for a dinar, and forty or forty-five *kaylā*-measures of wine for a dinar. Thus everything was of moderate price because the land was greatly productive during this time. Shrines also began to be built and churches renovated.

*Concerning the debates, disputes and troubles that took place in the holy Church and among its leaders during this year the year one thousand and seventy-eight (766-767), namely, because of George, Patriarch of the apostolic See of Antioch*⁵

After the chaste John (of Callinicum) died⁶—he had been made patriarch by

following accounts on taxation; see also below p. 229ff.

¹ ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܘܪܝܢܐ: For this idiom see Brockelmann, *Lexicon*, 652.

² Compare with Deut 32:15.

³ ܐܘܪܝܢܐ: Compare with Mandaic TQL as in *'uhrata taqil* "he smoothens the roads"; Drower-Macuch, *Mandaic*, 489. Brockelmann, *Lexicon* 833, emended the Syriac root to ܐܘܪܝܢܐ and translated "to sound the trumpet". Nowhere in modern Syriac dictionaries is this root attested.

⁴ About this term see p. 186 n. 2 above.

⁵ Chronicon 813 p. 246:15-247:19 [187-188], Chronicon 819 p. 19:6-12 [13], Chronicon 846 p. 237:6-10 [179], Michael IV 476-479 [II 527-529, III 3-4].

⁶ See p. 204 n. 3 about the date of his death.

the bishops of the Jazīra because they split off and separated from George and the people of the West, as we have noted above—the chaste and God-fearing bishops wanted to eliminate all the troublemakers among them so that they might become one people and might submit to one leader following the law which was established and signed by the holy Fathers. Moreover, fearing lest some kind of division or confusion should occur in the holy Faith, and because of the fact that all the cities adhered to George, and proclaimed him and loved him, all the bishops of the Jazīra and the West, including the chaste George, collected and gathered in the region of Sarūg, /p.244/ in the year one thousand and seventy-six of Alexander (764-765).¹

Several *matters were discussed* by both parties dealing with controversial issues of different kinds that existed between them. The chaste George, the Patriarch, loved peace more than schism and division. He did not want traditions and laws to change during his days, namely, those which were established by the one hundred and fifty holy Fathers, who gathered with the Holy Spirit in Constantinople and who marked and set the patriarchal boundaries: the patriarchate of Constantinople, after that of Rome, to Nectarius; that of Alexandria, Meṣrīn, Aigptos and all the western regions to Timothy; and that of Antioch and the entire East to Meletius. Because he feared lest schism should take place in the see of Antioch during his days, he accepted and approved all the demands made by the bishops of the Jazīra, even as far as the matter of the bishops who had been made by John, of the monastery of Qarqaftā,² who made him patriarch; he did not agree with or accept this (ordination) but wanted to exclude them from the entire priestly rank. This attitude angered the bishops of the Jazīra since many among them came from renowned monasteries. Nor was the chaste one stubborn in this matter, but said: “The priesthood, as well as the bishopric order, will be given to him who wants to go to the lower territories of ‘Sijstān and Herat.”³ This idea greatly pleased the bishops. For the honourable one said: “How is it possible that I expel a bishop from his city, who is better than I and who was not established by me, and bring in another, while he is leading his diocese which was entrusted to him with noble and virtuous conduct, and has been bishop for thirty years? Nor are there /p.245/ cities that ask for, or accept any one of them! But let any one among them, who is willing and who fears God, go to the lower territories.” He ordered that those who accepted (the

¹ See this date above.

² For its location see p. 195 n. 3 above.

³ *ܣܝܡܐ ܕܗܪܬ*: Herat is attested in Eastern Syriac sources as *ܣܝܡܐ* (Pahl. Harew) and identified with Herat, a city of Khorasan; Chabot, *Synodicon*, 673. Sijstān was located south of Herat, Yāqūt III 190. Both regions were East Syriac episcopal sees, Chabot, *Synodicon*, 682, as well as West Syriac sees, as is clear in this Chronicle and in the lists of bishops in Michael.

offer) be assisted by everyone and that they should go.

Truly, my Brothers, even if honourable George wanted to admit them, there was not one among them who deserved the bishopric rank, because they were haughty, boastful, troublesome, contentious, cunning, clever, and speakers of perverse things, who did not place before their eyes God's judgment, and upon them the apostolic word was fulfilled: *For I know that after I leave savage wolves will come in along with you, that will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise, speaking perverse things in order to turn away disciples so that they may follow them.*¹ Moreover, our Lord said about them when he cautioned his disciples: *Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are rapacious wolves. You will recognise them by their fruit. He said: Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor could a bad tree bear good fruit. You will know them by their fruit.*² Indeed, these bishops were bad trees, who made the church and the people of God taste bitter fruit.

From this point on, I shall describe the acme of suffering which had befallen the country. But let no one blame honourable George and the bishops for eliminating them from the church. I am, my Brothers, surprised /p.246/ at the honourable John, who became an ascetic through the pious labour of monastic life, and who was praised by everyone: how could he bring people like these for ordination, even if for priesthood? Nor was there a city that asked for them! Although the city of Amida had two or three bishops, he still appointed for it a third and a fourth, although its own bishops were more virtuous than those whom he appointed. One of the former was Mār Severus of the holy monastery of Zuqnīn, a great and God-fearing man. He, because of his weakened sight, resigned the administration of the city and lived in his monastery until the end of his life; Mār Ābay, of the monastery of Mār Ḥabīb in ʿArzen,³ a gentle and humble man, adorned with all spiritual virtues, succeeded him; in Tell-Bashmay there was Sargūna, a man of God, from the monastery of Mār Athanasius—all of them respected and holy old men. Though the city had them, John established others, one of whom came from ʿthe monastery of Ḥarbaz.⁴

¹ Acts 20:29-30.

² Mt 7:15-20.

³ ܐܪܝܢ: Main city of Arzanene; see above p. 123 n. 1.

⁴ ܡܢܐܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܝܫܘܬܐ: Also called "the monastery of Saint George," in the region of Samosata. The earliest mention of it is dated to the 7th century and the latest to the middle of the 10th century; Baršaum, *Histoire*, 510.

I wrote these things, my Brothers, because I wanted to show the evils that came upon us afterwards. But let no one blame the writer until he sees the fruit of these bad trees: †*The appearance† of a man reveals his deeds and his steps testify about him.*¹ These are the men along with their deeds for all to see.

When that synod ended, everyone went back to his region. Just as honourable George returned to his monastery, so did the miserable ones in question go too, with great shame and dishonour. They were not the kind of people who would cover up their ignominy by staying in their monasteries, but removed every stone, confusing and troubling many. /p.247/ They even wondered how they could take revenge on George and his party. Because he had first-hand experience of the issue, and out of fear, in light of what had happened earlier, George went to his monastery and determined not to enter a city or a village or a monastery until the officials of that given place came first and took him to it.

In this same year the people of Ḥarrān came and fetched him, on account of some dispute that occurred between them and their bishop. When the affair for which he had gone was over, the Amidaeans came down to him with Mār Ābay, their bishop, so that †he might not tarry² from going and visiting them. As for him, like a gentle shepherd, he acceded to their request and went up with them. When he passed by the villages and cities on his way, he was welcomed by everyone with honour. The Amidaeans also went out and welcomed him with a great procession, as it befitted such a man. After he remained there for sometime, the members of the monastery of Zuqnīn—all of them respectable elders of the monastery—came, along with the honourable Mār †Euthalius,³ their abbot, and †Dionysius, their overseer,⁴ who became bishop of Ḥarrān afterwards. They took him to their monastery, because for a long time the honourable George had desired to see this monastery and to pray in it. After he had fulfilled his desire and had enjoyed the love of the members of that monastery, he crossed over to †Ḥāḥ⁵ and entered Tella-d-Kūm.

When he wanted to take the road to his monastery, Satan, who from the beginning hated virtues, incited his disciples, /p.248/ who were his instruments ready for perdition. Because he realised that the patriarch was accepted by everyone, he knew that peace was about to reign in the Church, and that trouble and dispute in it were to cease. People, among those whom

¹ Sir 19:29-30.

² ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ: For ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ (ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ). Chabot suggested ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ (ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ by metathesis); *Chronicon* II, p. 247 n. 1.

³ ܕܳܗܳܘܳܠܳܝܳܘܳܫ: About him see the Introduction, p. 3.

⁴ ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ: About him see the Introduction, pp. 3, 8f.

⁵ ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ: (or ܡܳܘܳܠܳܐ): In the Ṭūr-ʿAbdīn, some 16 km north east of Midiāt.

we mentioned above, went down to the Caliph and maligned the honourable George and all the bishops, saying: "He even said† that he himself was the Caliph, not you!" The prophet rightly said about these ones: *Your princes are rebels and associates of thieves; all of them love a bribe and run after requitals.*¹ Behold the rhododaphne² that took root, showed its blossom and bore deadly fruit! Come and see the trees and recognise them from their fruit!

When the Caliph heard about these things, his anger went up like smoke, and he roared like a lion over the prey. He sent after George and after all the bishops of the Jazīra quick messengers breathing fire! While he was still in Tella-d-Kūm, they took him from there to Ḥarrān, not even allowing him to enter its monastery. In Ḥarrān all the bishop† gathered and went from there to the Caliph in ʿBaghdad,³ where he was residing at the time. Now it was impossible for this Caliph, when he heard of someone, be he Persian, Arab or Syrian anywhere under his authority, who had done any wrong at all, to remain quiet or sit still until he had destroyed him. But if someone came to him and informed him of someone else being in possession of something, that person he considered a great friend. Upon seeing them, after they had arrived and had come into his presence, the Caliph growled at them like a bear ready to tear apart. He addressed them with rude words and then expelled them from his presence. As for the chaste George, /p.249/ the Caliph imprisoned him in fetters.

The bishops remained there for several days, after which the Caliph ordered them, saying that he was doing them a favour: "Appoint for you *him who is* a leader among you and go!" All of them wanted to establish David of Dara, thinking that he was responsible for all these matters and that he was very old. They also thought that if another were to be patriarch, David would not consent, and that he would not live long enough and George would be freed to replace him, though he was well aware of these things. Willing or not willing, he was appointed and he left. The Caliph even gave him a decree to imprison, beat† and kill anyone who resisted him and †did not submit† to him. As for George, he remained incarcerated in prison.

This is the origin of the controversy that took place in the Church and among the people of God! Monks and bishop† were subjected to insults and scorn to the point that they were not able to cross the streets of the city

¹ Isa 1:23.

² I.e. oleander; see also Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 295:27, below p. 257 and n. 5.

³ ܒܗܘܘܘܢ: Baghdad, built by Caliph al-Manṣūr in H. 144 (762), was the capital of the ʿAbbasids; see al-Yaʿqūbī II 373f. It was called Madīnat-al-Salām "City of Peace", but the old name of a near-by village, Baghdad, soon prevailed over the Arabic name. The name Baghdad may be attested in Cuneiform sources as early as the second millennium B.C. Assyriologists read the name of a place in central Mesopotamia Hu-da-du-um, which can also be read Bag-da-du-um.

because of the abuse. They were even called assassins and bloodthirsty! People went as far as refusing to take the Eucharist offered by any of them, saying: "You have mentioned the name of David over it."¹ This is the bad seed of darnel which the Evil One has planted by means of his disciples.

When the honourable David, together with the bishops of his party, went up to Mosul and ʿTakrīt,² people went out before him with insults and scorn instead of a patriarchal reception, calling him a bloodthirsty and an assassin. As for him, he did not ʿbecome furious at³ any of them, nor did he become angry but committed everything to God. He even called upon God as witness of the things of which he was accused, saying: "If I have been involved† in the affair of George, let an evil punishment come upon me!" But in spite of the many oaths, anathemas, and homilies which he used to deliver in churches, /p.250/ no one believed him, because they said that these bishops acted on his order. Thus he was not accepted even by one single person on account of the honourable George. Nor did he exact punishment on anyone for his insult or compel even one single person to proclaim him, but said: "Let anyone who wants to proclaim proclaim, and the one who does not want to proclaim I have no quarrel with him!" Through this statement he showed that he had been falsely accused, for although he was in possession of an important decree, he did not put constraint on anyone even when he heard insults and scorn uttered in his own presence.

If David sent a bishop of his party to one of the cities, people came to the point of attacking him. If he offered the Eucharist, they did not take it from him but despised him as well as his Eucharist. And if a God-fearing man was around to admonish them, saying: "Because of this behaviour wrath will come upon you!" they did more harm to him than to the other one. They also used to go from one church to another, saying: "We do not take the Eucharist from so and so because he proclaims David." Particularly the venerable monastic and episcopal attire became despicable to them. If a monk was around who had never seen either David nor George, they insulted the monk until he anathematised and cursed both of them, and the insulters as well. At the end people abstained from proclaiming either one. Thus this dispute continued to ravage the churches until the death of the honourable David.

¹ The name of the patriarch, as well as that of the local bishop, is usually commemorated during the celebration of the Eucharist.

² ܬܟܪܝܬ: Assyrian Tak-ri-i-ta-in and Arabic (and modern) تكريت was a fortified city located on the west bank of the Tigris almost mid-way between Baghdad and Mosul. The city was the see of the West Syriac Maphrian between 628 and the middle of the 12th century, but no Christian presence is attested there after the first decades of the 13th century; About Takrīt see J. Fiey, OS 8 (1963) pp. 289-342, PO 5/1 (1974) pp. 134-174.

³ ܠܘܡ ܝܘܠܝܕܘܗܘܢ: variant spelling for ܠܘܡ ܝܘܠܝܕܘܗܘܢ (/ ܝܘܠܝܕܘܗܘܢ).

These are the bad fruit which these evil trees have produced. Stay and hear about the kind of punishment that came upon us after these events. Know, my Brothers, that whenever the church is troubled, public affairs are also troubled. At this point, the latter was troubled first and then the former.

/p.251/ **767-768** The year one thousand and seventy-nine: The fortress of Arsamosata† on the Ṛarsanias¹ river was built. When the builders and workmen began its construction and it started to rise to a man's height, a great Roman army came and camped on the bank of the river, opposite the fortress. They did not cross over because it was holy Sunday and because they had not been ordered to fight. After they pitched camp, celebrated the Eucharist and ate bread, all the people of the fortress abandoned everything and fled. At this point, the Romans crossed over, seized everything, and set the rest on fire; they then destroyed the construction, carried away everything which they found, and returned to their territory. The Arabs, architects and workmen gathered again and rebuilt it.

ʿAbbās sent letters to all the cities that all the Arabs of the Jazīra, great and small, must come down to Ḥarrān. As they gathered to go down, they abandoned their fields unharvested, because they were in need of money. All the people, great and small, gathered and went down, but they gained nothing other than loss, because it was hard for the evil to become good. They also remained there such a long time that their green crops were spoiled and destroyed. After appointing about six hundred men in these fortresses,² ʿAbbās dismissed the rest, who carried to their homes the price of loss.

In this year Dionysius, Bishop of Ḥarrān, died, and another† Dionysius of the monastery of Zuqnīn succeeded him. In the same year, Stephen† of Ḥābūrā died too†, and³ succeeded him.

768-769 The year one thousand and eighty: Zachariah the Bishop died in /p.252/ Edessa and Iannai in Tella. Elijah, of the monastery of Qartmīn, a heartless and wicked man, who never put God in any of his thoughts, succeeded Zachariah in Edessa. He was not ordained because he deserved the episcopal rank, but because the Edessenes deserved him. Nonetheless, he was neither accepted nor approved because of the bad reputation that followed him which it is not necessary to discuss. Thus Edessa remained without a bishop. In Tella, Sabinus succeeded Iannai.

¹ ~~ܐܪܫܐܡܫܘܬܐ~~: For its location see p. 150 n. 6; for the location of Arsamosata see p. 39 n. 1.

² Presumably the fortresses on the Upper Euphrates where Arsamosata was also located.

³ Blank in MS.

During this time Sargūna of Mardē, David the Patriarch, Mār Ābay of Amida, Constantine of Samosata, and Paul of Takrīt were known.

The price of everything was very moderate: one *zūz* for thirty *qefizā* of wheat, forty vessels of wine and eight *litra*¹ of oil. The land was rich in vineyards and cultivated fields; cattle was like sand.

Zayd came to the usurers and they gave him one *zūz* on every dinar. He took the money and left, and deprived them of nothing more.

Also in this year, stones—black stones—fell from the sky. Many people really saw them and touched them, and they are still standing to this day. Did they per chance ascend to the clouds or where could they have come from? God alone knows! But again, there are no black† stones whatsoever in the region in which they fell! But believe, O reader, that God does in heaven and earth all that he wishes.

769-770 The year one thousand and eighty one:² An evil and violent man, whose name was Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab,³ became governor over Mosul. The prophet prophesied about this one, saying: *He destroyed the land completely,*⁴ and *made the world desolate like a desert.*⁵ He has no rival among the pagan kings, nor among the Magians or the Manichaeans. He brought /p.253/ the land into such a great calamity that since the creation of the world to this day, it has never suffered a calamity like the one it suffered at the hands of this man. If one wants to call him Anti-Christ⁶ and his agents messengers of the Son of Perdition, he is not wrong but he is calling him by his own name: *If a king is unjust all his servants are also unjust.*⁷

¹ A *litra* may be approximately 1/3 litre.

² *Narrationes variae* 335 [263]: H. 146 (763-764). *Chronicon* 813: 248:6-8 [188], Michael IV 476 [II 526]: S. 1083 (771-772). *Chronicon* 819 p. 19:27-20:12 [14]: S. 1080 (768-769). *Chronicon* 1234 I 340:9-25 [265]. Mārī 71. See also below p. 253.

³ **ܡܘܨܐ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܐ ܒܢ ܡܘܨܐ**: al-Ṭabarī VII 511 dates the removal (by Caliph al-Manṣūr) of Mūsā son of Ka'b from his position as governor of Egypt to H. 141 (758-759), his appointment as governor of the Jazīra to H. 155 (771-772), and his removal from this position to H. 158 (774-775); see al-Ṭabarī VIII 47, 54, 56. Ibn Khaldūn III 201 called him Mūsā son of Ka'b al-Khath'imī. al-Azdī 224, 226, called him Mūsā son of Ka'b al-Tamīmī. On the confusion of the names see al-Azdī, 224 n. 3.

⁴ Cf Ezek 30:12, where the imperfect **ܐܘܪܘܫܝܡ** is first person, the subject being God.

⁵ Isa 14:17.

⁶ The Chronicler of Z. (below p. 242) and other Syriac sources (see note 3 above) called him the "Jew," but this claim is not necessarily correct; for more details about this issue see Witakowski, *Syriac Chronicle*, 100 n. 84.

⁷ Cf Prov 29:12.

As we mentioned above,¹ the venerable monastic attire became despicable, bishops and monks were mocked at, and even the Eucharist was assaulted in such a manner that monks were afraid to go out to the streets because of the abuse of, especially, the peoples of Takrīt, ʿNarsābād² and Mosul. But Wrath overpowered these peoples first, and what is more, it followed them to seek them out in distant places. The Caliph had no man according to his heart except him. It was once written: *I found for Jesse a son according to my heart.*³ ‘Abd-Allah, son of Muḥammad, found in Mūsā a man according to his heart, so that he might walk before him in iniquity at all times.

When Mūsā became the governor of Mosul, he roared like a lion over prey, saying: *I will pursue my enemies and I will overtake them; I will not turn back until I exterminate them. I will beat them and they will not be able to stand; they will fall under my feet. They will call out for help but they will not have a saviour. They will beg the Lord but he will not answer them. I will pulverise them like dust before the wind, and I will tread on them like the mire of the streets.*⁴ He pursued the country, exterminated the people on the face of the world, and beat them so they could not stand before him. They fell under his feet and he trod on them like the mire of the streets, in the cities. He turned them, as it were, into straw before the storm, as they fled from one place to another. They called out to the Lord for help but he did not extricate them from his grip, or deliver them from their affliction. Their eyes failed while waiting for a deliverer.

Mūsā asked the Caliph to allow him to send agents to bring the fugitives⁵ /p.254/ of Mosul from all the regions, as if he wanted to pacify the country. He wrote to the whole country to the effect that no one should oppose him or oppose an agent of his. Then he dispatched one man to every three cities of the Jazīra, accompanied by many people. At this point, a man as wicked as the one who dispatched him, greedy, and a person in whose sight God did not exist, came to Amida, Arzen and Maipharqat; his name was Adam, son of Yazīd. At this time the people of Mosul, who lived in this region of the Jazīra, were exceedingly rich, in such a manner that they were devouring all the output of the people of the Jazīra through forfeit and usury. Though the Lord said: *Do not lend money to your brother on interest, and do not give your money with usury,*⁶ they did the opposite. They lent on interest and gave

¹ See p. 221.

² ܢܘܨܒܐܘܕܐܝܢܐ : The gentilic in this phrase must be a corrupt form of ܢܘܨܒܐܘܕܐܝܢܐ “the people of Narsābād, Narsābādians” (see below p. 225 n. 2).

³ Cf 1Sam 16:1ff.

⁴ Ps 18:37, 41.

⁵ Overwhelmed by taxes, people fled their regions to escape the tax collectors; see below p. 268.

⁶ Cf Lev 25:37.

(their money) at forfeit and with usury. They became owners of slaves and maidens, and possessed properties, vineyards and lands, in such a manner that soon they were close to owning the entire land which spoke the language of the children of Ārām,¹ and the whole Jazīra was near to becoming the property of the Narsabadians.² They also sat in public places, like magistrates and landlords, and controlled and administered the churches like prelates. They did not remember that they were aliens, strangers and guests in this land,³ and if they had destroyed their own land, how would they be able to colonise that of their neighbours? The prophetic word has been fulfilled upon them: *Do not be jealous of the wicked ones and do not envy the doers of iniquity, for they shall quickly dry up like grass and fade away like the green herb⁴ that sprout and develop rapidly in the morning and in the evening wither and dry up.⁵* Indeed, they were proud and haughty beyond measure, but *the Lord tears down the house of the proud.⁶* They were humiliated, uprooted and ruined, /p.255/ turning, as it were, into flowers before the sun.

When the one whom we mentioned above came into the Jazīra and took over the cities, all the inhabitants fled before him. Because they were all grocers and textile merchants, not owning much property, they hid their goods, carried their children on their shoulders and fled. One would cry over them, bruised among the mountains, dispossessed, hungry and *as powerless* as straw before the storm. Others entered one room inside another, confining themselves, like the dead, in inner and dark houses. They rotted and their human appearance turned into the appearance of the dead inside the graves. Because it was summer, life grew very hard for them. Those who fled, died along with their children, of hunger, on mountains and in caves, while wandering from one mountain to another. Those who hid themselves in houses died of fever as well as of fear, suffocation and heat. The people who sheltered them were even more scared, for wherever one of them was uncovered, they, as well as the family among which he had been found, would

¹ ארם הלבנון : Northern Syria, the Jazīra of the Arab sources, had been the homeland of the Aramaeans since the late second millennium B.C. Syriac-speaking people were the descendants of these Aramaeans, as the expression above indicates.

² نرساباد : Gentilic derived from Narsābād (نرساباد in al-Azdī 287), a city near Takrīt. The city was a Monophysite episcopal see during the 8th and 9th centuries, although it was completely destroyed in 797 by Yiḥiā al-Ḥarashī, the wālī of Mosul; see al-Azdī 287; see also Fiey, *Assyrie* III, 87-88.

³ Cf Heb 11:13.

⁴ Ps 37:1-2.

⁵ Ps 90:6.

⁶ Prov 15:25.

suffer severe tortures. Besides, the herald cried out that whoever hid a man of Mosul, all his possessions would be sold and he would be fined a certain sum. Because of this, people were scared and everyone ousted the man who was hiding in his place†. He also said: “He who catches a man (of Mosul) will receive a ‘reward¹ of forty zūz.” When the accursed and godless people of the shorn and miserable Arabs heard this statement, they turned it into trade. They watched wherever they were hiding, †and if someone† went out even if during the night, they would catch him and mercilessly ask him: /p.256/ “Either give us money or we will drive you (to the amīr) and will take the reward of forty zūz!” Whether he wanted to or not, they took money from him and then dismissed him. Sometimes the victim fell into the hands of even worse people!

Because this man was so cunning and crafty, no place in which someone hid any object escaped his attention, as if that very object had been calling him, saying: “Here I am! I belong to so and so!” He was aware of everything as quickly as the one who hid or put away an object, and everything was revealed to him, as is written about the Son of Perdition. As for the people who married (Syrian) women, sired Syrian children, and mixed with the Syrians, and whom no one was able to distinguish from the Aramaeans,² he quickly found out about them. He seized the leaders of the village in which they were living, beat their bodies with severe blows, until they produced securities whom they brought to him. When he had caught all of them in this way and made them ransom each other, he sold all their property and kept the proceeds. Thus he stripped all of them totally naked, expelled them and returned them to their own region where he imprisoned them. Hunger, various diseases and plagues† overpowered them, and only a few survived. The wealthy and the notables among them sold all that they possessed and paid him; they became dispossessed, with nothing left to anyone of them. As for this wicked man, although he promised under oath not to take from anyone of them one zūz or one fuls, he demanded gold dinars. But if any one of them sold all that he possessed, he could hardly raise the amount demanded from him.

*/p.257/ Concerning the sign
in the likeness of the broom which was seen in the sky³*

768-769 In the year one thousand and eighty, in the month of *Iyyār* (May), something like a broom appeared in the Northeast. When it was seen in this

¹ *ܐܘܪܘܚܐ*: From Arabic *جُعِلَ* “pay, prize ...” with the Syriac emphatic ending.

² Aramaeans here is synonymous with Syrians (Syriac-speaking Christians); see the note on p. 225 n. 1 above. The men in question may have been Muslim Arabs who married Christian women.

³ Cf Michael IV 474-475 [II 524]; May S. 1076 (765).

corner, it was ascending and was dark, as if it were sweeping the dust of a house. In the morning, it appeared bending its 'lock of hair¹ toward the earth. It moved forward little by little until it went up into the axis of the wheel that is in the sky, where it was swallowed up and disappeared. Its shape was like the one which was drawn above.² It was rightly and appropriately called a broom because as the shovel and the broom are brought into the house in order to cleanse it and sweep it, so too this thing swept the world and destroyed all that was in it.

First, all the cattle, especially sheep, perished this year. Abundant and heavy snow fell, covered the ground and remained for a long time until the cattle died of hunger, and 'many were slaughtered.³ In some places snow came down and crushed both sheep and shepherds, and the sheep perished along with the shepherds. Then southern and eastern winds, accompanied by abundant snow, blew for three days and three nights, killing many people as well as cattle, especially sheep. Many people caught on roads collapsed and died together with their donkeys.

*Concerning the people—called "Giants"
in the 'protean language⁴—who came up from the lower land
in the year one thousand and seventy-eight (766-767)*

During this time the Caliph deported a people from the land of Persia, and settled them on† the Roman border†. This people, made up of naked and barefooted men, women and children, /p.258/ did not practise any profession; the children were not taught any skill, nor did the women know how to work with wool. Their work consisted of laying ambush on roads days and nights, killing and despoiling people, and of cutting off roads. Because they used to live in inaccessible mountains, no one was a match for them. They even sought to assail the Caliph himself by cutting off the road of the treasury of the Commander of the faithful. When they did this and the whole country gave up all hope on them, the Caliph dispatched against them a great army. He captured, plundered, bound, and grouped them, wanting to destroy them all with the blade of the sword after he had crucified their leaders. As he wanted to act accordingly, God-fearing people advised him to send them to †border land† and expose them to enemies; there they would either be captured or

¹ כֶּסֶף : This word translates Greek κομήτης "comet" (lit. "long haired one").

² See above p. 184. A comet is drawn in the left margin of folio 146r.

³ כִּי רַב־בָּרְזֵל הָיוּ : Lit. "many were skinned"; כִּי רַב־בָּרְזֵל will occur again; see below p. 304 n. 1.

⁴ כְּלָשׁוֹן : For כְּלָשׁוֹן כְּלָשׁוֹן , i.e., the language of the Bible; about the "Giants" see Gen 6:4.

killed by the Romans. He quickly acted according to what he was advised, deporting them and settling† them beyond¹ the cultivated land opposite Qamḥ—they were about three hundred thousand strong. But they fled and dispersed over the entire land and only a few among them remained. Because this land was cold and they were naked, most of them died during the first winter that came upon them; those who survived did not give up their former behaviour either.

Concerning the restoration of the great church of Amida²

During this time, the people of Amida executed a major and splendid renovation of their great church which had been built by the God†-fearing emperor and believer Heraclius. Because this church had not been renovated since its first construction, †they took† care /p.259/ about its reconstruction. Since it was dilapidated to the extent that it was almost falling, the abbas Mār Ābay, bishop of the city, the venerable Mār George, the Visitor, and Thomas the Archdeacon, took great diligence over it and spent much money on it. They applied new material in replacement of all the decay that was in it, and made it as glorious as it had been originally.

*Also concerning the order issued by the Caliph
to register the properties of churches and monasteries³*

Satan, who always hates virtues, did not cease even now from kindling schisms and troubles† in the churches and the monasteries: *I will divide a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law,⁴ and the man's enemies are the members of his household.⁵*

At this time an order was issued by the Caliph that all abbots and church officials be held to register the properties of their monasteries, churches and shrines. The reason was as follows: Satan, who selected for himself a disciple,

¹ ܩܡܚܐ: It can also mean "within".

² About the building of the Church of Amida by Heraclius in 628-629 see above p. 142. Assemani, BO ii 114, dated this and the following events to S. 1081 (769-770); see Chabot, *Chronique*, 96 n. 1. Nonetheless, this date cannot be applied to the order of registering the properties of churches and monasteries (see the following account). When this order was issued, the governor of Mosul was Ja'far, son of Caliph al-Manṣūr. Ja'far died in H. 150 (767).

³ For the date of this account see the previous note.

⁴ Cf Mt 10:35 and Lk 12:53.

⁵ Micah 7:6.

Judas Iscariot*†, among the serene group of the apostles, now too selected a man named Ze'ōrā of the holy and lofty monastery of 'Mār Mattay,¹ in the region of Mosul. He had an argument with the abbot of the monastery, and just as Judas his master delivered our Lord to death, he acted likewise. Satan prompted him to outdo Judas many times over, so that he would not cause one single death but many, would not obliterate one single place but many,† and would not destroy one single monastery but many. Ze'ōrā withdrew from the community, as it were, a wolf from among lambs, and went to 'Ja'far, the son of /p.260/ the Caliph,² and said: "Look, all the gold of the house of Hishām as well as of the house of Marwān is in such and such a monastery!" He fully disclosed to him everything that was in the monastery. Ja'far sent cruel men to the monastery to take everything in it, including all the ritual vessels. Moreover, all the monks were bound with heavy fetters* and brought to Ja'far, who tormented them cruelly and threw them in prison, demanding from them whatever that second Judas told him.

Because of this, an order was issued to the entire country that every abbot must register the property of his monastery. Although everyone thought that the property would be confiscated, as had happened to that (of Mār Mattay), Ja'far suffered nothing less than what had happened to Belteshazzar³—for this one disdained the vessels of the divine rituals and wanted to confiscate them for himself and for his concubines. God did not neglect his church and his people either, but sent an evil spirit to Ja'far to torment him. Consequently, he freed the monks, who took back their property and returned to their monastery. And thus this matter came to an end and was not pursued again because that evil spirit destroyed him.⁴

*Concerning the fertility of the
country and the evils which were perpetrated in it*⁵

Since we want to provide information about the afflictions which the country had suffered, we should therefore talk about its fertility so as to show from

¹ *ܡܬܝܢܐ*: Known today as *دير شيخ متي*, the monastery is located on Mt. Maqlūb (also called Alfāf), some 35 km northeast of Mosul; about it see Fiey, *Assyrie* II, 759ff.

² *ܥܒܕ ܗܘܢܐ ܕܡܘܨܠ*: Caliph al-Manṣūr appointed his son Ja'far as *wālī* "governor" over Mosul and its districts in H. 145 (762-763), after he eliminated for the second time Mālik ibn al-Haytham; al-Azdī 194, 211. Ja'far died in H. 150 (767). The rebellious monk must have denounced his monastery to this Ja'far. The order of registering the property of monasteries and churches came from the Caliph, as stated by the Chronicler of Z. in the title of this section. See also Nöldeke, *WZKM* 10 (1896) p. 169 n. 2.

³ Dan 5:2-3.

⁴ Could this be a reference to the death (H. 150) of Ja'far, son of Caliph al-Manṣūr?

⁵ See above p. 215 and n. 3.

where to where the wealthy and the glorious country had fallen.

During this time, the country, particularly the Jazīra and the whole North, was productive. The whole land was beautiful with green crops, vineyards and much cattle, and was full of herds of horses and flocks of goats. People possessed a quantity of the grain in such a manner that wine was added to wine and wheat to wheat. *Truly Israel grew fat and kicked but did not say: Blessed be the Lord who enriched us.*¹ On the contrary, people suddenly ran after /p.261/ the property of the monasteries and the churches, saying: "What is the church suffering after all? We are in need because we pay the poll-tax and we have children!" Because they had many children, had become exceedingly wealthy, and had access to all good things, they became haughty, arrogant, jealous, adulterous, fornicators, drunkards, rapacious and false witnesses, to such extent that they would have committed almost all vices if *he (= God) had not set over them an evil angel, who forced bad paths*² among them.

If someone had a lawsuit against his neighbour, and was required by the judge to produce witnesses, he would go to the marketplace to find his colleague and say to him: "So and so, would you witness in my favour?" And this one would quickly answer and say: "By God, yes! On what matter?" He would swear even before learning about the matter!³ What can be more deserving for such people than what happened to them? *Let work be heavy for the men that they may be occupied by it and that they may not engage in vain conversations,*⁴ and: *My words will not be delayed any more.*⁵ Every day members of the same village, or two villages, made lawsuits against each other concerning the boundaries of fields. The wretches did not know that soon wrath would befall them and that they would lose their vineyards, houses and fields. And these would remain desolate, with no one to pass by them or settle in them. Even the venerable monastic order went beyond due ordinance, and instead of: *Take up your cross and follow me,*⁶ monks owned horses, herds of oxen, and flocks of goats and sheep. Each one possessed plots which *he acquired* from the lands of the community. They went outside to own vineyards and houses in the villages and to ride horses with saddles, like the pagans. They walked according to the wishes of their hearts, not submitting /p.262/ to the superior who had been assigned over them by God.

Do not think, wise person, that I am writing these things because I like to denounce people, but it is the goodness, mercy, kindness and patience of God

1 Cf Deut 32:15.

2 Paraphrase of Ps 78:49-50.

3 Similar statement is found below p. 280.

4 Ex 5:9.

5 Ex 12:28.

6 Lk 9:23.

which I want to show. After all of these words, stay and hear about the kind of abyss we have slipped into and about the kinds of afflictions that have caught us.

*Concerning the slaves
who rebelled in Ḥarrān, a city in Mesopotamia*

During this time, many Ṭ Moor,¹ Sindhi and Khazar slaves—about five hundred men—conspired. Armed, they invaded the city of Ḥarrān at midday, heading toward the Treasury. They killed †with the blade of the sword† whoever crossed their path, as they sought to break into the Treasury to take its assets. When ‘Abbās heard about this matter, he grew greatly alarmed; so he gathered a great army and met the slaves in battle. As people from both sides were killed in the intensive battle which they waged, in the end, the slaves were frightened and fled. Many of them were killed, some were captured, while the rest fled. Many of their leaders were also captured, beaten, and killed.

*Concerning the departure of the Caliph to the North,
the building of (Second)² Callinicum, and the origin of all the misfortunes
that befell the country*

Since we talked about the fertility, excellence and the various resources of the country, we will also talk about the quarrelsome people and the origin of (its) woes. It is written in the prophet: *Ah the Assyrian is the rod of my anger and the stick of my punishment is in their hand, against an idolatrous nation I will send him, and against a wrathful people I will command him to take spoil and to take captives /p.263/ and to make him like the mire of the streets;*³ and: *For he (the Assyrian) said: Look! the princes are altogether kings!*⁴ *Therefore, the Lord will not rejoice over their young men and have no pity on their orphans and widows, for all of them are idolatrous and evil-doers and every mouth speaks folly.*⁵ *And there will be none, he says, who will raise his wings or open the mouth and chirp*⁶ *before him. He came to ‘Anat, at Michmash he placed his supplies, and crossed over the pass of*

¹ **مور**: Gentilic “people of Mauritania”; see *Thesaurus*, 2051. About Sind and the Khazars see p. 206 nn. 7, 9.

² Addition based on the account about the new city; see below p. 233 and n. 1.

³ Isa 10:5-6.

⁴ Isa 10:8.

⁵ Isa 9:17.

⁶ Cf Isa 10:14b.

*Geba' to Bet Betan. Ramat was afraid and Geba' of Saul fled.*¹ *He shook his fist at the Mountains of Zion and the hills of Jerusalem.*² The prophet talked well when he saw with the prophetic eye the return of this basilisk!

During this year, the Caliph, along with his officials, departed³ from where he was residing, and arrived at the northern land with troops so numerous they could not be counted. He came to Mosul and the old and the young of the entire city gathered and complained before him about the evils, pillaging, afflictions and devastation which Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab, had brought against them. But because he enjoyed the sword more than peace, he dismissed all of them from his presence, and even inflicted upon their chiefs great punishments. But he rejoiced and was exulted in Mūsā, like someone who has found the man after his heart, and said: "I found the man after my heart, who fulfils all my desires, executes all that is in my heart, and walks before me in iniquity now and during all my days."

When the Caliph left for the Jazīra, 'Abbās, who was his brother and the amīr of the Jazīra, heard about him. Because 'Abbās knew his brother to be a man who set his mind more toward the sword than toward peace, and because the land of the Jazīra was rich in vineyards, crops and settlements during his tenure—for 'Abbās was a merciful and peace-loving man—he quickly sent messages to all /p.264/ the regions, saying: "Flee and leave the villages empty of people before him!" But the inhabitants of the villages neither understood nor comprehended what was said to them, and therefore sat quiet.

When the Caliph came, he saw that the land was fertile, rich, beautiful and full of all resources, for it was the month of *Iyyār* (May) during which all the crops were still available. After he saw all this, he observed that the land was blessed with numerous settlements. Though he took notice of the prosperity in the province of 'Abbās, he did not treat the last-named as befitted him. Instead of thanking him for this state, he roared over him like a lion set to devour. And when 'Abbās came toward him to welcome him in a procession as befits kings, the Caliph expelled him from his presence and tossed him aside like a dead twig. He even refused to let him be seen in his presence, saying: "Where is it that you said that the Jazīra was in ruins?" Then he deposed him from his office,⁴ took away his assets, and treated him with all kinds of evils. After he had done this to his brother, he came to Nisibis and 'Kefar-Tūthā,⁵ and then went straight to Callinicum.

¹ Isa 10:28-29.

² Cf Isa 10:32.

³ حَصَا : For the meaning given above see Mannā, *Dalīl*, 561 (رَحَلَ ، اِنْقَلَعَ).

⁴ Chronicon 813 p. 248: 6-7 [188]: S. 1083 (771-772). al-Ṭabarī VIII 46f: H. 155 (771-772). In the same year al-Manṣūr appointed Mūsā, son of Ka'b (son of Muṣ'ab, in the Chronicle of Z.), governor of Mosul.

⁵ كَفَرُ تُوْتَا : Located between Nisibis and Ra's-al-'Ayn.

*Concerning the building of 'Second Callinicum'*¹

The soul of this man² was inclined to magicians and diviners, and he adhered to, and executed all they said to him. When he consulted them concerning times and kingdoms, 'they collected³ insane and foolish statements and handed them to him, as demons are accustomed to do to mislead those who adhere to them. They said to him: "A man will become Caliph. He will build a city beside Callinicum, and will also go to Jerusalem where he will build a 'mosque.⁴ He will rule for forty years!" The wretch said: "I am he!" Therefore, he sent for workers from all the Jazīra and ordered them to lay bricks and the architects to build a wall.

*/p.265/ Concerning the flight of the Armenians
from the Roman territories and concerning the defeat which
the Arabs inflicted upon the Romans*

When the Caliph was in Callinicum, the Armenians left the Roman territories. They came to the agent who was in charge of the inner fortresses at that time, and asked him to come to them, because they wanted to leave for the Jazīra. They were from among the people who went in(side the Roman territory) with Kushan.⁵ After they returned (to the Roman territories) to bring their families out, and as the Arabs marched toward them, the chief of Qamḥ heard of them. Therefore, he led an army, pursued them, and overtook them along with their families, while they were camping in a meadow. Since the Armenians were treacherous and perfidious from the beginning, some among them fled and went to inform the Arabs about the place where the Romans had pitched camp, because they were not too far away.

While the Romans were camped, sleeping without concern, the Arabs attacked them during the second watch of the night, suddenly falling upon them and killing them with the blade of the sword. They captured many of them and brought those they captured by hand, as well as the severed heads of those whom they killed, down to the Caliph in Callinicum. They wanted to

¹ Chronicon 813 p. 247:23-24 [188]; S. 1080 (768-769), Rāfi[qa] next to Cal[linicum]. al-Ṭabarī VIII 44, 46: 154-155 H. (770-772). Yāqūt III 15: Caliph al-Manṣūr built a new city, al-Rāfiqa, near al-Raqqā (Callinicum), but the name of al-Raqqā prevailed. al-Rāfiqa must be ܡܠܝܟܘܬܐ ܕܩܠܝܢܝܩܘܡ "Second Callinicum," built beside Callinicum as mentioned by the Chronicler of Z.

² Reference to al-Manṣūr.

³ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ: From Arabic قُرَيْش.

⁴ ܡܫܝܕܐ: Arabic مسجد with the Syriac emphatic ending.

⁵ See above p. 190ff.

receive a reward from him, as well as status and praise. As for the Caliph, he gave them a bad reception instead of a reward; it is reported that he even confiscated their possessions.

*Concerning the 'censor'¹
whom the Caliph dispatched to the country*

When the Caliph realised that the country was populous, he decided to conduct a 'census (*ta'dīl*).² He did not take pleasure in (showing) compassion, settlements or prosperity, but wanted to subject more people to the 'capitation tax,³ so that he might increase tribute and hardship in the country. He sent for cunning and crafty people whom he appointed as agents, and then dispatched them to the territories to enumerate all the people for the poll-tax.

*/p.266/ Concerning the agents of 'the crown property'⁴
and 'the tithe collectors'⁵ whom the Caliph dispatched to the country*

Then the Caliph appointed people of bitter temper over the crown property and the tithe. Because the administrator whom he appointed over the crown property was a godless and merciless Magian, he came to all the cities of the Jazīra and registered the marketplaces, every place where anything was sold, and the stores in the marketplaces. Anything which 'was not entered⁶ in the census (*ta'dīl*) he made crown property, including the mills.

He measured the marketplace with a measuring line from one city gate to another, from East to West and from North to South. Outside the marketplace, he measured forty cubits on both sides, and confiscated whatever

¹ ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ: Participle with the suffix of the *nomen agens*. The ܡ derives from Arabic تعديل "census"; see above p. 147 n.6.

² ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ: Arabic تعديل with the Syriac emphatic ending; elsewhere the Chronicler of Z. gave the Syriac transcription of the Arabic term.

³ ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ.

⁴ ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ: From Arabic صوافي *ṣawwāfī* "state or crown property," not simply "confiscated property" as Margoliouth mentioned; *Supplement*, 284. The term is attested in al-Balādhurī, al-Ṭabarī and al-Ya'qūbī; see Morony, *Iraq*, 37 n. 39, concerning ibn Darrāj; see also below p. 256.

⁵ ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ: Syriac parallel of Arabic مُعْشِرُونَ "tithe collectors" (the tax was paid in cities on goods; see the following account).

⁶ ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ: One would probably expect ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ (ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ) (pass. part. of ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ "to enter"). Compare with ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ (ܡܚܕܠܝܢܐ) "not registered in the census"; see the following note.

was found within the forty cubits, whether houses or stores, and registered them. He registered as crown property, belonging to the Caliph, any place, whether a garden, mill or farm, which was 'not registered in the census (*ta'dīl*).¹ He also went around the city wall and registered its towers and forty cubits round about.² He did so to all the cities of the Jazīra and the West—because he travelled to the Jazīra, the West, as well as to Fourth Armenia. Other people received these places from him as land 'grants,³ and then he left for Ḥarrān.

From now on there was nothing but theft and rapine! He who went was captured and he who came was also captured, and all that was with him was snatched and taken away. Anyone, be he a buyer or a seller, who had something with him, was grabbed and his possessions were taken away. The agents even went out to fields and roads, capturing all wayfarers.

Concerning the tithe collectors

The Caliph also appointed another agent of the tithe, whom he dispatched for the destruction of the country. When this agent came into the cities, he went to the marketplaces, crossed over to the stores, and registered the goods that were inside them. But if the value was one hundred *zūz*, he wrote two hundred, and took away /p.267/ as tithe five *zūz* on every hundred—and if he could, ten *zūz* on every hundred.

Then the agents went out to the roads and stripped him who passed by, coming or going. Furthermore, wretches who lived in the cities used to go outside to hide themselves along the roads during the night; they used to go into the vineyards by which the 'Road of the King⁴ passed, to lie in wait. When poor merchants and people looking for madder would pass by, they would capture them by force, saying: "Either give us such and such, or go to the amīr!" In this way, they would rob them of as much as they wanted, although they were still not willing to release them.

They used to capture the poor who used to go into (the fields) looking for madder and take away everything that was with them. And when they were requesting them to allow them to uproot madders, they used to answer: "Go and uproot them a *zūz* for every three or four days!" They were settling accounts with them as if the poor were uprooting madder in their own

¹ ܠܘܚܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܚܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܚܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܚܘܬܐ: See the preceding note.

² See p. 256 below on the same issue.

³ ܕܘܠܘܬܐ: From Arabic *قطعة*. Although the Chronicler of Z. did not specify who "the other people" were, Arabic sources suggest that parcels of land were normally given to the privileged ones; see Morony, *Iraq*, 239 and 534 for the Arabic term.

⁴ ܕܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܚܘܬܐ: Reference to the public route; *Thesaurus*, 375.

gardens! Thus they could hardly save any of what they used to uproot with pain, because once they fled from this one, another one faced them, and if they fled from the latter still another one would face them. If they fled from the tithe, (the agent of) the crown property would face them. Thus people stripped the poor everywhere. Moreover, whenever those thieves found poor travellers, they posed as tithe collectors and stripped them. From this point onward, they did not need to set ambush on roads during the night, for they executed their wish and pleasure in midday.

Agents also registered the wheat belonging to people, but if a man had fifty *gerībā*, they wrote down a thousand. They used to write as they liked, though in this year nothing was lacking.

/p.268/ Concerning the brander and the stamps¹

The Caliph also appointed another agent in order to brand and stamp people on the neck, like slaves. The prophet says: *Everyone who had not received* the mark of that beast on the forehead.*² But here, not only did they bear it on the forehead, but also on both hands, on the chest, and even on the back. When this official came, he aggravated the land by his arrival more than all his predecessors, because he had been ordered to mark people on the hand with a mark that would not go away or be erased for the rest of their lives.

When he went into the cities, all the people grew agitated and fled before him. Shops *were closed*, selling and buying in the marketplaces stopped; even roads were empty of travellers. People that arrived refrained from entering the city because they feared disaster, and those that were leaving refrained from going out because the agent blocked the city gates and did not allow anyone to leave. When he had acted like that for about a whole week, no one remained in the street, nor did anyone come into the city from the country. The collectors of the poll-tax sent a message to the one who was appointed instead of 'Abbās to exact the poll-tax, saying: "People fled from this brander, and if he will not leave from here, you will not be able to exact the poll-tax." Upon hearing these words, he sent a written message to the brander and he left. People were relieved from this person for a short while, because of his discharge from office for this year.

¹ *Narrationes variae* 336:3-5 [263]: In Amida, time of Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab. According to this source the tokens placed around the necks of people were meant to "crush them, mock them, and insult them". *Chronicon* 819 p. 20:4-5 [14]; *Chronicon* 1234 I 340:13 [265]: time of ibn Muṣ'ab.

² Rev 20:4.

*Concerning the 'fugitives'*¹

The Caliph also appointed another agent to return everyone to his country and family home. This agent in turn established agents whom he dispatched to the cities. He did not send one agent to each city but the agent designated for each city to all the other cities in turn, so that all the agents would meet in a single city—as if each city in the Jazīra had one agent in charge of fugitives!² /p.269/ From this point on, there was no escape: only plundering, evil, iniquity, wickedness, and all the other opprobrious conduct, including denunciations, acts of injustice, and people, not only strangers but also kindred, taking revenge on each other. Brother conspired against brother, and the latter denounced the former.

He appointed over Mardīn a Persian man to bring back its fugitives and to exact the poll-tax. Because its people had fled in greater number than from anywhere else, the region had been occupied entirely by the Arabs, before whom the Syrians had fled. The man's name was Khalīl son of 'Zedīn.³ This man made the Arabs suffer so many ills that no one could rival him in animosity toward them, either before or after him. He sent to all the cities some of his 'chieftains,⁴ who removed each person from his house, village and country, even if he, his father or his grand-father was reported to have lived in Mardīn as much as forty or fifty years earlier. They were brought down to Mardīn. Not many were able to slip through, because he did not accept bribes nor mediation. He gathered people in this region in such a way that no place or village or ruin was available which he did not fill and 'crowd⁵ with people.

As for the Arabs, he made them roam from one place to another, after he had confiscated all that they possessed, filled their fields and houses with Syrians, and made them sow their wheat. He also captured the wealthy among them and treated them with merciless cruelty, applying all kinds of tortures

¹ **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ**: From Arabic جوالي (sing. جالية) "departures, flights." In Egypt this term referred to one who fled so as to avoid paying the tax; Fattal, *Statut*, 265. The same situation occurred in the Jazīra as the following account suggests.

² Wry comment of the Chronicler about the discrepancy between the letter of the law and the application of the law. See also below p. 258 and n. 2.

³ **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ** in Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 269:28. Are these forms for Arabic زيدان?

⁴ **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ**: Arabic أمير with the Syriac suffix of the *nomen agens* -ōnō (plural -ōnē).

⁵ **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ** (for **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ**): The √ is not **ܩܠܩ** as Brockelmann, *Lexicon*, 490, questioned, but **ܩܠܩ** as Margoliouth rightly noted; *Supplement*, 239. **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ** seems to be Pa'el, although one would expect **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ** since the verb is mostly attested in the Pe'al form. The confusion of the *yōdh* with the *nūn* in **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ** is well-known in MSS. It is unlikely that **ܩܠܩܘܬܐ** is Akkadian *sapānu* "to destroy" in which case the sentence would mean "no place ... which he did not fill with people and (by the same token) destroy".

and blows. He would take one of them, pass a razor over his head and beard, make for him a doughy crown which he would place over the head, and make him sit /p.270/ facing the sun. He would pour oil over his head so as to drip over his eyes little by little, and in this manner his head would suffer pain and ache.¹ There were in addition iron collars which he placed around people's legs, fingers and arms, as well as iron nuts² over their eyes. Thus he used to treat them to merciless torture, killing many among them. As for the others, they fled, wandering from one place to another.

Concerning the other evils that occurred in all the cities, let us call upon Joel the great, who witnessed them first, and he will relate them to you: *Hear this, you aged men, give ear all inhabitants of the earth! Has such a thing happened in your days or in the days of your fathers? Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. What the creeping locust left, the flying locust has eaten, and what the flying locust left, the crawling locust has eaten, and what the crawling locust left, the cricket has eaten.*³ When the prophet considered this period as well as the evils that were going *to come* upon the people, he said these words. Thus his words have been fulfilled in reality, for he who fled from the (agent of) the crown property, the tithe collector faced him, and he who fled from the tithe collector, the pursuer of fugitives faced him, and he who escaped pursuit, thieves faced him. They did more harm to villagers than to any others, in that they stripped them *for various reasons* in different ways. As for the agents of the fugitives, with whom the entire country was filled, they were scared to appear before the prefect. Yet these same impious agents of the fugitives used to capture whomever they saw, and either despoiled him of, and took away his possessions, or led him away to deliver him to the agent of the fugitives in charge of his region. These people did not escape a single evil, because agents used to capture them for each other. They did not care much about the return of the fugitives, /p.271/ for they used to ignore the one whom they stripped totally naked for a while, so that he might flee from them. In this way, he would not accompany them to denounce them for having plundered his property. But if they recaptured him, they treated him worse than before. This same wrath existed in all the territories of the Jazīrat.

The Caliph also ordered that no one, be he an Arab or Syrian, might harvest. He issued this order before he came to the Jazīra, namely, that no

¹ This type of punishment given to people who could not pay the tax existed during the time of 'Umar I. It is said about 'Umar that he prohibited such a practice when he himself saw a man being punished for the same reason; see Fattal, *Statut*, 288. For the description of other punishments see below pp. 271ff.

² Perhaps nuggets of iron in the shape of the nut possibly used to press into the eye.

³ Joel 1:2-4.

one should harvest or tread out (wheat), because he wanted to see the entire crop. And in this year the crop was abundant everywhere. When he came and saw everything, and having treated 'Abbās badly, he appointed other agents over the 'alms tax, that is the monetary alms tax,¹ whom he dispatched to the regions. When they received the order, *they acted* without mercy. As they went to the farms of the Arabs, they registered all that was on them—whether belonging to the Syrians or to the Arabs, but not as they were in reality. If apples or heaps and piles of wheat and barley weighed one hundred *gerībā*, they took them for three hundred. Thus nothing remained which they did not register, whether belonging to the Syrians or to the Arabs, including all that was *on the farms* of the Arabs, whether a garden or green crops or cattle. Then they would go to the city (with the farmers) and demand from them money against these possessions.² But many among the Arabs could not raise the amount demanded from them even after selling (their) wheat, yokes and a donkey, if they had one, for they ascribed to each man a given number of 'acres (*faddān*),³ sowed with a given number of *gerībā*. Even if the man did not sow more than five *gerībā*, they ascribed to him an acre (*faddān*) of full sowing capacity. Thus the Arabs suffered more wrongs and hardships than the Syrians.

As for the Syrians, the collector of the poll-tax ordered /p.272/ that they must gather. He then asked each village for securities and dismissed them to tread out (wheat).

*Concerning chieftains, scribes,
trustees, provincial chiefs and prefects*

Before departing from Nisibis, the Caliph ordered that every chieftain, scribe, trustee, provincial chief or prefect who had served during the time of 'Abbās, must come down to him together with the notables of the region. If there were twenty prefects in a village, all went down with their books. Thus the agents who were denounced to him came to him in Nisibis. He fettered them and they departed with him. The scribes as well as the trustees also departed

¹ **ܘܕܢܘܨܘܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ ܕܡܢܐ** : Rendering of Arabic صدقة المال "monetary alms tax". The first Syriac word translates Arabic زكاة "alms". **ܘܕܢܘܨܘܢܐ** is cognate of Arabic صدقة "alms". The last word is Arabic مال. In principle, this tax (also called 'uṣr) was paid in kind by Muslims on their lands and animals. But the reality was different, as suggested by the Chronicler of Z.

² The tax on agricultural income was required in monetary value and not in kind. As the Chronicler says, the evaluation of the income far exceeded its monetary value.

³ **ܘܕܢܘܨܘܢܐ** : From Arabic فدان, referring not only to a yoke or a plough, but also to a unit of land, equivalent to what a yoke of oxen could plough in a day, i.e., an acre.

with him. Although they surrendered (their wealth) and lost (everything almost) to the extent of having to eat their own flesh, they were not freed. They remained with him in the region for a long time, and he did not investigate them regarding any matter 'because they departed without authorisation. Thus, they were not investigated even after he departed.¹

After he had done all of these things in the Jazīra, *he placed his goods* in Callinicum, as Isaiah also stated about him: *at Michmash he placed his supplies, and crossed over to Bet Betan. Rama was afraid and Geba' of Saul fled.*² He too placed his goods in Callinicum, and crossed over to the West on his way to Jerusalem, which he terrified, drove away, terrorised and devastated more than the Jazīra. He did according to what Daniel prophesied about the Anti-Christ.³ He rebuilt the Temple as a mosque, because the little part which had survived from the Temple of Solomon had become the mosque of the Arabs.⁴ 'He again* married a woman⁵ and rebuilt the ruins of Jerusalem. He made up pretexts against people, and took away their property and cattle, namely, buffalo cows, /p.273/ leaving freely not even one of them to anyone. After he committed all of these evils against Jerusalem, as he had done against the Jazīra, he departed and returned at the approach of winter.

Let us return to the Jazīra and show what happened there. Before returning from the West, the Caliph appointed a Persian man named Abū 'Awn to exact the poll-tax, as well as other agents for other matters. From here misfortunes began. As ferocious animals, each tugging on a corpse, so were these agents, when five, six, seven and sometimes up to ten of them went into a village in a single day. Each one dragged along the inhabitants of that village, as many as they were in it, to his side. It was not possible for the villagers to be freed or escape death at the hands of these agents unless they paid a considerable amount of money. If the agents were to leave, others took

¹ Conjectural translation of an unclear passage. (The passage is edited in the *Codex*; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 272 nn. 2 and 3.) It seems that the Caliph left the matter of investigating the agents of 'Abbās to the newly appointed governor, Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab. This one investigated them after the return of the Caliph from Jerusalem, in 772-773; see below pp. 253f.

² Isa 10:28-29.

³ Cf Dan 9:25-27.

⁴ The Umayyad 'Abd-al-Malik built the Dome of the Rock in 691 A.D.; see al-Ya'qūbī II 261. The 'Abbasid al-Manṣūr rebuilt the mosque in 771 A.D. following an earthquake.

⁵ ܪܘܡܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܠܐ: The final *olaf* of the last word was a later addition in the MS. In his French translation, Chabot left the word untranslated; *Chronique*, 108. Hespel, *Chronicon*, 216:21, translated it "femme consanguine" (adjective derived from the Syriac word for "sister"). Not only is this adjective not attested in Syriac, there is no indication in Arab sources that al-Manṣūr married a consanguineous woman. The word in question is a phonetic spelling of ܪܘܡܐ "newly, again"; the unnecessary *olaf* (darker than the rest of the word) added in the MS at the end of the word is erroneous.

their place, and, therefore, people were not able to get away even from their threats. What can I say, therefore, if not the word of the prophet: *I was to them like a lion, like a devouring bear, and like a leopard* on the road of Assyria. There, the lion shall devour them and the wild beast shall tear them.*¹

If one calls these (agents) animals of the steppe, he is not far wrong, because they were worse than the birds of prey and the animals of the steppe. The same prophet also said: *The east wind, the wind of the Lord, shall come from the desert; it shall rise and devastate his sources and dry up his springs; it shall spoil the treasure of all precious vessels. Samaria shall be condemned because she has embittered her God.*² Another prophet said: *Awake, O you drunkards, and weep and wail, all you drinkers of wine, over the wine [p.274] that was cut off from your mouths. For a nation has come up to my land, powerful and without number, its teeth are like the teeth of a lion, and its fangs are like the fangs of a lion's whelp.*³ Do you see how the prophets call this evil nation an animal of the steppe? *It has laid my vine waste, and my fig tree a devastation. It has splintered it, threw it down, and has made its branches white.*⁴

Truly the wine was cut off from the wine growers. Even more, they started to flee from one village to another. But they could not escape in this manner, for once they escaped from one agent, another one faced them and stripped them. Even if they escaped from the thieving collectors, the chiefs of the village† they entered played the role of thieves and brigands. And one who was famous in the village, a known leader and administrator, was in fact the chief of a den of robbers. When the poor sought his protection, he would dig all kinds of pits for them. All evils against the people far and near, in the country and outside it, originated with him. Indeed all local chiefs were the same in this regard. *Its princes are rebellious and companions of thieves. All of them love a bribe and run after rewards. They do not defend the orphans, and they do not pity the widows.*⁵ Nor did the judgment of God exist in their sight. If the prophet gives testimony about these events, who among the God-loving ones shall blame us—we who had witnessed them and felt them with our own hands—for including them in the present book, so that they may be known to future generations? It is written: *Ask you father and he will show you,*⁶ and *tell your children and their children to another generation.*⁷

¹ Cf Hos 13:7-8.

² Hos 13:15-16.

³ Joel 1:5-6.

⁴ Joel 1:7.

⁵ Isa 1:23.

⁶ Deut 32:7.

⁷ Cf Joel 1:3.

Concerning the fact that people began to pillage graves¹

As evils multiplied, "one smote another, wings struck one another, one hand stretched out to the other (to fight), and on all /p.275/ sides a plaintive sound was heard because no one among the living persevered to escape from this hardship."² This weighed hard on the living to the extent that they pillaged even the dead buried in the ground. As for those who wanted to spoil the graves and pillage them, by this time they executed their will. But because that vessel* of sin, that son of perdition, that advocate of the devil, and one who held everything sacred and religious in contempt, whose root and growth originate in a rebellious house, and who was of the people who wanted to stone Moses³—namely Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab—had not yet been revealed, there sprung up for us an evil side-growth at this time, because of our sins. People were not greatly afflicted thus far, except for the poor lowlanders and foreigners living in the country, who were so afflicted and devastated that they perished during this year; they started to carry their children on their necks and roam from village to village.

During this year, we received terrible news coming from far-away regions, that at such and such a place people were disturbing graves, bringing out of them silver and gold. We *did not believe* this news, because of the horror of the affair, namely that people could do this to the dead. Although everyone who returned was saying that people were digging up gold, we were not inclined to verify whether this could have been possible. But this matter did not delay for long to be seen with our own eyes, in our lands, on our fathers and brothers, who had died in the past. We will also write about this matter here in due time, as it is and as it was.⁴

Concerning the Lord's rainbow that appeared overturned during this year, and the white sceptre that was seen in the middle of the sky /p.276/ directed, like an arrow, at the arc of the bow⁵

Also in this year, in the month of *Iyyār* (May), a rainbow was constantly seen among the clouds, its arc facing down and its ends facing up, like a bow stretched by the hands of a man to attack, exhibiting menace and threat

¹ Chronicon 819 p. 20:6-8 [14], Chronicon 1234 I 340:15-16 [265], Michael IV 467-477 [II 527-528]: Brief notes in connection with the hardship created by Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab.

² This seems to be a quotation from an unknown source. See a parallel statement below p. 277.

³ Ex 17:4.

⁴ See below pp. 277 and 309f.

⁵ An arc with three parallel curves in the shape of the letter C was drawn in the right margin of folio 150v.

against the inhabitants of the earth. It was seen on a holy Sunday, at the third hour of the day, as honourable old men who saw it testified before us. If someone does not want to believe this matter, let him search in the previous chapters where he will find one like it,¹ as those that appeared afterwards also testify.

Then something like a white lance appeared, extending from the western end of the sky, and moved until its tip turned toward the East in the middle of the sky. It was thick like a rope and was seen² by many people because it appeared for many days. Many people said many things about it. Some said that it was †the staff† of wrath, and others that it was just one of the clouds that appeared in the sky and nothing more. As for the intelligent people and God-fearing ones, when they saw this sign, they were filled with great fear, for they knew that it was brought up by sins and was full of threat of punishment. But the stupid paid no attention at all to it: *The wise man looks far away, but the fool not even in front of his eyes.*³ *The wise man has his eyes in his head, but the fool walks in darkness.*⁴

Then the straight part of the lance moved toward the centre of the extended bow. The lance did not delay much in showing its effect, and fulfilling the mission for which it had been sent by /p.277/ God. Perhaps someone says that God has neither a bow nor arrows. Let the one who wants to say this listen to what the psalmist says: *God will rise and suddenly shoot his arrow at them, so their tongues will languish. All who see them will be scared and all men will fear.*⁵ He also said: *He sent out his arrows and dispersed them.*⁶ People scattered and turned into aliens everywhere. Lands were ruined, villages became deserted, and people wandered from one region to another.

*Concerning another sign
which was also seen in the northern region during this year⁷*

Another sign appeared in the northern side, and its appearance gave testimony about the threat and menace of God against us. It was seen at harvest time, while occupying the entire northern side, from the east end to the west end.

¹ In folio 73r three rainbows in the shape described above by the Chronicler are drawn in red ink.

² MS: ,ሠሐሩ... ሠሐሩ ላይ (lit.) "it was not seen".

³ Cf Job 39:29.

⁴ Eccl (Qoh) 2:14.

⁵ Ps 64:7-8.

⁶ Ps 18:14.

⁷ See also below p. 262.

Its likeness was as follows:¹ a red sceptre, a green one, a black one, and a yellow one. It was moving up from below, while one sceptre was vanishing and another one appearing. When someone looked at it, it would change into seventy shapes. For the intelligent person the sign indicated menace. Many people said many things about it; some said it announced bloodshed and others said other things. But who knows the deeds of the Lord? *I will give signs in the heaven, and wonders on the earth.*²

*Concerning the question of how the poll-tax
was split up,³ and concerning imprisonment in churches*

When the poll-tax was claimed from everyone and people were not able to pay⁴ the total amount, the amīr seized the securities and divided it among them as much as he could, to each one /p.278/ the same amount, and the securities divided it among their villages. Since the agents of ‘Abbās had not yet been dismissed, and the root of all evils had not arrived yet,⁵ the agents neither ran to oppression nor did they go beyond what was appropriate; they simply claimed the (tax) money from the districts.

When the tax could not be raised in this manner, they divided it again among the same securities. The amount could not be raised even so, even though these securities plundered the poor, orphans and widows who lived in their districts, having no pity on the orphans and no mercy on the widows. They did not act in this way at the order of the prefect, but on their own: *The meal of the lion is the wild asses of the steppe, and that of the wealthy is the poor;*⁶ this applies to these securities. Moreover, many among them rejoiced in this storm* and darkness that overwhelmed the land, but the wretches did not know that soon wrath *would befall* them too. Therefore, they rushed to buy the vessels, cattle and things of the poor who lived in their villages, and stored them in their houses. They now became wealthy, as they wanted to, lending money at forfeit and with usury without mercy, in such a manner that they were near acquiring, as they wanted to, even the children of the poor as slaves and maids. They did not know, the wretched ones, that the end of the wicked is perdition.

¹ On the right margin of folio 150v several superposed horizontal lines are drawn.

² Acts 2:19.

³ *ከሠላሳ*: Possibly /ከሠ/, lit. “to plough up, divide”, Ethp.; the context supports such a derivation. Or it can derive from /ከሠ/, “to release, pay ...”; see below p. 264. This root is also attested at the beginning of the present account.

⁴ *ከሠላሳ*: /ከሠ/; see the previous note.

⁵ Reference to Mūsā, son of Muṣ‘ab.

⁶ Sir 13:23.

The securities valued fifty and sometimes sixty—seventy for others—*geribā* of wheat at a dinar. To him who bribed them with one *zūz*, they ascribed whatever amount he wanted.¹ They valued fifty—sixty, seventy and up to eighty for others—*kaylā* of wine at a dinar. Thirty, thirty-five, and up to forty *geribā* of wheat were sold in the market for a dinar. Wine was similarly moderate. A sheep was sold for one *zūz*, a goat for one *zūz*, an ox for five *zūz*, and a donkey for four *zūz*. The price of everything was moderate.


/p.279/ When the affair of the tax lingered and did not progress, the amīr gathered the people of (that) place. But this amīr 'was a man who hated injustice and iniquity;² he did not accept flattery from anyone nor did he send 'police³ to the province. He simply gathered the local people and incarcerated them in a big church.

Concerning the imprisonment in the church⁴

When the herald called out that people must gather in the church, fire-breathing police came and gathered whoever was slightly reputed to have some money. What shall I say, therefore, if not the words of the prophet: *O God, the gentiles came into your inheritance and defiled your holy temple; they have made your holy temple a privy; they have given the bodies of your servants to blows and tortures, the flesh of your righteous ones to the laceration of lashes and rods, their feet to pillory, their hands to hooks, and their fingers to bands.*⁵ All noble men, and even noble women whose husbands were far away or had left temporarily because of this wrong, gathered. They brought the women out of their houses, dragged them in the street, and detained them in the church; women, who were never seen in the street, came down and became ignominious in the midst of men! They did the same to Arab women. All the Arabs without distinction came down, and if someone was not available, they dragged his wives or his daughters. After they had seized the villages, one by one, the villagers either borrowed money and brought it to them, or they were given sound beatings, along with shackles on feet and fingers.

¹ The tax was based on the revenue of the person. A bribe of one *zūz* stimulated the agent to ascribe to the person a lower revenue.

²  : The translation above conflicts with the actions of the man described in the account that follows.

³  : Arabic شرطة . al-Ṭabarī VII 653 mentioned the *ṣurṭa* in connection with the Caliph in Baghdad. This military force must have existed in the provinces as the present account suggests.

⁴ See also pp. 270f and 302.

⁵ Cf Ps 79:1-2.

The insolent and wicked ones went up and sat on the high seat located in front of the altar of the divine sacrifice. They even dared to do the 'prostration'¹ of their God-irritating prayer on the very holy altar /p.280/ upon which they went to pray, and to trample it with their filthy feet. They performed in the sanctuary the abominable ablution of their body limbs, in addition to other impurities which they did in it. Moreover, the whole crowd of men and noble women discharged inside the church their excrement, in front of each other and without shame. Thus, they remained inside for three days and three nights. A bitter outcry emanated from it, and along with the sad outcry of those who were condemned in it, a stench rose up instead of the sweet incense of choice plants.

Out of hardship, people suddenly fell upon the property of churches and monasteries, in such a manner that even distant churches experienced the desecration that was taking place in the glorious church of the city, which was also the first of all the churches in the region.² Although the fetid stench was not smelled in them, their properties, vessels and altars were looted by their members and were given to the pagans in pledge. *I shall leave my house, because the priests polluted the altar and violated the law.*³ *Of what use is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? I have had enough of burned offerings of rams, and the fat of fattened animals. I do not delight in the blood of bulls, of lambs and of he-goats. When you come to appear before me, who requires these of you, to trample my courts? Do not bring me any more vain offerings. The(ir) odour is despicable to me. On the new moons and on Sabbath you call the assembly. I will not eat that which is obtained wrongfully and through confinement. My soul hated your new moons and your appointed feasts†; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread forth your hands, I will turn my eyes away from you. Even though you will make many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood.*⁴ When the prophet examined closely with spiritual eyes all the evils of our numerous sins, /p.281/ he said these words: *None of my words will be delayed any longer, says the Lord: I spoke and I shall fulfil.*⁵

¹ ܪܟܥܐ: Translation of Arabic ركعة.

² The city must be Edessa. Not only did the collector of the poll-tax return with the collected poll-tax to the Caliph in Nisibis, the Chronicler of Z. also mentions at the end of the present account that it was the Church of Edessa that was mostly plundered and had its assets carried away.

³ Cf Zeph 3:4.

⁴ Isa 1:11-16.

⁵ Ezra 12:28.

After the agent treated the people with all kinds of tortures and ordeals, he compelled everyone, Arabs and Syrians, merchants and owners of the stores in the marketplace, to pay as was fit. For during these days purchase and sale activities ceased in the marketplace and the streets were empty of incoming and outgoing people, since the gates of the city were shut. When God-fearing people realised all the profanation which the impure people had caused inside the holy sanctuary, they experienced great pain and called upon God, saying: *“Why, Lord, have you forgotten me in this way, and why has your wrath prevailed over the sheep of your flock? Remember, Lord, your Church which you acquired¹ through the precious blood of your only Son, and which you saved through your life-giving sufferings. Your enemies boasted inside your Church.² As with wood in the forest, they cut its doors and their wood with axes. They profaned the place, the abode of your name, saying: ‘We will destroy them at once, we will abolish all the *appointed feasts* of God from earth!’³ Until when, God, shall the enemy mock at, and anger your name for ever? Why did you turn your hand and your right arm away from your church?⁴ Why was your anger, O Lord, kindled against your people and you rejected your heritage and delivered us in the hands of the nations? Our adversaries ruled over us and our enemies oppressed us and we were subjected under their power!⁵ Then the Lord said to these ones: Because many times I rescued you and you embittered me with your actions.⁶*

After pressuring everyone, the (tax) money was collected. As for those who lent money, ‘a neighbour could hardly lend a dinar to the villagers, because agents went out exacting /p.282/ it from the villages.⁷ Thus the agent dispossessed the region and went down to the ‘Commander of the Faithful⁸ in Nisibis.

When the Caliph returned from the West, his return affected all the churches of the cities. The Church of Edessa, more than all the others, was plundered and its property was carried away. We too say with the prophet: *In all these events, the anger of the Lord against us did not abate*; rather he raised his hand (to strike).⁹*

¹ Ps 74:1-2.

² Ps 74:4.

³ Cf Ps 74:6-7.

⁴ Ps 74:10-11.

⁵ Cf Ps 106:40-42.

⁶ Cf Ps 106:43.

⁷ The translation of this sentence is conjectural.

⁸ *ܘܡܝܪ ܡܘܨܬܝܢ* (sic) *ܘܡܝܪ*: Syriac rendering of أمير المؤمنين, the title of caliphs.

⁹ Cf Isa 5:25.

*Concerning †an impostor† who appeared
in the Jazīra in the year one thousand and eighty-one (769-770)¹*

It was our wish to report everything and leave a record for those who will come to the world after us, so that when they come upon an obstacle which tripped up the ancients, they† may become themselves vigilant not to trip because of it too: *Strike the fool and the wise will be disciplined.*² They will see the stumbling blocks which made the ancients stumble, and will avoid them, because every day's evil emerges with it. Our Lord ordered his disciples: *Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing.*³ *They will lead astray many, he says, and even the chosen ones—if that were possible.*⁴ Also: *See that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name. If someone says to you: 'Behold, Christ is here', or 'he is there', do not go! Many will be determined to lead astray. If *he says* to you: 'He is in the wilderness' do not go out, and if 'he⁵ says: 'He is in an inner chamber' do not go in.*⁶

Although Christ himself revealed to us all the stumbling blocks, and the prophets preached to us in the past, and the apostles blasted into our ears like trumpets, concerning the coming of the impostor† and that of the false prophets who preceded him, we listened neither to the prophets, nor to our Lord nor to the apostles. Rather, we closed our eyes, shut our ears /p.283/ and buried our minds in the pit* of errors, so that we could not see with our eyes, hear with our ears, and understand with our minds the words of the holy Scriptures; we simply forgot all of this and walked following our own will.

†We saw† him who was called sign of desolation by Daniel,⁷ false Christ by Christ,⁸ and son of perdition† by the Apostle.⁹ We grasped with our hands †the Anti-Christ†, and touched him about whom it has been written *he will come at the end.*¹⁰ In our own time, one of his emissaries appeared, a disciple of his who has since shown us, in deed and not just in word, what he will do when he comes. The wise mark every dangerous and dreadful place where a murder may have been committed, so that when unaware people come and see

¹ Chronicon 819 p. 19:13-26 [13-14]: S. 1074 (762-763). Chronicon 846 p. 237:12-21: S. 10[81?].

² Cf Prov 19:25.

³ Mt 7:15.

⁴ Mt 24:24.

⁵ : Lit. "they will say".

⁶ Cf Mt 24:23, 26.

⁷ Cf Dan 9:27.

⁸ Mt 24:24.

⁹ 2Thes 2:3.

¹⁰ Dan 9:26.

the sign, their minds may grasp the warning that this sign represents. It will serve them as a lesson for what happened in that place before. We too are placing here what has just taken place, so that if the same befalls you, you will be reminded of that man of violence, who mixed his bitterness with honey.

During this time a man from the village of ʿBēth Rāmā¹ in the region of Takrīt appeared. As he had been orphaned since youth, he desired the virtuous life of monasticism and left to enter the holy monastery of Mār Mattay in the region of Mosul. After living there for two or three years, the Devil enticed him again to return to his first vomit,² because he had not yet distributed whatever wealth he inherited from his parents. As he had seduced Judas through the love of money, so did he with this one, although many noble causes were also available to him through the love of the poor, foreigners, stricken ones and distressed people, in addition to many other causes. Instead of his wonderful promises, the Devil extended to him the noose, as he had done to Judas.

When /p.284/ he returned home, as a substitute for monastic practices and love of the poor and the afflicted, he hung about with young people his age and joined them in all their actions. Instead of spending his possessions on the afflicted, he wasted it on drunkenness, while living prodigally in hideous conduct. In the end, he even ended up in paganism and apostatised. As he was behaving prodigally in this manner, his entire wealth was wasted. And since he had wasted everything through his vicious conduct and only his corruption remained, he came to his senses and said: “Woe unto me for what I have done to myself!” He then left for the steppe of ʿSinjār,³ to virtuous hermits who lived there. After they admitted him, he assumed big and difficult tasks and imposed on himself fasting and the state of perpetual prayers. He spent a span of almost five years in these practices until his body was so burned up that he looked like an Indian, his face changing as a result of the severity of the sun. Even then the Devil did not give up on him, but started to appear to him in the form of angels, praising his efforts and even revealing to him future events.

When the holy Mār Zeʿōrā heard about these things, he said to him: “My son, beware of the treachery of the Seducer! All of these things come from the Devil!” This venerable Zeʿōrā was at that time the superior of the anchorites in that region. Although this venerable man adjured him everyday not to be engaged in any of these illusions, but to despise all of them because they came from the Devil, he paid no attention but devoted himself to them.

¹ ܒܪܝܡܡܐ: Another form of ܒܪܝܡܡܐ, بَارِمَا (Bārimmā) of the Arab sources. It was probably located at al-Faṭḥa on the Tigris (south of the Lower Zāb river); see Fiey, *Répertoire*, 179.

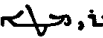
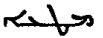
² Cf Prov 26:11.

³ ܨܝܢܝܐ: For its location see p. 164 n. 5.

He even attracted people to him, saying: "This or that event will happen," "So and so has done something, and people will come to me today from such and such a place." Intelligent people know that it is not difficult for the Devil, when he seduces someone to do /p.285/ something and he does it, to let him know his plan. He does not say things that do not happen, but things that happen through his plan. This is the reason why he is called Slanderer, because he reveals secrets. It is written that the Slanderer reveals secrets. Is it not so that when someone has taken the road, and a fast messenger comes, saying: "So and so is coming here today," he does not say what did not happen, but what has just taken place? Therefore, this miserable one erred, strayed and transgressed the rules, inspired by diabolical, dreamlike visions. But a large crowd started to follow him¹ because he himself erred and went out of his mind.

When blessed Mār Ze'ōrā heard about these things and realised that he did not respect the advice (of the monks) but started to slander them, saying: "They are really jealous of me," he seized him, beat him, expelled him from there, and forbade him even from staying in the whole region of Mosul. As for him, he left for the Jazīra and came to the region of Dara. In this region there was a large and important village inhabited by a large population. The inhabitants were simple people, better labourers than all their neighbours, and more faithful than all those in their region. They were also very attached to the monks, and were honouring their priests as if they were angels, because of the fact that they were devoid of all worldly guile and engaged only in their own work. The Adversary led his servant to a faithful people like this. When he entered the village in question and the people saw him dressed in despicable clothes, with his body† burned up and blackened (by the sun), they welcomed him as if he were an angel. He started to tell them that he had been sent by God to proclaim to them as follows: "Your village will soon be overturned and will be engulfed by the ground. It will be covered by the ground and will not ever be inhabited again!" The people, out of naïveté, /p.286/ accepted him and listened with the simplicity of their hearts to everything he said. The name of this village, which was located in Ṭūr-'Abdīn, was Ḥāh. He kept preaching every day: "Repent*, pray and fast* before earth opens its gulf to swallow you up, because the measure of your sins is full, and your iniquity has become more grievous than that of Sodom and Gomorrah. Therefore, there is nothing but the merciless judgment of God."

When the simple people heard these words and tasted the honey which was mixed with poison, because of the sweetness of the honey, they did not recognise the bitterness of the deadly poison. Nor did they listen to our Lord or the prophets or the apostles or their own bishops. Because of the words:

¹ : Perhaps one should read the second word  and translate the sentence "he started to mislead (people after him)".

“Fast* and pray!” they did not recognise the treachery of the Devil. But to him who said: “Fear God! This one is a seducer!” they used to answer: “What wrong is he saying? He is only saying: ‘Fast* and pray!’” They could not hear anything said by anyone but erred and led all the region astray after him. They gave in to pain and tears, leaving their work, fields and vineyards without cultivation, and †participated*¹ in prayers†. Then they began to say about him that he was performing all the miracles like our Lord. Moreover, his messengers, that is, the devils, came out and spread his news in all the land of the Jazīra. And the lands of the North, the South, the East and the West rushed to him, everyone being carried to his destruction.

When one group would come from one of the regions and encounter another group that was returning from him, those who were coming would ask those who were going back: “How did you find the man?” They would answer: “Nothing like what he does is heard of in the entire world!” while showing them their limbs, saying: “He /p.287/ was paralysed; his arm was withered; he was a leper and this one blind. And now, as you see, we are without any infirmity or disease. Look at our eyes that are open, our arms that are stretched forth, and our feet that are healthy. Do not question us, but take heart through faith and go to him, and you will receive from him all that you ask!” Thus these travelled to him, and just like the first, they would come upon all the other caravans on their way to him, and they would testify before them: “We have seen him with our own eyes, casting out devils, opening the eyes of the blind, making the deaf hear and the paralysed walk.” They would also say to others: “We have seen him raising up a dead person! *He performed* all the miracles before us!”

Be assured, reader or listener, that those who appeared to the people who had been there, who met them with donkeys, mules, horses, and in large numbers, and showed them their limbs, said to have been cured by him, were not people but demons. We learn from this that not a single person was actually seen being cured by him. To some they appeared, saying: “We are angels and we are kept in check by the prayers of Mār Mārūthā”—for they used to call him Mārūthā. “If he permits us we will bring the grasshopper along with the locust!” To others they used to appear, saying: “We came to earth as winged snakes and we will leave no one alive, if Mār Mārūthā permits us!” Statements like these were heard in all the regions of the Jazīra from rebellious demons. Caravans rushed there without interruption. Understand, O intelligent one, that when the son of perdition will come, he will not act differently. His ministers will come out /p.288/ to spread his news across the whole earth. They will show themselves physically† to everyone, saying: “This one was paralysed, this one was blind, this one was a leper, and he healed them!”

¹ For the meaning of *عاشق*, see *Thesaurus*, 2163.

What is more, they used to pretend to be dead, paralysed, lepers, blind and the like, and come forth to him. And as soon as he ordered the paralysed to walk, he walked, and the one who looked like a real paralysed person was now walking! The miserable people, who abandoned the holy Scriptures and followed him, did not know that these were demons, and that he who approached him was not cured by him. But if the illness comes from Devil, the stricken person would become healthy when the Devil comes out of him. They used to say: "Because you do not have faith, you are not cured. As for us, we have seen this, and we testify to it: Each person we saw going to Mārūthā and returning, when asked: 'Were you cured?' he would answer: 'I am cured.'" But if a person did not benefit from Mārūthā at all, he would say: "If you believe, you will regain health in forty days!" And with the pretext: "At the end of forty days you will regain health," he used to dismiss him.

All the territories rushed to him, bringing many bonds, along with gold, silver and display vessels. He would give alms and make many prayers. Standing, he would sprinkle people with ashes, saying: "May God be reconciled!" He would stand upon a raised platform, like a bishop, although he was ordained only to the rank of deacon. While the apostolic canons command that a priest cannot be blessed except by his fellow priest or by a bishop, and that he cannot accept the blessing except from them, this impudent fellow was not only blessing priests, but was also placing the cross and the hand on /p.289/ the heads of the priests. Moreover, he used to prepare oil of prayer while many priests were gathered around him, and give it to them. He would bless oil in this way: he would say prayers over it, then spit* in it, and bless it with his spittle! It was not possible for a bishop to go there or for a monk to say anything about him, without being given sound beatings by the villagers, who used to say to them: "You are only jealous of him!"

When the holy Mār Cyriacus, the bishop of that region,¹ realised that his own flock was captured by the Devil and that it was not listening to him, but he was now facing their retaliation, he rushed to the venerable David the Patriarch and informed him about everything. Upon hearing about these events, the venerable David removed Mārūthā and incarcerated him in the prison of Ḥarrān. Despite that, people did not give up his error and many used to visit him in prison, where he would bless oil and give it to them. This fool was also performing it with his spittle!

Passing over many matters, we shall move to others, as we want to inform about the years of hardship which the country suffered.

¹ The region is Ṭūr-'Abdīn of which Cyriacus was the bishop; see above p. 194

*Concerning the first year of affliction
which was the year one thousand and eighty-four (772-773)¹*

First, concerning †scribe(s), agent(s) and trustee(s)†

When the Caliph (al-Manṣūr) returned from the region of Jerusalem, he seized ‘Abbās and confiscated all that he had. He appointed in his place Mūsā, †son of † Muṣ‘ab, whom we mentioned above.² The Caliph surrendered to him the agents, scribes and trustees who held office at the time of ‘Abbās, so that he might settle accounts with them; then he went down to Baghdad.

Upon receiving the order, the tyrant summoned every person who served as agent or trustee or scribe during the time of ‘Abbās. /p.290/ Because he had not yet been dismissed from Mosul, he brought them to Balad,³ where he imprisoned them with very heavy fetters, without settling accounts with them or requiring the regions to show what they had taken away. This crafty evil-doer sent to have brought to him from every* city greedy informers, in whose mind God did not exist. *The son of perdition* selected men like these, slanderers like himself, and honoured them in word and deed, promising* them great things, as Satan does to his followers, although afterwards he finally rewards them with a bad end followed by Gehenna. With these words he would fool everyone, so they might expose the scribe, agent or trustee of his city, in terms of what he had or what he did not have, and in terms of his situation in wealth, houses and properties. After he had learned about everyone and was illuminated about their possessions from the informers, they did not receive a fair reward from him. On the contrary, God delivered them into the hands of the wicked man whom *they loved*, but who harmed them more than anyone else had done.

Mūsā incarcerated those who were appointed through the mandate of ‘Abbās for about five or six months until he had learned about all their actions from the wicked, whom this tyrant had selected from their own cities. When he did not receive any complaint (about them) from any region, he freed them one by one. But on the basis of what he had learned about everyone from the informers, without mercy he set the amount of gold they had to pay him. For some the amount was two thousand dinars, for others four, ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty or forty thousand dinars. As we said earlier, he fined them on

¹ The Chronicler of Z. mentioned four years of hardship during which people of all social classes suffered; see below p. 284. The four years of hardship extended from 772-773 to 775-776, but the Chronicler talked in detail about the first two years only, the first of which is the subject of this and following accounts.

² See p. 223 and n. 3; see also al-Ṭabarī VIII 47ff.

³ بِلاد: Neo-Assyrian Balaṭ, Arabic Balad (بلط in Yāqūt II 481 as in Assyrian), and modern Eski Mosul, located on the Tigris, some 30 km north of Mosul.

the basis of what he had learned from the informers, not because /p.291/ they were guilty, but solely to satisfy his own greed and frenzy. Accordingly, he tortured each one in hands and feet, until the person agreed to whatever fine he had had imposed upon him. If the person gave in, he was sent back to his city in fetters, accompanied by cavalry and sponsors, to collect from him the sum in question. Censors were ordered to go and register all that remained.

When the crafty evil-doer saw that the Caliph had elevated him, increasing his former prestige, he roared like a lion over his prey, being aware that the Caliph delighted in destruction more than in prosperity. He began to plot against the country, as the Pharaoh did against the children of Israel. As a first step, he ordered censors to assess their regions. These censors inherited his greedy ways. He did not order them to assess the country because he wished it well, but for the sake of appearance as well as fame, in that he opted for a new census (*ta'dīl*). But this affair became known by its conclusion: The man who had been highly taxed by the censors, was now taxed according to the new (census); the man who had been taxed lightly, was now taxed according to the old (census).¹ The censors demanded gifts and 'bribes'² in public, without any shame or fear. The country was assessed in this manner, and nothing was gained other than great losses due to their robbery and greed.

Concerning the branders and the stampers

Mūsā dispatched branders and stampers of tin, alongside these censors. They were ordered to brand everyone they captured with the names of his region and town, and then to remove him to his region and place. They did not give heed to this order, but hurried to satisfy their own greed. In addition to the stamp with which they branded /p.292/ the marks on people, they added many things of their own. First, they captured the chiefs of the country, and said to them: "Let everyone bring his people to the city! Let no one leave! You will bear responsibility!" After each one had brought his people into the city, they were branded. They wrote the name of the town on the right hand and on the left hand "Jazīra"; they hung two seals³ on the neck, one branded

¹ The new *ta'dīl* was supposed to be lighter than the first one, but in the end it did not benefit anyone. Those who were taxed lightly still paid according to the old system, and those who paid according to the new system were taxed excessively.

² 𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤀 instead of 𐤀𐤃𐤁. The shifting of 𐤁 to 𐤃 and vice versa is attested elsewhere in the Chronicle: 𐤀𐤃𐤁 for 𐤀𐤃𐤁, below p. 255 n. 3, 𐤀𐤃𐤁 for 𐤀𐤃𐤁 (نقطبة, *Qaḥṭaba*), above p. 206 and n. 2.

³ Seals of lead or clay used to be placed around the neck of the *Dhimmi* (Christian, Jew or Zoroastrian) after he had paid the poll-tax, apparently since the time of 'Umar; see Fattal, *Statut*, 289f.

with the name of the town, and the other with the name of the province. They also took at the outset one *zūz* from each group of three. They recorded the man's name, what he looked like, as well as the village and the province from which he came. This greatly disturbed people, because many foreigners were captured. A person was branded on the spot with the name of whatever village he claimed he came from, even if he had never even entered it. If the census had come¹ to completion, it would have caused the people more harm than anything else that had happened in the country.

When the brander realised that his work was not completed, he set out for the country to capture all travellers. Although he went through the country more than twenty times, he was not satisfied until he had dealt with all the people and no one escaped him. At this point, as Daniel the Prophet and John the Apostle said: *All the people received the mark of the beast*² on their hands, breasts and backs.

Concerning the tithe collectors

Mūsā dispatched other agents to collect the tithe, and they in turn shook the country. When they went into the cities, they entered the stores and examined their contents. If a poor man owned (merchandise) worth *one hundred* *zūz*, they wrote five hundred, and if it was worth one thousand, they wrote five thousand. They went into the houses of the Syrians and the Arabs, and wherever there was /p.293/ wheat, barley or anything of that kind, they marked it. Without even looking at the content, they ascribed such and such thousands (*gerībā*) to so and so, and demanded from him one *gerībā* for every ten *gerībā*, and then had him deliver them to Baghdad. If this (extortion) had continued to the end, it would have ruined the country, because there were many people to whom they ascribed ten thousand *gerībā*, who did not own even twenty! It was the wretched informers, mentioned above, who taught them evil.

Mūsā was also continually summoning the informers, who used to come down to him, so that he could learn about the wealth available in the city of each one of them. The people used to bribe³ and revere the informers so they would keep quiet about them. After the tithe collectors had done their job, the poor and lower people were greatly reduced to poverty, on account of them and the informers, and they could hardly get rid of this hardship. Thereafter, they went out to roads and passes, dispossessing whoever was

¹ ܘܚܝܠܐ: ܘܚܝܠܐ with otiose *yōdh* on this 3rd feminine singular perfect Pe'al form. Or is it for ܘܚܝܠܐ (Ethpa'el of the same root; see Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 40), in which case the translation would be "(if the census) had been brought (into completion)".

² Rev 19:20.

³ ܘܚܝܠܐ for ܘܚܝܠܐ; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 293:12 and n. 2; see above p. 254 n. 2.

coming or going. They also laid in wait on roads during the night and grabbed, like thievest, the possession *of people* who were evading the tithe and the crown property, saying: "We are the tithe collectors!"

When the unending evil began to ruin the country, and roads became deserted by travelling people, men went down and complained† before Mūsā. He ordered the collectors not to seize people outside the marketplace. Even then, they hardly stopped their evils.

Concerning the crown property (Ṣawfī)

Every growth that springs up after another one is worse than its predecessor, because these growths spring up from a bad and bitter root—that of wrath. It is written: *Their plant is from a bad plant;*¹ /p.294/ *the root of all evils is the love of money;*² *nor can the greedy one be satisfied forever.*³ Even if this greedy one possesses the entire world, he still desires to possess that which he does not see. As Sheol and perdition could not be satisfied, neither could this greedy one who is the son of Sheol and the son of perdition. He never had enough of people, their vineyards, their cattle, their lands; they worked for him but were not enough for him. But he also extended his greed to roads, mountains and waters running in rivers, reaching even the dead who had been buried in the graves for two or three thousand years! 'He removed⁴ their bones from their resting places and scattered them over the surface of the ground like dirt. Woe unto you, Sheol! Just as you cannot get your fill of the corpses you pile up inside you everyday, so too your children whom you begat and have cannot get their fill until death shuts their insatiable mouths!

When those appointed over the crown property came, they controlled streets and roads and robbed all the passengers.⁵ They controlled the rivers so that 'passengers⁶ could not cross over, and fishermen could not fish in them. They measured marketplaces with a measuring line from North to South and from East to West, forty cubits from this side and forty cubits from the other side. They expropriated houses, stores and numerous yards. They confiscated every store which was not registered in the old census (*ta'dīl*), and compelled† residents to leave their houses. Although people suffered great loss at the

¹ Unidentified.

² 1Tim 6:10.

³ Cf Eccl (Qoh) 5:10.

⁴ ܨܘܦܝ: This root is not attested in Syriac, and as such it must be an Arabism: نزع "to remove . . ." Otherwise, it should be corrected to ܨܘܦܝ (Aph'el of ܨܘܦܝ) "he removed".

⁵ See above p. 235.

⁶ ܨܘܦܝ: Another form of ܨܘܦܝ and stands as a parallel to ܨܘܦܝ "fishermen" that follows. Otherwise, ܨܘܦܝ also means "boats".

hand of this one and at the hand of the root of all evils,¹ this calamity still continued for them.

They also measured the city wall and expropriated its towers as well as its environs,² so as to fulfil in every way their greed through the love of money. They brought a herald outside to shout: "He who wants to rent* a store or a tower³ should go /p.295/ to the 'amīr⁴ of the crown property." These (amīrs) harmed the owners of these (buildings) to such an extent that a person hardly recovered any part of his own property. They also expropriated places where sales and purchases were performed, even if they were outside the area in question.

Many people used to rely on fishing in rivers so they could sell their catch in order to pay the onerous tribute that befell them. But a herald was brought outside, (shouting): "He who fishes in the river or makes a shelter or a hut in it without the permission of the agent of the crown property will be condemned to death!" Thus people were prohibited from fishing. If they captured a man bringing home fish or throwing a net, they would beat him soundly and confiscate his property. They would also demand from every one who wanted to fish half of what he would catch. Since fishermen were barred everywhere, individuals from among them came and agreed to pay the sum the agent had imposed upon them. They imposed the sum in turn upon the villages located along the river banks. The agents did this with respect to all the rivers, indicating to each person the exact spot where he could fish and how much he had to pay. Agents would seize ferry boats too, and likewise confiscate half the income.

As a result, there was hardship for everyone in every way. If a person evaded the agent of tithes, he faced the agent of the crown property. Sometimes both agents seized him at the same time, in addition to those that pursue fugitives, who did not leave any property to anyone.

*Concerning the pursuers of the fugitives
and the evils which they used to commit*

‘This root of the Rhododaphne⁵ produced a growth that contained more deadly and destructive poison than all the others before it. He set an agent

¹ The first one is the agent of the crown property, whereas "the root of all evils" is Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab.

² See on the same issue p. 234.

³ Now that the stores and towers in question had become crown property, people were required to rent them from the agent of the crown property.

⁴ *إمير* (for *امير*): see also p. 247 n. 8.

⁵ I.e. oleander; see also Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 295:10, below p. 247 and n. 2. In the present context, the term is in reference to Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab.

over the entire Jazīra for the purpose of returning every fugitive to his region. When the agent received this order, he set his mind /p.296/ to all evils, and selected for himself wicked people. Now if someone were to call these people beasts of the steppe and birds of prey, he would not be far wrong. Such people he selected and dispatched to the cities, ordering them to bring him back a given amount of gold to a certain city. He appointed many agents whom he sent to every city in the Jazīra.¹ He did this in the case of each city, with the result that in one day or one week ten agents might enter a city to apprehend fugitives.²

Thus they would attack people like rapacious beasts, grabbing them without mercy, selling all that they possessed, and carrying away the proceeds as their reward. They used to bring them into houses where they were detained until they perished of hunger; and many of them did indeed die of hunger, of cold and of the wounds inflicted on them, for the purpose of extracting money from them. For all that these poor people possessed (in kind) fell short of satisfying the voracity of these birds of prey that flocked together against them.³

Because the (city) people were not enough for them, they attacked the country folk as well, threatening them with the words: "We have people among you!" They would treat people harshly, more on account of personal needs and wants than because of the poll-tax and general tributes. Thus if a person went into a village or to some farm, he would find there at least four or five agents. And if he fled from one village to seek refuge in another, pursuers of the fugitives, poll-tax agents, or thieves, would fall upon him no matter what road he took. For by then they had taken to robbing in broad daylight rather than during a sleepless night. And should he escape all the above, the villagers themselves would assume the role of the wicked, /p.297/ without any fear of God.

Therefore, it is now time to say with Moses the Prophet: *For a fire is kindled in my anger, and it burns to the lower Sheol, consumes* the earth and its produce, and sets on fire even the foundations of the mountain. I will*

¹ After this word the phrase ܩܠܝܢܐ ܕܥܝܢܐ "one (agent) for each (city)" appears in folio 154v surrounded with dots, which means that it is to be deleted. Another possible translation would be: "He set many agents over one single city, whom he dispatched to every city of the Jazīra." But see the following note.

² The Chronicler of Z. seems to repeat in this statement information given earlier about the agents of the fugitives: Every city had one such agent; the agent of every city was sent to every other city (to look for fugitives) in such a manner that ten (or more) agents could have gathered in one city at the same time; see above 237 and n. 2.

³ Since the agent asked his "wicked" men to bring him gold, these men demanded money (ܩܝܨܐ) from the people. But after surrendering to the men their own possessions as reward, they had no money to give to the agent.

*heap evils upon them. I will stir up against them the rapacious beasts and the poisonous snakes that creep in the dust. Outside the sword shall cut and in inner chambers shall be terror.*¹ Do you think that the prophet talks about rapacious beasts and snakes that are by nature snakes and flying things? No! He talks about those who have only human form while all the savage characteristics of dragons, beasts of the steppe and birds of prey are found in their behaviour, just as the philosopher also said: "I see the man but I do not see human nature."² Though he saw the physical appearance of a human, he could not discern human behaviour. Instead, it was the behaviour of beasts, birds of prey, and *poisonous snakes*, as the Prophet added.

Know, intelligent one, that all of these things *are found* in them, but especially an uncontrollable rage, just like fire, that they had acquired. They did not have mercy in themselves, but were like rapacious wolves when they attack the flock. Even the agents of the country became for them dumb dogs that could not bark. In addition, they agreed with the thieves and helped them in all evil doings and iniquities. If a poor man, who had been robbed of his belonging, went to see them, he gained nothing from them, for greed had made them deaf and incapable of enunciating what is right, since they strayed from the path of justice. They snatched whatever they wanted and seized the very thing which /p.298/ had been plundered from the poor.

Let us also inform about the evils that befell the Arabs, for not one person was saved from this wrath that came during this time on account of our many sins.

*Also concerning the agent
of †the monetary† alms tax of the Arabs³*

The total behaviour of the rapacious wolf is nothing but madness. This was true of this Mūsā as well. All he did and undertook was overflowed with violence and rage. He appointed a separate agent in charge of the monetary alms tax of the Arabs. This agent made* a census (*ta'dīl*) of the Arabs and their farms, like the one to which the Syrians had been subjected. He registered their acres (*faddān*), their cattle, and whatever they owned and produced. If someone had a garden with vegetables, flax or †chick-peast, he registered it. But because a census (*ta'dīl*) was unknown in Arab law, and had never been conducted by anyone of the early caliphs, the people despised it

¹ Deut 32:22, 24b-25b.

² Attributed to Antithenes the Cynic (Ammonius, in Porphyrii Isagogen 40,8 [ed. A. Busse]).

³ See also p. 234. For the term *نجم الحبل* see p. 239 n. 1.

and *showed nothing but contempt*¹ for it.

After he completed registering all their properties, he sat down to 'calculate everything in monetary terms.² He calculated 'twenty- four³ *zūz* for each acre (*faddān*), and fixed as much as he liked the amount of the tithe which he received on goats, cattle, oxen and other things. The same applied to the wheat, because he did not leave anything for them which he did not register, including bee-hives, 'pigeons and cocks.⁴ But if 'chick-peast were planted in the field of an Arab among them, it was registered as a field of wheat or barley, or as a garden. They calculated the whole monetary value and imposed it on everyone in accordance with his property. Then, people worse than the offspring of vipers, wrathful, wicked, merciless, and in whose sight the judgment of God did not exist, came over them from 'Āqūlā⁵ and 'Başra.⁶ They felt no embarrassment before the elderly, /p.299/ did not pity widows, and plundered orphans. People like that came to settle accounts with them! From this point onward, all one could see was the venerable and the old being dragged and hauled away. In addition, they would inflict on them all kinds of beatings and torments. Honourable men in fetters were strung up by their arms with a cord, until they nearly died.

What they took was a tenth in name only. But even though the Arabs sold all that they possessed, they still fell short of what they were required to pay. They would beg them to levy the tax in accordance with the law instituted by Muḥammad, their guide and 'law givert, and by the first caliphs, that is to say, to collect in kind what each possessed: wheat for wheat, and likewise, cattle for cattle. The agents, however, did not agree to this and told them: "Go sell your goods as you like and give us what is ours: gold!" Clearly, in this case evil was punished with evil, and the pagan proverb has it: Wizards triumph over wizards, and antidotes neutralise other antidotes produced by wicked and vicious vipers.

Furthermore, the Arabs themselves would wriggle among the poor villagers, like worms in wood, taking away their fields, houses, grain and cattle.

¹ *لَمْ يَهْتَبْ لَهُ شَيْئًا*: For *لَمْ يَهْتَبْ لَهُ شَيْئًا* (لَمْ يَهْتَبْ لَهُ شَيْئًا). Mannā, *Dalīl*, 643, gives the meaning of this *أظهر حسن السنت*: "to show good manners".

² *سَبَّحَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ بِحَسَابِ مَالِهِ*: Lit. "he calculated everything and made it money." The alms tax used to be paid in kind, but this agent claimed money against goods of material value.

³ *أَرْبَعِينَ*: Correction made in MS on some other word.

⁴ The last two words are rubbed out in the MS and only their traces are visible.

⁵ *أَقُولِي*: Gentilic "of 'Āqūlā (Kūfā)." See the following note.

⁶ *بِأَسْرَى*: Gentilic, "of Başra," modern Başra in southern Iraq, where 'Āqūlā (Kūfā) is also located. Both of these cities were called by Yāqūt I 430, *بصرتان* "the two Başras". In the MS a *wāw* was misleadingly placed after the *bēl*, a fact which led Chabot and Hespel to confuse the toponym with "Boşra" (in the Ḥaurān).

They worked for them like slaves until they virtually owned them and their children as slaves, in addition to whatever they possessed. But the poor received no help from that slithery snake, 'Moses¹ son of Muṣ'ab, who thwarted all their plans. On the contrary, only beatings and harsh punishments were reported on all sides. /p.300/ Sometimes the Arabs tormented the villagers who resided in their farms, in that they divided (the tax) so that they had to pay it with them, until they destroyed them and took away whatever they possessed; they finally ran away from their own dwellings. Because it was the beginning of the calamity as well as the beginning of the plundering, and since enough provisions were still available, they were not gravely afflicted. But those wicked agents were unrelenting. They charged twenty-four zūz on the acre (*faddān*) and one 'yoke-heifer² on thirty oxen. They charged twelve zūz on the heifer and one cow on forty oxen. And on the cow they charged twenty-four zūz—while in the marketplace it was not worth four—and they charged one zūz on the bee-hive.

Even so the agents did not settle or give up their evils, for they taxed each of the Arabs on the other resources as much as they wanted. As they treated them without mercy and felt no embarrassment before the elderly and the venerable among them, some of them left and went down to Mūsā. They wailed and complained before him, and he remitted to them twelve thousand dinars from the tax. But *the evil man *is incapable of doing good*, and if he happen to do good, it is because he completely forgot about it,*³ as it is written. Mūsā, likewise, completely forgot that he had done good. But he remembered that and returned to claim from them the twelve thousand (dinars) and did not let them keep them. For it is hard for what is bitter to become sweet, and for brambles to produce dates.

Since all of this aggravated madness, unleashed on people when the poll-tax was levied, continued,† let no one, my Brothers, blame the writer for abridging the tale of multitudinous evils that confronted us. For even if all people were to become /p.301/ writers, if all wood were made into pens, and all wine were to turn into ink, it would not suffice to write about and recount what happened in the land, since they would still remain on the shore of a sea of evils that overwhelmed the world.

Therefore, let us come to the other matters and leave some record for those who will come into the world after us.

¹ ܡܘܨܝܐ : The Syriac biblical name corresponding to Arabic موسى (موسى) is here given.

² ܕܘܚܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܐ ܕܘܚܝܐ .

³ Cf Eccl (Qoh) 1:15.

*Concerning the previous sign which was seen
in the northern region; it was also seen in this year*

In the past, God spoke to this stubborn race through the prophets, and later he spoke to all the children of Adam through his beloved son,¹ and now to us, the irritating sons, who have the words of the prophets, the promises which the Saviour has given to his Church, and the teaching of the Apostles. But our hearts are hardened, our eyes are closed, and our ears are blocked, so that we may not see with our eyes, listen with our ears and understand with our minds the living words of our Saviour and turn away from our wickedness and live. Signs appeared to us in the sky, threatening a disobedient people, and their mere appearance testified to the intelligent ones about the magnitude of our evil and about the wrath with which justice is menacing us.

The sign which was seen a year ago in the northern region was seen again in this year, in the month of *Ḥazīrān* (June), on a Friday. It was on Fridays that it used to appear during these three consecutive years, stretching itself out from the eastern side to the western side. When seen by someone, it would change into many shapes, in such a way that as soon as the red ray vanished*, a green one would appear, and as soon as the green one vanished, a yellow one would appear, and as soon as this one vanished, a black one would appear. It announced that the land would not merely suffer one affliction /p.302/ but several, as in fact happened to us. The shape of this sign is as drawn above.²

*Concerning the levying
of the poll-tax in the first year of affliction*

*My people, enter your chambers and shut your door behind you and behind your sons. Keep quiet a little while until my wrath has passed away.*³ The same prophet also says: *My people, be not afraid of the Assyrian who smites you with his sceptre, for in a little while my wrath will come to an end.*⁴ Also another prophet, when he was witnessing with the prophetic eye this bad time and the evil calamity that occurred to the people, priests and holy shrines, and the fact that joy abandoned people, shouted and said: *Gird yourself with sackcloth, O priests, mourn and lament, O ministers of the altar, go in, pass the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God! Because flour and libation are withheld from the house of your God. Sanctify a fast, call an assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the Lord*

¹ See Heb 1:1-2.

² See above p. 243. Horizontal lines are drawn one above the other on the right side of folio 155v of the MS.

³ Cf Isa 26:20.

⁴ Isa 10:24b-25a.

*your God. Cry to him and say: Alas, alas, for the day! For the day of the Lord is near, and a plunder from God is coming. Lo! the food was removed before our eyes, and joy and gladness from the house of our God.*¹ Joy and gladness abandoned people, Sundays and feasts ceased, and sacrifice and libation were cut off from the holy altars. Our feasts turned into mourning, our happiness into lamentation, and our gladness into hardships. On that appointed day, Isaiah said, *the Lord will humiliate the nobles among the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will lay bare their forms.*²

On this appointed day, the Lord removed the glory of the daughters of the holy Church, and of the daughters of the nobles the glory of their apparel and adornments: braids and bands of their hair /p.303/ and temples, facial ornament, earrings, necklaces, bangles, bracelets, ankle-chains, linen garments, long gowns, fine linen, purple robes, long garments, silky robes, scarlet robes, and all other items of their adornments. They got vinegar instead of their sweet smell, and instead of a girdle they wore aprons; baldness replaced their curled hair, and instead of their silky robes, *they were clothed* with sackcloth and rags.³ They wandered around with their children, hungry, dispossessed and exhausted, from one place to another, and from one house to another.

Let us come to the time in question and show what happened. First, an agent came to levy the poll-tax, preaching peace and saying: "Sit, stay, and *fear not*! For I am levying on the basis of the new census (*ta'dīl*), and I am not taking a province for another province,⁴ or a village for another village, or a man for another man." Since they thought that he spoke the truth, they sat and waited: *His words were sweeter than honey but were arrowheads.*⁵

As he set himself to receive the poll-tax, he proceeded to seek out everyone in his own place. He dispatched many agents to the people, appointing two or three prefects for every village—the prefects in turn appointed one (man) over every ten men—and two provincial chiefs over each district, in addition to other assistants. They came out like rapacious wolves attacking a flock of sheep. 'Couriers,⁶ with whom roads and villages were filled, also came in and out like flashes of lightning. It did not matter if there were one or ten or twenty exactors in one village, since the couriers used to snatch what the former were levying. Moreover, 'they used to cut purses⁷ and

¹ Joel 1:13-16.

² Isa 3:17.

³ The wording of the whole paragraph is based on Isa 3:18-24.

⁴ لا آخذ الإقليم من الإقليم: Possibly a rendering of Arabic لا آخذ الإقليم من الإقليم; see Nöldeke, WZKM 10 (1896) p. 165.

⁵ Cf Ps 55:21b.

⁶ سعاة: Translation of Arabic سعاة.

⁷ قطعهم من حياضهم: This sentence has a parallel in Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 304:27: قطعهم من حياضهم. The verb in the first sentence is an Arabism: قطع "to cut".

take away (money), as much as they wanted, and there was no one to hold them accountable. After they had plundered /p.304/ and robbed widows and orphans, they brought the 'property'¹ in its entirety and sold it. Even the villagers committed evils toward the poor among them.

'They released'² one third (of the tax), and before it was completely released, another agent came to relieve the first one and to demand the second third. But after the first had (completed) his levy and released (that) third, he asked the people, impudently and without shame, 'to impose the sum of his expenses on the entire region.'³ Thus he took (everything) and left, *like the spirit which goes with no return*,⁴ though they thought he would return. So if one says that the first (agent) took this third and the couriers (took) another third, he is not far wrong. Never mind the robbery of the agents, provincial chiefs and prefects!

Concerning the second agent

This second agent was crafty, cunning, voracious, greedy, and a friend of thieves, in such a manner that he was publicly and shamelessly coveting to confiscate people's property. As for those who came to him for justice, he resorted to tricks to take away the very thing which he had rescued from the hands of the thief. His words were flatteringly sweet 'as if dipped in honey', but in the end they were bitter and worse than wormwood.⁵ He selected for himself people in whose sight the fear of God was absent. He appointed them to pave the way for him, and sent them to the country like wolves. He imposed upon the prefects to exact 'the amīr's pay'⁶ first, as soon as they levied. As soon as the provincial chiefs and the agents entered a village, they seized the prefect of the village so as to bring the sum claimed from him, 'cut the purse',⁷ and took away as much (money) from it as they wanted, saying: "This is the pay of the amīr." They mercilessly beat venerable people and men of considerable old age, and from now on, on all /p.305/ sides a plaintive sound was being heard.

He also assisted all the pursuers of the fugitives, in that he became their

¹ ܡܘܨܒܐ: This word means both "property" and "cattle".

² ܡܘܨܒܐ: Pa'el, lit. "to set free" hence to "release, to pay". This sense of the verb is not widely used. As the text suggests, the poll-tax was paid in three instalments.

³ ܡܘܨܒܐ ܠܗ ܡܘܨܒܐ ܡܘܨܒܐ ܡܘܨܒܐ ܡܘܨܒܐ: Seemingly a Syriac rendering of Arabic: قَطَعَ مَالَ نَفَقَاتِهِ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ الْمَنْطِقَةِ.

⁴ Cf Ezek 1:12.

⁵ Cf Prov 5:4.

⁶ (sic) ܡܘܨܒܐ ܡܘܨܒܐ: Syriac transcription of Arabic: جُعِلَ الْأَمِيرُ; for the first term see above p. 226 n. 1.

⁷ ܡܘܨܒܐ ܡܘܨܒܐ: See p. 263 n. 7.

partner in theft. He sent them out of the cities, away from their places, and imposed upon them, threefold or fourfold, the poll-tax. He plotted all kinds of evil schemes against the people of God, and was even assisted by the notables of the city itself, to whom he used to make great promises. As for himself, in all his undertakings, he would levy the tribute for himself and not for the Caliphate.

All the woes multiplied in the country: Fugitives, 'old debts¹ which they claimed even from one who died twenty years before, (taxes) which they took away in multiples without mercy, along with many evils, such as exaction on provisions, and others that could not be counted because of their great multitude. Now this crafty evil-doer, while the first and middle thirds (of the poll-tax) were not yet levied, made a 'written agreement² for the whole region concerning both the Arabs and the Syrians. No one was aware of this document other than those few who were plotting evil like him, and who were voracious along with him. He stated in the document in question their consent as follows: "We approve, of our own accord, one hundred and twenty thousand (dinars), and let no debt or 'contributions³ befall us—'neither us nor against our further provisions."⁴ In addition, he wrote in the same document their names together with the consent of all the chiefs of the region in question, and sent the document to the root of all evils, the son of Muṣ'ab. It seems to me that this wrongdoing originated in this same root, because all his agents acted likewise.

Because a written order came that all the chiefs of the regions must go down to Mūsā, the agent gathered /p.306/ them all and sent them to him. He made a secret agreement with the city people, promising them great things which he would offer them if they would go and praise him before the son of Muṣ'ab; he even paid them with magnanimity the expenses from his own money. This matter did not stay hidden from the country people, and from this point, both parties became mutual adversaries and enemies. Thus during the entire journey they quarrelled with each other, the city people favouring the agent and the country people asking for another one. Finally, the party of the country people won over those of the city, especially when the city people learned about the wrong in the 'written agreement,⁵ which the agent has

¹ *ḥuṣṣā ḥuṣṣā*: The first term derives from Arabic *سَقَطَ* lit. "to be dropped", hence "to be abolished, cancelled, or declared null and void". With hesitation Chabot, *Chronique*, 165, translated this term as "tributs anciens".

² *ḥuṣṣā ḥuṣṣā*: This phrase has a parallel: *ḥuṣṣā ḥuṣṣā* (كتاب الصلح); see below n. 5.

³ *ḥuṣṣā*: From Arabic *براءة*; Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 61.

⁴ *ḥuṣṣā ḥuṣṣā*: Conjectural translation.

⁵ *ḥuṣṣā ḥuṣṣā*: Syriac rendering of Arabic: *كتاب الصلح*. The Syriac translation of this Arabic term is given in n. 2 above.

written and sent to the son of Muṣ'ab. They abhorred him and rejected him. Another agent was brought for them, who also made with them an agreement over seventy thousand (dinars), and then departed.

Also concerning the third agent

This agent was the completion of the trinity of wrath. He was much worse than his colleagues, because he sprouted up from that harmful root (the son of Muṣ'ab) from whom he received power and advice for all evils. If he did not surpass his predecessors in harmful deeds, he did not decrease them either. He was like his colleagues—a thief and a friend of thieves. He made the poor suffer all harms and torments by removing their properties and selling all they possessed. He laid charges against numerous people in the following manner: His agents would seize a poor fellow and would inflict on him various tortures; and when they realised that he could definitely not bring anything—because he did not own anything on earth—the agents, who were iniquitous judges, would instruct him: “Go to the marketplace and look for someone who you know is wealthy, and say: ‘I entrusted property to him’ or ‘He is my debtor.’” And this miserable one, while hard-pressed /p.307/ right and left, front and behind, up and down, feared the Lord not to bear unjust witness against anyone, whereas if he would not testify, he would be inflicted with tortures by the unjust judges themselves. Therefore, he would call upon God as a witness concerning those against whom he was compelled to testify. He was led against his will to bear unjust witness against those whom he had never seen and whom he knew not. What to say about these agents if not that they loved bad deeds rather than good deeds and lies rather than righteous speech? Truly those judges liked all those who spoke falsehood; the tongues that spoke lies were to them more lovable than the tongues that spoke the truth. All of them spoke iniquity and their hands were involved in iniquitous deeds. And if there was a man who was not familiar with, or trained in, odious deeds, they taught him all the odious courses.

Thus this wicked agent went out to all the cities, demonstrating—the wicked one—that he sprang from Mūsā himself. He gathered goats, sheep, bulls and all the properties of the poor people, and sold them: two pregnant she-goats for one zūz, two or three ewes for one zūz, five he-goats for one zūz, one donkey for two zūz, one yoke-ox for three zūz, a strong and pregnant cow for three or four zūz. Stalks of wheat bent down and touched the ground from the drought that took place—about which we will leave a short record. People conspired against each other; the speech of everyone was full of lies, and (all) walked in falsehood. Jeremiah witnessed these things with a prophetic eye, and said: *Beware, everyone of his neighbour and do not trust in any brother, for every brother is from now on treacherous and every friend walks in treachery; every man lies against his neighbour and they do*

*not speak the truth; they have taught their tongue /p.308/ to speak falsehood, and because of this, they are exhausted and weary.*¹ They came together and dwelled in treachery, and due to their treachery they did not know the Lord. Rather, *everyone was a liar,*² *everyone was filled with iniquity, all of them rushed toward evil.*³ *There was no one who did good*⁴. *All of them went astray at the same time, but they were rejected,*⁵ because the chiefs went from evil to evil and ran from iniquity to iniquity.

Like lambs that fall among wolves, so the poor among them, being dispossessed and plundered by them. Although they made them suffer all evils, to the point of selling whatever they possessed, the 'poll-tax could barely be paid!⁶ Never mind the other wrongs which they suffered at the hands of the pursuers of the fugitives, the 'garrisons,⁷ (the collectors of) the tithe and of the crown property, and the censors! The one who was imposed upon excessively in the new census (*ta'dīl*) by the censors, was taxed according to the new census. The one who was assessed less (in the new census), was taxed according to the old census.⁸ So on all sides there was hardship and bitterness.

Concerning the agreement (ṣulhā) of this year

Surely they went from bad to worse! Just when people had escaped one calamity, another, worse than the former, caught them. The chieftains, because they trusted that they did not have to answer to anyone, mercilessly and pitilessly determined (the tax) and imposed it on people. Even the country chieftains became their equals and even better thieves than they. When they were assessed for seventy thousand (dinars),⁹ they themselves demanded a further three (thousand), not sparing or saying: "Such and such village is broke

¹ Jer 9:4-5.

² Ps 115:11.

³ See Ps 53:2 and Ps 14:1.

⁴ Ps 14: 1, 3, 52:2, 4.

⁵ Cf Ps 53:6.

⁶ **ܐܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ**: For Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 135, the second word should probably be corrected into **ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ** (**ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ** "to be left over"). The whole sentence was translated (after Chabot) as "there hardly remained enough for the poll-tax". Nonetheless, **ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ** (Pa'el) "to release, pay . . ." was previously encountered (above p. 264 and n. 2), and one might derive **ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ** (for **ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ**, Ethpa.) from the latter root rather than emending it as suggested by Margoliouth.

⁷ **ܕܝܘܪܝܢܐ**: From Arabic **مرايطون**.

⁸ See the comment on a similar statement above p. 254 n. 1.

⁹ This is the sum set in the agreement (*ṣulhā*) promoted by the agent who replaced the second agent; see above p. 266 (top of the page).

and cannot bear (the tax).” But whatever had been ‘assessed¹ for a village, they and the authorities demanded and devoured.

After they had determined the amount to be imposed upon each person and had gone out for the levy, the plunder of the poor people began. They took the property of the better-off in their villages, and left nothing whatsoever to anyone of them. /p.309/ Moreover, if a person had property but was a native of another region, they left him nothing that they did not plunder and sell. They even attacked travellers. They seized every one who was going or coming, took his cattle and other belongings and sold them. Then, neighbours went out plundering and formed bands—surely like the amīr!—and openly looted the belongings of whomever they found, saying: “We demand from you (payment) according to the agreement (*ṣulḥā*)!” From then onwards, a wailing sound was heard in every place. If a man fled from the village in question, he was robbed on the road, and if he escaped from the road and was not robbed, the village toward which he ran for refuge played the role of brigands, assassins and highway-robbers toward him. If he fled to the steppe, thieves attacked him like lions, and if he wandered around in inhabited land, others met him like bears. If he entered the village, the villagers themselves bit him like snakes, and if he went to the notables, seeking their help, they played the role of scorpions toward him and dispossessed him. Even the prefects were threefold as bad as the agents and the brigands, because if they exacted (tax) from someone it was for threefold what he owed. Agents would say to the prefect himself: “This one owes such and such,” and would give him a sound beating, saying: “Pay!” But the prefect would not be called to account for his robbery!

At this point, moreover, wretched young men, Arabs and Syrians, went out to the suburbs of the city, and onto roads and highways, seizing poor people, saying: “Come! Look! The amīr is looking for you! Come and pay according to the agreement (*ṣulḥā*)!” In this way they left no one anything that they did not rob and carry away, and everyone fled from the suburbs of the city as though from a vault full of vipers.

/p.310/ The poor people suffered another wrong. When the stampers came,² the people hurriedly took refuge with the prefects and provincial chiefs, and because they were afraid of the pursuers of the fugitives and the usurers, they asked the prefects and provincial chiefs to stamp them.³ But when the agreement (*ṣulḥā*) took effect, these very prefects detained them and

¹ مَطْعَمٌ: The verb, from Arabic مَطَعُ , is in the sense of مَطْعَمٌ encountered earlier; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 308:21.

² See about them on p. 236 above.

³ People were stamped after paying the tax. The poor people in question seem to have been stamped by the prefects and provincial chiefs even though they did not pay the tax, but were then fined by them.

assumed the role of the pursuers of fugitives and usurers. They forced whoever did not go to his village to pay thirty or forty (dinars).

In Edessa more than any other city, the notables suffered because of this same agreement (*ṣulḥā*), for a hateful man, named Razīn, came upon them. After he caught a poor man, examined him and learned that he possessed nothing, he would march him off with two policemen and instruct him, saying: "Go out to the marketplace, find someone and say to him: 'Bail me out,' then leave him and flee!" He would accept these terms, go out to the marketplace and seize a man. The police would let him escape, seize the other man, though he did not exchange even a word with the first man, and drag him to the amīr, saying: "It is you who bailed him out! Either bring him to us or bring what he owes!" He would swear: "I did not bail him out, nor do I know him," but they would throw him down and put iron collars around his feet until his legs would break. They would not release him until he brought the very sum which they imposed upon him.

*And it shall happen on the day of the Lord's sacrifice that I will punish the officials and the king's sons and all who are clothed in strange apparel. In that day I will punish all the plunderers and the rapacious who fill their storerooms by means of plunder and deceit.*¹ These are the words entrusted to us by Zephaniah the Prophet, who said: *In the day of the Lord's sacrifice . . . What day of the Lord's sacrifice is it other than that of the holy Passion of our Saviour, since at this time during all the years of affliction, /p.311/ woes afflicted us, until even feasts turned into mourning. What officials, king's sons, plunderers and thieves are there who filled their houses with more plunder and betrayal of the poor, orphans and widows than the Edessenes? What is written has now been fulfilled! Moreover, their wisdom and understanding perished. They sought (only) one thing with their wisdom but did not find it: I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and I will take away their understanding.*² *Therefore their goods shall become a booty and their houses a desolation. They shall build houses but not dwell in them, and they shall plant vineyards but not drink wine. The day of the Lord is near, and hastens fast. The day of anger, distress, anguish, confusion, desolation, darkness and gloominess shall be bitter and harsh upon the fortified cities and high battlements, when people shall be compelled to walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the Lord.*³ *This shall be in return for their pride.*⁴ All of these things befell us and no one of them was missed. While the poor people suffered numerous wrongs of which the whole world cannot keep record, the extortion (of the agents) had neither beginning nor end. They

¹ Zeph 1:8-9.

² 1Cor 1:19.

³ Cf Zeph 1:13-17a.

⁴ Zeph 2:10.

were not satisfied with the spoil which they plundered, but at Razīn's order all the people were gathered and were confined in the churches of the city.

*Also concerning the confinement
in the church that took place in this year¹*

*Jerusalem has seriously sinned, therefore she has become an abomination. All †*who honoured her*† disdained her for they saw her nakedness. She too groaned and turned backward.² The oppressor has stretched out his hands upon all her pleasant things. I saw the gentiles who entered your sanctuary, whom you ordered that they should not enter into the congregation.³ The Lord has forgotten his sanctuary, he has despised his altar, [p.312] he has delivered into the hands of the enemies the walls of her palaces; †they shouted⁴ in the house of the Lord as on the day of a solemn feast.⁵ He has uprooted her tabernacle like a garden and laid in ruin her festivals; the Lord has caused the festival and †sabbath⁶ to be forgotten in Zion, and has rejected in the day of his anger kings and priests.⁷ Jeremiah the prophet should come now and see with his own eyes that all the things which he prophesied were fulfilled and came true.*

When the wicked agent (Razīn) ordered the Edessenes to gather, and that he who sheltered anyone would be subject to death, the police came and gathered the entire city. They even searched homes and overlooked no one, rich or poor, whom they did not bring into the church. If the father of the family was away, they brought his family in. And if they found someone hiding, they gave him and the father of the family in which he was hiding a sound beating, and sold all that he possessed. Thus, great and small, Arabs and Syrians, were detained, and those wretched ones went up and sat inside the sanctuary. They seized everyone known to have possessed even one *fuls* and took it away. People also gave in pledge their properties and those of their wives, and paid for what they did not owe. They used to say to them: "You paid for †such and such† village."

Iniquity lifted up its head because truth had disappeared. Lies moved openly because there was no justice. After they had treated people with all evils, had sold all they possessed and took away the proceeds, †they defiled†

¹ See also above p. 245, and below p. 302.

² Lam 1:8.

³ Lam 1:10.

⁴ Unlike in the Peshīttā, the verb in MS is in the singular.

⁵ Lam 2:7.

⁶ سبحة: Lit. "Sundays".

⁷ Lam 2:6.

the inside of the church. Men and women dropped in it their excrement because they spent three days and three nights inside it. They desecrated it and a stinky smell came out of it instead of a fragrant one. Here the gentiles went inside the inheritance of God, defiled* his holy sanctuary, and turned the holy church into a privy.

When the merchants and those from whom (the tax) money was exacted asked the villagers to write receipts for them, no one /p.313/ paid them any attention. As they complained at length to the same wretched agent, he said to the villagers: "If you want, write (receipts) for them." So those who wanted to write wrote and those who did not want to write did not. Even those who wrote were of no help for anything, because an order came and the herald shouted: "Let no one pay and no one claim an old or a new debt!" At this point, all the merchants and city people who suffered injustice gathered and went down to Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab, to complain about the injustice which they suffered. But they erred and went out of their mind because they sought justice from a wretched man, and believed that he was not responsible for these evils that they suffered. As for him, not only did he not return to them what was owed to them, but he became angry with that agent because he did not exact from them three times as much.

When the son of Muṣ'ab went down to Baghdad to the Caliph, all the people in the region of Mosul and the Jazīra gathered and followed him to the Caliph. Many thousands and countless myriads of them remained there for more than five or six months, complaining and crying out to the Caliph about the injustice which was done to them by the son of Muṣ'ab. But he did not pay attention to anyone of them. In addition, dysentery and other diseases attacked them, and half of them did not return from there. The others returned without achieving anything, other than calamity for themselves and for their regions: *If a king is unjust, all his servants are also unjust.*¹

*Concerning the many punishments
that took place and that people had suffered during this time†*

It is not absurd to include this subject in this bitter chapter; perhaps people coming after us will realise our castigation and *will fear* the Lord. It is written: *Strike the fool and the wise will be instructed.*² *Behold, I will feed /p.314/ this same people with wormwood and give them bitter water to drink. I will scatter them among the nations whom they have not known.*³ Truly, he laid affliction on our loins,⁴ through the punishments of numerous

¹ Cf Prov 29:12.

² Cf Prov 19:25.

³ Jer 9:15b-16a.

⁴ Cf Ps 66:11.

and deadly blows. *He let a man ride over our head.*¹ *He tormented us with pain on our loins and continued against us.*² *The Assyrians marched against us, holding in their hands the rods of anger, and the stiff sticks of the punishment of the Lord are in their hands.*³ The prophets had previously announced the matter and then departed; as for us, we have seen it with our own eyes, touched it with our own hands, and suffered it in our own bodies. From now on it is not a (matter of) report but of (actual) experience.

First, they (=agents) prepared pieces of wood, about four fingers wide and levelled on both sides. They would throw a person face down; one man would sit over his head and another over his feet, while a third one would mercilessly beat him on the buttocks, as if on hides. The following has been fulfilled: *he laid affliction on our loins; you let a man ride over our head.*

Second, they used two sticks, fastened with iron on one end. They would place one of them above the legs of a person and another one below them, while a man would stand on the other end until the victim's legs were crushed. The following has been fulfilled: *He put my feet in the stocks.*⁴

Third, they used to hang men from their arms until their limbs were disjointed, and women from their breasts until they were torn off.

Fourth, they would strip people and make them carry stones while bending. They would make them stand in the snow and frost and would pour cold water on them until they became numb and fell on their faces.

Fifth, they prepared for themselves five pieces of wood, which they 'tied firmly together⁵ on one end /p.315/ with a string. They would place fingers of people between them, and press (the wood) hard on the other end until they touched each other, crushing the fingers. They also prepared two boards and tied them together on one side. They would place one (board) underneath the victim's back and another on his chest. On the other end a man would stand up until the victim's ribs were crushed† and his intestines almost came out. They made iron collars for the arms and for every limb. They sharpened reeds and pushed them underneath the nails. They made (iron) walnuts and placed them on the sockets of the eyes until the eyes almost came out.⁶ They made victims stand on snow and in water, †barefoot and naked†, until they turned

¹ Cf Ps 66:12.

² Cf Ps 129:3.

³ Cf Isa 10:5.

⁴ Job 13:27.

⁵ **س** **ب** **س**: This word should probably be read **س** **ب** **س** "to press, contract, squeeze . . ." as translated above. The five sticks mentioned above were used to crush the four fingers placed between them. Hespel suggested **س** **ب** **س** "to split asunder (the pieces of wood)," but it is hard not to take into consideration the *bēl* in the verb.

⁶ See above p. 238 n. 2.

blue like the 'indigo plant.¹ They had heavy sticks with which they mercilessly beat people who had been thrown face down. Swords were of no use to them² nor was a prison needed. *Nobles are hung up by their hands*, said the prophet.³ Let him come here and see the nobles hung up and more. They were hung up between earth and sky, while some were beating them with heavy sticks, and others placing shackles on their feet.

They did not wait to inflict tortures on them in stages. Instead, as *they gnashed their teeth*⁴ and *clapped their hands at them*,⁵ they wanted to inflict on their bodies all the tortures at once. They would throw them naked onto the snow and roll big stones onto their backs until their bellies would burst open and their ribs and /p.316/ spinal vertebrae would be crushed. They would heat a bath until it turned hot as fire; they would fill it with smoke and confine people in it while naked. Moreover, they would bring kittens and throw them between them; from the heat these kittens would attack them and 'torture'⁶ their bodies with their claws. They would confine them in dark houses, in which no speck of light whatsoever penetrated. It is written in the Scriptures: *Even blows which are not recorded in this book (of the law) I will bring upon you.*⁷ They executed all of these torments and tortures on frail people because of the tribute!

If this persecution, in which Christians, pagans, Jews, Samaritans, worshippers of fire and sun, Magians, as well as Muslims, 'Sabaeans⁸ and Manichaeans were subjected together, had not been general, would gods or goddesses not have been extolled in this bitter persecution? But the matter concerned neither religion nor worship East or West. Terms such as "worshipping toward the South" or "worshipping toward North" had become irrelevant. If only Christians had been singled out in this persecution, I would have praised the martyrdoms of our days more than all those of the past, because quick death by the sword is easier than enduring endless tortures.⁹ Saint Basil said: "I did not see anyone who was led to prison or to tortures on account of his poverty."¹⁰ Let him come now and see the countless thousands

¹ **حبله**: Another form of **بيله** (Arabic **بيل**).

² See just below the Chronicler's statement: "Quick death by the sword is easier than enduring endless tortures".

³ Lam 5:12.

⁴ Lam 2:16.

⁵ Lam 2:15.

⁶ **حفتهم**: Aph'el of **حفت**, Arabic **نكل** (see *Thesaurus*, 3036), although one would expect **حفتهم**.

⁷ Cf Deut 28:61.

⁸ **سائيم**: Gentilic, lit. "people of Harrān."

⁹ Parallel statement below p. 294.

¹⁰ A *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* search yielded nothing in Basil's extant works.

and myriads of Arabs and Syrians, guilty or not guilty, poor and wealthy, all mixed together! The bitter cup was mixed with bitter food for everyone, great and small, wealthy and poor, without distinction, as the prophet said.¹ The wealthy person ate bitterness everyday because they had unjustly confiscated all that he possessed, and because his bones had been crushed /p.317/ under blows. The poor one ate bitter herbs and drank bitter water because they claimed from him what he did not possess, and because there was nobody who lent money and no one who asked for a labourer to work in his field or vineyard: *And he gave wormwood for food . . .*²

My Brothers, let no one think that I wrote excessively here. Rather, it ought to be known that all the sheets and papers of the world are not enough to write on them about the evils which were applied to people in our days. Nor should one complain about paucity, because we are not able to consider everything, nor did the punishments in question occur in one city only.

*Concerning the drought and famine that took place
during this year, and concerning the advance of the peoples
of the South and of the East toward the northern land*

The prophets call upon us all the time like trumpets*, and preach to our ears like horns, so that we may turn all the time to the Lord and implore him. On our part, we have hardened our hearts like stones, closed our eyes and blocked our ears not to walk in the paths of the Lord, but following our own will. Every one of us loves the desires of his heart and not the wishes of God. It is written in the prophecy: *Thus says the Lord: Because of my house that is destroyed, and you hurry every man to his own house, because of you the heavens have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its fruits. And I ordered devastation against the land and against the mountains, against the grain and against the wine, and against the oil and against everything that the ground brings forth, and against men and against cattle, and against all the labour of your hands.*³ *You look for much, and it will come to little; you bring it home but I will blow it away.*⁴ *You will sow but you will not reap.*⁵

All of these things happened to us during this bitter time. Rain that usually falls in winter was withheld by the heavens, and there was no dew. No seed /p.318/ sprouted, and what had sprouted dried out, especially in the southern and eastern regions, as well as in the whole open country, although some grew

¹ Cf Jer 25:15.

² Jer 9:15.

³ Hag 1:9b-11.

⁴ Hag 1:9a.

⁵ Micah 6:15.

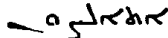
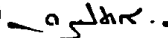
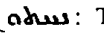
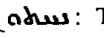
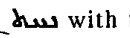
at the feet of mountains. Therefore, all the peoples came out for intercessions, and every tongue and nation called out for help toward one direction in great pain. When people realised that rain was being withheld, they grew pitiless by not willing to offer their wheat for sale, even though buyers began to go after them. Because of this, immense hardship gripped the poor, whereas those who had heaped wheat for themselves long time ago rejoiced and exulted. The prophet shouted against these, saying: *Hear this, O you who despise the poor, and dismiss the needy of the land, saying: 'When will the month be over that we may sell grain? And when will the Sabbath be over that we may open the granaries, make the measures small, enlarge the weights and sell to the needy and the poor the grain substitute?' The Lord, the Mighty One of Jacob, has sworn: 'I will never forget their deeds!'*¹ and *I will turn their feasts into mourning, and all their songs into lamentations.*²

When those that owned the grain realised that the heavens remained shut, they closed their hands tight and refused to sell wheat, since they were waiting for the rain to fall. As a result, people began to suffer.³ The prefect ordered every nation and people to conduct intercessions, that the Lord might perhaps have mercy on us and open for us the door to his favours. As a result, the Christians led by their bishops, the Jews with their trumpets, along with the Arabs, came out and the Lord was moved to show us mercy. There was rain and vegetation here and there, as Amos the prophet said: *And I also withheld the rain from you /p.319/ three months before the harvest, and I will send rain upon one city, and none upon another. One half will be rained upon, and the other part upon which rain shall not fall †shall dry out. As a result, the inhabitants of two or three cities shall gather into one city.*⁴

This wrath also reached Mosul, where the entire crop dried out; such was also the case in the East and in the South. Because all of these regions were also devastated through the wickedness of the son of Muṣ'ab, their inhabitants gathered and reached the northern land. All the Taghlibites and the Ma'daeans⁵ moved up along with their sheep, camels, families and all their belongings. They filled the land and devastated it to such an extent that there was no pasture anymore for the cattle. It was cleared as if with a broom.

¹ Cf Amos 8:4-7.

² Amos 8:10.

³ (for ) . : The wāw of  was added in the MS over the nūn. The subject may be "rain" since elsewhere in this account this word governs verbs in the 3rd mas. pl.; see for ex. Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 318:6. Chabot took that wāw for a conjunction linking  with the following sentence, although the reading leaves the verb without a fem. pl. subject.

⁴ Amos 4:7-8a.

⁵ The Taghlibites and the Ma'adaeans were Arab tribes, living in southern Mesopotamia; the former also lived in the Jazīra.

Because of this, all the cattle in the North perished the following winter. Countries and cities were also devastated. In (the province of) Mosul, all the villagers of ʿBēth Garmai,¹ ʿHazzā,² ʿMargā,³ ʿKhōnīshabūr,⁴ ʿDāsan,⁵ ʿQūq,⁶ ʿSalah,⁷ and many other places gathered and marched to the northern regions, in such a way that in cities and villages people were not able to move because of them. Moreover, they almost caused a famine because of their multitude. Therefore, what is written has been fulfilled upon them: *I am sending after them famine, captivity and pestilence.*⁸ All of these things came with them and after them. We will relate at the right time the calamity that afflicted them through illness, captivity and pestilence that befell them.⁹

772-773 The year one thousand and eighty-four: Holy Mār Paul, Bishop of Takrīt, Zakkay of ʿKarmā,¹⁰ and Jonah of †Bē(th) Nūhadra¹¹ died. Because of the quarrel involving David (the anti-Patriarch, these cities) did not /p.320/ accept replacements appointed by him. Thus they remained without bishops, while waiting for the release of George from prison.

During the same year, the Caliph ordered that a wall be built for ʿĀqūlā.¹² Now this crafty evildoer fell in love with money, though *the love of money is the root of all evils.*¹³ People, vineyards, lands, wild animals, livestock, and mountains that yielded gold and silver to give him were not enough for him. Rather, he constantly resorted to tricks with all people, so much so that not

¹ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : باجرمي, territory to the Lower Zāb with its central city Karkh-Selōkh (modern Kirkuk); see Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne* III, 11ff.

² ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : Place located to the southwest of Erbil; it survived as a small village bearing the same name; Fiey, *Répertoire*, 89; id., *Assyrie Chrétienne* I, 165ff.

³ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : مرج الموصل to the north east of Mosul, between the Khāzir and the Gōmal to the east, the Great Zāb to the west, and the mountains of ʿAqra to the north; Fiey, *Répertoire*, 108; id., *Assyrie Chrétienne* I, 225ff.

⁴ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : بوازيج (الملك) on the confluence of the Lower Zāb with the Tigris; Yāqūt I 503; see also Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne* I, 115ff.

⁵ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : Also called ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ (Arabic داسن and جبل داسن) and was located to the east of the Tigris, Yāqūt II 432, on the upper course of the Great Zāb; see also Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne* I, 227 and *passim*.

⁶ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : Another form of ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ (Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne* I, 147), near the Great Zāb.

⁷ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : سلق in Yāqūt III. The region of Rawandūz and Shaqlāwah in Adiabene; see also Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne* I, 191 and *passim*.

⁸ Cf Jer 29:17.

⁹ See below p. 303ff.

¹⁰ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : Located near Takrīt, on the eastern bank of the Tigris; Yāqūt IV 457.

¹¹ ܚܘܪܘܝܢܐ : For the location see above p. 194 n. 4.

¹² al-Azdī 223, al-Ṭabarī VIII 46: 155 H. (771). ʿĀqūlā is Kūfā.

¹³ 1Tim 6:10.

even a single *zūz* was spent by him. When he ordered that a wall be built for 'Āqūlāt, he tricked the inhabitants of 'Āqūlā. He sent men of his own and ordered them to measure the length, width and height of the house of each one of them. Consequently, the owner of the house undertook to build a sector of the wall corresponding to the length, width and height (of his own house), while he assumed all the expenses involved in it.¹ Thus the caliph built a big and strong wall encompassing all of 'Āqūlā, while he spent not a *fuls* on it.

*Concerning the evils which people did to the graves,²
for they disturbed their bones and scattered them over the ground*



As evils multiplied, one smote another, wings struck one another, one hand stretched out to the other (to fight), and hardship prevailed over people beyond measure.³ All that people had possessed was sold and taken away. They did not know what to do because agents pressured them to bring, even what neither their fathers nor themselves had possessed, to give to them. This hardship prevailed over all creatures, and even the animals, birds and fish of the sea felt⁴ (it). Because of the great iniquity of the chieftains, the same people also dared to commit /p.321/ a great and terrible wickedness. They attacked the graves occupied by the dead for a long time, disturbing them and moving their bones, which they exhumed from their places and scattered like litter over the surface of the ground.

The very thing which we used to hear about from afar came upon us. We see now with our own eyes—it is not a matter of hearsay anymore—people scattering on the ground those who were buried and who were resting in graves since before the advent of Christ, while rushing to take away from them gold and silver. Thus they would disturb graves, each of which contained more than five hundred corpses, and exhume their bones. Satan directed them to numerous places in which there were underground and unnoticeable graves of the ancient. Thus they dug and exhumed bones from their places and scattered them. Even old people native to these places used to say under oaths: “We have never heard from our fathers, nor were we aware that there were graves in these places!” This statement tells the

¹ According to al-Ṭabarī VIII 46, al-Manṣūr allotted five *dirhams* to each resident in Kūfā, so as to learn about their total number. Nonetheless, he ended up by collecting forty *dirhams* from each resident as a contribution toward the building of the city wall.

² See on the same subject above p. 242 and below p. 309f.

³ Similar statement above 242.

⁴ : This word is placed in the MS inside a circle of dots which suggests that it is to be deleted. But without it the preposition  “against” (the animals, birds ...) is needed to make a sense of the whole sentence.

intelligent that it was Satan who attracted the people and stirred them up against them. It was Satan too who spread the news everywhere that in such and such village people had exhumed gold and silver to the sum of so many thousands (of dinars), and that so and so had discovered such and such jewels, so that he might rush all of them to this impiety.

Wise people are not unaware that a bracelet or an earring or money placed in the belt of someone could have been buried along with some men in a grave that contained one thousand dead, either as a result of a massive burial or because the grave-diggers were unaware of them. Among a thousand dead some items could well be found. It also happened that a bracelet /p.322/ of copper, and not a small one but a big and marvellous one, was found, and Satan converted it into gold, proclaiming it as such in the region! And thus, if it was of iron, he converted it into silver, so as to instigate everyone to violate the graves.

In all of these afflictions which† people had suffered along with the animals of the steppe, birds of the sky, fish of the sea, trees and all that exists on earth and beneath the earth, *the anger of the Lord is not turned away from us; rather, he raised his hand (to strike).*¹

During this year, there was a plot against the patrician of Greater Armenia, in which he was killed with the sword. It is said that he had more than one hundred thousand slaves. Thus all his property was confiscated and was brought down to the Caliph.

*Concerning the evils that increased in the world
through false witnesses; concerning falsehood, borrowers,
lenders and accusers; and concerning the mercy of God that
tolerates and endures our provocations*

We should not overlook what we are also placing in this bitter chapter. When those who come after us realise the numerous stumbling-blocks against which we stumbled, and the afflictions which we suffered on account of our wickedness, they will perhaps avoid them, will not wander in a trackless desert as we did, and †will not be surrounded† by rapacious animals, as happened to us.

It was not because God needed the mercy of Abraham that he revealed to him the sins which the Sodomites used to commit against travelling strangers, but in order to show to his children the bad things which angered God and which attracted Wrath against those who committed them. It is written in the Torah: *Shall I hide from my servant Abraham the thing that I shall do?*²

¹ Cf Isa 9:21.

² Gen 18:17.

Also: *Because I know him he will command his children and his grandchildren /p.323/ after him to keep the ways of the Lord, to do justice and righteousness. The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah has come before me, and their sins are very grave.*¹ Was it for Abraham to have mercy over Sodom that God revealed their sins to him? It was rather to constantly remind his children of them, while saying: "Keep away from these things!" Even David said to his son: *Know the God of your ancestors and do his service, if you desert him he will desert you for ever.*² This happened to us. When we deviated from the way of justice, no man felt it, but when God deserted us, all the creatures felt it along with us: wild animals, domestic animals, fish of the sea, birds of the sky, and even the dead in the graves. Even stones and wood suffered with us.

It is written: *Love the Lord †your God† with all your heart and with all your soul, †and your neighbour† as yourself. On these two commandments hang the law and the prophets,*³ as well as the entire power that the New Testament has. As for us, we set ourselves against them in all our actions. Also: *You shall not kill ... you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness ... Honour your father and your mother... You shall not covet anything belonging to your neighbour. You shall not give your money for interest.*⁴ *You shall not take a bribe that blinds the eyes of the wise people. You shall not stretch out your hand with the guilty to become a false witness for him. You shall not wrong the justice due to the poor.*⁵ *You shall not commit adultery.*⁶ We did not learn about all of these things *through hearsay* only, but we fully committed them in person. And in order that people would not blame God on account of the afflictions that came upon us, we should know that he did not even treat us in accordance with our sins. Let us praise his favours which cannot be fathomed or restrained, and which tolerate and bear our provocations and the evils committed with our hands, and because of which wrath was brought on the disobedient children.

/p.324/ What are the sins which were committed in the world that are not found among us? †If it is the aggression† of Cain, here it is with us! All sodomy is with us! Falsehood, hatred, and the complaint and disobedience† of the Israelites are among us! Rapine, plundering, killings, false witnessing and all the evils of †Julianus†⁷ are with us! We wanted to talk about all of these

¹ Cf Gen 18:19a, 20a.

² 1Chr 28:9.

³ Mt 22:37, 39.

⁴ Cf Deut 5:17-21 and Ex 22:25.

⁵ Cf Ex 23:6-8.

⁶ Deut 5:18.

⁷ ܐܘܠܝܢܝܘܣ: Perhaps a reference to "Julianus" the apostate, the Roman emperor well-known in Syriac hagiographical sources.

things, one by one, so that our children may realise our punishment and may abstain from doing what we did, lest this violent staff should fall on them too.

First, concerning false witnessing that occurred among us

It is written: *The works of people did not come out of my mouth,¹ and I shall destroy him who accuses† his neighbour in secret.²* We, my Brothers, do not want to relate to you the shameful deeds of people or to slander them; rather, we want to show you the causes of this calamity, so that you may avoid them, because *faith vanished from earth and the man speaks to his friend with flattering lips.³*

When a man had a lawsuit against his neighbour, he would go to the marketplace and call upon someone: "Oh, Sir so and so, will you witness in my favour?" And this one would answer, firmly and concomitantly, saying: "Yes, by God! Peace be with you, on what matter?" †He would swear† before knowing the matter! These things were done not only by pagans but also by Christians, including old men! With money, a man could hire as many false witnesses as he wanted, concerning whichever matter, if he wished to. While the judgment of God did not exist in their sight, they used to make a poor man disappear from earth in one hour.

Also concerning borrowers, usurers, and falsehood

*Behold, †you all† speak iniquity and your hands are involved /p.325/ in injustice.⁴ *His mouth* is full of evil, fraud and deceit; under his tongue are iniquity and villainy.⁵ You shall not lend your money in usury, nor shall you give your neighbour on interest. If you lend money to the poor among my people with you, you shall not act toward him like a usurer, and you shall not take from him interest.⁶* And David also said: *He who does not lend his money with interest, who swears to his neighbour†, lies not ...⁷* These words became meaningless to us.

Hard-pressed by harsh exactions, villagers used to go to the cities, carrying presents to people lending on interest. Seeing them, the usurer would say: "Welcome!" and with sweet words, would add: "I shall give you as much

¹ Cf Ps 17:3b.

² Ps 101:5.

³ Cf Ps 12:2-3.

⁴ Cf Ps 58:2.

⁵ Ps 10:7.

⁶ Lev 25:37.

⁷ Ps 15:5.

(money) as is required by you, and have no concern. As long as I am alive I will give to you, and you will be in (no) need of anyone. I ask you for no witnesses or securities or a pledge; I ask for neither interest nor a forfeit. So take, and as soon as the crops are available bring me what belongs to me or give me wheat or wine as valued at its time. Go now and come back in a few days!" After hearing sweet words, the hard-pressed person would go home in great happiness and joy, not knowing that Satan would not allow that (usurer) to fulfil the words that came out of his mouth: *His words are sweeter than honey but they are arrowheads*;¹ besides, their end is (like) *bitter herbs*.

The hard-pressed, relying* on the relieving promises which the usurer had induced him to trust, *did not urge* himself to rush and collect the money of his poll-tax, but quietly sat in his house until the tax collectors came. As soon as they grabbed him, he would say: "Be patient with me for a little while! I am going /p.326/ to bring it to you." He would go in trepidation to the one who assured him that he would give to him, and say to him: "Please, Sir, give me what I had asked you for, so that they may not whip² me." But he would answer him: "Wait for me for a little while!" and at this point he would either leave him and go, or would fool him, saying: "Go today and come back in the morning! At the present I have no time for you." And he would treat him in like manner for many days.

Since the borrower was tormented to death, he would make many fervent pleas to the usurer. He would be interrupted: "I am not giving to you, because I do not have it to give you," or he was told: "I need a receipt from you." The borrower would say: "I will make it." But after writing a receipt for him, the usurer would dismiss him, saying: "Go this evening and come back in the morning!" When he came early in the morning, he would say: "I will lend it to you only if you give me a pledge." After giving him the pledge, he would then add: "How much interest will you give me for this money? And how much wheat will you give as a surety,³ because I will not take the wheat as it will be valued at its time." Constrained, he would give him as much as he opened his mouth and asked for, and would also write (receipts) for him. Then he would ask him for sponsors. Thus, after he contradicted all his earlier promises, he obtained from him a pledge, arranged for a receipt, determined the interest, asked for securities and demanded from him sponsors, while he hardly gave to him enough to relieve him. The borrowers would not

¹ Cf Ps 55:21b.

² ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ (see ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ below): The action of whipping in Syriac is not expressed with ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ (lit. "to scorn, despise"); for the latter see *Thesaurus*, 4029. It is possible that ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ derives from Arabic ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ "to whip, lash ...".

³ ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ: Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 278 took this form for ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ "right of redemption" ("rachat" in Chabot, *Chronique*, 152). As a parallel to ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ and ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ see ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ / ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ and ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ "pledge, gage" (Arabic ܘܥܘܪܘܢܐ).

only kiss his hands but also lick the soles of his feet, saying: "If we will not bring what belongs to you in so many days from now, we will owe all that is written in this document."

At this point, the borrowers would quickly go out to sell their properties and collect money for him. As soon as they collected it and were on their way to pay it back in dignity, /p.327/ Satan, who hates all virtues, would rise vehemently to wage war against their plans, saying: "How are you giving this (money) now? The (tax) will be claimed from you but you will have nothing to pay it, because all your property is sold. That (usurer) is not in want and cannot do harm to you. Moreover, your pledge is kept with him, although you can take it from him and place it with another person; but it is better to keep it with him!"

Behold, the Evil One gave the borrowers very bad counsels, so that they might not fulfil* their promises and relieve the mind of the usurer, who in turn would relieve them, and that they might reward him with the lie which he himself applied to them. But these wrong counsels came through a counsellor, that is the daughter of that of Adam, and therefore, the words: *Women ruled over us*,¹ were fulfilled during this time. They ruled over men and advised them: "Do this, do that!" The man would then answer: "You advised me well," without considering the covenants and oaths made to God, nor those that he would himself make when he would ask for (money) again but would not be given. Rather, the counsel of Satan and that of the spouse were pleasing them more than anything else.

It also happened that whenever one of them held the money in his hands, and the usurer urged him, saying: "Give me what belongs to me," he would strongly deny, saying: "I do not have!" because Satan controlled his mind. Although he would be imprisoned and whipped,² he would not pay back. Toward these people the Psalmist shouts, saying: *The wicked borrows and does not pay back*.³ Instead of the borrower going to the door of the usurer, the usurer would go to the door of the borrower, with pleas. If half of it was paid back, the usurer thought that he had received the full amount! Thus falsehood ruled completely in every person.

¹ Cf Isa 3:12.

² ~~whipped~~: See p. 281 n.2.

³ Ps 37:21.

*Concerning accusations, charges,
plundering of each other, along with false witnesses*

When the country people returned /p.328/ to pay the poll-tax, they formed 'bands like those of Caiaphas.¹ They went round about the cities, inquiring about places where someone had stored something, whether wheat, or wine or furniture. They would go to the amīr, saying: "Behold, so and so is a member of our poll-tax paying group, and he has such and such with so and so, but he did not pay the poll-tax for so many years!" Then that (amīr) would order them: "Go and sell his property." If† the victim or anyone else stood up against them to prevent them, the prefect would ask the malfactors: "Do you have witnesses against him?" Some among them from the same village would come to testify against him, though they had never seen him before. Thus they would sell all that the man had possessed, while he lamented, and would not allow him even to come near his property. Others would say to the man: "You sponsored us!" and others: "You have in our village a vineyard or a garden or olive trees, but you did not pay tax on them for so many years." Though he would swear: "I have never entered* your village nor do I have in your place a garden," in no way they would leave him alone until they had sold all that he possessed, for the prefect himself was guiding them in these affairs.

Because of this, people †were afraid† to appear in public places, but even so they did not escape from these wicked men. They used to inquire about them, and as soon as one of them captured someone, he would say to him: "Either give me such and such amount, or I will take you to the amīr!" Thus this affair turned into a great trade for many people in the city, who filled their houses through plundering and treachery. Micah the Prophet, who rebuked kings in their own presence, said about them: *The righteous man has perished from the earth, and there is no one honest among men. They all lie in wait, and each man hunts his brother for perdition. Their hands are prepared for evil and /p.329/ *they do not do good*. The ruler asked for gold and the judge said: "Bring a bribe!" and the prince speaks his own desires. They rejected their goodness like a rag that moths had eaten.*² Add to this: *Trust not your neighbours; have no confidence in your friends.*³

David also said: *They sharpened their tongue(s) like a sword and their word like an arrow to shoot in secret at the innocent; they shoot at him at once without being seen. They planned to hide snares, while thinking that the*

¹ As stated in *Thesaurus*, 3610, West Syriac authors confused Caiaphas with Josephus, the first century A.D. Jewish general and author.

² Micah 7:2-4a.

³ Micah 7:5a.

*Lord does not see.*¹ He also said about them: *They will return in the evening, howling like dogs, and prowl around the city.*² *They loved curses more than blessings. They dressed themselves up with curses as a weapon; they penetrated into them like water, and like oil into their bones.*³

Such rapine and plunder was committed in the city by enraged dogs, that is villagers and city people, whose mouths were open like putrid graves. So if they captured one of the poor people, and he escaped them, others would hunt him immediately, and if he escaped these, still others would hunt him. Isaiah the Prophet said about them: *How did the faithful city become a harlot? She was full of justice and righteousness, but now murderers! Your silver has become scum, your tavern-keepers mix (wine) with water. Your princes are rebellious and all of them are associates of thieves.*⁴ He also said: *Mockers shall rule over them. The people will fall upon one another, every man his fellow, and young men will attack the elders and the base men the honourable.*⁵ *Her officials within her are roaring like lions, her judges like evening wolves. Her prophets are wanton.*⁶

*Woe unto those who plot iniquity and work evil upon their beds! They even rise up early in the morning and execute what they had plotted. They lift up their hands /p.330/ toward God, and covet fields and houses, take them away by force, and oppress people.*⁷ This is what Micah has said about plunderers and wicked people. He also said: *Her rich men are full of deceit, and her inhabitants are full of falsehood, and their tongue is treacherous in their mouth. I too will begin to smite you, and will destroy you on account of your sins. You shall eat but not be satisfied, and dysentery shall be inside you. You shall thresh but shall not save, and what you shall save I will give to the sword. You shall sow but you shall not reap, you shall press olives but you shall not anoint yourself with oil, and you shall tread out wine but you shall not drink from it.*⁸

Which one of these (deficiencies), whether of oil, wheat, or wine in which labourers take pleasure, did not happen to us personally? Even wrath came upon the plunderers more cruelly than upon anyone else. During the first year, humble people and foreigners perished as we mentioned above; in the second year, those above them; in the third year those above these; in the fourth year, the rapacious and the plunderers. They lost not only their properties, but also the things that they had plundered and amassed. People

¹ Cf Ps 64:3-5.

² Ps 59:6.

³ Cf Ps 109:17-18.

⁴ Isa 1:21-23a.

⁵ Isa 3:4b-5.

⁶ Zeph 3:3-4a.

⁷ Cf Micah 2:1-2a.

⁸ Micah 6:12-15.

had done to, and performed upon, each other these things, similar ones and greater than these, about which the prophets had preached before.

The villagers, in particular, went too far in this evil. City people and merchants started it first, in rushing to sell the properties of the villagers, including vineyards, fields, and their whole output. But they did not rejoice in this, because the villagers turned against them. If one had wine or wheat in the village of anyone of these villagers, they brought it out, sold it or consumed it. The prefect supported all of the evildoings by not holding anyone accountable. Moreover, it was not enough for those merchants to be plundered and their properties to disappear, the villagers would grab anyone of them and hand him over to the prefect, saying: "All /p.331/ our production was taken away by this one. Therefore, order him to pay on behalf of the village!" The prefect would harass him to such an extent that he would make him disappear from earth. He would confiscate all that he owned and carry away all that he had plundered or not plundered. As a consequence, the wealthy used to run away from the villagers, like goats before wolves, and hide, while renouncing the vineyards and everything which they took away from them.

It also happened that (city) people would go to buy wine freely from the wine-press (of the villagers), but they would go into the presence of the amīr to complain to him. If it (= the sold wine) was still in their village, the prefect would send to mark it, and if it was taken into the city, the prefect would confiscate it in like manner. Thus the buyer lost the wine and what he had paid for it!

The more we talk about the evils that occurred and which people had perpetrated against each other, the more we are left far behind the full extent of such evils, because there is no one who can record them on account of their multitude. Nevertheless, these bits are enough for the intelligent. Let us say with Jeremiah the Prophet about them: *My people became foolish. They knew me not, says the Lord. They are stupid children and there were no wise men, for they are skilled to do evil but to do good they have no knowledge. I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void.*¹ *Truly all at once had broken the yoke and cut the bonds. Therefore, a lion shall devour them and the evening wolves shall tear them to pieces. A leopard shall lie in wait over their villages. Every one of them that goes out shall be torn to pieces, because their transgressions became grievous, their sins multiplied,*² *and they manifested their evil like the Sodomites.*³

¹ Cf Jer 4:22-23a.

² Cf Jer 5:5b-6.

³ Isa 3:9.

*Concerning the second year of affliction,
which is the year one thousand and eighty-five (773-774)*¹

We provided information above about the bitter afflictions and merciless rapine that befell to people due to the agents who were /p.332/ involved in them—the agents of the alms tax (*ṣadaqat al-māl*) of the Arabs, of the crown property (*ṣawfī*), of the tithe and of the fugitives—as well as due to many other reasons which we have previously discussed. Therefore, it is not necessary that we repeat the information to the intelligent, for they know that more than in the preceding and following years, calamities increased many times as much in this year, coming not only from earth and people but also from heaven and even from the Lord.

The agent of the crown-property (*ṣawfī*) mercilessly demanded double tax money. The agent of the tithe attacked travellers like an enraged dog, plundering without mercy him who came or went. As for the pursuers of the fugitives, they were more eager for a poor fellow to fall into their hands than the vultures are for corpses, and like vultures around the corpse, so were they pulling at the poor people. And what do I have to say about the violation of the graves, if not what Jeremiah has said—for it was he who foretold us the violation of the graves and the dispersion of their bones like litter upon the face of the ground, and there was no one to gather them. It is written: *At that time, says the Lord, they shall exhume from their graves the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of their nobles, the bones of their priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and they shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the host of heaven, which they have loved and served and followed, and which they have sought and worshipped; and they shall not be gathered and buried but they shall be like litter upon the face of the ground.*²

These things happened in our own time, and we also wrote about them above.³ Nevertheless, evils, especially the violation of graves, multiplied in this year more than in all the preceding and following years. Jeremiah also said about those who lived at this time: /p.333/ *And all those *who remain* in this evil tribe, in all the territories where I have scattered them, shall choose for themselves death rather than life.*⁴ The same Jeremiah also said: *And the corpses of this people shall be food for the beasts of the steppe and for the birds of the sky, and there shall be no deliverer. And I shall make to cease from the villages of Judah and from the streets of Jerusalem the voice of joy and the voice of happiness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice*

¹ See above p. 253 n. 1.

² Jer 8:1-2.

³ See p. 277 and n. 2.

⁴ Jer 8:3.

*of the bride; for all the land shall become a waste.*¹ These words have been fulfilled, since corpses of people have been given as food for the animals of the steppe and the birds of the sky—for the prophet likened this godless people to the impure animals and birds. The voice of happiness and that of the bridegroom and of the bride ceased. Even the married ones repudiated their wives and wrote for them bills of divorce on account of the multitude of evils: *Because of the great amount of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold.*²

It is not necessary for us to write about these evils again. Rather, we shall leave them quickly and shift to additional evils that this year has witnessed more than others: harsh winter, severe cold, lack of pasture, shortage of fodder for domestic animals, total loss of all the cattle, famine, a cruel disease, pestilence in which people and domestic animals perished like locusts, plundering which villagers did to each other, pillaging of people, murders due to lack of bread, highway robberies, and the fact that Christians ate meat during Lent, and that they even ate carcasses because of want of bread. These things I have to talk about. These things I have to relate and write down for our posterity.

*First, concerning the severe winter,
the total loss of domestic animals, /p.334/ animals of the steppe
and birds, and the strong winds that blew*

It is written: *I shall turn your summers into winters.*³ This happened to the world in the course of this year.

In (the first part of) this year, wine was plenty, because God gave the poor a pause so that they might put an end to the greed of those judges whose mouths were wide open. Just as open graves have not enough of corpses carried to them every day, so did the officials of this time not have enough of the crops which the whole land produced for them. Thus God gave from his rich treasury abundant crops so that through them agents could close their fetid jaws and leave the poor alone, till the Day of Reckoning would come for them, and till their offences would become complete and the measure of their sins full.

Nevertheless, winter came as early as First *Tiṣrī* (October), and the abundant snow, which remained for a while, crushed the vineyards along with their grapes. Despite the accumulated snow, people went into the vineyards to pick the grapes in large bowls†, but because of the great severity of the cold that came upon the land, all the grapes fell off and got spoiled in the snow.

¹ Jer 7:33-34.

² Mt 24:12.

³ Cf Zech 14:6.

Thus cold weather and snow replaced rain that usually fell from First *Tiṣrī* (October) up until the approach of *Ḥazīrān* (June). Snow fell on one day†, and mountain-cutting winds, frost and severe cold occurred on another. Thus God wanted punishment to befall the country in this year from all sides, sky, earth, and the four winds of the sky: the sky †with snow† and severe frost; the earth below with rock-shattering cold; and the regions with the great evils that people perpetrated against each other, and which were countless in their multitude.

*Concerning the total loss of livestock
and cattle in this year /p.335/ because of lack of fodder*

When drought took place, as we mentioned above,¹ the Taghlibite and Ma'daeen people gathered, and along with their cattle, camels and families, moved up to the northern land, invading and devastating the southern plain* on their way. They bought all the grain and brought it down to the lower region.

The whole pasture in the open was consumed. The whole ground was cleared as if with a broom, and straw and fodder grew scanty. Because of the fact that there was no pasture outside, and grain in the stables was scarce, all the grazing and stall-fed livestock—goats, sheep and animals of burden—perished. For if the owner of the cattle drove the cattle to pasture, he would not collect anything edible, because there was nothing at all other than dust; there was not even one leaf on a tree which was not consumed by the heat. Grazing animals consumed what had been gathered for the animals of the stable, and then both grazing and stall-fed animals perished, because winter was long-lasting and the cold grew very severe. Outside there was frost and inside famine, and because of this all the cattle—sheep, oxen, horses and donkeys—perished in the North. Villages reeked because of †the carcasses†,² to such an extent that they stank worse than graves!

Concerning the strong wind that blew in that year

Furthermore, a strong and mighty wind blew, such as has never been experienced in either our time or that of our ancestors. It killed many people and sheep, cattle, and all the birds perished. All vegetation was pulled up by the roots and the wind produced swirls of dust similar to those made of snow.

For two consecutive days the wind blew, /p.336/ between Nativity and

¹ See p. 274.

² ܠܝܘܢܐ : From Arabic جسد with the Syriac emphatic ending.

Epiphany, and again on the fourteenth of *Šebat* (February), the first Sunday and Monday of Lent. Because the soil cracked due to frost and drought, all vegetation in cultivated fields as well as on uncultivated terrain was pulled up root and all, and withered. Darkness and a black haze caused by clouds of dust grew thick. As well, all birds, doves included, perished, although it was not known precisely what had happened to them, whether they had been swept away by the wind, or had succumbed and perished in the open field, as a result of the frost. Numerous panthers*, died as well; in fact only a few of them survived. Thus perished both domestic animals and those of the steppe.

Also concerning the hail-stones that also fell in this year

Also during this year, hailstones fell, such as have never been seen in our own day. They were as big as pebbles, of sundry shapes, with two, three or four *jagged prongs*, as sharp as a sword. They slashed trees and vineyards, pulled up vegetation, and smashed roof tiles on all houses that featured them.¹ As well, they wreaked havoc through huge torrents that accompanied them.

The wind that blew through the clouds piled sheets of rain against each other, in such a manner that, to onlookers, it seemed as though the earth itself were catapulting them straight upward toward the sky.

*Concerning the return of Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab,
to the region and the agents he appointed, and concerning
the afflictions which people suffered on account of them*

As we mentioned above, when the past year, which is that of this wicked man (Mūsā), ended, /p.337/ all the residents of the territories of the Jazīra and Mosul gathered and went down to the Caliph to denounce Mūsā on account of the evils which he perpetrated on them.² But they erred in that they expected to find justice in a perverse man and a friend of thieves. Instead of the favour which they thought they would get, they kindled malice against themselves. For not only did he not accept their speech, he collected all the petitions which the poor people had made to him concerning their affliction, and handed them to Mūsā. What is more, he increased his prestige, placing him at the top of

¹ Only the houses of the rich had roof tiles in northern Syria and that is why the Chronicler stressed that fact. This is in line with his belief that God's wrath targeted mainly the rich, and to a less extent the poor of his society.

² Mūsā, son Muṣ'ab, became governor of Mosul in 769-770, according to the Chronicle of Z.; see this date above. The "past year", which must correspond to 772-773, is the "first year of afflictions"; see above p. 253. In this year people of the Jazīra and Mosul went to Baghdad to complain about Mūsā; see above p. 271.

all his officials, and furthermore, he ordered him to appoint agents from and for the cities, each city with a native agent in it.

As for Mūsā, after receiving the order, he returned in great 'fury,¹ roaring like a lion over the prey. And as the wild animal intensifies its past aggression whenever it escapes after falling into a pit, so did this one increase his past malice manifoldly when the Caliph backed him with the order. In fact even God extended the hand to him, as Jeremiah also said: (*Thus said the Lord ... to me:*) "Take the wine cup of this wrath from my hand, and make all the nations to whom I am sending you drink it. And they shall drink and stagger; and they shall be troubled before the sword which I am sending among them." And I took the cup from the Lord's hand, and made all the nations to whom the Lord had sent me drink it.² He also said: (*Then you shall say:*) "Drink and be drunken, and be troubled and fall and rise not before the sword which I am sending among you."³ He also said: *Shall you be pronounced innocent? You shall not be pronounced innocent, for I am calling for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, says the Lord. The Lord /p.338/ will roar from on high and will utter his voice from his holy abode. He will roar mightily against his fold, and will shout, hurrah! hurrah!, like the one who treads grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. The clamour will reach to the ends of the earth, for the Lord has a verdict against all the inhabitants of the earth.*⁴

Truly the Lord had a case against all the inhabitants of the earth during this year, because there was no nation or kingdom that was at ease. Hardship pressed hard upon all of them alike, for all of them drank from the cup in the Lord's hand, and became dazed and troubled: Persians, because tax cancellation* was not granted to them; Arabs, along with Jews and Christians, because of extortions; Egyptians, Armenians, Sindhi and all other nations were oppressed by the heavy tribute. This situation tells already that it was from this cup that they had drunk: *You have shown your people hardships and you have given them troubled wine to drink.*⁵

Nor was the Roman land spared from this cruel affliction, but the leaders of both our nation and theirs fell in love with money with one consent, because the mixture in the cup was one for all nations: *You are filled with dishonour instead of glory.*⁶ Habakkuk also said: *Drink you too and stagger! The cup in the Lord's right hand will turn upon you, and shame upon your glory! For the violence of Lebanon will cover you, and the*

¹ כַּחֲמֹסִים: Is it for כַּחֲמֹסִים "in victory" as Chabot, *Chronicon* II, p. 337 n. 1 wondered, or for כַּחֲמֹסִים as Hespel corrected and as translated above?

² Jer 25:15-17.

³ Jer 25:27.

⁴ Jer 25:29b-31a.

⁵ Ps 60:3.

⁶ Hab 2:16a.

*destruction of the beasts will trouble you, because of the blood of people and the plundering of the land, of the city and of all its inhabitants.*¹ Look! This prophet showed that the first cup which the land and its inhabitants had drunk during the preceding year, came from the Lord's hands, because he made it known, saying: *The cup in the Lord's right hand will turn upon you, and shame upon your glory!*

/p.339/ *Look! I am laying in Zion a stumbling-block and a rock of scandal: He who falls over it, it will cut him, and he upon whom it falls will be crushed.*² The same thing happened through Mūsā: If they accepted him, they brought wrath upon themselves, and if not, there were sword and evil on all sides. When he returned, as we mentioned above,³ the Lord laid a stumbling-block for all the nations †before him†, in that he weakened them through the cold, frost, snow and ice, in such a way that they were not able to get out and flee* before him, as a result of the great severity of the cold. And if one of them escaped, he came back immediately, without being pursued by anyone, like the one who returns home hastily after having been fettered by enemies. The prophet did not hide this reality from us, but said: *If you establish your nest on high I will bring you down from there and if you go down even to Sheol I will bring you up from there and I will deliver you to the hands of those who seek your life.*⁴ Also: *He will be trodden like the mire of the streets, and like dirt upon the face of the ground, and there will be no deliverer.*⁵ This statement shows that this calamity came upon us from the Lord.

When Mūsā returned, he roared like a lion over the prey. He inquired and learned about wicked and merciless people whom he had appointed as agents in their own cities. This matter irritated the poor people more than anything else, because they were not able to denounce the agent, since he was a native and nothing was hidden to him. The agent also selected for himself the notables in the city and in the country and made them his friends. Notables and agents began to steal openly and no one held them accountable. As for the poor people, they found themselves in great distress. /p.340/ Their hands were paralysed, their hearts grew confounded, and their backs broke at the news of the arrival of the impious one. Their hope was shattered for *the thing that they feared came upon them, and the thing that they dreaded befell them. They were not at ease, nor were they quiet or at rest, but wrath came,* as Job said.⁶

¹ Hab 2:16b-17.

² Cf Isa 8:14-15.

³ See pp. 289-290.

⁴ Cf Amos 9:2.

⁵ Cf Micah 7:10, Jer 8:2b.

⁶ Job 3:25-26.

Mūsā appointed such people as agents, one for each village. Many others accompanied them, whose own demands were harsher than the poll-tax which they exacted, because they were thieves, brigands and highway robbers. These were selected and were established as judges! It is written: *If kings are wicked, all their servants are also wicked.*¹

Thus they used to exact tax from the poor through strong pressure, cruel blows and tortures, while taking away more than half of what they exacted as honorarium. And they came back again! After they had received from the people honorarium money, they compelled them to sell their properties 'at a low price,² and bought them with the honorarium which they had already received. In this way, they filled their houses with the properties of orphans and widows. They also bought their goats, oxen and all that they possessed. Moreover, if one of the agents went to a region that did not possess anything, he would first claim his honorarium, and then harass the local people and buy their property. What wicked man is worse than this agent? Even the provincial chiefs and the prefects were associates in this wickedness, because they practised robbery more than anything else: *Your princes are rebels and companions of thieves.*³ So through these vexations they exacted 'one- or two-thirds of the tax,⁴ while no beginning or end was known to this extortion. The agents did not reveal what they used to receive nor /p.341/ was the amount which 'they determined and imposed⁵ known, because all their actions were those of thieves, brigands and highway robbers. They grabbed well-known people and notables of the country and sold all their cattle as well as their entire possessions; then they destroyed them, exterminating them from the face of the earth. Taking away all that they possessed was not enough for them, for they used to claim from them even the thing that they did not possess!

Mūsā appointed agents for many affairs, including ones for the monetary alms tax (*ṣadaqat al-māl*) of the Arabs, from whom they exacted it

¹ Cf Prov 29:12.

² ܠܚܝܒܐ: This expression probably corresponds to Arabic *بالكسر* "(so cheap that the vendor comes out) broke". The agents bought cheaply the properties of the poor with the honorarium money which they had received from them, thus making gain in both ways.

³ Isa 1:23.

⁴ ܠܚܝܒܐ ܠܚܝܒܐ ܠܚܝܒܐ: The poll-tax was paid in three instalments as is suggested in p. 264. See also note 2 in that page.

⁵ ܠܚܝܒܐ ܠܚܝܒܐ: Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 299b, translated these words "to do damage by exaction". Nonetheless, what the Chronicler of Z. seems to say is that the agents did not publicly reveal what "they had determined (*ܠܚܝܒܐ* probably in its Arabic [فَطَعَ] and Akkadian [*parāsu*] sense) and imposed (*ܠܚܝܒܐ*)" as total amount of tax, because the tax money included honoraria.

manifoldly. They claimed 'cancelled debts,¹ demanded thirty and sometimes forty *zūz* from everyone on whom they had imposed ten. They determined on their own further 'contributions² and went out to the country to impose them on wayfarers. And sometimes they determined contributions which they imposed on the notables of the country, 'Muslims³ as well as Christians. Nevertheless, they did not wander around because they cared for 'Islam⁴ but in order to satiate their greed through the love of money. They determined 'fees⁵ and mercilessly imposed them on the country and fields of the Arabs, while the produce was not yet known. Now 'the evils originated with the governor himself,⁶ but (his) agents added to them, and the provincial chiefs, couriers and prefects made matters even worse. Thus merciless plundering, fraud and injustice were ruling all of them.

Isaiah the Prophet shouts at these people, saying: *Woe unto me, the wicked acted wickedly, the wicked acted very evilly! Fear and the pit tare upon you, as well as the snare†, O inhabitant of the earth! He who [p.342] flees from the sound of the terror shall fall into the pit; and he who comes up out from inside the pit shall be caught in the snare. For the flood-gates from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth shook. The earth shall quake exceedingly, the earth shall totter exceedingly, the earth shall stagger like a drunken man; it shall quiver like a hut; its transgression shall prevail over her and it shall fall and not rise again.*⁷ The wicked acted wickedly and without shame, and the earth trembled and tottered; people wandered from one village to another and from one territory to the next one, and their wickedness grew grievous. *The earth was laid waste and its face was turned upside down; the law disappeared, because the slave became like his master and the priest like the people; the borrower became more cruel than the usurer and the debtor more cruel than the creditor.*⁸

Isaiah also said about these people: *Behold, the Lord shall destroy the earth and tear it asunder and overturn its surface and scatter its inhabitants; and the people shall be as the priests, the slave as his master, the maiden as her mistress, the borrower as the usurer, the owner as the purchaser, the*

¹ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ: For this term see below p. 265 and n. 1.

² ܩܘܒܘܠܐ: See p. 265 and n. 3 for this term.

³ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ: From Arabic 'مهاجر' with the Syriac emphatic ending.

⁴ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ: This word will possibly occur again but in a lacuna; see below p. 323 and n. 6.

⁵ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ: For the meaning and Arabic origin of the word (قطيعة), see Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 300. The fee in question must have concerned agricultural fields, since it is said that it was levied even before harvest.

⁶ ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ (sic) ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܥܘܒܝܐ: Lit. "the foundations of the evils is found at the bottom (i.e. the highest echelons of the provincial administration)".

⁷ Isa 24:16b-20.

⁸ Cf Isa 24:1b-2.

creditor as the debtor; the earth shall be utterly laid waste and utterly despoiled; for the Lord has spoken. The universe lamented and sat in mourning; the land became like its inhabitants. The law ceased; good commandments changed into bad ones; the everlasting right covenants ceased¹ and iniquity, wickedness and robbery replaced them.

Satan said to the bad ones: "Lo, aie! My eye spotted them!" He said to his agents: "Pursue him and overtake him!" (so that) no one rebels and not even a few turn away from sin. He spread out his net in which all the children of Adam were caught. His hand, like a nest, was able to gather the nations, since no one, not even bishops, priests or judges escaped sin, /p.343/ calumination, mutual rapine, slander, abuse, blasphemy, hatred, murmuring, plundering, adultery and violation of the dead in the graves. All the seeds of the Accuser were now sowed in everyone, and everyone was eager to do evil according to his rank and power.

When the prophet in question saw these things, he said: *Because of this the earth shall sit* in mourning and all its inhabitants shall be guilty. Wheat mourned, vineyards languished, and all the merry-hearted are inhibited†. Joy and tambourines have ceased, the voice of the jubilant has stilled, joy, lyres and song are ended. No more do they drink wine. Strong drink *shall be bitter* to those who drink it. The village was plundered; all the wine-cellar are shut. There is an outcry in the streets for wine. All joy has ceased and gladness is gone,² and instead of them there were destruction, misery and bitterness. We did not learn about these things through hearsay; rather, we saw them before our eyes.*

People did all the evils to each other. They attacked hermits, recluses, and stylites, bringing down many from their pillars, and driving recluses out of their cells. Monks, who gathered in humility and holiness in holy congregations in the monasteries, suffered hardships, persecutions and cruel tortures, more than anyone else, because of the exactions of the judges. The reader should know and understand that a persecution more severe than the one of this year had never before been experienced in the world. If this persecution had not been general, in which all people (indiscriminately) were more oppressed and persecuted than in any previous one, I would have praised the martyrdoms of today!³ If someone owning something wanted to escape, he was bound as if with fetters, until he was despoiled† and nothing /p.344/ was left to him. Only after he was stripped of everything, was he released, and did he flee. For if one of them had anything, it was impossible for him to escape, and if he escaped, the road itself despoiled him. If he placed his property in the ground, this same place shouted about him: "This is the

¹ Cf Isa 24:1-5.

² Isa 24:6b-11.

³ Parallel statement above p. 273.

property of so and so, come and take it!" If he placed it with people, the very person who offered him a shelter fulfilled toward him the role of thieves and brigands.

Obadiah the Prophet said about these people: *If you rise high like the eagle, and if you set your nest among the stars, I will bring you down from there, says the Lord.*¹ He also said: *How Esau was searched out and how his hidden things came to light!*² It was here possible to see that the thing which was hidden by someone was quickly uncovered. Hosea also said: *Because of the multitude of iniquity, intemperance increased,*³ *intemperance in the house of God.*⁴ Intemperance, iniquity, falsehood and hypocrisy increased in everyone: *My people are foolish, they know me not; they are stupid children. They are skilled in doing evil but they know not the good. I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void,* said holy Jeremiah.⁵ The whole earth became waste and void, and the darkness of sin and iniquity covered its face.

All the cattle of the country was sold, and its merchants increased more than the stars of the heavens, as Nahum also indicated to us.⁶ Two or three pregnant she-goats were sold for a zūz, as were ewes; one ox for a zūz, one donkey for a zūz, and one 'mule⁷ for ten zūz. What escaped the 'destruction⁸ was blown away by the wind. People's display and attractive vessels, as many as had been plundered by the judges†, were sold for free; that is, vessels worth twenty or thirty zūz went for two or three zūz.

When the land had been despoiled, the holy days of Lent drew near /p.345/ and the weeks called "of incense" came. Nevertheless, we are not calling them "of incense" but of bitterness, difficulties and sigh, for during them hardship increased more than during the rest of the whole year. Thus this affliction continued through the whole holy Lent until 'New Sunday⁹ passed. Feasts and Sundays ceased. Prayers usually offered during the days of Lent, Palm Sunday and Sundays also ceased. Christians removed all iron and wooden objects from their houses and sold them. They pulled out their doors and sold them, while hoping for the best. At the end, they pulled out even the beams of their houses and sold them. At this point, they abandoned their

¹ Obad 4.

² Obad 6.

³ Hos 9:7b.

⁴ Hos 9:8b.

⁵ Jer 4:22-23a.

⁶ Nah 3:16.

⁷ ܡܘܠܐ: Arabic بئيل instead of Syriac ܡܘܠܐ (Akkadian *kūdanum* or *kūdannum*); the same Arabism occurs in Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 375:18, 21, 17.

⁸ ܡܘܠܐ: A reference to the destruction of animals in the harsh winter described above; see p. 287.

⁹ ܐܘܪܘܫܐܝܡ: The first Sunday after Easter.

ruined houses and fled, while dispossessed, wandering from one village to another and from one territory to the next one. Here one can say with Jeremiah the Prophet: *The people ate wormwood and drank bitter water. They were scattered among the nations whom neither they nor their fathers have known; and the sword was sent after them until they are consumed.*¹ Isaiah also said: *They will be like fleeing gazelles and like sheep that have no one to gather them. Every man will turn to his own people and every man will flee to his own land.*² Moreover: *Their houses will be filled with howls; there demons will dance and ostriches will dwell; hyenas will cry in their enclosures and jackals in the temples of their pleasures.*³

We do not have to say only that *flour and drink offerings are cut off from the house of God,*⁴ but also that the wood of churches was removed and sold, the rest was consumed by fire, and the cultic vessels disappeared. Vineyards were destroyed, vines mourned, fields produced thorns and thistles, fig trees dried up, olive trees were also destroyed, and pomegranate, palm, apple and all other trees were ravaged, because joy ceased among people, and the peasants fled; their houses became a dwelling place for wild animals.

*/p.346/ Concerning the calamity that occurred
as a consequence of the villagers'† destruction of each other,
and of their malice directed against each other*

Nor did we consider leaving this subject out of this chapter of woes, groans and bitter pain. I stated above⁵ that the issue of the appointment of local agents was more harmful than all the preceding and following wrongs. Because the local agent was not content with his own prey alone, he sent despicable and mean couriers before him, who took away everything, not leaving even a nail in a wall, because they were as ravenous as evening wolves. They did not own anything, but now they became wealthy as a consequence of their plundering as well as that of their agent. Those who were, up to this day, assassins, highway robbers, drunkards, fornicators, night ambush layers, and burglars are today judges! See, my Brothers, the effect of sins and in the hands of whom they deliver those who commit them, as is said: "An evil person takes revenge on an evil person." Behold where and in the hands of whom our sins had cast us, and who became for us exactors: oppressive and merciless people!

As the agents claimed the poll-tax and many other things manifoldly, all

¹ Cf Jer 9:15b-16.

² Isa 13:14.

³ Isa 13:21b-22a.

⁴ Joel 1:9a.

⁵ See p. 291.

that people had possessed was sold and taken away. They did not claim from a district its tribute unless manifoldly, and no beginning, neither middle nor end was known. They determined and imposed taxes on (each of) the districts, saying: "The 'arrears of the tax¹ of the district are such and such, and so many thousand (dinars) is still owing." As soon as people brought this amount, they determined another amount. And as soon as people raised this, too, under pressure, they determined another amount, and no one was able to speak because everyone was afraid of the tax assessment of the judge. Then they seized the notables and imposed on them taxes without mercy, until they ruined /p.347/ and devastated many.

The villagers supported the evil-doers. They used to attack people, and unjustly take away and sell all that they possessed, saying: "You have a vineyard or a garden or a forest or olive trees in our village!" or "You bailed out a man among us!" or "You are subject to our poll-tax, and for so many years you did not pay us! Now pay us because we are hard-pressed!" On these and similar pretexts, the villagers used to seize the poor people and ruin them. The judge himself taught them this manner, supported them and did not hold them responsible for what they used to do. They also attacked the wayfarer, seizing him and stirring up false witnesses, who would say against him: "He is subject to our poll-tax." He would swear: "I have never seen these people nor did they ever see me!" but they would answer: "He is subject to our poll-tax!" At this point, they would bring from among themselves false witnesses, and set them against him, and in this manner they would sell his cattle, property and all that he possessed. They used to go round about the cities, like 'dogs that nose around to find the trail² of their owners, or that of animals or sheep, and inquire about him who had any stored supply, whether wheat or iron or any merchandise, to take it away. One could see them prowling around in cities in groups, quarrelling* with people, saying: "So and so is one of us!" And as soon as this one escaped from them, others faced him and escorted him to others. And even if he hid something either in the ground or with someone, the place itself would scream concerning him, like a pregnant woman in labour. People were busy during the holy days of Lent with these activities and similar ones, as well as with others that relate to them.

Let us shift now to the other evils which the villagers had committed against each other: /p.348/ *They go from strength to strength.*³ We too are going from one calamity to another, for *filth* is upon filth and vomit upon vomit,*⁴ and after a report comes another report.⁵

¹ אַכְסָרָא: Translation of Arabic كَسْرٌ, attested in the sense above in al-Mas'ūdī, as noted by Nöldeke in WZKM 10 (1896) p. 166; Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 339.

² For this sentence see Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 318.

³ Ps 84:7a.

⁴ See Isa 28:10.

*Concerning the hardship which people experienced
through the agreement (ṣulhā), and concerning the pillage which villagers had
committed against each other*

Since the Lord brought complete destruction and made irrevocable decrees over all the earth,¹ it is possible to see here the complete destruction that happened to everything. Nor did the wrath of the Lord against us abate yet,² because of the fact that we did not desist from our numerous sins and iniquities; on the contrary, we added to them more and more every day, like someone who takes a heavy load, and instead of reducing it, adds to it. The Lord was a bit angered but we went on with the evils. Because of this, Jeremiah also shouts at us, saying: *Thus says the Lord: Even if Moses and Samuel stand before me, my soul would not want this people. Send them out of my sight, and let them go. If they say to you, 'Where shall we go?' say to them, 'Thus says the Lord: To death those for death, to the sword those for the sword, to famine those for famine, to captivity those for captivity.'* I will set over them four destroyers, says the Lord: *The sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy.*³ At this point the Lord has sent us out of his sight. No oblation, no prayers for forgiveness, and not even the righteous people among us appeased the Lord concerning us, but he devastated the regions and people abandoned their houses. Then dogs fell upon them to drag them and tear them apart, and birds of prey to devour them without mercy. But people are more harmful than dogs and birds of prey. For unlike the former, when the latter devour a corpse and have enough, they restrain themselves from tearing it apart; they do not eat, grind up /p.349/ and trample down the remainder with their feet. As for those rapacious animals,⁴ they ate, had enough and stored the rest in their houses.

All the evils about which we talked were not enough for them, but they also added to them the following ones. When the whole poll-tax was near being released, a cruel man, whose name was Razīn and whom we mentioned above,⁵ was sent to the country in order to impose the agreement (ṣulhā). He came to Amida, Arzen, and Maipharqat. In (the region of) Amida, there were some greedy and scornful country people, who never talked about its agent without wanting badly to kill him.⁶ The greedy notables (of Amida) and the

⁵ Jer 51:46b.

¹ Cf Isa 10:23.

² Cf Isa 5:25.

³ Jer 15:1-3.

⁴ The villagers are meant.

⁵ See p. 269.

⁶ ܠܚܘܒܝܢ ܡܠܟܝܢ: A rough translation of this unusual phrase.

rapacious agents approved the payment of seventy thousand (dinars) for the agreement (*ṣulhā*). But they sent a message to the son of Muṣ'ab to the effect that Razīn should not come to them, so that they might fulfil their enraged desire on the country people. This they did and took away much money, for they did not extort from people only seventy thousand (dinars), but three times as much. They determined and imposed tax on everyone, as much as he was assessed for, even though everyone had sold all that he possessed. They also pressured poor people, 'foreigners,¹ travellers, [. . .] and merchants. They oppressively despoiled the people who were in the city, saying: "You are in the 'lists!'"² and the agent was supporting them in this matter. And whomever they found having *one fuls*, they informed about him and plundered either his wheat or barley or other tradable products. Even then the amount which was imposed on people was hardly raised. As everyone was plundered, plaintive sounds were heard from all sides. The agents also scrutinised every place in which there remained even very little wealth; they determined the tax and imposed it, saying: "Such and such province is deserted and there is nobody in it." /p.350/ So they also paid on behalf of that (province), but then the agent determined (the tax) and imposed it on the latter (province) and (its people) also paid the tax.³

When the poor people realised that this open robbery did not cease, that the agents had neither shame nor fear of God, and that the root of all evils did not call them to account for all the crimes which they used to commit every-day in all the territories, they rebelled, saying: "We have paid our 'ta[x?]'⁴ and many tax arrears of our neighbours, our agreement (*ṣulhā*) and that which is not ours! When will they have enough of our flesh? We will not pay again because we do not know from where we will bring them (money)!"

Nevertheless, when the agents heard these words, they clapped their hands and gnashed their teeth like bloodthirsty wolves, gathering against them all the thieves and assassins of their city. Moreover, he (=Mūsā) dispatched 'his deputy,⁵ accompanied by rapacious and bloodthirsty people—the country

¹ ܟܘܪܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ: The word also refers to "anchorites".

² ܩܘܪܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ: The "lists" in which the names of the *Dhimmi* who paid the poll-tax were found; see Harrak, "Piecing Together the Martyrdom of Cyrus of Ḥarrān".

³ The last sentence is not clear in the Syriac original. It seems that the agent made a rich province pay the poll-tax on behalf of a supposedly "broke" province, but then turned and imposed the poll-tax on the broke province! This makes sense since people complained shortly below: "We have paid our ta[x?]' and many tax arrears of our neighbours, our agreement (*ṣulhā*) and that which is not ours!"

⁴ ܟܘܪܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ (middle part is effaced in MS): For ܟܘܪܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ?

⁵ ܟܘܪܝܢܝܘܬܝܢ: Transcription of Arabic *خليفة* with the Syriac pronominal suffix. The word is not used here in reference to the head of the Islamic state "caliph". The Chronicler of Z. referred to the latter with the Syriac word for "king", as mentioned

notables, wicked and merciless men. He also gathered youths from a village, a host with short spears and slingers, and marched against them. But the villagers applied*† their cruelty to all the killers and thieves among them, causing great harm to their brothers which the tongue is inadequate to describe.

The place that rebelled was located between mountains, in the northern region of the country; it was called Tutis. Its people were a mixture of Syrians and Urṭians,¹ because the Syrians shared the region, that is Fourth Armenia, with the Urṭians. There was in this region a place that produced lead and silver, as well as others that cast iron. Because of the great hardship that befell the whole country, /p.351/ many people gathered in the place where lead was produced, to such an extent that they formed a big camp, with an agent appointed by the Caliph. And people from all regions came* to this place in which they dug wide and deep tunnels, searching for lead.

The host headed to the place which we mentioned and attacked *the villagers*, wanting to impose upon them the agreement (*ṣulḥā*). But their Persian agents did not want to comply with the troops, saying: "Many of the villagers are from your region, and they pay the onerous poll-tax!" The troops were not persuaded, but heavily armed themselves for battle, so as to plunder everything that they had. While not intending to cause massacres, the Persians ordered the campers *to rise up* and drive them away so that they might not be invaded.

When they pitilessly*² invaded them and began to massacre them, the miners of lead fled away before the sword. Because it was still winter, there was much snow on the ground. Moreover, ice condensed on the entrances of the mines which were covered with snow and filled with water, so much so that they became undetectable. When people fled, they fell into these mines and many of them suffocated and died; for they sank into them, under the ice, in the middle of the mines. The troops also pitilessly killed many of them with the sword and despoiled and plundered that entire camp.

Let us lament, like* Jeremiah the Prophet, over these events, and say: *All our enemies opened their mouths against us. Fear and terror have come upon us, pitfall* and ruin. My eyes flowed† with streams of tears over the ruin of the daughter of my people. My enemies hunted me like a bird for no reason. They reduced /p.352/ my life to silence in the pit and cast stones on me. Water flowed over my head.*³ Let us add what was said by another

above, pp. 32 and 141 n. 7.

¹ About the Urṭians see Harrak, BCSMS 25 (1993) pp. 43ff.

² **ܠܘܥܘܒܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ**: One would expect **ܠܘܥܘܒܐ ܕܢܘܨܐ**. The emendation of the second word into **ܠܘܥܘܒܐ** "in the fortress" (see Hespel, *Chronicon*, 286 n. 13) is not necessary. The present account talks about **ܠܘܥܘܒܐ** "camp" and not about a "fortress".

³ Lam 3:49-53.

one: *He who flees from the sound of the terror shall fall into *the pitfall*;
and he who escapes from *the pitfall*, shall fall by the sword, and he who
survives the sword, shall fall in captivity.*¹ Here none of these failed to
happen. Nor were those who suffocated or killed pitied, brought out or buried
by the Christians, their colleagues. On the contrary, if they brought out one of
them, they stripped him of his garments and left him naked at the entrance of
the mine.

It is not necessary to talk about the evils which were committed in that
land. First, perhaps no one will believe us, due to their evilness. Second, so
that they may not become known to pagans who may say that the fear of God
did not exist in the sight of the Christians, because their actions were more
harmful than those of the Magians. Nevertheless, by demonstrating that these
matters were the prelude to the calamity that came upon us, those who realise
our deeds will take precaution. Moreover, by leaving a short account about
them, we will show the mercy of God, who bears and endures our abuses and
the multitude of our evil-doings.

So the troops invaded the campers, and because of the abundant snow that
was in that land, they did not flee. If some fled, the troops followed their steps
and found them cast on the snow, along with their belongings, wives and
children, trembling and as pale as salt, because of the severe cold. But instead
of treating them with mercy, they stripped all of them—men, women and
children—and left them naked, without clothing or shoes. They even took
their trousers, without being embarrassed to face physical /p.353/ nakedness,
and what is more, they defiled their wives and daughters in the presence of
each other without shame. Now the wicked man, who invaded them, decreed
that a despoiled item was the property of him who had plundered it, so that he,
and the local thieves who joined him and marched with him, could fulfil their
savage desire, which they did.

In fact the villagers and their chieftains acted worse than pagans. Not only
did they not pity, even slightly, their brothers, but their evil-doings surpassed
those perpetrated by publicly-known highway robbers. They destroyed all
objects of use to people, burned down wooden objects, smashed earthenware,
and appropriated what was made of bronze and iron: beds, doors, washtubs
and basins, leaving nothing which they did not destroy with fire. They
smashed pitchers, baskets, pots, and wine-jars; they drank the wine that was in
them, as much as they were able to, and wasted the rest, pouring it on the
ground. If the wine-jar was in the ground and they were not able to break it,
one of them would stretch forth his spear to pierce it at the base, releasing its
wine into the ground. They did the same with the honey: they ate as much as
they were able to and cast the rest on the ground. They broke all the
beehives, soaked them in water, and all the bees died—they dared to do even

¹ Cf Isa 24:18.

this thing through the advice of Satan, who paved the road for them to that place. Even worse than the pagans who were among them, they dared to eat meat and cheese during the holy days of Lent, in addition to their corrupt actions. So when the news about what they had done to their brothers reached us, we experienced great pain, grief and deep sighing; we were also startled at the extent to which the Evil One manipulated people.

They also attacked churches, /p.354/ pillaging their books and taking away all the cultic vessels of the holy liturgy. Because they detained the 'wives¹ of the campers inside them, the pagans went inside and 'had intercourse² with them. Here one ought to weep with Jeremiah, and say: *From Zion, that is from the holy church, all her splendour has departed, her priests are humbled, and she is bitter. The enemy rose up. The oppressor stretched out his hand over all her precious things, and she saw the nations that invaded your sanctuary, those whom †you forbid† to enter into the congregation.*³ Add: *Women are violated in Zion.*⁴ These evils were perpetrated in that land. Men, raging like assassins, were also brought, and they gathered people's cattle and left with them. They did the same to numerous villages, bringing out villagers, and plundering and dragging residents.

As for Arzen and Maipharqat, they were visited by Razīn. When this man found out about the robbery of their agents, he inflicted great tortures and severe blows upon them, until they bred worms and died. He broke their hands and legs while in shackles, and carried away the money which he stole from them. Thus the Lord delivered them into the hand of an evil and wicked man, and all the abominations which they committed were applied to them. It is said about them that they captured young men from the streets and sinned with them. Even those wicked scribes and trustees, who were Christians, shamelessly sent to bring 'consecrated virgins,⁵ virgin girls of notable families and married women, to violate them. Truly those who assailed the brides of Christ had no sense of shame nor did they know the limits of *what is permissible*. God delivered them into the hands of those who were worse than they: An evil man /p.355/ is punished by an evil man and both are punished by God.

¹ ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢ: Syriac rendering of Arabic نسوة with the pronominal suffix. The equivalent in Syriac would be ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢܝܢ. Even if one considers ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢܝܢ a phonetic spelling of ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢܝܢܝܢ (lit. "their family/people"), this word does not fit the context.

² ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢܝܢܝܢ: Lit. "they hurled themselves" (over them). Arabic سافح /Syriac ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢܝܢܝܢ, Pa'el) means "to whore, fornicate". Is this Syriac word an Arabism, showing metathesis? About imprisonment in churches see also pp. 270 and 245.

³ Cf Lam 1:6a, 4b, 9b-10a.

⁴ Lam 5:11.

⁵ ܥܘܘܠܝܢܘܢܝܢܝܢ: Lit. "Daughters of the Covenant".

So when Razīn realised their malicious actions, he brought them and pierced their nostrils in which he placed a ring, as is done to camels. He also made a hole between their eyes in which he attached a seal; he prepared chains so that they might be pulled by them. As soon as he judged them, he delivered them to servants to ridicule them in the public place, and then he threw them in prison. He provided them with bread, only enough to keep them alive. A putrid smell†, worse than that of the grave, spread out to all sides from the house in which they were detained.

I wrote these few details so that when officials see them, they may put God in their mind, may not govern in a detestable way and beyond what is proper, may realise that there is a law even for the one who makes the law, and may understand that the chief who does not govern according to the law, the title of leadership that magnifies him will soon and quickly be taken away from him; it will be replaced by the title of tyranny filled with all deficiencies*, that is frenzy and madness.

Concerning the famine that overtook people, and the severe disease and great pestilence that took place in the same year

It is written in the prophecy: *Behold, I shall feed this people with wormwood and give them bitter water to drink. I shall scatter them among the nations whom they do not know, and I shall send after them famine, pestilence, captivity and sword.*¹

What the prophet had stated occurred, and not only did nothing fail to happen but there was even more. For a great calamity† took place in the southern regions, caused by the drought which we mentioned above. For this reason and because of the cruelty and persecution of Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab, all the inhabitants of the southern and eastern regions fled and went up to the land of Mesopotamia. Villages, cities, houses and fields were filled with them, to the extent that no /p.356/ space was available in which one could move or sit. They caused the great hardship to grow even bigger for the poor people and labourers of Mesopotamia. There was no one to pay wages to them, and no one to hire them. If someone among them wanted to work in return for his own bread, one could bring to work as many people as one wanted, even without having to give them enough bread.² Men, women, children and old people begged from houses throughout the day without halt, in such a way

¹ Cf Jer 9:15b-16a.

² *لَسَكَ سَكَ*: Chabot, *Chronicon* II, p. 356 n. 1, wondered if this word should not be read *سَكَ*. But the same expression "bread at will" (Costaz, *Dictionnaire*, 93, Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 117, both after Chabot, *Chronique*, 177) occurs more than once in the Chronicle of Z.

that if they noticed an open door somewhere, thirty or forty of them stood* at it at the same time.

At the beginning, all the people extended the hand to give. But when the poor, foreigners and stricken ones increased* beyond limit, people withheld their donations, because they feared lest they themselves be more in want and more miserable than they. Add to that the fact that the agent took, through injustice and robbery, the grain away from the owners and sold it. Nor did the poor avoid sin. The strong youths among them made for themselves, with shameless impudence, clothes like those of lepers, cripples and the blind. They used to beg, bending over like cripples, but load with imprecations him who did not give them donations. None moved away from a door until he had taken the thing that he asked for. But because of the imprecations, people grew afraid to open their doors. As for the wicked who acted in this way, they used to go to the marketplace to sell the bread which they begged for, and buy for themselves meat and wine. When people realised these things, they again withheld their assistance to the poor, and as a consequence, they suffered the great calamity. /p.357/ Because the wicked who did these things were devoid of human sensibility, they turned this into a trade when they invaded houses and mills everywhere.

Then the country people of Mesopotamia gathered and invaded the cities again, because of the famine, for all their property had been sold and none could lend them money. They consumed meat and milk during the whole Lent, for wherever they begged they were given meat, because of the slaughtering¹ of cattle that took place. In some regions, famine became so severe for the country people, because of the multitude of foreigners, that they attacked carcasses*†. As for the foreigners, while they fled famine in their native lands so that they might not die of it, it moved along with devastation and pestilence before them, with them and behind them, wherever they went and came: *They ate wormwood, drank bitter water, and were scattered among people whom they did not know; (God) also sent after them sword, captivity, famine and pestilence, until they were consumed.*² They suffered this calamity throughout the winter, and when the weather became slightly warmer, and the grass began to appear, they rushed to the new herbs in the fields and grazed on them like cattle. Moreover, they brought some of the herbs they picked to the marketplace to sell, so that they could buy bread for

¹ ܠܚܘܒܝܘܬܐ: Chabot misread ܠܚܘܒܝܘܬܐ. On the basis of this misreading, modern lexicographers gave dubious meanings: "pestilence" by Brockelmann, *Lexicon*, 763, and Costaz, *Dictionnaire*, 362; "great want" by Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 330 (after Chabot). The Syriac word was encountered earlier; see above p. 227 n. 3. Here ܠܚܘܒܝܘܬܐ (ܠܚܘܒܝܘܬܐ) ܠܚܘܒܝܘܬܐ "extensive slaughtering (lit. "skinning") of (cattle)" is reported as a consequence of a long and severe winter and lack of fodder.

² Cf Jer 9:15b-16b.

themselves. But although they did not get their fill of them, as was true for the cattle as well, their colour resembled that of the herbs.

At this point, what was said by the prophet was fulfilled upon them: *You shall eat but not be satisfied, because dysentery shall be inside you.*¹ This is what happened now: they were eating but were not satisfied, and all of them were stricken by a stomach-ache. Porticoes, streets, fronts of stores, towers, shrines and every place were filled with these people. Then numerous and various sicknesses started to appear in them: ulcer, pustules, stomach-ache, /p.358/ eye disease, fever, not to mention other diseases, such as pimples, that is tetter, pleurisy, as well as many other unknown diseases. Hemorrhoids and dropsy were also frequent.

News about a disease in Mosul reached us, according to which the heads swelled and the victims quickly fell dead, while there were not enough people to bury them. We took this matter for a tale, but it did not delay much to befall us,² for the disease gradually spread in the lower cities until it reached us. Such was the disease: At the beginning, it caught the 'crown of the head'³ of the victim and then it moved down little by little until it reached the heart itself and seized it. Then the mind became confused, the vision of the eyes was gone, the whole human consciousness was lost, and the victim 'fainted'⁴ as if he were dead. He would remain in this condition for several days, devoid of any human consciousness. And if a man was stricken and failed to write his will on the same day or on the second, it was impossible for him to become alert again. And if after a few days his reason was restored and he spoke, *he would wake up* as if from a deep sleep, unaware that he had been ill with anything. If his physical weakness allowed him, he would stand up.

The disease used to strike a person more than five or six times. Some died from the first attack, others from the second one. Others were stricken more than five times, and then the disease returned and carried them off. On some of them, and they were many, a white abscess appeared. After it remained for one or two days, it dried out and a red abscess emerged in the same spot, and when this one dried out, a blue one emerged. After one had endured all this /p.359/ affliction for many days and thought that he had already gained back his health, the same person suffered a stomach-ache, and when he got rid of it, pustules and tetter attacked him. In fact, four or five victims could be found discarded in one place, each one sick of one disease, for their diseases did not look the same.

Others were found sick of pustules, stomach, pimples, hemorrhoids, and the

¹ Micah 6:14.

² The writer lived near Amida, a northern Syrian city.

³ ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ : From Arabic أم الرأس "skull, brain, cerebral membrane, meninges"; Mannā, *Dalīl*, 24. The symptoms described in this account are likely of meningitis.

⁴ ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ : ܡܢ ܩܘܪܝܢܐ, lit. "to sink into a deep sleep"; see Mannā, *Dalīl*, 257.

disease that troubles the heart. All of these diseases were also found together in one single body. After the victim had suffered all of these things, he would fall dead. Hunger and thirst tormented victims even more than the diseases. Thus they were discarded in porticoes, shrines, churches, towers and streets, covered with dirt and tormented by various sicknesses. Others roamed in cities due to tormenting hunger; more than ten, twenty and thirty people used to stand together at the same door, stricken, some with pustules, others with abscesses, some with stomach-ache, others with various diseases. After these diseases had settled in their bodies, the severe pain of hunger and thirst compelled them to move on their hands and feet, begging for bread for themselves from everywhere. But those who wanted to make donations were not enough to help those who came to their doors. And because of the multitude of those who used to approach houses, those who were discarded in the streets were the ones who were tormented by hunger and thirst: *They will be discarded in the streets of Jerusalem because of sword, famine and pestilence, and they, their wives† and their sons will have none to bury them. And I will pour out their wickedness† upon them. (...) If you go out to the field, behold the slain by the sword! And if you enter into the village, behold the tormented ones /p.360/ by hunger.*¹

When the disease in question befell the cities, and their inhabitants began to perish like locusts, people grew afraid to go into the cities because of the authorities, diseases and pestilence. At this point, they began to attack others, cutting roads and plundering wayfarers. When they attacked, plundered, despoiled, and killed, they did not look for or run after gold and silver as much as they moved about to look for bread. Thus many murders were committed because of the flour or wheat that one among them was carrying to bring to his family! They did not hesitate to shed human blood for one or five *qefizā* (homers) (of wheat or flour)!

Moreover, people in one region dared to cross over and plunder villages in other regions, and cut roads for travellers. They used to come from the country, each one with pale appearance. After entering the village, they used to sell the product of their work, buy bread, eat it without limit and suddenly collapse at the door of death. It happened to some of them that, while holding bread with the hand and eating it, their colour turned dark like a sack, and they bent backward, fell and died. This happened to many. So many of them died that there were not enough people to bury them during the whole day.

Even so, God did not neglect the poor, but his grace and mercy covered them. For they were the first to be attacked by this disease and to collapse, to such an extent that streets and every place stank because of them. And thus, depending on time and on whatever little wealth people still possessed, everyone cared for them as much as possible. Those among them who died

¹ Cf Jer 14:16, 18.

were buried by everyone with great respect. People brought litters /p.361/ and clothed*† the dead with shrouds; they went out and buried them in their own beautiful cemeteries, with prayers and psalms, as Christians ought to do.¹ Then they gathered the stricken who had been discarded in the streets, being tormented by diseases, hunger and thirst, brought them to a shrine and appointed people to serve them; everyone, according to his ability, took them and carried them.

Because of the calamity that attacked their land, all the people were equal in need. Those who were wealthy turned into beggars, *those that fed on delicacies are cast out in streets, those who were brought up in scarlet sleep on dung-hills.*² Jeremiah the Prophet also added, saying: *Their appearance is blacker than charcoals; they are not recognised in the streets; their skin is wrinkled on their bones; it has dried up and has become like a stick. Those who were killed with the sword are better off than those who were killed with hunger, for they became emaciated like those who were wounded and cast out in the field.*³ Such was also the case with those who were sick and tormented, when they were removed from the streets to be buried. The same wrath *blazed up* against the inhabitants of cities, and all of them fell alike: the great and the small, children and old people, young men and virgins, to such an extent that if you went into twenty houses *you could hardly find* in one of them someone able to serve his fellow with water. Rather, all of them were discarded, as if dead, while no one among them was able to distinguish between the good and the bad. Just as there was no house that did not contain dead people, as mentioned above,⁴ one could also say here that there was no house, not even one, that did not contain sick people. Add to that what is said by Jeremiah: *The tongue of the suckling child cleaved to the roof of his mouth because of thirst; the children asked for bread, but there was no one to cut and give them.*⁵

Even if in a house one or two people were spared /p.362/ the disease, they were discarded on the ground due to hunger, being more tormented than the sick because there was no one to bake bread and serve it to them. The discarded, who were stricken with various diseases, were also tormented by hunger and thirst, because of the small number of people who were able to

¹ The fact that God had permitted the poor to die and be taken care of by the healthy is a theme cherished by the Chronicler of Z.; see above p. 170. He actually borrowed this theme from John of Ephesus, who included it in his description of the bubonic plague that took place in 541; see above p. 103.

² Lam 4:5.

³ Lam 4:8-9.

⁴ See p. 150ff. The reference is made perhaps to the plague that struck the Near East around the middle of the 8th century A.D.

⁵ Lam 4:4.

stand up and serve each other with water. The wrath prevailed over them severely, and pestilence overwhelmed* them in such a way that two or three from the same house used to be buried each day. Mother and daughter, or father and son, or two brothers used to be buried at the same time in the same coffin. Even two brothers would be escorted, one from this side of the city and the other from the other side. Their coffins would be brought beside each other and would be joined together in the grave, placed one above the other. Many happened to surrender the last breath to their Creator at the same time. The pestilence prevailed over famous people as well as over fathers of families; all the priests of the church of Amida also perished in this pestilence.

The pestilence began to spread little by little from the cities *to their outskirts*, falling upon villages, and as it did to the cities so it did to the outside. Here the statement† of Isaiah was fulfilled: *You (Zion) have drunk from the hand of the Lord the cup of his wrath, you have drunk to the dregs the cup of terror. There is none to comfort you among all the sons whom you have begot, and none to take her by the hands among all the sons that she has brought up. †Two things† have befallen you: Who will be sorry *for you*? *You shall suffer* plunder, destruction, famine, and sword: Who will comfort you*? Your sons are confounded; they sleep at the head of every street; like the faded beet, they are full of the wrath of the Lord, the rebuke of your God.*¹

Like the beet faded by the frost, so was the appearance of all the people who escaped from this disease. They all became bald too, /p.363/ in such a way that, if it were not for their garments, priests and monks could not be recognised. The priests could not be distinguished from the laymen because all of them became shorn. Moreover, their vision and hearing were lost, and for a long time they did not regain their strength. The warmer the weather became the more severe grew this disease. When the harvest time drew near in ʿBēth ʿArabāyē,² all the people of the North as well as the foreigners, gathered and all of them went for the harvest, solely in order that they might feed themselves on bread. Women and youngsters also went, for the people of the North had a custom according to which their children go to the harvest. But at this point, old people, children, women and youngsters also went, out the great hardship that pressed upon them during this time.

After they went and ate as much bread as they wished, all of them succumbed to various sicknesses, to such an extent that roads and paths, heights and depths, villages and cities, and every place were full of them. They used to perish like locusts. They had no wage other than bread alone, enough just for each one of them. Many said that some of them would go out to the

¹ Cf Isa 51:17b-20.

² **ܘܒܝܬ ܘܥܪܒܝܝܬ**: Territory corresponding roughly to the Jazīra; for the latter see above p. 143 n. 6.

field, and as soon as they ate and had enough, would fall and die, to the extent that twenty would go out but only five would return. When the owners of the harvest learned about this matter, they did not allow any of them to enter the field, except for those of healthy appearance and fleshy structure. They used to give them five, or a maximum of ten *fuls* in daily wages. Thus people harvested the owners' plentiful harvest but the strength of the poor was not appreciated. Nor did they allow them to eat dry bread as much as they wished, not because of want but because of the bad will that they had.

We should also talk about /p.364/ the evils that people did in disturbing*† the graves and the dead.

*Concerning †the plundering†
of the graves and the despoiling of the dead¹*

Jeremiah the Prophet foretold us the violation of the graves, when he talked about them, about the scattering of their bones, and about the fact that none would gather them but they would become like dung upon the face of the ground: *At that time, says the Lord, they shall exhume from *their graves* the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of their nobles, the bones of their priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and they shall spread them before the sun and the moon and all the hosts of heaven, which they have loved and served, and which they have gone after, and which they have sought and worshipped; and they shall not be gathered or buried but they shall be like dung upon the face of the ground.²*

As a result of our sins that are more numerous than generations, times and multiple numbers, Satan became forceful and strove hard so as to make us suffer this matter: people disturbed the dead and scattered their bones outside their graves without pity. As someone brings dirt out of his house and scatters it outside, so did they exhume them and cast their bones out of their graves. Nor did they pity them and return them to their places, after they had fulfilled in them their savage and wicked desire. In addition, if there were zealous and God-fearing people, who rebuked them on account of this evil, iniquity and impiety*, they answered them: "What evil are we doing? And wherefrom do we bring money and pay (taxes)?" And when they were asked: "Did you find anything† at all?" those mad ones stuck /p.365/ to the words of Satan, their father and master, saying: "We are finding!" And as soon as they were asked: "You, what did you find?" he would answer: "I did not find anything so far, but so-and-so found so-and-so many rings, earrings and golden necklaces; and in such and such village, they exhumed gold and silver worth so-and-so many thousand (dinars)!"

¹ See also above pp. 242 and 277ff.

² Jer 8:1-2.

Satan was teaching them to utter these empty words which redounded to their own shame. If one who was reported to have found something was investigated, his discovery turned out to be either a bronze earring or an iron ring! These were their findings, but Satan announced, through his servants, that they were marvels, and thousands and myriads in number, so that everyone might work with him in this impiety. As for reward, he gave them the flame of Gehenna. Since former generations of the faithful rebelled against him, and consequently he did not fulfil his will on them during their life time, he is now satisfied that his servants have fulfilled his desire by scattering their bones. Here the enemy of all virtues mocked at us as well as at them: them, because their bones are scattered, and us, because we have done this with our own hands.

Just as all the dead had succumbed to a variety of plagues, so too various diseases now fell upon the people. Therefore, 'what has been written¹ about many plagues attacking cities when graves are being violated has been fulfilled. Because people felt completely free* to disturb graves, they even dared despoil the dead that had been buried in those very days. A corpse just interred had already been robbed by the time the grave-diggers returned with another corpse. They also disturbed the burial shafts of Arabs and Jews. After robbing the corpse, they would bury it again and cover it with earth, so that no one might notice /p.366/ what they had done. Or they would abandon it stripped naked and cast, face down. When people became aware of this, either by catching some of the grave robbers (in the act) or by finding burial objects in their possession, they did not leave the dead, once buried, without guards day or night, until the corpse was decomposed. They covered the beautiful garments that they buried with the dead with lime and dipped them in cedar resin, before moths could attack them. For this reason, there were several guards in the cemeteries of the Syrians, Arabs and Jews. They did not leave the dead without guards, until they became decomposed and putrefied. As for the brigands and thieves, they did not refrain from robbing the poor of the shabby*² cloth or piece of cloak which was placed on him.

We found a prophecy concerning the violation of graves, but we could not find one dealing with the despoiling of the dead. Nevertheless, through our impiety and iniquity, we exceeded all the evils which are mentioned or which are not mentioned in the Scriptures. Therefore, let us praise the Lord for his grace which cannot be fathomed or comprehended by the erring children, him who bears our errors and the multitude of our evils.

¹ כְּכַתּוּבָא: One would expect כְּכַתּוּבָא . כְּכַתּוּבָא כְּכַתּוּבָא can be translated "scriptural word" but no such statement seems to be made in the Bible.

² כְּבִיטָא: The word is misspelled כְּבִיטָא "villager" in Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 366:14.

*Concerning the destruction caused by the pestilence and
the rapacious animal that appeared after the pestilence¹*

After we had fallen into all this impiety and into the iniquity of all odious things, including falsehood, rapine, mutual plundering, slander, railing, atrocities*,² adultery, robbery, false witness, murder, as well as mutual calumny, woes began to surround us on all sides. We were not capable of repenting and returning to the Lord in any way, but we were capable of removing even the buried dead /p.367/ from their graves. Then the Lord rewarded us according to our actions. He abandoned us and all woes sought us, as the prophet said: *I will gather evils against them, I will cause my arrows to consume them; they shall be tormented in hunger, delivered to bad [winds], and I will deliver them to the birds of prey and *I will stir up* rapacious animals against them. Outside the sword *shall bereave*, and terror shall be in the chambers.*³ As for Isaiah, he said: *They shall be left together to the birds of prey of the mountains and to the beasts of the earth. And the birds of prey will gather upon him, and the beast of the earth will rage at him.*⁴ And Habakkuk said: *You are filled with shame instead of glory. Drink you too and stagger! The cup in the Lord's right hand will turn upon you and shame upon your glory! For the violence of Lebanon will cover you, the destruction of the beast will trouble you, because of the blood of people, and the plundering of the land, of the city and of all its inhabitants.*⁵ Holy Jeremiah also said: *Send them out of my sight, and let them leave. If they say to you, 'Where shall we go?' say to them: 'Thus says the Lord: To death those for death, to the sword those for the sword, to famine those for famine, to captivity those for captivity.' I will set over them four destroyers, says the Lord: The sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. And I will deliver them to the terror.*⁶ He also said: *If you go out to the field, behold those slain by the sword! And if you enter into the village, behold the tormented by hunger.*⁷

¹ Brief mention of both events in *Narrationes variae* 335:23-336:3 [263], *Chronicon* 819 p. 20:10-11 [14] and *Chronicon* 1234 1 p. 340:16-19 [265]. Here the rapacious animals are identified as wolves, but see below, p. 312 n. 3, about their true nature. Another mention of "rapacious animals" is found in *Chronicon* 813 p. 256:10 [194]: early 9th century.

² ܠܘܥܘܒܝܢ: So in Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 366:24 (MS is rubbed out at this spot). Perhaps one should read ܠܘܥܘܒܝܢ as translated above. Chabot, *Chronique*, 185, and Hespel, *Chronicon*, 299, translated the word as "brigandages" suggesting that they read the Syriac word as ܠܘܥܘܒܝܢ. But the word for "robbery" comes after.

³ Cf Deut 32:23-25a.

⁴ Isa 18:6.

⁵ Hab 2:16-17.

⁶ Jer 15:1b-3.

⁷ Cf Jer 14:18.

When the evils of the agents, want, famine, pestilence and various diseases increased on people, they abandoned their houses and went up to settle on mountains and in narrow valleys. There they perished, like locusts, of hunger, /p.368/ pestilence, and cold; they were devoured by wild animals and birds of prey, and there was no one to bury them. But the pestilence prevailed in the lower regions and devastated that land to the extent that many houses of forty or fifty people remained without one single resident. In Mosul, more than one thousand coffins used to be removed every day, and in (the district of) Nisibis*, some villages *that grew!* large, were completely ruined. All the officials of the country died, but it was mainly the priests whom this pestilence had killed in cities and villages. In the monastery of 'Qartmīn,¹ ninety-five men, mostly famous ones, died in the pestilence, and in the monastery of 'the Holy Cross,² all of its officials. Fields, villages and large houses remained deserted in the cities.

Moreover, frightful and dreadful animals appeared after this pestilence. They did not fear anything, nor did they run away from or were scared of people, but killed a countless number of them. They looked somehow like wolves, although they were a bit different from wolves in that the muzzle of each one of them was narrow and long. They had big ears, like those of a horse, and the hair, long and raised skyward, that covered their dorsal ridge looked like pig's hair.³ They caused great harm to the people in Ṭūr-'Abdīn. People said that they devoured more than one hundred men in one village, and in many others, twenty men in some, forty or fifty in others. People were not able to hurt any of them, /p.369/ nor did these flee from people. And if there were people who chased one of them with weapons, they were unable to do any harm to it. Nor did it run away from them but returned against them; and as their hands let loose their weapons, it jumped on them and tore them into pieces. They used to break into houses and courtyards, snatching children and leaving, and there was no one to oppose them. Some of them climbed up high roofs during the night, snatching children from their houses, and then came down, and there was no one to oppose them. Not even dogs barked at any one of them! Because of this, this region suffered a more cruel and harsh calamity than all the ones which it had experienced before. Two or three persons were not able to walk together. Nor were cattle seen anywhere, because they were devoured by one of the animals; for if one of them went*

¹ مرقا: For the location see p. 124 n. 5.

² مرقا: There were two monasteries of the same name, one located 20 km north east of Mīdiāt and 7 km north of Ḥāḥ in the Ṭūr-'Abdīn, and another one located near the village of Dafnā on the road to Ḥiṣn Kifā. The account above probably refers to the first one.

³ The description of the animal is no doubt that of the hyena, a Greek name derived from "pig" because of the animal's bristly mane.

among goats or sheep, it snatched some of them.

How can we explain this cruel scourge except to say that these animals were sent against us by God? It became clear to everyone that they received this power from God, because neither dogs nor people were able to do any of them any harm. It is said: *I will gather evils against them.*¹ Behold the punishments of the merciless tribute and the flight from one place to another! Behold famine, pestilence and various diseases! Behold the rapine and plundering of each other and of one district by its neighbour! Not only did all the cattle of the country perish during this year, but the birds of prey tore apart the unburied human corpses everywhere. In addition to this, behold the rapacious animals! These animals crossed over to the land of 'Arzanene² and caused great harm /p.370/ in one village, as well as in the region of Maipharqat and in the 'Šahiā mountain.³ The damage in Amida was little.

*And in all these matters the anger of the Lord did not turn away from us, but he also raised his hand (to strike).*⁴ Nevertheless, it is not he who did not turn his sceptre away from us. Rather, it is us who did not turn away from our odious deeds, and what is more, we multiplied them many times over, in such a way that woes upon woes *were revived* against us. Therefore, God added another signal to chastise us.

[... ...]⁵

People were [not] able to cross over to, or reach, the roundabouts of that house, because the strong smell of putrefaction that was coming from it reached a great distance. If someone was compelled to reach that house—on the ground that his relative was there—he remained troubled by the smell for one or two days.

Here we have to say with Isaiah the Prophet: *As eggs that have been abandoned are gathered, they gathered the entire earth; and there was none that raised up the wings, or opened the mouth, or chirped.*⁶ Arabs and Syrians, notables and common people, natives and foreigners, gathered, and there was none who raised up a wing, or opened his mouth, or spoke. David the Prophet should come too to see the holy temple, while defiled and made a privy like the temple of Ba'al, that is of Nadu-Ba'al, and say: *O God, the nations have come into your inheritance, they have defiled your holy temple, they have turned your holy church into a privy; a stinky smell came out*

¹ Deut 32:23.

² ܐܪܨܢܢܐ: For its location see p. 123 n. 1.

³ ܐܪܨܢܢܐ: For the location of the "Arid Mountain" see p. 183 n. 2.

⁴ Isa 5:25a.

⁵ After a gap of a few folios the partial account of yet another calamity follows.

⁶ Cf Isa 10:14b.

from it instead of a sweet smell.¹ /p.371/ The same Isaiah said: *Because of these things the land will sit in mourning, and all its inhabitants will be condemned. The land mourned and sat in mourning, the inhabited world mourned, sat in mourning and wailed, for all tables are full of vomit and filth without leaving a (clean) place.*² The prophet told them, as if from the mouth of the Lord: *For I have said to them: 'This is my rest, give rest to the weary; and this is calm' but they did not want to hear me. And the word of the Lord was to them: Filth upon filth and filth upon filth, vomit upon vomit and vomit upon vomit.*³ Here it is possible to see their vomit upon their vomit, and all their tables full of vomit, and without a (clean) place. What tears and what pain are enough when noble and distinguished people were seen holding their bread with the hands and eating, while dung upon dung was heaped up before them, although other people before them had left the place, because of its misery. Joel the Prophet shouted about these matters, saying: *Gird on sackcloth, O priests, dance and wail, O ministers of the altar. Go in, pass the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God, not because libation and flour are withheld from it*⁴ but because the Lord neglected the Church and abandoned it in the hands of strangers.

While people were thrown in this great affliction, this wicked man took the document,⁵ something like the *ʿtaʿdīl*⁶ which they wrote at the beginning of the year. He imposed upon him whose name was not written in it, or him who was not branded on his hands, a fine of forty-eight *zūz*, which was fixed in the amounts of sixty, thirty-five, twenty-five, or fifteen *zūz*. Thus he released many of them but the poor and the needy remained in the same prison, tormented by hunger and stinky smell. /p.372/ He then grabbed the notables in lieu of their sons or brothers or members of their households, whose names were not recorded in the register (*tafṣīl*),⁷ and imposed upon them fines. He captured those registered as well and imposed upon them numerous penalties. Then he selected for himself wanton people and drunkards and made them his friends. They brought accusations against men of low status as well as against notables, and captured them and brought them to him. And in this situation no one at all escaped, without being fined, either because of himself or on behalf of members of his family, or because the wicked man accused him of alleged wrongdoing.

¹ Paraphrase of Ps 79:1.

² Isa 24:6a, 28:8.

³ Isa 28:12-13a.

⁴ Joel 1:13.

⁵ The referents are unclear possibly because of the gap.

⁶ ܐܘܕܘܠܐ: "Census". The word must be mistaken for ܐܘܕܘܠܐ *tafṣīl* (from Arabic تفصيل) "a register" mentioned below.

⁷ ܐܘܕܘܠܐ ܕܐܘܕܘܠܐ: Syriac rendering of Arabic كتاب التفصيل; see the previous note.

He also seized country people and compelled them to 'make an agreement'¹ with him. They greatly resisted him on this matter, but he inflicted upon their chieftains blows to death. He determined the tax, as much as he wanted, and imposed it on everyone, and there was no one to rebuke him, saying: "What did you do?" Trustworthy words and truth are not found in any of them. For they seized the people of the city and 'made an agreement'² with them, concerning their sons and brothers, for the amount of two thousand (dinars). After they received it, they did not refrain from their evil but issued fines against them, while accusing them of alleged wrong-doings of all kinds. They went out to roads and pathways, hunting those who were usurers, as well as those who were not. They also plundered and took away all that was found on a person.

God in his mercy caused this affliction to take place in *Iyyār* (May). Therefore, all the people hid themselves in mountains, like doves among the crags. All the roads were deserted by outgoing and incoming people, because this wrath pressed heavily upon all the regions. People died of hunger, and others were afraid to reach the city or the village. Whenever some of the men had something to sell in the city, so that they might buy for themselves bread, as soon as they came close to the city wall, /p.373/ they would send women into the city whom they brought with them. The men would hide themselves in the fields until they were consumed by hunger, while waiting for those whom they had sent. Some hid themselves for two, three or four (days), and even from Sunday to Sunday, in graveyards and in fields like the demoniacs, tormented by hunger. Finally, as the women left the city, it happened that their merchandise was sold for free! Therefore, it is time for us to say: *Outside the sword *and famine* shall bereave, and terror shall be in the chambers.*³

This wrath grew harsh for the people of Tella, Edessa, and Ḥarrān. But the prophet said: *This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land,*⁴ and, therefore, the violent scourge also reached the people of Nisibis, who were taxed without mercy; agents seized every incoming and outgoing person, and imposed on the villages merciless taxes. At this point, the local notables gathered and went down to Mūsā and asked him to 'make an agreement'⁵ with them, but he refused. Then they asked him to redeem the indemnities imposed by the men whom he had dispatched, and only that the rapacious dogs whom he had sent might not come to their regions. Nor did he yield to this, but took them and threw them in the prison of Mosul. He fettered them and vowed

¹ *في ليد*: *في ليد* from Arabic *الصلح* (كتاب) mentioned above p. 265 and n. 5.

² *في ليد*: From Arabic *صُلح*; see the previous note.

³ Deut 32:25a.

⁴ Zech 5:3.

⁵ *في ليد*: From Arabic *صُلح*; see n. 1 above.

that as long as he had power, they would not be released from there. Many people implored him for their sake but he did not give in to them. Thus they remained in prison until the Lord arranged a ransom, when that tyrant also met (his) punishment, a wage that befitted him.¹

It is now time to move on from one evil to another.

*Tenth Discourse:*²

*Concerning the agents of the tithe
and the agents of the crown property (ṣawfī)*³

I say that *from the viper's root an asp appeared to us, /p.374/ and its offspring are flying basilisks.*⁴

Those who were sent against the country by this viper were in fact worse than asps! After they reached a city and entered it, they mercilessly ascribed any amount to people. They would ascribe to the man who did not own wheat or barley but purchased it from the market for domestic consumption, one thousand, and to others, two, and sometimes five or ten and upward, forty or fifty thousand *gerībā* of grain. Without entering the house of anyone and learning about what he had, they would ascribe to him whatever was dictated* by Satan. They did the same to shopkeepers, textile-merchants, †oil-merchants† and all merchants of the marketplace. [They taxed]⁵ them without mercy and demanded money from them, in such a way that if the entire contents of a shop were sold, that would not pay half of what they demanded of its owner. All people were subjected to great hardship caused by the usurers, the tithe, and the poll-tax. The agent of the crown property also caused as much damage as he could, capturing and plundering* who were coming in and going out.

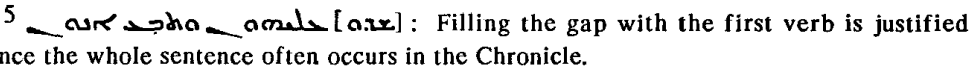
Here we have to say: *What the flying locust has left, the hopping locust has eaten, and whatever escaped this one, the cricket has eaten, and what was left by this one, the creeping locust has eaten.*⁶ Likewise, what the

¹ It is possible that this refers to the dismissal of Mūsā, son of Muṣ'ab, as governor of the Jazīra, which took place in H. 158 (744); he was followed in Mosul by Khālid, son of Barmak; see al-Ṭabarī VIII 56. See also p. 318 and n. 5 below.

² For the order of this and the following sections in the MS see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, p. 377 n. 6.

³ See also above p. 234f.

⁴ Isa 14:29

⁵  : Filling the gap with the first verb is justified since the whole sentence often occurs in the Chronicle.

⁶ Joel 1:4.

collectors of the poll-tax had left was taken by the usurers, and what the usurers had left was taken by the tithe collectors, and what escaped them was taken by the crown property (*ṣawfī*): *And he who flees from the noise of the terror shall fall into the pit, and he who comes up out of the pit shall be caught in the snare,*¹ and he who escapes from the snare shall be devoured by the wild beast.

*Concerning the second ʿamīr of the garrisons*²

When Khalīl, son of ʿZedīn,³ the *amīr* of the garrisons whom we mentioned in the book above,⁴ died, Abū ʿAwn⁵ succeeded him. He waged a war /p.375/ against the agents of the son of Muṣʿab⁶ and drove them out of the cities†. The man was Persian, cruel as well as powerful and bloodthirsty, coming from the Caliph to shake the country. All the Arabs in the country suffered his oppression, because he started to do things which the Persians were not accustomed to. For the law of the Persians was thus from the beginning: long-lasting and merciless imprisonment. But this one began to kill with blows and even to crucify. He caused hardship to the Syrians wherever he arrived through the lodging of the beasts of burden and the expenses of his army. They used to settle among people from whom all their provisions and that for their beasts of burden derived.

The prophet said: *They all come for spoil.*⁷ As for Abū ʿAwn, before extirpating taxes from a city, he used to send his forerunner before him to prepare a place, and seize the cattle, and impound them for him. Coming to a city† twenty days earlier, the forerunner used to engage in all evils and plundering. He and his fellows would go out to the roads or villages, seize mules, horses, and even ʿhusbandmen,⁸ and trade them in. They would detain them in houses and courtyards, and would release them and dismiss them to him who paid them two *zūz* for a mule or a horse. Then another one would be captured in its place. They would also go to roads and hostels located

¹ Isa 24:18.

² ܐܡܝܪ ܡܪܝܒܝܬܝܢ: Syriac rendering of Arabic أمير المرابطين.

³ ܐܘܢܝܢ: Spelled ܐܘܢܝܢ elsewhere; see above p. 237 n. 3.

⁴ Above p. 237f.

⁵ ܐܘܢܝܢ: About him see above p. 240f.

⁶ Another indication that Mūsā, son of Muṣʿab, was dismissed from the Jazīra; see also p. 316 n. 1. It is strange that the Chronicler of Z. did not formally discuss this issue, whereas he talked in detail about the dismissal of ʿAbbās from the same province. Did he discuss the dismissal of Mūsā in a now lost folio?

⁷ Hab 1:9.

⁸ ܩܘܠܘܢ: From Latin colonus “husbandman, tiller of soil”; see Margoliouth, *Supplement* 295.

outside the city, hunting down the donkeys of the poor. They would take one *zūz* for each donkey from the poor and then dismiss it. They would also go out to the country and demand that people bring their beasts of burden to them. As soon as they were brought, they demanded payment (for the return of their beasts of burden): two *zūz* for every mule and one *zūz* for every donkey. And he who did not pay them the amount, his animal was taken into courtyards. As a consequence, /p.376/ numerous animals captured from the country, roads and public places were confined inside courtyards.

People also suffered severely because of the expenses of the agents and of their cattle, and remained [constrained?]¹ for a long time. Then Abū 'Awn came, herding the cattle of merchants and travellers; he used to seize large numbers of cattle of the poor in this manner, over the course of many days and months. He did not release them until the poor sold all they possessed to pay for their expenses, and even then he was not willing either to release the cattle or to pay their owners anything. The Scripture says: *They are swifter than the evening wolves and they fly high like an eagle hungry to devour.*² It also says: *They all come for spoil.*³

Let us talk a little about Abū 'Awn. When the news about him spread across the regions, terror and trembling gripped everyone. He began to beat without mercy, kill, and even crucify. In every city he entered, he [decre]ed that two, three or five men be crucified. Therefore, people trembled before him. They said that he used to slay thieves, assassins and highway-robbers. As for us, we learned that for the most part he did not kill (other) people apart from some 'Messalians,⁴ those who are called zealots, beggars and Messalians. He passed through all the lower cities of the Jazīra, beating, killing and crucifying. He also came to Amida, where he stayed for several days and crucified four men. He crossed over to Maipharqat, and from there he returned to Amida and settled in it, while [... ...].

[... A few folios are missing ...]

[... ...] while capturing Arabs and Syrians concerning inheritance matters, and made them [suffer losses], /p.377/ cruelly and maliciously. They did not allow the person to inherit from his kin—following what is written in the law of the caliphs—other than the son inheriting from the father and the father from the son, the uncle from the nephew and the nephew from the uncle.

¹ [ܘܢܘܩܘܢܘܢܐ] ܘܢܘܩܘܢܘܢܐ .

² Hab 1:8.

³ Hab 1:9.

⁴ ܘܢܘܩܘܢܘܢܐ: Adherents of a heresy that spread from Mesopotamia in the middle of the fourth century. It called for intense prayers and ascetic contemplation, instead of sacramental grace, to eject the devil dwelling in each human being; see Chadwick, *The Early Church*, 179.

Even these kinsmen had great difficulty to get rid of these animals [...]. For Joel the Prophet said: *His teeth are like the teeth of the lion, and [his fangs] are like the fangs of the lion's whelp. He has laid my vine waste, splintered my fig tree, he splintered it and threw it down; its branches became white.*¹

Here it happened that the agents of the poll-tax took away what had remained, and the agent of the inheritance demanded the remainder. They dispossessed people, and their offshoots became white from having nothing.

*Sixth account:*²

Concerning the [death] of the amir of Amida and the book which was written, and concerning the relief that took place among the notables of the region who were imprisoned

Concerning Amida, time is too short for us to talk about the evils that occurred in it in this year, for it suffered more afflictions than any other city during this year. But because it is still the beginning of the destruction, and it is not yet over, I shall talk about the beginning of the woe. I shall once again call upon holy Isaiah, because he was the first to witness these evils, and is more familiar with the woe than we are; I shall also call upon his colleague Jeremiah, so that *on the evidence of two witnesses the matter shall be established:*³

*The city is filled with confusion, the fortified city is filled with noise. Your slain men are not slain with the sword or dead in battle. All your rulers fled this wrath together. /p.378/ They are captured, those who remained with you; they are captured altogether, and the rest had fled far away. Therefore, I said: "*Leave me* to weep bitterly over the destruction of the daughter of my people," for it is a day of confusion and trampling and weeping. In that day the mighty Lord called for weeping and mourning, for tearing out the hair and girding with sackcloth.*⁴ Jeremiah the Prophet should also come and lament over her, he who is exceedingly knowledgeable about lamentation and mourning: *I am weary with my grief and [my heart is sad] in me. Behold the cry of the daughter of my people for help coming from a far land. For the slain of the daughter of my people I am saddened and astonishment has seized me, because the healing of the daughter of my people did not occur. Would that my head were waters and my eyes fountains of tears! I wept day and night over the destruction of the daughter of my people. Who left me in the wilderness, the camping place of*

¹ Joel 1:6b-7.

² For the order of this and preceding sections in the MS see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 377 n. 6.

³ Deut 19: 15b.

⁴ Cf Isa 22:2-5a, 12.

*wayfaring people? [I left] my people and went away from them, for they all are adulterers and an assembly of liars. They shot their tongues as if with their bow, in falsehood and not in truth they grew strong in the land, for they proceeded from evil to evil, and they do not know the Lord.*¹

These evils, in addition to others, increased in Amida, a city [in the Jazīra], during this year, at the hand of an iniquitous and tyrannical agent who came to it. [For] an agent named Mabdūl came to it from Callinicum. He was an impious and heinous [man], in all of whose thoughts God did not exist. /p.379/² [...] deed and [...] that is before God and [...] of Amida. [...] he set on fire. Without [...] of falsehood and rebellion, and through [...]. Satan thus reported [...] in/among people [...] for evil-doers, not [...] of the Jazīra [...]. He demanded [...] for them the heads/officials of [...] for this prophet said [...]. Now he selected for himself among them wicked men like him, in order to fulfil through them his will and that of Satan, his father. He made them chiefs [...] for another reason/matter [...] orphans and widows. They plundered travellers and took them as captives [...] and they crossed over to the people of the other village [...] and hurriedly went. [...].

Evil increased [...] village until [...] in a man, who was pasturing goats, or [...] to run out of the village, while others come. [...] And they crossed over to the outskirts of the other village, [...]. They went and bought it/him (or: sold it/him) [...]. Those thieves, who are [...] entered Armenia [...] and hanged him at the head (or: beginning/summit of) [...]. Afterward, they crossed over [...] outside the land of Arzen [...] Perrhe [...] many from the region of Samosata [...] they crucified [...] anger [...]. After violent shootings [...] it happened to them [...] (their) wish they fulfilled on him [...].

/p.380/³ As it carried away houses and [...] and every [...] hea]ps could be seen in it. [...] the muddy wave of the river and they suffocated. They did [...] of the dead on the banks of the river. (One ought to cry) over youthful boys and beautiful girls, old men and women, and every person whom the torrential waters had swept in their sleep to a tormenting death by drowning in the water, as happened to the people of Cain. The flooded river swept away and spoiled† goods belonging to merchants, store-owners and all† the marketplaces. And if the owner of the store were nearby [...] he would be carried away along with his †in-[store?]† property. Here we have to say with David the Prophet: *My soul sank in a deep abyss where there is no*

¹ Cf Jer 8:18-21, 9:1-3.

² The obverse of folio 173 is mostly illegible. Only full words and sentences available in Chabot's edition are translated, despite their damaged contexts.

³ Add. 14665, fols. 2-7 (now in the British Library); see Wright, *Catalogue* III, 1118f, for a description. The first few lines are not completely preserved and what is left was partially reconstructed by Chabot. They are left without translation.

*foothold. They went into deep waters, and gulfs and hurricanes swallowed them.*¹ *Waters came up to their souls and their eyes grew dim, for they were waiting to see the morning light.*² Add what was said by Jonah the Prophet: *You cast me into the deep, into the midst of the sea, and the river surrounded me. All your tempests and waves passed over me. Waters surrounded me up to the soul and the deep was round about me. My head was retained at the bottom of the sea. [p.381/ I came down to the bottom of the mountains, but the land fastened its bolt [at my face] forever.*³ It is possible to say the same about these victims that they went down *to the bottom* of the waters and that the land fastened its bolt at their faces forever. Their lives reached Sheol, in that they are counted among those who went down to the pit. They became like a man who has no help among the deceased nobles, and like the killed ones laid in graves.

769-770 The year one thousand and eighty-one: Holy and martyr Cyrus of Harrān was martyred.⁴

After this impious and godless kingdom (of the Arabs) was set to rule and as it became powerful, great and countless evils caused by harsh, heavy and merciless extortions [befell]⁵ the whole country and the Christian people began to be pitilessly harassed. Labour of any kind ceased everywhere, because the (ruling) tyrants refrained from handing wheat and rations over to the Arabs, as was the custom. As a consequence, money became scarce in the world. Moreover, those Arabs bought lands, vineyards and yokes, and became themselves labourers.⁶ Extortions and the poll-tax weighed heavily on the Christian people beyond measure, and they started to bring destruction upon the country. Joel the Prophet said earlier about these events: *Fire devours before him, and behind him a flame burns. The land is like the garden of Eden before him, but behind him a desolate wilderness.*⁷

During the (early) Arab rule, the tribute did not weigh so heavily upon the Christians that it went beyond their endurance, and so evils of harsh extortions suddenly broke out against them. As they had not yet learned to flee from one place to another, the door to paganism opened for them. All wanton and

¹ Ps 69:2.

² Cf Ps 69:3b.

³ Jonah 2:3, 5-6.

⁴ About a similar title jotted in the *Codex*, see the Introduction, p. 14ff. Michael IV 476 [II 527]: 1080 S. (768-769); short account. See Harrak "Piecing Together the Fragmentary Account of the Martyrdom of Cyrus of Harrān".

⁵ [بعل] ?

⁶ Since the Arabs became labourers, they did not need to hire Christians for work in the fields, hence (one would assume) "money became scarce in the world (i.e. country)".

⁷ Joel 2:3.

careless people slipped quickly into the pit and chasm of perdition, destroying /p.382/ their souls as well as their bodies—in other words, everything they possessed: their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; baptism; the holy seal of myron; together with the living body and purifying blood (of Christ). Instead of these, they bought for themselves unextinguishable fire, undying worm, a quarrelsome thief, Satan instead of Christ, and darkness instead of Paradise. [... and understand well and see] if there has been such a thing as this, if nations have changed [their gods, those who were no] gods! But my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. Be astonished, O heavens, at this, and tremble and be utterly afraid, says the Lord, for my people have committed two evils: they have abandoned me, the fountain of living waters, and they went and dug for themselves cisterns, leaky* cisterns that can hold no water.¹ Why then is he plundered? The lions roar against him, they roar loudly, and they make his land a waste; his villages are desolate without inhabitant(s).² Such will be done to you, for you have abandoned the Lord, your God. And now why should you go in the road of Egypt to drink the waters of the Shihur? And why should you go in the road of Assyria to drink the waters of the river (Euphrates)? Your wickedness will chastise you, and your backsliding will rebuke you. Know and understand that it is evil and bitter thing for you have abandoned the Lord your God.³

Isaiah said about them: *I have raised and brought up children, but they have acted wickedly toward me. The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib; but Israel does not know and my people does not understand. Woe unto the sinful nation, a people /p.383/ hardened with iniquity, evil offspring, corrupt sons, you have abandoned the Lord, you have angered the Holy One of Israel, and you have gone away backward! Why should you still be smitten and continue to be more chastised? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is saddened. From the sole of their foot up to the top of their head, there is no soundness—that is faith—in them but wounds and bruises and sores [...]—because of this, the holy spirit moved out of them and an unclean spirit controls them—not to bind up, or to bandage, or to soften with the holy oil [...]. The divine grace ceased, and their land and villages became desolate. Their souls burned in the fire of Gehenna, for devils, who are aliens, are devouring your land⁴—that is your body. When you will extend your hands, I will avert my eyes from you; even if you make many prayers I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.⁵*

Thus when they gave up confidence in the help of Christ and in that of their own lives, they turned toward paganism faster than sheep rushing to

¹ Jer 2:10b-13.

² Jer 2:14b-15.

³ Jer 2:17-19.

⁴ Isa 1:2b-7a.

⁵ Isa 1:15.

drink water. They did not listen to either their pastors or anyone who rebuked them. Nor did they give heed to the holy scriptures. For the same holy Isaiah said about these careless people: *Thus says the mighty Lord: O my people, be not afraid of the Assyrian who shall smite you with his rod and who shall lift up his staff against you on the road of Egypt—he calls the road of Egypt paganism and I[sl]am!*¹ *In a very little while, my anger will come to an end.*² He also said: *My people, enter your chambers and shut the door on your faces, hide yourself for a little while until my wrath is past.*³ /p.384/ Another (sage) says: *For the Lord chastises him whom he loves, as a father who chastises his son.*⁴ And David said: *The Lord has chastised me severely, but he has not given me over to death.*⁵ And the Apostle proclaimed and blasted like a trumpet: *If we are without discipline, then we are strangers not sons.*⁶ They neither heeded and listened to, nor did they understand these holy words that the holy scriptures preached; rather, all of them deviated, not knowing or understanding what the Lord had done.

[... One missing folio ...]⁷

In their [...] because of the fact that they were walking in darkness and devi[ating from the way] of truth; so they walked in an untrodden wilderness, and the lig[ht of righteousness] did not shine for them, for the prophet said: *They are erring like sheep and every m[an turned to his own way].*⁸ Holy Hosea saw all of them and shouted [at them, as if with] the mouth of the Lord: *For they will not be my people and I will not be for them.*⁹ As Joel [the Prophet †was] observin[ing] these evil peoples [...], and what they were doing to the people of God, †he too spoke, [as?] his colleagu[est], as if with the mouth of the Lord: *A nation [has come up against my land], powerful and countless. His teeth are like the lion's teeth, [and his fangs] are like the fangs of a lion's whelp. He has laid my vine waste, [splintered my fig tree], he splintered it and threw it down; its branches became white.*¹⁰ The holy

¹ ܠܗܘܐ . . . ܘܢܘܡܐܝܢܐ may only tentatively be restored into ܠܗܘܐ [ܠܐܝܠܗܘܢ] as translated above. This Syriac word occurred in the Chronicle of Z.; see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 341:15, and above p. 293 n. 4. At any rate, “paganism” in the context of this Discourse is synonymous with Islam.

² Isa 10:24-25.

³ Isa 26:20.

⁴ Prov 3:12.

⁵ Ps 118:18.

⁶ Heb 12:8.

⁷ What comes after this long break is an account dealing with Christians apostatising to Islam.

⁸ Isa 53:6.

⁹ Cf Hos 1:9.

¹⁰ Joel 1:6b-7.

prophet foresaw these ones [...]

If those who used to do such a deed (as apostasy) had numbered one, or one hundred, or one thousand, or [...], /p.385/ I would have kept silent. But because it is not right that this corrupt matter remain without a short mention, we will talk about the bitter [shoot?], laceration of thorns, and the tares, but also about the beautiful shoot and the light [...] that appeared to us among them. For even without blows and tortures people slipped toward [apostasy *with] great [eag]lerness*, in groups of twenty, thirty, one hundred, two hundred or three hundred [men], without any compulsion [that led them?] to it. They used to come down to Ḥarrān, to governors, and apostatise to Islam. †They would bo[ast and look down] on us†, saying to us: †“You are godless and you are hol[ding, as it were, onto] a spider’s [web],”¹ boasting and rising up against the truth. Thus [Satan?] formed a great crowd from the regions of Edessa, Ḥarrān, Tella, Rēsh-‘Aynā, [...], Dara, Nisibis, Sinjār and Callinicum. Error and slander turned strong beyond measure in people coming from these regions, who were sometimes fifty or one hundred in a village, or half of it or one third of it. But they grew different from the faithful people in both person and name; in person, because their once happy personal appearance became repugnant, in such a way that they were recognised by the intelligent ones through their persons, odour, and the look of their eyes. This also happened to Judas, the traitor,² and their* first father*, in that his look and his name became exposed, when he left the disciples’ rank, and when the holy Spirit moved out from him and the impure spirit possessed him.

For thus says the sacred scripture about the Devil and about those whom he rules: *Under three things the earth trembles and under the fourth one—the bodies of impious people—it cannot bear up.*³ /p.386/ [It trembles under] a slave—Satan—when he reigns, under a slanderer when he is filled with [bread], and under an impure spirit—a maiden when she expels the H[oly Spirit—her mistress—]; add also the hate*† that Satan had toward them.⁴ [...] and (the scripture) also says: *The one who ate of my bread—first Judas—and in whom I trusted, has greatly betrayed me.*⁵ *My friends and companion[s*

¹ ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܕܠܟܘܢ ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܕܠܟܘܢ ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܕܠܟܘܢ ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܕܠܟܘܢ :

Compare the content of this reconstructed line with verse 40 of *sūrat al-'Ankabūt*, which says of the non-believers: *مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ كَمَثَلِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ اتَّخَذَتْ بَيْتًا وَإِنَّ بَيْتَ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ لَبَيْتٌ لِلرِّجَالِ وَلَٰكِنْ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ* “The likeness of those who have taken lords other than Allah, is the likeness of a spider, which makes itself a dwelling; and the weakest of all dwellings is the dwelling of a spider.” For more details about the reconstruction of the Syriac passage see Harrak, in *PdO* 20 (1995), pp. 341ff.

² ܟܘܢܘܫܐ : See below p. 329 n. 2, for a commentary on this word.

³ Prov 30:21.

⁴ Cf Prov 30:22-23.

⁵ Ps 41:9. Ms has: ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܟܘܢܘܫܐ ܕܠܟܘܢ [...] “[...] many betrayed me”.

*stood† aside from my grief, and my kin]smen stood far off.*¹ 'S'atant [instigated them to apostatise¹] so as to drag them to Gehenna, and they boasted [...] and rejoiced. They were cast out of the heavenly kingdom. [...] instead of their glory, to no advantage and gain. †[Their fig trees]† were splintered, their branches beclame white], their fig tree was laid waste.² Also [...] holy Micah said: *Because of this, lament and wail, go bare-foot and naked, make a wailing like that of the jackal and mourning like that of the jackal; for your wound is painful.*³ He also said: †In the housest of Aphrah, roll yourself in dust, pass on your way, O inhabitant of Shapir.⁴ [...] from baptism and the church, but not in this inhabitant [...]. Joel himself shouted in the same manner but they did not listen: [Hear this], you old men, and give ear, all inhabitants of the land. Has [such a thing] happened in yofur d]ays, or in the days of your fathers? Tell your children of it, [and let your children tell their child]ren, and their children another generation.⁵ And a little later, he said: *Wake up, you [drunkards].*⁶

[p.387/ Isaiah] said: *They are drunken, but not with wine; they strayed but not with fermented drink.*⁷ [Wail, all dr]inkers of wine, because of the holy wine that passed away from your mouth.⁸ [The prophet] clearly talked about their abandonment by God: *That day the Lord will take away the beauty of their apparels, their adornments and their tresses, their hair bands, their plaits of halir, their braids, and all the ornament of their faces,*⁹ etc. Shortly after, he said: *Instead of their sweet perfume there shall be dust, and instead of their girdle, they will fasten themselves with an apron, and instead of [plaits of hair], there will be baldness, and instead of their purple robes, they will clothe themselves with a sackcloth, for their beauty shall be destroyed.*¹⁰ Even if it is hard for me—perhaps for you too—to be assured that their beauty was destroyed, that the fine features of the souls that had abandoned the Lord were taken away, and that instead of the sweet odour of the holy myron a stinking and fetid smell emanated from them, believe the holy prophets who foresaw the matter and preached about it.

Along with their appearance, their name as Christians, and even as Muslims, was taken away from them. For they lost one name, that of Christ, but did not grab that of Muḥammad; rather, they found with their apostasy 'a

¹ Ps 38:11.

² Joel 1:7.

³ Micah 1:8-9a.

⁴ Micah 1:11.

⁵ Joel 1:2-3.

⁶ Joel 1:5a.

⁷ Isa 29:9.

⁸ Joel 1:5b.

⁹ Isa 3:18-19.

¹⁰ Isa 3:24.

name which they despised,¹ for they were called ʿAydūli², so that they might be distinguished, through *their name*, from both the gentiles and the faithful. And as *their father*, Satan, acquired through his transgression the name of Satan the Slanderer, so did they; for Satan also means the Advers[ary]. It is not] right to keep under cover the words of the holy prophets, one of whom said: *Naked I came out*,³ and another: *The Lord will take away the glory of their apparels*.⁴ Why did they call [...]? It was necessary for us /p.388/ not to overlook these [prophetic words, not to place them in the ground to be concealed, and not to [...] and we would become for them a laughter, a lesson to consider, and subject of talk. [...] good quality gold among pebbles [...] are the wor[ds] of the prophets, no[t to b]e placed again under cover.

I am returning (to these words), so that they may be placed (before the eyes) of the intellig[ent¹] people, like a mirror, and so that they may not stumble against them. One (prophet) said: *They have abandoned me, the fountain of living waters, and they went and dug for themselves leaky cisterns which can hold no water*.⁵ Another one said: *Naked I came out and I was not ashamed*.⁶ Another one said: *In that day the glory of the apparels of the souls that have abandoned the Lord will be taken away*.⁷ Another one said: *Send to Kedar and to the islands of the Kittaeans and understand well and see if nations have changed their gods, those who are no gods, just as my people have changed their glory for that which does not profit*.⁸ And another said: *They provoked me: 'He is not my God!' and I too will provoke them: 'They are not my people!' and I shall anger them: 'They are a stupid people!'*⁹ I called upon these (biblical) witnesses for your sake, so that you may become certain of what I have written down and that you trust that this is not unreliable. It is written that *on the evidence of two or three witnesses every matter shall be established*.¹⁰

It happened, as we said to you, that numerous people converted to paganism and renounced Christ, baptism, the Eucharist and the Cross through which every human being was granted salvation. They renounced all of the things that are part of Christ's programme of salvation, only confessing that

1 : The verb derives from Arabic /بشع/ "to be repugnant".

2 : For this term see below pp. 330 n. 8 and 330 n.2.

3 Job 1:21.

4 Isa 3:18.

5 Jer 2:13.

6 Job 1:21.

7 Cf Isa 3:18.

8 Cf Jer 2:10b-11.

9 Cf Hos 1:9.

10 Deut 19:15b, Mt 18:16, 2Cor 13:1.

‘Christ was the Word and the Spirit of God.’¹ Nor did they admit to this very profession or understand what Moses had previously said: *In the beginning God created . . .*² /p.389/ which the Son of Thunder (John the Apostle) interpreted, saying: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This One was in the beginning with God; everything came to exist through his hand, and without him not even one thing that was made came into existence.*³ They did not understand, nor did they comprehend these words, because they walked in darkness. As soon as someone asked them: “This ‘Word and Spirit of God in ‘Īsā’,⁴ what is it?” they blasphemed, saying: “He is like Moses, Elijah and Muḥammad;”—the prophet who was the founder of their faith. “He is simply a prophet, like other prophets, a man like you and me.” But then they professed that he was not born from a human seed, like anyone else, but they de[nied] him any divine substance. They only called him Word and Spirit of God, and Prophet, and one not born from the seed of man; instead, God ordered Mary and she conceived him, ‘as t[he] [rees]† are pollinated †to pro[duce fru]lit† without the intervention of a male, since they are pollinated by the wind.’⁵ Jeremiah the Prophet called a dubious faith like this one a *leaky cistern*.⁶ This apostasy was practised not only by the young, but also by adults, including many elderly people, †and worst of all†, by old priests and numerous deacons who cannot be numbered. I shall talk very briefly about one or two events that happened to them and which they reported and admitted publicly, and with that conclude my account of these people.

I was in Edessa at that time for some event that took place there. When I was there, people came and said before us, as well as before everyone, that a man, a deacon from /p.390/ the region of Edessa, had slipped into this pit and chasm of perdition. When the idea of apostasy occurred to him, all the notables and priests of the village seized him and begged him at length not to apostatise, but he was not persuaded. After imploring him with sad tears as well as with gifts to get rid of the bad will in which he found himself—more so because of the rank of the holy priesthood which had been conferred on

¹ ܘܚܪܝܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ: This is a rendering of *sūrat al-Nisā'*, verse 171: *إنما المسيح عيسى ابن مريم رسول الله وكلمته القاها الى مريم وروح منه*; see also *sūrat āli-Imrān* 45.

² Gen 1:1. Early Syriac authors shared the general belief that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch.

³ Jn 1:1-3.

⁴ ܘܫܝܫܘܬܐ: Koranic “Jesus”

⁵ ܘܫܝܫܘܬܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ: For the reconstruction and discussion of this badly damaged passage see Harrak, in PdO 20 (1995) pp. 374ff.

⁶ Jer 2:13.

him—and since he did not yield to them, they left him. As for him, he went to seek refuge in a man, one of the Arabs in that region, and asked that he might become a Muslim at his hands. This man did not pressure him; on the contrary, he asked him not to do so lest he should regret it one day and return to his faith, in which case great tortures would then be inflicted upon him. But he said: “If the idea of repenting* will occur to me, I will not turn away from your faith, because God indicated that to me.” The man said to him: “Do you renounce Christ?” He said: “Yes.” Then he said to him: “Do you renounce Baptism?” He said: “I renounce it.” He then said to him: “Do you renounce the Cross, the Eucharist and everything which Christians profess?” He replied: “I renounce them.” At this point, the son of the Devil added to these words insults not requested by the Arabs. After he made him apostatise in this manner, he asked him: “Do you believe in Muḥammad as the messenger of God, and in the Book that descended upon him from Heaven?” He said: “I believe.” Then he said: “Do you believe that ‘Īsā is the Word and Spirit of God, that he is a Prophet, and that he is not God?” He replied, saying: “Yes.” Thus he made him renounce everything in his free will. For no one among the people was forcibly driven by anyone else, unless by the Devil this father†, to renounce his faith, while many /p.391/ of them apostatised without any reason whatsoever. Then he ordered him: “Untie your belt¹ and pray toward the South.”

Now God was not disgusted to wash the feet of the ‘betraye^r² or to allow him to share in the mystical† Supper;³ moreover, he even gave him the dipped and ‘softened morsel,⁴ unlike the other apostles, and with his finger he pointed him out as the betrayer. So did God do to this wretched one. The Holy Spirit despised him more than the renegade despised the Spirit he received in baptism, and turned him into an object of dread for others. In like manner, we too shall set him as an example for the generations to come after us, so that all the believers who will read in this book, will realise what happened to this wretched one, and take care of the grace which they have received, lest the same thing should happen to them too.

After he untied his belt and kneeled to pray, his body shivered, and at the time of prostration something like a white and beautiful dove came out of his

¹ *ܡܠܚܕܩܝܗܘܢ*: See also Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 391:13 and 29. The second word refers to the *zunnar* which the Christian *dhimmī* had to wear to distinguish them from the Muslim. To ask the Christian apostate to untie his belt is the first step toward admitting him to Islam. For more details, see Harrak, in PdO 20 (1995) pp. 341f.

² *ܡܘܨܝܘܢܐ*: Reference to Judas Iscariot in Jn 13:11. Since the Syriac word also means “Muslim”, one wonders if the Chronicler was not engaged in wordplay.

³ Reference to the last Supper before the passion of Christ; see Mk 22:21.

⁴ Jn 13:26. The expression *ܠܥܝܢܐ ܠܥܝܢܐ* perhaps means “released from blessing”, that is, by the dipping action of Judas, the bread reverted to ordinary, unblessed, bread.

mouth and went up to the sky. When the wretched one saw this dove, he grievously wailed*, like a woman, and terrified all those who were there, saying: “Woe unto me! Woe unto me! Woe unto me, what has happened to me!” After they calmed him down from screaming, he spoke before everyone about what he had seen and what had happened to him—he was talking openly and with many tears before everyone. Some† of those who heard him reported the matter to me, but because at that time I did not pay enough attention to it, I forgot the name of the man and that of his father, as well as the name of his village.¹ About this wretched man and about those who acted like him, the Scripture says: *Lament, wail, and make lamentation like the jackal*,² because the Holy Spirit—a mistress—went out and the impure spirit—a maid—came in, as says the Scripture.³

Moreover, it is said about a priest from the region of Harrān that when he untied his belt and wanted /p.392/ to pray, he saw two men near him with magnificent apparel, one on this side and another on the other side. He said that both prostrated themselves simultaneously, and they seemed to him to be suddenly taking off that magnificent apparel and to be ascending to Heaven. So he too lamented with Isaiah the prophet: “I am laid bare and all the glory that I assumed inside the water⁴ is taken away from me;” for holy Isaiah said: *That day—when one of them would apostatise—the Lord will take away the glory of his apparel*,⁵ and, *they will put his lot among the wicked*.⁶

Look, O believer, when you are in great fear, believe firmly in what is written, have faith at least in the prophets, and understand that a servant cannot serve two masters,⁷ that is the Holy Spirit and the impure spirit. It is not possible that a king and a slave live in one house. Therefore, God does not live in the soul that renounces him and confesses Satan.

I ought to talk about the reason why the apostates acquired the name of ʿAydūlī,⁸ and then leave off. They used to turn to apostasy in large and impressive groups, and their names used to be written in ʿlists.⁹ Later, as they (= the Muslims) wanted ʿto assist them,¹⁰ they would call: ʿ“Where is so-and-

¹ The village was located in the region of Edessa, as suggested at the beginning of the account about this man.

² Micah 1:8.

³ Cf Prov 30:23.

⁴ Reference to Baptism.

⁵ Isa 3:18a.

⁶ Cf Isa 53:12 (and Lk 22:37).

⁷ Mt 6:24.

⁸ ܐܝܕܘܠܝ: See below p. 330 n. 2.

⁹ ܕܡܢܘܢܝܢ: Probably a reference to Arabic ديوان, a list of Muslims who had the right to share the booty of conquered lands.

¹⁰ ܕܡܢܘܢܝܢ: So in MS, although Chabot, for no good reason, wanted to read

so, son of so-and-so?"¹ And they, because they lacked knowledge of the Arabic language, would answer, saying: "Behold! these are they!"² Because of this, †the apostates† found a nickname for themselves that suited them and that distinguished them from all nations.

The account about the apostates has ended.

*Also concerning the martyr
Cyrus, who is the subject of this account*

When the error of paganism prevailed in the country and the darkness and obscurity of the Devil gathered over the entire camp of the believers, we became a mo[ckery] and laughing-stock³ /p.393/ to all the pagans: *Enem[ies laughed among themselves] at us,⁴ the Slanderer kicked with his feet and put out his lip[s], the wick[ed] wagged his head.⁵* God said to him: My eye spotted them, *because my hand has attained[ed] the powler[of the peoples, like a nest.⁶* The Devil spoke to all those on the left, who were the children of darkness, his friends: "This is the day made for us for exultation, rejoicing and merrymaking! But chase them, reach them and do not let one of them escape, for their God has deserted them. Otherwise, *who will deliver them from my hands?*"⁷ Behold, soon and without the compulsion of judges, tortures, blows, amputation of limbs, or fear of fire, and without being torn by beasts, they will all adhere to my command and my worship, now that they have renounced the one who, in the past, had persecuted us by stretching his arms on the cross. Honour shall soon be paid to us in the world, as was the case with us in the past, before the advent of the son of Mary in the world."

The Devil was being passionately inflamed in his mind by this arrogance and extensive nonsense, hoping that he would soon introduce the adoration of idols into the world. But God always takes care of the human race and has

ⲕⲁⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ "to circumcise them;" *Chronicon* II, 392 n. 1.

¹ ⲕⲁⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ: Syriac transcription of Arabic: فلان (for ابن) ابن .

² ⲕⲁⲛⲉ ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ: Since the apostates "lacked knowledge of the Arabic language", as stated above, this sentence must contain Syriac and Arabic elements. The interjection ⲕⲁ can be either Syriac or Arabic ⲕⲁ "lo! see! there!". ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ is puzzling. It may be another form of following ⲛⲓⲛⲓⲟⲩ which seems to be vernacular Arabic "these" (classical هؤلاء). ⲛⲓ is the familiar word for "lord, sir". The analysis and translation given above, of the whole sentence, are tentative, at best.

³ Cf Ps 44:12.

⁴ Cf Ps 80:7.

⁵ Cf Ps 22:7.

⁶ Isa 10:14.

⁷ Isa 43:13a.

never neglected Adam and his offspring; from the beginning he fashioned the first man out of dirt, and planted for him a garden for his delight, and established him as master over the whole creation. And when Adam sinned and transgressed the command, he did not abandon him, but like a merciful father, chastised him and instructed him through the Law, and admonished him through the prophets and the Fathers. At the end, he sent his only Son to save Adam. The Son descended to his own image, *took the form of a slave*,¹ and became like us, /p.394/ one of us, and because of us, *becoming like us in every respect except sin*.² He breached the fence of the old enmity,³ abated the evil conflict the snake had caused in the garden which had angered God against people, and united them with God. He gave his back to blows and tortures, and his face to bruises; he set his face toward outrageous spitting. He suffered, like an evildoer, all things from the Jews and the Romans, and was numbered among the wicked ones.⁴ He was led to the cross like a killer and evildoer. A crown woven of thorns was placed on him so that he might uproot all the thorns that the curse of Adam had caused to sprout. They made him hold a reed, so that he might write the bill of freedom for Adam. They made him drink wormwood, so that he might sweeten the bitter drink which the Enemy had mixed for the people from the beginning. They pierced his hands and feet, opened his side with a lance, and blood and water flowed from him, for the ablution of Adam and his offspring from sins. He brought back all the captives that the Evil One had led away jealously, and gave them his body to eat and his blood to drink, so that [they might live?] in him for ever.⁵

[... ...]

/p.395/ [...] the action of the Deceiver [...] This one [...] his church, when he saw his flock leaving, he did not [...] that he gave him, [...] persecuted [...] nor did (Jesus) now ignore the salvation of his church wh[ich he acquired by his blo]od. David, the Prophet, invoked him: *How long, [O God], shall the adversary [scoff] and revile your name?*⁶ *Return to us our saviour.*⁷ *W[hy did you turn] your face and your right hand away*⁸ from your church? *Remember, Lord, your congregation, [which you have possessed of old and*

¹ Phil 2:7.

² Heb 4:15.

³ Cf Eph 2:14-15.

⁴ Cf Isa 53:12.

⁵ The folio ends here. The following folio is missing, and folios 5 to 7 are fragmentary. The translation above, which contains several reconstructions, is often tentative, because of incomplete contextual information.

⁶ Ps 74:10.

⁷ Cf Ps 80:4.

⁸ Ps 74:11.

*redeemed with a firm staff*¹ ...] Do not remove your favours and your grace from your chu[rch]. The Lord [replied?] to David the Prophet, saying: "Every† [...] to the congregation, for from now on there is no help for you."² [...]] †for you saw† the Ark of the Lord [...] the uncircumcised.

[... ...] Cyrus was [...] of parents well]-known in the city, of the family [...]. The father of the mar[tyr was] a priest, chaste and full of all virtues and of all divine graces, so if I call him [...] of the Lo[rd], and a preacher, I do not think I am in error, because the bloodshed of the son of bo[th of them] was [one], and their testimony was also one. The name of his mother [was] 'Priscilla!³ She too became the foundation† that was between [...]. *She resembled* Elizabeth, mother of the Baptist, in [giving] alms everyday, and in her faith and in all the virtues that suit wom[en]. From a good couple like this, a blessed fruit, Cyr[us], was born for us, and in †the la[nd]† of paganism,⁴ between tares and thorns, a †li[ght appeared] for us†; in the dense darkness, and between Manichaeans and †servants [of the Devil]†, a star of beautiful flame shone for us in the sky and enlight[ened people], because of the fact that he walked in the path which Christ trod for us. †[In Harrān, the ci[ty]† of paganism, the blaze of the light shone [...]. /p.396/ [He was] a disgrace for the Devil and his servants, [...], and destructive errors. And infidels fr[om ...], and by the heavenly and earthly they were disgrace[d ...] and in this, because the Devil covered the shame [...].

Now this holy Cyrus was a [...] and fast moving man, physically strong and valiant [...]. During the time in which that battle [took place ...] Muḥammad, 'Abbās, and Sulaymān, son of Hishām [...] as was written above.⁵ [...] Cyr[us] just happened to be in †that ba[ttle]†. In that battle [...] from/by 'Abbās [...]] A Persian man reigned [and seized?] the reins of the caliphate, people [happened ...] the Devil/the Slanderer. They accused him of many things before Ḥumayd, [son of Qaḥtab],⁶ who was at that time †the am[īr]† of the Jaz[īra]. When he heard about these things from the deceivers, he seized the man and asked him: "Are you Christian?" He said: "Yes." The judge said: "Ho[w ... for a Christian man [...] for the pol]l-tax?" Cyrus [told]† him the reason without lie, and how he had been registered against his will. The judge said: "It is not possible that you be registered for the poll-tax [...] 'after] you became Muslim.⁷ But come near and pray, for if not, a cruel death [...] you

¹ Cf Ps 74:2.

² Ps 3:2. The feminine independent pronoun "you" refers to the "congregation".

³ **هذه السيدة العذراء**: MS very damaged at this spot and the name has been tentatively deciphered.

⁴ Harrān is meant, because it was a Manichaean centre.

⁵ Reference to the battle of the Zāb, above p. 179.

⁶ Ḥumayd was the third governor of the Jazīra and predecessor of 'Abbās.

⁷ Tentative translation of a damaged passage. Perhaps Cyrus was registered against

will suffer at my hands!" Cyrus said: "Or[der] me whatever yo[u wa]nt, but I will not do this! And if you ord[er] all tortures against me, you will not be able to turn me away from my faith!" The judge said: "[It is wrong(?)], O wretched one, that you hurl foolish words, †[but come near]† now, pray and †confess that God is one, and has no †[associate, and that Muḥammad is the serva]nt†, messenger and prophet of God,¹ that he [...] /p.397/ [...] over his kin[gdo]m [...] he was owning [...] they are demanding from us many [...] now [...] he is. Either you profess or [...] and I will enhance your status and multiply gifts for you †if you conver[t ... and become Musl]im† at my hand and pray." Cyrus said: "Even if †you give me [all that is in the wor]ld†, I am now telling you, as I have previously told you, that I shall not renounce my faith, because †if I destroy my soul† [... gifts†] will not profit me anything." The judge said: "So everyone I ask [to apostatise] destroyed his soul on the basis of what you said: 'If I †will renouncet†, I destroy †[my soul]†?' Hence, according to your statement, all the Christian people who became Muslim, have (in fact) destroyed their so[uls] like you. For behold, many [...], including even old people, if they knew [... ...]

[... ...] †because of me†. You have saddened the exulting angels [...] through] your flight. The church, your mother, used to rejoice in you, but now lo, she is saddened [...] you gladdened her. And now [...] is saddened by your departure. [...] †is waiting for you†. The Devil [...] for it by (or: through) your flight. All the martyrs were [...] †for you†. Even paganism and the city of Ḥarrān [...] to you, and [...] the darkness that surrounds is dissipating from it. "[... ...] Whence did you know me, my Lord? and what are the[se ...]," he said. Lo, before my eyes the whole [...] testifies [...] *you are considered^{*}, more than all the martyrs [...] and faith and the entire camp of the believers [...] /p.398/ because of the exactions of the poll-tax [...] not, and let us go immediately [...] without their knowledge [...] and do for me a lamentation [...] and do whatever you wish, [... for] our Lord said: *Whoever denies me before men, I also will deny him before my father who is in heaven*² and before [God's] holy angels. [... Cy]rus said: "Yes." Then all those who heard [...] some gross blasphemy. And he undertook sending after him [...] ... " [...] while every day I was sending to bring him and in different ways? [...] even great judges. Thus he never yielded to me [...]" And thus, after he spent a long time in prison [...] he ordered him to say: "I confess that Muḥammad is the messenger of God." [Nor] did he yield to him in this way.

his will in the *dīwān* as Muslim, but in order to stress his identity as a Christian he included his name in the list of the poll-tax paying Christians.

¹ אָמַרְתָּ אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַתָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له: Rendering of the Muslim *taṣahhud*:
 وأن محمدا هو عبدالله ورسوله ونبيه .

² Mt 10:33.

Then the judge became furious and ordered [...] that they return him [to prison] *with abuse*. Thus he [...] of everything, nor did he release him in this way. But when Satan grew strong [...: “] if this one becomes stronger than me, and this colleague† see him [they will say this is?] not a judge but a devil [... Now if you become Muslim² and] pray, you will take what belongs to you along with gifts and honours [... ...]. Thus he left him in prison, saying: “[... ...] when Ḥumayd will be dismissed from the Jazīra, and ‘A[bbās] will come to [... ...]” As for (Cyrus), he fled from Ḥarrān and entered [... where] he remained for a long time—about four y[ears]¹—[... by him]self. And he went [...] from it [...].

/p.399/ [The ble]ssed one said: “Not about this [...] all those who are persecuted, behold [... ...] he will think [...], the church through [my?] sacrifice [... up]on me, in this hour which †is leading us† to this sacrifice [...] and calm, on behalf of my brothers and members of my faith [... up]on me. The blessed one said: “There is in Ḥarrān [... f]ind her (or: it), if you go round about the entire inhabited world.” “Behold, there [... ...] holy men are looking for you. Whenever you go and they will see [... the D]evil, as well as all those who submitted to his will.” After they [made many stat]ements, holy (Cyrus) stood up and quickly travelled to Ḥarrān, while many prayers [were offered]. When he arrived in Edessa and was seen there by many persons, his acquaintances, [they begged him] not to go to Ḥarrān. But he looked at them, and with a joyful countenance he said to th[em]: “[...] I came because I am a ready for suffering.” And from there, he went like a lamb to the [slaughter]†, beholding Isaac,² the daughter of Jephthah,³ †and greater than all of them†, [Christ, the Lord] of Isaac, carrying his cross and coming like (a lamb) to the slaughter. [... ...] while everyone adjured him not †to enter Ḥarr[ān]† [...] but he, like that one (=Christ), gave them a reply: “... I con]sider nothing else than that I fulfil my course⁴ [... and be delivered from this wor]ld, so that I may be with Christ. And blessed am I [...” [...] your hands to shackles and your feet to fetters and your [...].

[... Lacuna ...]

¹ Chabot restored [كورد على حدة] “four w[eeks];” *Chronicon* II, 398:23.

² Gen 22:9-11.

³ Judg 12:34-39.

⁴ Acts 20:24.

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List of Collations

Chabot's edition of the Chronicle of Zuqnān, published in *Chronicon II*, has been checked against the original manuscript, now in the *Bibliotheca Vaticana*, and the few folios now at the *British Library*. The following list includes variants between the original manuscript and Chabot's reading of the text. The variants are of two kinds. The first kind includes correct words in the MS that are misspelled or overlooked in Chabot's edition. The second kind includes questionable words in the MS that were corrected by Chabot in his edition, and that he failed to mention in footnotes; these questionable words are identified in the following list with the adverb (sic).

In the English translation all the collations are immediately followed by a dagger (†), as is explained on p. 34 above.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2:18 ⲉⲃⲉⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛ
read ⲉⲃⲉⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛ | 17:15 " ⲉⲃⲉⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛ read ⲉⲃⲉⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛ |
| 3:14 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 17:17 ⲁⲙⲁⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛ .
MS ⲁⲙⲁⲛⲉⲃⲉⲛ (sic) |
| 5:3 ⲉⲃⲉⲛ read ⲉⲃⲉⲛ | 18:27 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 6:17, 21 delete square brackets | 23 n.5 ⲉⲃⲉⲛ . MS ⲉⲃⲉⲛ (sic) |
| 7:11 ⲉⲃⲉⲛ read ' ⲉⲃⲉⲛ ' | 23:29 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 9:15 ⲉⲃⲉⲛ . MS ⲉⲃⲉⲛ (sic) | 24:18 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 12:22 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 24:24 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ . MS ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ (sic) |
| 13:3 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 25:18, ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 13:16 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ . MS ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ (sic) | 25:19, ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ . MS ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ (sic) |
| 13:24 [ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ] read [ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ] | 26:17 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 14:3 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 28:25 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ . MS ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ (sic) |
| 14:17 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 29:12 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 14:23 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 30:12 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 15:4 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 30:15 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 15:5 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 31:13 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read [ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ] |
| 15:6 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ | 31:14 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ |
| 15:7 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ . MS ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ (sic) | 32 n.5 ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ read ⲁⲗⲗⲁⲗ (o
may have been added later) |

- 33:6 כחניק read חניק
- 33:7 כחניק read חניק
כחניק
- 33:21 לעלמס read לעלמס
(from context)
- 34:3 וסממס read וסממס
- 34:4 וסמ read וסמ
- 34:5 לעלמס read לעלמס
- 34:9 כחניק read חניק
- 34:19 כחניק (sic in MS); delete n. 3
- 35:6 כחניק read חניק
- 36:25, כחניק. MS כחניק (sic;
the , below the end of this word is
also above the ו of וסמ [for
וסמ])
- 37:1 כחניק read חניק
- 37:8 כחניק read חניק (sic)
- 37:20 כחניק read חניק (trace of
final כ is seen)
- 37:24 כחניק read [חניק]
- 38:5 כחניק read חניק; delete n. 3
- 38:20 לעלמס read לעלמס
לעלמס לעלמס לעלמס לעלמס
לעלמס
- 38:22 סמ. MS סמ (sic)
- 39:26 סמ read סמ
- 40:1 כחניק read perhaps חניק
(traces of the Greek under-script
confuse the word)
- 41:18 חניק read חניק
- 42:7 חניק, חניק read חניק
- 42:15 חניק read חניק
- 43:9 כחניק. MS כחניק (sic)
- 43:24 חניק read חניק
- 45:1 חניק read חניק
- 48:6 חניק read חניק
- 48:12 חניק read חניק
- 49:3 חניק read חניק
- 49:4 חניק read חניק
- 49:14 חניק read חניק
- 49:22 חניק read חניק
- 50:3 חניק. MS חניק (sic)
- 50:7 חניק. MS חניק (sic)
- 50:15 חניק read חניק
- 50:18 חניק. MS חניק (sic)
- 50:19 חניק; read חניק
(sic)
- 50:21 חניק. MS חניק (sic);
Delete n. 6
- 50:22 חניק read חניק
- 52:10 חניק read חניק
- 55:11 חניק. MS חניק
(sic)
- 56:27 חניק read חניק
- 60:20 חניק. MS חניק (for
חניק)
- 61:4 חניק (sic; change n. 2
into: L חניק)
- 61:9-10 חניק read
חניק (sic) חניק חניק
- 61:24 חניק. Sic in MS: traces
of the ח as well as its kashideh are
well seen; delete n. 10
- 67:10 חניק read חניק
- 68:29 וסממס read וסממס
- 69:2 וסממס read וסממס (sic)
- 69:27 חניק [חניק] read חניק
- 70:2 חניק read חניק
- 70:3 חניק read חניק
- 70:7 חניק read חניק
- 71:6 חניק: space and faint traces
allow for the reading of חניק
- 71:9 חניק read חניק
- 71:14 חניק read חניק
- 71:25 חניק read חניק
- 72 n. 7 חניק read חניק
(see Land, *Anecdota* II, 302:9)
- 73:22 חניק read חניק
- 79:3 חניק, חניק, חניק read:
חניק, חניק, חניק
(...)
- 81:8 חניק. MS חניק (sic)
- 82:4 חניק read חניק
- 84:11 חניק. Text effaced; probably
חניק
- 87:15 חניק read חניק
- 91:9 [חניק] חניק... read חניק
[...]
- 93:9 חניק read חניק
- 93:23 חניק read חניק

- 94:25 $\text{قُتِلَ} \text{قَتَلَ}$ read قُتِلَ
 $\text{قُتِلَ} \text{قَتَلَ}$
- 95:9 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ (MS قُتِلَ
[sic]; see n. 4)
- 98:9 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 98:29 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 99:11 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 99:21 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 100:1 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 113:1 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 115:19 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 118:5 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 118:17 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 118:21 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 120:2 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
 قُتِلَ (wāw added later)
- 122:9 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 122:14 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 123:24 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 124:15 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 126:2 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 127:1 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 127:4 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 128:13 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 129:2 قُتِلَ ; MS قُتِلَ
 قُتِلَ (sic)
- 129:9 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 129:10 قُتِلَ . Traces of قُتِلَ (sic)
in MS
- 129 n. 12 add L
- 130:3 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 131:21 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ
 قُتِلَ (sic)
- 132:15 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 132:18 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
 قُتِلَ (قُتِلَ added later in MS;
delete n. 3)
- 132:23 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 135:2 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 135:27 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 136:2 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 136:15, 17 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 136:19 قُتِلَ ; (MS rubbed off;
read probably قُتِلَ)
- 137:9 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 137:10 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 137:23 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 138:7 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 138:19 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 139:7 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
(delete n. 8)
- 139:18, 22 قُتِلَ read as in
MS قُتِلَ (delete n. 16)
- 139 n. 2: Read: L قُتِلَ
 قُتِلَ
- 140:3 قُتِلَ read (with Martin)
 قُتِلَ ; delete n. 3
- 140:5 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 142:16 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ
(sic)
- 143:4 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ (sic
and as in Land, *Anecdota* II,
329:11); delete n. 2
- 144 n. 2: قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 147:2 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic);
delete n. 1
- 148:24 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 150:9 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 152:23 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 153:17 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 154:18 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 155:13 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 156:7 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 157:16 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 160:21 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ
(sic)
- 161:18 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ ; delete n.1
- 161:24 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 161:28 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 162:13 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 162:14 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 164:27 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ
(sic)
- 164:29 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ (as
in l. 30)
- 166:12 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 169:23 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ
- 170:29 قُتِلَ . MS قُتِلَ (sic)
- 171:4 قُتِلَ read قَتَلَ

- 171:24 Կոմ խոփոց read Կոմ խոփոց
 173:17 ճուրօ read ճուր
 173:19 Կհաչաւ. MS Կհաչաւ (sic)
 173:24 լիփօս. MS լիփօս (sic)
 173:29 Կէտ Կսոմ read Կ Կսոմ
 Կէտ
 175:14 Եր յստի : Եր յստի may have been
 erased intentionally in the MS
 176:21 Կսոս read Կսոս
 176 n. 1: Ms. Լիփոց read: Ms.
 Լիփոց
 177:26 Կոմ Կ read Կոմ Կ
 180:7 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 181:14 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 181:26 Կիւրիւն² read Կիւրիւն⁵
 182:10 Կիւրիւն. MS Կիւրիւն
 (sic)
 184:19 Կիւրիւն. MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 185:25 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 186:7 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 186:28 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն; delete
 n. 3
 187:29 օմ read ,ոմ
 188:29 Կիւրիւն corrected in MS from
 Կիւրիւն
 189:22 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 189:30 Կիւրիւն. MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 189 n. 2: Կիւրիւն. MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 190:3 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 190:9 Կիւրիւն³ read Կիւրիւն³
 190:15, Կիւրիւն⁴ read Կիւրիւն⁴
 192:9 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 192:10 օմ Կիւրիւն (as in Peshittā);
 MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 192:19 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 192:25 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 197:8 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն; Կ
 was added later and the first Կ
 originally an Կ
 198:4 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 198:18 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 200:20 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 200:26 Կիւրիւն. MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 200:27 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 206:15 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 207:25 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն
 (sic)
 208:3 Կոմ read Կոմ
 209:24 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն²
 210:2 and n. 2: օիւրիւն ; in MS the
 wāw was crossed off
 210:27 Կիւրիւն; MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 211:16 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն
 (sic)
 211:25 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 211:26 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 212:2 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն (trace
 of Կ visible; delete n. 1)
 212:5 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 212:9 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 212:17 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 213:18 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 215:28 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 216:5 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 217:11 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն; delete
 n. 1
 217:16 " Կիւրիւն
 read Կիւրիւն
 218:7 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 221 n. 6: Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 222:15 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 224:20 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic). In line
 2 original Կիւրիւն was corrected into
 Կիւրիւն
 225:4 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 225:12 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 225:12, Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 225:25 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 225:25 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 226:10 Կիւրիւն read " Կիւրիւն
 226:22 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն
 (sic; , barely visible)
 228:6 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 230:20 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 231:16 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 232:26 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն
 233:5 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 235 n. 1: read Կիւրիւն (sic)
 235:26 Կիւրիւն . MS Կիւրիւն (sic)
 235:30 Կիւրիւն read Կիւրիւն

- 236:10 ܠܚܘܚܐ . MS ܠܚܘܚܐ (sic)
 236:11 ܘܡܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܡܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (Δ added in MS)
 236:16 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 236:29 ܠܚܘܚܐ . MS ܠܚܘܚܐ (sic)
 237:6 ܚܘܚܐ read ܚܘܚܐ
 237:9 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 238:24 ܘܡܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܡܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 238:25 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 239:8 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic) for ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 239:18 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 240:19 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 241:7 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 241:27 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 242:14 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 242:26 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 243:17 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 244:8 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 244:16 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 246:22 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 248:6 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 248:18 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 249:10 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 249:11 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 249:14 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 249:18 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 249:28 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 250:30 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 251:2 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 251:25 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 251:26 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 252:23 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 254:3 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 255:23 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 255:27 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 256:22 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 257:27 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 258:14 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 258:17 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 258:27 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 258:29 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 259:11 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 259:18 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic); delete n. 5
 259:27 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 262:13 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 263:12 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 265:6 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 265:10 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 269:7 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 271:5 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 274:10 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 276:18 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 280:25 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ ; MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (see also 281:19)
 282:8 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 282:13 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 282:27 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 283:5 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ : ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 285:26 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 286:18 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ : Sic in MS; delete n. 3
 286:19 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ : Sic in MS (first ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ added later in MS; delete n. 4)
 288:2 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 288:28 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 2 8 9 : 2 1 -2 2 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (no *siāmē* in MS; sic)
 289:24 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 293:19 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 293:23 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 294:24 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (*nūn* almost visible)
 294:26 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ
 297:15 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . MS ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 297: n. 5 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ read ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ (sic)
 298:5 ܘܫܘܠܗܘܢܐܘܪܐ . Corrected in MS from

- 298:13 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 298:23 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 299:12 ܠܚܠܐ . Corrected in MS from ܠܚܠܐ
 300:29 MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 301:8 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 304:19 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 305:21 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 306:30 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 310:8 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 310:16 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 310 n. 2: ܠܚܠܐ . MS probably ܠܚܠܐ
 311:26 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 312:20 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 312:24, ܠܚܠܐ . Corrected in MS from ܠܚܠܐ as in line 28
 313:27 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 315:7 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 315 n. 4: Read: Ms. ܠܚܠܐ
 3 1 8 : 2 0 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 ܠܚܠܐ (a added in MS over the ܠܚܠܐ)
 319:4 ܠܚܠܐ read probably ܠܚܠܐ (rubbed off and ܠܚܠܐ modified into ܠܚܠܐ)
 319 n. 6: Read ܠܚܠܐ
 320:11 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 320:28 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (last word placed inside a circle of dots)
 321:12 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 321:16 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 322:4 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 322:22 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 323:14 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 323:15 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 324:2 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 324:4 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 324:12 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 324:22 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 324:30 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 325:7 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 328:7 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 328:20 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 334:17 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ ; delete n. 2
 334:21 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 334:26 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 335:20 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (dot of ܠܚܠܐ is not visible)
 337:9 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 339:7, ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 341:27 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (as in Peshittā)
 343:9 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 343:29 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 344:27 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 346:2 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 347:17 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 348:13 ܠܚܠܐ read probably ܠܚܠܐ (MS pale at this spot)
 348:17 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (faint traces of ܠܚܠܐ in MS; see Peshittā)
 350:17 ܠܚܠܐ ; MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 351:28 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ as in MS and Peshittā; delete n. 4.
 354:9 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (as in Peshittā)
 355:9 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (traces of ܠܚܠܐ in MS)
 355:24 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 357:7 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 357:10 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 359:9 ܠܚܠܐ MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 359 n. 2 read: ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 359:29 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 361:1 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ (sic)
 362:20 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 362:23 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ
 364:1 ܠܚܠܐ . MS ܠܚܠܐ as in n.1 (sic)
 364:3 ܠܚܠܐ read ܠܚܠܐ

364:28 **חגמ** read **חגמ**
 366:14 **כחשעו** for **כחשעו** Keep n. 3
 374:12 **כ...** read possibly **כחשעו**
 375:2 **כחשעו** read **כחשעו**
 375:16 **לכחשעו** read **לכחשעו**
 380:12 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**
 380:13 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**
 380:14 **...** read **חגלסו**
 380:18 **חגלסו**, **חגלסו** read **חגלסו** (sic)
 383:8 **חגלסו** read probably **חגלסו**
 384:17 **חגלסו** space in MS allows for: **חגלסו**
 384:18 **חגלסו** [...] read **חגלסו**
 385:10-11 **חגלסו** [...] read **חגלסו**
 386:4 **חגלסו**. MS **חגלסו** (sic)
 386:8 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו** (= Peshittā)
 386:9 **חגלסו** .. read **חגלסו**
 386:12 read **חגלסו**
 386:17 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו** although the second /b/ is not clear
 389:16 **חגלסו**.. read tentatively:
 389:20 **חגלסו** . MS **חגלסו** (sic)
 389:20 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**
 390:29 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**
 391:4 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**
 391:21 **חג** read **חג** (preposition [not relative pronoun] added above the line)
 392:24 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**

395:13 **חגלסו** read **חגלסו**
 395:34 **כ** [] read perhaps **כחגלסו**
 395:35 **כ** [...] read **כחגלסו**
 395:35 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 395:38 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו**
 396:10 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו**
 396:26 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 396:29 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו** or **כחגלסו**
 396:37 **כחגלסו** [] reads **כחגלסו**
 396:37f **כחגלסו** ...] read **כחגלסו**
 397:5 **כחגלסו** ... , read **כחגלסו**
 397:6 **כחגלסו** [] read perhaps **כחגלסו**
 397:6 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו**
 397:7 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו**
 397:8 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו**
 397:10 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 397:10 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 397:20 **כחגלסו** [] read seemingly **כחגלסו**
 397:23 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו**
 397:24 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 398:17 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 399:5 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**
 399:14 **כחגלסו** [] read perhaps **כחגלסו**
 399:15 **כחגלסו** [] read **כחגלסו** (sic)
 399:17 **כחגלסו** [] read perhaps **כחגלסו**
 399 n. 6 **כחגלסו** read **כחגלסו**

List of Corrections

The following list contains selected corrections of errors found in the MS. In the English translation all the corrected errors are immediately followed by an asterisk (*). The list does not include corrections previously made by Chabot in his edition as long as he called attention to them in footnotes.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>9:3 ל for ל</p> <p>16:12 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>23:8 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>33:9 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>35:8 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>35:11 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>36:3 חלל for חלל</p> <p>50:19 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>50:19 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>50:21 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>51:23 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>60:20 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>64:12 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>77:21 & n. 5 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>86:10 $[\text{אחיהלחלח}]$ for $[\text{אחיהלחלח}]$</p> <p>94:17 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>101:16 $[\text{אחיהלחלח}]$ for $[\text{אחיהלחלח}]$</p> <p>111:11 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>117:5 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>123:17 אחיהלחלח for probably אחיהלחלח</p> <p>124:26 and n. 7: MS אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח (in apposition to אחיהלחלח)</p> <p>126:8 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> | <p>128:3 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>136:2 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>142:13 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח (see note 5)</p> <p>147:19 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>148:23 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>157:16-17 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>164:12 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>173:8 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>173:18 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>173:23 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח as in line 25</p> <p>178:10 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח (= Peshittā)</p> <p>178:28 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>179:21 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>180:6 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>183:21 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>185:13 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>185:16 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> <p>185:20 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח (= Peshittā)</p> <p>186:22 אחיהלחלח for אחיהלחלח</p> |
|--|---|

188:26 ⲛⲉⲛⲟⲩⲁ for ⲛⲉⲛⲁⲓⲃⲁ (= Peshittā)
 190:15 ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩ for ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 195:2 ⲛⲉⲩⲉ for ⲛⲉⲩ
 195:22 ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ for ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲁ or ⲛⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲟ
 196:26 ⲕⲓⲛⲓⲛ for ⲕⲓⲛⲓⲛⲁ
 200:11 ⲙⲁⲓⲟⲩ for ⲙⲁⲓⲟ
 201:8 ⲕⲉⲩⲉ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ
 207:30 ⲁⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲟ for ⲁⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ (= Peshittā)
 211:16 ⲙⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲟ † for ⲙⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 212:16 ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 213:25 ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓⲟ for ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓ
 214:16 ⲕⲁⲓⲁ for ⲕⲁⲓⲁⲓ
 219:30 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩ
 221:4 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕ
 222:30 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ for either ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲁ or ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ
 231:15 ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩ for ⲙⲟⲩ
 236:3 ⲕⲁⲟⲙⲁⲩ for ⲕⲁⲟⲙⲁ
 237:8 ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 237:11 ⲁⲓⲁⲩⲁ for ⲁⲓⲁ
 239:8 ⲛⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁ (MS ⲛⲉⲩⲉⲩ) for ⲛⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 240:7 ⲙⲁ for ⲙ
 240:10 ⲛⲉⲩⲁ for ⲛⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 244:2 ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ (ⲁ added later) for ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕ
 249:3 ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓⲟ for ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓ
 255:8 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲉ
 259:18 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 260:6 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩ one would expect ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 261:26 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ perhaps for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 268:3 ⲙⲁⲩ read rather ⲙⲁⲩⲁ (ⲙⲁⲩ in Peshittā)
 268:11 ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩ for ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁ or ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩⲟ
 270:17 ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 270:23 ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 271:13 ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓⲟ for ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓ
 271:21 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 272:27 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ

phonetic spelling of ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 273:19 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ
 275:7 ⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲩⲁ
 275:20 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 ⲕⲉⲩⲉ (Ettaph. of ⲕⲉⲩⲉ)
 278:15 ⲕⲉⲩⲉ for ⲕⲉⲩⲉ
 278:16 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 281:19 ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁ for ⲙⲟⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ (see also 302:23, 311:1, 345:6)
 282:23 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ or ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ as in line 20
 283:1 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 286:4 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 286:4, 12, 15 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 282:6 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁ (ⲕⲁⲕⲁ); see Chabot, *Chronicon* II, 348 n. 1
 286:18 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 287:12 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ
 290:5 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 290:7-8 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ or ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ
 290:9 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩⲁⲩ
 290:19 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 292:28 ⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲩⲁ
 293:19 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 294:30 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ (ⲕⲉⲩⲁ)
 297:3 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 297:17 ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲉⲩ
 298:16 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ (ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ)
 300:22 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ
 301:28 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁ
 303:7 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ (Ethpa. 3 f.p. perfect)
 303:12 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 311:26 ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓ † for ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓⲟ (= Peshittā)
 312:28 ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓ for ⲙⲁⲓⲁⲓⲟ (as in line 24)
 313:29 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 317:14 ⲕⲉⲩⲁ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ
 323:25 ⲕⲁⲕⲁ for ⲕⲁⲕⲁⲕⲁ
 325:1 ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ for ⲕⲉⲩⲁⲩ (= Peshittā)

- 325:23 כִּי for כִּי
- 325:25 לִי לִי : לִי לִי for לִי לִי : לִי לִי
- 327:8 לִי לִי for לִי לִי
- 328:16 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (H; also Margoliouth, *Supplement*, 247)
- 329:1 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 333:1 לִי לִי for לִי לִי (=Peshittā)
- 335:5 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 336:10 חֵלֶל one would expect חֵלֶל (sing. חֵלֶל)
- 336:17 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 338:11 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (✓חֵלֶל)
- 339:9 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 341:19 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (H)
- 343:7 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (=Peshittā), or חֵלֶל
- 343:11 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (✓חֵלֶל)
- 347:22 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (✓חֵלֶל)
- 348:2 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (=Peshittā)
- 350:17 חֵלֶל† for חֵלֶל
- 351:4 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 351:7 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 351:13 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 351:16 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 351:25 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 351:27 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 352:3,4 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 354:28 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (✓Ethp. inf.)
- 355:17 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 355:12, חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 356:10 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 357:10 חֵלֶל (no dots over /r/) for חֵלֶל
- 358:20 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (Ethpe. of חֵלֶל)
- 361:1 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 361:18 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 361:21 חֵלֶל one would expect חֵלֶל
- 362:6 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 362:18 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 362:24 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (= Peshittā)
- 362:25 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 364:1 חֵלֶל† (see n. 1) for חֵלֶל
- 364:10 חֵלֶל (rubbed out in MS) for חֵלֶל
- 364:25 חֵלֶל (rubbed out in MS) for חֵלֶל
- 365:23 חֵלֶל (rubbed out in MS) for חֵלֶל
- 366:14 חֵלֶל (MS חֵלֶל as in note 3) both for חֵלֶל
- 366:24 חֵלֶל (rubbed out in MS) for חֵלֶל?
- 367:6 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (= Peshittā and H)
- 367:6 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (= Peshittā)
- 368:7 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 368:7 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (MS rubbed out at this spot)
- 369:15 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 370:6 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 373:8 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 374:11 חֵלֶל one would expect חֵלֶל
- 374:18 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 378:2 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (= Peshittā)
- 381:3 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 382:13 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 385:3 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 385:6 חֵלֶל [חֵלֶל] for חֵלֶל [חֵלֶל]
- 385:23 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 386:4 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 387:20 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 387:21 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 390:13 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 391:16 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל
- 395:31 חֵלֶל (added later) for חֵלֶל
- 397:29 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל (✓חֵלֶל?)
- 398:15 חֵלֶל for חֵלֶל?

Index of Biblical Quotations

(Books are listed in alphabetical order)

Acts

2:19 244 *n.2*
2:20 202 *n.1*
20:24 334 *n.4*
20:29 204 *n.4*
20:29-30 218 *n.1*
28:4 130 *n.3*

Amos

1:9 181 *n.7*
4:7-8a 275 *n.4*
4:9-10 186 *n.1*
4:10 201 *n.3*
4:10b 172 *n.2*
5:26 158 *n.1*
8:4-7 275 *n.1*
8:10 275 *n.2*
9:2 291 *n.4*

Chronicles, 1

28:9 279 *n.2*

Corinthians, 1

1:19 112 *n.2*, 269 *n.2*

Corinthians, 2

13:1 326 *n.10*

Daniel

1:12 47 *n.4*
3:19-23 66 *n.1*
3:31-35 99 *n.1*
4:24 68 *n.2*
5:2-3 229 *n.3*
9:25-27 240 *n.3*
9:26 248 *n.10*
9:27 248 *n.7*
11:24 63 *n.2*

Deuteronomy

5:17-21 279 *n.4*
5:18 279 *n.6*
19:15b 319 *n.3*, 326 *n.10*
24b-25b 259 *n.1*
28:61 273 *n.7*
32:7 139 *n.3*, 241 *n.6*
32:15 216 *n.2*, 230 *n.1*
32:16-17 207 *n.3*
32:22 259 *n.1*
32:23 313 *n.1*
32:23-25a 311 *n.3*
32:25a 315 *n.3*
32:46 139 *n.2*

Ecclesiastes

1:15 261 *n.3*
2:14 243 *n.4*
5:10 256 *n.3*

Ephesus

2:14-15 331 *n.3*

Exodus

5:9 230 *n.4*
10:14 186 *n.4*
10:20 130 *n.1*
12:28 230 *n.5*
15:5 130 *n.2*
17:4 242 *n.3*
22:25 279 *n.4*
23:6-8 279 *n.5*

Ezekiel

1:12 264 *n.4*
7:17 174 *n.1*
21:3 96 *n.2*
30:12 223 *n.4*

Ezra

4:12 190 n.5
 4:16 190 n.5
 5:3 190 n.5
 5:9 190 n.5
 12:28 246 n.5

Genesis

1:1 327 n.2
 1:3 207 n.1
 1:14 207 n.1
 1:16 207 n.2
 1:22-24 155 n.4
 3:17-18 185 nn.3, 4
 8:4 205 n.1
 16:1-15 148 n.2
 18:17 278 n.2
 18:19a 279 n.1
 18:20a 279 n.1
 19:24 205 n.3
 22:9-11 334 n.2
 41:18-21 102 n.1

Habakkuk

1:6-7a 180 n.1
 1:8 318 n.2
 1:8-9a 180 n.2
 1:9 317 n.7, 318 n.3
 1:9a 180 n.4
 1:10 180 n.5, 181 n.2
 2:16a 290 n.6
 2:16-17 311 n.5
 2:16b-17 291 n.1
 3:2 107 n.3

Haggai

1:6 122 n.2
 1:9a 274 n.4
 1:9b-11 274 n.3

Hebrews

1:1-2 262 n.1
 4:15 331 n.2
 11:13 225 n.3
 12:8 323 n.6

Hosea

1:9 323 n.9, 326 n.9
 9:7b 295 n.3
 9:8b 295 n.4
 13:7-8 241 n.1
 13:15-16 241 n.2

14:9 120 n.1

Isaiah

1:2b-7a 322 n.4
 1:11-16 246 n.4
 1:15 322 n.5
 1:21-23a 284 n.4
 1:23 220 n.1, 241 n.5, 292 n.3
 1:28 99 n.2
 3:4-5 181 n.3
 3:4b-5 284 n.5
 3:9 285 n.3
 3:12 282 n.1
 3:17 263 n.2
 3:18 326 nn.4, 7
 3:18a 329 n.5
 3:18-19 325 n.9
 3:18-24 263 n.3
 3:24 325 n.10
 5:25 247 n.9, 298 n.2
 5:25a 313 n.4
 6:13 100 n.5, 169 n.7, 210 n.3
 7:18-19 178 n.4
 8:14-15 291 n.2
 9:17 231 n.5
 9:21 278 n.1
 10:5 272 n.3
 10:5-6 138 n.2, 231 n.3
 10:5-6a 178 n.3
 10:8 231 n.4
 10:14 330 n.6
 10:14b 231 n.6, 313 n.6
 10:23 298 n.1
 10:24-25 323 n.2
 10:24b-25a 262 n.4
 10:28-29 232 n.1, 240 n.2
 10:32 232 n.2
 13:7 174 n.2
 13:14 296 n.2
 13:21b-22a 296 n.3
 14:17 223 n.5
 14:29 316 n.4
 15:2 174 n.3
 18:6 311 n.4
 21:9 212 n.4
 22:2-5a 319 n.4
 22:12 319 n.4
 24:1-5 294 n.1
 24:1b-2 293 n.8

- 24:3 100 n.3
 24:4 100 n.2, 107 n.5, 172 n.3
 24:6 100 n.1
 24:6a 314 n.2
 24:6-7 95 n.3, 169 n.4
 24:6b-11 294 n.2
 24:16b-20 293 n.7
 24:17 213 n.1
 24:18 301 n.1, 317 n.1
 24:19 100 n.7
 24:19-20 100 n.4, 169 n.6, 177 n.5,
 197 n.2
 26:20 262 n.3, 323 n.3
 28:8 314 n.2
 28:10 297 n.4
 28:12-13a 314 n.3
 29:9 170 n.2, 325 n.7
 29:14 112 n.2
 37:10-13 208 n.5
 37:29 209 n.4, 215 n.2
 37:34 209 n.3, 215 n.2
 41:25 175 n.2
 43:13a 330 n.7
 51:17b-20 308 n.1
 53:6 323 n.8
 53:12 329 n.6, 331 n.4
- Jeremiah**
 1:14 175 n.3
 2:10b-11 326 n.8
 2:10b-13 322 n.1
 2:13 326 n.5, 327 n.6
 2:14b-15 322 n.2
 2:17-19 322 n.3
 4:22-23a 285 n.1, 295 n.5
 5:5b-6 285 n.2
 6:21 174 n.5
 6:22-25 175 n.1
 7:33-34 287 n.1
 8:1-2 286 n.2, 309 n.2
 8:2b 291 n.5
 8:3 286 n.4
 8:18-21 320 n.1
 8:21 95 n.1, 169 n.1
 9:1 102 n.4, 116 n.1, 168 n.4
 9:1-3 320 n.1
 9:4-5 267 n.1
 9:10 168 n.5
 9:12 120 n.1
- 9:15 274 n.2
 9:15-16 188 n.2
 9:15b-16 296 n.1
 9:15b-16a 271 n.3, 303 n.1
 9:15b-16b 304 n.2
 9:17 169 n.5
 9:17 95 n.4
 9:18 168 n.6
 9:20-21 168 n.7
 9:21 96 n.1
 9:22 168 n.8
 12:13 185 n.5
 14:2b-6 167 n.2
 14:16 306 n.1
 14:18 306 n.1, 311 n.7
 15:1-3 167 n.1, 298 n.3
 15:1b-3 311 n.6
 18:11 63 n.2
 22:19 92 n.1, 109 n.1, 111 n.3
 24:10 170 n.1
 25:15 274 n.1
 25:15-17 290 n.2
 25:27 290 n.3
 25:29b-31a 290 n.4
 29:17 276 n.8
 48:43-44 213 n.1
 50:2 103 n.1
 50:41 101 n.1
 51:1-2 103 n.1
 51:46b 297-298 n.5
 51:58 190 n.3
- Job**
 1:21 326 nn.3, 6
 3:25 193 n.5, 210 n.2
 3:25-26 291 n.6
 3:26 193 n.6
 13:27 272 n.4
 39:29 243 n.3
- Joel**
 1:2-3 325 n.5
 1:2-4 187 n.2, 238 n.3
 1:3 241 n.7
 1:4 206 n.10, 316 n.6
 1:5a 325 n.6
 1:5b 325 n.8
 1:5-6 241 n.3
 1:6b-7 319 n.1, 323 n.10

- 1:7 241 *n.4*, 325 *n.2*
 1:9a 296 *n.4*
 1:13 95 *n.2*, 314 *n.4*
 1:13-16 263 *n.1*
 1:13a 169 *n.2*
 1:13b 169 *n.3*
 2:2-4 179 *n.1*
 2:3 321 *n.7*
 2:4b-7a 179 *n.2*
 2:9-10a 179 *n.3*
- John
- 1:1-3 327 *n.3*
 11:34 154 *n.2*
 13:11 328 *n.2*
 13:26 328 *n.4*
- John, 1
- 1:1 63 *n.1*
- Jonah
- 2:3 321 *n.3*
 2:5-6 321 *n.3*
- Judges
- 12:34-39 334 *n.3*
- Kings, 1
- 12:8 191 *n.2*
- Kings, 2
- 1:3 156 *n.3*
 2:24-25 158 *n.3*
 18:4 47 *n.3*
 18:28-35 208 *n.5*
 23:19 47 *n.3*
- Lamentations
- 1:4b 302 *n.3*
 1:6a 302 *n.3*
 1:8 270 *n.2*
 1:9b-10a 302 *n.3*
 1:10 270 *n.3*
 2:6 270 *n.7*
 2:7 270 *n.5*
 2:8 190 *n.4*
 2:15 273 *n.5*
 2:16 273 *n.4*
 3:49-53 300 *n.3*
 4:4 307 *n.5*
 4:5 307 *n.2*
 4:8-9 307 *n.3*
 5:11 302 *n.4*
- 5:12 273 *n.3*
- Leviticus
- 25:37 224 *n.6*, 280 *n.6*
- Luke
- 9:23 230 *n.6*
 12:53 228 *n.4*
 22:37 329 *n.6*
- Mark
- 4:24 210 *n.4*
 13:24 202 *n.1*
 15:21 213 *n.5*
 22:21 328 *n.3*
- Matthew
- 6:24 329 *n.7*
 7:2 210 *n.4*
 7:15 248 *n.3*
 7:15-20 218 *n.2*
 7:17 204 *n.5*
 10:12 83 *n.2*
 10:14 157 *n.4*
 10:33 333 *n.2*
 10:35 228 *n.4*
 11:15 119 *n.7*
 13:9 119 *n.7*
 16:27 210 *n.5*
 18:7 52 *n.2*
 18:16 326 *n.10*
 22:37 279 *n.3*
 22:39 279 *n.3*
 24:6 202 *n.2*
 24:12 287 *n.2*
 24:15 202 *n.3*
 24:19-21 202 *n.4*
 24:23 248 *n.6*
 24:24 248 *nn.4, 8*
 24:26 248 *n.6*
 26:41 119 *n.6*
- Micah
- 1:8 329 *n.2*
 1:8-9a 325 *n.3*
 1:11 325 *n.4*
 2:1-2a 284 *n.7*
 5:10 201 *n.4*
 6:12-15 284 *n.8*
 6:14 305 *n.1*
 6:15 274 *n.5*
 7:2-4a 283 *n.2*

- 7:5a 283 *n.3*
 7:6 228 *n.5*
 7:10 291 *n.5*
Nahum
 2:5b-6 179 *n.4*
 2:10b 179 *n.5*
 3:16 295 *n.6*
Numbers
 16:30 88 *n.5*
 16:33 88 *n.5*
Obadiah
 4 295 *n.1*
 6 295 *n.2*
Peter
 22:22 121 *n.5*
Philippians
 2:7 331 *n.1*
 3:2 121 *n.4*
Proverbs
 3:12 323 *n.4*
 5:4 264 *n.5*
 8:33 113 *n.4*
 15:25 225 *n.6*
 19:25 248 *n.2*, 271 *n.2*
 26:11 121 *n.5*, 249 *n.2*
 29:12 223 *n.7*, 271 *n.1*, 292 *n.1*
 30:21 324 *n.3*
 30:22-23 324 *n.4*
 30:23 329 *n.3*
Psalms
 3:2 208 *n.2*, 332 *n.2*
 8:9 56 *n.4*
 10:7 280 *n.5*
 12:2-3 280 *n.3*
 14:1 267 *nn.3-4*
 14:3 267 *n.4*
 15:5 280 *n.7*
 17:3b 280 *n.1*
 18:14 243 *n.6*
 18:37 224 *n.4*
 18:41 224 *n.4*
 22:7 330 *n.5*
 35:10 211 *n.1*
 36:6 105 *n.1*, 171 *n.4*
 37:1-2 225 *n.4*
 37:21 282 *n.3*
 38:11 325 *n.1*
 41:9 324 *n.5*
 44:12 330 *n.3*
 52:2 267 *n.4*
 52:4 267 *n.4*
 53:2 267 *n.3*
 53:6 267 *n.5*
 55:21b 263 *n.5*, 281 *n.1*
 58:2 280 *n.4*
 59:6 284 *n.2*
 60:3 290 *n.5*
 64:3-5 284 *n.1*
 64:7-8 243 *n.5*
 66:11 271 *n.4*
 66:12 272 *n.1*
 68:22 211 *n.2*
 69:2 321 *n.1*
 69:3b 321 *n.2*
 74:1-2 247 *n.1*
 74:2 332 *n.1*
 74:4 247 *n.2*
 74:6-7 247 *n.3*
 74:10 331 *n.6*
 74:10-11 247 *n.4*
 74:11 331 *n.8*
 76:30 158 *n.2*
 78:46 187 *n.1*
 78:49-50 230 *n.2*
 78:62 107 *n.4*
 79:1 314 *n.1*
 79:1-2 245 *n.5*
 80:4 331 *n.7*
 80:7 330 *n.4*
 82:5 157 *n.3*
 84:7a 297 *n.3*
 90:6 225 *n.5*
 92:6 157 *n.5*
 101:5 280 *n.2*
 104:22-23 180 *n.3*
 106:40-42 247 *n.5*
 106:43 247 *n.6*
 107:8-10 208 *n.2*
 107:27 98 *n.3*, 112 *n.3*, 175 *n.5*, 211
 n.3
 109:16 212 *n.3*
 109:17-18 284 *n.3*
 115:11 267 *n.2*
 118:18 323 *n.5*

- 118:24 *191 n.3*
118 (119):137 *107 n.1*
129:3 *272 n.2*
147:2 *163 n.7*
- Revelation
19:15 *71 n.2*
19:20 *255 n.2*
20:4 *236 n.2*
- Romans
1:27 *55 n.1*
16:17-18 *121 n.1*
- Samuel, 1
4:11 *205 n.2*
14:14 *164 n.8*
16:1ff. *224 n.3*
- Samuel, 2
6:2 *59 n.3*
- Sirach
13:23 *244 n.6*
19:29-30 *219 n.1*
31 (34):23 *190 n.6*
- Thessalonians, 1
5:21-22 *121 n.3*
- Thessalonians, 2
2:3 *248 n.9*
- Timothy, 1
6:10 *256 n.2, 276 n.13*
- Zechariah
5:3 *315 n.4*
14:6 *287 n.3*
- Zephaniah
1:8-9 *269 n.1*
1:13-17a *269 n.3*
2:10 *269 n.4*
3:3-4a *284 n.6*
3:4 *246 n.3*

Index of Place Names

- Abarnê 38 & n.11, 65 n.2
Abila 50
Abne 58
Acco 39
Adhoulis (see also Azulis) 76 n.5
Adiabene 276 n.7
Aegea 50
Africa 101, 209
Aiggyptos 131, 217
Alabanda 51
Aleppo 9, 41 & n.3, 48 n.2, 50 & nn.7, 10, 53, 58 n.8, 144
Alexandria (Great) 37, 41, 46, 48, 49, 50, 60, 70, 77 n.2, 84, 85 & n.3, 86, 96 n.4, 97, 99, 109, 114, 115, 120, 121, 122, 124, 131, 132, 134, 136, 192, 217
Alexandria Minor 50
Alfâf (Mount) 229 n.1
Alinda 51
Allân 159 nn.1-2, 206 & n.8
Alzn 70 n.1
Amida 2, 3 & n.8, 6, 15, 18, 29, 31, 40 & nn.3-5, 41, 42, 49, 50, 51, 58 n.7, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 65 n.2, 66, 70 n.3, 113, 114, 115, 116 & n.2, 117, 118, 119, 124, 136, 137, 141, 142, 144, 148, 149, 153, 156, 158, 160 n.1, 165, 176, 182 n.2, 183 n.1, 184 n.2, 188 n.5, 192, 194, 195 & n.1, 199, 204, 206, 215, 218, 223, 224, 228 & n.2, 236 n.1, 298, 305, 308, 313, 318, 319, 320
'Anat 231
Anatolia 128 n.4
Anazarbus 41 & n.10, 50, 74
Anemurion 51
Antarados 125, 134
Antioch (Great) 18, 37, 38 n.1, 41 n.3, 46 & n.4, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53 & n.2, 55 & nn.3, 6, 56, 59, 61, 64, 69, 70 & n.8, 71 & n.3, 72, 73, 74, 86 & n.9, 87, 88 & n.6, 89, 90 & nn.4, 6, 91, 101, 113, 114, 124, 132, 136, 137, 140, 141, 144, 146, 148, 149, 150 n.4, 158, 176, 192, 193, 204, 216, 217
Antioch on the Tigris 70 n.8, 86 & n.3
Anzitene 70 & nn.1, 5, 188 n.1, 191
Apameia 41 & n.5, 47, 50, 53
Aphrah 325
Aphrodisias 51
'Aqra (mountains of) 276 n.3
'Âqûlâ 178 & n.5, 189, 206, 260 & nn.5-6, 276 & n.12, 277
Arabia 47, 53, 60, 125, 129, 134
Ârâm 225 & n.1
Araraṭ 205 n.1
Araxes river 40 n.4, 213 n.4
Armenia 2, 38 n.8, 39 n.1, 40 n.4, 42, 50 n.5, 86 n.8, 87, 114, 123, 143 n.10, 150, 159 & n.2, 160, 174 n.4, 188, 189 n.4, 190, 209, 213, 235, 278, 300, 320
Armenia II 86 n.8
Armenia, Fourth 190, 235, 300
Arsamosata 39 & n.1, 41, 51, 150 n.5, 222 & nn.1-2
Ar-ṣa-ni-a 150 n.6

- Arsaias (Murad Su) river 39 n.1, 51 n.9, 123 n.1, 150 & nn.5-6, 222 & n.1
 Arsinoe 51 & n.9
 Arvad 144 & n.5
 Arzan-al-rūm (see also Erzerum) 213 n.4
 Arzancan 207 n.4
 Arzanene 70 n.1, 123 & n.1, 192, 218 n.3, 313 & n.2
 Arzen 123 n.1, 218 & n.3, 224, 298, 302, 320
 Arzn 70 n.1
 Arzrum 123 n.1
 Ashkelon 96
 Asia 19, 51, 92, 99, 112 n.1, 113, 114, 120, 121, 122, 123, 133, 138, 150, 172
 Asia Minor 18, 19, 44 n.3, 92 n.3, 123 n.1
 Asmara 76 n.5
 Assyria 41 n.13, 178, 322
 Āthūr 41 n.13
 Axoum 76 n.3
 'Ayn Garrā 175 & n.6
 'Ayn-Haylaf 59
 Ayshūmā (Mount) 195 & n.1
 Azarbayjān 2,
 Azulis (see also Adhoulis) 76 & n.5
 Ba'albeck 126, 127
 Ba'alhan 13, 194 & n.1
 Babylon 47, 102, 212
 Babylonia 33
 Ba-da-ni, URU 41 n.2
 Bag-da-du-um 220 n.3
 Baghdad 220 & n.3, 221 n.2, 245 n.3, 253, 255, 271, 289 n.2
 Baishān 209 & n.2
 Balad 183 n.2, 253 & n.3
 Balat 253 n.3
 Balīkh river 41 n.8, 58 n.1, 161 n.1
 Bālis 146 n.1, 161 n.2
 Bārimmā 249 n.1
 Baṣra 168 n.2, 260 & n.6
 Baṭnan (of Sarūg) 41 & n.2, 56, 67, 144, 146
 Batrūn 128 n.4
 Beirut 40 & n.1, 125, 129-131, 134
 Bet Betan 232, 240
 Bēth Aphthonia 46 n.9
 Bēth 'Arābāyē 58, 308 & n.2
 Bēth Ārāmāyē 41 & n.13, 97 n.2, 163 & n.5
 Bēth Arsham 19, 39 n.1, 44 & n.5, 78 & n.1
 Bēth Balish 160, 161 & n.1
 Bēth Garmai 276 & n.1
 (Bēth) Ma'dē 160 & n.1, 184
 Bē(th) Nūhadhra 194 & n.4, 276 & n.11
 Bēth Qardū 205 n.1
 Bēth Qēdūnā 198
 Bēth Rāmā 249 & n.1
 Bēth Sherlā 60 n.3
 Bēth Shilā 60 & n.3
 Bēth Shūra 60 n.3
 Bethany 154
 Bilād al-Nabat 41 n.13
 Birta 6
 Bithynia 99, 124, 172
 Black Mountain 150 & n.4
 Black Sea 99 n.5, 161 n.3
 Bokhtan river 123 n.1
 Bosporus 75
 Boṣra 260 n.6
 Botrys 128 & n.4, 129
 Bukhārā 20
 al-Buṣayrah 41 n.7
 Byblos 125, 134
 Byzantium 19, 75 n.1, 96 n.4, 108 n.1, 161 n.6
 Caesarea, in Cappadocia 51 n.5, 161 n.3, 210
 Caesarea, in Palestine 125, 143 & n.11, 161 n.4
 Callinicum (see also Raqqa) 41, 51 & n.3, 58 n.1, 114, 140 n.2, 165, 192, 194, 195, 204, 216, 231 & n.2, 232, 233 & n.1, 240, 320, 324
 Callinicum, Second 231 & n.2, 233 & n.1
 Cappadocia 29, 50, 99, 150, 152 n.1, 161 n.3, 172, 201
 Caria 19, 51, 92
 Carthage 101
 Caspian Gates 159 n.1

- Caspian Sea 159 n.1
 Caucasus 206 n.9
 Çermük 38 n.11
 Chalcedon 37 & n.3, 46-52, 56-58, 60, 61, 85, 114, 115, 120, 131, 133
 Chalcis 48 n.2
 Chaldea 163 n.5
 Chersonese 51 n.4
 Chios, Island of 114
 Cilicia 41 nn.6, 10, 50, 74, 99, 123, 172
 Cilician Gates 152 n.1
 Circesium 41 & n.7, 51, 161 n.1
 City of the Sun (see Ba'albeck)
 Claudia 86 & n.8, 87 n.1
 Coloneia 50
 Constantinople 18, 19, 31, 37, 38 & n.1, 39 n.3, 42, 44, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 56, 70, 75, 84 n.1, 91, 94 n.1, 99, 102 & n.5, 103, 104, 112, 114, 116 n.2, 120, 122, 124, 134 & n.1, 135 nn.2, 4, 136, 151 & n.3, 161, 217
 Corinth 74, 93 n.2
 Ctesiphon 39 n.1, 44 n.5, 70 n.8, 86 n.3
 Cydnus river 123 n.2
 Cyprus 144
 Cyrrhus 50 & n.10, 132
 Cyzicus 93 & n.2, 134 & n.3
 Dafnā 312 n.2
 Damascus 50 & nn.8-9, 58 n.2, 114, 143 n.3, 175 n.6, 176
 Danube river 75 n.1
 Daphne 73, 89
 Dara 42 & n.3, 51, 143 & n.9, 156, 181 n.4, 189, 192, 194, 204, 220, 250, 324
 Dardania 38 n.4, 74 n.2
 Dāsan 276 & n.5
 Dayr Jundī 194 n.4
 Dayṣān river 68, 69, 165
 Delta (Egypt) 96 n.4
 Derbend 159 n.1
 Desert of Scete 2
 Desert of the Hermits 53
 Diocaesarea 51 n.5
 Diyār-Bakr 40 n.3, 188 n.5
 Dvin 143 & n.10
 Dyrrhachium 38, 74
 Eden 179, 321
 Edessa 6, 9, 13, 17, 29, 31, 32, 37 & n.1, 39 & n.1, 40, 41 & n.2, 45 n.1, 46 & n.1, 47 n.7, 48 & n.2, 50 n.7, 51, 55, 56, 57 & n.1, 58 nn.1, 3-4, 6-7, 65, 68, 69, 114, 118, 124, 133 n.1, 137, 140 & n.6, 141 n.4, 143 & n.9, 144, 146 & n.12, 148, 149, 153, 156, 160, 165, 166, 176, 183, 184 & nn.1, 4, 6, 192, 194, 195, 198-200, 206, 222, 246 n.2, 247, 269, 315, 324, 327, 329 n.1, 334
 Egypt 2, 8, 10, 48 & n.4, 76, 94 n.1, 96 n.4, 97, 99, 163, 178, 209, 223 n.3, 237 n.1, 322, 323
 Elul 182
 Emesa 175, 194 n.1
 Enzite 150 n.6, 207 n.6, 208 & n.4
 En-zi-te 70 n.1
 Ephesus 18, 19, 21, 22, 28, 30, 37, 41, 47 n.1, 51, 61 n.3, 64 n.3, 66 n.2, 84 nn.1, 4, 91 n.4, 92 n.3, 94 nn.1-2, 114 & n.5, 120, 121, 122 n.1, 123, 126 n.1, 131 nn.1, 3, 168 nn.2-3, 172 n.1, 307 n.1
 Epidamnus 38 n.4, 74 n.2
 Epiphania 50
 Epirus 74
 Erbil 276 n.2
 Erevan 143 n.10
 Erzerum 40 n.4, 213 n.4
 Eski Mosul 253 n.3
 Ethiopia 76 nn.3, 5, 85 n.2, 96 n.4
 Euchaita 44
 Euphrates 3, 6, 38 n.11, 39 & n.1, 40 n.4, 41 nn.3, 7-8, 47 n.6, 51 nn.1-3, 9, 66, 67, 69, 70 n.1, 78 n.3, 86, 123 n.1, 141, 150 nn.5-6, 161 n.1, 165, 171, 175, 179, 193, 194 n.2, 207 n.4, 213 n.4, 222 n.2, 322
 Euphratesia 47
 Europe 21
 Europos 51 n.2
 Faramā, el- 96 n.4
 Gabbūlā 78 & n.1
 Gabīthā 143 & nn.3-4

- Galata 108 n.1
Galatia 99, 172
Galilee 129
Gallipoli Peninsula 51 n.4
Gate of the land of the Turks 159 & n.1, 174 & n.4
Gaza 96
Geba' (of Saul) 232, 240
Germanicia 51 & n.1, 151 n.1
Gōmal 276 n.3
Gomorrah 250, 279
Great Ocean 76
Great Sea 76
Greece 74
Gubbā Barrāyā 140 n.2
Gumathena 64 n.4
Gumtā 64 n.4
Hābūrā 13, 194 & n.2, 222
Hadriane 51
Hāh 58 n.5, 219 & n.5, 250, 312 n.2
Halicarnassus 51, 121
Hanī (canal) 161 & n.1
Hanigalbat 51 n.3
Hārbaz 218 & n.4
Hārē river 183
Harmiš river 196 n.4
Harrān 2, 8, 15, 16, 30, 31, 40, 41 & n.2, 51, 56, 68, 114, 141, 153, 156, 166, 176 & n.5, 184, 189, 192, 193, 194, 202, 203, 219, 220, 222, 231, 235, 252, 273 n.8, 315, 321, 324, 329, 332 & n.4, 333, 334
Hārūrā' 164 n.3
Haurān 260 n.6
Hāzrō 182 & n.2, 183
Hāzzā 276 & n.2
Hebdomon 135 & nn.2-3
Heliopolis 50 n.8
Hemerion 51 & n.2
Hendibānē 58
Herat 217 & n.3
Hermon (Mount) 126 n.6
Hierapolis 41 & n.6
Hijāz 166 n.5
Himyar 77 n.4, 78 n.1, 85 n.2, 115 n.2
Hirmās river 196 n.4
Hirtā of (Bēth) Nu'mān 78 & n.3, 81, 84 n.2, 114, 122 & n.3, 124
Hiṣn Kifā 312 n.2
Hōrīn 50 & n.9
Hu-da-du-um 220 n.3
Iberian Gates 159 n.1
Iconia / Iconium 99, 172
India 76 & n.3, 209
Indus Valley 206 n.7
Ingila 70 nn.2-3
Iraq 41 n.13, 112 n.5, 164 nn.3, 5, 168 n.2, 178 n.1, 179 n.8, 181 n.1, 196 n.3, 260 n.6
Irenopolis 50
Isauria 151 n.1
Isba 51 & n.8
Ismī 124 n.3
Israel 163, 230, 322
Italy 132
Izlā (Mount) 177
Jabbūl 78 n.2
Jaghjagh 196 n.4
Jazīra 13, 16, 17 n.1, 20, 21, 25, 27, 30, 31, 41 n.13, 143 & n.6, 145, 156, 161 n.3, 166, 175, 176 & nn.4-5, 177, 180 & n.7, 186 n.2, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195 & n.3, 196, 197, 198, 201, 204, 206, 207, 213, 215, 217, 220, 222, 223 n.3, 224, 225 & n.1, 230, 232, 233, 234, 235, 237 & n.1, 238, 240, 248, 250, 251, 254, 258 & n.1, 271, 275 n.5, 289 & n.2, 308 n.2, 316 n.1, 317 n.6, 318, 320, 332 & n.6, 334
Jazīrat-ibn-'Umar 205 n.1
Jerusalem 37, 41, 46, 48, 49, 70, 94, 96, 114, 119, 136, 141, 167, 168, 232, 233, 240 & n.1, 253, 270, 286, 306, 309
Jordan river 209 n.2
Jubayl 128 n.4
Judah 286, 309
Jullāb river 58 n.7
Kalenderis 51
Kamakhon 207 n.5
Karin, city 213 n.4
Karkh-Selōkh 276 n.1
Karmā 194 & n.3, 276 & n.10
Karnoy-K'alak' 213 n.4

- Kedar 326
 Kefar-Tūthā 177 n.4, 232 & n.5
 Kestroi 51
 Khābūr 8, 41 nn.7, 9, 197
 Kharput 39 n.1
 Khazars 206 & n.9, 231 n.1
 Khāzīr 276 n.3
 Khōnīshabūr 276 & n.4
 Khonokhora 51 & n.10
 Khorasan 2, 178 n.1, 206, 217 n.3
 Kilissa-Hissar 152 n.1
 Kirkuk 276 n.1
 Küçük Çekmece 135 n.3
 Kūfā 146 n.5, 164 n.3, 178 n.5, 206,
 260 nn.5-6, 276 n.12, 277 n.1
 Laodicea 18, 41, 50, 90 & nn.4, 6, 91
 114
 Latakia 41 n.4
 Lebanon 47, 126, 127, 128 n.4, 150,
 290, 311
 Ligin 60, 62
 Litarbā 9
 Lusonia 172 & n.1
 Lycaonia 151 n.1
 Lydia 19, 92, 162 n.2
 Ma'althāyā 194 n.4
 Mabbug 41 & n.6, 46, 48, 50, 53, 177,
 193, 194
 Macedonia 117, 159
 Macius river 196 n.4
 Macrikey 135 n.2
 Madāyē river 58 & n.7
 Madh^cbhā 65 & n.2
 Madīnat-al-Salām 220 n.3
 Maeander river 51
 Maipharqat 176, 181 & n.8, 182 &
 n.2, 189, 192, 224, 298, 302, 313,
 318
 Majdal 195 n.3
 Malatia/Malatya (see also Melitene)
 29, 70 n.1, 150 n.5, 162
 Mandane 51
 Maqlūb (Mount) 229 n.1
 Maraḡ 165 & n.3
 Mar'ash 151 n.1
 & n.1, 181 n.4, 192, 194, 204, 223,
 237
 Mardīn (see Mardē)
 Margā 276 & n.3
 al-Marī (canal) 161 n.1
 Marmara, Sea of 93 n.2, 134 n.3
 Mashē river 196 & n.4
 Maskene Qadīmeḡ 161 n.1
 Mauritania 231 n.1
 Mecca 141 n.6
 Media 209
 Medina 141 n.6
 Mediterranean Sea 47 n.6, 90 n.6
 Melitene (see also Malatia / Malatya)
 86 n.8, 150 & n.5, 162, 189, 190 &
 n.1, 201, 207 n.4, 213
 Meloe 51 n.7
 Melota 51 & n.7
 Meskene Qadīmeḡ 146 n.1
 Mesopotamia 2, 6, 19, 27, 41 n.13, 42,
 47, 60, 78 nn.3, 6, 97 & n.2, 99,
 115, 119, 143 & n.6, 163 n.5, 178
 n.5, 202, 220, 231, 275 n.5, 303,
 304, 318 n.4
 Meṣrīn 131, 217
 Michmash 231, 240
 Midiāt 124 n.5, 184 n.4, 219 n.5, 312
 n.2
 Mitylene 28
 Moesia 88 n.3, 99 & n.5, 172 n.1
 Mopsuestia 37 n.1, 41 n.10, 50, 132,
 152 n.1
 Mosul 7, 15, 16, 20, 21, 24, 30, 31, 41
 n.13, 112 n.5, 165 n.3, 175, 189 &
 n.1, 193, 194, 195, 198, 202 n.6,
 204, 205, 221 & n.2, 223, 224, 225
 n.2, 226, 228 n.2, 229 & nn.1-2, 232
 & n.4, 249, 250, 253 & n.3, 271,
 275, 276 & n.3, 289 & n.2, 305,
 312, 315, 316 n.1
 Murad Su 39 n.1, 51 n.9, 123 n.1, 150
 nn.5-6
 Najrān 19, 78 n.1, 79, 81
 Narsābād 224 & n.2, 225 n.2
 Natrūn (Wādī) 1, 2
 Nebi Uri 50 n.10
 Neocaesarea 51, 161 & nn.3-4

- Nicomedia 124 & n.3
 Nicopolis 38, 39 n.3
 Nineveh 138
 Nisibis 2, 10, 41, 42 n.3, 165 n.3, 179,
 196, 232 & n.5, 239, 246 n.2, 247,
 312, 315, 324
 Olbia 51
 Orontes river 90
 Osrhoene 47, 68, 143 n.6
 Palestine 18, 19, 53, 60, 96 & n.4, 97
 & n.2, 98, 99, 125, 129, 134, 141,
 143, 161 n.4, 171, 209 n.2
 Palmyra 50 & n.9, 166 n.5
 Palozonium 161 & n.5, 162
 Paradise 70 & n.5
 Pashpashat 182
 Pelusium 96 n.4
 Pergamon 114
 Perrhe 45 & n.1, 46, 51, 320
 Perrhe, sea of 53 n.2
 Persia 2, 53, 114 & n.3, 122, 123 n.1,
 140 n.6, 209, 227
 Pesilta 114 & n.1, 124, 136, 137
 Petra 60
 Pheison / Pheis(on) 181 & nn.6, 8,
 182
 Philadelphia 51
 Phoenicia 46, 47, 125, 126, 128 n.4,
 129, 134, 144 n.5
 Phrygia 19, 51 n.6, 92, 162 n.2
 Polhat 163 & n.2
 Pompeiupolis 88 & nn.3, 6, 90 n.4
 Pontus 44 n.3, 51 n.5, 161 n.3, 172
 n.1
 Prosidin 86
 Ptolemais (Acco) 39
 Qalinqala 213 & n.4, 215
 Qaluq 156
 Qamḥ 207 & n.4, 208, 228, 233
 Qardū (Mount / mountains of) 16, 30,
 204, 205 n.1
 Qartmīn 58 n.5, 124 & n.5, 176, 192,
 195, 222, 312 & n.1
 Qinnishrīn 3, 48 n.2, 50 & n.7, 53, 60,
 88 n.2, 114, 193, 194
 Qolosh 70 & n.3
 Qulab 181 & n.6, 182
 Qūq 276 & n.6
 Qurā 166 & n.5
 Rāfiqa 233 n.1
 Rama(t) 232, 240
 Ramlah 78 & n.5, 81 n.1
 Raqqa (see also Callinicum) 41 n.8,
 58 n.1, 146 n.1, 161 n.1, 233 n.1
 Ra's-al-'Ayn (see also Rēsh-'aynā) 41
 n.9, 176 n.2, 177 n.4, 195 n.3, 232
 n.5
 Ravenna 101
 Rawandūz 276 n.7
 Red Sea 76 n.5, 99 & n.4, 172
 Rēš-ēni 41 n.9
 Rēsh-'aynā (see also Ra's-al-'Ayn) 41,
 51, 324
 Rhegion 135 & n.3
 Rhodes 41
 Rome 37, 41, 46, 48, 49, 70, 101, 114,
 124, 132, 136, 138 n.1, 217
 Russia 159 n.1
 Ṣahiā (Mountain) 183 & n.2, 190 &
 n.8, 313 & n.3
 Salah 276 & n.7
 Salqaṭ river 214
 Samaria 129
 Samosata 51, 176, 192, 194, 195, 200,
 204, 218 n.4, 223, 320
 Sand, mountain 78 & n.5
 Sandalia 176 n.2
 Sarepta 125, 134
 Sarūg / Baṭnan of Sarūg 3, 13, 41 &
 n.2, 56, 67 & n.3, 144, 146, 148,
 204, 217
 Savur 51 n.3
 Ṣaydūn (see also Sidon) 46 & n.7
 Scete 2
 Sebasteia 50
 Seleucia, in Syria 50, 59, 60, 73, 89,
 90 n.6
 Seleucia, on the Tigris 44 n.5, 53 n.2
 Senir 126 & n.6
 Shaqlāwah 276 n.7
 Shapir 325
 Shihur 322
 Shūrā 51 & n.3, 58 n.5
 Shūru 51 n.3

- Sidon 39, 46 & nn.6-7, 125, 134
 Sidōn (see also Sidon) 46 & n.6
 Siffin 146 & n.1
 Sijistān 20, 217 & n.3
 Sind 2, 206 & n.7, 209, 231 n.1
 Singāra 164 n.5
 Sinjār 143 n.6, 164 & n.5, 194, 249 & n.3, 324
 Sinjār (Mount) 143 n.6, 164 n.5
 Sirmios 136 n.3
 Smyrna 114
 Sodom 205, 250, 279
 Sophanene 123 & n.1, 181 nn.6, 8
 Sozopolis of Pisidia 46
 'Stone Face' (mountain) 128 & n.6, 129
 Suf, Sea of (Red Sea) 99 n.4
 Şurta 70 & n.4
 Sycae 108 & n.1
 Synnada 161 n.6, 162 & n.2
 Syria 2, 7, 9, 18, 19, 24, 30, 31, 33, 48 n.4, 50 & nn.8-10, 51 n.3, 54, 56, 57, 59, 64, 70 n.8, 73, 78 n.2, 90 n.6, 99, 100, 120 n.2, 122, 125, 133, 143 n.4, 151 & n.1, 152, 176 n.2, 178, 181, 185, 188, 211, 213, 215 & n.3, 225 n.1, 289 n.1
 Tabaristān 20
 Tadmur (Palmyra) 50
 Tak-ri-i-ta-in 221 n.2
 Takrīt 194 & n.3, 221 & n.2, 223, 224, 225 n.2, 249, 276 & n.10
 Tarmal (Great) 158
 Tarsus 123
 Taurus 152 n.1, 183 n.2
 Tell-Bashmay 40 & n.8, 58, 176 n.2, 192, 193 n.1, 218
 Tell-Mahrē 3, 4, 9 n.3, 25
 Tell-Mashrīthā 177 & n.4
 Tella 40 & n.9, 41, 46, 48, 51, 60, 87, 118, 149, 156, 160 n.1, 184, 222, 315, 324
 Tella-d-Kūm 157, 158 & n.1, 206, 219, 220
 Tella-d-Mawzlat 58 & n.10, 114 n.1
 Territory of the Turks 174 n.4
 Thebes 76
 Theodosiopolis 40 & n.4, 213 n.4
 Thermae 50
 Thrace 100, 135 & n.4
 Thracian 51 n.4
 Tiberias 84
 Tigris 29, 53 n.2, 70 & nn.3-4, 86 n.3, 123 n.1, 165, 183 n.2, 185, 189 n.1, 205 & n.1, 215, 221 n.2, 249 n.1, 253 n.3, 276 nn.4-5, 10
 Tishpa 184 & n.2
 Trans-Jordan 48
 Tripolis 125, 128 n.4, 134, 145 & n.1
 Troas 128 n.4
 Tūr-'Abdīn 51 n.3, 124 n.5, 160 n.1, 194, 206, 219 n.5, 250, 312 & n.2
 Turkey 2, 58 n.9, 124 n.3
 Tutis 300
 Tyana 152 & n.1
 Tyre 39, 47, 125, 134
 Ugarit 41 n.4
 Viran-Şehir 40 n.9, 58 n.9
 Wadiya 83 & n.1
 Yabrud 50
 Yarmūk 143 nn.3-4
 Yathuth 178
 Zāb (rivers) 179 & n.9, 249 n.1, 276 nn.1, 3-6, 332
 Zaytā 161 n.1
 Zaytūn (canal) 160, 161 n.1
 al-Zaytūnah 161 n.1
 Zīād 207 & n.6
 Ziata 70 n.1
 Zion 190, 232, 263, 270, 291, 302, 308
 Zula 76 n.5
 Zuqnīn 2, 3 & n.8, 4, 6-10, 17 & n.1, 20, 28, 31, 70, 144, 176, 188 & n.5, 192, 199, 218, 219, 2221

Index of Personal Names

- Aaron (Bishop of Arsamosata) 41, 51
 Aaron (the Persian) 146
 Ābay (Bishop of Arzen) 192, 194, 195, 204, 218, 219, 223, 228
 ‘Abbās (brother of Caliph al-Manṣūr) 17 n.1, 21, 204, 206 & n.1, 207, 208, 213-215, 222, 231, 232, 236, 239, 240 n.1, 244, 253, 317 n.6, 332 & n.6, 334
 ‘Abbās (confused with Caliph ‘Alī) 145 n.8, 146 & n.5
 ‘Abbās (uncle of the Prophet Muḥammad) 145 & n.8, 146 & nn.2, 4, 7
 ‘Abbās ibn al-Walīd (I) 152, 166, 174 & n.6, 175
 ‘Abd-Allah Abul-‘Abbās (= al-Saffāh) 189 & nn.1-2, 4, 196 nn.1-2
 ‘Abd-Allah al-Baṭṭāl 161 n.6, 162
 ‘Abd-Allah al-Ḥakamī 159 n.2
 ‘Abd-Allah al-Rāsibī 164 n.3
 ‘Abd-Allah, son of ‘Alī (uncle of Caliph al-Manṣūr) 196 & nn.2, 7, 197
 ‘Abd-Allah, son of Marwān II 179
 ‘Abd-Allah, son of Muḥammad (= Caliph al-Manṣūr) 3, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 180 n.7, 181 n.4, 189 & nn.2-3, 192, 193 n.4, 196 & n.2, 201, 202 n.6, 207 nn.4-5, 208-209, 220 n.3, 223 n.3, 224, 228 n.2, 229 nn.2, 4, 232 n.4, 233 nn.1-2, 240 nn.4-5, 253, 277 n.1
 ‘Abd-al-‘Azīz (son of Ḥajjāj, Arab leader) 166 & n.4
 ‘Abd-al-Malik (Caliph) 147, 148, 150, 156, 164 n.1, 240 n.4
 Abraha (Ḥimyarite king) see Abraham
 Abraham (Bishop of Anzitene) 70
 Abraham Bar Kayli (Bishop of Amida) 58f., 60, 62-64, 66, 116 n.2
 Abraham (ascetic) 70 n.2
 Abraham (son of Euphrasius, priest) 78
 Abraham (king of the Ḥimyarites) 85 & n.2, 114
 Abraham (the Patriarch) 82, 138, 278, 279
 Abraham (Mār) 184 n.4
 Abramus (Ḥimyarite king) see Abraham
 Abū ‘Awn (Arab tax agent) 20, 240, 317 & n.5, 318
 Abū-Bakr (Caliph) 142 & n.5,
 Abū-Muslim (Arab military leader) 196 & n.2
 Aburin (Arab governor) 156
 Acacius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 37
 Adam (Biblical) 110, 111, 262, 282, 294, 331
 Adam (son of Yazīd, Arab official) 224
 Adday (the Visitor, of Paradise) 70
 Agapetius (Pope of Rome) 114
 Agathodorus (Bishop of Isba) 51
 Agrippa (king of the Heruli) 74
 Aḥūdemmeḥ (Catholicos of Persia) 114 & n.4
 ‘Akkī (= Muqātil ibn Ḥakīm, Arab governor) 180 & n.7, 191

- 'Akkī, (son of) 191
 Alexander (Bishop of Abila) 50
 Alexander (Bishop of Khonokhora) 51
 Alexander (of Macedonia) 18, 94, 117, 120, 133, 138, 159, 217
 'Alī (son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad) 145 n.8, 146 n.5, 150 n.2, 164 n.3
 Alimericus (Theoderic king of the Ostrogoths) 48 & n.5
 Amantius 50 & n.2, 125
 Ammonius 259 n.2
 Amos (the Prophet) 186, 201, 275
 Anastasius I (Emperor) 7, 37, 38 & n.5, 39 n.3, 41, 42 & n.5, 46-49, 74
 Anastasius II (Emperor) 149
 Anastasius (Bishop) 2
 Anastasius (Patriarch of Antioch) 136
 Anastasius (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 37
 Anastasius (the Kushite) 199, 200
 Anatolius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 37
 Andrew (the chamberlain) 50 & n.2
 Andug (king of the Kushites) 76, 77, 114
 Anthemius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 70, 114, 124
 Antithenes (the Cynic) 259 n.2
 Antoninus (Bishop of Aleppo) 41, 50
 Apion (father of Ephrem of Amida) 64 & n.2, 113
 Apollinarius (Patriarch of Alexandria) 124, 132, 136
 Arcadius 134 n.1
 Areobindus 43
 Arethas (son of Gabalas, King of the Arabs) 114
 Arsham 39 n.1, 44 n.5
 Artabas (son-in-law of Emperor Constantine) 161 & n.6, 162
 Asclepius (bar Mallāhē, Bishop of Edessa) 56 & n.1, 57, 69
 Ash'ath (son of) 206 & nn.1, 3
 Ashur-bel-kala (Assyrian king) 51 n.3
 Athanasius (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37, 48
 Athanasius I (Patriarch of Antioch) 140, 141, 144
 Athanasius II (Patriarch of Antioch) 147, 148
 Athanasius III (Patriarch of Antioch) 158 & n.4, 176
 Athanasius IV (Sandēlāiā, of Maipharaqat, later Patriarch) 176 & nn.2-3, 192 & n.4, 193 & n.1
 'Atīq 164
 'Awf 182, 183
 al-Azdī (Arab historian) 20, 21, 23
 Bar Hebraeus (Syriac author) 3, 24
 Bar-Sahdē (Bishop in Persia) 114
 Basil (Saint) 273 & n.10
 Bayṣar 19, 84
 Belisarius 59
 Belteshazzar (Biblical) 229
 Buraykah 181 & n.4, 183 & n.3, 189 & n.3
 Caiaphas 283 & n.1
 Cain (Biblical) 279, 320
 Calandion (Patriarch of Antioch) 37
 Celer (military general) 42
 Chosroes (King of the Persians / Sassanian king) 86, 111 n.1, 114, 140 n.6
 Constans II (son of Constantine III) 145 & n.4, 147 & n.2
 Constantine (Roman Emperor) 2, 18, 71, 138
 Constantine (error for Constans II) 145
 Constantine III (the Younger, Emperor) 145 & nn.3-4
 Constantine IV 147 & n.2, 148
 Constantine V (Emperor) 161 & n.6, 165, 189, 190
 Constantine (family name) 60
 Constantine (Bishop of Edessa) 156, 176
 Constantine (Bishop of Laodicea) 41, 50, 114
 Constantine (Bishop of Samosata) 176, 192, 194, 195, 204, 223
 Cosmas (Bishop of Amida) 31, 156, 157, 176

- Cosmas (of the monastery of Mār 'Aqībā) 48
 Cratius 124
 Cyriacus (Bishop of Amida) 116 n.2, 137, 141, 142
 Cyriacus (Bishop of Edessa) 17, 144, 146
 Cyriacus (Bishop of Ṭūr-'Abdīn) 194, 252
 Cyril (Patriarch of Alexandria) 46
 Cyrus (martyr of Ḥarrān) 2, 16, 17 & n.1, 30, 31, 321, 330, 332 & n.7, 333, 334
 Cyrus (the martyr, of Ligin) 60, 62
 Daḥḥāk (son of Qays al-Shaybānī) 177 & nn.1, 3
 Daniel (the Prophet) 240, 248, 255
 Darius 44 n.5
 Darrāj, ibn 234 n.4
 David (the Prophet) 279, 280, 283, 313, 320, 323, 331, 332
 David (Bishop of Dara) 192, 194, 204, 220 (anti-Patriarch) 202, 221, 223, 252, 276
 Dimnon / Dimnos (king of the Ḥimyarites) 76 & n.4
 Diocletian 74
 Dionysius (I, of Tell Mahrē, author) 3, 4, 9 & n.3, 25
 Dionysius I (Bishop of Ḥarrān) 8, 192, 194, 219 & n.4, 222
 Dionysius II (Bishop of Ḥarrān) 222
 Dioscorus (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37, 48
 Domninus (Patriarch of Antioch) 124, 132
 Domnus (Patriarch of Antioch) 37
 Dumachus 43 & nn.1-2
 Eli (father of Hophni and Phinehas) 205
 Elijah (of Jerusalem) 46, 48, 49
 Elijah (Patriarch of Antioch) 149, 153, 156, 158 & n.4
 Elijah (Bishop of Edessa) 222
 Elijah (the Prophet) 327
 Elijah (Bishop of Sinjār) 194
 Elijah (the Tishbite) 156
 Elisha (copyist of Zuqnīn) 2, 4-11, 14, 17
 Elisha (monk) 59, 158
 Elizabeth (mother of the Baptist) 332
 Entrechius (Bishop of Anazarbus) 41, 50
 Ephrem (the Amidean, Patriarch of Antioch) 49, 51, 54 59, 64, 65, 74, 86 & n.2, 90, 113
 Epiphanius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 48, 49, 70
 Esau (Biblical) 295
 Esimiphaeus (Sumayfa' Ašwa') 85 n.2
 Eunomius (of Amida) 114
 Euphemia (Empress) 49 n.3
 Euphemius (Bishop of Aphrodisias) 51
 Euphemius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 37, 38, 44 & n.3, 48
 Euphrasius (Patriarch of Antioch) 49, 54, 56, 69, 70, 72-74, 86 n.2
 Euphrasius (father of priest Abraham) 78
 Eusebianus (Bishop of Hadriane) 51
 Eusebius (Church Historian) 138
 Eustathius (Bishop of Perrhe) 51
 Eustochius (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 136 n.1
 Euthalius (Abbot of Zuqnīn) 2, 3 n.8, 219 & n.3
 Eutropius (Pseudo-bishop of Ephesus) 122
 Eutyches (theologian) 47
 Eutyches (= Paul, Patriarch of Antioch) 51
 Eutychius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 124, 132, 136
 Eutychius (for Eustochius, Patriarch of Jerusalem) 136 & n.1
 Ezekiel (the Prophet) 209
 Ezra (Biblical) 190
 Felix (Patriarch of Rome) 37, 41, 48
 Flavian (Patriarch of Antioch) 37, 46 & n.4, 48
 Flavian (Patriarch of Constantinople) 47 & n.1

- Fravitta (Patriarch of Constantinople) 37
- Gaianus (of Alexandria, the Phantasiast) 86 n.5, 115 & n.2
- Gemellinus (Bishop of Perrhe) 45 n.1, 46
- Gennadius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 37
- George (chorepiscopus of Amida) 2, 3 n.8
- George (the prefect) 141
- George (Patriarch of Antioch) 13, 193-195, 198, 199, 202, 204, 216-221, 276
- George (the Visitor) 228
- Gordius (King of the Huns) 75
- Grepes 74 n.12
- Grigor (the Urṭian) 183
- Grod 75 n.2
- Habakkuk (the Prophet) 180, 290, 311
- Habīb (Bishop of Edessa) 31, 149, 153-156
- Ḥabīb (Arab military leader) 145
- Hagar (Biblical) 148 & n.2
- Ḥārith (son of Ka'b / Kalb) 82 & n.1, 83
- Hārūn al-Rashīd (Caliph) 20, 21
- Ḥasan (son of Qaḥṭaba, Arab governor) 206 & nn.1-2
- Helpidius (Bishop of Kestroi) 51
- Heraclius (Emperor) 141 n.3, 142 & n.2, 143, 145 & n.3, 228 & n.2
- Heraclonas (Emperor) 145 n.4
- Hezekiah (Biblical) 47
- Hilarion (Bishop of Neocaesarea) 51
- Hilarius (Patriarch of Rome) 37
- Hishām (Caliph) 30, 156 & n.2, 159 & nn.1-2, 160, 161 & nn.1, 3, 164 & n.1, 165, 166, 168, 174, 209, 229
- Hophni 205
- Hormizdas (Patriarch of Rome) 48, 49, 70
- Hosea (Biblical) 295, 323
- Hubayrah, (son of) 179 & n.8
- Ḥumayd (son of Qaḥṭaba) 332 & n.6, 334
- Iannai (Bishop of Tella) 222
- Ibas, his *Letter* 132
- Ibrāhīm (Caliph) 166 & n.7, 168 n.1, 174 n.6, 175
- Ignatius (Saint) 46
- Isaac (Biblical) 334
- Isaac (Patriarch of Antioch) 192, 193 & n.4
- ʿĪsā (Koranic name of Jesus) 27, 327 & n.4, 328
- Isaiah (the Prophet) 175, 178, 240, 263, 284, 293, 296, 308, 311, 313, 314, 319, 322, 323, 325, 329
- Isidorus 134 & n.1
- Isidorus (Bishop of Qinnishrīn) 50, 60
- Ismael (son of Hagar, maid of Sarah) 148 n.2
- ʿIyād (Arab general) 143 & n.7
- Jacob (Biblical) 275
- Jaʿfar (son of Caliph al-Manṣūr) 228 n.2, 229 & nn.2, 4
- James (Bishop and Doctor of Baṭnan of Sarūg) 41, 56, 67 & n.3,
- James (Baradaeus, Bishop of Edessa) 114 & n.1, 124, 136, 137
- James (the Jew, Bishop of Edessa) 141 & n.4
- James (Bishop of Edessa) 9, 17, 131 n.1, 146, 148, 149
- al-Jarrāḥ (son of ʿAbd-Allah al-Ḥakamī, Arab general) 159 & n.2, 160
- Jephthah (Biblical) 334
- Jeremiah (the Prophet) 94, 115, 167, 168 & n.3, 174, 190, 266, 270, 285, 286, 290, 295, 296, 298, 300, 302, 307, 309, 311, 319, 327
- Jesse (Biblical) 224
- Job (Biblical) 210, 291
- Joel (the Prophet) 178, 187, 238, 314, 319, 321, 323, 325
- Johannes (Catholicos of Armenia) 114
- John (the Abbot) 17
- John (bar Aphthonia) 46 n.9, 48, 88 & n.2
- John I (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37, 46, 48

- John II (Patriarch of Alexandria) 48
 John (of Saint John's [of Alexandria])
 77 & n.2
 John (Bishop of Amida) 124, 136,
 137
 John (of Antioch) see Malalas
 John II (Patriarch of Antioch) 144 &
 n.7
 John (the Apostle) 255, 327
 John (Bishop of the Arabs) 141, 144
 John (of Asia) see John of Ephesus
 John (of [Mt] Ayshūmā, monk) 195
 John (Bishop of Callinicum) 114
 John (Bishop of Callinicum, anti-
 patriarch) 192, 194, 195, 198, 204
 & n.3, 216-218
 John (Patriarch of Constantinople)
 48, 49
 John (of Sirmios, Patriarch of Con-
 stantinople) 136 & n.3
 John (son of Daddī) 181-183, 189
 John (of Ephesus, Syriac author) 18,
 19, 21, 22, 28, 30, 61 n.3, 64 n.3, 66
 n.2, 84 nn.1, 4, 91 n.4, 92 & n.3, 94
 nn.1-2, 112 n.1, 113, 114 & n.5,
 120, 122 n.1, 123, 126 n.1, 131
 nn.1, 3, 133, 138, 168 nn.2-3, 172
 n.1, 307 n.1
 John (Bishop of Ephesus) 37
 John (brother of Ephrem, Patriarch
 of Antioch) 65, 66
 John (Bishop of Harrān) 41, 51
 John (Bishop of Hemerion) 51 & n.2
 John (Bishop of Hierapolis) 41
 John (Bishop of Hōrīn) 50
 John (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 49
 John (the Stylite of Litarbā) 9
 John (Bishop of Mopsuestia) 50
 John (Bishop of Pergamon) 114
 John (Bishop of Persia) 114
 John (Bishop of Qinnishrīn) 114
 John (Bishop of Tadmur [Palmyra])
 50
 John (Bishop of Tella) 41, 46, 48, 51,
 87
 John (monk of Zuqnīn) 70
 John the Baptist, Saint 144
 John's, Saint 77 & n.2
 Jonah (the Prophet) 141, 321
 Jonah (of Bēth-Nūhadhra) 194, 276
 Joseph (a Jew) 143 n.11, 161 n.4
 Josephus (Jewish Historian) 283 n.1
 Joshua (the Stylite, author) 4-9, 14,
 17, 24
 Josiah (Biblical) 47
 Judas (Iscariot) 192, 229, 249, 324,
 328 nn.2, 4
 Julian (of Halicarnassus, Phantasiast)
 51, 115 & n.2, 121, 136
 Julian II (Patriarch of Antioch) 148 &
 n.5, 149
 Juliana (Patrician) 42, 43
 Julianus (the Apostate) 279 & n.7
 Julius (Bishop of Aegea) 50
 Justin I (the Elder, Emperor) 48, 49,
 50 n.2, 52, 60, 67 n.3 (on p. 68), 70
 & n.7, 73 & n.3, 74 & n.7, 75, 78 &
 nn.1, 4, 7, 126 n.4
 Justin II (Emperor) 137, 139 nn.6-7,
 140 & n.1
 Justinian (Emperor) 18, 19, 23, 30, 50
 n.10, 51 n.4, 60, 70 n.7, 73 n.3, 74
 & n.7, 75, 77, 78 n.4, 84, 86 n.7, 88
 & nn.4, 6, 90 & n.4, 91 & n.1, 92 &
 n.2, 93 n.1, 94 & n.1, 114, 115 n.3,
 123 n.2, 125 & nn.1, 5, 126 n.4,
 127, 128 n.1, 129 & n.3, 131, 132
 and nn.1-2, 133, 134 nn.1, 6, 137 &
 n.1, 138, 139 & nn.5-6
 Justinian the Elder (error for Justin)
 74 n.7
 Justinian II (Emperor) 148, 149
 Justinian Fourth (error for Justin II)
 139 & n.6
 Juvenal (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 37
 Ka'b 82 & n.1
 Kalb 82 n.1
 Kawad (King of Persia) 6, 7, 24, 40 &
 nn.3-4, 42 n.5,
 Khālid (son of Barmak, Governor of
 Mosul) 316 n.1
 Khalīl (son of Zedīn) 237, 317
 Khaybarī (Sa'īd son of Bahdal) 177 &
 nn.1, 3
 Kushan 190 & n.7, 191, 233

- Lazarus (Biblical) 154
 Lazarus (the Visitor, of ZuqnĪn) 2, 8, 9
 Leo 141 n.3
 Leo III (military commander, later Emperor) 150, 151 & n.1, 152, 161 n.6, 162, 165
 Leo IV (son of Constantine, Emperor) 2
 Leo (Roman Emperor) 152
 Leo (Patriarch of Rome) 37, 47 & n.1, 57, 58
 Leontius (Emperor) 149 & nn.2, 9
 Luke (Bishop of Anemurion) 51
 Lupicina (Empress) 49 & n.3
 Mabdūl (Arab agent) 320
 Macarius (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 114, 136
 Macedonius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 38, 44, 46 n.4, 48
 Mahdī (son of 'Abd-Allah) 2
 Malalas, John (Greek author) 28, 71 n.3
 Mālik ibn al-Haytham 229 n.2
 Mālik (son of Shabīb) 161 n.6, 162
 Mālik (son of Ṭawq) 213
 Mani 91
 al-Manṣūr (see 'Abd-Allah son of Muḥammad)
 Mārā (Bishop of Amida) 50, 59, 60
 Mārā (Abbot of Ṣurta) 70
 Mardas (governor) 156
 Marinus (ex-prefect) 43
 Marion (of Shūrā) 51
 Maron (the Stylite) 70 & n.2
 Martyrius (Patriarch of Antioch) 37
 Martyrius (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 37
 Mārūthā 251, 252
 Marwān (Caliph) 147 & n.3
 Marwān II (governor of Armenia, and later Caliph) 159 n.1, 160, 166 n.7, 174 & n.4, 175, 176 & nn.4-5, 177, 179 & n.8, 180, 190, 209, 229
 Mary (the Virgin) 136, 327, 330
 Maslama (Arab general) 31, 150 & n.3, 151, 152 & n.2, 153 & n.2, 159 & nn.1-2, 160, 161 & n.2
 Matthew (Bishop of Aleppo) 144
 Maurice (Emperor) 140 & nn.3, 5, 141 & n.2
 Maximilla (follower of Montanus) 124
 Maximus (Patriarch of Antioch) 37
 Melchizedek 115
 Meletius (Patriarch of Antioch) 217
 Menas (Patriarch of Constantinople) 114
 Menophanes (Bishop of Antioch on the Maeander) 51
 Michael the Syrian (Syriac author) 3, 8, 17 n.1, 24, 25, 28
 Michael (Patriarch of Great Alexandria) 192
 Micah (the Prophet) 201, 283, 284, 325
 Montanus (heretic) 123 & n.3
 Moses (Abbot) 2, 10
 Moses (Biblical) 163, 167, 186, 242, 258, 298, 327 & n.2
 Moses (Bishop of Baṭnan of Sarūg) 56, 67
 Moses (Phantasiast) 122
 Mu'āwiya 144, 145 & n.1, 146 & nn.6, 12, 150 n.2
 Muḥammad (the Prophet) 26, 28, 141 & nn.6-7, 142 & n.5, 145 n.8, 260, 325, 327, 328, 333 & n.1
 [...] Muḥammad 332
 Mundhir (King of the Arabs) 77 n.4, 78, 81 & n.1
 Muqātil ibn Ḥakīm al-'Akkī 180 & n.7
 Mūsā (son of Ka'b) 223 n.3, 232 n.4
 Mūsā (son of Ka'b al-Khath'īmī) 223 n.3
 Mūsā (son of Ka'b al-Tamīmī) 223 n.3
 Mūsā (son of Muṣ'ab, governor of Mosul) 7-9, 16, 20, 21, 24, 31, 202 n.6, 223 & n.3, 224, 232 & n.4, 236 n.1, 240 n.1, 242 & n.1, 244 n.5, 253-255, 256, 257 nn.1, 5, 259, 261 & n.1, 265, 266, 271, 275, 289 & n.2, 290-292, 299, 303, 315, 316 n.1, 317 & n.6

- Musonius (Bishop of Thermae) 50
 Nahum (the Prophet) 179, 295
 Narses (Byzantine general) 140 & n.6
 Nectarius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 217
 Nestorius (Patriarch of Constantinople) 46, 47
 Nicephoros (Bishop of Sebasteia) 50
 Ninos (founder of Nineveh) 138
 Noah (Biblical) 69 & n.2, 103, 205 n.1
 Nonnus (Bishop of Amida) 42
 Nonnus (Bishop of Circesium) 41, 51
 Nonnus (Bishop of Seleucia) 50, 59, 60
 Novatian (Patriarch of Rome) 138 & n.1
 Nu'aym (son of Thābit, military general) 175
 Nūnā (deaconess) 60
 Obadiah (the Prophet) 295
 Palladius (Patriarch of Antioch) 37
 Patricius (Byzantine general) 55
 Paul (the Jew, also Eutyches, Patriarch of Antioch) 49, 51-54, 55 & nn.3, 6, 56, 59, 73
 Paul (Patriarch of Antioch) 124, 136, 137
 Paul (Patriarch of Alexandria) 41
 Paul (Bishop of Alexandria Minor) 50
 Paul (the Apostle) 120, 204
 Paul (Bishop of Callinicum) 41, 51
 Paul (Bishop of Edessa) 46 n.1, 48, 51, 55-57
 Paul (Bishop of Ephesus) 37
 Paul (Bishop of Epiphania) 50
 Paul (Bishop of Najrān) 79, 83
 Paul (Bishop of Takrīt) 194, 223, 276
 Pelagius (Bishop of Kalenderis) 51
 Pepin (King of the Franks) 2
 Peter (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37
 Peter (Bishop of Alinda) 51
 Peter (Patriarch of Antioch) 37
 Peter (Patriarch of Antioch) 137, 140 & n.2
 Peter (Bishop of Apameia) 41 & n.5, 50
 Peter (Bishop of Edessa) 41
 Peter (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 49, 70
 Peter (Bishop of the Mandane) 51
 Peter (Bishop of Melota) 51
 Peter (Bishop of Rēsh-'aynā) 41, 51
 Pharesmanes (military leader) 56, 57
 Philippicus (Emperor) 149
 Philoxenus (Bishop of Mabbug) 41, 46, 48, 50
 Phinehas 205
 Phocas (Emperor) 140 nn.5-6, 141 & n.2, 142 & n.2
 Phocas (Patrician) 92
 Photinus (Bishop of Arsinoe) 51
 Photius (Bishop of Smyrna) 114
 Plato (Byzantine prefect) 43 & n.3
 Pompey (Roman general) 50 n.5
 Priscilla (follower of Montanus) 124
 Priscilla (mother of Cyrus of Harrān) 332 & n.3
 Probus 17
 Proclus (Bishop of Coloneia) 50
 Procopius (Bishop of Ephesus, Phantasiast) 121
 Procopius (Byzantine general) 144, 145 & n.2
 Proterius (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37
 Pseudo-Zacharias (of Mitylene, historian) 28
 Ptolemy (Greek astronomer) 198 n.2
 Qaliū (Arab commander) 164 & n.6
 Qashshīsh (Bishop of the Island of Chios) 114
 Qūrā (Bishop of Edessa) 37 n.1
 Qurra (son of Thābit, Arab leader) 181
 Rabbula (Bishop of Edessa) 45 n.1, 46 & n.1, 48 n.1
 Radād (Arab military leader) 213
 Razīn (Arab tax agent) 269, 270, 298, 299, 302, 303
 Rehoboam (Biblical) 191
 Rehumī (martyr in Najrān) 79, 80, 82
 Rufinus (Byzantine leader) 74
 Sābā (Bishop of Amida) 176

- Sabinus (Bishop of Tella) 222
 Sa'īd (son of Bahdal) see Khaybarī
 Sa'īd al-Ḥarashī (Arab governor) 21
 Saksakī (Arab leader) 177
 Šāliḥ (ibn Šubayḥ, governor of Armenia) 189 & n.4
 Sallustius (Patriarch of Jerusalem) 37, 41, 49
 Samuel (Biblical) 167, 298
 Sarah (Biblical) 148 n.2
 Sargūna (Bishop of Mardīn) 192, 194, 204, 223
 Sargūna (Bishop of Tell-Bashmay) 218
 Sawāda (Arab leader) 182
 Sennacherib (Assyrian king) 206 n.10, 208
 Sergius (priest) 4
 Sergius (Bishop, Phantasiast) 122
 Sergius (Byzantine military leader) 208
 Sergius (Patriarch of Antioch) 114
 Sergius (Bishop of Cyrrhus) 50
 Sergius (Bishop of Ḥarrān) 114
 Sergius (the Recluse, of Qolosh) 70 & n.3
 Severus (I, of Zuqnīn, Bishop of Amida) 176
 Severus (II, of Zuqnīn, Bishop of Amida) 15, 16, 29, 30, 176, 192, 204, 218
 Severus (Patriarch of Antioch) 46 & nn.5, 9, 47, 48, 50, 51, 59, 70, 87
 Severus (son of Mashqē, Patriarch of Antioch) 146, 147
 Severus (Bishop of Edessa) 137, 140
 Severus (Bishop of Sozopolis of Pisidia) 46
 Severus (impostor) 163 n.1
 Shalmaneser III (Assyrian king) 70 n.1
 Shemuni (deaconess) 60
 Simon (Bishop of Bēth Arsham) 19, 44, 77 & n.5, 78 & n.1
 Simon (of Bēth Qēdūnā, Bishop of Edessa) 198-200
 Simon (Bishop of Edessa) 144
 Simon (Abbot of Gabbūlā) 78 & n.1
 Simon (of Ḥarrān) 141, 153, 156, 176
 Simon (the Recluse, of Qolosh) 70 & n.3
 Simplicius (Patriarch of Rome) 37
 Socrates (Historian) 18, 138
 Solomon (Biblical) 127, 191, 240
 Stephen (Bishop of Ḥābūrā) 13, 194, 222
 Stephen (son of Paul, man in Maipharqat) 182, 183, 189
 Sulaymān (Caliph) 149, 151
 Sulaymān (son of Caliph Hishām, military leader) 161 & n.6, 162, 175, 332
 Sumayfa' Ašwa' 85 n.2
 Symmachus (Pope of Rome) 46, 48
 al-Ṭabarī (Arab historian) 23
 Theodora (Empress) 18, 59, 60, 126, 131 n.1, 132, 133 & n.1, 134 n.1
 Theodore (of Mopsuestia, theologian) 37 n.1, 132
 Theodore (of Cyrrhus, theologian) 132
 Theodorus (Patriarch of Antioch) 144, 146
 Theodorus (Bishop of Oblia) 51
 Theodorus (Byzantine official) 107, 108
 Theodorus (Byzantine general) 144
 Theodorus (Bishop of Ḥirtā of Nu'mān) 114, 124
 Theodosius I (Emperor) 213 n.4
 Theodosius II (the Younger, Emperor) 18, 40 n.4, 138
 Theodosius III Constantine (Emperor) 149, 150 & n.7
 Theodosius (Patriarch of Alexandria) 70, 85 & n.3, 86 & n.5, 114, 124, 134
 Theodosius (son of Emperor Maurice) 140 & n.5, 141
 Theodotus (Bishop of Amida) 149, 153, 156
 Theophanes (Byzantine historian) 23, 29, 134 n.6 (on p. 135)
 Theosebius (Bishop of Ephesus) 41, 51, 114

- Thomas (Bishop of Amida) 41, 42, 59, 60
 Thomas (Bishop of Amida) 142, 144, 148, 149 & n.11
 Thomas (Archdeacon of Amida) 228
 Thomas (the Apostle) 118, 193
 Thomas (Bishop of Damascus) 50, 114
 Thomas (Bishop of Dara) 51
 Thomas (the dux, a Goth) 61
 Thomas (Bishop of Germanicia) 50
 Thomas (the Stylite, of Tella) 149 & n.8, 156
 Thomas (Bishop of Yabrud) 50
 Tiberius (II) Caesar 139 & n.7, 140 & nn.1, 3
 Tiberius (III) Apsimaros (Emperor) 149 & n.9
 Timothy I (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37, 217
 Timothy II (Patriarch of Alexandria) 37
 Timothy III (Patriarch of Alexandria) 49, 70
 Timothy IV (Patriarch of Alexandria) 85 n.3, 86 & nn.4-5
 Timothy (Patriarch of Constantinople) 44, 46, 48
 Timothy (Bishop of Edessa) 192, 194, 195, 198
 Trajan 74
 'Ubayd-Allah (son of Bukhturī) 183
 'Umar I (Caliph) 143 & n.2, 144, 238 n.1, 254 n.3
 'Umar II (Caliph) 151, 152 & n.2, 155 & n.6 (on p. 156)
 'Umar ibn Hubayrah (governor in Iraq) 179 & n.8
 Uria 50 n.10
 'Uthmān (Caliph) 144 & nn.4, 6, 145
 Valentinus (Byzantine army commander) 143
 Victor (Bishop of Philadelphia) 51
 Vigilius (Patriarch of Rome) 124, 132, 136
 Vitalian (Byzantine leader) 46 & n.2
 Wahnāb, son of (Arab leader) 201
 Walīd I (Caliph) 148, 149 & n.10, 166, 174 n.6
 Walīd II (Caliph) 166, 168 n.1, 174 & n.4, 175
 Xenaias see Philoxenus (Bishop of Mabbug)
 Xenodon (King of the 'Indians') 76 & n.2
 Ya'qūb (Arab leader) 177
 Yazīd I (Caliph) 146, 147 n.1
 Yazīd II (Caliph) 155, 156 & n.2, 164 n.1, 175
 Yazīd III (son of Walīd I, Caliph) 166 & n.7, 168 n.1
 Yazīd ibn 'Umar ibn Hubayrah see 'Umar ibn Hubayrah
 Yēshū' (see also Joshua, the Stylite) 4
 Yihyah (son of Sa'id al-Ḥarashī) 21, 225 n.2
 Yōhānīs (Patriarch of Antioch) 176, 192 & n.2
 Zachariah (Bishop of Edessa) 13, 200, 222
 Zakkay (Bishop of Karmā) 194, 276
 Zayd (Arab official?) 223
 Zeno (Emperor) 37 & n.1, 38, 48 & n.4, 49
 Ze'ōrā (the Stylite) 144 & n.7
 Ze'ōrā (monk) 229
 Ze'ōrā (Superior of anchorites) 249, 250
 Zephaniah (the Prophet) 269
 Zeuxis (Bishop of Alabanda) 51
 Zoelius (Patriarch of Alexandria) 113
 Zuhayr (Arab commander) 164

Subjects Index

- 'Abbasids (called Persians) 20, 21, 29, 30, 174 n.6, 178 & n.1, 179ff, 188f, 190 passim, 220 n.3, 209 n.1
- Administration, Arab ranks (see also Taxation, Agents):
amīr of cities 319
'*amōlē*, '*ummāl* (Agents) 20 (Abū 'Awn), 253ff, 320 (Mabdūl)
Caliph (see s. v.)
Chieftains 239f
Governors (see s. v.)
Prefects 239f
Provincial chiefs 239f
Scribes 239f, 253ff, 302f
Trustees 239f, 253ff, 302f
- Administration, Byzantine ranks:
cubicularus (Chamberlain) 50
Dux 61 (Thomas)
(Ex)-prefect 42, 43 (Marinus of Syria, Plato)
Magistros 44
Patrician 42, 43 (Juliana of Byzantium), 92 (Phocas)
Praepositus 50
Prefect 42, 43 (Plato of Byzantium), 141 (George)
Prefect of the *praetorium* 56
Proconsul 125 (in Caesarea of Palestine)
Referendarius 107f, 110 (Theodorus)
Satraps 65
Stratelates 125 (Amantius in the East)
- Akkadian/isms 42 n.1, 72 n.4, 94 n.3, 147 n.7, 163 n.4, 166 n.1, 181 n.7, 206 n.10, 220 n.3, 221 n.2, 237 n.5, 292 n.5, 295 n.7
- Apostasy 16, 28, 31, 32, 79, 138 n.1, 249, 321-330
- Arabisms 7, 25, 26 & n.1, 27-29
- Army, troops:
Arab 150-152, 153, 191, 201
Byzantine 189-191, 200 n.3
Goth 55
Heruli 75
Huns 75, 159
Roman *numeri* 65 & n.1, 66
Turks 159f
Ur̄tjan 191
- Army, units:
Bands 181ff
Cavalry 66, 152, 160, 164, 211
Police 245 & n.3
- Astrology, Astronomy: Diaries 23; Zodiac 198 & n.2
- Bishops (listed according to their named sees):
Abila: Alexander 50
Aegea: Julius 50
Alabanda: Zeuxis 51
Aleppo:
Antoninus 41, 50
Matthew 144
Alexandria Minor: Paul 50
Alinda: Peter 51

- Amida:
 Ābay of Arzen 192, 194, 195,
 204, 218, 219, 223, 228
 Abraham Bar Kayli 59, 60ff, 116
 n.2
 Cosmas 31, 156-158, 176
 Cyriacus 116 n.2, 137, 141, 142
 Eunomius 114
 Ephrem 49, 51
 John 124, 136, 137
 Mārā 50, 59, 60
 Nonnus 42
 Sābā of Zuqnīn 176
 Severus of Zuqnīn (I) 176
 Severus of Zuqnīn (II) 15, 16, 29,
 30, 176, 192, 204, 218
 Theodotus 149, 153, 156
 Thomas 41, 42, 59, 60
 Thomas 142, 144, 148, 149 &
 n.11
 Anazarbus: Entrechius 41, 50
 Anemurion: Luke 51
 Anzitene: Abraham 70
 Antioch (on the Maeander): Meno-
 phanes 51
 Apameia: Peter 41 & n. 5, 50
 Aphrodisias: Euphemius 51
 The Arabs: John 141, 144
 Arsamosata: Aaron 41, 51
 Arsinoe: Photinus 51
 Baṭnan of Sarūg:
 James 41, 56, 67 & n.3
 Moses 56, 67
 Bēth Arsham: Simon 19, 44f, 77 &
 n.5, 78
 Bēth-Nūhadhra: Jonah 194, 276
 Callinicum:
 John 114
 John 192, 194, 195, 204
 Paul 41, 51
 Chios Island: Qashshīsh 114
 Circesium: Nonnus 41, 51
 Coloneia: Proclus 50
 Cyrrhus: Sergius 50
 Damascus: Thomas 50, 114
 Dara:
 Ephrem 51
 David 192, 194, 204, 220, 221
 Thomas 51
 The East (Phantasiasts):
 Moses 122
 Sergius 122
 Edessa:
 Anastasius the Kushite 199f
 Asclepius 56 & n.1, 57, 69
 Constantine 156, 176
 Cyriacus 17, 144, 146
 Elijah 222
 Ḥabīb 31, 149, 153-155, 156
 James (Baradaeus) 114 & n.1,
 124, 136, 137
 James 'the Jew' 141
 James (Philoponus) 17, 146, 148,
 149
 Paul 46 n.1, 48, 51, 55f
 Peter 41
 Qūrā 37 n.1
 Rabbula 45 n.1, 46 & n.1, 48 n.1
 Severus 137, 140
 Simon 144
 Simon of Qēdūnā 198-200
 Timothy 192, 194, 195, 198
 Zachariah 13, 200, 222
 Ephesus:
 Eutropius 122 (pseudo-bishop)
 John 37
 John of Asia 18, 19, 21, 22, 28,
 30, 61 n.3, 64 n.3, 66 & n.2, 84
 nn.1 & 4, 91 n.4, 92 & n.3, 94
 nn. 1-2, 113, 114 & n.5, 122 n.1,
 123, 126 n.1, 131 n.3, 133, 168
 nn. 2-3, 172 n.1, 307 n.1
 Paul 37
 Procopius (Phantasiast) 121
 Theosebius 41, 51, 114
 Epiphania: Paul 50
 Germanicia: Thomas 50f
 Ḥabūrā: Stephen 13, 194, 222

- Hadriane: Eusebianus 51, 115 & n.2
 Halicarnassus: Julian 51, 121, 136
 Harrān:
 Dionysius 8, 192, 194, 219, 222
 Dionysius II of ZuqnĪn 222
 John 41, 51
 Sergius 114
 Simon 141, 153, 156, 176
 Hemerion: John 51 & n.2
 Hierapolis: John 41
 Hĭmyar: Paul 78, 79
 Hĭrtā of Nu'mān: Theodorus 114, 124
 Hōrĭn: John 50
 Irenopolis: John 50
 Isba: Agathodorus 51
 Kalenderis: Pelagius 51
 Karmā: Zakkay 194, 276
 Kestroi: Helpidius 51
 Khonokhora: Alexander 51
 Laodicea: Constantine 41, 50, 114
 Mabbug: Philoxenus 41, 46, 48, 50
 Maipharaqat: Athanasius "Sandēlāiā" 176 & nn.2, 3, 192
 Mandane: Peter 51
 Mardē (Mardĭn): Sargūna 192, 194, 204, 223
 Melota: Peter 51
 Mopsuestia:
 John 50
 Theodore 37 n.1, 132
 Neocaesarea: Hilarion 51
 Olbia: Theodorus 51
 Pergamon: John 114
 Perrhe:
 Eustathius 51
 Gemellinus 45 n.1, 46
 Persia:
 John 114
 Bar-Sahdē 114
 Philadelphia: Victor 51
 Qinnishrĭn:
 Isidorus 50, 60
 John 114
 Rēsh-'Aynā: Peter 41, 51
 Samosata: Constantine 176, 192, 194, 195, 204, 223
 Sebasteia: Nicephoros 50
 Seleucia in Syria: Nonnus 50, 59, 60
 Shūrā: Marion 51
 Sinjār: Elijah 194
 Smyrna: Photius 114
 Sozopolis of Pisidia: Severus 46
 Tadmur (Palmyra): John 50
 Takrĭt: Paul 194, 223, 276
 Tell-Bashmay: Sargūnā 218
 Tellā:
 Iannai 222
 John 41, 46, 48, 51, 87
 Sabinus 222
 Thermae: Musonius 50
 Tūr-'Abdĭn: Cyriacus 194, 252
 Yabrud: Thomas 50
Bnath Qiāmā 79 & n.3, 302 & n.5 (see also nuns)
 Bones, Burning of/disturbing 38, 79, 242, 256, 277f, 309-310
 Bribes, illegal rewards 226, 254 & n.2, 255, 258 & n.3, 264 & nn.3 & 6, 292 & n.2
 Bridges 165
 Building/rebuilding activities:
 Amida, the Great Church: 142, 228 & n.2
 Antioch, the city: 90
 Antioch, Seleucia, and Daphne, the cities: 73
 'Āqūlā, the wall: 276, 277 & n.1
 Arsamosata, fortress 222
 Baghdad, the city: 220 n. 3
 Callinicum, bridge: 165
 Dara, wall 42
 Edessa, Old Church 146 & n.12
 Laodicea, city 91, 291
 Malatya of Cappadocia, city: 29
 Qamḥ & Ziād, fortresses: 207 n.4
 Second Callinicum, city: 231, 233 & n.1

- Buildings
- Churches, shrines (according to cities):
 - Amida, Great church 142, 228 & n.2; John the Baptist 144; Mār Ze'ōrā 144
 - Antioch, Great church 71f
 - Arsamosata 39
 - Bēth Shilā 60 & n.3
 - Constantinople, Great church 128, 134
 - Edessa, (Old) Church 146 & n.12, 160, 246 & n.2, 247
 - Mabbug, Mother of God 177; Mār Thomas the Apostle 193f
 - Maraq 165
 - Bishop's residence 38, 47, 72
 - Mosque (the Dome of the Rock) 233 & n.4, 240 & n.4
 - Palaces: Hebdomon in Byzantium 135
 - Synagogues 38 & n.2 (Antioch); 40 (Beirut); 44
 - Temples: Ba'al (Nadu-Ba'al) 313; Ba'albeck 126f; Temple of Solomon 233, 240 & n.4
 - Burials 170 & n.4, 252, 277f, 308, 309-310
- Calendars:
- Antioch 18, 88
 - Gregorian 33
 - Hijra 18, 138
 - Indiction 18, 88, 117
 - Laodicea 18, 90
 - Lunar 20, 150
 - Seleucid 18, 33, 138
 - Solar 20, 150
 - Problems of computation 23, 150 & n.2
- Caliphs, 'Abbasid:
- 'Abd-Allah Abūl-'Abbās 189 nn.1, 2, 4, 196 & nn.1-2
 - 'Abd-Allah (al-Manṣūr) 3, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 180 n.7, 181 n.4, 189 & nn.2-3, 192, 193 n.4, 196 & n.2, 201, 202 n.6, 207 n.4-5, 208-209, 220 & n.3, 223 n.3, 224, 227, 228 & n.2, 229 nn. 2 & 4, 231, 232 & n.4, 233 nn.1-2, 240 & nn.4-5, 246 n.2, 247, 253ff, 271, 276, 277 & n.1, 300, 317
 - Hārūn al-Rashīd 20, 21
 - Mahdī son of 'Abd-Allah 2
- Caliphs, early and Umayyad:
- 'Abd-al-Malik 147, 148, 150, 156, 164 n.1, 240 n.4
 - Abū-Bakr 142
 - 'Alī 145 & n.8, 146 & n.5, 150 n.2, 164 n.3
 - Hishām 30, 156 & n.2, 159 & nn. 1 & 2, 160, 161 & nn. 1, 3, 164 & n.1, 165, 166, 168, 174, 209, 229
 - Ibrāhīm 166 & n.7, 168 n.1, 175
 - Marwān 147 & n.3
 - Marwān II 159 n.1, 166 n.7, 174 & n.4, 175, 176 & n.5, 177-180, 190, 209, 229
 - Mu'āwiya 145, 146 & nn.6 & 12
 - Sulaymān 149, 151
 - 'Umar 143 & n.2, 144, 238 n.1, 254 n.3
 - 'Umar II 151, 152 & n.2, 155 & n.6
 - 'Uthmān 144 nn. 4, 6, 145
 - Walīd I 148, 149 & n.10, 166
 - Walīd II 166, 168 n.1, 174f
 - Yazīd 146, 147 & n.1
 - Yazīd II 155, 156 & n.2, 164 & n.1, 175
 - Yazīd III 166 & n.7, 168 n.1
- Canals: Zaytūn, Bēth Balish, Hanī 160, 161 & nn.1 & 2
- Catholicos (p. 114 n.3 for the term):
- Ahūdemmeḥ of Persia 114
 - Johannes of Armenia 114
- Census (*ta'dīl*) 147 & n.6, 149, 234 & n.2, 254 & n. 1 (new), 256 (old), 259 (of the Muslims), 263, 267

- (new), 314 & n.6
 Chalcedonians 18, 67 n. 2, 126 n.3, 177
 Chapter: *The Three Chapters* 132 & n.2
 Christians of the Jazīra (see Syrians)
 Chorepiscopus: George of Amida 2, 3 n.8, 53 & n.3, 65, 73
 Chronicles, Histories:
 —Arabic:
 History of Bukhārā 20
 History of Sigistān 20
 History of Ṭabaristān 20
 Tārīkh, al-Ṭabarī's 23
 Tārīkh al-Mawṣil, al-Azdī's 20, 23
 —Babylonian:
 Neo-Babylonian Chronicles 23
 —Greek:
 Ecclesiastical History, Eusebius 138
 Ecclesiastical History, Socrates 18, 138
 John Malalas 28, 71
 Theophanes 23, 29
 —Syriac:
 Bar Hebraeus 3, 24
 Chronicle of Edessa 28
 Chronicon 813 8
 Chronicon 819 8
 Chronicon 1234 3, 8
 Dionysius of Tell-Mahre 3, 25
 John of Ephesus' *Ecclesiastical History* 18, 21ff, 28, 138
 John of Litarbā 9
 Joshua the Stylite (ed. Wright) 4 passim, 21
 Michael the Syrian 3, 8, 17 n.1, 24, 25, 28
 Narrationes variae 8
 Pseudo-Zacharias of Mitylene 28
 Circumcision 329 & n.10
 Circus (in Constantinople) 38 & n.1, 125 n.2
 Codex, manuscripts:
 BL Add 14.548 9, 12
 BL Add 14.647 28
 BL Add 14.650 28
 BL Add 14.651 12
 BL Orient. MS 5021 9-10
 Cod. Syr. 115 (Harvard) 12
 Codex Climaci rescriptus 12
 Codex Zuqninensis 1 passim, 11
 Comets 14, 38 & n.10, 39 & n.8, 52 & n.5, 93, 136 & n.5, 138, 139 & n.1, 196 n.7, 198, 226, 227 & nn.1 & 2
 Commentators:
 Aaron the Persian 146
 James of Edessa 148
 Consubstantiation: The 'Son is Consubstantial' 136, 139
 Conversion:
 to Christianity 45, 75, 77, 91f
 to Islam 321-332
 Councils:
 Chalcedon 37 & n.1, 46f, 48f, 50, 52, 54, 56ff, 60f, 69, 85, 114f, 120, 131, 133
 Constantinople 116 n.2, 132 'The Fifth Council'
 Ephesus 47 n.1
 Cult of trees 141
 Deacon(ess) 327:
 John (of Ephesus) 66 & n.2
 George, later patriarch 194
 Mārūthā the 'imposter' 251, 252
 Nūnā 60
 Shemuni 60
 Syrian 108
Dhimmī 254 n.3, 299 n.2, 328 n.1
 Diseases (see also plagues) 207
 Divorce 164 & n.4, 202
 Dreams 56, 90
 Drought 166-168, 274-276, 288
 Earthquakes:
 Anazarbus in Cilicia 74

- Antioch 70 & n.7, 73, 86 n.9, 88 & n.6
 Beirut 129 & n.3, 134
 Botrys in the Lebanon 128 & n.3, 129
 Constantinople 124, 128, 134 & nn.2 & 4, 135
 Corinth 74
 Cyzicus 93, 134
 Daphne in Syria 73, 89
 Dyrrhachium in Epirus 74
 Laodicea 90f
 Lebanon 39
 Nicomedia 124
 Nicopolis (Armenia I) 38 & n.8
 Palestine 125, 129, 134
 Phoenicia 125, 129, 134 & n.4
 Pompeiupolis 88 & n.6, 90 n.4
 Rhegion 135
 Rhodes islands 41
 Seleucia in Syria 73f, 89
 Syria, north 146, 160, 165, 169, 177, 197
 Syria 125 & n.5
 Eclipse 39 & n.3, 87 & nn.1 & 2, 140
 Elections, West Syriac patriarchs 13, 194-196
 Emperors—Roman, Byzantine:
 Anastasius I 7, 37, 38 & n.5, 39 n.3, 41, 42 & n.5, 43, 46f, 48f, 74
 Anastasius II 149
 Artabas 161 & n.6
 Constans II 145 & n.4, 147 & n.2
 Constantine 2, 18, 71, 138
 Constantine III 145 & nn.3-4
 Constantine IV 147 & n.2, 148
 Constantine V 161 & n.6, 165, 189f
 Heraclius 141 n.3, 142 & n.2, 143, 145, 228 & n.2
 Heraclonas 145 n.4
 Julianus the Apostate 279 & n.7
 Justin 48f, 52, 60, 70 & n.7, 74 & n.7, 75, 78 & n.1, 4, 7, 126 n.4
 Justin II 137, 139 & nn.6-7, 140 & n.1
 Justinian I 18, 19, 23, 30, 50 n.10, 51 n.4, 60, 70 n. 7, 73 n.3, 74, 75, 77, 78 n.4, 84, 86 n.7, 88 & nn.4 & 6, 90 n.4, 91, 92 n.2, 94 n.1, 114, 115 n.3, 123 n.2, 125 nn. 1-5, 127, 128 n.1, 129 n.3, 131, 132 nn. 1-2, 133, 134 & nn.1 & 6, 136, 137 n.1, 138, 139 & nn. 5-6
 Justinian II 148, 149
 Leo 141 n.3
 Leo III 152, 161 n.6, 162, 165
 Leo IV son of Constantine 2
 Leontius 149 & nn.1-2 & 9
 Lupicina (empress) 49 & n.3
 Maurice 140 & nn.3 & 5, 141 & n.2
 Philippicus 149
 Phocas 140 nn.5-6, 141 & n.2, 142 & n.2
 Theodora (empress) 18, 59, 60, 126, 131 n.1, 132, 133 & n.1, 134 & n.1
 Theodosius I 213 n.3
 Theodosius II 18, 138
 Theodosius son of Maurice 140 & n.5, 141
 Theodosius III 149, 150 & n.7
 Tiberius II 139 & n. 7, 140 & nn.1-2
 Tiberius Apsimaros 149 & n.9
 Zeno 37 & n.1, 38, 48 & n.4, 49
 Envoys (ambassadors) 78, 78, 81, 84
 Eutyches 47
 Eutychnianism 47 n.1
 Famines 30, 39, 115, 119, 151, 166-168, 185-189, 202, 274-276, 303-305
 Feasts:
 Ascension 71 n.3
 Easter 197
 Epiphany 75, 135, 289
 Festive day in Arsamosata 39

- Festival of the Cross 48
 Incense Week 295
 Mother of God 61
 Nativity 58, 135, 288
 New Sunday 295 & n.9
 Palm Sunday 197, 295
 Pentecost 73, 198
 Sundays 295
 Fire: Antioch 52f, 70, 71; Mt Qardū
 (monastery of the Ark) 30, 204-
 205; Temple of Ba'albeck 126f
 Fishermen, fishing 256f
 Floods 15, 16, 29-30 (Mosul); 68f
 (Edessa); 86f, 123, 165, 205, 320
 Foreigners 71, 299, 303, 308, 313
 Fortresses:
 Arsamosata on the Arsaniās 222 &
 n.2
 Qamḥ 207 & n.4
 Qulab 182
 Ziād (Enzite) 207 & n.6, 213-215
 Gates:
 Allān's Gate, Gate of the Land of
 the Turks 159 & n.1, 174 & n.4
 Amida 40
 Caspian/Iberian Gates 159 n.1
 Cilicia 152 n.1
 Constantinople 124
 Laodicea, Gate of Antioch 91
 Goth 55, 61
 Governor(s)—Arab, 153 & n.3, 182,
 324
 — in the Jazīra and/or Mosul:
 'Abbās 17 n.1, 21, 204, 206 n.1,
 207-216, 222, 231-232, 236, 239,
 240 n.1, 244, 253, 317 & n.6, 332
 n.6, 334
 'Abd-Allah (later Caliph al-Manṣūr)
 180 n.7, 189, 192
 Aburin 156
 'Akkī 180 & n.7, 191
 Humayd son of Qaḥṭaba 332 & n.6,
 333-334
 Ja'far (son of al-Manṣūr) 228 n.2,
 229 & nn.2, 4
 Khālid son of Barmak 316 n.1
 Mālik ibn al-Haytham 229 n.2
 Mardas 156
 Mūsā son of Muṣ'ab 7, 8, 9, 16, 20,
 24, 31, 202 n.6, 223 & nn.2 & 3
 passim, 232 & n.4, 236 n.1, 240
 n.1, 242 & n.1, 244 n.5, 253ff,
 256, 257 nn.1 & 5, 259, 261, 265,
 266, 271, 275, 289 & n.2, 290,
 291, 292, 299, 303, 315, 316 &
 n.1, 317 & n.6
 Yihyah son of Sa'īd al-Ḥarashī 21,
 225 n.2
 —in Armenia:
 Jarrāḥ 159 n.2, 160
 Marwān (later Caliph) 160, 174
 Sāliḥ ibn Ṣubayḥ 189 & n.4
 —in Egypt:
 Mūsā son of Ka'b 223 n.3
 —in 'Irāq: Yazīd son of Hubayrah
 179 & n.8
 —in Melitene:
 Mālik son of Shabīb 162
 Grants 235 & n.3, 293 & n.5
 Ḥarurites 164 & n.3, 177 & nn. 1-4,
 181
Henoticon 48 & nn.4-5, 49
 Heresy: Melchizedekites 45, 115;
 Messalians 318 & n.4; Montanism
 123 & n.3; Phantasiasts 115, 121,
 136
 Hospices in Byzantium: Euboulos 52
 & n.1; House of Isidorus 134 &
 n.1; House of Arcadius 134 n.1
 Hostages 182, 189
 Iconoclasm 155
 Idols, statues 75, 98, 126 n. 5, 158 &
 n.1, 330
 Impostors 162-164, 248-252
 Inheritance 109f, 318f (in Islam)

- Islam, religion 141-142, 293 & n.4,
323 & n.1
- Khawārij (see Ḥarurites)
- Kingdom, Arab 321
- Koran 27, 324 & n.1, 327 & n.1, 328
(the Book)
- Lent 45, 62, 81, 120, 197, 289, 295,
302, 304
- Lepers 63f
- Letters: of Simon of Bēth Arsham 19,
78 & n.1; 45 n.1 of Rabbula of
Edessa; of Ibas 132
- Literary themes (death of the poor):
30, 104ff, 170, 289 & n.1, 306, 307
& n.1
- Locusts, insects 38, 39 & n.9, 185-
187, 206 & n.10, 306
- Magians 45, 223, 234, 273, 301
- Manichaeans 15, 91, 202-204, 223,
332 & n.4
- Martyrs:
- Bayṣar (survivor) 19, 83, 84f
 - Cyrus of Harrān 2, 16, 17 & n.1,
30, 31, 321 & n.4, 330-334
 - Cyrus of Ligin (Monophysite) 60,
62f
 - Gordius of the Huns 75
 - Hārith son of Ka'b 82f
 - Martyrs of Najrān 19, 77ff
 - Magian converts 45
 - Novatian 138 n.1
 - Rehumi of Najrān 79ff
- Martyria: Mār Ṣari 58
- Mawālī* 206 & n.6
- Measures:
- faddān* 239 & n.3, 259, 260, 261
 - gerībā-Jarīb* 167 & n.3, 186 & n.2,
187, 217, 239, 245, 255, 316
 - kaylā* 216, 245
 - litra* 223
 - qefizā-qafiz* 167 & n.3, 186 & n.3,
187, 213, 223
- Meteorite 223
- Military commanders, leaders
- Arab, pre-Islamic 81f
 - Arab, Islamic:
 - 'Abbās 152
 - 'Abd-Allah al-Baṭṭāl 161 n.6, 162
 - 'Abd-Allah son of 'Alī 196 & nn.2
& 7, 197
 - 'Abd-Allah son of Marwān 179
 - 'Abd-Allah son of Muḥammad 189
& n.2
 - Abū Muslim 196 & n.2
 - Habīb 145
 - Hasan son of Qaḥṭabah 206 & nn.
1-2, 254 n.2
 - 'Iyād 143 & n.7
 - al-Jarrāh 159 & n.2, 160
 - Mālik son of Shabīb 161 n.6, 162
 - Mālik son of Ṭawq 213 & n.3
 - Maslama 31, 150 & n.3, 151, 152 &
n.2, 153 & n.2, 159 & nn.1-2, 160,
161 & n.2
 - Mu'āwiya 144
 - [...] Muḥammad 332
 - Nu'aym son of Thābit 175
 - Qaliū 164 & n.6
 - Qurra son of Thābit 181f
 - Radād 213
 - Son of 'Akkī 191f
 - Son of Ash'ath 206 & n.3
 - Sulaymān son of Caliph Hishām
161 & n.6, 162, 175, 332
 - Wahhāb son of 201
 - Yazīd son of Hubayrah 179
 - Zuhayr 164
- Armenian: Kushan 190 & n. 7,
191, 233
- Byzantine:
- Celer 42
 - Leo 150-152
 - Narses 140 & n.6
 - Patricius 55
 - Pharesmanes 56, 57

- Procopius 144, 145 & n.2
 Sergius 208ff
 Theodorus 144
 Valentinus 143
 —Harurites:
 ‘Atīq 164
 Buraykah 181 & n.4, 183, 189 & n.3
 Ḍaḥḥāk 177 & nn. 1 & 3
 Khaybarī 177 & nn.1, 3
 Saksakī 177
 Ya‘qūb 177
 —Jewish
 Jonah 141
 Josephus 283 n.1
 —Syrian Christian:
 John son of Daddī 181
 Mines 300
 Miracles, signs 31, 153-155, 156-158, 196f
 Monasteries
 Abel in Edessa 153, 184
 Akoimiton 42 & n.8
 Mār ‘Aqībā 48 & n. 2
 Mār Athanasius on Mt. Tell Bashmay 192, 195, 218
 ‘Ayn Ḥaylaf 59
 Bēth Kewēlā (The Ark) on Mt Qardu 15, 16, 30, 204f
 Bēth Aphthonia 46 n.9
 Bēth ‘Ārābāyē 58 & n.10
 Bēth Ma‘dē 184
 The ‘Cloisters’ 58 & n.3
 Mār Conon 58 & n.2
 The Cross 312 & n.2
 ‘The Easterners’ in Edessa 57f
 Eusebius of Abne 58
 St George 218 n.4
 Mār Ḥabīb in Arzanene 192, 218
 Ḥarbaz 218 & n.4
 Ḥarrān 220
 Hasikha 70 & n.2
 Ḥawronyōthō 65
 Hendibānē 58 & n.6
 Ḥesmē 184
 John the Urṭian 18, 40
 Mār Julian the Elder 58 & n.7
 Kamūlā 205 n.1
 Lazarus 184
 Manichaean, in Ḥarrān 202-204
 St Mary in Naṭrūn 1, 2
 Mār Mattay 229 & n.1, 249
 Mār Miles 184
 Mother of God in Edessa 199
 Nafshatha 58 & n.4
 Nardos 194 n.4
 Paul the Solitary 10
 Paradise 70
 ‘The Persians’ 56
 Pesilta 114 & n.1, 124, 136
 Qarqaftā 195 & n.3, 217
 Qartmīn 124 & n.5, 176, 222, 312
 Qinnishrīn 3, 88 n.2, 193, 194
 Qetrē 184 & n.3
 Qūbē 184 & n.1
 Rishmat in Ṭishpa 184 & n.2
 Mār Romanus 63
 Mār Samuel 58 & n.5
 Mār Shilā 148
 Sinnīn 184 & n.6
 Mār Solomon of Maqlyāthā 58 & n.8
 Tellā-d-tūthē 64 & n.4
 Theodotus of Amida 156
 Mār Zakka 58 & n.1
 Zuqnīn (near Amida) 2 passim, 144, 176, 188 & n.5, 192, 219, 222
 Monastic ranks
 —Abbot:
 Euthalius of Zuqnīn 2, 3 & n.8, 219 & n.3
 John 17
 John bar Aphthonia of Qinnishrīn 88 & n.2
 Mārā of Ṣurta 70
 Moses of Nisibis 2, 10
 Simon of Gabbūlā 78 n.1
 —‘Visitor,’ ‘steward,’ ‘overseer’

- (*sō'ūrō*):
 Adday of the Paradise Monastery 70
 Dionysius of Zuqnān 3, 8, 9, 219 & n.4
 George of Amida 228
 Joshua of Zuqnān 8
 Lazarus of Zuqnān 2, 8, 9
 Monks, recluses, ascetics (see also stylites): 43, 63, 126, 133, 153-155
 Abraham 70 n.2
 Anastasius the Kushite of Zuqnān 199f
 Elisha of Edessa 59
 Elisha of Zuqnān 2 passim, 9-11, 14, 17
 John of Zuqnān 70
 John of Mt. Ayshūmā 195
 Lazarus of Zuqnān 9
 Mārūthā the 'impostor' 248-252
 Sergius 70
 Simon 70
 Simon of Qēdūnā 198
 Theodotus of Amida 156
 Thomas of Tella 149 & n.8, 156
 Ze'ōrā of Mār Mattay 229
 Ze'ōrā of Sinjār 249-250
 Monophysites 18, 37 nn.1,3, 42 & n.7, 46f, 50 n.2, 116 n.2, 126 n.3, 133 & n.1, 134, 225 n.2
 Mountain:
 Araraṭ 205 n.1
 Ayshūmā 195 & n.1
 Black 150 & n.4
 Edessa 199
 Izlā 177
 Maqlūb 229 n.1
 Qardū 16, 204, 205 n.1
 Ṣahiā (Arid) 183 & n.2, 190 & n.8, 313 & n.3
 Senir (Hermon) 126 & n.6
 Sinjār 143 n.6, 164 n.5
 'Stone Face' in Botrys 128 & n.4, 129
 Tell Bashmay 192
musawwadā, putting on black 29, 179 & nn.6-7, 180, 181 & n.1, 196 n.3
 Muslims 21, 27, 155 n.5, 273, 293 & n.3, 325, 328 & nn.1-2, 332 n.7
 Nations, people (other than the Byzantines)
 Allān 206 & n.8
 Arabs, pre-Islamic 48, 78
 Arabs 141 & n. 5, 142 passim, 148 & n.2 (sons of Hagar), 155 & n.5, 206f, 220, 321 & n.6; Arabs of the Jazīra 170, 181-184, 189 & n.1, 226, 237, 238, 245-247, 255, 259ff, 290, 310, 313, 318, 321 & n.6
 Aramaeans 148, 225 & n.1, 226 & n.2
 Armenians 143, 185 & n.2, 188f, 233, 290
 Assyrians 138, 208, 215 n.3
Azulis 76 & n.5, 231
 Edomites 48
 Egyptians 290
 Ethiopians (called Indians) 75ff
 The 'Giants' 227 & n.4, 228
 Heruli 75 & n.1
 Ḥimyarites 76f, 114f
 Hittites 215 n.3
 Huns 75 & n.2, 76-85, 122, 159
 Jews 38, 40, 44, 51, 76, 77 & n.4, 85, 91, 94, 125, 141, 143 n.11, 161 & n.4, 162-164, 170, 175, 223 n.3, 254 n.3, 273, 290, 310, 331
 Khazar 159 n.1, 206 & n.9, 231
 Khorasanians 178 n.1, 206
 Kushites 76-85, 114f
 Lakhmites 78 n.3
 Ma'adians 78 & n.6, 275 & n.5, 288
 Medes 206
 Moors 207, 231 & n.1
 Nabateans 97 n.2

- Nubians 207
 Persians 78, 143, 206, 220, 290
 Romans 290, 331
 Sabaeans (of Harrān) 273
 Samaritans 125, 163, 273
 Sindhi 206 & n.7, 231, 290
 Syrians, Christians (see also Aramaeans) 147, 148, 150 n.1, 155 & n.5, 170, 181, 182 & n.1, 183-184, 220, 225 & n.1, 226 & n.2, 237, 238, 245-247, 255, 273, 290, 295, 300f, 310, 313, 318, 321 & n.6, 332 n.7
 Taghlibites 275 & n.5, 288
 Ṭayyāyē 141 n.5
 Turks 159 & n.1, 160, 174, 206
 Urtians 40 & n.6, 185 & n.2, 188 & n.1, 191, 300f
 Natural, cosmic phenomena 15, 20, 32, 38 & n.10, 39, 40f, 72, 223, 242-244, 262
 Nestorianism 38, 47 & n.1, 49f, 56f, 63, 132 & n.2
 'Nestorians' (also called 'Persians') 15, 16, 37 n.1, 38, 42, 44f, 46f, 55, 204f
 Nuns (see also *bnath qiāmā*) 79

 Oath, swearing 44, 79, 151, 159, 181, 182, 230, 278, 280
 Ordinations: episcopacy 115 (unlawful), 217; priesthood 120 (unlawful)

 Pagans, paganism 18, 19, 75, 91, 127, 273, 332f
 Palaeography 9, 11 passim
Paramonarios 77 & n.1: John of Saint John's 77
 Patriarchs, listed according to their named sees:
 —Alexandria:
 Apollinarius 124, 132, 136
 Athanasius 37, 48
 Cyril 46
 Dioscorus 48
 Gaianus 86 n.5, 115 & n.2
 John I 37, 46, 48
 John II 48
 Michael 192
 Paul 41
 Peter 37
 Proterius 37
 Theodosius 70, 85 & n.3, 86 & n.5, 114, 124, 134
 Timothy (I) 37, 217
 Timothy (II) 37
 Timothy (III) 49, 70
 Timothy (IV) 85 n.3, 86 & nn.4-5
 Zoelius 113f
 —Antioch:
 Anastasius 136
 Athanasius I 140, 141, 144
 Athanasius II 147, 148
 Athanasius III 158 & n.4, 176
 Athanasius IV Sandēlāiā 176 & nn.2-3, 192 & n.4, 193 & n. 1
 Calandion 37
 David of Dara, anti-patriarch 202, 220, 221, 223, 252, 276
 Dionysius of Tell-Mahrē 3, 4
 Dominus 124, 132
 Domnus 37
 Elijah 149, 153, 156, 158 & n.4
 Ephrem son of Apion 49, 51, 54, 59, 64ff, 74, 86 & n.2, 90, 113
 Euphrasius 49, 54, 56, 69, 70, 72, 74, 86 n.2
 Flavian 37, 46 & n.4, 48
 George of Ba'althan 13, 193-196, 198f, 202, 204, 216-221, 276
 Ignatius 46
 Isaac of Qartmīn 192, 193 & n.4
 John 49
 John II 144 & n.7
 John of Callinicum, anti-patriarch 195f, 204, 216-218
 Julian II 148 & n.5, 149
 Martyrius 37
 Meletius 217

- Palladius 37
 Paul the Jew 49, 51f, 53f, 55 nn.3
 & 6, 56, 59, 73
 Paul 124, 136, 137
 Peter 37
 Peter 137, 140 & n.2
 Maximus 37
 Sergius 114
 Severus 46 & nn.5, 9, 48ff, 51, 59,
 70, 87
 Severus son of Mashqē 146, 147
 Theodorus 144, 146
 Yōhānīs 176, 192 & n.2
 —Constantinople:
 Acacius 37
 Anatolius 37
 Anthemius 70, 114, 124
 Epiphanius 48f, 70
 Euphemius 37, 38, 44 & n.3, 48
 Eutychius 124, 132, 136
 Fravitta 37
 Gennadius 37
 John 48f
 John of Sirmios 136 & n.3
 Macedonius 38, 44f, 46 n.4, 48
 Menas 114
 Nectarius 217
 Nestorius 46, 47
 Timothy 44, 46, 48
 —Jerusalem:
 Anastasius 37
 Elijah 46, 48f
 Eustochius 136 & n.1
 John 49
 Juvenal 37
 Macarius 114, 136
 Martyrius 37
 Peter 49, 70
 Sallustius 37, 41, 48-49
 —Rome:
 Agapetius 114
 Felix 37, 41, 48
 Hilarius 37
 Hormizdas 48f, 70
 Leo 37, 47 & n.1, 57, 58
 Novatian 138 n.1
 Simplicius 37
 Symmachus 46, 48
 Vigilius 124, 132, 136
Periodeutai 53 & n.4, 65, 73
 Persecutions, harassment, attacks:
 On people in general 297, 298-303,
 311 & n.1, 312 & n.3, 313 (by
 animals), 317f, 319f (in Amida)
 Anti-Christian (Najrān) 19, 77ff
 Anti-Jewish 38
 Anti-Manichaean 91, 202f, 273
 Anti-monastic 294
 Anti-Monophysite 18f, 43, 49ff, 52,
 53ff, 57ff, 60ff, 69, 78 n.7
 Plagues, epidemics, and pestilences
 —Bubonic, technical terms:
 Arabic طاعون *tā'ūn* 104 n.6
 Greek *boubōn* 104 & n.6
 'Swelling of the groins' 104
 'Disease of eruptions' 104
 Syriac ܩܘܪܘܢ *šar'ūtō* 104 n.6
 Syriac ܩܘܪܘܢ *mawtōnō* 170 n.3
 —Bubonic, occurrences:
 6th century: 18-21 passim, 30, 39,
 94-95, 96 & n.4, 97-113, 119, 168
 n.2, 172 n.1
 7th century: 3
 8th century: 21 passim, 29 (of
 horses), 30, 148 & n.6, 168-174,
 176, 188, 200f (among animals),
 202, 312
 —Meningitis 30, 305 & n. 3, 306
 —Other diseases 303-310, 313
 Polemics, Christian-Muslim 27, 324,
 326-327
 Police, see Army, units
 Prices of Goods 23, 167, 213, 216,
 223, 245, 261, 266, 295
 Prisons 315
 Profanation of churches 245-247,
 270f, 302
 Prophet:

- Elijah the Tishbite 156 & n.3
 Elisha 158 & n.3
 Ezekiel 209
 ʿĪsā (= Jesus) 27, 327 & n.4, 328
 Moses 163, 167, 186, 242, 258,
 298, 327 & n.2
 Muḥammad 26, 28, 141 & nn.6-7,
 142 & n.5, 145 n.8, 260, 325, 327,
 328, 333 & n.1
- Races, games 43
 Rebellions:
 Arab 166, 174, 181-183
 Harurites 164, 177
 Jewish, Samaritan in Palestine 125
 Slaves in Ḥarrān 231
 Riots, internal revolts:
 Byzantium 42, 46, 48
 Mesopotamia 115f, 117-119, 181-
 184
 Palestine 125
 Rivers:
 Araxes 40 n.4, 213 n.4
 Arsanias (Murad Su) 39 & n.1, 51
 n.9, 123 n.1, 150 nn.5-6, 222 &
 n.1
 Balīkh 41 n.8, 58 n.1, 161 n.1
 Bokhtan 123 n.1
 Cydnus 123 & n. 2
 Danube 75 n.1
 Dayṣān 68, 69, 165
 Euphrates 3, 6, 38 n.11, 39 & n.1,
 40 n.4, 41 nn.3, 7-8, 47 n.6, 51
 nn.1-3 & 9, 66, 67, 69, 70 n.1, 78
 n.3, 86, 123 n.1, 141, 150 nn.5-6,
 161 n. 1, 165, 171, 175, 179, 193,
 194 n.2, 207 n.4, 213 n.4, 222 n.2,
 322
 Gōmal 276 n.3
 Ḥarē 183
 Harmiṣ 196 n.4
 Hirmās 196 n.4
 Jaghjagh 196 n.4
 Jordan 209 n.2
- Jullāb 58 n.7
 Khābūr 41 nn. 7, 9, 197
 Khāzir 276 n.3
 Macius 196 n.4
 Madāyē 58 & n.7
 Maeander 51
 Mashē below Nisibis 196 & n.4
 Orontes 90
 Salqaṭ 214
 Tigris 70 nn.3-4, 86 n.3, 123 n.1,
 165, 183 n.2, 189 n.1, 205 & n.1,
 206, 221 n.2, 249n.1, 253 n.3, 276
 nn.4-5, 10
 Zāb 179 & n.9, 249 n.1, 276 nn.1,
 3-6, 332 & n.5
- Road of the King 235 & n.4
 Rulers (see also Caliphs, emperors):
 —Arab, pre-Islamic:
 Arethas son of Gabalas 114
 Mundhir 78, 81
 —Assyrian:
 Sennacherib 206 n.10, 208
 —Ethiopian/Kushite ('Inner Indian'):
 Andug 76, 77, 114
 —Franks: Pepin 2
 —Heruli: Agrippa 74f
 —Ḥimyarites:
 Abrahah al-Ashram 85 n.2; Abra-
 ham 85, 114; Abramus 85 n.2
 Dimnon 76f
 Esimiphaeus 85 n.2; Sumayfa'
 Aṣwa' 85 n.2
 —'Indian': Xenodon 76
 —Hun: Gordius 75
 —Jewish in Ḥimyar: 78ff
 —Nineveh: Ninos 138
 —Persians:
 Chosroes 86, 111 n.1, 114, 140 n.6
 Kawad 6, 7, 24, 40 & nn. 3-4, 42
 n.5
- Sacraments 318:
 Baptism 75, 77, 322, 326, 328, 329
 & n.4

- Eucharist 45, 58, 61f, 64, 87, 221 & n.1, 222, 322, 326
 Myron 322, 325
 Schools:
 School of Edessa 37 & n.1
 School of the Ur̄tians 40 & n.5
 Sects:
 Christian: Novatian 138 & n.1
 Muslim, see Ḥarurites
 Septuagint 1, 11, 14
 Slaves 231
 Stars, shooting of 15, 20, 74, 142 & n.4, 180, 201 & n.7, 202
 Stylites 7, 9, 24, 294
 John of Litarbā 9
 Joshua of Zuqnīn 4-9, 14, 17, 24
 Maron 70 & n.2
 Zachariah 200 & n.2
 Ze'ōrā 144 n.7
 Superstitions 96 & n.5, 112 & n.5, 113
 Synods and Congresses:
 Antioch 46
 Constantinople (debates on Faith) 19, 126, 129, 131 & n.1, 133 & n.1, 132
 Sidon 46
 Tire 47
 Synods, West Syriac: 13, 15, 16, 30, 148, 149 n.11
 Mabbug 193-196
 Sarūg (in 764-765) 204, (in 766-767) 216-219
 Taxation
 Crown property (*ṣawfī/ṣawwāfī*) 234 & n. 4, 256, 257 & n.3
 Extorsion, overtaxation, 7, 20, 239 passim, 255, 273, 293, 294, 296-299, 321, 333
 Fugitives, tax-evaders 224 & n.5, 225f, 236, 237 & n.1, 257ff
 Levying the Poll-tax 244-247, 262-264, 270f
 Lists of payers 299 & n.3, 314 & n.7 (*tafṣīl*), 332 & n.7
 Poll-tax 16, 147f & n.7, 148 n.1, 234, 240 passim, 321f, 332
 Protesting tax policy 299
 Registering religious estates 228 & n.2, 229
 Sponsors of individuals, communities 299 & n.3
 Tax penalties, fines, punishments 202 & n.5, 237 & n.1, 238 & n.1, 245-247, 272-273, 302, 314ff, 317f
 Tax Settlements 265 & nn.2 & 5, 267 & n.9, 268, 298-299, 314 & nn. 76-7, 315 & nn.1-2, 5, 319
 Taxation, Agents:
 Alms tax agents 239 & nn.1-2, 240, 259-260, 286, 292
 Branders and Stampers 236 & n.1, 254, 268 & n.3
 Censors 234, 254f, 267
 Chieftains (*amīrōnē*) 237 & n.4
 Couriers 263 & n.6, 293
 Crown property agents 234 & n.4, 256f, 267, 286, 316
 Forerunners 317f
 Garrisons 267 & n.7, 317 & n. 2, 318 (Khalīl son of Zedīn and Abū 'Awn)
 Informers 255
 Poll-Tax agents 240 (Abū 'Awn), 253, 258 & n.2, 263-267, 269-271 (Razīn), 316
 Prefects 263, 264, 285, 292, 293, 298f (Razīn)
 Provincial chiefs 263, 292, 293
 Pursuers of Tax-evaders 224-226, 237 (Khalīl son Zedīn), 238, 257-259, 264, 267, 286
 Tithe Collectors 234 & n.5, 235-236, 255f, 267, 286, 292, 316f
 Top Agents of the Poll-Tax 20, 240ff (Abū 'Awn), 263 (first

- agent), 264ff (second agent), 266ff (third agent), 269, 298, 302f (Razīn)
- Taxation, Technical Terms
kharāj 147 n.6
 Poll-tax: *gezīṭā*, *jiziā* 147 & n.7, 148 & n.1
 Tribute: *madātō*, *madattu* 147 & n.7
- Trade 76
- Trisagion* 42 n.7, 43 n.2
- Tome of Leo* 47 & n.1, 57
- Towers 257 & n.3, 306
- Treasures 129f (in the sea)
- Treasury, caliphal 176 & nn.4-5, 229, 231 (in Harrān); Byzantine 43
- Treaties:
 Roman-Persian 42, 74
 Arab-Byzantine 145 & n.2
 Arab-Turk 159
- Umayyads 21, 174 n.6, 178 & n.1, 209 n.1
- Usury 224-225, 278, 280f, 316
- Violence
 'Āqūlā, 229
 Jazīra 7, 8, 183f, 202, 296-297, 300-303
 Mosul 189
- Walls of cities, 190
 —Byzantium: 151; wall of Constantine 135; Rhēgion 135; wall of Theodosius 135
 —Mesopotamia: Amida 40 nn.5, 7; Dara 42; 'Āqūlā 276f; Edessa 39, 68f
 —Northern Syria 235, 257; Melitene 189f
- Syria: Antioch 89, 90 & n.3
- Wars, battles, military campaigns
 Arab conquest 141 passim
 Arab conquest of Allān's Gate 159 & n.1; Armenia 143; Arvad 144; Byzantium 150-152; Cyprus 144; Gate of the land of the Turks 159f, 174; Jazīra 143, 145; Neocaesarea 161 & n.4; Palestine 143; Tripolis 145
- Civil wars (*fitnah*) 27, 145, 147, 166, 169
- Arab-Byzantine Wars 31, 144, 162, 190f, 206-216, 233f
- Ethiopian-Himyarite Wars 19, 76f, 85
- Persian-Byzantine wars 7, 40, 41, 86, 101f, 140 & n.6
- Battles, Arab:
 'Ayn Garrā ('Ayn al-jarr) 175 & n.6
 Gabīthā 143 & nn.3-4
 Mashē 196 & n.4
 Ṣā'ifa 206 & n.1, 207ff
 Ṣiffin 146 & n.1
 Synnada 161 n.6, 162
 Tell-Mashrīthā 177 & n.4
 Yarmūk 143 nn.3-4
 Zāb 179 & n.9, 180, 332 & n.5
- Wars in Italy 101; North Africa 101
- Weapons 208 & n.1, 209f
- Wills 109f
- Winter, harsh 87 n.2, 89, 165, 184f, 227, 287-289, 295 n.8, 304 n.1
- Witnesses (false) 280, 283
- Women 245f, 270f, 282, 313, 302 & nn.1, 2
- Zodiac 198 & n.2
- Zoroastrians 206 & n.5, 254 n.3