Mieke van Breukelen

Relations Arabia and Byzantium 5th-9th century: Christians, Muslims and Jews

Vol.1: History and Historiography

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Honor thou father and thou mother

Foreword

The following source material is intended to give some insight into the relations between sixth-century Arabia and its surrounding world.

Chapter One.

Related to the historiography of Edessa

Riedel (2012, pp.1–25) discusses East- and West-Syrian historiography in her article. The Syriac language was first written in Greek and from the fifth/sixth c. CE onwards in the Syrian tongue. Its center was Edessa. Its churches divide into three sections: the Church of the East following Nestorius, the Syrian Orthodox Church following Cyril of Alexandria, the Monophysite Church, and the Chalcedonian churches as the Melkite and Maronite Church. Their dating system was Seleucid, followed by Islamic dating after 622 CE and dating after the year of office of bishops and other clergy members. The historical writings of East-Syrian writers consist of literature, bible work references, grammar, poetry, Saint's Live, and law books. The historiography of West-Syrian writers used history with events of creation and church history (Eusebius). Historiography of East-Syrian writers begins with the church's foundation and the life of the Fathers.

The Syrian Orthodox literary genre consists of lengthy chronicles in which political and ecclesiastical history was kept separate (Debié, 2009, pp.93–114). Historiography was one of the tools for expressing confessional identity. The Hellenistic kings provided a synthesis between the double Syria-Mesopotamian and Greek culture, and cities were named after the sons and daughters of Seleucus, ruler of Syria. In the 13th c. Syriac declined as a living language. Church unity ended, and with the church on the side of the Chalcedonians, the genre of ecclesiastical history ended. City chronicles and archives of late antique Edessa (7th and 8th c. CE) were called Calendars containing private and public acts (Debié, 1999–2000,pp.409–417). These Calendars also kept the Imperial acts and gatherings of church councils. Natural phenomena were noted. Apart from Calendars, an ecclesiastical archive existed. The city's main church held the lists of bishops compiled from the diptychs. The chroniclers used a chronological entry.

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Four chronicles show interactions between Greek, Syriac, and Christian Arab cultures in late antique and Byzantium. Conterno (2013, p. 1–20) states that the expression "circuit de Theophile d'Edesse has been introduced by Antoine Borrut (1) to explain the presence of shared material in Theophanes Confessor's Chronographia, Michael the Syrian's chronicle, the anonymous Chronicle of 1239 and Agapius of Mabbug's Kitab al-unwan. These four texts rely on

Theophilus of Edessa's lost History for large parts of the events of the VII and the first half of the VIII century, Agapius directly, Theophanes through a Greek translation-continuation of it. The texts rely on Michael the Syrian and the anonymous chronicler of 1234 via the last work of Dionysius of Tell Mahre. (2)

Chapter Two

Related to Christian communities:

Coptic literature is entirely religious and almost entirely Christian (Emmel, 2007, pp. 83–102). The oldest manuscripts date from the 3rd c. CE onwards. When the Arabs conquested Egypt in the 7th c CE, this announced the end of the first period of Coptic book production. By the end of the 12th c. CE Arabic had replaced Coptic as the language of all of Egypt. Coptic was subordinated to the Egyptian churches and monasteries. Fragments of individual codices became scattered across numerous libraries and museums in Egypt and other countries. Tito Orlando offered a history of Coptic literature. The richest source of Classical Coptic literature is the works in the 'white Monastery' library of Shenoute, with results from the 11th, 12th, and 13th c. CE. There is also a large body of Christian hagiographical literature and some other genres. The Christian Bible became the foundational monument of Coptic literature. Many translations are mentioned in Emmel's work. Original Coptic literature is cited from the time of the Arab conquest and shortly after. Concluded is by saying the piece of presumably original Coptic literature.

Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) describes the position of al-Hira, the capital of the 'Persian-Arabs.' Their leaders appointed tribe members kings, military leaders, and tax collectors elsewhere in Arabia. Most of the kings were pagans, but archaeological surveys have shown the Christian character of this border city. Histories composed in al-Hira are derived from Arabic sources from the 9th c. The Lakhmid dynasty is mentioned, as well as the martyrs of Naira. There has been a Christian school at the site, founded in the tradition of Edessa and Nisibis. The histories available to 9th c. authors were composed under the Nasrid king al-Numan III.

In *Hira and her Saints*, Wood (2014, pp. 6–20) focuses on the role of the Hiran hagiographic cycle as a form of local history-writing. Hira was a small but powerful kingdom. It served as the client state of the Sasanian Empire to get its influence in the Arabian peninsula. Hira hosted the burial place of the Catholicos of the Church of the East, and the monastic tradition goes back to the fifth century. The Christian community was joined in their religion by the Nasrid king, al-Numan III, whose predecessors had long maintained public paganism. Associated with Hira is the production of an irregular cycle of Saints' lives, set in the region around Hira. This cycle discusses the miracles and the monastic foundations of four holy men, active in the vicinity of Hira in the period c.590–680. The lives were probably initially composed in Syriac, of which the Syriac version only survives in the ninth century *Book of Chastity of Isho'dnah* of Basra. The Chronicle of Set can find the more extended versions. The *cycle of Lives* also shows a change in perspective from the ¨Hiran histories¨ collected for their emphasis on kings, tribes, and local bishops. The hagiographical collection includes the story of the conversion of Hira's hinterland and the creation of a new network of monasteries outside the city. King Numan was replaced by frontier governors loyal to Khusrau, and persecution of the Jacobite (miaphysite) congrega-

tion took place in the 520th c. Diophysitism, undertaken by a cleric based in the monasteries of the north, has a firm stamp in this Hiran hagiography. Finally, the history of the Hira city records the deeds of the Christian Nasrids.

Hoyland (2014, pp. 268–280) wrote about writings by insiders and outsiders of Arabia, the last inscriptions and poetry. A little relationship is assumed between the so-called kingdoms of Ghassan, Lakhmids, and Kinda. Preferable is to distinguish between tribes and princely dynasties. But are they clans, as mentioned in the Muslim sources, or just individual families, as noted by Greek and Syriac sources? Hoyland's paper reports the people of Ma'add, their suzerain, the king of Himyar, who made the Kinda, his Arab allies as deputies over Ma'add. Afterward, the responsibility for Ma'add fell once more to the Lakhmids.

The Islamic conquest of the Near East in the 6th century CE saw descendants of the old elites or members of the same kinship groups (Kennedy, 2010, pp.181–98). In late-antique Syria, these were Greek-speaking and Chalcedonian in faith, called rum in Arab sources. This elite stood in contrast to the chiefs of the Bedouin tribes affiliated with the Byzantine Empire, led by the phylarch of the Ghassanid family and monophysite in religion. One of the late-antique aristocrats is Sergius, son of Iwanni Rusafoyo from Edessa. Also spoken is about land scale landownership in Palestine. Finally, another group in the elite of late antique Syria is the Jafnid branch of the Ghassan tribe.

Les Rois de Kinda (Robin, 2012/AH1433, pp.59–129) contains Theodor Nöldeke´s *étude sur les princes Jafnides* (Ghassanid). G.Rothstein conducts the same method he used on *Les Lakhmids of al-Hira*. The paper contains mentions of the Phylarch Arethas, besides histo-

riography of 6th c. CE. Finally, it describes Justinian's envoy to Ethiopië and Yemen.

Chapter Three

Related to the relations of Byzantium and the Arab kingdoms:

About the economic history of Byzantium, Laiou (2002, p. 391) wrote that in Syria and Egypt, the exchange economy continued along more or less the same lines as it had done in the sixth century until these areas fell to the Arabs in the 640s. The extant sources – narrative, Saint's Lives, and legal – must be used with the archaeological material, even though their information is not always consistent. Sometimes one is forced to use material from a later period, primarily the ninth century, to illuminate developments that otherwise remain unclear. As far as exchange, both economic and non-economic, is concerned, several factors negatively affected its development. The great plagues of the sixth century and the decline of the urban population are indicators of reduced urban/rural exchange. The temporary Persian conquest of Syria-Palestine-Egypt in the early seventh century, soon followed by the Arab conquest of these areas, the conquest of North Africa, and the constant Arab incursions into Asia Minor, affected the structure of the state. Sea communications also were disrupted and changed, now becoming small-scale navigation, with the islands of the Aegean acting as relay stations. (1)

The Constantinopolitan emperor Leo III resisted the Arab siege of Constantinople (Yamaner, 2012, pp. 1–10). Yamaner (2012, pp.1–

10) continues to mention that Leo III subdivided and reduced the power of the big themes to avoid conflicts over the throne. A civic law was published, the Ecloga, on behalf of himself and his successor Constantine V in 726 CE.

Byzantine iconoclastic controversy in the 8th c. is based on a crisis within Byzantine Christianity itself. Brown (1973, pp. 2–34) shows a solid monophysite streak in the theology of Constantine V. This movement originated among the orient population, hostile or indifferent to the Chalcedonian synthesis of Christ in human form. The last meant a shift of Byzantine gravity to the oriental population of Anatolia instead of the traditional urban culture of the Aegean. In this period can be seen newly military reforms and newly-instituted themes. Objects wholly Holy for the Iconoclasts were the Eucharist, the church building consecrated by the bishop, and the Sign of the Cross. Leo III ordered the forced baptism of all the Jews in the empire. The pilgrimage sites that had dotted Asia Minor were deserted.

Chapter Four

Related to the historiography of Muslims and the relation

between Muslims/non-Muslims:

El-Rahman Tayyari (2008, pp.74–102) explains the relationship between prophethood and kingship. The origins of prophethood are traced to biblical narratives, the origins of kingship to Persian regal

history, and specifically to the notion of justice in Persian kingship. The divine origin of Islam underscores the religious identity as the true representative of the Abrahamic tradition, as distinctive from Judaism and Christianity. Stories of David, Solomon, and Joseph amplify this type of combined prophethood and kingship. The early Islamic supposition of chronology is influenced by the Jewish, Christian, and Persian traditions of chronology. The author mentions works used by hadith scholars. The Quran is explained as 'genealogies,' as the Jewish and Christian' generations,' and there are saying of dating systems.

Shaddel (2018, pp.291–311) discusses the Muslim *Hijr*i era, which has eleven days difference from the Coptic and Julian Calendars and is first mentioned in non-Arabic documents. The starting point of the Muslim period indicates the beginning of Muhammad's career as a king, entering and subduing the land.

Cohen (1999, pp. 100–157) describes the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and the Islam state. He relates the Christians originating the Pact of 'Umar, a list of restrictions dating 638 CE. These restrictions were translated until the twelfth c. and could be conquest treaties or stipulations adapted from eastern Roman laws (Justinian) concerning the Jews.

The following account includes material from richer narrative histories. It has historical events from the seventh c., with a detailed report of the reforms of Yazid II and accounts of church affairs. At the moment of writing the chronicle, the state was opposed to Miaphysite orthodoxy and saw the natural disaster as a sign of God's displeasure. It reports the suffering of the local Arab population under 'Persian rule.' The author (Wood, 2011, pp.549–568) concludes by stating that by the 770s, Arabs settled among the Suryoye could

be considered a natural part of the social landscape.

The paper by Carlson (2015, pp.791–816) treats medieval Muslim geographical literature. It mentions the Byzantine reconquest borders of the tenth c. CE. The paper analyses geographical works, ten in Arabic, one in Persian, and one in Hebrew. Geographically, the northern border of Syria is the Taurus mountains of southeastern Anatolia. In 634 CE, the region was inhabited by multiple kinds of Christianity, alongside Judaism and paganism. The works consist of geographical texts composed by administrators, travelers, and belles-Lettrists describing the region in the medieval period. In this period, Mu'awiya transferred Muslim populations to coastal cities. There are mentioned shared sanctuaries by Muslims and Christians in Damascus and Homs. It also relates to rural shrines in the Jerusalem neighbourhood, which pertain to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Rachel, Job, Moses, Saul, David, Uriah, Solomon, and Jeremia, revered in common by Jews, Christians, and Muslims. After the Byzantine reconquest of northern Syria, new Christian rule was brought back Greek control over Syria, while Armenians were settled north of Syria and along the Cilician coast.

Chapter Five

Related to Judeo-Christian historiography and Arabia:

Around 520 CE, a struggle for Arabia took place between Judaism and Christianity, with Byzantium and Ethiopia as the main characters (Shahid (1979, pp.23–94). The author describes the Byzantine-

Ethiopian conquering of Himyar and the establishment of Christianity there. In 572 CE, the Persian occupation followed, and after that, Byzantine re-occupation, with a new episcopate in South Arabia.

Newby (1974, pp.431–437) relates the activities of king Abraha (of Aksumite descent) in Procopius writings and Himyaritic inscriptions, showing his activities in South Arabia in the middle of the sixth c. CE. Abraha secured Abyssinian goodwill and defended the Christian martyrs of Najran against Dhu Nuwas, the king of Himyar.

Introduction

Researched is A. the historiography of Edessa, B. Christian communities, C. the relation between Arab kingdoms and Byzantium, D. the historiography of Muslims and relations Muslims/non-Muslims, and, finally, E. the Judeo-Christian historiography and Arabia. Research is done by looking for A. at West- and East Syriac historiography, Syriac Chronicles, City chronicles and archives of Edessa, and chronicles showing interaction in late-antique and Byzantium. For B is glanced at Coptic history writings, histories of al-Hira, the Live of Saints of al-Hira, kingdoms of Ghassan, Lakhmids and Kinda, the kings of Kinda and the elite in late-antique Syria. For C is viewed at the emperor Leo III, the iconographic controversy in the Byzantine Empire in the 8th c. CE and the economic history of Byzantium. D pays attention to early Islamic prophethood and kingship, the Muslim Hijri era, the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and the Islam State, and medieval Muslim geographical literature. Finally, for E is reviewed Judaism and Christianity in Arabia and King Abraha in South Arabia.

Chapter One.
Historiography of Edessa

West- and East Syriac Historiography

To provide a concise but not comprehensive introduction to Syriac sources for Byzantinists and medieval historians of other persuasions, Riedel (2012, p. 1–25) offers a brief overview. The texts mentioned here are geographically restricted to lands under the hegemony of the Roman Empire up to the rise of Islam in the early seventh century. Although the language calls' Syriac,' this may appear misleading, as it was not widely used in what is now called Syria until the late sixth century. Indeed, it was never the administrative language of any political or state entity but existed in lands where Greek, Persian, or Arab authorities held official jurisdiction. Its origins as a language of culture lie in the area between the Euphrates and the Tigris, especially in the Roman provinces of Osthoene and Mesopotamia. The critical center for Syriac culture was Edessa (modern Urfa, or Sanliurfa, in southeast Turkey). Most Syriac texts are related to Christianity, produced by Christians, and most were copied and transmitted by monks for education, worship, and exhortation. Many early writers were poets who used poetry for education, polemics, apologetics, liturgy, and exegesis. Other prose writings include biblical interpretation, theology, saints' lives, liturgies, and ascetic writings. A very early translation movement from Greek into Syriac produced law codes, philosophy, and historiography. Purely historical scripts, such

as chronicles, were not composed in Syriac before the early sixth century.

Most historical texts were translations of Greek chronicles written by Eusebius, John Malalas, Socrates, Soromen, Theodoret, and Zachariah of Mytilene in the pre-Islamic period. One of the most distinctive features of Syriac as a field of study is a large number of texts from copies made before the Islamic period and the number of early manuscripts, the oldest dating from the early fifth century. Non-documentary sources for Syriac sources include an inscription, which was widespread throughout Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine. The oldest of these dates securely from the sixth c. CE and found near Edessa.

There are few coins with Syriac inscriptions because it was never the primary language of any political power or state. However, some coins were struck in Edessa's second and early third centuries while it was still a semi-independent kingdom. Three main scripts use for the Syriac language. The regular Estrangelo alphabet is an angular, monumental script most commonly used until the Islamic conquest of the early seventh century. Serto developed concurrently with Estrangelo but began to be used more extensively in the eighth century. It was widely adopted in the West Syrian churches, such as non-Chalcedonian 'Jacobites' and the Chalcedonian 'Maronites,' after whom it is often named 'West Syrian.' The Eastern script, called 'Nestorian' or 'Chaldean,' developed even later. A helpful collection of images of 200 dated Syriac manuscripts, recently republished, offers photographs of these various kinds of Syriac handwriting and a thorough introduction that discusses everything related to its production: writing materials, styles, quires, vowel pointing, punctuation, and dating. In addition, a new international project is underway to provide an online database of all Syriac manuscripts.

Because Syriac literature was primarily written by and for Christians, it is usually classified by theological categories that confuse those unfamiliar with ecclesiastical history. However, in the fifth century, Christological controversies divided Syriac Christianity into three separate identities, which continue today. These are known as the church of the East, the Syrian Orthodox Church, and the Chalcedonian Churches. This three-way split in the church specifically involved varying doctrinal interpretations of the relationship between the divinity and humanity of Christ. It is helpful to know when each term came into use and whether it was a self-designation or an abusive label. As it is now known, the Church of the East embraced a strict dyophysite doctrine, which held that Christ had two natures. The Church of the East views Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople (r. 428–31), very positively, despite being anathematized at the Council of Ephesus in 431. Thus, their theological opponents referred to them as 'Nestorians.' However, the Christological theology of the Church of the East developed from Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. 428).

The Syrian Orthodox followed the Christology of Cyril of Alexandria, which held that Christ had one nature and one hypostasis united in one person. As a result, the Syrian Orthodox are labeled as 'Monophysites,' a polemical term that refers to their view of the one nature of Christ. They are also sometimes called Jacobites. The word 'Jacobite' derives from a sixth-century bishop of Edessa, Jacob Baradeus (r. 543–78), and was first used during a period of persecution by imperial authorities. The Melkites (literally, 'royalists,' because they agreed with the emperor) comprised Christians from the East who, in distinction to the two-nature/two-representation of God and one nature/one representation of God views, agreed with the Council of Chalcedon's two nature/one hypostasis view. The Maronites were monks who also agreed with Chalcedon but later embraced Monothelitism, a political compromise offered in the early

seventh century by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius in his failed effort to unite Monophysites and Chalcedonians into one church (1).

Syriac evidence dates to the early first century CE, with the earliest Manuscripts dating to the fifth century CE. However, Syriac manuscripts are profiled in the fifth and sixth centuries. Many of these have been translated and published in critical editions. The oldest Syriac manuscripts in these collections come from the monastery Dayr As-Satriani in the Wadi Natrum in Egypt, a Syrian Orthodox monastery. These manuscripts were acquired in the early tenth century by Moses of Nisibis, the monastery's abbot (2). Practical handbooks include Wright's *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts* in the British Museum. For those interested in art history, a comprehensive survey of Syriac illuminated manuscripts with black-and-white photographs appeared in two volumes in 1964 (3). The most famous and beautiful Syriac manuscript, *the Rabbula Gospels*, has also been published as a facsimile and contains examples of 'Garshuni,' which refers to foreign languages (in this case Arabic) written using the Syriac alphabet.

Further information on the production of Syriac manuscripts in the early period was published by MC Mango (4). Riedel mentioned the following for dating: Most Syriac manuscripts use the Seleucid dating system if they provide a date. This system is based on the accession of Seleucus I, who ruled Syria after Alexander the Great. The Seleucid era thus began on October 1, 312 BCE, and is sometimes referred to by Syriac scribes as 'the year of the Greeks'. It is still used in Syriac manuscripts to the present day. Other less common dating systems include local eras like Antioch (began October 1, 49 BCE) or Bostra (began March 22, 106 CE), although these are used in comparatively few manuscripts. After the rise of Islam, Syriac codices began to provide dates based on the Islamic era, which began on July 16, 622 CE and is referred to as 'the year of the hi-

jra' (5). Hijra dates, although uncommon, most often appear alongside Seleucid dates and are used mainly in manuscripts of the church of the East. World chronicles in Syriac (when they depend on Greek sources) sometimes use the dating system of Constantinople, based on the creation of the world, believed to have begun on September 1, 5509 BCE. Finally, a few Syriac texts, written after the first contacts with western missionaries, provide dates according to the Christian era, believed to have begun at the incarnation of Jesus Christ. This system was popularized by a sixth-century Roman monk Dionysius Exiguus, who called it *Anno Domini* (AD). It has recently been co-opted by the more religiously neutral Common Era designation (BCE/CE& BC/AD), using the same numbering to indicate the years. Many Syriac scribes also provide dates according to the year of office of patriarchs, bishops, abbots, and other systems; sometimes, these dates do not agree and are to be read carefully.

The field of Syriac studies is well-supplied with several general introductions to its literature. Among these are the two slim volumes by *Sebastian Brock, An introduction to Syriac studies (6). The earlier book, A brief outline of Syriac Literature* (7), outlines the most important (and accessible) Syriac authors chronologically. A recent publication, *Nos sources: arts et littérature syriaques* (8), offers a mini-encyclopedia on Syriac literature. The delightfully titled *Scattered Pearls* (9) has presented a new translation into English (from Arabic) of a book published in 1943 by the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch. His purpose is to correct Western scholars' incomplete picture of Syriac literature. It is tremendously helpful as he references writers that few scholars have heard of before. Two bibliographical projects are to be mentioned: Cyril Moss' catalog (10) of Syriac manuscripts, books, and articles lists everything held in the British Museum collection. Sebastian Brock's series of bibliographies (11) have been published at

regular intervals as an extension of Cyril Moss' *Catalogue of Syriac Printed Books and Related Literature* in the British Museum for lists of more recent publications. They are intended to help students locate secondary literature on a given subject within the field of Syriac studies. Two reference works on the Syriac fathers are available, one in Latin and one in English. Somewhat dated but still very useful, the work of the Jesuit scholar Ortiz de Urbina presents a compendium of the Syriac fathers in Latin with a helpful introductory chapter describing the historical origins and historical origins and literary background of Syriac Christianity. (12) The first three parts are organized according to the theological doctrine, that is, in three categories: Orthodox, Nestorian, and Monophysite. Parts Four and Five treat anonymous works (primarily hagiography and minor chronicles) and post-patristic biblical texts. A comprehensive survey of Eastern fathers, including Greek, Coptic, Armenian and Syriac writers, has been translated from Italian into English under *Patrology: the Eastern Fathers from the Council of Chalcedon (451) to John of Damascus* (750). (13) Each author or text is described in its historical context and followed by a bibliography for editions, translations, and secondary scholarship, including studies and introductions to that particular text or author.

To find manuscripts, editions, and translations of Syriac texts, the canonical place to start is with the *Patrologia Syriaca* (14), the *Patrologia Orientalis* (PO) (15), and the *Scriptores Syri* series of the *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* (CSCO). (16) Nöldeke's dense but comprehensive *Compendious Syriac Grammar is the most significant reference grammar.* (17) More recently, a few other new editions have also appeared. (18) Why should Byzantinists be concerned with Syriac translations of Greek texts now no longer extant? One important example: few original Greek anti-Chalcedonian texts remain, except in Syriac; this loss skews the history of theological conflict for those

aware only of the pro-Chalcedonian Greek texts. (19) In the relatively small number of palimpsests with Greek underneath and Syriac on top, we may find further evidence of the traces of Greek manuscripts in the Syriac corpus. The northern Mesopotamian cities of Edessa and Nisibis (until 363) and monasteries of northern Syria and southeastern Turkey produced most Syriac manuscripts, translations, and original compositions. Except for chronicles and biblical commentaries, Syriac writers prefer metrical writing genres over prose and compose beautiful poetry. The origins of Syriac poetry are ecclesiastical and bear no traces of pagan influence. (20). Syriac translations of biblical books and commentaries in the second century existed. The standard Syriac translation of the Hebrew Scriptures is the Peshitta, a word that means something like 'simple' in Syriac. The word Peshitta also refers to the Syriac version of the New Testament. Syriac hagiography consists mainly of stories about ascetic feats, miraculous work, or panegyrics. Unlike Byzantine Greek hagiography, there are few accounts of martyrdoms, even at the hands of Muslims. A small number of martyr-acts concerned persecutions in the early fourth century under Roman emperors before the legalization of Christianity. There are more martyrdom stories of persecution under the Sasanid dynasty, beginning in the early fourth century under Shaper II. Eastern Syriac hagiography resembles the writing of history to the extent that it records saints' lives, using the sequence of their exploits to mark the passage of time.

The three significant collections of hagiographical texts in Syriac are Assemani, Bedjan, and Books. (21) Apologetic literature in Syriac is Greek mainly by origin, but its value lies in preserving material whose Greek versions are now lost. Syriac law books include both ecclesiastical canons and civic law and a widely-known work that included the laws of Constantine I, Theodosius, and Leo. Two general formats were used for historiography by West Syrian writers: world

history, which covered events from creation. (22) and church history, modelled after Eusebius. (23) The eastern tradition does not follow the universal history model. Generally, it begins with the life of Jesus, followed by the church's foundation and the fathers' lives. (24) Local histories also covered events limited to a geographical area. Up to the end of the fifth century, Syria historiography consists primarily of translations of Greek works. However, chroniclers began composing works in Syriac in the fifth and sixth centuries. These writers built a cultural identity in their works for the Syriac-speaking community (25).In particular, community identities developed in the aftermath of the seventh century's Islamic conquests in ways that distinguished them from and adapted to the new hegemony. (26) More ever, the methodology of Syriac historiography has exited the interest of a good number of scholars. (27) The earliest Syriac world history was written by Jacob of Edessa (d. 708), and the oldest Syriac church history is the *Ecclesiastical History of John of Ephesus* (late sixth century). The most important local histories are the *Chronicle of Edessa*, written in 540, and the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*, written in the early sixth century. (28) Syriac historiography was produced until the thirteenth century, with the composition of Barhebraeus world chronicle. (29) Barhebraeus (1226–86 CE), known as Bar Ebroyo in Syriac and as Gregory Abu'l Faraj in Arabic, was a maphrian (high-ranking clergyman) in the East Syrian church and is one of the most important later historians. He wrote his world chronicle in both Syriac and Arabic. Although most of the early material repeats the still extant history of Michael the Syrian, it is the later material for which Barhebraeus is best known. (30) Although Egypt was undoubtedly the cradle of Christian monasticism, it was in Mesopotamia and the Syrian desert that the 'ascetic stars,' as Peter Brown calls them, lived and flourished in the fifth and sixth centuries. (31)

Among the most important sources for understanding Syrian attitudes toward the interaction of the social and religious realms must also count the sixth-century collection of 58 stories of Mesopotamian and Syrian ascetics written by John of Ephesus (32). The philosophical tradition in Syriac begins with Bardaisan (CE 154–222), who wrote a Socratic dialogue contrasting fate and free will. (33) Bardaisan's views were considered heretical by the church. Other philosophical and similarly heretical texts include an eleventh-century composition attributed to Jacob of Edessa (d. 708) titled *Causa causurum*, in which the author proposes the unification of Jews, Muslims, and Christians based on what each religion accepts as true of God. (34) Moses bar Kepha (d. 903) wrote a treatise on predestination and free will, and Barhebraeus wrote *The Candelabra of the Sanctuaries* to refute monophysite theology. (35) *Abdisho of Nisibis* wrote a book summarizing East Syrian theology, entitled *The Pearl* (The truth of the faith), in 1298 and translated it into Arabic in 1312. (36)

Finally, Riedel concludes the overview: A chrestomathy is a brief anthology of texts that help students improve their reading. A beneficial modern volume, published in 2006, includes 26 extracts from Syriac literature dating from the second to the thirteenth centuries. (37)

1. For more on the history of the Maronite Church, see M. Moosa, *The Maronite in History* (Syracuse, 1986). On union with Rome, see K. Salibi, *'The Maronite Church in the Middle Ages and its Union with Rome'*, Oriens Christianus 42 (1958): 92–104. For more on the Melkite Church, see I. Dick, *Les Melkites* (Brepols, 1994).

2. S. P. Brock, *'Without Mushē of Nisibis'* Where Would Be? Some reflec-

tions on the transmission of Syriac literature: Journal of Eastern Christian Studies 56 (2004) 15–24.

3. W. Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, was acquired in 1838*, 3 vols. (London, 1870–72).

4. M. C. Mango. '*The Production of Syriac Manuscripts*', 400–700 AD, in *Scritture libri e testi nelle aree provinciali di Bisanzio*, vol. I, eds. G. Cavallo, G. de Gregorio and M. Maniaci (Spoleto, 1991), 161–79.

5. S. P. Brock, 'The use of hijra dating in Syriac manuscripts: a preliminary investigation' in J. J. van Ginkel, H. L. Murre-van den Berg, T. M. van Lint (eds.) *Redefining Christian Identity. Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam* (Leuven/Louvain, 2005), 275–90.

6. S. P. Brock (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2006, rev. 2nd eds.).

7. S. P. Brock (Kottayam: St. Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, 1997).

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13. *Patrology: the Eastern Fathers from the Council of Chalcedon (451) to John of Damascus (750)*, ed. Angelo Di Berardino, tr. Adrian Walford (Cambridge, 2006).

14. *Patrologia Syriaca* [=PS] (Paris, 1894–1926), 3 vols. For Syriac texts with German translations, see *Göttinger Orientforschungen*, Reihe I, Syriaca [=GOFS] (Göttingen, 1971-).

15. *Patrologia Orientalis* [=PO] (Paris/Turnhout, 1904-).

16. *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* [=CSCO] (Leuven, 1904-).

17. J. F. Cookley, *Paradigms and Exercises in Syriac Grammar* (Oxford, 2002); T. Nöldeke, *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, tr. J. A. Crichton (Eisenbrauns, 2001) NB: This is a reprint of the 1904 edition, with the addition of an English translation of his manuscript annotations, German 2nd edition of Nöldeke, with annotations, ed. Anton Schall (Darmstadt, 1966).

18. W. M. Thackston, *Introduction to Syriac* (Bethesda, 1999); T. Muraoka, *Classical Syriac. A Basic Grammar with a Chrestomathy* (Wiesbaden, 1997), Muraoka is stronger on syntax, which is largely omitted

from the older grammar.

19. For more on this, see M. Debié and D. Gonnet, *'les pères disparus en grec'* in A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet, eds., *Les pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque* (Paris, 2007): 127–148.

20. For more on the origins of Syriac poetry, see S.P. Brock, *'Syriac and Greek hymnography: problems of origins,'* Studia Patristica 16 = Texte und Untersuchungen 129 (1985) 77–81 [repr. in SSC].

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75)", Parole de l'Orient 36 (2011): 549–568; M. Debié, "Syriac Historiography and Identity Formation," Church History and Religious Culture 89: 1–3 (2009): 93–114. Also, see M. Debié, *"Writing History as 'Histoires': The Bibliographical Dimension of East Syriac Historiography*," Pages 43–75 in *Writing 'True Stories': Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Medieval Near East.* Edited by Papeconstantinou, Arietta and Debié, Muriél and Kennedy, Hugh N., Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 9. Turnhout: Brepols, 2010; Weitecke, Dorothea, *"Michael the Syrian and Syriac Orthodox Identity*," Church History and Religious Culture 89: 1–3 (2009): 115–125; Hoyland, Robert G., *Theophilus of Edessa's Chronicle and the Circulation of Historical Knowledge in Late Antiquity and Early Islam Translated Texts for Historians* 57, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2011; Pinggéra, Karl, "Nestorianische Weltchronistik. Johannes Bar Penkaye und Elias von Nisibis", Pages 263–283 in *Julius Africanus und die christliche Weltchronik.* Edited by Wallroff, Martin. Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der alt-christlichen Literatur 157. Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006.

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on the Methodology of Michael the Great as a Historiographer and its Implications for Modern Historians," Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies 6 (2006): 53–60. See also Ginkel, Jan J. van, "The Perception and Presentation of the Arab Conquest in Syriac Historiography: How Did the Changing Social Position of the Syrian Orthodox Community Influence, the Account of Their Historiographers?" Pages 171–184 in *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*. Edited by Grypeau, Emmanouela, and Swanson, Mark and Thomas, David. The History of Christian-Muslim Bubonic Plague Pandemic according to Syriac Sources", Pages 59–86 in *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750*. Edited by Little, Lester K., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007; Parvis, Paul M. *"Theodoret's Bias: The Aim of the Historia Eccleslastica*," Studia Patristica 47 (2010): 21–26.

28. For a survey on Syriac historical texts, see S. P. Brock, 'Syriac sources for seventh-century history,' BMGS 2 (1976), 17–36.

29. English translation: E. A. W. Budge. *The Chronography of Gregory Abu' l Faraj, The Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly Known as Bar Hebraeus. Being the First Past of his Political History of the World.* Translated from the Syriac (2 vols; London, 1932).

30. Cf. H. Takahashi, *Barhebraeus; A Bio-Bibliography* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2005).

31. P. Brown, '*The Rise and Function of the Holy Man*,' Journal of Roman Studies 61 (1971) 82.

32. E. W. Brooks, '*John of Ephesus: Lives of the Eastern Saints*' (Patrologia Orientalis 17.1 (1923); 18.4 (1924); 19.2 (1926), Paris; rpt. Brepols, Turnhout 1983), with English translation. See also Susan Ashbrook

Harvey, *'Asceticism and Society in Crisis. John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints'* (Berkeley, 1990). A volume on the Syriac ascetic tradition appeared in 2011 that may be of interest to Byzantinists: Alain Desreumaux, ed., *les Mystiques syriaques* (Paris 2011), esp. the contribution of M. Cassin *'Mystique réflexion à partir de quelques auteurs grecs'*.

33. H. J. W. Drivers, ´The Book of the Laws of the Countries. Dialogue on Fate of Bardaisan of Edessa´ (repr. Gorgias Press, Piscataway NY, 2006). For more on the philosophical background of the text, see Albrech Dihle, 'Zur Schicksalslehre des Bardesanes', in *A. Dihle, Antike und Orient*. Gesammelte Aufsaetze (Heidelberg, 1984) 161–73.

34. German translation by Carl Keyser, *Das Buch von der Erkenntnis der Wahrheit, oder, Der Ursache aller Ursachen* (Leipzig, 1889).

35. The Treatise on predestination is preserved in a British Museum Manuscript (Add. 14, 731) but is unpublished. For Barhebraeus, there is a French translation of books 1–4 and 6–12 (all in the Patrologia Orientalis series); a German translation of book five by R. Kohlhaas (1959).

36. English translation: George Percy Badger, *'The Nestorians and their Rituals with the Narrative of a Mission to Mesopotamia and Coordistan in 1842 to 1844'* (London, 1852), vol. II, p. 380; Eshai Shimun (tr.). *The Book of Margarita (the Pearl) on the Truth of Christianity* (Chicago, 1965); Syriac text: Angelo Mai, *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio e Vaticanis Codicibus* (Rome, 1938), vol. X, pp. 744–780; Yosip E. H. Kellaita, *Ktaba d-metgre marganita d-ʿal svava d'krestyanuta* (2nd ed; Mosul, 1924).

37. Martin Zammit, *'Enable men Karmo Suryoyo. A Syriac Chrestomat-*

ly' (Priscataway NJ, 2006).

Syriac Chronicles

Debié (2009, pp. 93–114) explained in her paper that the first West Syrian historical texts were produced in the sixth century when the history of what would become the Syrian Orthodox Church began. The ethnic origins of the Abgarid dynasty played no part in Syrian' ethnogenesis.' However, a notion of Syro-Mesopotamian origins existed, closely related to a supposed homeland, that of Aram (Debie,2009, pp.93–114). Whereas the Assyrians came to personify the ever hostile Persian neighbour, a stereotypical enemy, the Hellenistic kings were perceived as having effected a synthesis of double Syro-Mesopotomic and Greek culture. The Seleucid era, as adopted by the Edessans, thus remained in use and is an assertion of independence and a strong local identity marker, rejecting the local Antiochene and the Byzantine imperial eras (Debie, 2009, pp. 93–114). The Syrian Orthodox also developed an innovative method of writing the history of their separated church, producing a new genre consisting of lengthy chronicles written in several parts or columns, in which political and ecclesiastical history was kept separate., according to Debie (2009, pp.93–114).

Debie (2009, 93–114) also states that this Syrian Orthodox method of writing history is the only truly distinctive Syrian Orthodox literary genre. Debié (2009, pp.93–114) continues to mention that historiographical texts are thus literary compositions of their time, providing various elements of identity construction or reconstruction. The history of the Syrian Orthodox was already Christian, deeply rooted in Greek Christianity, albeit occasionally in a Semitic dress. The same

is true also for the East Syrians who began writing history when they were forced to defend their religious identity against fellow Christians of other confessions or heretical groups. (1)

Historiography was one tool used to express confessional identity, in opposition first to other Christians and then to others in general, i.e., 'heretics,' Muslims, and later Turks and Mongols. Syriac-speaking communities retold their origin stories in texts such as the *Doctrina Addai, the Acts of Thomas*, and later *Mar Mari*. According to the *Doctrina Addai*, the conversion of the city of Edessa occurred under Abgar Ukkama (4–6 BC), though even the alleged conversion of King Abgar VIII is a myth, and Christianity took hold only in the fourth century. Even the Syriac historians did not consider Edessa the first Christian kingdom. Jacob of Edessa says Constantine was the first king to convert to Christianity. Beginning with Eusebius, the story of Abgar's correspondence with Jesus and his conversion became the accepted history of the origins of Christianity at Edessa. The theme of kingship is of great importance. Both Jacob and Dionysius of Tel Mahre try to demonstrate that the Syrian Orthodox also once possessed political power and kings who supported their identity as a people, despite what 'the Greeks' – here meaning Chalcedonians – said to the contrary. Also should be noted the implication here that it was the Greeks who called the Assyrians and Chaldeans' Syrians'. The Hellenistic kings would have affected a synthesis of this double Syro-Mesopotamian and Greek culture (Debie, 2009, pp.93–114).

Hence, the importance of the Hellenistic period became a chronological knot where the two cultures were combined. Since Jacob of Edessa is one of the most philhellenic of all Syriac authors, it is not surprising that he considers Constantine the legitimate heir of all earlier kingdoms. Dionysius of Tel Mahre also attempted to demonstrate the continuous existence of a Syrian Empire. The successor

state to the Syrian Empire was thus the Roman Empire, deemed legitimate because it is Christian. The Roman-Byzantine kingdom is thus acknowledged, but only during the period before it ordered the enforcement of the Chalcedonian position. According to Dionysius of Tel Mahre, the Greeks claimed that no king was ever descended from the Syrian Orthodox people and that the latter had been cut off. After that, no political power took the side of the anti-Chalcedonians, and they were forced to create a new identity solely on religious grounds. The Syrian Orthodox had to compensate for their lack of sovereignty and thus declared that their head was none other than Christ himself

After Jacob of Edessa, the Syrian Orthodox started writing history as large chronicles in two separate parts, one ecclesiastical and the other secular. Political events were banished from the realm of ecclesiastical history. Though hostile to the Chalcedonians, Syrian Christians, lacking a kingdom of their own, recognized the Byzantine Empire as the only Christian state which remained the protector of all Christians. However, this position changed later, and Dionysius of Tel Mahre considered it better for the Syrian Orthodox to be under Arab rule than Chalcedonian domination. In the West Syrian organization and calculation of time, a strong geographical dimension reveals a close attachment to one region, Syria. The *Suryaye* never ceased counting years according to the Seleucid era, a curious habit since they called this the era 'of the Greeks' or 'of Alexander, son of Philip of Macedon.' The era came to be known by this name or by the name of the Greeks. Commencing on the first of October, as did the Macedon year, this reckoning is still used for inscriptions in Syriac and Syrian Orthodox manuscripts alongside Christian-era dating. Although bearing the title of 'Patriarch of Antioch in Syria,' the head of the Syrian Orthodox Church was rarely in Antioch itself, and the church had no geographical center. The patriarch was forced

to live in various monasteries outside Antioch or in Harran, Kallinikos, Edessa, and Melitene. As an institution, the Syrian Orthodox Church was the only one whose geographical organization did not match the administrative divisions of the political entity in which it found itself. From this, it is clear that the Syrian Orthodox Church was not simply a 'negative copy' of the Chalcedonian church; from the beginning. It had appointed a bishop for the territory beyond the frontier, for the Persian Empire. A secondary patriarchate,' entitled the 'maphrianate' (16), was created to look after the *Suryāyē* in the Persian Empire. This double hierarchy that survived the end of the Sasanid Empire and the abolition of the political frontier may well have enabled the church to encompass the double identity of the 'Syrians' proper of the west bank. So whereas the East Syrian Church became, despite ceaseless persecutions, the 'national' church of the Sassanid empire, the Syrian Orthodox Church remained neither Byzantine nor Persian but Syrian.

When the Persians invaded Syria and wanted to replace the local ecclesiastical hierarchy with one that they considered more politically loyal and reliable, the Syrian Orthodox people would not accept (unsurprisingly) the proposed Nestorian bishops. However, they persuaded the Persians to grant them Syrian Orthodox bishops from the Persian Empire. Being identified on religious grounds as belonging to the Jacobite church, as their enemies put it – the Syrian Orthodox no longer needed to insist on using Syriac. Since they had completely abandoned their use of Greek because of their enmity with the Chalcedonians, they were able to adopt Arab first as their colloquial language and then as a literary one. The Syrian Orthodox started writing religious texts in Garshunni, Arabic, with Syriac letters.Debié (2009, pp. 93–114) continues by explaining that the Edessa dynasty is presented as Greek. According to Debie (2009, pp. 93–114), it seems clear that the ethnic origins of the Abgarid dynasty played no part

in Syrian' ethnogenesis.' The royal family was thought to have been of Arab descent. Jacob of Edessa (and consequently Michael the Great and *the Chronicle of the year 1234* (3) adds that the people who had settled in Edessa before its Macedonian re-foundation were of Armenian stock (Debie, 2009, pp. 93–114). We cannot ascertain whether they were Arabs (as some of the names may indicate), Aramean, Parthian, or Armenian. (4) Nevertheless, the memory of Macedonian origin can be found in almost all historical texts, though not in the form of a link with Macedonia itself, but rather with Seleucus, the ruler of Syria.

The *Chronicle of 1234* gives a traditional aetiological explanation; these cities were named after the sons and daughters of Seleucus. According to this text, derived from Edessa sources, Edessa was the first city to be (re-) founded in the 'region of Syria' and received its new name from the elder daughter of Seleucus. According to Eusebius, however, followed by the chronicler of Zuqnin and Michael the Elder, Antioch was the first Seleucid foundation, dating from Seleucus' first year, at the beginning of the era in the 'Greek years.' Michael the Great retells the story that Seleucus ordered all records of other systems of reckoning in local languages to be burnt. (5) This is, of course, intended to legitimize the use by Syriac-speaking communities of a Greek era rather than a Syriac or Aramaic one. To do this is an assertion of independence through the rejection of the local Antiochene and the Byzantine eras officially used in the Empires. Although the East Syrians used this era dating inscriptions and manuscripts (6), they never employed it in historiography except when treating western events or citing western sources. (7) The Melkites and the Maronites also used this era, almost to the present day. This system of dating was not political, but neither was it religious. The history of Ahigar the Wise (8), the survival of the literary genre of dialogue poems (9), and perhaps also the use of archives and practices of record keeping as exem-

plified by the Edessa archives or reminiscences of Assyrian rites can be found in *the Acts of Mar Mari* (10). All this is intended to show that Aramaic was spoken in these kingdoms. Syrian origin was illustrated using the Bible, but Greek mythology was used to write the history of Syria and the Syrian Kings. This history reports that the Syrian kings were the first to wear purple garments but omits the account, related in *the Chronicle of Malalas*, of the subsequent transmission of the purple to other nations, including the Romans (with the implication that the Byzantine emperors were not 'porphyrogenetoi'). Debie (2009, pp.93–114) continues that going back to the Chaldean and Assyrian Empires, the common ancestry relies upon a common language more than a common homeland or acknowledged sovereign. The question extends to that of the ancient language, about which opinions in the chronicles vary. Next to Chaldean and Assyrian, Hebrew was one of the options. (11) Syriac, that is Aramean, the other. From this latter, according to *the Chronicle of 1234,* all the others were descended and mixed (12). The Assyrians were never presented positively but were considered as enemies, beginning with the promise given by Jesus to Abgar that Edessa would hold against its enemies, the Assyrians, for, as *the Chronicle of 1234* reports, Atur, 'that is Mosul', continuously harassed the kingdom of Abgar. (13) Thus, being associated with the foreign territory of Atur, which belonged to the Persian Empire.

Continuing on Language, Religion, and Ethnicity, Debié (2009, pp. 93–114) analyzes that the Syriac language is called the Edessan or Mesopotamian tongue or language. (14) This does not mean that all 'Syrians' actually spoke Syriac, that is, the Edessa literary language which was both written and spoken at Edessa but was only read and written 'in other districts.' The geographical boundaries of spoken Syriac, unfortunately, remain extremely vague. Thus the existence of an eastern and western form of Syriac may not be due to an inter-

nal evolution of the language but may be explained by the influence of local spoken dialects on grammar. Thus, phonology resulted in the creation of two different systems of diacritical marks and vowels. Spoken Syriac had declined as a living language in the thirteenth century and became a literary and ecclesiastical language. Thus the dialects now evolved even more independently of one other. The Estrangela script was a common heritage of all Syriac communities. However, from the end of the seventh or early eighth century, it was replaced by scripts varying from one confession to another. The East Syrians and Melkites developed their own 'Nestorian' and 'Melkite'scripts. Thus, the script enabled one to recognize the communal setting at once, and the Syrian Orthodox used either the western or eastern Syriac dialect.

The Syrians are mentioned in *Nikephoros Ouranos*' Taktikon, on the side of the Armenians and Margarites (Christians who apostatized to Islam), at the time of the Byzantine reconquest.(15) The Syrian Orthodox were subsequently identified as a religious group or church, for the Emperor Nikephoros Phokas agreed with their patriarch that the Syrians should move to Melitene, which deserted when it reconquered from the Muslims in 934. Although 'heretics,' the Syrians were chosen because they were a frontier people, used to living between the two peoples and Empires of the Greeks and the Arabs. There followed a golden age for the wealthy Syrian Orthodox community. However, the state of peace and relative harmony ended at the beginning of the eleventh century when the Arabs defeated Emperor Romanos Argyros. The Emperor decided to blame this upon his weakness in allowing the Jacobite' heretics' to prosper in his Empire. The Syrian patriarch then fled back to the lands under Arab dominion to escape anti-Chalcedonian persecution (imprisonment). However, the ethnic identity of the Syrians was perceived by the Byzantine as heretical; they did not admit to assimilation.

In conclusion, Debié (2009, pp. 93–114) points out that the end of Church unity, and the might of the Empire being put on the side of the Chalcedonians, came with the end of the genre of ecclesiastic history. Control over the writing of the past was placed in the hands of senior members of the church, such as John of Ephesus (Bishop, representative of the Syrian Orthodox in Constantinople), Dionysius of Tel Mahre (Patriarch), Michael the Great (Patriarch), and Barhebraeus (Maphrian).

1. On East Syrian historiography, see Muriel Debié. *'Writing History as 'Histoires.' The Biographical Dimension of East-Syriac Historiography'*, in Muriel Debié, Hugh Kennedy and Arietta Papaconstantinou (eds.), *Writing 'True Stories': Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Medieval Near East* (Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 9; Brepols, forthcoming in 2009).

2. F. M. Abel, 'L'ère des Seleucides', *Revue Biblique 47* (1938), pp. 198–213.

3. Chabot. *Chronique 5.6*, ed. Vol.4, p. 77, transl. Vol.1, p. 120.

4. Van Rompay, *'Jacob of Edessa'*, pp. 273–274.

5. Chabot, *Chronique 5.4*, ed. Vol. 4, p. 74, transl. Vol.1, p. 116, citing Eusebius' chronicle.

6. On the dating of manuscripts, see Francoise Briquel-Chatonnet, *'Le temps du copiste: notations chronologiques dans les colophons de manuscripts syriaques'*, in Francoise Briquel-Chatonnet and Hélène Lozachmeur (eds.), *Proche-Orient ancient: temps vécu temps pensé* (Antiquités sémitiques 3; Paris, 1998), pp. 197–210; Sebastian P. Brock, *The Use of Hijra Dating in Syriac Manuscripts: a Preliminary Investigation'*, in Van

Ginkel. Murre-van den Berg, and Van Lint (eds.), *Redefining Christian Identity*, pp. 275–290.

7. See Muriel Debié, *'Writing History as "Histoires". The Biographical Dimension of East Syriac Historiography'*, in Debié, Kennedy, and Papaconstantinou (eds.), Writing 'True Stories.

8. Franςoise Briquel-Chatonnet, *'L'histoire et la sagesse d'Ahiqar, fortune littéraire de la vie d'un dignitaire araméen à la cour assyriene'*, in 'Jean-Louis Bacqué'-Grammont, Angel Pino, and Samaha Khoury (eds.), D'un Orient à l'autre (Cahiers de la Sociétè asiatique NS 4; Paris-Leuven, 2005), pp. 17–40; Riccardo Centini and Christiano Grottanelli (eds.), *Il saggio Atique, Fortuna e trasformazioni di uno scritto sapienzale, Il testo più antico e le sue version* (studi biblici 148, Brescia, 2005).

9. See the numerous articles and translations by Sebastian P. Brock.

10. Francois Briquel-Charonnet, Christelle Jullien, and Florence Jullien, *'Traces d'un ancient rite assyrien dans les Actes de Mar Mari?'*, Semitica 51 (2003), pp. 65–71; Amir Harrak, *The Acts of Mar Mari the Apostle* (Writings from the Greco-Roman World II; Atlanta, 2005), pp. XXII- VI, about the assemblies, with a bibliography on the subject.

11. According to Michael the Great, this was the opinion of Jacob of Edessa and John of Litarba (Chabot, *Chronique 2.3*, ed. Vol. 4, p. 10, trans. Vol. 1, p. 20.

12. Chabot, *Chronicon anonymum 1*, ed. 47, trans. p. 34.

13. Ibid. ed. p. 120, trans. p. 95.

14. Van Rompay, *Jacob of Edessa*,' p. 278; Lucas Van Rompay, 'Past and Present Perceptions of Syriac Literary Tradition,' Hugoye. Journal of Syriac Studies 3.1 (Jan 2000), 16, note 14.

15. Citation in Dagron, *Minorités ethniques et religieuses*', p. 185.

16. 'Maphrian' is a Syriac term, meaning 'the one who makes fruitful,' the 'propagator.'

City chronicles and archives of Edessa

Debié (1999–2000, pp. 409–417) wrote that it has long been noticed that historical material focusing on Edessa could be traceable in the Syriac chronicles. However, we have no evidence of a so-called "City chronicle" or Stadtchronik in Edessa as those postulated in Constantinople, Rome, or Ravenna (1). Syriac chronicles nevertheless can give an interesting glimpse at what would be a city chronicle and the archives of a late antique city. We know there existed from the 4th century onward annals which circulated in popular illustrated almanacs written in Greek or Latin, such as the *Calendar* of 354 (2). The calendars made Constantinople's annals known throughout the empire and made them easy to use by chroniclers. Nevertheless, unfortunately, we do not know much about how these annals and, more precisely, the city chronicle that underlies them were compiled.The problem is, do we have to postulate the existence of a city chronicle, or is it possible to find an alternative, although not exclusive, explanation for this phenomenon? As for record-keeping, Debié (1999–2000 pp. 409–417) mentions that Antiochan and Edessenian historical material in the chronicles comes from the archives of the two cities well attested by historical testimonies. Malalas speaks in his

chronicle of the "akta τής πολεως" [akta ton poleis].

We are better informed about the archives of Edessa, whose existence is closely linked with the independence of the Edessenian kingdom. The famous Dura Europos sale contract provides the first testimony (P Dura 28, dated May 243), which clearly states that a copy was to be deposited in the archives of Edessa (3). We also have evidence of their existence in literary texts such as the *Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius of Caesarea* (4). These copies also existed in the later *Chronicle of Edessa* of 540 (5) or the *Miscellaneous Chronicle* of 640 (6). Apocryphal texts issued in Edessa also refer to the city archives, probably because of their fame and authority (7). These archives contained private and public acts, as shown by the Bill of Sale of Dura and the minute of Edessa's floods, copied by the *Chronicle of Edessa* of 540 (8). Along with the civil archives, ecclesiastical archives existed since the 4th century, which may have been kept in the same place as the civil ones (9). We know that the archives kept documents there, but the chronicles-contrary to the ecclesiastical histories-quote very few documents. What the chroniclers are interested in is made explicit by a brief note in the *Miscellaneous Chronicle*: the "book of the archives" (10). What is meant thereby? Probably a kind of registry like the rolls found in Egypt, where all the entries of documents were listed. The accuracy of dates is vital for legal documents as for ecclesiastical history. For example, the Edessian date for Christ's birth – 309 of the Seleucid era and not 312/1 as expected – was probably kept in the ecclesiastical archives. It was the important task of the "book of the archives" to ensure a good classification of the documents and dating documents and events. Its location in the storage rooms and shelves probably gave the date of entry of the document. This "book of the archives" is likely to have kept, as a calendar, the record of important local events and civil and ecclesiastical administrative acts.

The disastrous and numerous floods of Edessa were listed as the *Chronicle of Edessa* testifies, who mentions them all, other chronicles choosing only some of them. Imperial edicts sent to all provincial cities and metropoles were kept there, as shown in the *History of Edessa* of Pseudo-Joshua, (11), and important ecclesiastical decisions such as the gathering of Church councils. The acts of local administration from the Abgar dynasty and the emperor and its representatives were kept there. The history of Pseudo-Joshua thus records the edict of emperor Anastasius sent to all the oriental cities about the abolition of the *collation Lustralis*. The history also records the celebration held on that occasion in Edessa (12). The chroniclers' task was to choose between the annalistic records of events such as good news, calamities, and new annual liturgical commemorations recorded in the local ecclesiastical calendars.

They also had to choose between decisions as they were probably kept in the "book of the archives" and a detailed account based on the documents deposited. The *Chronicle* of Edessa of 540 gives thus only the date of Anastasius' decision, whereas the Pseudo-Joshua makes a detailed account from documents. (13) New buildings and destructions due to wars, earthquakes, or fire were also carefully recorded and dated. Natural calamities and wonders were registered: locusts, plague, famine, celestial signs (comets, eclipses). Independent lists of these events are likely to have circulated, as is pointed out by the chronicle of Malalas. The chronicle lists all the earthquakes that shook Antioch's city, information then transmitted to John of Ephesus and then to the *Chronicle of Zugnin* (14). Lists of bishops were compiled the same way as is shown by the chronological canons of James of Edessa, who gives a mathematical order of the bishops, not only of Edessa and the patriarchates but also of Cappadocia, for example. This numbering of bishops does not appear in other chronicles. However, they all use this type of list: bishops of Edessa in al-

most every chronicle. Alternatively, written nearby were written bishops of Amida in the *Chronicle of Zugnin*. These records were not necessarily kept in the city archives, especially after the seventh or eighth centuries when we have no evidence that they were still alive, but most likely in the city's main church archives. Alongside the list of Amida bishops, we find information about the main church in the Chronicle of Zugnin. This information can be such as the burials which took place there. (15) The same is true about Edessa, as shown in the *Chronography of Edessa* of 1234. The church diptychs were the source for compiling these lists, but the authors do not mention them as a direct source. They seem to have been used only second-hand. We know of independent lists such as the lists of caliphs. Elias of Nisibis in the 1th century gives an idea of the range of lists the chroniclers had: a chronology of the kings of Edessa, the Persian kings, and the Arab caliphs. He also mentions a "book of chronology," which may have already gathered several documents of that kind.

We can infer that chronological and thematic lists were excerpted from the civil and ecclesiastical archives and circulated independently. The chroniclers used these lists and transmitted them, directly or not, to subsequent texts. The standard material centered on Antioch, Amida, and especially Edessa identified in the Syriac chronicles has to be traced in former texts used as source material and in these independent lists, which were quite numerous and varied in contents. The existence of these lists can account for the discrepancies noticed between the different chronicles. The compilers did not necessarily have the same lists to build their chronicle.

The way the chroniclers did work explains the surprising discrepancies. It is to be kept in mind that the late antique and medieval chroniclers did not have our modern, updated calendars at their dis-

posal. They had to convert in the current Seleucid era in imperial or royal years ("in that year of that king") or another era such as the Antiochan one. They did not always unify their chronology: the use of the Abraham years in the *Chronicle of Zugnin*, which the author could not convert in the Seleucid era, immediately points to its direct source, the chronicle of Eusebius. To date as specific as possible, the chroniclers tried to create synchronism, giving, for example, the year of the ruler of the local bishop, the day and month if possible, and the year in the common Seleucid era. The dating of the ecclesiastical council illustrates how the chroniclers used the material at their disposal. It is striking that the chronicles do not agree on the dates of the main ecclesiastical councils. Brief forms of these lists must have circulated, as shown in the *Chronography* of 1234. Longer versions, as in the *Miscellaneous Chronicle*, are due to the combination of different documents. This latter form is: "The council of the 315 bishops was gathered in Nicea in the days of Constantine the first Christian emperor in the year 636, the 1st of the month of Haziran, in the 13th indiction. The deposition of Arius was made, and the council took place 326 years after Christ's birth. The heads of the council were: …". The dating in the Seleucid era could not come from official documents since the imperial administration did not use them. It had to be set up by the chroniclers themselves – or the head of the archives – with the help of the succession of the emperors and bishops, the official dating (here the byzantine indictions). The minimum information at hand was the reign of the emperor, which gathered the council. The chronicler had to complete this information with the material at his disposal.

The beforementioned explains the extent of the accuracy and completeness of the lists in the chronicles. After indicating the name of the reigning emperor and possibly his regnal year, a more precise date in Seleucid is calculated by the chronicler according to the suc-

cession lists of the emperors. However, this practice led to inaccuracies: the Melchite Chronicle, for example – which shares a common source with the chronicle of 846 – situates the council of Ephesus in the 6th year of Theodosius II, whereas the chronicle of 846 in the 32nd year of the same emperor, the straight year being the 22nd. The regnal years are thus as inaccurate as the date in the Seleucid era. The conversion in the Seleucid era of regnal years, which could be wrong if the succession list was wrong, can account for the differences. The list of the Fathers attending the councils could help date the councilor. The other way round, it could help complete the list of the succession of the bishops: to date in the Seleucid era, the death of bishop Eulogius of Edessa, the chronicle of 846 says that he died one year after the council, that is, in 693 AG (the council being dated 692). We know otherwise by the *Miscellaneous Chronicle* that Eulogius did attend the council. The councils helped date other events: the Chronicle of Edessa of 540 states: "In 635 was built the cemetery of Edessa, under bishop Aitallaha; the year before had taken place the great council of Nicea".For the church's construction date, two elements of the ecclesiastical chronology (year of the bishop and date of the council) were used. For the church's construction date, we have to reconstitute the dating in the Seleucid era. That is probably one of the reasons why so important ecclesiastical events, such as the great ecumenical councils, were ill-dated and unevenly documented in the chronicles. We know that independent lists of councils circulated, which were copied by the chroniclers (16). The author hypothesizes that there was no longer a form of these lists in the archives or circulation from which the chroniclers would have excerpted more or less complete and accurate copies. However, she hypothesizes that only shorter forms existed that the chroniclers had to compete with other material at their disposal, crossing dates and documents to produce more elaborate entries.

What is true of councils can also be applied to other examples. The chroniclers used crossed documents to elaborate complex entries, sometimes from previous chronicles and documents they had at hand. Prosopographic information is used to date local events, notably the constructions of public buildings in Edessa, which are one of the recurrent elements of the standard material. In these entries, buildings – notably churches – and bishops date each other according to the following model: "In that year, died that bishop; such one succeeded to him, who built that church." The only information we can constantly trace about the Edessenian bishops is their building activity. The other way round, the only date of church achievement we have is the date of the election or arrival of their builder: "Then was build in the oriental part of the city the church of the twelve Apostles… and then of Sergius, the glorious martyr. The bishop of Edessa built these two churches. He fell in the heresy of Nestorius, that is, of the two natures, in the year 746. The last happened under the episcopate of Ibas, who succeeded Rabbula. This quote shows that the *Chronography* of 1234 used a list of the Edessenian bishops to date the church's construction. At the same time, it used a detailed source focusing on the architecture of the Edessenian churches, as pointed out in the short description he gives. It also gives his information about heretic bishops, here about Ibas. The chronicler used prosopographic information to date the buildings, which is usual throughout the chronicles. It means that the form of the chronicle entry could differ in each text, depending on the sources it relied upon. Since chronology bears theological meanings and interpretations, it is never neutral and can be influenced by the chronicler's religious confession. That is another reason why common material can give different entries in the chronicles, according to what the author selected and how he presented the historical material.

Debié's (1999–2000, pp. 409–414) purpose was to show that the

chroniclers created chronological inputs and did not simply copy out what they found in the city archives or previous texts.

Notes:

1. A. Freund. *Beitraege zur antiochenischen und konstantinopolitanischen Stadtchronik* (Jena, 1882).

2. B. Croke, "City chronicles of late Antiquity," in G. Clarke, B. Croke, R. Mortley (ed.). *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity,* (Sydney, 1990).

3. J.A. Goldstein, *"The Syriac Bill of Sale of Dura Europas,"* Journal of Near Eastern Studies, 25 (1966), p. 1–16; A. R. Bellinger, C.B. Welles, *"A Third Century Contract of Sale from Edessa in Osrhoene,"* Yale Classical Studies, 5 (1935), p. 95–154. Two copies (promotion) were made, one for Tiro, the buyer, and the other one was to be deposited in the "archeion" of Edessa.

4. HE I, 13.5.

5. XE, CSCO, p. 3, 11–16.

6. XMI, p. 96, T/77 Y.

7. *Acts of Sharbil, Ancient Syriac Documents Relative to the Earliest establishment of Christianity in Edessa,* (ed. W. Cuseton), (London, 1864), p. 41; *The Doctrine of Addai the Apostle,* (ed. G. Philips), (London, 1876) and *Ancient Syriac Documents,* p. 23. Even if these texts are spurious, the reference they make to the archives of Edessa shows the authority they held in late antiquity.

8. XE, CSCO, p. 3 T.

9. Cf the Acts of Sharbil who pretend to have been deposited "among the royal charts." The Acts may have preserved the memory of a traditional procedure.

10. "Ktaba d beit arche", XMi, p. 96 T/77V.

11. PJ, CSCO, p. 259 T/191 V.

12. PJ, CSCO, p. 257–8 T/190 V.

13. XE, CSCO, p. 8 n. LXXIV: PJ, CSCO, p. 257–8 T/190 V.

14. See all the occurrences in W. Witkowski, *"The Sources for the Third Part of the Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius,*" Orientalia Suecana, 40 (1991), pp. 252–275.

15. PZ II, p. 21 T/16 V; 150 T/112 V.

16. A list of the dates of the councils is copied in the Bb. Add. 17 193 (1185 AG), f, 82. C f. W. Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum.* (London, 1870–1872), p. 989a-1002a.

Chronicles showing interaction in late antique and byzantium

Conterno (2013, p. 1–20) states that the expression "circuit de Theophile d'Edesse has been introduced by Antoine Borrut (1) to explain the presence of shared material in Theophanes *Confessor's Chronographia*, Michael the Syrian's chronicle, the anonymous *Chroni-*

cle of 1239 and Agapius of Mabbug's *Kitab al-unwan*. According to Robert Hoyland, three more sources can add, namely, the *Chronicle of Seert* (an East-Syrian chronicle written in Arabic in the X–XI century) and two Latin chronicles written in Spain in the VIII century, the *Chronicle of 741* (also called *Byzantine-Arab Chronicle of 741*) and the *Chronicle of 754* (also called *Hispanic chronicle of 754)*. (3) The resemblances between the two Latin chronicles and Theophanes' *Chronographia* had already been observed by their first editor, Theodor Mommsen, who hypothesized the derivation of the shared accounts of Oriental events from an Arabic source. (4) In the *Epimetrum* following the two texts, Theodor Nöldeke proposed a different hypothesis, suggesting that the material stared by the Latin chronicles and Theophanes came instead from a work of a Syrian miaphysite author, writing most likely in Greek. (5) Although the close parallels are admittedly few, Hoyland includes the two Hispanic chronicles in the "circuit de Théophile d'Edessa," supposing they depended on the same Greek translation of Theophilus' work used by Theophanes. His reconstruction follows scholars such as Borrut and Stephen Shoemaker. (6) Contrariwise, according to Wolfram Brandes, the Oriental material found in the two Latin chronicles is earlier than the "Syriac Common Source" shared by Theophanes and the Syriac chronicles. However, it comes nonetheless from an Eastern written source on which they all ultimately depend (7).

James Howard-Johnson has expressed a different view. He notes that the reason for the resemblances between the two Hispanic chronicles and Theophilus of Edessa's dependants "is probably to be sought in a common ultimate rooting in reality or the management of news about reality, rather than the use of a commonly written source". (8) The pieces of information that the two Latin chronicles share with Theophanes and the other texts are the following: Heraclius' and Nicetas' twofold expedition to overthrow Phocas; the defeat of the

Byzantine general Theodore at Tabitha against the Arabs; Umar I's murder. Further, a peace treaty between Marwan and Constantine; a positive remark on Umar II and Yazid ibn al-Muhallab's rebellion against Yazid II. Hoyland observes that the overlap of the *Chronicle of Seert* with the other sources supposedly involved in the "circuit of Théophile d'Edesse" is limited. Nevertheless, he counts the chronicle among Theophilus' dependants and reports in the volume the few matching passages: Heraclius and Nicetas' twofold expedition to overthrow Phocas: the desertion of the Persian general Šahrbaraz and the defeat of the Persian army on the river Zab. Further, a sign in the sky foreshadowed the Arab invasion, Heraclius' withdrawal from Syria, and the building of a mosque on the Temple site at Jerusalem. Another text will be considered in this study, Patriarch Nicephorus' *Breviarum*. The presence of material of Oriental origin in the *Breviarum* is a debated question. The following items will be considered: a comment on the fact that while the Persians were devastating the land outside Constantinople, Phocas was inflicting even heavier damages to the people inside it, Heraclius' and Nicetas' twofold expedition to overthrow Phocas, the fall into disgrace of Priscus, Phocas' son-in-law, and Heraclius' dismissal words to him. Further, an episode concerning the Persian general Sahrbaraz and a letter of Khosrau's counterfeited by Heraclius.

The only item all sources share is the anecdote of Heraclius' and Nicetas' expedition against Phocas. Hoyland, noticing its presence in all the sources, observes that "presumably it derives ultimately from a Byzantine source, possibly the continuation of John of Antioch." The story of Sahrbaraz's desertion is to be found in the *Chronicle of Seert*, but with some interesting additions compared to the version of four others. Šahrbaraz swears allegiance to Heraclius. He puts Khusrau's seal on the forged letter and shows it to his fellow generals, thus causing the whole army to go over to the Romans. While

Sahrbaraz is besieging Chalcedon, Khusrau learns that Heraclius is moving against him with an army of Turk allies. Therefore he writes Sahrbaraz the order to give up the siege and return to back him up with his keeps. Walter Kaegi and Paul Cobb have first remarked that an episode concerning Sahrbaraz's desertion is known due to Muslim sources. There are two versions of it, one ascribed to al-Zukri (d.730 ca) and reported in Ibn' Abd al-Hakam's *Futuh Misr*, and the other going back to Ikrima (d. 724) and preserved by al-Tabari in his *Ta'rikh*. (10). Michael the Syrian: "The Persians crossed to the west side of the Euphrates and captured Mabbug. Tennessee, Aleppo, and Antioch. And while the Persians were doing these things, Phocas was killing the leaders from within. Other people, the free men and those fighting were done away with".

Another *type* of heroic tale is found in the *chronicle of 754*. (11) The urge to stop hunting a supposed written "Urquell" shared by all the chronicles and to take seriously into account the idea that this material was being circulated orally analyzed the correspondences. To say how this corpus of heroic tales originated, how far it spread, and by whom it was passed has to be investigated. Although produced within the Byzantine empire, it crossed linguistic, religious, and political borders. We find correspondences among our sources in pieces of information concerning the loss of the Oriental provinces to the Arabs. Particularly telling is the case of Heraclius' withdrawal from Syria. (12) Michael the Syrian and the chronicle of 1234 report the anecdote of the emperor saying farewell to the region. They both say that he allowed his troops to lay waste the land as if it already belonged to the enemy. He sent an order to the people in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Armenia not to put up resistance to the Arabs anymore and hold on to their places. Theophanes, very briefly, say that Heraclius abandoned the region in despair, taking with him the relic of the Holy Cross. Agapius says that Heraclius retired from Mabbug

to Antioch because he had already despaired of saving the region. Later on, after knowing of the defeat of the Persians by the Arabs, he wrote to Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Armenia, ordering them not to oppose the will of God and not to engage in battle against the Arabs anymore. *The Chronicle of Seert* also says that Heraclius ordered men that they should not oppose God's will and not fight the Arabs anymore but hold on to their places and that he left Syria despairing of keeping it. It seems like behind all these versions was an account containing the following items: Heraclius' despair of saving the region, his salute to the region, his order to devastate the land as if it already belonged to the enemy, his order not to fight the Arabs anymore, not to oppose God's will but to hold on. In the two Hispanic chronicles, we find the account of Theodore's defeat and death at Tabitha. (13). Both the *chronicle of 741* and the *chronicle of 754* mistakes Theodore, who was killed at Tabitha, for Heraclius' brother, whereas he was the emperor's Sacellarius, who bore the same name. Theophanes had also defeated Heraclius' brother at Tabitha. Earlier, he had survived the battle. (14). The last two items suggest that the oral accounts concerning Heraclius did not deal exclusively with his military successes and the most glorious part of his reign.

The other passages of the two Latin chronicles that Hoyland has signaled as coming from Theophilus' chronicle concern the caliphate. They derivate ultimately from the Islamic tradition: 'Umar I's murder; a peace treaty between the Arabs and the Romans; a positive remark on 'Umar II; Yazid ibn al-Muhallab's rebellion against Yazid II. The two Latin chronicles place the murder in the tenth year of 'Umar's reign. At the same time, the Syriac texts place it in the twelfth year and the Islamic sources in the eleventh. According to the "Theophilus' theory," Theophilus of Edessa and the anonymous chronicler of 819 used a Syriac chronology written in 730 in the Qartamin monastery (15). The core of this piece of information should be as-

cribed to Theophilus of Edessa too. Although the time of the first put into writing of historiographical material in the Islamic tradition is a debated question (16), there is no doubt that many of the narratives reported in the first written sources derived from the practice of storytelling. Anthony points out that "most of our information derives from second/eighth-century accounts redacted and compiled together in works mostly dating from the third/ninth century onwards." (17).The Arab and the Roman peace treaty(18) was signed, according to the *chronicle of 741*, by Marwǎn and Constantine IV. The Arabs were to release all the captives and the deserters found in their lands and pay the Romans a daily tribute of 1000 golden coins, one girl, one Arab mule, and a silk garment for nine years. Michael the Syrian and the *chronicle of 1234* report instead of a peace treaty of ten years between ʻAbd al-Malik and Justinian, according to which the latter would remove the Mardaites from Lebanon and withdraw his troops from Arab territory.' In addition, Abd al-Malik would pay a daily tribute of 1000 gold coins, one horse, and one enslaved person per day, and half of the revenue of Cyprus, Armenia, and Iberia. In neither case does Theophanes mentions the duration of the treaty. In the case of Yazid ibn al-Muhallab's rebellion against Yazid II (19), not only is any literal correspondence between the Latin chronicles and the other sources missing, but the former also contains some details that are not in the latter. They say the military rebellion started by the troops defending the Persian territory. The place of the final battle is specified, namely in the Babylonian plain above the Tigris (20). The *chronicle of 741* says that Maslama, the general sent by Yazid II against the rebel, was his half-brother, born of a different mother. (21)

Stephen Shoemaker's book The Death of a Prophet shows how misleading it can be to trace all the similarities to a shared written source. Shoemaker spots, both in Christian and Islamic sources, hint

at Muhammad's presence during the first Arab raids on Roman territory. Such detail is at odds with the traditional account, according to which the Islamic expansion began only after the Prophet's death. With his careful analysis of the sources, Shoemaker shows that so many unrelated testimonies of the same alternative version cannot but prove that the early Islamic tradition had initially produced two different narratives of the first conquests. Both testimonies circulated widely and were recorded in Christian sources, and in the end, one of the two became mainstream and overshadowed the other. Shoemaker relies on the "Theophilus theory" and follows Hoyland in reckoning the *Chronicle of Seert*, one of Theophilus' dependants. Conterno (2013, pp. 1–20) also notes that misled by the "Theophilus theory," Shoemaker fails to realize that the *Chronicle of Seert* is one more independent witness to the lost early tradition whose traces he is looking. Furthermore, therefore one more piece of evidence supports his argument.

Conterno concludes: The two Latin chronicles and the *Chronicle of Seert* do not depend on the same written source attested by the other four texts, but they depend on the duplicate accounts that were produced and first spread orally, accounts that might have been immediate, of ultimately, or even not at all based on reality. Therefore, they are considered independent sources if we look at them from a "Quellenforschung" perspective. Nevertheless, if we look at them from the point of view of "intercultural transmission," they share the same material, although not via a direct written transmission. It is likewise impossible to say when the above-examined passages of the *Chronicle of Seert* found their current written form. The author does not imply that the anonymous chronicler got all his quotes from oral sources in the late X century. He must have found them in his sources, but there is no way to demonstrate that he used Theophilus of Edessa or that one of his sources did. Neither can we prove that he

found all the items in the same source nor that they reached him only through Christian intermediaries.

In conclusion, Conterno (2013, pp. 1-20) explained that the scarcity of preserved contemporary sources makes studying the circulation of historical knowledge in the Near East between the VII and the VIII century a most delicate task. The material analyzed in the present study urges scholars to consider the interaction between oral and written tradition more seriously. Mapping the circulation of written texts cannot be explained by the evidence provided by the preserved sources.

1. cf. Borut 2005 and Borrut 2011.

2. See Conrad 1988, Conrad 1992, Hoyland 1991, Hoyland 1997, and Hoyland 2011.

2. See Conrad 1988, Conrad 1992, Hoyland 1997, and Hoyland 2011.

3. Cf. Hoyland 2011, pp. 15–19; Borrut 2011, pp. 150–151, 232–252. Out of brevity, when referring to both texts, I will call them "Hispanic chronicles" or "Latin chronicles."

4. *Hispanic Chronicles*, p. 324. "Tenemus igitur chronicorum Arabum scriptorum saeculo octavo medio epitomen contaminatam et cum historiis Isidorianis et cum laterculo imperatoris Orientis. Ex iisdem chronicis conference patet Byzantios scriptores saeculi octavi et noni Nicephorum et Theophanes eas sumpsisse, quae de rebus gestis Arabum adferunt". Cf is also the second critical edition of the two texts. Gil 1973, pp. XXXV- XI.

5. *Hispanic Chronicles*, pp. 368–95 "Quae in Continuation Byzantia Arabica de rebus Orientis narrator, non-dubito, quin in Syria scripta sint [...]. Quo verisimile fit, cum heterodoxum fuisse, fortasse Monophysitam ut erant fere omnes terrarum Syrarum Christiani, excepta Palestina; [...] Qui haec in Syria conscripsit aut lingua Syriaca aut Graeca sit oportet. Et cum Syrorum lingua hominibus Latine loquentibus non magis nota sesset quam lingua Latina Syriam habitantibus, haec c Graecis Latin a forta esse certum videtur. Neque causa est cur coniciamus, textum Graecus e Syriaco versum esse". See also Proudfoot 1974, p. 406, and Rochow 1991, pp. 40–42.

6. Shoemaker 2012, pp. 40–42.

7. Brandes 1998, p. 555: "Auf welchen Wege dieses orientalische Quellenmaterial nach Spanien kam, kann hier nicht behandelt werden. Auf jeden Fall scheint es eine Quelle zu repräsentieren, die vor die von Mango, Conrad u.a. angenommene Chronik ca. 750 neuerdings meist Theophil von Edessa zugeschrieben – zu datieren ist".

8. Howard-Johnston 2010, p. 433.

9. Hoyland 2011, p. 60 n. 68.

10. Both the account are reported in English translation in Kaegi-Cobb 2008.

11. A passage unparalleled in the *Chronicle of 741*, *Hispanic Chronicles*, pp. 335–336.

12. Theophanes, p. 337; Agapius, p. 470 and p. 471: Michael the Syrian, p. 424–425; *Chronicle of 1234*, p. 251; *Chronicle of Seert*, p. 626, Cf. Hoyland 2011, pp. 106–108.

13. Theophanes, p. 348; Agapius, p. 479; Michael the Syrian, p. 430; *Chronicle of 1234*, p. 261; *Hispanic Chronicles*, pp. 337–338. Cf. Hoyland 2011, pp. 99–103.

14. According to Dionysius' dependants, Heraclius' brother was defeated at Gousiya, in the region of Hims (Michael the Syrian, p. 418, *Chronicle of 1234*, p. 242–244. However, Agapius does not mention the place (Agapius, p. 454 and 469). Cf. Hoyland 2011, pp. 96–98.

15. See Hoyland 2011, pp. 316–318; Borrut 2011, pp. 143–152.

16. For a discussion of the relevant literature, see Donner 1998, pp. 18–19, and pp. 205–206 (for Donner's view of oral tradition as the first step toward literary fixation). Borut supports the idea of early written production. However, he also argues in favor of the coexistence of orality and literacy, saying that they should not necessarily be considered as opposing cultural features, see Borrut 2011, pp. 175–176.

17. Anthony 2010, p. 214.

18. Theophanes, p. 361 and p. 363; Agapius, p. 497; Michael the Syrian, p. 445–446; *Chronicle of 1234*, p. 292; Hispanic Chronicles, p. 346 (the passage is present only in the *chronicle of 741*). Cf. Hoyland 2011, pp. 180–182.

19. Theophanes, p. 401; Agapius, p. 504; Michael the Syrian, p. 489; *Chronicle of 1234*, p. 308; *Hispanic Chronicles*, pp. 357–358. Cf. Hoyland 2011, pp. 218–220.

20. Michael the Syrian is the only one to name the place, but he says more vaguely "near Babylon."

21. The text in the critical edition reads as follows: "fratre dudum memorato Mazlema nomine non dissimilar matre progenitor." The apparatus, though, records the variant "non de simili matre," which matches the historical truth and is adopted by Hoyland in his translation.

Chapter Two.
Christian communities

Coptic Historiography

One consideration stands out above all others, namely the reconstruction and publication of the widely scattered remains of the largest Coptic library yet known, the library of the so-called 'White Monastery' of Shenoute, which is our richest source by far for works of classical Coptic literature (Emmel, 2007, pp. 83–102). (7) But here, too, we face the problem of the relatively late dates of the surviving manuscripts. The bulk of the White Monastery codices and the parchment are dated to the tenth, eleventh or twelfth centuries. A few are perhaps assignable to earlier centuries, but very few give a firm impression of being pre-conquest. It might be useful to have a detailed survey of what is known of Coptic literature only (known) from mss that are datable or assignable with reasonable certainty to the third through seventh centuries. (8)Emmel (2007, pp. 83–102) explains that so far as one can tell from its fragmentary remains, Coptic literature was entirely religious and almost entirely Christian. (1)

The oldest surviving manuscripts that are written in what is recognizable as the Coptic stage of Egyptian, and written according to more or less standardized, or at least systemic, norms of spelling, are perhaps as old as the third century AD. (2) Students of the mater-

ial remains of Coptic literature are inclined to assign the bulk of all the typologically earliest manuscripts to the fourth and the fifth centuries. When the Arabs conquested Egypt in the seventh c. CE, an approximate dividing point for the end of the first period of Coptic book production, after which the next large group of surviving manuscripts is dated, or assignable, to the ninth and later medieval centuries, into the twelfth, was provided. In the ninth century, dated colophons became relatively common in Coptic manuscripts. By the twelfth century, Arabic had effectively replaced Coptic as the language of all of Egypt. Materially, Coptic literature survives almost exclusively in codices (3), made either of papyrus (typical of pre-conquest manuscripts), parchment (typical of the earlier post-conquest manuscripts), or paper (typical of the later post-conquest manuscripts).

History has not been kind to Coptic literature, which is unfortunately noteworthy among the literature of the Christian Orient for its extremely fragmentary and impoverished condition of survival. This condition is due in the first instance to the near-fatal blow to Coptic culture that the Arab conquest of Egypt turned out to be over time. The Coptic language did not live on for many centuries beyond that event. The result was that Coptic literature survived less by design than by pure chance, owing to the dry climate of Egypt south of the Nile Delta. In addition, the increasingly difficult circumstances of the Copts after the seventh-century conquest meant that much even of what has survived of Coptic literature has come down to us filtered through cultural circumstances that may well have altered the character of that literature. Nearly everything written in Coptic was finally subordinated to the needs of the Egyptian churches and monasteries, which by the tenth century were effectively the only bastions of Coptic (Christian) culture in what had become an Arabic-speaking and largely Islamic land. Not one single an-

cient Coptic mss is known that can be situated in Alexandria, the only city in Egypt in which we can trace a lively intellectual culture even well beyond the Arab conquest. (4) To make matters yet more difficult, significant portions of what little did survive elsewhere in Egypt were dispersed in the modern period, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Now fragments of individual codices, sometimes even torn pieces of individual leaves, are to be found scattered across numerous libraries and museums in Egypt, Europe, North America, and elsewhere.

Much basic research is still waiting to be done, including reconstructing dismembered codices and identifying and editing their texts. The last is quite apart from pursuing questions of textual criticism and the higher levels of literary criticism, including translation, all of which must be presupposed by any good literary history. Tito Orlandi, the author of the quoted statement, is the only scholar in recent years who has ventured to offer anything like a 'history of Coptic literature. He has published a series of summaries of his investigations' general results throughout the last century's closing three decades. (5) But given the state of research in Coptic literature, no one should be surprised if the history he sketched out has to be changed in various ways as research progresses. Orlandi's view depends on his explanation for the existence of pre-conquest translations of Greek Patristic authors, transmitted in Coptic with false attributions, where one famous name has merely been replaced with another, without there being any discernible motive for doing so. (6) His explanation is to suggest 'that during this period [the late fourth and early fifth century], the Copts chose texts for translation without seriously considering the author's name. It is even possible that texts circulated anonymously in the beginning, only to have an author assigned to them later on, or that there were already mistaken attributions in the Greek mss. from which the translations were made. 'The

material selected for translation seems to have been chosen chiefly according to the requirements of a special section of Egyptian society, the monastic groups,' or simply following 'whatever the "normal market was offering, a market geared more for popular consumption than for the demands of an official level".

Emmel (2007, pp. 83–102) clarifies about Coptic literature in general, that Coptic literature knows only one truly remarkable individual author, a late antique monastic leader named Shenoute (347–465). However, another remarkable component of Coptic literature is translations of primary Manichaean and' gnostic' literature (9). Coptic is also noteworthy for preserving many apocryphal biblical (especially New Testament) works- many of which are gnostic. Discoveries of Coptic translations of works like the Gospel of Thomas, the *Epistula Apolostorum*, *the Gospel of Mary*, the so-called *Gospel of the Saviour*, and the recently recovered *Gospel of Judas* continue to enrich our knowledge of early Christianity in its spread and evolution all around the Mediterranean. (10). Including — apart from the Christian Bible, which is ubiquitous — a large body of Christian Saint's Lives literature (lives of saints, including martyrs, monks, and bishops, often mixed, including biography, passion, miracle, encomium, sermon, and romance) can describe the rest of Coptic literature (11). This literature overlaps with another large corpus, namely liturgical texts in a stricter sense (some of which cannot necessarily be regarded as 'literature' narrowly defined). Less numerous are works that may be classified as treatises or literary epistles, and seemingly rare and uncommon are works with historical intentions. Of the latter, the only remarkable survivals are the works known as the *Coptic Church History* (which, however, has much in common with the hagiographical literature) (12) and John of Nikiou's *Chronicle of World History* (which survives only in an Ethiopic translation made from an Arabic translation). (13) While some religious poetry is known apart from specifi-

cally liturgical compositions, two works are mentioned: the so-called *Alexander Romance* and *Cambyses Romance. (*14)

About the bases of Coptic Literature: the Coptic Bible and Shenoute, Emmel (2007, pp. 83–102) clarify that whereas the earliest attempts to write Egyptian using the Greek alphabet supplemented by Egyptian demotic characters (meant are both the so-called 'Old Coptic' and 'Pre-Coptic' texts (15)) do not show any significant signs of influence from Greek literature as such, attesting only some degree of fundamental literacy in Greek, the earliest examples of the Coptic writing system proper (which can be seen as early products of a concerted, if not necessarily fully organized, effort to standardize something akin to the surviving Old Coptic and Pre-Coptic experimentations) are primarily translations from the Greek Bible, that is from the Septuagint and the New Testament. Apart from biblical books (mainly from the Old Testament, and including 2 Macc. 5:27–7:41 as an excerpt headed 'The Martyrs of the Jews Who Lived under Antiochus the King'), these very early Coptic texts include only Melito of Sardis *On the Passover* and an unidentified homiletic work. (16) Such reconstruction is perhaps most convincing if it is placed only after the end of the Great Persecution in Egypt (313) or even after the triumph of Constantine (324), the Council of Nicaea (325), and the accession of Athanasius as bishop of Alexandria (328). (17). However, by that te, there was another major religious missionary movement underway in the Roman empire, equally interested in making translations of sacred texts into local languages, namely the Manichaeans. Maybe competition with earlier translation and publication projects by Manichaeans (or even gnostics of some sort) could show the Coptic version of the Bible. In any way, the Christian Bible became the enduring foundational monument of Coptic literature. The same goes for the Christian church, especially its monasteries, whose care Coptic literature flourished and survived to the extent it did. Fur-

thermore, a late antique Coptic monastic leader named Shenoute, whose prophetic inspiration and talent for eloquence, both nourished by a thorough knowledge of the Coptic Bible, led to the creation of the only other truly outstanding literary achievement in Coptic.

Of the manuscripts of Shenoute's works, his *Canons* and his *Discourses* (or *logoi*) survived. Still, less has been translated accurately into any modern language. In probably 385 CE, he became the head of his monastery at the edge of the western desert across the Nile from Panopolis (modern Akhmim), continuing within a decade of his death in 465 CE. Two long open letters were to be read by or to all community members four times each year. The only names to be mentioned here as authors of original Coptic literature before Shenoute are Pachomius. Perhaps also mentioned can be St Antony (if he did not write his letters in Greek) and Paul of Tamma (18), and still more doubtfully, the poorly attested Hieracas (19). One should 'appreciate the enormous effort it must have required to raise the Coptic language. The last had, until then, only been used for translation, to the level of an independent, literary language.' (20) Shenoute lived as a hermit, some distance removed from his monastery, and communicated with the residents of his community using letters. He wanted letters to be read aloud to assembled monks, be they male (as in the Monastery of Pshoi) or female (as in the monastery located in Atripe. (21).

Coptic translation literature is mentioned by Emmel (2007, pp. 83–102) 'the interest of a piece of Coptic translation literature should not end once its *Greek Vorlage* has been identified. Rather, one must still ask questions about its translation and the alternations during its transmission´. Methodologically, there are good reasons to include translation literature within our purview because we often can not distinguish between translation and original Coptic literature. Also,

most Coptic speakers likely made no such distinction. Translated literature was, for them, so far as we can tell, as much a part of 'Coptic literature' as was original literature. This understanding also applies if they knew that the author of a given work was a non-Egyptian or a non-Coptic speaker. By searching for original Coptic literature, Emmel (2007, pp. 83–102) mentions that they are: Besa (22), Shenoute's immediate successor as quoting from the Bible; John the archimandrite (23); the author known as 'Pseudo-Shenoute' (24) seems at times almost to have worked from texts of Shenoute using scissors and paste. One can praise these authors for a certain 'mastery of the Coptic language (25), which in Orlandi's opinion, was not achieved again until the time of Damianus, bishop of Alexandria, from the last quarter of the sixth century until 605 CE. Around that time, a group of authors displayed 'a language [...] which has at last become independent of the Greek model and self-sufficient in its syntactical and stylistic elements, a style of which Shenoute 'is to be understood as a precursor. (26) These authors, as far as they are known to us from the few of their works that survive, are the following: (27) Pisentius of Koptos (569–632 CE), from whom we have an encomium *On Onnophrios* and the beginning of another sermon (P. Lond. Copt. II 167.1). To this can be added a fragment of a papyrus codex probably from the seventh century (28). There is also an archive of his brief correspondence. Constantine of Siout (c. 550–640 CE): two encomia *On Athanasius*; two *On Claudius,* the martyr; and one *On George*, the martyr; an encomium *On Shenoute* is known unfortunately only by title. Rufus of Shotep (c. 600 CE): a series of sermons (in the form of exegetical commentaries) *On the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.* John of Shaun (c. 600 CE): a sermon *(logos) On the Archangel Michael* and *Heretical Books.* (29)

These names stand out because they can be viewed as a kind of group to which attention is drawn in the Arabic church historical source

known as the 'History of the Patriarchs (of Alexandria).' (30) Here, the question of the authenticity of the attributions in our manuscripts is still open. Given the amount of apparent epigraphy and misattribution we know of in our manuscripts, why should we trust the attributions of works to these particular names? In these sermons, one can prefer to see translations of works written in Greek in the late fourth or early fifth century. On the other hand, there exist more works attributed to men who lived before the Arab conquest and who very likely preached in Coptic rather than Greek that might deserve to be considered as original Coptic literature: for example, Makarios of Tkow (d. 451 CE), from whom we have a sermon *On Michael*, the archangel (31); Isaac of Antinoopolis (dates unknown), from whom we have an encomium *On Colluthus* (32), or Phoibammon of Shin (dates unknown, from whom we have an encomium *On Colluthus*, which is an indication that it was his second in honour of that martyr. (33)

In conclusion, Emmel (2007, pp. 93–102) mentions that from the time of the Arab conquest and shortly after, we have a few words, or fragments of works, of presumably original Coptic literature. These works are from the following authors: (34) Benjamin, bishop of Alexandria (626–65 CE), from whom we have a sermon *On the Marriage at Cana* and two fragments concerning Shenoute. (35) Agathon (Benjamin's successor, 655–81 CE): a fragment of a sermon, the attribution of which is hypothetical. (36). John III (Agathon's successor, 681–9): an encomium *On Menas*, the martyr; and two dialogues (in which John appears as one of the interlocutors), one known as the *Questions of Theodore*, the other as the *Controversy of John III*, although it is not clear to me that these two dialogues should be considered as works of John rather than as anonymous works about him. (37) John of Nikiou (John's successor, early eighth century): an encomium *On Macrobius*, the bishop and martyr; and a *Life of Isaac*,

patriarch of Alexandria *Zacharias of Xois* (also early eighth century): two sermons, one of them *On the Lord's Coming to Jerusalem as a Boy*, the other *On Repentance* (38); and an encomium (*bios*) *On John Kolobos*. (39)

1. 'Literature' is here narrowly defined, excluding documentary texts and subliterary genres (magic, medicine, pedagogy).

2. See Quaegebeur 1982, 1991a, 1991b, and 1999c (also Quecke 1997); Kasser 1991a and 1991b; Satzinger 1991; Bagnall 2005.

3. Very few Coptic book rolls are known. See further Emmel 1998.

4. Cf. Muller 1954: 269.

5. Especially Orlandi 1970: 57–158; 1978 (see 143–6 for references to earlier discussions of 'Coptic literature'); 1986 (note esp. 52); 1990; 1991b (with 1991a and many related articles in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*): 1995; 1997; 1998. Orlandi's most recent results appear on the website of his project 'Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letlerari' (Consult also Krause 1979 and Coquin 1993.

6. Such false attributions are to be distinguished from purposeful post-conquest pseudepigraphy: see Orlandi 1991b: 1456–8.

7. For a recent summary of the history of this task, with particular reference to the works of Shenoute, see Emmel 2004b: I. 18–28; see also Orlandi 2002.

8. Forerunners of such an undertaking are W. E. Crum's chapter ('Literature') in Winlock, Crum, and Evelyn White 1926: I. 196–208, and Kahle 1954: I. 269–74, giving a list (now needing some revision)

of Coptic mss. thought to be earlier than the sixth century.

9. The term 'gnostic' is used here in a broad and historically imprecise way (in contrast to the usage advocated by Layton 1995; cf. Emmel 2002). The relevant bibliography is vast (cf. Krause 1979: 707–10, adding a reference to Scholer 1997); as convenient starting points, consult Layton 1987 for gnostic literature and Gardner and Lieu 2004 for Manichaean literature.

10. Consult Krause 1979: 697–707; Coquin 1993: 190 and 197–200; Schneemelcher 1991–2; Elliott 1993; Bovon et al. 1997–2005; Schneemelcher 1990–7; for the *Gospel of the Saviour*, see Emmel 2003 and 2005b; the *Gospel of Judas* is to be published by R. Kasser and G. Wurst.

11. For a convenient of this literature, with English translations, see Reymond and Barns 1973; Depuydt 1993.

12. For the texts, see Orlandi 1968–70; Johnson 1976; Orlandi 1985.

13. Zotenberg 1883 (cf. Zotenberg 1877–9); Charles 1916.

14. See Müller 1991; Krause 1979; 716–17; Coquin 1993: 196.

15. See the references in n. 2 above.

16. For the latter, Goehring 1990: 1–79 and 261–76 respectively. See further Orlandi, 1978: 146–51; 1986: 53–5; 1998: 120–1; cf. n. 3 above.

17. Cf. Roberts 1979: 64 n. 4, referring to G. Mink.

18. On whom see Orlandi 1988 and Lucchesi 1995.

19. See further Krause 1979: 710–2; Coquin 1993: 200–1; Orlandi 1986: 60–4 and 1998: 129–31.

20. Orlandi 1998: 134.

21. On the tripartite division of Shenoute's 'monastic federation,' see Layton 2002; on the women's monastery, see Krawiec 2002 (cf. Behlmer 2004).

22. See the nearly complete edition of what survives of Besa's letters and sermons by Kuhn 1956 (this edition includes some fragments of Shenoute's works: see Emmel 2004b; II. 937–8, cf. 559 and 566) and 1984, I do not believe that Besa was the author of the so-called (see Keil 1978): 40–1; and several forthcoming publications by N. Lubomierski, including her 2005 Berlin Th. D. dissertation).

23. His 'Canon' has not yet been published (apart from a few fragments), nor has he been delineated as a distinct author: see the discussions in P. Ryl. Copt. 6s and P. Lond. Copt. 85, and also Emmel 2004b: I. 91–2 and II. 887–98 passim (showing how often fragments of this author's work have been attributed mistakenly by modern scholars to Shenoute). The work discussed by Horn 1986, && 2–4, as a work of Shenoute (see pp. 15–16), belongs to John's corpus.

24. Ed. Kuhn 1960 (see CSCO 206: V- VI, for Kuhn's characterization of the author and his work; cf. Shisha-Halevy 1975: 151 n. 13 hypothesized 'that Pseudo-Shenoute' represents a ratifiable mixture of distinct Shenoutian and extraneous elements, rather than a homogenous non-Shenoutian text attributed to Shenoute').

25. Orlandi 1986: 70, referring to Besa.

26. Orlandi 1986: 75–7 (the quotation is from 76); 1970: 97–106; 1991b: 1455–6; 1998: 144–5; 1997: 113–20. See also Krause 1979: 713–14; Coquin 1993: 202–3. Bishop Damianus does not belong to this group of authors, for Coptic was not his native language, and he composed in Greek and perhaps also Syriac (Orlandi 1991b: 1455b).

27. References to editions and translations (also to other minor or little-known works of these authors) can be found in the publications of Orlandi, Krause, and Coquin listed in n. 8 above.

28. Winlock, Crum, and Evelyn White 1926:1, 204 with n. 1.

29. Cf. Müller 1954: 244–5.

30. Evetts 1904–15: 213 (PO 1.4: 477); cf. Garitte 1950: 297–8.

31. Lafontaine 1979.

32. Ed. S. E. Thompson in Depuydt 1993: I. 46–83 and II. 37–64; cf. Emmel and South 1996.

33. Till 1935–6: I. 168–81. On the uncertainty of the last two authors' dates, see Timm 1984–92: I. 113 and n. g. on p. 125.

34. Orlandi 1986: 77–8; 1991b: 1456; 1998: 146 (Iomit Isaac of Qalamun because 'can be dated approximately to the first half of the ninth century (Coquin 1991; cf. Coquin 1993: 204), which is well beyond the limits set for his volume). See also Krause 1979: 715–16; Coquin 1993: 203–4. For the dates of the Alexandrian patriarchs from 500 CE to 700 CE, I follow Jülicher 1922.

35. Cf. Müller 1954: 232–5.

36. See Müller 1959: 334–6.

37. Note the comment by Graf 1944–53: I. 479.

38. See Müller 1954: 237–9.

39. Hopfner (1918: 3 (see especially n. 1) and 33–7) argued that Zacharias merely translated a Greek text into Coptic.

Histories of al-Hira

Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) begins his paper by explaining that the city of al-Hira is the Syriac sources' Hirta d-Nu'man, the capital of the 'Persian Arabs.' (1) Its power was based on a tactical policy among the tribes of inner Arabia whom it subjected. The kings of al-Hira received landed estates and military support from the shahs. In turn, they appointed tribe members as kings, military leaders, and tax collectors elsewhere in Arabia (2). The kings of al-Hira were, in M. B. Rowton's terminology, 'dimorphic,' able to play a role as Sasanian courtiers and leaders of an Arab federation. (3) Most of the kings were pagans, (4) yet the early twentieth century's archaeological surveys have highlighted the border city's Christian character. (5) The city hosted a bishop (Hosea) who signed the attendance lists of the 410 CE synod of Ctesiphon. (6) And Christianity was identified by Islamic-era sources as a defining feature of the 'Ibad, the elite with recently settled migrants. (7)

Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) continues with the memory of Al-Hira. Information on al-Hira, and information for histories composed in al-Hira, is from Arabic sources from the ninth century by Muslims and

Christians. Much of this has passed through the works of Hisham ibn al-Kalbi (d. 819), whose monumental volume on Arab tribal genealogy remains extant. (8) The foundational work is Gustav Rothstein's late nineteenth-century monograph on the "Lakhmid" dynasty, succeeded in the twentieth century by the works of Irjan Shahid and J.S Trimingham. (9) Much of this secondary material is valuable and thought-provoking but without source-critical treatment of all the Arabic material. The Christian societies of al-Hira may have also been interesting for later Muslim writers. As Thomas Sizgorich observed, some Muslim correspondents understood Arabian Christians, such as the martyrs of Najran, to have been proto-Muslim. (10) In a surrounding where early conversion to Islam was highly desirable, a monotheist ancestry ahead of Muhammad may have been a desirable characteristic for tribal history. (11) Tales of the foundation of Al-Hira (Wood, 2016, pp. 785–99) demonstrates that the richest of the testimony that discusses al-Hira is that of al-Tabari (d. 923). Wood (2016, pp.785–99) will use the material he preserved as an example of the distinguished and diverse histories of the city and its kings: as there were: – the Tanakh, who lived in hair tents across the river. Al-Tabari draws on Ibn al-Kalbi to construe the flight of the Tanakh from Iraq during Ardashir I's administration (224–241), the settlement of al-Hira, and the following division of the city and its environs between three groups: the 'Ibad, who dwelled in fortified houses in the city proper, the Tanakh as mentioned before, participation in the confederation led by the Nasrids. The Nasrid king lists show Christianity in the Hiran Histories (Wood, 2016, pp. 785–99). A Christian school in al-Hira also existed, founded in the tradition of the schools of Edessa and Nisibis. (12) The ninth-century ecclesiastical historian Isho' dnah of Basra (850's) (13), whose work is preserved in the Haddad Chronicle, reports that the 'Ibad converted to Christianity after the reign of the fourth-century king 'Amr ibn 'Adi. According to this story, one of the Banu Lihyan (14) was the

first to transform, afterward the Banu' Adi and other people. Later, while they lived in hair tents, priests and deacons came to them and started singing psalms and building churches and houses. The appearance of these missionaries starts an agreement between the Banu Lihyan and the Banu'Adi, with the latter demanding that "the king is from our line and we should build the church and hold gatherings there" (Wood, 2005, pp.785–99).

Conclusively it is defined that the church, the seat of the bishop, and the congregation of al-Hira's people should be [under the authority] of the Banu Lihyan. However, the right to speak first belongs to the Banu' Adi." (Wood, 2006, pp.785–99). Later this decision is then written down and witnessed before the king, 'Amr ibn Imru al-Qays. The threat of ex-communication then defends oaths taken in these meetings in the church: "the damning of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and the Old and New Testaments will be upon him." (15) Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) continues clarifying Al-Hira and its Bishops. A set of vignettes related to Isho' dnah are connected directly by church history. Al-Tabari follows his account of the precedence of the Banu' Adi by describing the founding of churches in al-Hira, as the "church of the angels," built by 'Amr Ibn Imru' al Qays for the Banu Lihyan, and the churches built by the bishops of al-Hira. His account takes the form of a commentated church list, occasionally cross-referenced to the catholicos of the church of the East and the Nasrid rulers. (16)

Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) concludes his paper with an explanation of the reign of Al-Numan III. The histories of al-Hira available to ninth-century authors such as Hisham ibn al-Kalbi of Isho' dnah of Basra were composed under the Nasrid king al-Nu 'man III. The king lists found in all of the Abbasid-era, Arabic historians give pride of place to al-Nu 'man III's reign and the city's foundation. Not

yet mentioned is the language in which pre-Islamic Hiran history was composed; al-Hira was also said to have been where first developed the Arabic script. Hisham ibn al-Kalbi is said to have done his investigations in church archives, and Abbasid caliphs are said to have read Hiran monastery's wall inscriptions. (17) Unless a translator was used, and our sources neglected this fact, it seems that the sources were composed in Arabic. (18)

1. On the Arab allies of the Sasanians in general, see C. E. Bosworth, "Iran and the Arabs before Islam," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3.1: *The Seleucid. Parthian and Sasanian Periods,* ed. E. Yarshater (Cambridge, 1983), 593–612. For the identification of Hirta d-Nu 'man (camp of al-Nu 'man) with the city known to Muslim Arabs as al-Hira, see G. Rothstein, *Die Dynastie der Lahmiden in al-Hira*: *Ein Versuch zur arabisch-persischen Geschichte zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Berlin, 1899), 12–13.

2. M. Kister, "Al-Hira: Some Notes on Its Relations with Arabia," *Arabica 15* (1968): 143–69, at 152 (for the estate of 'Ayn al-Tamar, which may have been dedicated to date production); 147 and 159 for tribal appointments (especially the appointment of a king in Yathrib by al- 'Numan III). Al-Tabari (*Annales*, ed. M. de Goeje [Leiden, 1879–1901], 1: 890) reported the construction of irrigation canals for the city. For Sasanian influence deeper into the Arabian peninsula, see M. Lecker, "The Levying of Taxes for the Sassanians in Pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 27* (2002): 109–26.

3. M. B. Rowton, "Urban Autonomy in a Nomadic Environment," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 32 (1973): 201–15.

4. Some kings of the Persian Arabs are accused of very flamboyant

paganism, including human sacrifice, but this is likely to be Roman black propaganda. See the sources cited and discussed in Fisher and Wood's *"Writing the History*."

5. See studies bt D. Talbot Rice, "The Oxford Excavations at Hira", *Ars Islamica* I (1934): 51–73; Y. Okada, "Early Christian Architecture in the Iraq. South-Western Desert", *Al-Rafidan* 12 (1991): 71–83. Also note the summary by E. C. D. Hunter, "The Christian Matrix of al-Hira", in *Les controverses des chrétiens dans l'Iran sassanide*, ed. C. Jullien (Paris, 2008), 41–56, at 50.

6. *Synodicon orientale, ou, Recueil de synods nestorians*, ed. and tr. J.-B. Chabot (Paris, 1902), 35, Al-Hira was also said to serve as the burial place of a number of sixth-century catholicoi: J. M. Fiey, "Résidences et sé pultures des patriarches Syria ques – orientaux", *Le Muséon* 98 (1985): 149–68.

7. T. Nöldeke (*Geschichte der Perser and Araber zur Zeit des Sasaniden* [Leiden, 1879], 24) describes the Syriac etymology of the 'Ibad as "servants [of Christ]". For Christian identity in Iraq in this period more generally, see S. P. Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties," *Studies in Church History* 18 (1982): 1–19, and in the late sixth century, J. T. Walker, The Legend of Mar Qaidagh: *Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2006). For Christianity among the Arabs, see the source commentary of G. Fisher et al., *Arabs and Empires before Islam*, G. Fisher (Oxford, 2015), ch. 6. For the different sections of al-Hira's population, see (for instance) the account in al-Tabari, ed. de Goeje, 1: 822, with additional sources cited in I. Toral-Niehoff, "The 'Ibad of al-Hira: An Arab Christian Community in Late Antique Iraq," in *Neuwirth*, Sinai, and Marx, *Qur'an in Context*, 323–48, at 326–27.

8. On Ibn al-Kalbi's surviving work on genealogy, see W. Caskel, *Gamharat an-nasab: Das genealogische Work des Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi* (Leiden, 1966), as well as H. Kennedy, "From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arab Genealogy," *Arabica 44 (*1997): 531–44; B. Ulrich, "Constructing al-Azd: Tribal identity and Society in the Early Islamic Centuries" (Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Wisconsin – Madison, 2008), 53–56. They stress the immense scale of Ibn al-Kalbi's task, which was to record the descent of an entire "nation." Ibn al-Kalbi was said to have composed three works on al-Hira: a book of al-Hira, a book on its churches, monasteries, and the 'Ibad, and a book devoted to the 'Ibad poet 'Adi ibn Zayd (J. Horovitz, "Adi ibn Zeyd, the Poet of Hira," *Islamic Culture* 4 [1930]: 31–69, at 32).

9. Rothstein, *Lahmiden;* I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, 2 vols. in 4 (Washington, DC, 1995); idem., *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (Washington, DC, 1989); idem., *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century* (Washington, DC, 1984); J.S. Trimingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times* (London, 1979). Also note G. W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (Cambridge, MA, 1983).

10. T. Sizgorich, "Become Infidels, or We Will Throw You Into the Fire": The Martyrs of Najran in Early Muslim Historiography, Hagiography, and Qur'anic Exegesis, in Writing *"True Stories": Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Early Medieval Near East*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Turnhout, 2010), 125–47. Also note the identification of (pre-Islamic) Christian ascetics, such as the monk Bahira, as early witnesses to Muhammad's prophetic status: S. H. Griffith, "Muhammed and the Monk Bahira: Reflections on a Syriac and Arabic Text from Early Abbasid Times," *Oriens Christianus 79* (1995): 146–74. For other examples of Muslim interest in Christian culture, see H. Kilpatrick, "Representation's of Social Intercourse between

Muslims and Non-Muslims in Some Medieval Adab Works," in *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey*, ed. J. Waardenburg (New York, 1999), 213–24.

11. Abu I-Baga' *(Manaqib)* alters the story of the Nasrid conversion to Christianity to make it impermanent. Also, denigrating the Arab Kings of the jahiliyyah is a panegyric to the Bedouin king of his day. But these alterations reflect an eleventh-century situation and need not reflect the earlier reception of the Hiran narratives.

12. A. H. Becker, *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom: The School of Nisibis and Christian Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia* (Philadelphia, 2006), 159–66.

13. On Isho 'dnah's historical output, see P. Nautin, "L'auteur de la "Chronique de Seert": Iso 'denah de Basra", *Revue de l'histoire des regions* 186 (1974): 113–26; J. M. Frey, *"Iso 'dnah et la Chronique de Seert"*, Parole de l'Orient 6–7 (1975–76): 447–59. Nautin's attribution seems unlikely to me.

14. The Banu Lihyan, also known as the Banu Aws ibn Qallam, were linked by marriage to the Banu Ayyub, the house of 'Abi ibn Zayd: al-Isfahani, Aghani, 2: 98.

15. Haddad Chronicle G LXXXIV (132 11. 24 jf). For an example of the role of oaths in moderating the conflict between elite families, see the commitments of 'Adi ibn Zayd and "Abi ibn Marina regarding satirical poetry (Tabari, ed. de Goeje, 1: 1019).

16. Haddad Chronicle G LXXXIV (132–33). On these episcopal lists, see further J. M. Frey, s. r. "Hira." *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de geographie ecclesiastiques* (Paris 1912). The compiler clarified that he abbreviated

Isho' dnah's list and referred the reader to Isho' dnah for further details. Before the account of Shem's un's election, an account of al-Nu-man, I's conversion, has been inserted into this episcopal history (GLXXXV).

17. Tabari, ed. de Goeje, 1: 628; Yagut, *Mu'jam al-buldan*, ed. Wüstenfeld, 2: 709, translated and discussed in H. Munt et al., "Arabic and Persian Sources for Pre-Islamic Arabia," in *Arabs and Empires*, ed. G. Fisher (supra, n. 12), 434–500, a) 465–66.

18. Cf. the use of translations for Syriac.

Hagiography of al-Hira

Wood (2014, pp. 6–20) begins his paper by explaining that the city of al-Hira identifies with Hirta d-Nu'man, mentioned in the Syriac sources as the capital of the "Persian Arabs." (1). He continues to note that its power was based on a break-up policy among the tribes of inner Arabia, threatened, deceived, and rewarded, just as the kings themselves demanded rewards from their Persian masters. (Wood, 2014, pp. 6–20). The kings of al-Hira received landed estates and military support from the shahs. In turn, they appointed tribe members as kings, military leaders, and tax collectors elsewhere in Arabia (2). The kings of al-Hira were, in M. B. Rowton's terminology, "dimorphic," able to play a role as Sasanian courtiers and leaders of an Arab federation. (3) Most of the kings were pagans, (4) yet the early twentieth century's archaeological surveys have highlighted the border city's Christian character. (5) The city hosted a bishop (Hosea) who signed the attendance lists of the 410 CE synod of Ctesiphon. (6) Christianity was identified by Islamic-era sources as a defining fea-

ture of the 'Ibad, the elite that co-existed with more recently settled migrants. (7)

Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) continues with the history of Al-Hira. Information on al-Hira and its history comes from Arabic sources compiled by Muslims and Christians from the ninth century and beyond. Much of this has passed through three works of Hisham ibn al-Kalbi (d. 819), whose huge volume on Arab tribal genealogy remains extant. (8) The foundational work of reconstruction in this school is Gustav Rothstein's late-nineteenth-century monograph on the "Lakhmid" dynasty, succeeded in the twentieth century by the works of Irfan Shahid and J.S Trimingham. (9) Much of this secondary material is very useful and thought-provoking without source-critical treatment of the full range of the Arabic material. The Christian organization of al-Hira may have also been interesting for a later Muslim audience. As Thomas Sizgorich noted, some of Ahmad b. Hanbal's Muslim writers understood Arabian Christians, such as the martyrs of Najran, to have been proto-Muslim. (10) In a surrounding where early conversion to Islam was highly renowned, a monotheist ancestry that predated Muhammad may have been desirable for tribal history. (11)

About tales of the foundation of Al-Hira, Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) demonstrates that the richest historiography discussing al-Hira is that of al-Tabari (d. 923). Material of al-Tabari will be used as a chief example of the complex and varied histories of the city and its kings. As there were: the Tanakh, who lived in their tents across the river. Al-Tabari draws on Ibn al-Kalbi for the flight of the Tanakh during Ardashir I's reign (224–241), the settlement of al-Hira, and the division of the city and its environs between three groups. Ibn al-Kalbi describes the 'Ibad, who dwelled in fortified houses in the city proper; the Tanakh, as mentioned before, participated in the confed-

eration led by the Nasrids. The Nasrid king lists show Christianity in the Hiran histories (Wood, 2016, pp. 785–99). Al-Hira also contained a Christian school founded in the tradition of the schools of Edessa and Nisibis. (12) The ninth-century ecclesiastical historian Isho' dnah of Basra (850's) (13), whose work is preserved in the Haddad Chronicle, reports that the 'Ibad converted to Christianity after the reign of the fourth-century king 'Amr ibn 'Adi. According to this story, one of the Banu Lihyan (14) converted first, followed by the Banu' Adi and the rest of the people. Later, while they lived in hair tents, priests and deacons came to them and started singing psalms and building churches and houses. The appearance of these missionaries starts an agreement between the Banu Lihyan and the Banu' Adi, the latter demanding that "the king is from our line and we should build the church and hold gatherings there" (Wood, 2014, pp. 6–20). Agreed is that "the church, the chair, the cross, and the gathering of the people of al-Hira should be of the Banu Lihyan, but the right to speak first before the kings belong to the Banu' Adi" (Wood, 2014, pp.6–20). The decision is written down and witnessed before the king, 'Amr ibn Imru al-Qays. The threat of anathematizing then defends oaths taken in these meetings in the church. (15) Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) continues clarifying Al-Hira and its Bishops. A set of vignettes related to Isho' dnah are connected directly by church history. He follows his account of the lead of the Banu' Adi by noting the church building in al-Hira, as the "church of the angels," built by 'Amr Ibn Imru' al Qays for the Banu Lihyan, followed by the churches built by al-Hira's bishops. His explanation takes the form of an annotated episcopal list, occasionally cross-referenced to the catholicos of the church of the East and the Nasrid rulers. (16)

Wood (2016, pp. 785–99) concludes his paper by explaining the reign of Al-Numan III. The histories of al-Hira accessible to ninth-century authors such as Hisham ibn al-Kalbi or Isho' dnah of Basra were

composed under the Nasrid king al-Numan III. The king lists found in the Abbasid-era Arabic historians give pride of place to al-Nu 'man III's reign and the city's foundation. Not yet resolved is the language in which pre-Islamic Hiran history was written. Al Hira first developed the Arabic script. Hisham ibn al-Kalbi asserts to have done his research in church archives, and Abbasid caliphs claimed wall inscriptions of a Hiran monastery. (17) It seems likely that the sources were composed in Arabic. (18)

1. C. E. Bosworth, "Iran and the Arabs before Islam," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3.1: *The Seleucid. Parthian and Sasanian Periods*, ed. E. Yarshater (Cambridge, 1983), 593–612. For the description of Hirta d-Nu'man (camp of al-Nu'man) with al-Hira, see G. Rothstein, *Die Dynastie der Lahmiden in al-Hira: Ein Versuch zur arabisch-persischen Geschichte zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Berlin, 1899), 12–13.

2. M. Kister, "Al-Hira: *Some Notes on Its Relations with Arabia*," Arabica 15 (1968): 143–69, at 152 (for the estate of 'Ayn al-Tamar); 147 and 159 for tribal appointments (especially the appointment of a king in Yathrib by al-'Numan III). Al-Tabari (Annales, ed. M. de Goeje [Leiden, 1879–1901], 1: 890) reported the city's irrigation canals construction. Further, M. Lecker, "The Levying of Taxes for the Sassanians in Pre-Islamic Medina (Yathrib)," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam 27* (2002): 109–26.

3. M. B. Rowton, "Urban Autonomy in a Nomadic Environment," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies 32* (1973): 201–15.

4. Some Persian Arabs'kings are accused of paganism, including human sacrifice, but this might be Roman publicity. Again, see the sources in Fisher and Wood's "Writing the History."

5. See studies in D. Talbot Rice, "The Oxford Excavations at Hira," *Ars Islamica I (1934)*: 51–73; Y. Okada, "Early Christian Architecture in the Iraqi South-Western Desert," *Al-Rafidan 12* (1991): 71–83. E. c. D. Hunter, "The Christian Matrix of al-Hira", in *Les controverses des chrétiens dans l'Iran sassanide*, ed. C. Jullien (Paris, 2008), 41–56, at 50.

6. *Synodicon orientale, ou, Recueil de synods nestorians*, ed. and tr. J.-B. Chabot (Paris, 1902), 35. Al-Hira is also said to serve as the burial place of a number of sixth-century catholicoi: J. M. Frey, "Résidences et sépultures des patriarches Syria ques – orientaux", *Le Muséon* 98 (1985): 149–68.

7. T. Nöldeke (*Geschichte der Perser and Araber zur Zeit des Sasaniden* [Leiden, 1879], 24) describes the Syriac etymology of the 'Ibad as "servants [of Christ]". For Christian identity in Iraq: S. P. Brock, "Christians in the Sasanian Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties," *Studies in Church History 18* (1982): 1–19; J. T. Walker, *The Legend of Mar Qaidagh*: *Narrative and Christian Heroism in Late Antique Iraq* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2006). For Arabs'Christianity, see the source commentary of G. Fisher et al., *Arabs and Empires before Islam*, G. Fisher (Oxford, 2015), ch. 6. For the al-Hira population, see the account in al-Tabari, ed. de Goeje, 1: 822, with additional sources cited in I. Toral-Niehoff, "The 'Ibad of al-Hira: An Arab Christian Community in Late Antique Iraq," in Neuwirth, Sinai, and Marx, *Qur'an in Context*, 323–48, at 326–27.

8. On Ibn al-Kalbi's surviving work on genealogy, see W. Caskel, *Gamharat an-nasab*: *Das genealogische Work des Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi* (Leiden, 1966); H. Kennedy, "From Oral Tradition to Written Record in Arab Genealogy," Arabica 44 (1997): 531–44; B. Ulrich, "Constructing al-Azd: Tribal identity and Society in the Early Islamic Centuries" (Ph. D. diss., Univ. of Wisconsin – Madison, 2008),

53–56.

9. Rothstein, Lahmiden; I. Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Sixth Century*, 2 vols. in 4 (Washington, DC, 1995); *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fifth Century* (Washington, DC, 1989); *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century* (Washington, DC, 1984); J.S. Trimingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times* (London, 1979) and G. W. Bowersock, *Roman Arabia* (Cambridge, MA, 1983).

10. T. Sizgorich, "Become Infidels, or We Will Throw You Into the Fire": The Martyrs of Najran in Early Muslim Historiography, Hagiography, and Qur'anic Exegesis, in Writing *"True Stories": Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Early Medieval Near East*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Turnhout, 2010), 125–47. S. H. Griffith, "Muhammed and the Monk Bahira: Reflections on a Syriac and Arabic Text from Early Abbasid Times," *Oriens Christianus 79* (1995): 146–74. H. Kilpatrick, "Representation's of Social Intercourse between Muslims and Non-Muslims in Some Medieval Adab Works," in *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey*, ed. J. Waardenburg (New York, 1999), 213–24.

11. Abu I-Baga' *(Manaqib)* alters the story of the Nasrid conversion to Christianity to make it impermanent. To denigrate the Arab Kings of the *jahiliyya*h is a panegyric to the Bedouin king of his day.

12. A. H. Becker, *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom: The School of Nisibis and Christian Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia* (Philadelphia, 2006), 159–66.

13. On Isho 'dnah's historical output, see P. Nautin, "L'auteur de la "Chronique de Seert": Iso 'denah de Basra", *Revue de l'histoire des regions*186 (1974): 113–26; J. M. Fiey, *"Iso 'dnah et la Chronique de Seert"*,

Parole de l'Orient 6–7 (1975–76): 447–59.

14. The Banu Lihyan, also known as the Banu Aws ibn Qallam, were linked by marriage to the Banu Ayyub, the house of 'Abi ibn Zayd: al-Isfahani, Aghani, 2: 98.

15. Haddad Chronicle LXXXIV (132 ll. 24 jf). For the role of oaths in moderating the conflict between elite families, see the commitments of 'Adi ibn Zayd and "Abi ibn Marina regarding satirical poetry (Tabari, ed. de Goeje, 1: 1019).

16. Haddad Chronicle LXXXIV (132–33). On these church lists, see further J. M. Frey, s. r. "Hira." *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de geographie ecclesiastiques* (Paris 1912). The compiler clarified that he abbreviated Isho' dnah's list and referred the reader to Isho' dnah for further details. An account of al-Numan, I's conversion has been inserted into this episcopal history (LXXXV) before the account of Shem' un's election.

17. Tabari, ed. de Goeje, 1: 628; Yagut, *Mu'jam al-buldan*, ed. Wüstenfeld, 2: 709, translated and discussed in H. Munt et al., "Arabic and Persian Sources for Pre-Islamic Arabia," in Arabs and Empires, ed. G. Fisher (supra, n. 12), 434–500, a) 465–66.

18. Cf. the use of translations for Syriac.

Kingdoms of Ghassan, Lakhmids, and Kinda

Hoyland (2014, pp. 268–280) published 2001 *Arabia and the Arabs*, in which he distinguished between writings by insiders and essays by outsiders. The former is rare and consists primarily of inscriptions and poetry from the sixth century. Though fragmentary and hailing from many different sources in diverse languages, the latter are relatively numerous. He questions whether we should always prefer the testimony of an insider to that of an outsider. What value should we assign to Muslim sources, which, in their extant form, date no earlier than the ninth century?

Concerning the Ghassan and the Jafnids, Hoyland (2014, pp. 268–280) points out that C. J. Robin raised the question of the nature of the relationship between the so-called kingdoms of Ghassan, Lakhm, and Kinda and the tribes that go by these names. His preference was to assume a minimal connection. Instead, he says, we should distinguish between the tribes and the princely dynasties to which the empires of Rome, Persia, and Himyar had delegated certain powers and awarded certain subsidies and titles. The most famous dynasties were the Hujrids of Kinda, the Jafnids of Ghassan, and the Nashrids of Lakhm. They were not appointed over their tribes of origin and did not act as, or derive their support from being, leaders of a single tribe.

F. Millar pointed out that our capacity to define people or a dynasty by these names derives from Arabic sources written several centuries later (1). Most contemporary sources speak only of the individual leaders or their immediate familial group. Syriac authors often use the terms Beth Harith *(Hrt)* and Beth Mandir, literally the 'house of Harith,' the 'house of Mundhir,' meaning the family of these two

leaders, al-Harith ibn Jabala (c. 530–69) and his son al-Mundhir ibn al-Harith (570–82) (2). From the realm of Himyar, in southwest Arabia, we have two Sabaic inscriptions that refer specifically to Ghassan. The first is from the mid-third century and records the dispatch of an ambassador to 'the kings of the peoples of Ghassan, al-Asd, Nizar, and Madhhij.' (3) The second, also an inscription in Sabaic from a century later, speaks of the Himyarite army's campaiging between the land of Nizar and Ghassan in north central Arabia. (4) These are still outsider texts, but we also have some insider references.

A Nabataean Aramaic rock inscription from al-Qati'a, some 40 miles southeast of Dedan (modern al-'Ula), dated palaeographically to the third-fourth century, records the request for 'the kinsman/nobleman Harith (Hrtt) son of Zaymanat, king of Ghassan (mlk'sn), to be remembered. (5) This reflects that a pre-Islamic Arabic dialect (or dialects) was spoken in some parts of the Nabataean kingdom and its later replacement, the Roman province of Arabia. (4) Were they complete clans, as the Muslim sources say (in particular, speaking of the clan of Jaffna), or were they just individual families, as the Greek and Syriac sources imply? Concerning the Lakhm and the Nasrids, Hoyland (2014, pp. 268–280) demonstrates that the same question arises concerning the Arab allies of the Persian Empire based in the Iraqi city of al-Hirah, southeast of Bagdad. Muslim sources refer to their tribal group as Lakhm and the ruling dynasty as the clan of Nasr. Unfortunately, we have no Persian historical sources from the pre-Islamic period. A mid-seventh-century Christian author from Khuzistan in southwest Iran preserves a notice about the journey of Isho'yahb, patriarch of the Church of the East (582–95), to meet a later al-Numan (died c. 602). We have no evidence to confirm the claim of Muslim sources that they were of the Nasrid clan of the tribe of Lakhm. (7)

The Khuzistani chronicle, as mentioned above, says of al-Hira that it 'was settled by King Mundhir, surnamed the 'warrior,' who was sixth in the line of the Ishmaelite kings.' (8) Interestingly, the antiquarian Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi (died 819) also places this al-Mundhir sixth in the line of the Nasrid kings of Lakhm. Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi maintains that he 'took the accounts of the Arabs and the genealogies of the clan of Nasr ibn Rabi'a and the lifespans of those who acted as agents for the Persian imperial family and the history of their times from the monasteries of al-Hirah.' (9) It was common for significant monasteries to keep a record of historical events relevant to the Church, and it is certainly plausible that al-Hirah too practiced keeping records. Keeping records of historical events would mean that Muslim histories of the ninth and tenth centuries might have had at least some access to Late Antique Arabian perspectives. However, they may not be insider sources.

About the Persian Conquest of Yemen and Ma'add, Hoyland (2014, pp. 268–280) points out that we have a surprisingly large number of references to the people of Late Antique Arabia called Ma'add in a broad array of outside sources. (10) They would seem to have ranged across central and north Arabia and were subject to attempts by various powers to assert control over them. In the Namarah inscription of 328, they are described as being under the suzerainty of Shammar Yuhar' ish, king of Himyar, (11) who had recently united the whole of South Arabia. For the next couple of centuries, as we are told in several south Arabian inscriptions, Himyar sought to extend and deepen their rule over all of Arabia, and Ma'add featured prominently in their plans. One inscription of c. 430 speaks of the 'land of Ma'add' (12) and narrates how the Himyarite king Abikarib As' ad and his son Hassan Yuha'min campaigned there and established their favored Arab allies, Kinda, as their deputies over Ma'add.

Kinda looked to the north for advancement. Under the leadership of their leader al-Harith ibn 'Amr, a treaty was signed with the Roman empire in 502. For a brief time, during the last years of the reign of the Persian Emperor Kavad (488–531), al-Harith (Amr) replaced the Lakhmids as the Persian's chief Arab ally, installed himself in al-Hirah, and asserted his sway over Ma'add (Hoyland, 2014, pp.268–280). However, al-Hirah angered the military governor of Palestine and was forced to take flight, in which he was assassinated by the Lakhmid al-Mundhir or one of his allies. Nevertheless, al-Harith's successor and grandson, Qays, was still well regarded by the Romans, who described him as ruler of two of the most prominent peoples of the Saracens, Kinda and Ma'add. However, kinda fell out of flavor. Kavad's successor, Khusrau I (531–79), reinstated the Lakhmids as their principal agents in Arabia. Justinian decided to rely on the Himyarite throne, turned his attention to south Arabia's traditional concern with its northern territories, and between 535 and 560, fought to extend his authority over the whole of the Arabian Peninsula retake control over Ma'add from the Lakhmids (13).

The responsibility for Ma'add fell once more to the Lakhmids: a debt called upon by the last Lakhmid chief al-Numan, when he was threatened by the emperor Khusrau II at the close of the sixth century (14). Muslim tradition has different views on Ma'add's constituent parts. Lukasz (of Abd al-Qays), Bakr, Tamim, Lead, and Taghlib were counted as members (15), but the other four were assigned to other coalitions: Kalb and Bahra to Quda'a, and Ghassan and Lakhm to Qahtan. No Arab allies of Himyar are mentioned, such as Kinda and Madhhij, which suggests that Himyar has fallen (so after c. 570). They might have been flourishing and are considered the enemy. The latter seems the more likely scenario, and we may assume that the tribes of Ma'add were in a loose coalition against Abraha's encroaching ambitions.

In conclusion, Hoyland (2014, pp. 268–280) remarks that his paper is meant to highlight the problems of advancing any firm historiographical claims about the value of one set of sources over another.

1. F. Millar, 'Rome's 'Arab' Allies in Late Antiquity. Conceptions and Representations from within the Frontiers of the Empire', in H. Börm and J. Wiesehöfer (eds.). *Commutatio et Contentio. Studies in the Late Roman, Sasanian, and Early Islamic Near East in Memory of Zeev Rubin* (Reihe Geschichte 3; Stuttgart, 2010), pp. 199–226 at 200. G. Fisher has also accepted Robin's hypothesis, 'Kingdoms of Dynasties? Arabs, History, and Identity in the last Century before Islam', *Journal of Late Antiquity* 4 (2011), pp. 245–67.

2. E. g. John of Ephesus, *Historia ecclesiastica* 3.4. 22 (CSCO 105, p. 209; Beth Harith bar Gabala), and 3.2.9 (CSCO 105, p. 67; Beth Mundhir bar Harith).

3. Robin 'Arabes de Himyar', p. 184 ('Inan 75). See on this inscription also the paper of Robin, this volume, p. 40 (n. 13)

4. Robin 'Arabes de Himyar', p. 172 (n. 30; 'Abadon 1). See Robin's paper, this volume, p. 37–41, with further references.

5. Robin 'Arabes de Himyar,' p. 183, citing the Saudi epigrapher S.al-Theeb.

6. Most recently, see M. C. A. Macdonald, 'Ancient Arabia and the Written World,' in idem (ed.). *The Development of Arabic as a Written Language* (Supplement to the Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies, 40; Oxford, 2010), pp. 5–27 at 19–20.

7. We have evidence for the existence of a tribe called Lakhm, namely

a Persian-Parthian inscription from Paikuli in northeast Iraq (H. Humbach and P. O. Skjaervo, *The Sassanian Inscription of Paikuli 3.1* [Wiesbaden 1983], line 92). The inscription lists among the vassals of the Sassanian Emperor Narseh (293–302) an 'Amru king of the Lakhmids' ('mrw lhm 'Dyn MLK').

8. *Chronicon anonymum* (CSCO 1, p. 39).

9. E. g. Ja'far Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari, Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-al-Muluk, vol. 1, p. 1039 De Goeje (excepting Aws ibn Qallam, who was not a Lakhmid). See G. Rothstein *Die Dynastie der Lakhmiden in al-Hira. Ein Versuch zur arabisch-persischen Geschichte zur Zeit der Sasaniden* (Berlin, 1899), pp. 5–60, for discussion of Lakhmid king lists and chronology.

10. For a thorough study of history and references to all the primary sources that underline the account, see M. Zwettler, 'Ma'add in Late-Ancient Arabian Epigraphy and other Pre-Islamic Sources,' *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 90* (2000), pp. 223–309.

11. Line 3 of the Namarah inscriptions as 'the city of Shammar wmlm d'; the last phrase is sometimes read as 'and he (Imru' al Qays) ruled Ma'add.' It is usual in Nabataean inscriptions for proper names to end in waw, so we should read 'the city of Shammara, king of Ma'add.' For more information on the Gemara inscription, see Hoyland, *'Arab Kings*,' 377–78 and n. 20 Hereto.

12. Ry 509; httw 'rd. m´d; cf. Ibn Habib, *Kitab al-Muhabbar*, p. 368 Lichtenstadler: Nazala bi-ard Ma'add.

13. Abraha's triumph over the Lakhmid ruler al-Mundhir and his som 'Amr is narrated in the inscription Murayghan 1=Ry 506 (dated Sep-

tember 552) and Murayghan 2; for recent discussion of these two texts see C. J. Robin, 'Abraha et la reconquête de l'Arabie déserte: un réexamen de l'inscription Ryckmans 506=Murayghan 1, *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 39 (2012) pp. 1–93. and the paper of this volume, pp. 67–68.

14. *Chronicon anonymum* (CSCO 1, p. 20): "He sent word to his fellow tribesmen, Ma'add, and they took captives from and ravaged many districts belonging to Khusrau, even reaching the (region of) 'Arab.'

15. That Bakr and Taghlib belonged to Ma'add is noted by the poet al-Musayyib ibn al-Rafael, quoted by M. J. Kister, 'Mecca and the Tribes of Arabia: Some Notes on Their Relations,' in M. Sharon (ed.), *Studies in Islamic History and Civilization in Honour of Professor David Ayalon* (Leiden, 1986), pp. 33–57 at 46.

The kings of Kinda

Robin (2012/AH1433, pp. 59–129) begins his paper by mentioning the first kings of Kinda: A1. Rabi the son of Mu'awiyat of the line of Thawr [...]. B. The Hujrids or banu Hujr or banu 'Amr b. Mu'awiya. 5. The enigmatic Qays are descendants of al-Harith (in Greek Kaïsos, descendants of Arethas). C. Secondaries 4. The Banu Jabala. E. The Hujrids and their Himyarite overlords. 2.e. Abraha (c. 535 – c. 565). The pre-Islamic kings of the Arab tribe of Kinda relied mainly on the famous *Book of Songs* (*Kitab al-Aghani*). In 1887, the German Theodor Nöldeke made important methodological progress in his study of the Jafnid princes of Syria (commonly, inappropriately called "ghassanids"). The German Gustav Rothstein implements the same method for the Nasrids of al-Hira (mistakenly called "Lakhmids") (1)

A. The first kings of Kinda. 1. son of Mu'awiyat of the Thawr lineage was mentioned for the first time in 220 of the Christian era. Kinda then had its centre in an oasis. The king was waging war against two tribes [of Sahrat] [to the Abyssinians of the Najran region]. The conquest of Hadramawt took place in 296. B. The Hujrids or banu Hujr or banu 'Amr b. Mu'awiya. 3. al-Harith al-Malik b'Amr.

The traditions that are interesting in the relations of al-Harith over al-Hira and Sasanian Persia are particularly numerous, especially if we compare them with those relating to the Ghassan and the Roman Empire. They imply that al-Harith not only extended his power but especially if we compare them with those relating to Ghassan and the Roman Empire. They imply that al-Harith extended his power over the al-Hira region and beyond the Empire in southern Mesopotamia. The first group of traditions reports that al-Harith invaded Iraq during the predecessor reign of al-Mundir (who reigned for 49 years if Ibn al-Kalbi is to be believed, from c. 505 to 554). The name of this predecessor is debated. It could be al-Numan (the father of al-Mundhir) or a namesake. Other traditions claim that the reign of al-Mundhir was interrupted by that of al-Harith. The Sasanian king Qubad had asked al-Mundhir, his governor in al-Hira, to embrace the doctrine of Mazdaq like him. But al-Mundhir had refused and had been deposed. Al-Harith, who had accepted, had received the throne of al-Hira as a gratuity.

The Byzantine ambassador Nonnosos, whom Emperor Justinian (527–565) sent to Arabia and Ethiopia after the conquest of Himyar by the Aksumites, probably around 540, mentions in his report that his grandfather – whose name he does not give – had already concluded an alliance on behalf of Emperor Anastasius (491–518) with an Arab leader named Arethas. The identity of this Arethas is not in doubt because his descendant, Kaïsos, "is at the head of the Chin-

denes [Kinda] and the Maadenes [Ma'add]." Arethas is a Kindite leader who can be identified with al-Harith al-Malik b'Amr b Huir. The "peace" evoked by Nonnosos means that Arethas puts himself at the service of Byzanz. Arethas had lied in the chronicle of John Malalas, who reports: "a conflict broke out between the Duke of Palestine, Diomedes, silentarius, and the phylarch Arethas. The death of Arethas occurred in the months preceding, probably at the end of 527 or the beginning of 528. It is probable (as the Himyarite inscriptions indicate) that this Arethas "child of the Thalabane is a Tha'labatid, not from Kinda, but a tribe of western Arabia, probably Ghassan. The descendants of Hujr Akil al-murar take refuge in Hadramawt after a final battle lost on yawm Jabala. 5. The enigmatic Qays descendant of al-Harith (in Greek Kaïsos, a descendant of Arethas).

Justinian sent an embassy to Ethiopia and Arabia in the South in the spring of 531. (3) The emperor enjoins Ambassador Julian to obtain from Aksum and Himyar that they commit themselves to the sides of Byzantium in the war against Persia. We thus learn that Kaisos "a "descendant" (and not son) of Arethas, has brothers named Ambros ('Amr) and Iezidos (Yazid) and a son named Mauias (Mu'awiya). Kaisos divides his power between his brothers Ambros [Amr] and Iezidos [Yazid]. The kinship that linked 'Amr to the Hujrids likely led some of the latter to ally themselves with the Nasrids and, through their intermediary, with the Sasanids. (4) But, if some princes are aligned with Byzantium and others with Persia, nothing forbids assuming that the lines of group support also exist within each coalition.

D. The legendary kings. Kinda, the Hadramawt native would have been forced to leave at the request of a defeat. The tribe then took refuge in the heart of desert Arabia, in the land of Ma' add, in Ghamr

of Kinda, two days walk from Makka. During this migration, the tribe would have given itself a king for the first time. E. The Hujrids and their Himyarite overlords. The Arab-Islamic tradition mentions the Himyarite overlords. The traditionalists know perfectly well that the Himyarite "kings" are not real sovereigns but simple agents of the Himyarite kings. On the other hand, according to informants from the great tribe of Bakr in Northeastern Arabia, this tribe and its Shiite kings would act independently without needing the support of Himyar or Persia. 2. The Himyarite expeditions to desert Arabia. d. Two Syriac texts belonging to the same tradition indicate that this king (whom they call Maʾdikarim or Maʾdokarim) was placed on the throne by the Aksumites and is Christian. (6) This is in good agreement with the fact that the Kindite prince Arethas (al-Harith al-Malik), in charge of central Arabia, concluded an alliance with the Byzantine emperor Anastasius (491–518) (above B. 3 "al Harith al-Malik b. Amr."). e. Abraha (c. 535-c. 565).

Three inscriptions by Abraha shed light on the end of the Kindit dynasty. Abraha first relates his campaign against Kinda in the Hadramawt and the submission of the revolts: he then details the work he carried out on the Dyke: he finally mentions incidentally that, still in Marib, he consecrated a church and convened (in the autumn of 547) a diplomatic conference with representatives of Rome, Ethiopia, Persia and three Arab princes (7). 6. Kinda, Qahtan and Himyar. The Kindite princes derived great prestige from it, comparable to that of the Meccans on the eve of Islam. The Shiite princes were then the natural flag bearers of the Southern Arabs in the political struggles of Islam's early days. They supplanted the Sabeans, the Himyarites, and the Hamdanites.

In conclusion, Robin (2012/AH 1433) states that the ancient history of Kinda and its kings is becoming more evident. It was said that

Kinda, forced to leave Yemen, had migrated with her kings to Ghamr of Kinda, then to Central Arabia. Driven out of it, she would finally have taken refuge in Hadramawt. Kinda always provided the Arab auxiliaries necessary for the conquest of desert Arabia. And the kings of this tribe (of the Hujrid dynasty) administered the conquered regions. The chronology of the Hujrid dynasty was previously based on two mentions of al Harith al-Malik in external sources (Malalas and Nonnosos). More than a third of the last mentioned sources refer to another personage (Theophanes the Confessor) and concludes with the following questions: − When does al-Harith al-Malik become king of al Hira, and for how long? What was the attitude of al Harith al-Malik when the Himyarite king Yusuf As'ai Yath'ar revolted against his Aksumite overlord in 522? Does he adhere to Yusuf's policy or remain faithful to his alliance with Byzantium (and with his ally Aksumite)? − How to reconcile the two versions of the succession of al-Harith al-Malik, that of the Byzantine sources, which mention the only Kaisos (Qays), and that of the Arab-Islamic tradition, which focuses on the four sons of al-Harith (Hujr, Ma'dikarib, Shurahbir, and Salama)? − Finally, where do the Kindite phylarchs Arethas (al-Harith al-Malik) and Kaisos (Qays) receive the Byzantine ambassadors sent to them? Would it not be in the oasis of Dumat al-Jandel, which is close to Byzantium, which would explain the fact that Arethas had a quarrel with the Duke of Palestine (Malatas XVIII. 16) and a kind presence in Duma until the dawn of Islam?

1. Die Dynastie der Lakmiden in al-Hira. Ein Versuch zur arabisch-persischen Geschichte zur Zeit der Sasaniden, 1899).

2. Robin 2008, pp. 176–178.

3. Procopius, Wars, I. 20 g, and follow-up; Beaucamp 2010.

4. See the story of the Hujrid Abu' l-Jabr b.' Amr b. Yazid b. shurah-bil b. al-Harith al-Malik, who solicits the help of Kisrà (the overlord of the Nasrids) to fight against other Hujrids (below C. 5. Other Elites occupying high positions").

5. Olinder 1927, pp. 21–23.

6. Beaucamp and alii 1999, pp. 75–76; Robin 2010 b, pp. 72–73.

7. See CIH 541/98 (Y'fr); see also DAI GND 2002/20, II, 14–15, text that is a draft of CIH 541.

The elite of late-antique Syria

Kennedy (2010, pp. 181–98) begins his explanation by mentioning that the Islamic conquest of the Near East can be seen as a major and decisive break in the area's history. The elites of the new era are descendants of the elites of the old or members of the same kinship groups. The secular elites of Late Antique Syria can be divided broadly into groups. At the top were the imperial officials in charge of the government, the military, and administering the imperial estates, Greek-speaking and largely Chalcedonian in faith. This group is normally referred to as rum in Arab sources. In contrast, were the chiefs of the Bedouin tribes affiliated with the Byzantine empire, the so-called *must' aribat al-sham*, led by the phylarchs of the Ghassanid family and largely Monophysite in religion.

The Syro-Byzantine aristocrat we know most is Magnos the Syrian, a favorite of the Emperors Justin II and Tiberius II. According to John of Ephesus (1), he originated from Huwwarin in the central

Syrian steppe, where he built a church and surrounded the settlement with a wall. It was probably in around 570 that he was appointed curator of the imperial estate of Marina, recorded in an inscription found in Antalya. In the later 6th century, curators of the Imperial estates were among the most powerful figures in the Byzantine hierarchy. (2) In 581, Magnos, described by a later Syriac source as "a wicked and nasty man," was entrusted by the Emperor with the arrest of the Ghassanid Phylarch al-Mundhir. Al-Mundhir, according to John of Ephesus (3), was lured into a trap, inviting him to the consecration of a church he had constructed at Huwwarin and arresting him. He died, probably in 582, before he was able to capture al-Mundhir's son al-Numan. He also possessed what would seem to have been his property at Huwwarin, where he spent money developing the small town. We know of other men during this period who bore the title of Khuratos of the domains of Hormisdas, Domniziolus, who was Magnos' immediate predecessor and was sent by Emperor Tiberius in 578–79 to pacify a rebellious army in Armenia, and Constantine Lardys, who was put to death by Emperor Phocas in 602. (4) Another landowner we find developing his estates was one Gregorius Abimenus. He spent his own money improving the defenses of the little town of Anasartha on the desert margins of Northern Syria.

Another example of late antique Syrian aristocrats who combined landownership with the exercise of government authority can be found in the story of the misfortunes of the family of Sergius, son of Ioannis Rusafoyo from Edessa.Sergius was one of the sources from the chronicle of Dionysius of Tell-Mahre, whose family had inherited the Rusafoyo properties. (6) The story begins when Khusraw II fled into exile in the Byzantine Empire at the beginning of his reign in 590. He stayed in Edessa at the palace of one Marinus, next door to the palace owned by Sergius' father, Ioannis. This story is interesting because the family has come down to prosperity. It provides

a textual account of depositing a hoard of precious objects, a process well-attested in the archaeological record.The ownership of these estates does not seem to have been affected by Persian or Arab conquests, as they were passed down by inheritance within the same group of Edessa families at least until the 9th century. A short account of two brothers from the Greek aristocracy in Balis and Qasirin implies a situation where several small towns and estates in this crucial strategic area were owned by magnates who were also responsible for their defense.

The existence of this powerful group of magnates may provide the context for two of the most remarkable secular buildings of late antique Syria, Androna and Qasr Ibn Wardan. The first of these is the *kastron* at Androna (7) / al-Andarin, a finely built quast-military structure with a bath-house outside the walls, which became the nucleus of a small urban settlement that continued to thrive into Umayyad times. We know from an inscription found on the site that this was constructed by one "munificent Thomas" in 558. This Thomas is unknown, and it is unknown why this high-status building was constructed in such a remote outpost. Reminded is that Magnos' [see above] home base at Huwwarin is close to Androna and situated in a similar semi-arid environment. Even more mysterious is the nearby site of Qast ibn Wardan. An impressive palace and church are constructed here, both preserved to an astonishing degree, and a ruined building nearby is described as barracks. Fired brick with stone surrounds the architecture is of very high quality. We have building inscriptions of 564 and 572 and another which reads *ton Georgian*. It has been suggested (8) that the structure was constructed for George, known from a surviving seal to have been strategies, that is, an army officer only one grade below the *Magister Militum per Orientem.*

Kennedy (2010, pp.181–98) states that Qasr Ibn Wardan has never been surveyed. Whether the complex stood on an estate or in isolation on the fringes of the desert remains unclear. Kennedy (2010, 181–98) clarifies how archeological and written evidence from Palestine does suggest that there were large agricultural estates in the province. (9) The Saltus Constantiniacus and the Saltus Gerariticus lay on the arid margins of Limes Palaestinae. Added can be the estate of Sycomazon to the south of Gaze. They were administered by procurators and actors of the *res privata* who collected rents from tenant farmers. The Saltus Gerariticus shown on the Madaba map and with the Saltus Constantiniacus is recorded in the lists of George of Cyprus. Also, in Palestine, Procopius records that the orator Evangelus from Caesarea bought the coastal village of Porphyrean for the vast price of three centenaria of gold. However, it became confiscated by Justinian (10), indicating that large-scale landowner strip may have been more widespread than the scanty evidence suggests.

Lately mentioned is the elite of pre-Islamic Syria by the Petra papyri. Petra has become one of the better-known cities of the [th] century. (11) Certainly, until the last decade of the 6th century (the last papyrus is dated to 591), the local landowners controlled the city, monopolized most government offices, and probably provided the clergy. They were not, however, major regional powers. The properties of the three brothers Bassus, Epiphanios, and Sabinus detailed in one of the documents consisted of small, scattered plots amounting to perhaps 135 acres. (12) It seems they were prosperous and probably influential, but more gentry than great landowners. How much of the secular aristocracy survived the Persian occupation of Syria between 610 and 628, with their wealth and reputation intact, is unclear. Many must have been killed, dispossessed, or emigrated. The survival of the Rusafoyo family of Edessa despite their difficulties, and the presence of the Greek elite families, which pro-

duced Sophronius and St John of Damascus, suggests that some of them at least did manage to maintain their positions.

The story of the survival of the family of St John of Damascus is perhaps especially revealing in this regard. (13) His grandfather Mansur b. Sarjun (Sergios) had been appointed by Emperor Maurice to supervise the collection of taxes but had failed, not surprisingly, to send anything to the fiscal during the Persian occupation. He tried to excuse himself because he had sent the money to the Persians, but Heraclius had insisted on fining him 100.000 aurei. Because of his resentment over this, he negotiated the city's surrender to the Muslims. He took service under the new regime under which the family continued to run the fiscal administration. The other important group in the elite of late antique Syria were the leaders of the Arab *must'ariba* tribes allied to the Roman government and let, at least until 581, by the Jafnid branch of the Ghassan tribe. The Byzantines had allies amongst the mostly Christian Arab tribes of the Syrian desert, which gave them military assistance. One source mentions the Christian Arabs tribes of the Syrian desert, which gave them military assistance. One source mentions the Christian Arabs (nasari al-'arab) who provided supplies for the Byzantine army before the battle of Ajnadayn. (14).

At the time of the first Muslim attacks on Syria, the most important Arab tribes in the steppe land and the desert were Bali in the Balga region south of Amman, Judham, and Lakhm, again in the Balga and further south in Transjordan and Palestine, Bal-Qayn, to the east of Judham [origins. The Judham ultimately traced their descent to the Yemenite Kahlan ibn Saba and claimed kinship ties with the tribes of Lakhm and Amila. The 9th-century Arab genealogist and historian Ibn Abd Rabbini recorded that the Judham Lakhm (progenitor's name was Malik) and Amila (progenitor's name was al-

Harith) were all sons of [kings]. Also in the desert, Banu al-Kalb in the Palmyrene, the Ghassan in the Hawran, and the area around Damascus. (15) Further north in the area around Homs and Aleppo lived the semi-settled Tanukh, while the Bahra' lived in the middle Euphrates area to the east. Indication of the composition of the *must'ariba* as a group comes from the Muslim expedition to Mu'ta in September 629. The Arab sources (16) say that the Muslims were confronted and defeated by a Byzantine *(Rum)* army of 100.000 sent by Heraclius and the *must'ariba* of the tribes of Lakhm. Judham, Bal-Qayn, Bahra, and Bali, also said to have numbered 100.000, commanded by one Malik b. Rafila of the Banu Irasha of Bali.

It is surely significant that the commander of the whole Byzantine force was one of *must'ariba*, not one of the *rum*. The leaders of these tribes can certainly be counted among the elite of late antique Syria. Until 501, the *must'ariba* tribes were led by the Jafnid family, who were given the title of *phylarchs*. The Jafnids came from the tribe of Ghassan and are frequently referred to as the "Ghassanids," but this is slightly misleading because, we shall see, the Ghassan had independent leaders and survived as a group after the disappearance of the Jafnids. Reminded is that it was Magnos, the best-known member of the landowning elite, on one side and a bedouin, Arabic-speaking Monophysite party on the other.

Kennedy (2010, pp. 181–98) continues on Syrian Elites in Early Islam, mentioning that the Arabic sources provide a certain amount of detail about the elite emigration to Byzantine territory or further west. When Mu'awiya b Abi Sufyan conquered the coastal cities of what is now Lebanon, they "expelled many of the people." However, it is not clear whether they fled to Byzantine territory. (17) In some cases, whole cities seem to have been abandoned by their Greek inhabitants. One such place was Tripoli (Lebanon). According to one re-

port, Heraclius attempted to persuade the people of Edessa to leave with him, but they refused, saying that they were better off staying where they were. (18) The big winners in rearranging elites that followed the Muslim conquest were the *must'ariba*. Some of them joined the emigrants to Byzantine-held territory. The highest profile of them was Ayham b. Jabala is described as the King of the Ghassan. He had converted to Islam but had been disgusted as being treated as an equal to a low-born Muslim. Following, Ayham b. Jabala left for the Byzantine empire, taking with him, according to some accounts, 30.000 of his followers. (19) There was a rumor, reported in the Arab Muslim sources, that one of his descendants became Emperor of Byzantium with the title Nikephoros I (802–11). There was nearly a larger defection when the Christian Bedouin Banu Taghlib refused to pay the taxes demanded because they were a sign of humiliation and threatened to leave the Muslim lands and settle in Byzantine territory. It was only after some careful diplomacy that the caliph 'Umar b. al-Khattab (634–44) decreed that they need only pay the alms *(sadaqah)* demanded of all believers but at twice the rate paid by Muslims. (20) The Muslim authorities seem to have been prepared to accept that many Byzantines should be allowed to leave their cities had surrendered peacefully.

In the case of the Arabs, however, the authorities took a much more severe approach. According to one report, when 'Umar heard that a Christian Arab tribe in the Jazira, the Banu Iyad of some 4000 strong, had sought refuge in Byzantine territory, he wrote to the Emperor. 'Umar threatened that he would tear up all the agreements he had made with the local Christians and expel them from Muslim territory unless the errant Bedouin were driven back into Muslim-held territory. The Emperor, we are told, duly complied. (21) Most of the Arab tribal elite of Syria made their peace with the Muslims, or at least with the governor of Syria, Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan and his fam-

ily. Men like Hassan b. Badal, chief of the Banu Kalb, probably the most numerous and powerful of the Christian Arab tribes of Syria, retained their Christian religion but married their daughters into the Umayyad family and became important political figures in the Umayyad state. The emigration of Jabala b. Ayham and his followers to Byzantine territory did not mean the disappearance of Ghassan from the Arab Middle East.

About these Ghassan, Kennedy (2010, pp. 181–98) relates that there were important differences. The tribe no longer had any unique and special relationship with the authorities. It was one of some *must'ariba* tribes that formed the bedrock of support for the early Umayyads in Syria. They were firmly attached to the Yameniya or southern party in Umayyad politics. The leadership also changed. The Jafnids lost their position with the departure of Jabala b. Ayham and were supplanted by a new line who traced their descent to Ka'b, brother of the original Jaffna b. 'Amr.

The Ghassan were supporters of the Umayyads from a very early stage. We come across them in accounts of the confrontation at Siffin in 657 between the largely Iraqi supporters of 'Ali b. Abi Talib and the Syrian supporters of Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan. The accounts of this confrontation are interesting, detailing as they do to the composition of tribal support for both leaders. The Ghassanids, naturally, supported Mu'awiya. Unfortunately, none of our sources give any names for the leaders of the Ghassanids. In the crisis of the Umayyad caliph after the death of the caliph Yazid I in 684 that the descendants of the *Must'ariba* tribes demonstrated their group feeling and political weight during the conflicts surrounding their adoption of Marwan b. al-Hakam as Umayyad caliph and the battle of Marj Rahit in 64/684. The peaceful but premature death of the caliph Yazid b. Mu'awiya left the Umayyad caliphate in crisis. Most deemed his two sons too young

for the caliphate and seem to have lacked ambition for high office. The governor of Damascus, Dahhak b. Qays al-Fihri, and a large portion of the Arab leaders in Syria, decided to accept the rule of that same Ibn al-Zubayr. All would have been lost, and the Umayyad caliphate would have ended early. However, this was for the determination of a small group of pro-Umayyad leaders and their supporters. The pivotal figure here was Malik b. Hassan b. Badal was then governor of Palestine and described as *sayyid* (lord) of the people of Palestine. (22) At the same time, he was reviled by his enemies as a bedouin (*a'rabi*) (23). He summoned the leader of Judham, Raw b. Zinba made him his deputy and ordered him to incorporate Lakhm into Judham "so that you will not be short of men" (24). It was not easy for Raw to face competition for the leadership of Judham from one Natil b. Qays, who, of course, proclaimed his allegiance to Ibn al-Zubayr. In the end, however, the majority of Judham and the Arabs of Palestine seem to have followed Raw.

The zeal of the Syrian tribes for the Umayyad cause can be seen in a confrontation that followed in the Damascus mosque. The Umayyad cause was championed by another Kalbi, Sufyan b. al-Abroad and the chief of Ghassan, Yazid b. Abi'l-Nims (son of the father of the weasel). (25). The Battle of Marj Rahit was crucial in establishing the political construction of the Umayyad caliphate. For the next generation, the most powerful and influential of all the groups in the western half of the caliphate were the descendants of the *must' aliba* tribes. They were certainly now the new Syrian elite and, far from being a new aristocracy from Arabia, they were directly connected with the elite of 6th – century Syria. Except for the narratives and poems, we hear little about these important supporters of the Umayyad regime. They reappear in the historical record to play an important role in the tribal conflicts in the last year of the Umayyad caliphate. Later in 734, Ghassan was among the Syrian

tribes which marched on Damascus to install Yazid III as caliph. (26) The 'Abbasid revolution of 750 was disastrous for the power, wealth, and status of the Arab tribes of Syria. Like Judham, Lakhm, and Bali, with whom the Arab tribes of Syria were often associated, they seem to have lost their tribal identity.

Kennedy (2010, pp. 181–98) concludes to mention that the question of continuity and change in the Syrian elite from the late antique to early Islam is a complex one. It seems as if the *rum*, the old Hellenised ruling class, lost their status and identity by death in battle, emigration, or merging into the new order as *mawali* of the Umayyads. The memory and reputation of Justinian and other Byzantine emperors may have perished in Syria. However, the importance of the Ghassanids and their *must' Ariba* followers survived in history, legend, and poetry for centuries.

1. John of Ephesus: 129–30.

2. Feissel 1985: 465.

3. John of Ephesus: 132.

4. Feisel 1985: 472–3.

5. See the "reconstitution" of Dionysius of Tell-Mahre's chronicle in Palmer 1993: 122–4. Simon Ford for drawing attention to this.

6. Palmer 1993: 98–100.

7. On Androna: Strube 2003, and Mundell Mango 2008. On Qasr Ibn Wardan. De' Maffei 1995.

8. De'Maffei 1995: III.

9. Dauphin 1998: 72–3, 104–5.

10. Procopius. Anecdota XXX. 18–19.

11. For an introduction to the papyri, Koenen 1996.

12. Koenen 1996: 183–4.

13. For the family's history, see Auzepy 1994: 193–204.

14. Ibn A'tham: 1. 134.

15. For the distribution of Arab tribes in Syria. Donner 1981: 102–11.

16. Al-Tabari: 1, 1610–18.

17. Al-Baladhuri: 126.

18. Al-Tabari: 1, 2395.

19. Al-Baladhuri: 136–7.

20. Al-Baladhuri: 182–3: Al-Tabari: I, 2509–11.

21. Al-Tabari: I, 2506–9.

22. Al-Tabari: II, 468.

23. Al-Tabari: II, 472.

24. Al-Tabari: II, 468.

25. Al-Tabari: II, 470–71.

26. Al-Tabari: II, 1793.

Chapter three.
Relation between Byzantium and the Arab kingdoms

Economic history of Byzantium

Regarding non-economic exchange, Laiou (2002, p.391) clarifies that this was of minor quantity but still exists. The imperial government still had some reduced resources in silk stuff and coins. (2) A gift of mithqals of gold, gold tesserae, and 1000 workers were sent by Justinian II in In 705–711 CE to the caliph al-Walid. (3) Within the empire, there was low demand, given the relative decline of the cities in both demographic and economic terms. This decline must be considered a certainty for the period ranging from some time in the late sixth century (depending on the locality) to ca. 800 CE. (4) A number of the large cities – for example, Alexandria and Antioch – were lost to the empire, and the ones that remained decreased in size. (5) The cities of Asia Minor became small and catered primarily to defense needs. (6) The empire became much more ruralized, resulting in trade and exchange. Mentioned should be that narrative, Saint's Lives, and legal evidence provide information that is somewhat at odds with archaeological evidence. Grain and textiles are the two major commodities that can be used to gauge the importance of exchange. The supply in this period can not have been very high, especially after the loss of Egypt, given the depopulation of the empire

and the low production of grain. In the seventh century, further depopulation occurred.

Regarding economic exchange Laiou (2002, p.391) mentions that an occasional famine in Constantinople, such as that of 743 CE, shows the price of food soaring. (7) This was at the time of the rebellion of Artabasdos, when he was master of the city, while Constantine V besieged it by sea. Artabasdos tried to provision the city by sending out ships, but Constantine V captured them and distributed them to his soldiers. The price of barley, millet, other grains, pulses, olive oil, and wine rose precipitously, which shows the importance of imported provisions, presumably from Asia Minor and the Aegean islands. Silk was the other important commodity. The production and sale of silk had become a state monopoly after Justinian I. In the seventh century, silk manufacturing increased, and its sale seemed to have become organized along with different principles.

Laiou (2002, p.391) mentioned that items of exchange are foodstuffs such as grains, olive oil, wine, and salt trading. Salt was an important commodity whose export outside the empire's frontiers was forbidden (8). Trade in enslaved people is attested on behalf of the state (9) and, possibly, by private individuals. About foreign trade, Laiou (2002, p. 391) illustrates that it did exist, limited though it was. Recent work has disputed the idea that commercial exchange between

the western and Eastern Mediterranean was virtually extinct in the ninth century. Instead, M. McCormick sees the nadir of exchange in ca. 700 CE, with a revival, especially in the ninth century, dependent on the renewal of the western economy. He considered merchants from west Europe going to the East, especially Palestine. There was a significant change in the routes of communication with westerners going to Jerusalem through the Byzantine Empire in the first

half of the eighth century. Subsequently, going by way of North Africa and Egypt. (10)

Interregional trade, Laiou (2002, p. 391) continues, would involve areas over 300 km, and its objects would be expensive luxury goods. Entrepot trade elsewhere would transport the merchandise. (11) The distances must be taken only as general indicators, depending on whether the transportation was by land or sea. (12) The trading activity should also mention large landlords. In the eighth century, John of Jerusalem accused iconoclastic bishops of being too involved with economic concerns: their fields, their money, and the raising of horses, cattle, and flocks. They sold wheat, distributed wine, dealt in oil, and traded wool and silk. Although Saint's lives present problems of chronology, for example, when an eighth-century vita recounts the life and deeds of a saint of the fourth century, it nevertheless adds to this picture. When Byzantine taxation was monetized remains a matter of dispute, with scholars arguing for any time between the eighth and tenth centuries. (13) (14) A complaint of the anti-iconoclastic sources against Emperor Constantine V is tantalizing. The accusation that he wanted to hoard gold, that his tas collectors forced the taxpayers to sell their products cheaply. As a result, the price of wheat and barley fell to shallow levels, which can only admit one interpretation: that the emperor demanded taxes on species and that the peasants were forced to sell their produce on the market with the result that modern economic theory would predict. (15)

In the eighth and ninth centuries, in Byzantium, as in the West, Laiou (2002, p. 391) further explains, but much less than in the West, a climate of hostility toward lending at interest stemming from ideological grounds. The ninth-century Ecloga Aucta and Eclogadion both restore the Justinianic interest rates and even slimly increase

them because of a technical adjustment, a clear indication that landing at interest was being practiced during the iconoclastic period. (16) In the early ninth century, it may reflect both a shortage of capital and the high risks of maritime trade. However, it has been observed that in the provinces were found extremely few copper coins in urban archaeological sites from the middle seventh c. until two hundred years later. This fact is at the center of the theories of total demonetization of the Byzantine economy in areas outside Constantinople until the tenth century. (17)

The eleventh and twelfth centuries are possibly the most interesting in developing the economy of exchange. (32) Although Italy and Sicily were lost, the Komnenoi were eventually able to stabilize the eastern frontier, but with the loss of large tracts of territory. The Caucasus was lost, with all that meant in eastern trade routes. So as much of the interior of Asia Minor, but if that was disastrous in political terms, it has been argued that in economic terms, the loss was not so serious since these were not the most fertile or the wealthiest of Byzantine land. They were not the most highly urbanized, which is a pertinent observation when one deals with the history of exchange. In the late eleventh century, the empire became more of a coastal state, although this process was not as advanced as it would in the fourteenth century. In a coastal state, with increased agricultural production and higher urbanization, the relative importance of seaborne trade would also increase. This importance, however, is where matters become complicated. The eleventh century saw in

western Europe what has been called the "Commercial Revolution": a considerable and sustained quickening in the relations of exchange, which was most evident and most advanced in the Italian maritime cities, but which would eventually include all of Europe.

For the first time, the Byzantine exchange economy had to be discussed in conjunction with the Italian commercial economy, and the relationship between the two became important. Trade with the Fatimids seems to have been brisk, with the Byzantines exporting silk cloth and items of a more utilitarian nature, such as cheese and wooden furniture, and importing spices, perfumes, and precious wood. Thessalonike received the products of Greece and, at least once a year, products from Italy and the Muslim lands. (33) The emergence of several cities that fulfilled this role, centers where the merchandise of a region or some regions was collected and picked up by merchants, should not be surprising after what has been said above. Al-Idrisi describes it as a "populous merchant city. The Greeks bring their merchandise there". (34) The account of al-Idrisi notes several cities with commercial activities significant enough to warrant specific mention. They are mainly situated along the coasts. Al-Idrisi also describes other areas of the Byzantine Empire as being involved in trade, although its extent is not always clear. In Asia Minor, several cities served similar purposes. Most important was the city of Trebizond, a focal point for the trade route from Kherson by sea and for the land routes from Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Syria. It sent to Constantinople grain, spices, and other products of the eastern trade. According to contemporary sources, it was a great emporium and the major outlet for Byzantine silks and brocades imported into the Islamic countries (35). Other cities were important in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The question is as follows: either the economy demonetized or not. The economy did not completely demonetize coins, including the copper ones, struck throughout this period (18). However, the closing down of provincial mints must be connected with a decreased use of coins. The real question then becomes a matter of the circulation of copper coins. The historian can fall back on the statement that the

archaeological record can not give a single interpretation.(19) But it is also possible to argue that a certain demonetization of copper was happening, reflected in the fact that copper coins are not found in excavations in large numbers. On the other hand, the reform of Leo III stabilized the silver coin(20), which may signal an overall improvement in the empire's economic situation. Indeed, it changed the situation concerning the silver coin, which had been rare since the seventh century. Silver coins may, to some extent, have replaced copper ones. It is, in any case, clear that, in the economic conditions of the seventh and eighth centuries, the use of money was greatly reduced, as can also be seen by the highly simplified monetary system of the Isaurian period.

A revival in the political fortunes of the empire occurred in the ninth and tenth centuries, as mentioned by Laiou (2002, p.391). This revival began to take the offensive against its numerous enemies in a slow and full of reversals until the late ninth century. However, it ended with the highly successful campaigns of Nikephoros II Phokas, John I Tzimiskes, and Basil II. (21) This political upturn is coincidental with an economic recovery. In the seventh and eighth centuries, the Byzantines had lost resources in the form of war booty or gifts given to Arabs or Bulgarians in exchange for peace or the return of prisoners – a one-way export of resources. By the late tenth century, the situation had been completely reversed. The fact that Byzantium became very wealthy as a state does not necessarily inform us about the structure of its economic activities or the structures and forms of exchange. Constantinople, as an entrepot of eastern luxury, exercised

international trade, but not as the only place. Other cities functioning as interregional and international trade centers also practiced this exchange. (22) In this period, Leo VI forbade trade with Syria and Egypt. (23) Byzantine merchants traded with the enemy, except

in times of crisis. Indeed, in the person of its generals on a campaign, the Byzantine government specifically encouraged merchants to travel into Muslim territories to collect intelligence. (24) The reference is, of course, to frontier areas such as Cilicia, Antioch, and the region of Aleppo. Less well-known is the routine trade in necessities along the eastern frontiers. Exporting timber to the Muslims was forbidden to impede their shipbuilding industry.

Foreign trade was highly controlled, at least in Constantinople itself and at least in the intent of the state. (25) It was regulated by treaties, such as the treaties with the Rus or with the Arabs. The treaty with Aleppo gives an inkling of the items exported by the Byzantines, including (nonforbidden) silks, other textiles, jewelry, and bulk commodities such as animals. The most important components of export were textiles. Byzantine silks were imported into Egypt, as the Geniza documents show, and their price was relatively high. (26) An Arab treatise mentions (along with silk, gold, silver, and red-leather utensils) pure gold coins, horses, locks, lyres, experts in hydraulic engineering, agronomists, marble workers, enslaved people, and eunuchs. (27) Silks, whether from Byzantium or reexported from the Muslim Near East, also appear in Bulgaria and the West. (28)

Concerning trade networks, Laiou (2002, p. 391) relates that the longer Mediterranean sea route is also mentioned in the ninth and tenth centuries by Arab sources. Ment is the route linking Peluse (al-Farama, in Egypt) to Constantinople and Tripoli to Constantinople, and a coastal route linking the stores of Syria and Asia Minor with Constantinople. (29 Thus, we find merchants from Trebizond, "numerous and wealthy," going to Syria. (31) Merchants in Cairo seem numerous: the adjective "Rumi" in the Geniza records designates merchants for the Byzantine Empire and Christians generally. Constantinople had a permanent marketplace and designated days for

bulk purchases of commodities abroad. The "market days" mentioned in the case of the regulation of the sale of specific commodities sold Syrian cloth or jewels may refer either to specific days of the week or to one day when a grand bazaar was held. What can we say about the exchange economy in the seventh to tenth centuries? After the great shock of the losses of the seventh century, what remained of Byzantium was poor and introverted. Cash circulated in the cities, but probably less until the base tax was monetized. Trade was not extensive and consisted of small-scale traders and sailors, who carried out their trade in small boats along with the Aegean islands and coastlands, possibly as far away as Italy, constantly under threat of Arab attack until the recapture of Crete by the Byzantines. The grim situation in the seventh to eighth centuries did not last very long. The changes can occur in stages, starting with the reign of Constantine V, if that is when the land tax began to be commuted. By the late tenth century, all sorts of things had been reversed, and the exchange economy presented a different aspect.

In conclusion, Laiou (2002, p. 391) explains that economic exchange was hampered by insecurity, meager resources, and deficient monetary circulation in the early period of the seventh century. Indeed, because large portions of the economy were outside the financial and exchange sectors – the army received its sustenance in significant part from the land. However, on the other hand, even in these conditions, some business took place, more than is usually admitted.

1. H. Ahrweiler, "Les ports byzantins (VIIe – IXe siècles)", in La navigatione mediterranea nell' alto medioero, 2 vols. (Spoleto, 1978), 259–83.

2. M. Kaplan, les hommes et la terre à Byzance du VIe au XIe siècle: Proprietè et exploitation du sol (Paris, 1992), 544; R. S. Lopez, "Le problème des relations anglo-byzantines du 7ème au 10ème siècle, Byzantion 18 (1946–48): 139–62.

3. Ghada al-Hijjawi al-Qaddumi, Book of Gifts and Rarities: Kitab al-Hadaya wa al-Tuhaf (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), account 9. A mithgal is the weight of a dinar, 4. 23 g: W. Hinz, Islamische Masse and Gewichte (Leiden, 1955), I ff.

4. For Constantinople, see C. Mango, Le développement Urbain de Constantinople, IVe − VIIe siècles (Paris, 1985), 51–62, and P. Magdalino, "Medieval Constantinople: Built Environment and Urban Development," EHB; for cities in general, see G. Dagron, "The Urban Economy, Seventh-Twelfth Centuries," EHB, and K. − P. Matschke, "The Late Byzantine Urban Economy, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries," EHB.

5. Although see the cautionary note struck by J. Russell, "Transformations in Early Byzantine Urban Life: The Contribution and Limitations of Archaeological Evidence," The Seventeenth International Byzantine Congress. Major Papers (New Rochelle, N. Y., 1986), 137–54.

6. See Ch. Bouras, "Aspects of the Byzantine City, Eighth-Fifteenth Centuries," EHB 501–2.

7. Theophanes, ed. de Boor, 1: 419–20.

8. A. A. Vasiliev, "An Edict of the Emperor Justinian II", Speculum 18 (1943): 1–13; H. Grègoire, "Un édit de l'empereur Justinien II, daté de septembre 688", Byzantion 17 (1944–45): 119–124a. For the prohibi-

tion, see Bas 56. I, II.

9. See the case of a vast slave sale, Oikonomides, "Silk Trade," 51.

10. M. McCormick, "Les pélerins occidentaux à Jérusalem," in press; I thank Michael McCormick for seeing the manuscript of his article.

11. L. de Ligt, Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire (Amsterdam, 1993), 18, 82–83, 88–89; cf below, 730–31, 754–55.

12. Surliat, De la Ville antique, 513–14, calls "grand commerce," as opposed to local, regional commerce, that which extends over distances of 100 km by land or, by sea, covers the distance from Egypt to Greece and from Egypt or Italy to Africa (this discussion is in connection with the grain trade).

13. PG 95: 329 D and cf PG 100: 572, on bishops engaged in estate production in the 9th century.

14. See Oikonomides, "Role of the Byzantine State," 98 I ff, and, for various viewpoints, J. Haldon "Synônê. Re-considering a Problematic Term of Middle Byzantine Fiscal Administration," BMGS 18 (1994): 116–53.

15. Nikephoros, ed. de Boor, 76; Theophanes, ed de Boor, I: 443. The suggestion of A. Dunn, "Kommerkiarios," 23, that the measure was "that the treasury lowered the monetary value attached

to the primary products accepted from fiscal agents" cannot be accepted. Patriarch Nikephoros states that the taxpayers were forced to sell their produce, so wheat was "bought" at 60 modioi per nomisma and barley at 70 modioi per nomisma. Hendy's interpreta-

tion (Studies, 798–99) also admits the commutation of taxes cf. Oikonomides, "Role of the Byzantine State," 98 I ff.

16. J. B. Pitra, Juris ecclesiastici Graecorum Historia et Monumenta (Rome, 1868), 2: 311. For the relevant registration of Patriarch Nikephoros I (806–815), see A. E. Laiou, "Economic Thought and Ideology¨ EHB 1138. The slight technical increase in the interest rate(12,5 %, 8, 33 %, 6,25%, 4,2 % instead of 12%, 8%, 6%, 4%) in fact goes back to Justinian I. It is an unavoidable result of the interest rate quotation expressed in percentages, as in CI, 4. 32, 36=Bas.2.3.74 D. Gofas, "The Byzantine Law of Interest," EHB, accepts the higher rate as normal since the time of Constantine I.

17. The most recent and focused interpretation is that of Hendy, "From Antiquity," 353 ff (ca.610-ca.830); it is shared by Haldon, Seventh Century, 117 ff. and occasionally, by Oikonomides in, for example, "Le Marchand," 639, with reference.

18. Grierson, "Coinage and Money", 446 n. 88.

19. Russell, "Transformations," 137–54.

20. Hendy, Studies, 500 ff; Morrisson, "Byzantine Money," 925–26.

21. For the early part of the revival, see W. T. Treadgold, The Byzantine Revival, 780–842 (Stanford, 1988). For the history of trade, along with the works mentioned in a note I, see E. Patlagean, "Byzance et Les marchés du grand commerce, vers 830 – vers 1030; Entre Pirenne et Polanyi", in Mercati e Mercanti (as above, note I), 587–632.

22. See below, 726–28.

23. Novel 63; De re Strategica, 42.7, ed. Köchly-Rüstow, 190; G. Dagron and H. Mitràescu, le traité sur le guerilla (Paris, 1986), chapter 7, commentary on p. 249 and n. 40, J-A, de Foucault, "Douze chapitres inédite de la Tactique de N. Ouranos", TM 5/1973.

24. Similar information is given by Ibn Hawgal, who says that Byzantine merchants were spying even in the interior of the Muslim territories; he claims that they had made little profit from trade but did much harm with their spying: Vasiliev and Canard. Byzance et les Arabs, 2.2:416.

25. On the distinction between what obtained in Constantinople and what obtained in the provinces, see Oikonomides, "Le Marchand byzantine," and idem., "The Economic Region of Constantinople: From Directed Economy to Free Economy, and the Role of the Italians," in Europa medieval e mondo bizantino (as above, note 66), 221–38.

26. See Muthesius, "Essential Processes."

27. C. Pellaf, "Gahiziana, I, Le Kitab al-Tabassur bi-l-tigara, attribué à Gahiz", Arabica I (1954), 159.

28. Patlagean, Pauvreté economique, 606–7.

29. T. Lewicki, "Les voies maritimes de la Méditerranée dans le Haut Moyen Age d'àpres les

sources arabes", in La navigazione mediterranea nell'alto medioevo (as above, note 3), 1: 450–53.

30. Cf. Vasiliev and Canard. Byzance et Les Arabes, 2. 2: 424: Mugad-

dasi (died late 10th century) says that there are Muslims in the towns of Bithynia, the "mine des cuivres," and Trebizond. Cf. B. Martin-Hisard, "Trébizonde et le culte de St. Eugène (6e – 11e s.)" REArm, n. s., 14 (1980): 307–43, esp. 337–38. In the 10th century, the Maleinoi had a hospice on their estates for Muslims, presumably traders.

31. On Trebizond, see O. Lampsides, ed., "Agios Evangios o polyxos... Trabzontov" [vert.] (Athens, 1984), 95–96 and elsewhere; cf. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, Fontes, 58; there were, in Trebizond, progontos, stratigos, emperoi...[vert.].

32. For the developments in the period, see P. Lemerle (Cinq études sur le onzième siècle (Paris 1977), C. Marrisson, "Monnais et finances dans l'empire byzantine, Xe -XIVe siècle", in Hommes et Richeses(as above note 1), 2: 91–115; eadem' La devaluation de la monnaie byzantine au XIe siècle: Essai d'interpretation, TM 6 (1976):3- 48; M. Hendy 'Byzantium 1081–1204. The Economy Fiscal Administration and Coinage of Byzantium (Northampton, 1989) arts.2 and 3; A. P. Kazhdan, "Iz ekonomicheskoi zhizni Vizantii XI–XII VV, VizOch (Moscow, 1971), 169–212; Laiou", "God and and Mammon", 261–300; idem. "Byzantine Traders and Seafarers" in the Greek and the Sea, ed. Sp. Vryonis, Jr. (New Rochelle, N. Y., 1993), 79–96, eadem, "Church", Harvey, Economic Expansion; R. -J. Lilie, Handel and Politik zwischen dem bizantinischen Reich und den italienischen Kommunen Venedig Pisa and Genua in der Epoche der Komnenen und der Angeloi (1081–1204 (Amsterdam 1984), the unsurpassed work of W. Heyd, Historie du commerce du Levant au moyen âge, 2d ed. (Leipzig 1936), is useful for this period as well.

33. On fairs, see below 754–56.

34. La geographie d'Edrisi, 2:296.

35. Vryonis, Decline 15 ff.

The emperor Leo III

About the Byzantine Iconoclasm of Leo III, Yamaner (2012, pp. 1–10) points out that the byzantine empire lost territories and faced destruction due to inner and outer crises from the 7th-9th c. When Leo III ascended the throne, political authority was quite fragile. Nevertheless, he was able to save Constantinople from the Arab siege and became a saver of his people. He used the icons to reach the internal dynamics of the empire by addressing the church's wealth. These efforts made him an iconoclast emperor. He strengthened the army and subdivided and reduced the power of the big themes to avoid conflicts over the throne. On his behalf and his successor Constantine V, he had the officials publish a civil law, ecloga, which was highly sophisticated and innovative. The discussions between the icons and the church, rather than for his successful efforts to extend the Byzantine state's life, commemorated Leo III.

The iconoclastic controversy in the Byzantine Empire in the eighth century

Brown (1973, pp. 2–34) demonstrates how the Iconoclast controversy in the eighth-century Byzantine empire was a sudden break in the even flow of society. The Iconoclast controversy has its ground in the attitude of the Iconodules in the Council of Nicaea of 787. The triumph of Orthodoxy in 843 also contributed. (1) The church has conserved icons since the Apostles' days. Their removal, between 730 and

787, had been an abrupt hiatus in the continuum of the Christian religion. The Emperors Leo III and Constantine V and their advisers were said to have acted under the influence of persons and ideas alien to the core of Byzantine civilization. (2) Renegade Muslims and Jewish sorcerers have been definitively ousted. Between 726 and 730, Leo III took his decisions through the advice of sober provincial bishops in a thoroughly Byzantine attempt to placate God, whose anger with the Christian people had been shown by Arab invasions and by volcanic eruptions. (3)

Almost all scholars regard Iconoclasm as endergonic: it was a crisis within Byzantine Christianity due to a consideration of the attitude of the early church to images (7) and the discovery of an Iconoclast movement in the Christian environment of seventh-century Armenia (8). Iconoclasm is still treated in most accounts as representing the momentary emergence of elements in Byzantine culture that were, if not alien, at least provincial or non-Hellenic. The triumph of Orthodoxy is presented as the assertion of Byzantine tradition over a deviant tributary. Two recent interpretations have been taken to support this impression. In the first place, Ostrogorsky could isolate a strong Monophysite streak in the iconoclastic theology of Constantine V. This discovery has been held sufficient to lay the Iconoclast movement under the *praeiudicium* of having originated among an oriental population. The population was either hostile or indifferent to the Chalcedonian synthesis of the divine and the human in Christ. They were also hostile to the showing of Christ in human form. (9) In the second place, it is assumed that the social changes of the late seventh and eighth centuries shifted the centre of gravity of the Byzantine state towards the oriental populations of the countryside of Anatolia, at the expense of the traditional urban culture of the Aegean. These changes were sharpened by the military reforms at the same time. Suggested is that the Byzantines recruited local armies

of the newly-instituted theme. Thus supporting the Iconoclast emperors who had originated from the same provinces, the eastern armies are held to have been expressing the sullen hostility of a whole provincial culture towards the alien, Iconodully piety of its capital. (10)

It is necessary to raise some *prima facie* objections to the fast-stated views if only to free the subject for further investigation along different lines. Far away, across the Arab frontier, John van Damascus had seen and stated clearly the Christological background to the controversy. John's *On Images* was written at a safe distance from the world, in the *Wadis* of the convent of Saint Sabas. There is little evidence that the Byzantine clergy knew of it at the Council of Nicaea in 787. Thus, the idea that Asia Minor was a vast, not separated backland and a seedbed of 'oriental' religiosity (11) is contradicted by most of what we know of the immediate Late Roman past. Particularly in those provinces in which the leading Iconoclast bishops had their sees. Third: most current explanations of the Iconoclast controversy implicitly ignore the role of Constantinople as the hub of the eighth-century Byzantine World. Whatever his eastern origins, the career of Leo before he became emperor satiated from Constantinople. Wherever their sees may have lain, the Iconoclast bishops probably got all their culture in Constantinople and conducted most of their business in Constantinople (12). These bishops regarded their duties as local bishops as taking them from Constantinople 'into the country.' Forth: least of all, did the eastern Themes consistently support the Iconoclast party? (14) Generally, the Iconoclast controversy has become a study of the origin of Iconoclast ideas. This study has, in turn, been encapsulated in a search for a local, provincial setting for such ideas. Theatrical, for it is not certain that the victory of the Iconoclasts would have led to the triumph of figural art in the Eastern empire or that their temporary success was a victory of the East-

ern over the European provinces of the empire. The heady alternative *East or Rome* was not at stake in the course of the eighth century. (15) Parochial, because it is assumed that the crisis, seen in the terms just outlined, concerned only the Byzantine empire. The alternative between East and West within the Byzantine empire was trivial compared with the burning problem shared by all Christian states in the eighth century – how to adjust to the crevasse that had opened between their rich Late Antique past and an anxious present overshadowed by the armies of Islam.

The most considerable evidence for the religious views of the Iconoclasts (16) is the *Queries* of Constantine (17) and the *Horos* of the Iconoclast Council of 754 (18). Even so, the repercussion of these views among the Iconodules at the Council of Nicaea in 787. The Iconoclast controversy was a debate on the position of the holy in Byzantine society. Particular material objects were holy because ordained priests had solemnly blessed them. They could be objects of worship in the complete sense. For the Iconoclasts, there were only three such objects: the Eucharist, which was both given by Christ and consecrated by the clergy (19); the church building, which was blessed by the bishop (20); the sigh of the Cross. (21) It appeared to the Iconoclasts that icons had sidled over the firmly – demarcated frontier separating the holy from the profane at a comparatively recent time. The Iconoclast bishops of 754 meant to put them firmly back in their place. Icons, therefore, could suffer the same fate as any pagan cult objects; they could be burned. (22) For the people of Israel, for instance, it lay in the fabulous Ark of the Covenant. It tended to lie in the great consecrated basilica for the present Christians. Pictures on the cool wall of the churches were more permanent reminders than the liturgy and reading of the gospels of Jesus'story and the passions of the saints. (23) Some Icons, the Iconodules insisted, were of immediate divine origin. They were 'not made with

human hands.' (24) The *Edessa' Mandylion*, on which Christ impressed his face on a handkerchief, was the prototype of such an icon. (25) For a cultivated man of the eighth century, whether he was a western European, a Byzantine, or a Muslim, art was part of a man's comfort: Byzantine and Umayyad baths and pleasure palaces show this clearly. (26) The work of the artist most sought at the time of the Iconoclast controversy were those which had little to do with the idea of the holy in the minds of any west European Byzantine or Muslim.

The controversy consisted in identifying the icon with the holy and rejecting its holiness by the Iconoclasts. It did not concern the status of the arts in Byzantine society. Religious images began to receive marks of veneration analogous to the imperial images in the sixth century or even earlier; in Kitzinger's opinion, the emperors took the final conscious step in fostering these practices. They allowed icons of Christ and the virgin to stand in the place of the imperial images and receive the same pagan worship as their images had always received. (27) By the seventh century, such icons were firmly established as part of the public cultus of the Byzantine empire. (28) Byzantines of the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries were getting from the icons what they never expected to get from an imperial image – they got the miracle of healing and the greater miracle of a flood of treats of repentance for their sins. (29) The 'psychodrama' of attacks on the images of the emperor and bishops was very common in the great towns of the Eastern empire. (30) Yet it would be wrong to conclude that, when the emperor's images were not being either welcomed or pelted, they were being worshipped. Far from it, they were being taken for granted. They were in constant danger of being obscured, in the public places, by great portraits of more exciting figures – by portraits of great pantomime actors, charioteers, and wild beast fighters. (31)

Another area of the religious life of the Late Antique world by the eighth century was to make an icon appear holy. The author suggests that we look more closely at the holy man. From the fourth century onwards, the holy man was a living icon. If Byzantines had not believed that created beings could interfere with God's will by their intervention, then the rise of the holy man and the rise of the icon would not have happened. As a religious system, early Islam consciously rejected these preoccupations. At a stroke, the icon became unnecessary. The Muslim rejected icons, just as he rejected the building of churches over the tombs of Christian saints (32) and the offering of incense in their names. The earliest icons are those that make plain the mechanism of intercession: from the late fifth century, *ex voto* icons published scenes from the court-life of heaven – the Virgin and Child enthroned, flanked by angels, with little donors supported by towering saintly patrons. (33) Angels appear early, despite genuine theological scruples about giving them a human form. (34) The Virgin is crucial, for she represented the acme of a mortal's intercession in heaven. She was invariably portrayed with Christ sitting on her lap. Objects blessed by the holy man had been the vehicles of cures since the fourth century. These *placebos* (often no more than drinking a cup of blessed cold water) had made divine protection for the sufferer tangible and so efficacious. (35)

By the end of the sixth century, icons associated with holy men or blessed by them had joined the more impersonal blessed objects. (36 The changes in the traditional type of relics were the momentum for the search for a face. Icons came to join the relics. Concerning the relic, they played a psychological role strictly analogous to the holy man. They were human figures filling the gap between awesome holy things and frail believers. That the holy man did not rise to influence in Late Roman society in so simple a way can clearly show. (37 We should look for changes in a different direction. The holy man re-

tained this role up to the eighth century. As the holy man was not ordained as a priest or a bishop, his appeal was precise: he stood outside the vested hierarchy of the Byzantine church. (38) He was holy because his clientele held him to be holy, not because any bishop had conferred holy orders. In the sixth century, formal gestures expressed the position of the holy man: a mystique of its own surrounded the monastic dress, the schema. (39) Hence an important shift in the religious topography of the Late Antique city. Christian basilicas, dominating in former centuries, now became empty spaces, except for great occasions.

Arab raids in the late seventh century felt like a hammer blow on the rich and loosely-knit world that has been described. Demoralization was the result, true of Byzantine society in the eighth century. The Byzantines knew God's anger for their sins. They knew these sins: homosexuality, blasphemy, tolerance of pagans, Jews, and heretics. (40) They had frequently punished such sins. Even Leo III had done his best in a tradition inherited directly from Justinian. He had ordered the forcible baptism of all Jews within the empire. (41); however, it was not thought about enough this time. The Iconoclasts intended to remove and punish the root sin of the human race, the deep stain of the error of idolatry. (42) Only a change in the mental climate of the age can account for such a drastic shift of emphasis.

It is unlikely that the Muslims used such methods. The influence of the Old Testament upon the public image of the Byzantine empire had grown steadily since the reign of Heraclius: the Byzantines were the 'true Israel.' (43) Leo III presented the post-Justinianic law in the preface of his *Ecloga* as no more than an elaborate implementation of the law of Moses. (44) This evolution gave the Byzantine clergy what they sorely needed in a time of crisis. The savage and raw mood of the Iconoclasts, and the determination with which

they attacked images as idolatrous, owe most to their ability to verbalize their anxiety. It was a presupposition that the Iconoclasts found writ large in the Bible. The apostasy of Israel had always taken the form of a return to idols (45). The slow decline of humankind into the mire of sin had taken the form of a steady increase in idolatry. (46) A quite unmistakable streak of reforming real, a frank admission that institutions can get worse, and a confidence that they can be made better, is one of the most tantalizing features of the Iconoclast movement. (47) But it is perhaps not as isolated as we had thought. Christians were drawing concrete historical and political conclusions from the Old Testament all over Europe. By the eighth century, this had vanished. Broken was the morale of the towns. The pilgrimage sites that had dotted Asia Minor were deserted. (48) The relics of the saints were abandoned or hurriedly transferred. (49) It is not surprising that the crisis was first felt in the western provinces of Asia Minor. However, this was not because Iconoclasm had strong local roots in these areas. Far from it, Iconodulism had local roots; (50), but the Muslim invasions had shaken these roots. Icons suffered because they were symbols of a style of political life that was outdated. The Byzantine empire could no longer sustain the luxury of remaining a 'commonwealth of cities.' What was at stake was that images had been forbidden in the Second Commandment (this everyone knew, and the patriarch's copy of the Old Testament even had a marginal note at the place) (51). At stake was that God had delivered this holy law to the Byzantines as the people of God. Therefore, the idea of the church as the core of Byzantine identity hardened. From the seventh century onwards, Byzantine thought of themselves as the 'baptized people.' (52)

Let us examine how the Iconoclast controversy reflects this change. It was the Iconodulism rather than Iconoclasm that polarized solid lo-

cal feelings. Polarization of the emotions is suggested by the fact that it was after the reversal of Iconoclasm that some provincial cities regained, from Empress Irene, some exemptions and privileges. They had been granted on the pretext of honoring the patron saints of these cities. (53) A radical wing in Iconoclasm denied the saints' intercession and their role as the special protector of individuals and localities. (54) There was an Iconoclast Jacobinism that ruthlessly sacked local cult sites. (55)

In conclusion, Brown (1973, pp. 2–34) remarks that it would be misleading to regard the Iconoclasts as anti-urban. (56) The bishops sided with the empire's centralized hierarchy in the debate on the fate of the Byzantine town. In the iconoclastic period, the bishop and governor united against the monastic holy man, a monk. He wore the badge of the monastery or practiced from the shelter of the great monastery or traditional grouping of hermits in a single place. (58) It is the same with the holy men of the reigns of Leo III and especially of Constantine V. (59) The conflict latent in this situation was brought into the open by the events of the late seventh century. The holy man had tended to bless and faster the growth of the icon: the bishop, as the famous *Admonition of the Old Man* showed clearly, now found that this was against the law of God as he and his emperor interpreted it. (60) The bishop felt more strongly than ever previously that if the Byzantine empire was a new Israel living under a single divine law, then it was he who should be its leader and the administrator of its laws for the believer. (61) Bishop and governor were committed to ensuring that many small towns did not sink into the surrounding countryside. (62)

1. See the masterly study of J. Gouillard, 'Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxiè: edition et commentaire'. *Travaux et Memoires du Centre d'His-*

toire et Civilisation byzantines, ii (1967), 1–316.

2. P. J. Alexander, *The Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople. Ecclesiastical Policy and Image Worship in the Byzantine Empire* (1958), pp. 6–22, discusses the evidence customarily advanced for such views.

3. G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (trans. J. M. Hussey, 1968), pp. 160 ff.

4. A. Grabar, *L'iconoclasme byzantine. Dossier archéologique* (1957) pp. 101–10 and P. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme byzantine* (1971), pp. 31–33.

5. K. A. C. Cresswell, 'The Lawfulness of Painting in Early Islam,' Ars Islamica, Xi-Xii (1946), 159–66 and U. Monneret de Villard, *Introduzione allo Studio dell' Archeologia islamica* (1966), pp. 249–75.

6. A. Sharf, *Byzantine Jewry. From Julian to the Fourth Crusade* (1971), pp. 61–81.

7. N. H. Baynes, 'Idolatry and the Early Church,' *Byzantine Studies and other Essays* (1960), pp. 116–43 and 'The Icons before Iconoclasm,' *Harvard Theological Review*, XLiV (1951), 93–106 in *Byzantine Studies*, pp. 226–39.

8. S. Der Nersessian, 'Une Apologie des Images au septième siècle, *Byzantion*, XVii (1945), 58–87 and P. J. Alexander, 'An Ascetic Sect of Iconoclasts in Seventh Century Armenia', *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of Albert Matthias Friend, Jr.* (1955), pp. 151–150.

9. G. Ostrogorsky, *Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Bilderstreites* (1929: photographic reprint 1964), pp. 5, 25–28, 40. This thesis is

examined with further elaborations by Alexander, *Ubi supra*, pp. 44 ff. Baynes (*Byzantine Studies*, p. 136) was unconvinced: 'there is little if anything to be said for the view, and there is no need for us to accept their contention.'

10. H. Ahrweiler, 'L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes', *Revue historique*, CC XXVii (1962), 1–32 at p. 23, and *Byzance et la Mer* (1966), pp. 40–41; Lemerle. *Le premier humanism*, pp. 34–36.

11. As Schwarzlose, *ubi supra*, pp. 44 ff.

12. [J. D.] Mansi [*Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 1759 ff.], Xiii, 33 CD (the bishop of Myria); 108 D (Thomas, Iconoclast bishop of Claudiopolis); 430 CD and 434 CD (canons 10 and 15 of Nicaea).

13. Mansi, Xii, 115 E.

14. W. Kaegi, 'The Byzantine Armies and Iconoclasm,' *Byzantinoslavica*, XXVii (1966), 48–70.

15. Lemerle, *Le premier humanisme* p. 107 exaggerates: 'Les iconodules sont dans la ligne du christianisme "humaniste", infléchi par la tradition gréco-romaine; les iconoclastes (comme avant eux les monophysites), dans celle du christianisme sémite et asiatique. Ce fut le dernier grand choix que les chrétiens eurent à faire.

16. Now available in *[Textus byzantinos ad Iconomachiam pertinentes in usum academicum, edidit Herman]* Hennephof (1969).

17. Hennephof, nos 141–87, pp. 52–57, extracted from Niceph [*orus, Antirrhetici*, P. G. c.] 205–553, edited with commentary by Ostro-

gorski, *Bilderstreit*, pp. 11–45.

18. Hennephof: nos 200–64, pp. 55 (Nice, 337 c): 'which is raised by rites performed by a priest from being a material object to become a vehicle of the supernatural.

19. Hennephof, no. 226, pp. 67–68 (Mansi, Xiii, 261 DE).

20. Hennephof, no. 184, p. 57 (Niceph 477 C).

21. G. Millet, 'Les Iconoclastes et la Croix. À propos d'une inscription de Cappadoce', *Bulletin de correspondence hellenique*, XXXiV (1910), 96–109.

22. V. Steph. *In.* P. G. c. 1085.

23. Mansi, Xiii, 361 A.

24. E. von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, Texte und Untersuchungen, XViii (1899) is fundamental.

25. Evidence collected in Dobschütz, *Ubi supra*, pp. 158*-289*.

26. F. Rosenthal, *Das Fortleben der Antike im Islam* (1965), pp. 357 on paintings in bath-houses.

27. Kitzinger, *'Cult of Images'*, pp. 125–6.

28. Grabar, *Iconoclasme*, pp. 45 and 70–77.

29. Mansi, Xiii, 12 A 'for spiritual profit and an outflowing of tears.'

30. See evidence collected in R. Browning, 'The Riot of 387 in Antioch', *Journal of Roman Studies*, Xiii (1952), 23–30 at p. 20. Also Kazimierz Majewski, 'Bezobrozowoscrzymskin', *Archeologia,* XVI (1965), 63–82, at p. 69.

31. *Codex Theodosianus*, XV, XVii, 12 (394) = *Codex Justinianus*, XL, XLi, 4.

32. Monneret de Villard, *ubi supra*, p. 272.

33. See Grabar, *Martyrium*, ii, 81: some of the earliest religious icons of public importance were in the form of ex-votos set up by members of the imperial family. Now see R. Cormack, 'The Mosaic Decoration of S. Demetric of Thessaloniki', *Annual of the British School of Athens*, LXiV (1969), 17–52, a most important study.

34. Raised by John, bishop of Thessalonica (610–649: Mansi, Xiii, 164 D.

35. Brown, 'Holy man,' p. 96.

36. Mansi, Xiii, 81 B, with the commentary of Kilzinger, 'Cult of Images,' pp. 108 ff.

37. Brown, 'Holy Man,' pp. 81–82. For an acute and instructive criticism of similar views long held by scholars of Western hagiography, see Frantisek Graus. *Volk, Herrscher und Heiliger in Reich der Merowinger. Studien zur Hagiographie der Merowingerzeit, Česka akademie ved* (1965), esp. pp. 31–36.

38. See K. Holl, *Enthusiasmus und Bussgewalt beim griechischen Mönchtum*, (1898), 205 f.

39. See K. Holl, *Enthusiasmus und Bussgewalt beim griechischen Mönchtum*, (1898), 205 f.

40. Theodosius II, Novella, iii, 8 (438) − Jews, Samaritans, pagans, and heretics: Justinian Novella, CXLi (559) − homosexuals.

41. Sharf, *Ubi supra*, 61.

42. Horos of 754: Hennephof, no. 205, p. 62.

43. E. g. George of Pisidia, *In restitutionem S. Crusis*, line 25 f. e.d. A. Pertusi, *Giorgio di Pisidia, Panegirici epici, Studia Patristica et Byzantina*, 7 (1960), 226.

44. Ecloga, Proemion, transl. E. H. Freshfield. *A Manual of Roman Law* (1926), pp. 66−70.

45. *The Admonition of the Old Man*, ed. Melioransky, p. XXiV, Cf. *Adversus Constantinum Caballinum*, P. b. XCV, 320 C.

46. Mansi, Xiii, 121 D and *The Admonition of the Old Man*, p. XVi quoting Wisdom, XiV.

47. Mansi, Xiii, 228 B. Compare *Adversus Constantinum Caballinum*, P. G. XCV, 341 B.

48. Mansi, Xiii, 125 AB − recognize the decline in the powers of the icon of the Virgin at Sozopolis. See H. Ahrweiler, *ubi supra*, p. 3. n. 4 on how numerous such cult sites had been.

49. Grabar, *Martyrium*, ii, 351, 354−5.

50. As seen by Dobschütz, *Christusbilder*, p. 265 n. 3.

51. Mansi, Xiii, 188 B.

52. The Jews are juxtaposed with 'the baptized people': Mirac S. Dem. 1332 B.

53. A.A.Vasiliev, 'An Edict of the Emperor Justinian II', *Speculum*, XViii (1943), 1–13. See G. I. Bratianu, *Privilèges et franchises municipals dans l'Empire byzantin* (1936), 88–98 and H. Ahrweiler, *ubi supra*, 25, n. 4.

54. G. Ostrogorsky, *Studien*, 29–40 – for a different account of this evidence.

55. The Iconoclastbishops in 754 feared extensive looting: Mansi, Xiii, 332 DE, Hennephof, no. 247, p. 73. See also Germanus, *de haeresibus*, c. 41, P. G. XCViii, 80 AC.

56. As H. Ahrweiler, *ubi supra*, p. 24 implies.

58. E. g. Theophanes, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6256, ed. de Boor, p. 442: Hennephof, no. 12, p. g. *V. Steph. In. P. G.* c. 1092 D – the mountain of St. Auxentios, with its holy men, was turned into an imperial hunting reserve.

59. *V. Steph., IUH. P. G.* c. 1129 B: 'that sorcerer' is Constantine V's view of Stephen the Younger. See P. Brown, 'Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity,' *Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations (A. S. A.* Monographs 9), 1970, pp. 20–25: (*Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine*, 1972, pp. 123–31).

60. *The Admonition of the Old Man*, ed. Melioransky, p. XViii. 'We should believe what God has said (in the Scriptures) and commanded by our holy Emperor.'

61. *Adversus Constantinum Caballinum*, P. G. XCV, 329 D.

62. On the profoundly non-urban quality of the position of the holy man, see E. Patlagean, 'À Byzance: Ancienne hagiographie et Histoire sociale,' *Annales*, XXiii (1968), 120–3.

Chapter Four. Historiography of Muslims and relations with Muslims/non-Muslims

Early Islamic prophethood and kingship

El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) begins his paper by pointing out that most studies examine prophethood and kingship separately. Another conspicuous trend in these studies is the question of the genealogies of prophethood and kingship as religiopolitical concepts. As for the origins of the concept of prophethood, most of these studies trace it to biblical narratives. (1) Regarding the origins of kingship, most scholars trace it to Persian regal history – specifically to the notion of justice in Persian kingship. (2) However, these studies do not discuss the role that prophethood and kingship played in the evolution of early Islamic historical thought. The earliest appearances are chronological indicators in early forms of representations of non-Islamic narratives. The beginning of Islamic historical thought meant transitioning from a moralistic orientation to a historicizing approach. (3)

By applying the *isnad cum matu* (4) examination, this study will also reflect on the thorny question of the authenticity of hadiths and early Islamic written reports that looms large in Western scholarship. (5) It is instructive to investigate the religious background against which the prophethood and kingship were chronologically conceptualized. Concerning the narratives of Prophethood and Kingship, El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) continues to note that the earliest needs of the early Islamic community were primarily pietistic and moralistic. (6) The preservation of the Prophet's sayings, deeds, and battles were the earliest forms of Islamic historical writing. (7) Muslims sought to clearly define their religious identity by underscoring the divine origin of Islam as the true representative of the Abrahamic tradition. They established their religious identity as distinctive from Judaism and Christianity. Muslims came to consider the prophet-

hood of Muhammad as the last one in the succession of the prophetic messages that began with Adam. (8), thus bringing God's message to completion.

This underscoring of the unique status of the Prophet yielded the pioneering forms of historical writing on non-Islamic topics wherein the stories of previous prophets became the focus of these representations. They were deriving their authority from prophethood, kingship functions as the second essential component in the chronological arrangements of prophetic narratives. The importance of kingship as a chronological concept stems from the assumption that the divine rulership of Muhammad combines both prophethood and kingship. The ideal Islamic image of this type of prophet-king rulership is modeled on biblical figures that loom large in the Qur'an and *hadith* tradition. The stories of David (9), Solomon (10), and Joseph (11) amplify this type of divine rulership that combines both prophethood and kingship. (12 When the Qur'an and *hadith* tradition proved insufficient for constructing prophetic stories, Muslims began to search for new materials to enhance their knowledge of these narratives. These inquiries created the basis upon which the genre known as the "Stories of the Prophets" was founded. (13) With the cultural encounter of Muslims with other civilizations, such as the Persian and the Graeco-Roman cultures, new materials on various scholarly interests became available. This rich cultural experience gave Muslims access to new sources and chronological systems and further enhanced their curiosity about the history of pre-Islamic religions and cultures.

Three main traditions of chronology influenced the early Islamic conceptualization of chronology: Jewish (14), Christian (15), and Persian (16). Reading early Islamic sources, one finds many references to these three sources (17). However, it seems that the appearance

of Persian tradition in the Islamic chronological arrangement of narratives was later than those of the Jewish and Christian sources. Moreover, Jewish (biblical) narratives were, as we shall see, very influential in early Islamic representations of prophetic history. It is no wonder that Muslim scholars had access to many Jewish chronological systems, such as *Seder Olam Rabba*. (18) Composed around 160 CE, this work reflects the Babylonian Rabbinic views on biblical chronology. (19) The accessibility of several competing chronological systems created controversies among Muslim historians, philosophers, and astronomers. (20) This reality makes it difficult, as we shall see, to pinpoint the sources that served Muslim scholars in their representations of the chronological eras. Against this background, early Muslim scholars arranged the Creation from Muhammad's prophethood.

El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) explains Nubawwa and Mulk as a chronological framework. Six renditions can trace the earliest stages. The examination of these reports demonstrates how Muslim scholars used this chronological structure to determine the number of years between Adam and Muhammed. These six versions, arranged in chronological order, are transmitted under the authority of 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas (d. 67/687), 'Ikrima (d. 105/723), al-Sha'bi (d. 103–109/721 -28), (21) Wahb ibn Munabbin (d. 113/732), al-Haytham ibn 'Adi (d. 205/821), and a version presented without a chain of transmission *(isnad)*. About the version of 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas, El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) illustrates that Ibn 'Abbas' was one of the prominent Companions who occupied an important role in the transmission of Islamic religion-legal traditions. He was well-versed in Arabic poetry and genealogy. Ibn' Abbas spent many years in Mecca, where he became the teacher of numerous famous scholars. (22) Ibn 'Abbas' version of the prophetic eras appears in the works of Ibn Sa'd (d. 230/845, Ibn Habib (d. 245/860), and al-Tabari (d.

310/923). Before examining this version, it is instructive to discuss the scholarly interest of these three authors. Ibn Sa'd was the scribe of the historian and judge Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Waqidi (d. 207/823 and had many teachers, among whom were prominent historians, such as al-Waqidi and Hisham ibn al-Kalbi (d. 204/819), and *hadith* scholars, such as Waki' ibn Jarrah (d. 197/813) and Sufyan ibn 'Uyayna (d. 198/813). Most Muslim scholars viewed ibn Sa'd as a reliable *hadith* scholar, but some *hadith* scholars criticized him for transmitting reports on the authority of al-Waqidi. (23) Judging from the content of his Kitab al-tabaqat (the earliest surviving Islamic biographical dictionary), one can say that Ibn Sa'd's writings revolve primarily around *hadith* scholarship and internal Islamic religious concerns. From the scanty information on Ibn Habib, we know that he was a knowledgeable scholar in poetry, genealogy, and history. Hisham ibn al-Kalbi was among Ibn Habib's important teachers, which shows that he was more interested in literary materials and chronology than religious sciences. Among his many works, only two survive today: *Kitab al-muhabbar* (24) and *Kitab al-Munammag fi Akhbar Quraysh*. (25) The relevant parts of the Muhabbar represent one of the earliest forms of historical writing on non-Islamic topics. (26).

By any measure, the writings of al-Tabari are impressive in their magnitude and in the diversity of religiopolitical and cultural aspects they discuss. The universal history *Ta' rikh al-rusul wa-l-muluk*, which was complementary to his earlier work on Qur'anic exegesis, the *Jami-al-bayan*, greatly impacted Islamic history writing. (27). A founder of an early legal school, (28) al-Tabari represents, on the whole, the view of *hadith* scholars. His treatment of non-Islamic cultures is dictated by his intention to present subjects compatible with the tenets of Islam and reflect on culturally and historically appealing topics to most Muslims. Al-Tabari's writing is an important

repository of early Islamic traditions and reports. As presented in these three reports, the *isnad* of Ibn' Abbas' version is of great importance. The *isnad* offered by Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Habib, and al-Tabari (29) includes the names of Hisham ibn al-Kalbi (d. 204/819). (30) Muhammad ibn al-Kalbi (d. 146/763–64), (31) and Abu Salih Badham (or Badtian) (d. 101/719). (32) As *hadith* transmitters, these three scholars had a bad reputation to the extent that many *hadith* scholars regarded reports transmitted by them on the authority of Ibn' Abbas as unreliable. (33) However, Muslim scholars portray them as reliable scholars of genealogies and historical reports *(Akhbar)*. The role played by Hisham ibn al-Kalbi, and his father in the evolution of Islamic historiography is of great significance, particularly in their compilation of several chronological works. (34) Ibn al-Kalbi's famous work on Arab genealogy is the first systematic collection of Arab genealogies. (35) The fact that the names of these scholars, especially that of Ibn al-Kalbi, are incorporated in these reports reflects a later stage in the Islamic perception of chronology. Against this background, these scholars utilized reports originating in traditions ascribed to Ibn' Abbas, but it seems that they added new materials that became available later. Ibn Habib attempted the role of Ibn al-Kalbi in the *isnad* of Ibn' Abbas' version. Hence he concludes his account by saying: 'This is the report of Ibn al-Kalbi *(hadha huwagaid Ibn al-Kalbi)* "(36). Regarding the content of Ibn' Abbas version, the reports of Ibn Habib and al-Tabari are almost identical.

Regarding themes and the number of years, Ibn Sa'd's account differs from those of Ibn Habib and al-Tabari. Relying on Ibn' Abbas's version, Ibn Sa'd opened his account concerning the intervals between Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. Firstly will be examined Ibn Habib's account. Ibn Habib claims that 590 or 579 years were between Moses and David: between David and Jesus 1053 years; and 600 years separated Jesus and Muhammad. (37) Most important for our discussion

is that the name of David appears in the accounts of Ibn Habib and al-Tabari, which is not mentioned in ibn Sa'd's report. The absence of the name of David from Ibn Sa'd story reflects the transmission of early Islamic traditions, traced back to the Companions and their Successors. These traditions were subject to rearrangement by later Muslim scholars, such as Ibn al-Kalbi, to address new scholarly needs, such as the chronological construction of narratives. The names of Moses and Jesus, who in Islamic consciousness are considered the religious founder of Judaism and Christianity, respectively, thus play a major role in this religious discourse. The chronological meaning of the term *qurun* is not specified in the Qur'an. As we will see in the treatment of 'Ikrima's version, it was the task of later Muslim scholars to give this term a historical definition. Unlike Moses and Jesus, David, who is presented in Islamic traditions as the archetype of the prophet-king, has no role in the religious competition between Islam and the other monotheistic religions. Therefore, the name of David in the accounts of Ibn Habib and al-Tabari indicates a shift from an Islamic preoccupation with moralistic themes under the rubric of *nubuwwa* to an interest in regal narratives.

It seems likely that Pentateuchal narratives influenced the accounts though any attempt to pinpoint these sources yield fruitless results. A good example of such biblical influence is found in Ibn Qutayba's (d. 267/889) Kitab al-ma'arif. He offers an account similar in themes to those of Ibn Sa'd. Ibn Qutayba relates that he took his information from the Torah. (38). El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) continues with the version of 'Ikrima. 'Ikrima (d. 105/703) was a Medinan *mawla* of Ibn' Abbas and ranked among his prominent student's Islamic traditions portrayed 'Ikrima as knowledgeable in *hadith* tradition and Qur'anic exegesis, 'Ikrima's version appears in the works of Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Qutayba, and al-Tabari. Relying on the authority of 'Ikrima's version, these authors relate that ten generations *(qurun)*

separate Adam and Noah (39), thus employing the Qur'anic term *qu-run* as the chronological unit used to calculate the number of years between prophetic intervals. The most striking difference between the authors is that the scholars mentioned in Ibn Sa'd's *isnad* are Kufan, whereas the ones in al-Tabari's *isnad* are Basran. This distinction between *isnad*'s application by Ibn Sa'd and al-Tabari, who offer identical accounts, illustrates the circulation of *hadith*-oriented reports from traditional Islamic learning centers, such as Medina and Mecca, to new places, such as al-Basra and al-Kufa. (40) They became interested in new areas of learning, such as philology and history. Ibn Sa'd, and al-Tabari portrays the term *qurun* (genealogies) and sheds light on the evolution of early Islamic historical thought. Early Muslim scholars applied the Qur'anic term *qurun* to the prophetic intervals. Exact chronological consideration was not then an immediate concern. As for the sources of 'Ikrima's version, one finds that the way *qurun* is employed in these reports resonates with the Jewish and Christian application of the term "generations." Some Jewish traditions calculate the intervals between Adam to Noah as ten generations.

As for the Christian sources, a reference to the chronological term "ten generations" can be found in the universal history of the tenth-century Arab Christian historian, Agapius, who relates that there were ten generations between Adam and Noah. Ibn Qutayba informs us that in the gospels, there were fourteen generations *(qurun)* between Abraham and David, between David and the Babylonian captivity passed fourteen generations and from the Babylonian Captivity to Jesus elapsed fourteen generations. About the version of Wahb ibn Munabbih, El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) relates that we will consider the version of Ibn Munabbih (d. 114/732) before that of al-Sha'bi because thematically, it represents a continuation of the chronological concept offered in 'Ikrima's report. A shift appeared

from religious themes to chronological interests. About the version of al-Shacbi, El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) continues to mention that as one of the famous Successors, 'Amir ibn Sharahil al-sha'bi (d. 103–109/721-28) is known as a reliable *hadith* transmitter. *Hadith* scholars portray him as a well-versed *faqih* who issued legal opinions *(fatawa)* on juridical and ritual matters. (41) He served as *qadi* under the Umayyad caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz (p. 98–101/717-20). (42) The few chronological reports transmitted on al-Sha' bi's authority reveal that he was also a collector of historical reports *(Akhbar)* revolving around the life of the Prophet and his *maghazi*. (43) Ibn Ishaq's activity as a historian reveals an extensive arrangement of reports within a systematic chronological structure, such as attaching his reports to dates and years. (44) As for the pre-Islamic era, al-Tabari mentions that Quraysh employed the "Year of the Elephant" as the starting point for their dating system, whereas pre-Islamic Arabs used their battle days. Al-Tabari adds that Christians follow Alexander the Great's era, whereas Persians employ regal history as their dating system.

In conclusion, El-Rahman Tayyara (2008, pp. 74–102) mentions the reference to significant events in Jewish history and the application of the reigns of Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great are indicative of the incorporation of new sources into their chronological arrangement of narratives.

1. Tageb El-Hibri, "A Note on Biblical Narratives and Abbasid History," in *Views From the Edge: Essays in Honor of Richard W. Balliet*, ed. Neguin Yavari, Lawrence Patler, and Jean-Mare Van Oppenheim (New York: Columbia University by Press, 2004), 63–69; S.D. Goitein, "Attitudes Towards Government in Islam and Judaism," in his *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 197–213; Franz Rosenthal, "The Influence of the Biblical Tradition on

Muslim Historiography," in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. Bernard Lewis and P.M. Holt (London, New York, and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1962), 35–45.

2. Crone, *God's Rule*, 148–66: Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 84–94; Marlow "*Kings, Prophets and the Ulama*," 101 ff.

3. For good discussions on the evolution of early Islamic historiography, see Fred Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998), 97–144; Chase Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 18–38, 55–111: 'Abd al-'Aziz al Düri, *Bahth fi nash'at ilm al-ta 'rikh 'inda l'-'arab* (Beirut: al-Matha' a al-kathulikiyya, 1960). Part I trans. Lawrence I. Conrad, *The Rise of Historical Writing among the Arabs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983); Stefan Leader, "The Literary Use of the Khabar: a Basic Form of Historical Writing," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*. I: *Problems in the Literary Source Material*, ed. Averil Cameron and Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1989), 277–315; Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

4. Harald Motzki uses this term. See "The Murder of Ibn Abi I-Hugayq: On the origin and the Reliability of Some *Maghazi* Reports," in *The Biography of Muhammad: the Issues of the Sources,* ed. Harald Motzki (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 170–93.

5. A good review of this debate can be found in Harald Motzki's "The Question of the Authenticity of Muslim Traditions Reconsidered: a Review Article," *Methods and Theory in the Study of Islamic Origins*, ed. Herbert Berg (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 24–57; idem. *The Origins of Islamic jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh Before the Classical Schools*, trans. Mar-

ion Katz (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 18–49, Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond: Curzon, 2003): 6–64: Donner. *Narratives of Islamic Origins*, 1–31: Albrecht Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: a Source-Critical Study*, second ed. in collaboration with Lawrence I. Conrad, trans. Michael Bonner (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 2–25.

6. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, 18–38, 55–111; Donner, *Narratives of Islam Origins*, 70–97.

7. Duri, *Rise of Historical Wring Among the Arabs*, 20–41: Khalidi, *Arab Historical Thought*, 16–61; Donner, 147–54 (on other studies, see 147 n. 2).

8. Sŭrat al-Ahzab: 40.

9. Sŭrat al-Bagara: 251 and Surar Sād: 20.

10. Sŭrat Sad: 35.

11. Sŭrat Yusuf: 101.

12. Crone, *God's Rule*, 11. 15–16; Al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship*, 41.

13. Among the early authors of the *qisas al-anbiy*a were Wahb ibn Munabbib (d. 113/732), Abu Hudhayfa Ishaq ibn Bishr (d. 204/821, and Abū Rita'a al-Farisi: Umăra ibn Wathima (d. 289/902). See "*Lives of the Prophets, as Recounted by Abu Ishaq Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Tha'labi*; trans. William m. Brinner (Leiden: Brill, 2002), XViii-XXiV.

14. Islamic sources refer to three versions of the Torah: Hebrew, Greek, and Samaritan, Hamza al-Isfahani, Ta'rik ed. I. M. Gottwald (Leipzig: Petrol, 1844, 153: Abu I-Fida, al-Mukhtasar fi akhbar al-bashar. I. ed. Muhammad' Azab. Yahya Hūsayn, and Muhammad al-Wasif (Cairo: Dar al-ma'arif, 1999), 15–18. See Everett K. Rowson, *A Muslim Philosopher on the Soul and its Fate* (New Haven, American Oriental Society, 1988), 62 (trans. 63).

15. Christians followed, on the whole, the genealogy outlined in the Old Testament, but they relied on the Septuagint. They also followed the era of Alexander the Great, i.e. the Seleucid period beginning in 311 BCE. See al-Biruni, *al-Athar al-biquya 'an al-qurun al-khaliya*, ed. Parvis Azkaei (Tehran: Miras Maktub 2001), 183: Rowson, *Muslim Philosopher*, 188–92.

16. Ibn Qutayba and al-Biruni mention three epochs used by Persians from the defeat of Persians by Alexander the Great, the rise of the Sasanian dynasty, and the death of Yazdijird III (p. 631–51). See Ibn Qutayba, *Kitab al-ma 'arif*, ed. Tharwat 'Ukasha (Cairo: Dar al-ma 'arif, 1969), 58; al-Biruni, *al-Athar al-bagiya*, 114–5.

17. Ibn Qutayba presents these non-Islamic narratives as Old Testament, New Testament, and Persian sources. Another reference to these three sources is found in al-Tabari's *Ta'rikh*, where he refers to the Hebrew Torah, the Christian version of the Torah (Greek Torah, i.e. the Septuagint), and the writings of the Zoroastrians. See Ibn Qutayba, *Ma'arif*, 57–58; al-Tabari, *Ta'rikh al-rusul wa-l-muluk*, I. ed. Muhammad Abu I-Fadl Ibrahim (Cairo: Dar al-ma'arif, 1960), 17–18 (ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901, I, 17–18; II, 234–35, ed. Charles Pellat (Beirut: Man shurat al-Jami 'a al-lub-naniyya. 1965), II, 415–17 (sees, 1433–38).

18. Al-Biruni, al-Athar al-baqiya, 84–86, 148.

19. *Seder Olam*, *The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology*, trans. with commentary by Heinrich W. Guggenheimer (Northval. N.J: Jason Aronson, 1998). X–Xiii. Here is the chronology provided by *Seder Olan Rabba* from the Creation to the Flood 1656 years; from the Creation to the birth of Isaac 2048 years; from the Creation to the First Temple's destruction and the Babylonian Captivity 3338 years.

20. Abu I-Fida, *Mukhtasar*, I. 15.

21. Al-sha'bi's death date is specified. Most modern scholars put the date of al-sha'bi's death in 103/721, but there are conflicting reports concerning this date. Most Islamic accounts place it between 721 and 728. See Ibn Hajjar. *Tahdhib al-tahdhib* (Hayderabad: Majlis Da'irat al-ma 'arif al-uthmaniyya, 1968). V. 68–69: also G. H. A. Juynboll. Art "al-Sha 'bi in EJ [2], IX (1995), 163–164.

22. Ibn Sa'd. *Kitab al-tabaqat al-kabir* (Beirut: Dar Sadir, 1960). II. 278–84: Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*. V. 245–48. See also Motzki, *Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence*, 141–42, 287–88.

23. Ibn Hajar. *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*. IX. 182–183: Scott C. Lucas, Constructive Critics, *Hadith Literature*, and *the Articulation of Sunni Islam*: *the legacy of the Generation of Ibn Sa'd, Ibn Ma'in, and Ibn Hanbal* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 203–208, 266–75.

24. Ibn al-Nadim, *al Fihrist*, ed. Yusuf 'Ali Tawil (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'il-Miyya. 2002), 171–72. See also Ilse Lichtenstädter. art. "Ibn Habib" in *El[2]*. VII (1991), 401–402; idem. "Muhammad ibn Habib and His Kitab al-Muhabbar". *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*. 1939, 1–27.

25. Ibn Habib, *Kitab al-Munammaq ji akhbar Quraysh*, ed. Khurshid Ahmad Fariq (Hyderabad: *Da'irat al-ma'Arif al-úthamiyya*, 1964).

26. Monika Sprinberg-Hinsen, *Die Zeit vor dem Islam in arabischen Universalgeschichten des 9. Bis 12. Jahrhunderts* (Würzburg: Telos Verlag, 1989).

27. Khalidi. *Arabic Historical Thought*, 73–81; Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins*, 127–31.

28. *The History of al-Tabari (Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk) General Introduction* and *From the Creation to the Flood*. I. trans. and annotated by Franz Rosenthal (New York: SUNY Press, 1989), 64–67.

29. Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat. I. 53*; al-Tabari. *Ta'rikh. II.* 237–38 (ed. de Goeje. I. 1073–75): Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar. I.*

30. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins.* 245: Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 51–54: Dari, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 51–52.

31. Ibn Hajar. *Tahdhib al-tahdhib.* IX. 178–81.

32. Abu Salih Badham was the *mawla* of Umm Hani', the sister of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. He was knowledgeable in genealogies but had a bad reputation as a *hadith* transmitter. See Ibn Hajar. *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*, I. 146–47.

33. Ibn Hajar offers a report in which we are told that Abu Salih warned Muhammad al-Kalbi that any statement he heard from him was false. Other Islamic traditions even inform us that al-Kalbi said that any report transmitted on the authority of Ibn' Abbas through Abu Salih was mendacious: *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*, I. 417: IX, 178–79.

34. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins*, 245. Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 51–54.

35. Werner Caskei, *Gamharat an-nasab, das Geneologisches Werk des Hisham ibn Muhammad al-Kalbi* (Leiden: Brill, 1966) I. 22.

36. Ibn Habib. *Muhabbar. I.* On the influence of Hisham al-Kalbi on Ibn Habib see Lichtenstädter. "Muhammad ibn Habib and its Kitab al-Muhabbar", 19–22.

37. Ibn Habib, *Muhabbar, I.*

38. Ibn Qutayba relates that between Adam and the Flood were 1240 years; 350 years were between the Flood and Noah's death; between Noah and Abraham 2240 years; 900 years between Abraham and Moses; 500 years between Moses and David; between David and Jesus 1200 years; and 620 years between Jesus and Muhammad. See *Ma' Arif*, 56–57; also Genesis 5.

39. Ibn Sa'd. *Tabaqat, I.* 53; Ibn Qutayba. *Ma' Arif, 57*; Al-Tabari. *Ta'rikh. II.* 235 (ed. de Goeje, I. p. 1069). Al-Maqdisi offers an identical version of al-Tabari's report. See al-Bad *wa l-ta'rikh*, II. 154.

40. Indeed, towards the end of the first/seventh century, al-Kufa and al-Basra became important centers of Islamic learning in various fields, such as *hadith*, philology, and genealogy. However, during the second/eighth century, there was a shift from al-Basra to al-Kufa. See Lucas, *Constructive Cities*, 70–71: Noth/Conrad, *Early Arabic Historical Tradition*, 53–54; Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 40.

41. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*. V. 65, 69.

42. Ibn Sa'd, *Tabaqat*, VI. 171–78, cited in Juynboll., "al-sha'bi." 163–64.

43. Ibn Hajar, *Tahdhih al-tahdhib*. V. 65–69. See also Donner, *Narratives of Islamic origins*, 242.

44. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins*, 242–43. Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought*, 34–39: Duri, *Rise of Historical Writing*, 33–26.

45. al-Tabari, *Ta' rikh*, I. 193 (ed. de Goeje), I. 201.

A chronicle of the seventh century

Wood (2011, p. 549–568) writes about the chroniclers of Zuqnin as follows: author of the *chronicle* is of Mesopotamian Christian origin. The *chronicle of Zugnin* preserves in a single manuscript. The text represents an attempt to continue an earlier tradition of ecclesiastical history. This tradition had begun in Greek but had been naturalized into the linguistic environment of Syriac-speaking Mesopotamia, the location of the authors' Jacobite monastery. The *chronicle* divides into four major sections. The last, the record of the compilers' days, will be the focus here. This material has been transposed into a series of dated lemmas, a structure that Witkowski has called 'the developed chronicle.' It expands the sparse format of inserted chronicles such as the *Chronicle of Edessa* by including material from richer narratives (1). The text cannot provide any accurate detail for the seventh century. Some natural disasters, the revelation of Muhammad, and the census of Abd-al-Malik in the 690s are the only material the chronicler has been able to produce.

The detail begins again in the 720s when he informs the reader of Yazid II's iconoclast reforms and the wars of the late Marwanids in the Jazira. The last was the region in which his monastery was situated. Alongside this narrative of the deeds of the caliphs and the prosecution of the jihad against the Kharars and the Romans, the chronicler also presents detailed accounts of church affairs. It also mirrors the material in Michael the Syrian that describes the deeds of successive bishops of Amida and patriarchs of Antioch and reports of local natural disasters, famine, plague, and price fluctuations. (2) The author's preconceptions of what ought to be included in a chronicle may, to some extent, be formed by what he had read in John of Ephesus. An account that combined ecclesiastical and secular affairs saw the natural disaster as a sign of God's displeasure, even in an era when Miaphysite orthodoxy opposed the 'state.' The presence of an Islamic secular narrative in the *chronicle* and the interest in eschatology indicate the author's awareness of the concerns of the Arab population in the Jazira in his day. However, his information here is probably oral: he states explicitly that the fourth part of the *chronicle* was his composition and cites no supporting material. So his treatment of the actions is interpreted in the broader context of Christian historiography. However, Wood (2011, 549–568) suggests that the accumulation and interpretation of this Arab oral history did not occur in a single moment but was the product of a series of moments of composition.

The author suggests that there were at least six phases of composition that overlap can identify in dated lemmas and interest in the same dramatis personae in the secular narrative. (3) Phase A was composed in 731. Its secular history dominates by the raids of Maslama, an Umayyad prince, against the Romans, led by Leo III, and against the Turks. Its author probably also compiled the earlier parts of the *Chronicle of Zugnin*. He retains their interest in ecclesiastical history,

reflected in his account of Cosmas, bishop of Amida. Phase B runs from 718–748. Its secular narrative continues the interest in jihad that we saw in A but also discusses the career of Marwan II before his accession as caliph and describes the civil wars between the different branches of the Umayyads and the opening phases of the Abbasid revolution. Phase C is a brief account that runs 742–751. It gives a distinctive local reaction to the Abbasid revolution when the chronicles cannot set local events in a broader context. Concurring, it focuses on the attempts of Christian rebels to defend themselves in the lawless environment that persists until the installation of an Abbasid governor. Phase D runs 749–763. This account records the victories of the Romans during an era of Arab disunity. In this sense, it is a continuation of B., which locates the center of the narrative in frontier warfare and ecclesiastical affairs. Phase E is a brief continuation of D that runs 760–5. Phase F is a much more extensive reflection on the imposition of Abbasid rule and their efforts at frontier warfare. This author is more exercised than his predecessors by the suffering inflicted by the caliphal war machine and by the adverse effects of the Abbasid government: over-taxation, a takeover of goods, and famine caused by war. Unlike the earlier phases, phase F also reports the suffering of the local Arab population under 'Persian' rules and addresses the issue of Christian apostasy to Islam. The last leads the author to embed the hagiography of a local martyr, Cyrus of Harran. This phase also has a much keener sense of eschatology. It identifies the Abbasid governor Musa as the antichrist and his heavy taxation and the apostasy accompanying it as an early apocalypse stage. It runs from roughly 762 to c. 775. Still, the system of dated lemmas is increasingly irrelevant toward the end, as the text transforms into a Jeremiad lamentation for the people's suffering. Identifying six phases of composition does not necessarily mean that we need to envisage six authors.

There seems to be a considerable change in the representation of and attitudes to the Arabs between 730 and 775. These years saw the end of the Umayyad caliphate, civil war, and the imposition of a new Abbasid administration. In his account of the same events, the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes draws attention to Leo's double-crossing of Maslama. He promises to act as Maslama's client to get his initial support. He then retracted his promise once established as emperor in Constantinople. (4) And the Arab Muslim source gives a significant role to Maslama in fighting the Kharijites in Iraq in c. 719–20, immediately before a long fall from grace at court during the reign of Yazid II. These omissions suggest that the chronicler was relatively sealed off from war stories from Byzantium. There is no interest here in Leo as the founder of the Iconoclast party within Byzantium. This issue dominates Theophanes' account of his reign. Even if the chronicles were mistaken about Leo's birthplace, the sense of Leo as a Suryoyo might account for the emperor's heroism in a generally politically neutral section. The chronicler certainly has no sympathy for Arab success in jihad (5). His account of the war emphasizes the effects of a scorched earth policy upon the people living on the frontier. The emphasis in his statement also relates to fate's potential to overwhelm both sides' forces.

The civil war report continues with an understanding of Marwan II's succession and how he seized Emesa in Syria. The brief references to Marwan's exhumation and beheading of Yazid II and his confiscation of gold from the Jews of Emesa may show the Christian chronicler adding further details to a narrative drawn from local Arab informants. (6) Here, at least, the chronicler's interest and sympathies align with those of the Arabic historical tradition, reflecting the one decade in the eighth century when the Jazira stood at the center of the affairs of the caliphate. Phase C was composed only two or three years later than phase B. As a result, the author writes with

a much-reduced awareness of broader political events, reducing his frame of reference to the activities of the Christian rebels in a nearby valley. It also refers to their Arab and Armenian opponents in this period of instability between 749 and 751. Phases D and E are short sections that continue A and B's interest in the frontier wars, a natural disaster, and the dealings of bishops. Both were composed in the decade after the mid-century crisis, in 763 and 765. Here the chronicler resumes the earlier interest in Constantine V, describing his recruitment of the Armenian Kushan. Here again, the author derives his information from local informants. Except that by the 760s several of Marwan's former followers had gone over to the Byzantines with Kushan. This event has given information from both sides of the frontier. Only at the end of the 760s did the Abbasid government's adverse effects seem to have bitten deep into the Suryoye of the Jazira. The chronicler had already observed the 'Abd-al- Malik census with great disapproval in a lemma for 690.

The *chronicle* has its origins in a universal Christian tradition. Their inheritance of this tradition was undoubtedly a source of prestige for the *chronicler* and other Suryoye who were aware of it. And the reception of this tradition, which made Jacobite Christianity the inheritor of the orthodox religion described by Socrates or Eusebius, may have helped enforce boundaries against other Christian denominations. But the final continuations of the *chronicle* reveal a much more blinkered world, with borders that do not go far beyond Melitene in the west and Mosul in the east. Even within this world, the fate of the Suryoye, especially the Suryoye of the villages surrounding Zuqnin, is the chief concern, and other Christian populations, such as Armenians and Urtians, are unwelcome competitors for resources even if they live nearby. (7)

Wood (2011, 549–568) concludes that given this distrust of outsiders

who enter this isolated mountain region, it is striking that, by the 770s, Arabs settled among the Suryoye could be considered a natural part of the social landscape.

1. W. Witkowski, *The Syriac Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tel-Mahre: A study in the History of Historiography* (Uppsala, 1987).

2. C. Cahen, *'Fiscalité, proprieté', antagonismes sociaux en Haute-Mesopotamie au temps des premier Abbasides d'apres Denys de Tell-Mahre'*, Arabica, (1954), 136–54.

3. L. Conrad, 'Syriac perspectives on the Bilad al-Sham during the Abbasid period, in M. Bakhit and R. Schick (eds.), *Bilad al-Sham during the Abbasid. Period*, 2 vols. (Amman, 1991), II, 24–6.

4. Theophanes, 394–5/545. The Syriac chronicler seems unaware of Byzantine Iconoclasm in Leo's reign, the issue that dominates Theophanes' representation of the emperor.

5. Kh. Blankinship, *The End of the Jihad State: The Reign of Hisham ibn 'Abd al-Malik'* (New York, 1994), esp. 5–9 and 50–2.

6. Zuqnin, 189/175.

7. E.g., Zugnin 199/183 on Grigor the Urtian and 205/188 on unwanted Armenian and Russian refugees.

Muslim Hijri era

Shaddel (2018, pp. 291–311) states that the Muslim calendar was, in all likelihood, originally meant to count the years from Muhammad's foundation of a new community and polity at Medina. The author discusses early Muslims' conception of their era and will contrast this view with eighth-century Christian writers' understanding of the Muslim chronological system. In a seventh-century CE papyrus from Egypt, the phrase snh Gada al-mu'minin occurs after the dating formula. It was read as a designation for the new *hijri* era introduced into Egypt by its Muslim subjugators, translating it as "l'année de la juridiction des croyants". (1) ila mil'ithnan was-Arba 'un gada' al-mu'minin would read "until the flooding of [the year] 42 of the gada' of the believers". The usage occurs in the account of the synod of 676 CE, compiled by George I, catholicos of the church of the East. Here the date is mentioned as "the year 57 of the domination of the *tayyaye*". (2) Mentioned are six bilingual Greek-Arabic papyri from Nessana, in the south-western Negev, near the Egyptian border from the years 54–57 AH in the Nessana corpus. (3) But the earliest known use of the Muslim *Hijri* era in non-Arabic documents is a monumental Greek inscription of the Umayyad caliph Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, celebrating the improvement of the Roman heated complex of Hammat Gader in modern Syria, from the year 42 AH.

The undertaking is dated using three chronological systems: the Byzantine indiction. Secondly, the era of the colony of Gadara (which has at its epoch the Roman colonization of the region in 64 BCE (4) and, *thirdly, the Hijri* era. The last is noted by Shaddel (2018, pp.291–311) as "in the sixth year of the indiction, in the year 726 of the colony, the year 42 as reported by the Arabs". Hammat Gader can be found situated at the triple point of the modern states of Israel, Jor-

don, and Syria, near the Golan heights. An anonymous Syriac list of the Muslim rulers, probably composed at the start of the reign of the Umayyad caliph al-Walid I (86 AH/705 CE) and hence known as the *Chronicon ad annum 705*, mentions a tract reporting the kingdom of the *tayyaye*, how many kings there were. It also mentioned how much land each held before his death after his predecessor. In 932, Alexander, the son of Philip the Macedonian, Muhammad, entered the land. He reigned for seven years. After him, Abu Bakr reigned for two years. After him, 'Umar reigned for twelve years. (5) The author of the chronicle seems to have been unaware that a year in the Muslim lunar calendar is approximately eleven days shorter than a year in the solar Alexandrian calendar. This author subtracted the time (in lunar years) elapsed since Muhammad's *hijra* from the Alexandrian date. Many non-Muslim authors have treated Muhammad as just one ruler in succession since immemorial.

The beginning of the Muslim era indicates the beginning of Muhammad's career as "king." They understood the Muslim era as a sovereign era. The last is contrary to the era of Seleucus or Diocletian. Other observers cannot be blamed for reckoning the Muslim era for a regnal system as reckoning by regnal years was a time-honored tradition in the late-ancient Near East. (6) But this apparent mistake could be of some heuristic value for us. If the ancient near-eastern practice was so strong-rooted that non-Muslims could only think about it, it might also have been strong enough to influence the early Muslims in selecting a date for their chronology. Given the near-eastern tradition, it is more than conceivable that, when devising a new era of their calendar, the early Muslims intended to follow established practices and imitate imperial dynasties. The Muslims had no kings (7), so they could not adopt regnal years as means of reckoning. They instead had a puritanical "community of believers," which Muhammad founded upon his arrival in Medina in 1 AH. Indeed, one

of Muhammad's first acts in Medina was to conclude a treaty with the town's various tribal groups. He announced his still rather small band of followers, the "believers" and the "Muslim," a community exclusive of all others. (8) A Muslim writer records how the second caliph, ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab, did this, mentioning both a Sasanian – style regnal reckoning and the Alexandrian-Seleucid era as proposed chronological systems that were rejected. (9) Al-Biruni's statement illustrates later Muslim's knowledge that their forefathers put the epochal point of their era at the beginning of a new community and state, which just happened to fall at the same time as Muhammad's *hijra*. P. Louver inv. J. David-Weill 20 shows that the Muslims were most concerned at the time with having a unique chronological system in keeping with their newly-acquired imperial grandeur and ideological pretensions. The last mattered rather than emphasizing the role Muhammad had played in the foundations of that empire. (10) It was a few generations later, probably beginning in the Marwanid period, that Muhammad's *hijra* was reckoned as the beginning of a new community and state and calendar.

The first reference to the *hijra* as the starting point of Muslim chronology comes from a brief Syriac chronicle composed upon the death of the Umayyad caliph Yazid II ibn ʿAbd al-Malik (105 AH/724 CE). This chronicle, which draws on a Muslim source, introduces itself as a notice of the life of Muhammad, the messenger of God, after he had entered his city and before he entered it three months from his first year. The chronicle also noted how long each king who subsequently arose over the Muslims lived once they had come to power. (11) Shaddel (2018, pp. 291–311) concludes, explaining that this chronicle equally treats Muhammad as a "king." Muhammad appears to mention the beginning of his reign with his emigration to "his city" – Medina. The city is also known in Arabic as *Madinat al-nabi*, or the "Prophet's City." He made his *hijra* in the third month of the

year 1 AH, three months after Islamic chronologies started.(12)

1. Ragib 2007. This interpretation is followed by Hoyland 1997, 690, who translated it as "the year of the dispersion of the believers." Doner 2011. Morelli 2010, 143, footnote 12, who opts for "Anno Della guidicatura o giurisdizione dei credenti"; SIJPESTEIN 2013, 68; and WEBB 2016, 150, DONNER 2002–2003, 48, renders it, the year of "the rule of the believers," which is followed by TILLER 2017, 142–143, footnote 486. In a later work, DONNER notes the idea that the phrase is to be understood as the "era of the believers" (DONNER 2010, 177), which is the main contention of the present paper. HOYLAND 2017, 125, footnote 54, based on parallels from late-ancient Christian texts, is inclined towards "administration of the believers." [*ila mil' ithnan was-Arba 'un gada' al-mu'minin* would read "until the flooding of [the year] 42 of the gada' of the believers". An early specimen of usage occurs in the account of the synod of 676 CE, convened by George I, catholicos of the church of the East. Here the date is mentioned as "the year 57 of the domination of the *tayyaye*."]

2. CHABOT 1902, 216 (text), 482 (translation); cf. also *snt hmsyn wts lswltn' dtyy'* in ibid., 227 (text), 490 (translation). On George and this synod, see HOYLAND 1997), 192–194. HOYLAND adduces more examples in ibid., 193, footnote 69.

3. For which, see ibid., 180–195; and MEIMARIS 1984. More examples of the use of the *Hijri* era in non-Arabic and non-Muslim documents are to be found in WORP 1985; BAGNALL and WORP 2004, 300, footnote 1; and BROCK 2005. For the earliest dated *Arabic documents*, see RAHEB (RAGIB) 2013. Finally, a new, intriguing example, referring to the *Hijri* era as *al-hijra al-hanifiyya*, has been brought to light by LEVY-RUBIN 2003, 202.

4. MEIMARIS 1992, 79–80.

5. Translation adopted from PENN 2015, 159.

6. MEIMARIS 1992, 357.

7. indeed, panegyrists sometimes used such designations as "king" *(muluk)* for the caliphs but remembered to be that these never appear in "official" contexts; cf. MARSHAM 2018.

8. LECKER 2004, 7.19.

9. Also reported by al-Tabari, *Ta'rikh* (1879–1890) I, 1251.

10. Attention is drawn to a unique, experimental coin issue, presumably belonging to the Umayyad caliph Yazid ibn Mu'awiya (r. 60–64 AH), dated using a Sasanian-style regnal era, beginning with the caliph's reign. It reads *snt' ywkw y yzytw*, "year one of Yazid" (MOCHIRI 1982). It seems that the Muslims did eventually briefly experiment with regnal reckoning but set it aside very quickly (Shaddel thanks Robert HOYLAND for reminding him of the issue.

11. PALMER 1993, 49. 12. HOYLAND 1997, 396

Relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and the Islam state

Cohen (1999, pp. 100–157) explains that the Pact of 'Umar is the basic document defining the relationship of the *dhimmis*, "protected people," with Muslims and the Islamic state. It is the Christians who "originate" the Pact of 'Umar. In a letter addressed to Caliph' Umar b.

al-Khattab (ruled 634–644) will take upon themselves a host of disabilities in exchange for protection. It is Caliph Umar who, responding to their letter, confirms the list of restrictions (with two amendments). Tritton was suggesting the Pact was a pseudepigraphic text, projecting later Islamic practice regarding the treatment of the dhimmis back to the time of the "founding fathers" of the Islamic state. In the Pact, it was forbidden for non-Muslims to change their native dress and imitate that and other habits of the Muslims. Conversely, and for similar reasons, saying in the hadith prohibit Muslims from imitating non-Muslim ways. (1) A medieval text writes: 'Umar writes, "Their churches will not be inhabited and will not be destroyed. Neither they, nor the land on which they stand, nor their cross, nor their property will be damaged". (2) The treaty might date from 638.

Cohen (1999, pp. 100–157) studied thirty specimens of the Pact of 'Umar in medieval Arabic sources and concluded that Turtushi composed the Pact of 'Umar in 1122 for the Fatimid vizier, al-Ma'mun b. al-Bata'ihi (1122–1125), while traveling and teaching in the Muslim East. It begins with several very short utterances traced back to the Prophet. Two recensions identify the Christians as "inhabitants of Syria." The letter quoted is that of the people of Hims. Abu 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrah was the person who conquered Hims, and the first person who caverned it was Fayad b. Ghana, who was appointed over it by 'Umar b. al-Khattab. What was the Pact of 'Umar? It is a *hadith* treatise. What the governmental response to such a petition might have been can be gauged from another source. The document in question is the well-known decree of appointment for the Nestorian Catholicos in Bagdad in 1138. (3) Why do the Christians petition to be subjected to discriminatory restrictions?

Cohen (1999, pp. 100–157) concludes by mentioning that modern

scholars have recognized that, while many of the restrictions in the Pact had their origin in stipulations imposed upon the non-Muslims in the conquest treaties, others were adopted or adapted from eastern Roman laws concerning the Jews.

1. M. J. Kister, "Do Not assimilate Yourselves...', with an Appendix by Menahem Kister" JSAI 12 (1989) = 321–71.

2. The History of al-Tabari, vol. 12, translated and annotated by Yohanan Friedman (Albany, NY, 1992), 191 cf. the first stipulation in the Pact of 'Umar below.

3. This document's best edition and treatment, superseding all previous.

Medieval Muslim geographical literature

Carlson (2015, pp. 791–816) analyses geographical works – ten in Arabic, one in Persian, and one in Hebrew. Interpreted as literature, they provide detailed information regarding the foundation of mosques and the slow conversion of multi-religious shrines. When Khalid b. al-Walid invaded Syria in 13/634, and a religiously mixed population inhabited the region with multiple kinds of Christianity alongside Judaism and paganism. A Byzantine reconquest and non-Muslim rule reintroduced non-Muslim rule to portions of Syria from 358/969 to 690/1291. Yaqut presented the most common definition of this region as extending from the Euphrates to the town of al-'Arish on the Egyptian coastline southeast of Gaza and from the Arabian desert to the Mediterranean Sea. (1) This definition indicates how far into modern Turkey the region was thought to extend. Be-

fore the Byzantine reconquest of the tenth century, the northwestern border of Syria was considered the boundary of Byzantine control, sometimes even including Malatya on the upper Euphrates as the northern edge of Syria. (2) On the other hand, Yaqut does not include any major city north of Manbij and Aleppo, noting only in passing the border regions of al-Massa, Tarsus, Adhana, and Macash. (3)

This article will take as the northern border of Syria the Taurus Mountains of southeastern Anatolia, excluding Malatya but including the border towns mentioned by Yaqut. Nehemia Levtzion (1990: 290) summarised what is known about the contours of the Islamization of Syria and Palestine before the Ottoman conquest, based primarily on secondary scholarship regarding primary sources by al-Baladhuri (d. 279/892) and Michael the Syrian (d. 1199). This account derives primarily from narrative historical sources. Although narrative sources help connect otherwise isolated data, their interests are typically circumscribed in ways limiting their utility in describing regional Islamization. Michael the Syrian, for example, is interested almost exclusively in the secular rulers and his denomination of Christianity and thus says very little about other Christian groups such as the Chalcedonians, much less the Jewish population of Syria. Al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-buldan* primarily collects traditions about the seventh-century conquests and only mentions non-Muslims when they figure in such traditions. The preceding is without any attempt to discuss the state of non-Muslims in Syria in his lifetime. Narrative sources need to be supplemented by additional evidence to provide a wider picture of the Islamization of Syria.

One body of evidence that allows us to provide a first sketch of the contours of the Islamization in Syria over the *longue dureé* consists of the geographical texts composed by administrators, travelers, and

belles-Lettrists describing the region of Syria in the medieval period. An eclectic body of Islamic geographical literature, primarily in Arabic but partly in Persian, preserves indications of the progress of Islamization during different periods. There is little evidence for rural Islamization before the tenth century, and the evidence suggests that rural Islam in Syria was primarily a nomad's religion before this period. The Byzantine conquests of the tenth to eleventh centuries and the subsequent Crusades reintroduced Christian rule in Syria, which resulted in certain segments of this region being known for Christian populations more than others. Rule by Christians and the confiscation of certain urban mosques may also have tent urgency to the process of founding Muslim rural shrines. In many cases, the earliest shrines known to have interested Muslims were dedicated to pre-Muslim figures. In some cases were maintained by Jews or Christians. When the Mamluks from Cairo expelled the last Crusaders, they devastated the coastline, leaving Christianity attested in northern Syria. (4) Carlson (2015, pp. 791–816) explains that Al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-buldan* is primarily a work of history and traditions that describes places only under the Muslims who have conquered there. The geographers of the Balkhi school, such as Ibn Hawqal (d. ca. 362/973) and al-Mugaddasi, divided their works by regions, each provided with a map.

The most extensive geographical work is the *Mu'jam al-buldan* of Yaqut al-Hamawi, arranged as a dictionary with place names in alphabetical order. The works of Benjamin of Tudela (d. 1173), Ibn Jubayr (d. 614/1217), and Ibn Battuta (d. 770s/the 1370s) are travelogues intended to convey geographical information. Nevertheless, the authors in the geographical discourse utilized earlier works in different genres and freely quoted other authors, as is typical for medieval Islamic scholarship. Geographical work pays selective attention to certain non-Muslim groups more than others and therefore cannot

be used to infer relative demographic strength. Thus, al-Baladhuri's *Futuh al-buldan* only mentions Syrian Jews briefly concerning Damascus, Tripoli, Hims, and Qaysariyya (5) but even after the massacre ordered by the Byzantine emperor Heraclius in 629. Tiberias was an important centre of the Jewish population. (6) The greater interest in Christians than in Jews, in al-Baladhuri and later Muslim geographers, is probably due to political opposition to the Christian empire of Constantinople rather than to demographic realities.

Other features of literary texts also complicate the use of geographical works. Geographical literature often lists places, but lists of villages are necessarily not comprehensive, nor can these lists be presumed to be representative. Furthermore, different authors have diverse interests that influence the selection criteria, so unless the author has a clear interest in recording religion, the absence of a reference to a particular religious community or expected religious edifice does not indicate its absence from the location. Finally, as with most fields of medieval scholarship, information included in the geographical work may have been borrowed from an earlier source without attribution, which makes it challenging to identify the period to which any given assertion may pertain. (7) The result is that these works cannot simply be transformed into a database on which statistical analysis can be performed. Rather, each text must be read as a literary and linguistic performance. Al-Baladhuri reported that the Muslim commanders appealed to the largely Christian Arabs who lived in Syria based on their common ancestry, with mixed results. Jabala, the chief of the Banu Ghassan, rejected Islam (although one account says he converted and then apostatized) and moved to territory still under Byzantine control. At the same time, the Arabs near Qinnasrin and Aleppo proved more agreeable, with many accepting Islam. (8) The link between coastal garrisons and mosques is made explicit by an account reported by al-Baladhuri that the caliph 'Uthmani directed his

cousin Mu' awiya, then governor of Syria, to garrison the coastal towns, to build new mosques, and to enlarge existing mosques. (9) Thus, al-Baladhuri referred to mosques in the cities of 'Asqalan 'in the days of Ibn al-Zubayr' (d. 73/692), the newly founded district capital al-Ramla by 101/720, al-Massa by 84/703, and Tarsus by 172/788. (10) He also indicated that Mu' awiya transferred Muslim populations to the coastal cities of Tyre, Acre, and Antioch. (11)

How long did Christians and Muslims share sanctuaries? According to al-Baladhuri, the transformation of the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Damascus into the Umayyad Mosque took place during the reign of the caliph al-Walid b'Abd al-Malik (d. 96/715), indicates that the mosque in the capital city of the Caliphate was shared for a few generations. The cathedral of Hims was divided between Christians and Muslims even longer. The early construction of mosques in the major cities of Syria added an Islamic focus to urban centres but did not necessarily exclude or replace non-Muslims. (12) If the district of Filastin was probably the Syrian district with the greatest concentration of mosques, al-Muqaddasi is explicit that it also had a greater number of rural shrines than other districts. The preceding, especially in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and he asserted that he had listed most of them. (13) The most striking feature of the list he gave, however, is how few of them celebrate specifically Muslim figures. (14) The majority of these shrines and holy sites pertain to figures of ancient Jewish history who were venerated in common by Jews, Christians, and Muslims (although often not Samaritans): Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Rachel, Job, Moses, Saul, David, Uriah, Solomon, and Jeremiah, some with multiple sites. A smaller number pertains to Jesus, Mary, and John the Baptist's father, Zakariyya. (15) Of distinctively Muslim sites possibly outside of major cities, he referred only to" 'Umar's mosques." His vague reference to the "shrines of the prophets" shows a Muslim approach to pre-Islamic history. It is therefore un-

clear whether the many shrines to pre-Islamic personages were distinctively Islamic or whether they were shared between Muslims and non-Muslims, perhaps even in possession of the latter.

The earliest geographers to observe the Byzantine reconquest painted the invaders as little more than raiders and deplored the sorry state of Islam that permitted them to succeed. Ibn Hawqal recorded Greek attacks on Hims, Aleppo, Qinnasrin, Jabala, Hisn Barzuya, Antioch, al-Hadath, Mar'ash, al-Haruniyya, al-Iskandaruna, and he blamed the enemy's success on failures of Muslim religious zeal. (17) He lamented over Antioch. The tenth century's Muslim geographers depicted Syria's division between Christian and Muslim rulers as a religious catastrophe. These geographers indicated that most Muslims in the areas now under Christian rule were content to accept the new system. Although the Byzantine army reportedly destroyed mosques, such attacks seem to have occurred as an element of capturing and plundering a city. There is no indication that the new Christian overlords prevented Muslim rulers from repairing mosques. (18 Nevertheless, significant demographic shifts happened during Syria's dividend period. The Byzantine reconquest brought Greek rule back to Syria but also brought Armenians who settled in northern Syria and along the Cilician coast. Ibn Hawqal already mentioned that when the Byzantines conquered Malatya in 319/931, they peopled it with Armenians. (19) Armenians would remain a substantial portion of the population in this region throughout Ottoman times.

Carlson (2015, pp. 791–816) concludes that the medieval Muslim geographical literature is a rich body of source material for social history, particularly for the history of Islamization. These works remind us that Islamization was more than just the progressive conversion to Islam of the populace of Syria, but included the construction or conversion of mosques and the diffusion into the countryside. The

evidence for sedentary rural Muslim populations and Muslim shrines outside the cities begins only in the geographies of the tenth century. This study largely supplements the work of Levtzion. It enriches our understanding of the conversion process, where his sources compelled him to speak in generalities and, concerning Islamization in particular, primarily about shifting government attitudes.

1. Yaqut al-Hamawi 1990, 3: 355.

2. Ibn Hawqal 1964a: 154; 1964b, 1: 164–65.

3. Yaqut al-Hamawi 1990, 3: 354.

4. The adverb is necessary: Arabic geographical texts do not devote much space to Mount Lebanon, which continues to have a substantial Maronite Christian population to the present; see Levtzion 1990: 306–7.

5. al-Baladhuri 1957: 170, 174, 183, 187, 192; 1916: 190–91, 195, 206, 211, 217.

6. Gil 1992: 8–10, 70–71.

7. Antrim (2012: 72) indicates that some geographers use sources without acknowledgement after criticising them elsewhere.

8. Al-Baladhuri 1957: 185–86, 198; 1916: 209, 224.

9. Al-Baladhuri 1957: 175; 1916: 196.

10. Al-Baladhuri 1957: 195, 226, 232; 1916: 220, 255, 262.

11. Al-Baladhuri 1957: 160–61, 201; 1916=180, 228.

12. Lapidus (1969: 57) asserted that in this period across the Muslim-ruled world, "Muslim cities were isolated in Christian, Zoroastrian, or pagan countrysides," but this view neglects both the nomadic Arab Muslims and the fact that cities had taken over by Muslim conquerors continued to have a non-Muslim majority for an indeterminate period.

13. Al-Muqudassi 1906: 184; 1994: 167.

14. His list is found in al-Muqaddasi 1906: 151; 1994: 138.

15. Josef Meri (2002: 195–201, 210–12, 243–50) discusses such shared shrines; Christopher Mac Evitt (2008: 126–30, 132–34) discusses the sharing of churches between Franks and Middle Eastern Christians, which could be every bit as awkward.

16. For discussion of the increasing number of Muslim shrines in medieval Syria, see Talmon-Heller 2007b: 190–95; Meri 2002: 257–62.

17. Ibn Hawqal 1964a: 162–65, 167; 1964b, 1: 173–77, 179–80.

18. For example, in the city of Aleppo; see Ibn Hawqal 1964a: 163; 1964b, 1: 174.

19. Ibn Hawqal 1964a: 166; 1964b, 1: 79.

Chapter five.
Judeo-Christian Historiography and Arabia

Judaism and Christianity in Arabia

Shahid (1979, pp. 23–94) describes that in the first quarter of the sixth century in South Arabia, the *Arabia Felix*, the struggle took place for Arabia between Judaism and Christianity, in which Byzantium and Ethiopia were directly involved. Ca. 520 Byzantium's ally, the Ethiopian Negus Ella-Asbeha, who assumed the biblical name Caleb, led an ambitious expedition across the Red Sea, landed in South Arabia, and defeated the Judaizing king of Himyar. He had assumed the biblical name Yusuf (Joseph). By doing so, he destroyed a kingdom of great antiquity – that of the Himyarites of South Arabia, which had endured for some six centuries – and secured an Ethiopian presence in South Arabia for at least fifty years. A Byzantine fleet transported the Ethiopian army across the Red Sea. This joint Ethiopian-Byzantine military effort was the cornerstone of relations between the two powers in the sixth century. Christianization followed the new occupation until the situation dramatically changed in 572 with the Persian occupation of South Arabia. (1) Byzantine *mission civilisatrice* was accomplished through the organization of the new South Arabian episcopate and the thorough Christianization of the newly conquered territory. The primary sources for

the conquest – the Greek *Martyrium Arethae* and the Syriac *Book of the Himyarites* – naturally treat this sequel summarily, and the only source that treats it extensively is the Greek *Vita Sancti Gregentii*. The primary work of Ethiopian literature, the *Kebra Nagast*, has also been studied, resulting in some significant conclusions for Byzantinists. (2)

1. For pre-Islamic Arabia, see I. Shahid, in *Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge, 1970). I, 3–29.

2. See I. Shahid, "*The Kebra Nagast in the Light of the New Researches*," Le Museon, 89 (1976), 133–78 (hereafter "*Kebra Nagast*"): see also Martyrs, 179 note 3, 230 note 1.

King Abraha in South-Arabia

Newby (1974, pp. 431–437) relates how Abraha is a well-attested historical figure, and both the writings of Procopius and the Himyaritic inscriptions describe his activities in South Arabia in the middle of the sixth century. (1) In this Sirah, we are told about Dhu Nuwas, the last of the Jewish kings of the Yaman, (2). Told is about the beginning of Christianity in Najran (3), the massacre of which is given as the cause of the access of the Ethiopians into Arabia. (4). The Negus of Abyssinia sent an expedition to the Yaman to seek revenge for the terrible persecutions of Christians in Arabia and establish Christian rule. According to a report, the seventy thousand Abyssinians were led by Aryat, who had a lieutenant named Abraha. (5) After successfully establishing the Abyssinian rule, Abraha seized power from Aryat and secured the goodwill of the Negus. Then Abraha built the cathedral in San'a'. When the Arabs were talking about this letter, one of the calendar intercalators was enraged. He was paternal

grand/grandfather Muhammad b. Tha'laba b. al-Harith b. Malik. The Kinānite went forth until he came to the cathedral and defiled it. Then he returned to his own country. Hearing of the matter, Abraha made inquiries and learned that the outrage was carried out by an Arab coming from the temple in Mecca and had defiled the cathedral to show it was unworthy of (pilgrimage) reverence. Abraha was outraged and swore that he would go to this temple and destroy it. He sailed forth with an elephant. The Arabs hold on, fearing destroying the Ka'ba, God's holy house. The account tells of the unsuccessful attempts by the ruling families to fight the Abyssinians. (6) This took place in the year of Muhammad's birth. The Qur'an is silent about all historical details, mentioning neither the attack's object nor the attackers' names.

Newby (1974, pp. 431–437) concludes: that it is in the Sirah that we find this historical anecdote. Judaeo-Christian literature seems the most likely source of origin. The Qur'an even sanctions asking the "People of the Book" about matters of prior revelation.

1. For a summary, see A. F. L. Beeston, "Abraha," *the Encyclopaedia of Islam*, B. Lewis et al., eds., Leiden 1963, Vol. I, pp. 102–3.

2. Guillaume, op cit., p. 14.

3. Ibid. See my article, "An Example of Coptic Literary Influence on Ibn Ishaq's Sirah." J.N.E.S. vol. 31 (1972), pp. 22–8.

4. Ibid., p. 18.

5. Ibid.

6. This would serve the polemical purpose of glorifying the southern

heritage of the Ansar, who were both Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham.

Conclusion

The East- and West-Syriac historiography is rich in material, as confirmed by Riedel (2012, pp.1–25), and the same can be said of the city chronicles and archives of Edessa in the 7th and 8th c. (Debié, 1999–2000, pp. 409–417). Theophilus of Edessa´s lost History can be mentioned as the most crucial source of the interaction between Greek, Syriac, and Christian Arab cultures in late-antique and Byzantium (Conterno, 2013, p.1–20). In contrast to those mentioned above, in the Syrian orthodox literary genre, political and ecclesiastical history was kept separate (Debié, 2009, pp.93–114). Christian Coptic literature dates from the 3rd c. onwards, while Arabic replaced its language and drove back Coptic to the Egyptian churches and monasteries (Emmel, 2007, pp. 83–102). In the 8th c., the Constantinopolitan emperor Leo III proclaimed a civic law, the Ecloga, and reduced the power of the big themes (Yamaner, 2012, pp.1–10). The structure of the Byzantine Christian state was affected by the Persian conquest of Syria-Palestine-Egypt in the early seventh century, soon followed by the incursions into Asia Minor, reducing the extant Christian sources (Laiou, 2002, p.391). Shahid (1979, pp. 23–94) describes the establishment of Byzantine Christianity in Himyar, resulting in a new episcopate in South Arabia. In the new Roman East of the 8th c. Christian churches were built on pagan temples and synagogue churches. During and after the appearance of Islam in Arabia, urban continuity is concluded by archaeological and architectural evidence (Walmsley, 2015, pp. 132–151). Brown (1973, pp. 2–34) states that Byzantine Christianity was the cause of an iconoclastic crisis in the 8th c. Religion under Constantine V showed a strong Monophysitism, resulting in forced baptism of the Jews in the

em[pire, while pilgrimage sites in Asia Minor were deserted. An Arab kingdom with a rich hagiographic tradition is Hiran. Wood (2014, pp. 6–20) explains the story of the conversion of Hira´s hinterland. Due to its Sassanian relations, it has a strong diophytistical influence. Important here is the Christian Nashrids. The position of al-Hira is described by Wood (2016, pp. 785–99). Archaeological evidence showed a Christian school on the site in the tradition of Edessa and Nisibis. El-Rahman Tayyari (2008, pp. 74–102) explains the origins of prophethood and kingship as underlying the divine origin of Islam. Its chronology is influenced by the Jewish, Christian, and Persian traditions of chronology. Writings by insiders and outsiders of Arabia conclude with the relation between the kingdoms of Ghassan, Lakhmids, and Kinda (Hoyland, 2014, pp. 268–280). Robin (2012/AH1433, pp. 59–129) notes about the Arab kings of Kinda and Byzantine emperor Justinian´s envoy to Ethiopië and Yemen. After the Islamic conquest of the 6th c., the descendants of the Arab tribes and kingdoms remained distinguishable from the chiefs of the Bedouin tribes affiliated with the Byzantine Empire (Kennedy, 2010, pp. 181–98). The Muslim Hijri era is discussed by Shaddel (2018, pp. 291–311), with its difference in calendar and indication of the beginning of Muhammad´s career as a king. Finally, the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims and the Islam state is described by Cohen (1999, pp. 100–157). There is also a discussion on the Pact of Umar´. Medieval Muslim geographical literature shows that after the Byzantine reconquest of northern Syria, new Christian rule brought back Greek control over Syria (Carlson, 2015, pp. 791–816), while the region was inhabited by multiple kinds of Christianity, alongside Judaism and paganism. Newby (1974, pp. 431–437) relates how king Abraha intermediated between the Abyssinians and the Jewish king of Himyar with the primary purpose of defending Christianity.

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Researched are A. the historiography of Edessa, B. Christian communities, C. the relation Arab kingdoms and Byzantium, D. the historiography of Muslims and relations Muslims/non-Muslims and, finally, E. the Judeo-Christian historiography and Arabia.

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