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The Syriac word *hugoye*, plural of *hugoyo*, derives from the root *hg*' 'to think, meditate, study'; hence, *hugoyo* 'study, meditation'. Recently, *hugoye* became to be used for 'academic studies'; hence, *hugoye suryoye* 'Syriac Studies'.

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PAPERS

COPTIC-SYRIAC RELATIONS BEYOND DOGMATIC RHETORIC

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ABSTRACT

This article highlights Coptic-Syriac relations in ways beyond the theological position of both churches. It focuses on the relationship between Copts and Syrians depicted in the Coptic Synaxarium. It includes a discussion of Syrian saints, Syrians who became patriarchs of the Coptic Church, and their role in the liturgical and devotional changes that occurred. After the Arab conquest, both churches came to share a common language—Arabic. This led to an exchange of theological terms. This shared theological language and the Syrian presence in the Coptic Synaxarium strengthened the relations between the two churches in ways beyond ecclesial politics.

The Coptic and Syriac Orthodox churches have a long common history. They are two of the oldest churches of Christianity, with large literatures in Greek, Syriac, Coptic, and later in Arabic. They shared the Roman hegemony—not only the entanglements of Roman law, but also imperial persecutions. They benefited from the Greek *paideia*. They were intellectually enriched by having their patriarchal residences and presence in cities that were hubs of the

cultural and commercial centers of the Roman Empire, i.e. the cities of Alexandria and Antioch. Although modern scholars have portrayed the theological history of both churches as a struggle of Antiochene theology against Alexandrian and vice versa, the reality is that each theological group read and thoroughly understood each other's literature. Both churches agreed to disagree with the Chalcedonian expression of faith. Both churches shared the same suffering to preserve this faith. They shared successive invasions by the Persians and then the Arabs. The Arab invasion led to the isolation of both churches from the rest of western Christendom. It forced both churches to change their theological languages from Greek, Coptic, and Syriac to Arabic. The Syrian Church was a pioneer in this translation process. The Coptic Church eventually became the most productive church of Christian Arabic literature. Both churches confronted the religious challenges of Islam. Religious debates took place in rulers' palaces as well as among the common lay people. This led to the production of a rich Christian-Islamic dialogue that preceded the attempts of the West by centuries. Since then, their common political situation converged more than ever. The Turks, then later the French and the British conquered both peoples. These layers of foreign hegemony greatly affected the religious expression and religious struggle of both churches. The Turkish, French and British occupations are a part of their history, and the Arab presence remains a reality.

However, scholarly research in the West has tended to focus only on a few specific aspects of this shared patrimony. Topics of interest include the non-Chalcedonian faith that both churches have in common;[1] also the library and wall paintings in the Syrian Monastery (Deir el-Surian) located in the Egyptian desert of Wadi el-Natrun.[2] Individuals of interest include Severus of Antioch and

[1] See, e.g. R.V. Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies* (London, 1940); idem, *The Council of Chalcedon* (London, 1961). A. Grillmeier, *Christ in the Christian Tradition*, vol. 1 (Atlanta, John Knox Press, 1975); idem, *Christ in the Christian Tradition,* vol 2, Part One (London, Mowbray, 1987). Research in the last few decades has changed the views and approach to these studies.

[2] The historical background of Deir el-Surian is discussed in J.M. Fiey, "Copts et Syriaques. Contacts et échanges," *Studia Orientalia Christiana Collectanea* 15 (1972–1973), 323–6; also an article about the painting renovations in the monastery Karel C. Innemée, "Deir al-Surian

his interlocutor the neo-Chalcedonian John the Grammarian;[3] also, John Philoponus, a philosopher and non-Chalcedonian theologian of the sixth century and Julian of Halicarnassus.[4] The focus of this paper is on other aspects of this shared patrimony: the strong Syrian presence in the Coptic Synaxarium and the theological

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(Egypt): conservation work of Autumn 2000," *Hugoye: Journal of Syrian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 July 2001; Lucas Van Rompay and Fr. Bijoul El-Souriany, "Syriac Papyrus Fragments Recently Discovered in Deir Al-Surian (Egypt), *Hugoye: Journal of Syrian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 January 2001; also an article about Peshitta texts found in the monastery by Peter B. Dirksen, "Peshitta Institute Communication 19: East and West, Old and Young, in the Text Tradition of the Old Testament Peshitta," *Vetus Testamentum* 35 no. 4 (1985), 468–484.

[3] The life of Severus of Antioch can be found in, John of Beth Aphthonia, *Vie de Sévère*, ed. and trans. by M.-A. Kugener, *Patrologia Orientalis*, 2 (Paris, 1907), 207–264. The main corpus of works such as letters and homilies written and delivered by Severus of Antioch are found in the CSCO series and the *Patrologia Orientalis*. Examples of other secondary works on Severus of Antioch, include J. Lebon, *Le Monophysisme sévèrien* (Louvain, 1909); V.C. Samuel, "The Christology of Severus of Antioch," *Abba Salama*, 4 (1973), 126–190; A. Vööbus, "Discovery of New Important *memre* of Gewargi, the Bishop of the Arabs," *Journal of Semitic Studies,* 18 (1973), 235–237; Iain R. Torrance, *Christology after Chalcedon, Severus of Antioch and Sergius the Monophysite* (Norwich: Cnaterbury Press, 1988); R.C. Chestnut, *Three Monophysite Christologies: Severus of Antioch, Philoxenus of Mabbug, and Jacob of Sarug* (Oxford Theological Monographs, 1976).

Some works of John the Grammarian are edited by M. Richard and M. Aubineau in *Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca* I, Turnhout, 1977.

[4] Julian Bishop of Halicarnassus died after 518 AD. He was deposed from his seat because he refused to adhere to the Council of Chalcedon's definition and sought refuge in Alexandria. He disagreed with Severus of Antioch because he upheld the idea of the incorruptibility of the body of Christ (Aphthartodocetic controversy). See F.L. Cross and E.A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 909; also, R. Draguet, *Julien d'Halicarnasse et sa controverse avec Sévère d'Antioche sur l'incorruptibilité du corps du Christ*, (Louvain, 1924).

terminology in Arabic shared by both Churches.[5] This is followed by a brief discussion of the exchange of theological terms after both Churches came to share Arabic as a common language. The approach of this paper is from the Coptic perspective.

The Synaxarium is a liturgical book that recounts the lives of the saints venerated by the Coptic Church. A chapter of the Synaxarium is read daily in the liturgy after the readings of the Praxis, or the Book of Acts, and before the Gospel reading. The simple narrative of the Coptic Synaxarium delivers a powerful message to the people. The first edition of the Synaxarium was compiled by three bishops, Bishop Peter, bishop of Melig, Bishop Michael, bishop of Atrib, and Bishop John, bishop of Borolus.[6]

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[5] The Synaxarium text is simply written and is read to the whole congregation every liturgy. Thus this text is a good choice for a study that focuses on the relationship between both churches beyond the hierarchical level and beyond dogmatic debates.

[6] Bishop Peter, bishop of Melig, Bishop Michael, bishop of Atrib, and Bishop John, bishop of Borolus, *The Synaxarium* (Cairo Egypt, El-Mahaba Coptic Orthodox Bookstore, 1978). This printed edition has been attested with six other Synaxarium manuscripts dating from fourteenth to the eighteenth century. All references to the Synaxarium will be according to the date of the saint or commemorated event to avoid unnecessary confusion between different editions. Therefore the entry for Bishop John would be Koiahk 19. Other Synaxarium editions have different compilers, occasionally leading to some date discrepancies and different lists of saints or events for a day's entry. For example, the Alexandrian Synaxarium edited by Forget mentions that the editors are "Bishop Michael, bishop of Atrib and Melig and others." I. Forget, ed. *Synaxarium Alexandrinum*. CSCO, vol 47, Ar. III, 18, t. 18, (Beryti, E Typographeo Catholico, 1905–1926), 1. There are two different sets of editors for each of the above mentioned editions. This has resulted into two different compilations of the Synaxarium. Also R. Basset, *Le synaxaire arabe jacobite (recension copte)*, in *Patrologia Orientalis* 1, 3, 11, 16, 17, and 20 (1904–1929). Also R. Coquin, "Le synaxaire des coptes; un nouveau témoin de la recension de Haute-Égypte," *Analecta Bollandiana* 96 (1978), 351–365. The edition of choice for this study is the 1978 El-Mahaba edition. The reason for this choice is that this study is concerned with church relations past and present; therefore, the study and reference will be limited to the modern edition (references to the Forget edition is made for comparative purposes only),

According to the Synaxarium Bishop John became a monk and disciple of St. Daniel, the hegemon of the Nitrian Desert. St. Daniel was born in AD 485 and ordained the hegemon over the Nitrean Desert in AD 535. During Daniel's priestly tenure as the hegemon, Emperor Justinian promulgated laws that strongly enforced Chalcedonian dogmas. Daniel's opposition to these laws caused him great suffering.[7] The first collection of saints' lives, or the nucleus of the book of the Synaxarium, seems to have been composed during the sixth century AD, with additions and

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since the El-Mahaba edition contains the collective memory of present day Coptic Church goers.

The Coptic months are as follows:

Thoout	September 11/12 – October 9/10.
Paopi	October 11/12 – November 9/10.
Hathor	November 10/11 – December 9/10.
Koiahk	December 10/11 – January 8/9.
Tobe	January 9/10 – February 7/8.
Meshir	February 8/9 – March 9.
Pharemhotep	March 10/11 – April 8.
Pharmouthe	April 9 – May 8.
Pashons	May 9 – June 7.
Paone	June 8 – July 7.
Epep	July 8 – August 6.
Mesore	August 7 – September 5.
Pikogi Enabot	September 6 – September 10.

(In leap years the dates from September to March differ but are adjusted automatically after Feb. 28.)

These Gregorian dates are in accordance with the Coptic Orthodox reckoning. Other scholarly texts have another calendar reckoning which does not coincide with the Coptic Orthodox practice. I have included the Coptic months in order to refer more easily to the saints' lives in the Synaxarium.

[7] Matta-El-Meskeen, *Coptic Monasticism in the Age of St. Macarius* (Nitrean Desert: Monastery of St. Macarius Press, 1984), 410–9. Britt Dahiman, *Saint Daniel of Sketis: A Group of Hagiographic Texts Edited withIntroduction, Translation, and Commentary.* Studia Byzantina Uppsalientia 10 (Uppsala: Uppsala University Library, 2007).

revisions into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[8] The escalation of the Chalcedonian controversy might have been a significant factor in the compilation of the Synaxarium in an attempt to preserve the saints' heritage in the Coptic memory. The Copts have been accustomed to listen to the stories of the saints during the liturgy as part of the readings revered by the church from very early times.[9]

The Synaxarium contains fifty-five accounts related to Syrian saints or to the Syrian Church. The Copts are reminded of the close relationship between the Syrian and Coptic Churches, since at least one such Synaxarium account per week is read in the Coptic liturgy. Of the fifty-five accounts, four take place during the time of

[8] Burmester suggests that compilations of the Synaxarium were made by the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century. O.H.E. Burmester, "On the Date and Authorship of the Arabic Synaxarium of the Coptic Church," *Journal of Theological Studies* 39 (1938): 249–253. Inner evidence supports the suggestion that the first compilation began by the sixth century; further additions and maybe major revisions took place in the twelfth and thirteenth century. The latest addition was in the 1970s when the life of the late Pope, Pope Cyril VI, was included after his departure from this world.

[9] The topic of the relationship between the Coptic and Syriac Churches could be approached through history, the lives of the Patriarchs, or other sources. But for the sake of this study that focuses on the popular understanding of the ecclesial relationship between both churches, the Synaxarium is an appropriate starting point. For example, in the Synaxarium we find that the relationship with the Armenian Church is rather minimal. However, if we look at Severus Ibn-El-Muqafaa's history we find a different relationship with the Armenian Church. In the life of Pope Cyril II, we read about the visit of Gregory, the Armenian Patriarch. We also know of a saintly Armenian monk in the Monastery of St. Macarius who could perform exorcism. We also know that the majority of the Amîr- al-Guyûš's army were Armenians. Sawirus Ibn Al-Mukaffa, *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church, Known as the History of the Holy Church,* Aziz Suryal Atiya, Yassa Abd Al-Masih, and O.H.E. Khs.-Burmester, ed. Vol. 2 Part 3 (Le Caire, Publications de la Société d'archéologie copte), 344–6.

Chalcedon,[10] five are post-Chalcedonian,[11] another five concern Patriarch Severus of Antioch,[12] three mention an exchange of letters of faith between Coptic and Syrian patriarchs,[13] two are dated after the Arab invasion,[14] two others do not have a clear date,[15] and the remaining thirty-two accounts deal with pre-Chalcedonian events.[16] More than half of the accounts are related to pre-Chalcedonian saints or events. There are only thirteen

[10] Koiakh 1, St. Peter of Edessa, bishop of Gaza. Meshir 9, Mar Barsoma, father of the Syrian monks. Pashons 29, St. Simeon the Stylite. Mesore 23, Martyrdom of 30,000 Christians.

[11] Pharmouthe 15, Consecration of the first altar for the Jacobites to St. Nicholaos, bishop of Mira. Paone 25, Pope Peter IV, 34th pope of Alexandria. Paone 28, Pope Theodosius, 33rd pope of Alexandria. Epep 19, Pope Johannes 10, 85th pope of Alexandria. Epep 24, Pope Simeon, 42nd pope of Alexandria.

[12] Paopi 2, the coming of St. Severus, Patriarch of Antioch, to Egypt. Koiakh 10, The translation of the relics of St. Severus of Antioch. Meshir 13, Pope Timothy the Third, 32nd pope of Alexandria. Meshir 14, commemorating the life of St. Severus of Antioch. Pharmouthe 7, St. Maqrophios.

[13] Pashons 27, Pope Johannes, 30th Pope of Alexandria. Paopi 17, Pope Dioscorus II, 31st pope of Alexandria. Paopi 25, Pope Peter IV, 34th pope of Alexandria. Koiahk 22, Pope Anastasius, 36th pope of Alexandria.

[14] Thoout 14, St. Agathon the Stylite. Though Agathon was an Egyptian monk, his life indicates the undisputed influence of Simeon the Stylite on his ascetical exercises. Koiahk 6, Pope Abraam the Syrian, 62nd pope of the Church of Alexandria.

[15] Koiahk 28, St. Paul the Syrian. Mesore 23, Martyrdom of St. Damian in Antioch.

[16] Fifteen of the saints were martyrs who suffered during the four periods of persecution that most of the Christian churches endured before the time of Constantine. There were confessors of faith during the same period; three Syrian patriarchs who defended the faith against the Arians; four famous Syrian saints: Saint Pelagia, St. Ignatius of Antioch (two commemorations), Queen Helena who, according to the Synaxarium, was born in Nisibis, St. Ephrem the Syrian, in addition to three commemorations for St. John Chrysostom. There were three commemorations of the translation of relics, and one dedication of a church to a Syrian saint.

Synaxarium accounts for Persian saints, two for Armenian saints,[17] one for a saint who died in India,[18] and one for an Ethiopian saint.[19] Although the Armenian, Indian, and Ethiopian Churches share the same theological confession, the Syrian Church maintains a special relationship with the Alexandrian Church.[20]

The most commemorated Syrian saint in the Synaxarium is Severus of Antioch. On the second of Paopi the entry of the Synaxarium commemorates the coming of St. Severus to Egypt.[21] The Synaxarium account tells that Severus was forced to flee to Egypt during the reign of Emperor Justinian upon the advice of

[17] Pharmouthe 19, The martyrdom of Symeon, the Armenian Bishop of Persia and one hundred and fifty others with him. Mesore 27, the martyrdom of St. Mary the Armenian at the time of the Arabs.

[18] Thoout 17, St. Theognosta.

[19] Mesore 24, Commemorating the departure of St. Thekla Haimanot the Ethiopian.

[20] This article will not attempt to investigate the authenticity of names, dates, places etc… mentioned in the Synaxarium. It is a study of its own to investigate each account and to cross-reference it with other manuscript traditions and with traditions of other churches to arrive at a conclusive saint's life or historical event. This is beyond the scope of this study. This study intends to focus on the tradition that is already in use in everyday liturgical books and how this affects the conception of the Coptic laity about the Syrian Church. The congregation sitting in the pews does not ask if this story or event is authentic, or if the dates agree with other historical scholarship. These narratives are for the spiritual nurture of the believers and it is quite sufficient for the listeners that it has been handed down from one generation to another in this form.

[21] Crum's article is based on many of the Synaxarium's narratives. W.E. Crum, "Sévère d' Antioche en Egypte,"*Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* Tome III (XXIII) Ser, 3 (1922–3), 92–104. See also Forget, vol. 47, 48–9. Severus' arrival to Egypt is also mentioned under the entry of Pope Timothy (32nd Pope of Alexandria) in B. Evetts, *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (S. Mark to Benjamin I)*, ed. R. Griffin and F. Nau, *Patrologia Orientalis, Tomus Primus* (Paris, 1907), 451–455. See also Youhanna Nessim Youssef, "Severus of Antioch in the Coptic Liturgical Books," *Journal of Coptic Studies* Vol 6 (NJ, 2004), 139–148.

Empress Theodora.[22] It then describes his stay in Egypt by a story that indicates that although Severus was travelling incognito, the Lord always recognized his priestly status, wherever he was. The story goes as follows: One day Severus, disguised as a monk, attended a liturgy in a church in the Nitrian desert. When the priest raised the *prospherein* he could not find the *qorban* to be consecrated.[23] The priest addressed the congregation saying that the *qorban* had disappeared because of sin, either his own or that of the congregation. At this moment, everyone in the church began crying and praying, asking for God's forgiveness. An angel of the Lord appeared to the priest to inform him that it was not anyone's fault but rather it was because the sacrifice was offered in the presence of a patriarch. As the highest ranking member of the priestly hierarchy present in church, the patriarch was supposed to say the prayers of consecration. The angel pointed to Severus who was sitting at the far end of the church. He was brought with great honor to the altar, and only then the *qorban* became present on the paten on the altar, thus making it possible for the liturgy to proceed. The message delivered by the narrative clearly indicates that Severus' patriarchal rank was recognized by God despite imperial opposition, and theological disputes did not affect his priesthood. According to the narrative, Severus went to Sakha after this incident and stayed at the house of an archon by the name of Dorotheos, and remained there until the time of his death.

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[22] Van der Meer addressed the problem of the presence of Empress Theodora in her article. Anneke van der Meer , "Het verblijf van Severus van Antiochië in Egypte," *Het Christelijk Oosten* 48 (1996), 53–4.

[23] From *prosphero* which literally means offering "of Eucharist as sacrifice" G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1994), 1183–4. In the Coptic liturgy it refers to the set of prayers that are recited from the offering of the Eucharistic Lamb till the prayers of the "kiss of peace" after the Gospel reading. At the end of these prayers the altar cover (*prospherein*) is raised marking the beginning of the liturgical prayers of the anaphora and the consecration of the Eucharistic Lamb. Therefore, the disappearance of the Qorban at this moment led the priest to conclude that either his own sin or that of the congregation is making it impossible to begin the consecration of the Qorban.

The entry of Koiahk 10, continues the story from where it had stopped at the second of Paopi, two months earlier. Some time after the burial of Severus in Sakha, his relics were translated to the Pateron Monastery to the west of Alexandria.[24] Dorotheos placed the body on a boat, intending to transfer it to the Pateron Monastery that is located on the Mediterranean Sea. As the boat branched into a smaller canal in the western branch of the Nile, the water became very shallow. The sailors began asking for the intercession of St. Severus, and the boat sailed six miles until it reached the sea. Severus' body was interred in the monastery in a tomb built by archon Dorotheos. The narrative describes the occurrence of miracles after the death of Severus. These miracles were another sign of his sainthood—a message not to be missed by the audience.

The third commemoration is for the death of Severus of Antioch on Meshir 14.[25] It is a one-page summary of his life story. It includes his birth, the prophetic vision received by his grandfather, his education and baptism, his monastic life, followed by his ordination as patriarch, his disagreement with the Chalcedonian confession, his flight to Egypt, his death in Sakha and the translation of his relics to the Pateron Monastery. Severus also appears in Synaxarium entries devoted to other figures. Meshir 13 commemorates Pope Timothy the Third, Pope 32 of Alexandria.[26] The entry mentions that Severus arrived in Egypt

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[24] The entry of Meshir 7, explains that the "Pateron Monastery", i.e. the Monastery of the Fathers is what is presently known as Deir Al-Zugag. This monastery is located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea about 46 km to the west of Alexandria and is presently used as a military base. Historically this area was accessible by boat through a branch of the River Nile and then to Lake Mareotis that is presently dried up. Butler disagrees with the Synaxarium account, for, based on his research, he reached the opinion that Deir Al-Zugag is the Ennaton Monastery. Alfred J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1902), 74. The translation of St. Severus' relic is mentioned in Forget, vol. 48, 146–7 under the entry of Koiahk 10.

[25] Forget, vol. 48, 266–8. Meshir 14.

[26] Forget, vol. 48, 266. Meshir 13. That is one day before the Coptic Church celebrates the Severus' death on Meshir 14.

during Timothy's primacy and that both of them traveled around the country strengthening the believers in the faith. This entry emphasizes the pastoral qualities of these two leaders and the suffering they endured for their faith. A distinctive feature of Pope Timothy's Synaxarium entry is his connection with Severus. The Pharmouthe 7 entry celebrates the life of St. Maqrophios. The narrator informs us that Maqrophios accompanied Severus during his travels in Upper Egypt.[27] During this time, Maqrophios fell in love with the monastic life and joined a monastery. This entry draws attention to the impact of Severus' life on those who met him. In short, the entries, not only portray a defender of the faith, they present a saint, a wonder worker, an exemplary man, and a good shepherd.

St. Severus of Antioch is especially honored in the Coptic Church liturgy. In the *Absolution of the Servants* that is said after the offerings and in the diptych, Severus of Antioch is the first in the hierarchy of the patriarchs to be mentioned, even before Dioscoros, Athanasius and Cyril of Alexandria. He has precedence over all of the patriarchs.[28] In the morning raising of incense, in preparation for the liturgy, during the *Litany of the Fathers*, the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch is described as a brother in the apostolic ministry. This shows the close relationship between the two

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[27] This is in reference to the events mentioned on Meshir 13. This narrative is different from the entry of Pharmouthe 7 in Forget's edition where the Synaxarium has a one-line entry which mentions that Maqrophios was the son of Abu Moussa the owner of Deir El-Baliana. Forget, vol. 67, 65.

[28] It is also worthwhile mentioning that St. John Chrysostom is mentioned before Saint Cyril in the diptych. Fiey in his article mentions other liturgical insights. Fiey, 346–9. See also H. Brackmann, "Severos unter den Alexandrinen," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 26 (1983): 54–58; S.P. Brock, "Tenth-century diptychs of the Coptic Orthodox Church in Syriac Manuscripts," *Bulletin de la Societé d'Archéologie Copte* 26 (1984): 23–29; Y.N. Youssef, "The Cult of Severus of Antioch in Egypt," *Ephemerides Liturgicae* 115 (2001): 101–107; "Severus of Antioch in the Coptic Theotokia," in B. Neil and others (eds), *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church* III (Brisbane, 2003), 93–108; "Severus of Antioch in the Coptic Liturgical Books," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 6(2004): 141–150.

churches. The Coptic Church not only welcomed Severus during his lifetime, but also honors him in her prayers after his death.

Two major Syrian monastic figures are honored in the Coptic Church, Simeon the Stylite on Pashons 9 and St. Barsauma, the father of the Syrian monks on Meshir 9.[29] The Synaxarium entry for Simeon the Stylite focuses on his sainthood and how he lived on a pillar for forty-five years. In comparison, the Synaxarium entry for Mar Barsauma, who died in AD 458, one year before Simeon, highlights Barsauma's theological stance. The entry indicates that Mar Barsauma was severely persecuted by the Chalcedonians because he was a staunch anti-Nestorian and anti-Chalcedonian. After Barsauma's death a pillar of light remained in his cell. These are two important Syrian monastic saints venerated by the Coptic Church. Both were praised for their sainthood, both witnessed the events of Chalcedon. Barsauma was praised for his theological stance.

The influence of Simeon the Stylite is evident in the life of St. Agathon the Stylite.[30] He was an Egyptian who at the age of thirty-five was ordained a priest. At the age of forty he went to the skete of St. Macarios. He constantly read the life of Simeon the Stylite and wanted to follow his example. At the age of fifty he went to the city of Sakha and lived on a pillar for fifty years. He died at the age of one hundred. The Synaxarium does not give any reason why he chose the city of Sakha to practice the ascetical life of a stylite, but it is interesting to observe that it is the place where St. Severus of Antioch was first buried.

The Synaxarium mentions St. Peter of Edessa, bishop of Gaza, who was an assistant to Emperor Theodosius II.[31] During his residency at the imperial court he lived an ascetic life. He later left the court and joined a monastery. He was ordained bishop of Gaza. It is said that during his first liturgy blood filled the paten.

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[29] Simeon is mentioned as Simeon the Recluse in Forget's edition on Mesore 3. See Forget, vol. 67, 253–4. However, St. Barsauma is mentioned on Pahons 9; Forget, vol. 48, 256–8.

[30] Thoout 14; Forget, vol. 47, 22–3. The stylite ascetic way of life did not only affect the Coptic ascetics but its influence reached Gaul and Spain.

[31] Peter of Edessa is commemorated on Koiahk 1. See, Forget, vol. 47, 131–2.

When Marcian became emperor and began persecuting the non-Chalcedonian bishops, Peter took the relics of St. James the Persian and fled to Egypt. After the death of Marcian he returned to Gaza. Peter of Edessa was a saint of Syrian origin who became bishop of Gaza, suffered persecution by the Chalcedonians, and found refuge in Egypt.

Mesore 21 commemorated the martyrdom of thirty thousand Christians in Alexandria. Proterius, the prefect of Alexandria, looted churches and monasteries, and when the Copts rioted, Proterius responded by massacring thirty thousand Christians. After the death of Marcian, Leo was appointed Emperor, and during his reign the bishops of Egypt ordained Pope Timothy as patriarch of Alexandria.[32] He was later exiled for seven years. When Timothy returned to Alexandria, Patriarch Peter of Antioch visited Egypt and a council of five hundred bishops from Alexandria, Constantinople, Antioch and Jerusalem was convened. All the bishops refused the Chalcedonian definition. This Synaxarium narrative is quite polemical, but it shows that the council was convened through the joint efforts of the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch. These are the four main Synaxarium accounts that are contemporary with the council of Chalcedon. Three of the four accounts, those of Mar Barsauma, St. Peter of Edessa, and the thirty thousand martyrs of Alexandria, clearly exhibited polemical repercussions on the life of the people and church after Chalcedon.

The Synaxarium mentions four exchanges of letters of faith between the Alexandrian and the Antiochene Churches.[33] The first of these took place when Severus of Antioch became patriarch in AD 512. He sent a letter to Pope Johannes II, Pope 30 of

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[32] For brief references to documents attributing the title "pope" to the bishop of Alexandria see Norman Russell, *Cyril of Alexandria,* The Early Church Fathers, ed. Carol Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2000), 208.

[33] A letter of faith is a letter that states clearly the faith of the Patriarch who writes it. It might also include the Nicean Creed with further elaboration on the Trinity and Christological issues that ensure that the writer's theology conforms to the non- Chalcedonian faith. Historical sources other than the Synaxarium inform us that this exchange took place on a regular basis whenever a change in the hierarchy of any of Coptic or Syrian churches occurs.

Alexandria, who was patriarch from AD 505 to 516.[34] Severus initiated the correspondence and sent a letter to the Patriarch in Alexandria, who in turn responded with a letter affirming the same faith. When his successor, Pope Dioscorus II, Pope 31 of Alexandria (AD 516–8), became pope, he exchanged letters with Severus of Antioch (AD 512–8).[35] According to the Synaxarium the first two letters were exchanged during the time of Severus of Antioch: the first he sent, while the second he received. This took place somewhere between sixty or seventy years after the council of Chalcedon. Further research is needed to clarify whether Severus of Antioch initiated this tradition of exchange of letters of faith between the Syrian and Coptic Churches.

The third exchange of letters between the two churches took place during the time of Pope Peter IV, 34th Pope of Alexandria (d. 569).[36] The exchange was between Peter and Theophanios, Patriarch of Antioch, when both were in exile. The fourth exchange of letters of faith is mentioned during the time of St. Anastasius, 36th Pope of Alexandria.[37] Athanasius, Patriarch of Antioch, initiated the letter after the death of his predecessor Peter the Chalcedonian, Patriarch of Antioch.[38] Anastasius was so pleased with the letter that he sent an invitation to Athanasius to come and visit Alexandria. Athanasius was well received, together with all the bishops who accompanied him. The two Patriarchs and their bishops convened for a full month in one of the monasteries

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[34] Pashons 27. The date of his ordination (AD 505) and the date of his death (AD 516) in the Synaxarium agree with modern historians. Frend in his *Synopsis of Events* calls him John of Nikiou. Frend also agrees with the dates above mentioned. See W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 972. Pope Johannes II is not to be confused with John, Bishop of Nikiou the chronicle writer who was born around AD 640–2 and was alive until year AD 696, when he was appointed as "general administrator of the Monasteries." See Robert Henry Charles, *The Chronicle of John (c. A.D 690.) Coptic Bishop of Nikiu* (Amsterdam, APA-Philo Press), iii.

[35] Paopi 17.

[36] Paopi 25.

[37] Koiahk 22.

[38] Peter of Callinicum, patriarch of Antioch, 581—591 AD. Frend, 982. Athanasius, patriarch of Antioch, AD 595–631. Ibid., 984.

on the coast at the outskirts of the city of Alexandria. The Synaxarium makes clear that the momentous decisions that took place during the meetings were the reestablishment of the ties between the two churches that had been strained by the preceding Chalcedonian patriarch in Antioch.[39] The letter of faith was mentioned because it was the cause for the meeting that occurred between the two churches and because it was mentioned as part of Pope Anastasius' work during his tenure. After AD 611 there is no official mention in the Synaxarium of any exchange of letters of faith between the two churches.[40]

Three post-Chalcedonian Patriarchs of Alexandria were ethnically Syrian.[41] The first pope elected from among the Syrians to the See of St. Mark was Pope Simeon, 42nd Pope of Alexandria

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[39] Butler writes his own version of the events taking a more historical perspective. "…[I]n the early autumn of 615 AD, the Coptic Patriarch Anastasius received a visit from Athanasius, the Patriarch of Antioch, who had been dispossessed by the Persian invasion. They met, as has been stated, in the celebrated Ennaton monastery on the sea-coast westward of Alexandria. One or two bishops from Syria probably accompanied their Patriarch; others, like Thomas of Harkel and Paul of Tella, were already settled at the monastery, working hard at their great task of revising the Syriac version of the Bible collation of the Greek: and yet others were in Egypt as refugees. For "while the Persians were ravaging Syria, all who could escape from their hands—laymen of all ranks, and clergy of all ranks with their bishops—fled for refuge to Alexandria.' (Gelzer's *Leontius von Neapolis,* Anhang ii. P112). It is therefore extremely probable that, as tradition avers, five Syrian bishops were present at the meeting of the two Patriarchs, which resulted in the establishment of union between the Syrian and the Coptic Church. Athanasius only remained a month in Egypt, after which he returned to Syria..." Alfred J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1998), 69–70.

[40] Fiey mentions the exchange of five "synodal letters" between the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch from the ninth to the twelfth century. J.M. Fiey, "Coptes et Syriaques. Contacts et échanges," *Studia Orientalia Christiana. Collectanea* 15 (1972- 1973), 349–53. He also records visits from the Syrian Church until the twelfth century.

[41] Fiey mentions that the first Syrian patriarch on Alexandria was Damian (AD 576–605). Fiey, 316. However, the Synaxarium mentions only three patriarchs and Damian is not one of them.

(d. AD 700).[42] He was a monk in the Pateron Monastery (Deir Al-Zugag). The Synaxarium links Simeon to his Syrian heritage by mentioning to his readers that Severus of Antioch was buried in the monastery. The Synaxarium attests to his saintly life. There were two attempts to poison Pope Simeon and he survived both of them. Pope Simeon was a great reformer. He fought very fiercely against a new trend among Coptic men who began emulating the Arabs by taking more than one wife. The second Pope of Syrian origin was Pope Johannes X, 85th Pope (d. AD 1369).[43] Nothing is known about his life except that he was from Damascus and his sobriquet was Al-Mu-tamen Al-Shamy (the Damascene entrusted [with the Church]). The sobriquet indicates that he was found worthy to be entrusted with the Church. These two examples show the closeness between Copts and Syrians. It is worthwhile noting that Popes in the Coptic Church are chosen by the lay people, not the church hierarchy. These were not political decisions.

The most famous of the three Syriac popes is Pope Abraam, 62nd Pope of Alexandria (d. 970).[44] He was commonly known as Ibn-Zar'a Al-Suriany, or Abraam bar Zar'a among the Syrians. Abraam was a merchant. He used to travel frequently to Egypt and eventually he settled there. When the Patriarchal seat was vacant he was chosen to be the Patriarch. During his tenure, Abraam was also faced with the Coptic men emulating the Arab majority by acquiring concubines, and he made it part of his lifework to stop such a practice. His fame arose from the following story. Severus Ibn-El-Muqafaa, bishop of El-Ashmunien, was a contemporary of Pope Abraam. While Ibn-El-Muqafaa was in the court of the Emir El Muez, he reluctantly participated in a debate with a Jewish scholar. Historical narratives indicate that such debates among the representatives of Christianity, Judaism and Islam were common in the courts of the Islamic Caliphs and Emirs. Bishop Severus won

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[42] Epep 24.

[43] Epep 19.

[44] Koiahk 6. He was elected in year AD 968. His tenure lasted for three years and six days. See Forget, Vols 47–8, 136–9; and O.H.E. Burmester, *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church Known as the History of the Holy Church, by Sawirus Ibn Al-Mukaffa Bishop of Al-Ashmunin*, (AD 849–880), vol. II Part I (Le Caire: Publications de la Société d'Archéologie Copte, 1943), 91–100.

the debate and the Jewish scholar decided to take his revenge. He returned to court with the biblical text and read to the Emir that it is written in the gospel that *For truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you* (Matt 17:20). The scholar added, if Christians believe that the gospel is true, let them prove this verse. The Emir welcomed the suggestion, since the Muqatam Mountain was encroaching on the city of Cairo. Pope Abraam was summoned to court and was informed that if he did not move the Moqatam Mountain, Christianity and the Gospel message would be considered invalid. The consequences of not meeting such a challenge would have led to the immediate persecution and extermination of the Copts. Pope Abraam requested three days to deliver the Emir's demands. He then gathered some monks and bishops to the Mu'alaqa Church in Old Cairo, and fasted and prayed for three days. On the third day the Virgin Mary appeared to the Pope and asked him to gather the people before the mountain and a miracle would take place. El Muez, accompanied by government dignitaries, stood on one side of the mountain and the Pope, together with the Coptic people, on the other side. They began praying and kneeling and with each kneeling they would say *kyrie eleison* (Lord have mercy). Each time they knelt, the mountain would be raised above ground high enough to permit the sun's rays to be visible from underneath the mountain. This event terrified the spectators, and ended the confrontation. This event led the Copts to receive licenses to build a few churches. The miracle of the Muqatam Mountain has a prominent place in Coptic history. It proved the validity of the Gospel message and preserved the Coptic Church from extermination at the hands of El Muez. Lest Copts forget this miracle, God's work with them, a three-day fast is annually observed—an addition that affected the liturgical practices. This pivotal event in Coptic history, that had its implication on liturgical practices, was championed by a Syrian Pope of the Coptic Church. Copts remember Abraam the Syrian for his piety and for his wisdom in handling the situation. This memory is beyond dogmatic rhetoric.

Pope Abraam added more than the three days of fast in commemoration of the Miracle of moving the Muqataam Mountain; he also added the fast of Jonah. The Copts observed the

fast of the Week of Hercules, but not the Syrians.[45] When Pope

[45] According to a *Katameros* footnote the Week of Heraclius is based on what is mentioned in the history book written by Patriarch Eutychius the Melkite. The *Katameros* explains the story of the Week of Hercules as follows: When the Persians besieged Constantinople for six years during the reign of Heraclius, he was able to escape the city. The Persians killed the generals, raped their women, and looted the city. They did the same with Jerusalem. According to the chronicle, the Jewish people aided the Persians in destroying the churches, especially the Church of the Resurrection and looted and burnt the city. When Heraclius reached the city of Jerusalem on his way back to Constantinople, the surviving Christians pleaded that he would kill all the Jews. He refused saying that he gave them a treaty of peace and he could not forsake his promise. The inhabitants responded that the Jews had not kept their promise of protecting the city and its inhabitants so it was permissible for him to forsake his own promise with them. They added that they were ready to fast for one full week on his behalf. Heraclius agreed to these pleading conditions and gave permission for the inhabitants to kill the Jews. Based on this promise the Patriarch of Jerusalem sent letters to all the Patriarchs to fulfill this promise. This was during the time of Pope Andronikos, 37th pope of Alexandria. And since the time of Andronikos, the Church of Alexandria fasts one week prior to the Great Lent in fulfillment of this promise. See *The Katameros of the Great Lent, Serves the Sundays and Weekdays of the Great Lent according to the Order of the Coptic Orthodox Church* (The Commission of Publication in the Diocese of Beni-Suef, 1986), footnote 2, p. 26. [The word "Katameros" is equivalent to the word "Lectionary" and is derived from the Greek *kata meros*.] What the *Katameros* failed to mention, as written in the chronicles of Eutychius, is that all the other churches stopped this fast after the death of Heraclius except the Coptic Church. See L. Cheikho, B. Carra De Vaux, and H. Zayyat, *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales*, CSCO, vol 51, Ser. 3, T. 7, (Beryti E Typographeo Catholico, 1909), 7. Strangely enough though this incident has affected the church fasting calendar, Severus Ibn-El-Muqafaa, bishop of El-Ashmounien does not mention this important event in his *History of the Patriarchs*. Though Severus mentions the savagery of the Persian invasions he could have easily commented on such an event. [Both references are for the life of Pope Andronikos who these events occurred during his tenure]. R. Graffin—F. Nau, *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (S. Mark to Benjamon 1)*, Patrologia Orientalis Tomus Primus, II and IV, B. Evetts, eds. (Librairie

Abraam was elected, he observed this fast on the condition that the Copts would participate in the Syrian fast of Jonah. The Copts agreed because they admired his piety.[46] It was agreed that the Copts would observe this three-day fast fifteen days prior to the

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de Paris, 1907), 484–6. And C.F. Seybold, *Severus ben el-Muqafa', Historia patriarcharum Alexandrinorum*, CSCO, vol 52, Ar.8 = Ar. III, 9, T, (Beryti E Typograhes Catholics, 1904), 103–4. The Synaxarium also does not mention any establishment of a new fast in the Church in the life of Pope Andronikos, 37th pope of Alexandria, Tobe 8. This is considered an important change in the liturgical calendar and should have been mentioned in the life of a Patriarch. John of Nikiou also does not make any reference to such an incident, even though he wrote in great graphic details how Phocas, the Persian General, raped Fabia, wife of Heraclius the younger, during the invasion of the Persians to Constantinople. Charles, *The Chronicle of John of Nikiu*, 167. Butler also does not make any mention of such an event during his description of the attack of the Persians on Alexandria and his reference to Andronikos. Butler, 69–92. *The History of the Patriarchs* written by Eusebius, bishop of Fuah, in the thirteenth century does not mention any of these events either. See Eusebius, bishop of Fuah, *The History of the Patriarchs*, Fr. Samuel the Syrian and Nabih Kamel, ed. (n. d.), 48–9. It is relevant to note that Eusebius is very dependent on the History of the Patriarchs written by Severus, bishop of El-Ashmounien. Though most of the early historians have attested to the collaboration of the Jews with the Persian army in many provinces, the story of the Jewish slaughter in Jerusalem is not mentioned anywhere. In addition, the Coptic Church now does not account for the extra week fasted before the Great Lent as the Week of Heraclius but as days compensating the Sabbaths where abstinence from food is prohibited. In conclusion, the explanation of the Week of Heraclius raises more questions than answers. It was only mentioned in the Melkite historian and Patriarch Eutychius' history and not mentioned in any of the Coptic sources. In addition, the rest of the churches do not follow this custom any more. The authenticity of such an event needs further study. In connection with our topic, it is most probable that the Copts simply fasted the three days of Jonah in accordance with Pope Abraam's wishes since he was accustomed to keep this fast in Syria, and the Copts willingly complied, simply because he proved such piety, especially in the movement of the mountain.

[46] Ibid., 4.

Great Lent following the strict dietary rules of the Great Lent.[47] These additional ascetic observances that the Copts follow are credited to Pope Abraam's piety. It is a piety beyond dogmatic rhetoric.[48]

Another aspect of Coptic-Syriac relations evolved after the Arab invasion. Both Copts and Syrians were forced to translate their Christian literatures into a new language. Both churches were faced with problem of finding Arabic terms that could convey Christian theological ideas. The first resource of the two churches had been to transliterate Greek words into Arabic form. However, since Syriac is a Semitic language, the Syrians found it very convenient to include some Syriac words as well in their translation, adding a Christian dimension to the meaning of the words. The Copts eventually borrowed from the Syrians, enriching the Coptic-Arabic vocabulary with "loan" Syriac words. These

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[47] The Copts observe the strictest fast during the Great Lent and Fridays and Wednesdays and the Fast of Jonah. No animal products are eaten during that time, not even fish.

[48] Six centuries later, in AD 1587, Pope Gabriel VIII, Pope 97 of Alexandria, was ordained to the See of St. Mark. He ordered that the Copts were not to fast the Fast of Jonah, but after his death, this decree was reverted, and the fast is still practiced to this day. It is important to note that Pope Gabriel wanted to introduce other changes in the fasts of the Coptic Church. He wanted to limit the Fast of the Apostles to fourteen days (from Paone 21—Epep 5). The way this fast is calculated is that it begins the second day of Pentecost and ends on Epep 5, the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Therefore, the beginning of the fast is variable, since Pentecost does not have a fixed day in the Liturgical calendar. His attempts to change the date were with the intention to limit the fast to two weeks ending on the Feast of St. Paul and St. Peter. He also wanted to decrease the Advent Fast by fifteen days. He also wanted to make the Fast of the Virgin Mary voluntary. None of these changes endured. After his death, the old custom was followed. Pashons 9. *The History of the Patriarchs* writes two lines about Pope Gabriel VIII. His birth name was Shenouda and became a monk in Skete. In AM 1302, he became patriarch. His tenure lasted for fifteen years, and he was buried in Skete. See O.H.E. Burmester, *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church Known as the History of the Holy Church, by Sawirus Ibn Al-Mukaffa Bishop of Al- Ashmunin*, (AD 849–880), Vol. III Part III, (Le Caire: Publications de la Société d' Archéologie Copte, 1970), 159.

words became so much a part of the language, that the average Copt is usually unaware that these are Syriac loan words. As to the average Arab reader, they sometimes think that these are Coptic loan words, since they do not understand them, and since they are not found in any Arabic dictionary. The Copts could have made use of only Greek theological terms. They chose to include Syriac loan words as well. This is an indication of the close relationship between the Copts and Syrians.

Here are a few examples.[49] Copts employ some monastic terms that are loan words from Syriac. Copts use the Arabic *deir* for "monastery" which comes from the Syriac *dayrâ*. The Copts use this Syriac word, while neither the Greek nor the Coptic words for monastery have survived in current use. Another monastic term commonly used is *rubîtah* which comes from the Syriac *rabbayta'* that is the title given to the monastery manager.[50] The Arabic transliteration of the Greek words *oikonomos* and sometimes *egoumenos* have survived in some of the Arabic literature, but *rubîtah*, the Syriac loan word, is the word mostly used.

Copts employ some Syriac liturgical terms as well. The verb to baptize *'mad* and *u'mid* are from the Syriac word *ʿmad*. Both *'mad*, the act of baptism, and *ma'mudia* are from the Syriac root. The latter can also be used to describe the baptismal font. The Godfather present during baptism is *šbin* and *ašbin* from the Syriac *shawshbina*.[51] These liturgical terms were borrowed from the Syriac rather than Greek or Coptic.

Common and formal ecclesiastical terms borrowed from Syriac include *kahin* derived from the Hebrew and also used by the Syrians. The Copts also use the Arabic term *qis* and *qasis* from the Syriac word *qashysha*. It is the term of choice when using informal

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[49] Graf's study of Arabic Christian terms needs to be updated and does not discuss the notion of transmission of terms from one language to the other. Georg Graf, *Verzeichnis Arabischer Kirchlicher Termini*, CSCO vol.147, Tome 8, (Louvain: 1954). Blau's work is also useful: Joshua Blau, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic, Based Mainly on South Palestinian Texts from the first Millennium,* CSCO vol. 267, Sub, t. 27. Louvain, 1966.

[50] Usually a different person than the abbot or spiritual leader of the monastery.

[51] The feminine Godmother is *shebint* and *'shebint* derived from the same root.

language. The Arabic term *šamâs*, deacon, is derived from the Syriac word *shamesh*. In Christian Arabic it is used to refer to all non-priests who serve at the altar regardless of their exact rank, whether cantor, reader, or sometimes even deacon, though for the rank of deacon, the word *dîakûn* derived from the Greek *diakonos* is usually augmented to the word *šamâs* to designate the specific rank of deacon.[52]

Three other words frequently used by Copts are the Arabic *mâr* "saint", the Arabic *mîmar* "homily" and the Arabic *tûba* "blessed." The term for "Saint", *mâr*, is derived from the Syriac *mar[i]* and is attached to most saints' names as well as the Arabic word *qûdûs* derived from the Arabic root *qds*.[53] Both terms are used in official language indiscriminately. For example it is customary to say either *mâr murqus* or *alqûdûs murqus*. The Arabic term for "homily" *mîmar* derived from the Syriac *mēmrā* is commonly used, though it is primarily applied to early Christian homilies written by the early Fathers of the Church. The third common word is the blessedness used in the beatitudes—the Arabic *tûba* derived from the Syriac *te'b*. The word has a similar root in Hebrew, and it is the only word used to express blessedness in the biblical sense in the Arabic language. In every case a Syriac word was chosen instead of a Coptic or Greek term. This is a simple demonstration of the impact of Coptic-Syriac relations beyond dogmatic rhetoric.

Both Orthodox Churches stem from two of the oldest civilizations of the world. The two Churches share a common history in many respects. Both Churches constantly experienced the presence of vibrant Jewish communities. Both Churches shared a Greco-Roman heritage that influenced many aspects of religious

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[52] Those who are familiar with the old Egyptian hieroglyphic language suggest that the word šamâs is derived from the hieroglyphic *šms* which means, "to follow, accompany." See http://www.jimloy.com/hiero/e-dict16.htm for the hieroglyphic inscription of *šms*. At first sight this could be a plausible suggestion. However, the Coptic Church thinks of those serving at the altar not as acolytes, or altar boys *following* the priest and fulfilling his demands, but rather as people who serve God. Thus the word *diakonos* and its Syriac literal translation would be more in accordance with the theological understanding of the Coptic Church regarding the role of the deacon in the church.

[53] St. Mary, in the Syriac form, is also used very often.

and social life. Historically they were influenced by the Romans, Greeks, Persians, Arabs, Turks, British, and French. Each culture left its stamp on the religious practice of both Churches. The geographical proximity of these two Churches led to an extraordinary exchange of ideas and religious figures. All of these points need further scholarly investigation, because these factors shaped the present Coptic and Syriac Churches, and shaped the relationship between them. Other topics of investigation might include liturgy, monastic exchange, and religious and cultural influence.[54] I would also be interested in an examination of the relationship between the two Churches from the Syriac perspective, from Syriac liturgical sources, and the possible impact of the Coptic Church on the Syrian. The present good relationship between the two Churches is not only based on theological agreement, though of course this is a crucial factor. Even though the Coptic Church shares theological agreements with other Churches, e.g. the Armenian and the Ethiopian, the relationship between the Coptic and Syriac Churches has a special dynamic. I hope that this will be a starting point for further research.

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[54] Fiey discusses the role of Deir El-Suryan and other monastic exchanges between Copts and Syrians. Fiey, 323–331. Maybe Syriac sources will shed more light on this.

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JONAH'S OAR CHRISTIAN TYPOLOGY IN JACOB OF SERUG'S *MĒMRĀ* 122 ON JONAH*

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ABSTRACT

Jacob of Serug's longest mēmrā—on Jonah (mēmrā 122, P. Bedjan, ed., Homiliae Selectae, vol. 4: 368–490)—stretches for 123 pages. Slowly and poetically, Jacob proceeds through the original text verse by verse, but along the way interweaves an unabashedly Christian typology and interpretation of the prophet's dilemmas and mission. The focus here is to present an outline of Jacob's commentary and argument and reconstruct how he uses Christological typologies to present the Christian Gospel. Jacob is not a systematic theologian, but in this mēmrā he has given himself enough space to build a full description of the Christian message in which Jonah becomes a type of Christ.

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1. THE *MĒMRĀ*

No one loses the opportunity to retell the story of Jonah. Its dramatic and singular story is detailed, yet simple, brief yet of ample length to spawn countless retellings and commentaries by rabbis, patristic authors, medieval commentators, song writers and artists. And it's not all about the fish. What has continued to confound and intrigue its readers is that the Book of Jonah keeps not making sense. That a prophet refuses to be a prophet and believes he can run away, that a storm can be so divinely personal and a great fish be so accommodating, that a prophet would be so angry at being successful and a wicked city could become the moral model for the Jewish and Christian community are the ideas that have enabled Jonah's tale to retain its edge and bite.

Certainly the exegetical poets of the Syriac tradition have had their say. Ephrem returns again and again to Jonah and Nineveh in a number of *madrāshē*[1] and *mēmrē*,[2] interpreting the narrative from various perspectives. Narsai also has written a lengthy *mēmrā* on the wayward prophet.[3] But it is Jacob of Serug (d. 521) who weaves the familiar tale in the most unforgettable fashion: *Mēmrā* 122, included in Paul Bedjan's *Homiliae Selectae*,[4] endures for 123 pages, 72 sections, 4 divisions, ca. 2540 lines.

Slowly and poetically, Jacob of Serug proceeds through the Biblical text verse by verse, along the way fashioning an

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[1] *Hymns on Virginity*, numbers 42–50. Cf. Edmund Beck, CSCO 223/224, Louvain, 1962; English translation by Kathleen E. McVey, *Ephrem the Syrian: Hymns* (The Classics of Western Spirituality; New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 438–460.

[2] Ephrem, *Sermones II*, Edmund Beck, CSCO 311/312, Louvain, 1970; English translation, *The Repentance of Nineveh: a metrical homily on the mission of Jonah by Ephraem Syrus*, translated by Henry Burgess (London: Blackader, 1853). Cf. Sebastian P. Brock, "Ephrem's verse homily on Jonah and the Repentance of Nineveh: notes on the textual tradition," in A. Schoors and P. van Deun (eds), *Polyhistor: Miscellanea in honorem C.Laga* (OCA 60, 1994), 71–86; and in *From Ephrem to Romanos* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), chapter V.

[3] *Narsai: Homiliae et Carmina*, Alphonse Mingana, edit. (Mosul, 1905) Eighth *Mēmrā*, "On Jonah the prophet," 134–149.

[4] Jacob of Serug, *Homiliae Selectae*, edit. Paul Bedjan (Paris, 1908) vol. 4: 368–490. BL Add. 14623, f. 31a.

unabashedly Christian typology and interpretation of the prophet's dilemmas and mission. Needless to say, there is neither time nor energy to rehearse the entire *mēmrā*, so what follows is an initial attempt to elicit what is unique and not unique about Jacob's sermonic poem.

Indeed, if by originality is meant that no one else has mentioned the idea before, then despite the size of Jacob's *mēmrā* on Jonah there are probably few observations, comments, and typologies that have not been made by someone else. Jacob would never have read the sermons or commentaries of the Greek and Latin Fathers, and one cannot really say for sure whether there was direct borrowing from his hymn-writing predecessor Ephrem. The size and message of Jonah ensured that everybody read it and exercised their imagination upon its few verses.

Nevertheless, there is a significant problem with all this reading and retelling and reinterpreting which I believe Jacob avoids. Yvonne Sherwood, in her recent monograph on the heritage of Jonah in Western culture,[5] observes that among the Fathers, "As the text becomes a gigantic and accommodating receptacle for Christ's truth and Christ's sufferings, Jonah's outline begins to melt; he loses his own voice and script and outline and becomes a ventriloquist for Christ. And as the Old Testament narrative is chomped and consumed by the New, emphasis is redistributed, and elements of the Old Testament text are lost. What disappears, specifically, is any sense of Jonah's resistance to God."[6] While Jacob explicitly calls Jonah a type for Christ, he does not allow the text to be consumed by the New Testament, and Jonah continues to be painted in darker hues throughout Jacob's retelling. As shall be seen, the heroic figures turn out to be the King of Nineveh and his subjects, the people of Nineveh.

Bedjan notes in his edition that in the British Library manuscript three major section breaks or divisions were included, therefore 4 divisions; the Mardin manuscript only included 2 breaks, so three sections.[7] Bedjan, utilizing the British Library Additional 14623 (f. 31a) manuscript as his base, along with

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[5] Yvonne Sherwood, *A Biblical Text and its Afterlives: The Survival of Jonah in Western Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[6] Sherwood, *A Biblical Text...*, 17.

[7] P. Bedjan, *Homiliae Selectae*, vol. 4, page xi, footnote 7.

Mardin 117 (f. 117), retained the four divisions. The first division ends at Section 15 with Jonah waking up in the hole of the ship, frightened by the storm. The second division ends at Section 34 with Jonah being successfully swallowed, not eaten, by the fish. The third division ends at Section 51 with the King of Nineveh exhorting his subjects to fight hard this new kind of battle of repentance. The fourth division is the longest and concludes with Section 72 in which Jacob points to God making Jonah a parable for the mercy of his creation.

2. CHRISTIAN TYPOLOGY IN JONAH

Following the normal opening section in which Jacob prays for inspiration and effectiveness in interpreting Scripture, he wastes no time in declaring his understanding of Jonah's role and purpose.

> Jonah portrayed the Son on the road of his preaching
> and the type inscribed on the path his suffering by which he imitated him.
> He bore suffering prior to the Son of the King, the chosen servant
> So that he might prepare the road for his Lord who comes to walk upon it.[8]

Jonah is the type (*tūpsā*) for Christ, but obviously his initial response to God's command to preach to Nineveh was not very Christ-like. He tried to run away and Jacob is incredulous: "... and what did he think would happen to him on the road that he had set out upon?"[9] Jacob makes no excuses for Jonah, yet turns around and acknowledges that divine providence beyond human understanding is at work here.

> But if he had set straight his road to Nineveh as he had been sent
> He would not have become a sign for our Lord as he became for him.
> The excellence of the road is that he fled from God
> for by that reason he served all the mysteries.[10]

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[8] 2. 369:18–21.

[9] 3. 371:19.

[10] 3. 373:7–10.

In the eighth section, Jacob unveils some of his more striking and original typologies and images. "In the *mēmrā* of Jonah the story of our Lord is explained"[11] is not unique, though here Jacob refers to the *mēmrā* as a work outside of his control for the first time. The sea, declares Jacob, is similar to the world, but the world's sins are more dangerous than the waves. "Look, I stand in both seas in the story which I have set down; May your cross, our Lord, be an oar that rescues me."[12] From this point, Jonah's and Jesus' mission become virtually one. "Through Jonah the way of the Son is depicted to one who observes it; the sea [is depicted] in the world which also was disturbed against our Saviour."[13] Nevertheless, it is clear who is prefiguring whom.

> Our Lord preached more than Jonah among the nations
> and brought the entire inhabitable earth back to repentance by his word.
> Greater is his road from that of the prophets by which they prefigured him
> Just as the substance of the body is greater than the shadows.[14]
> For he was lifted up greatly like the tempest against the son of Mattai.[15]

Jacob returns to Jonah's story and it is that curious incident of Jonah falling sound asleep in the hole of the ship during the worst of the raging storm that sparks the next Christological typology. Showing perceptive psychological insight, Jacob describes the sleeping prophet,

> He slept from depression, indeed in this way heavily
> or perchance the mystery bound him spiritually in sleep.
> Maybe because he was bearing the likeness of the Son
> [Jonah] typified that sleep which our Lord had slept on the sea.

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[11] 8. 378:15.

[12] 8. 379:10–11.

[13] 8. 379:16–17.

[14] 8. 380:6–9.

[15] 8. 380:11; Mt 14:30.

> He typified the burial of the Son in the depths when he was brought down
> [Sleep] cast him down into the ship and he slept for a long time.[16]

Jacob continues with the same Gospel scene, beginning this time with Jesus.

> Our Lord slept and the sea was disturbed against the disciples
> and this type was demonstrated in the sleep of Jonah.
> That is, he was asleep and they woke him up as in the typology
> which was performed by the disciples to our Savior.[17]

Jonah does awake and the lot thrown by the sailors falls on him. He tells them who he is and who is his God, ironically performing his evangelical commission here in the midst of the sea in the way he should have done on dry ground in Nineveh. The sailors are converted to God, the Creator of heaven and earth. Slowly proceeding through the enlightenment of the sailors and their sincere attempt to avoid having to submit Jonah to the angry sea, Jacob observes the sailors sadly binding up Jonah, wishing him peace and that he will keep them from sinking by his atoning blood. "Go, Hebrew, may peace accompany you amidst the floods, and by your pure blood may we not sink when we cast you out."[18] Once the sea did become calm after Jonah was sent overboard they became genuine converts, taking refuge in the household of Adonai and sacrificing peace offerings.[19]

This scene on the storm-tossed ship keeps expanding its dimensions in Jacob's vision. Jonah's inquisition by the captain of the ship and the sailors blurs into Jesus standing before Pilate and the Sanhedrin. The captain of the ship transforms into Pilate, washing his hands of the blood of an innocent person, and praying that the impending execution of Jonah/Jesus will not come back to convict them.

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[16] 13. 387:13–18; Mt 8:24.

[17] 13. 388:2–3, 8–9.

[18] 26. 411:11–12.

[19] 28. 413:4–15.

Jonah stood before the sailors while being questioned
just as also our Lord was tried by Pilate.
The sailors implored God on account of Jonah
lest they be destroyed by the blood of a man who was righteous.
The judge too washed his hands on account of our Lord
lest he be defiled by the holy blood which was innocent.
The sailors sought to return to dry land, but they were not able
to deliver that Hebrew from the whirlpool.
The judge too stirred up and made much on account of our Savior
but he was not able to help that innocent one.[20]

One of the most striking sections in terms of physical imagery naturally derives from Jacob's depiction of Jonah being swallowed providentially by the great fish. Needless to say, being swallowed by a whale or a fish is the stuff of horror and nightmares in any age (just mention the movie *Jaws*) and certainly some of the medieval and modern artistic renderings of the Book of Jonah have focused graphically on the horrific elements.

Jacob's rendition plays on several themes, notably that Jonah's sojourn is symbolic both of birth and death, of the womb and the tomb.

A wronged dead one who is alive in destruction and is not destroyed
The Living One who was not dead, they carried off and buried, casting him away.
The bridegroom for whom the movements of the fish were like a bedroom
and he reclined to enjoy the banquet of passions at which he had sat down.
A new fetus which entered through the mouth to the belly of his mother
and he became a conception without intercourse by a great miracle.[21]

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[20] 29. 415:4–13.

[21] 31. 418:3–8; ܘܗܘܐ ܒܛܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܙܘܘܓܐ ܒܬܕܡܘܪܬܐ ܪܒܐ.

A remarkable image is briefly portrayed in which Jonah enters through the mouth of the great fish into its belly or womb of his mother and miraculously becomes an immaculate conception, a prefiguring of Jesus' birth in the Virgin Mary. That's it, for Jacob does not elaborate as in so many of his ideas.

Finally, Jacob comes around to a fuller typology of Jonah's three days in the fish pointing towards Jesus' time in the tomb. "Through these days when he was in the fish, he depicted the Son and [it was] this reason [that] summoned the *mēmrā* to be spoken"[22]—apparently an implicit reference and cue from Jesus' initial proclamation of the sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:38–41) and the three days of Jonah in the fish paralleling Jesus' three days in the heart of the earth.

> Three days in the heart of the earth Jonah was buried
> so that the road of our Lord which was to the tomb
> should be explained.
> The prophet in the fish and the Lord of the prophets in
> the death which he desired
> The ones buried who sprung forth not being destroyed
> by annihilation.
> The dead ones who became the reason for life by their
> actions:
> Jonah to Nineveh and the Son of God to all the earth.[23]

The typology continues unabashed as Jacob keeps weaving tighter the connection between Jonah and Jesus, gradually removing from Jonah the weight of his disobedience and raising him to an almost-Christ status.

> Jonah dove and from within the deep he rescued
> Nineveh
> Moreover, our Lord dove and drew up Adam from the
> whirlpool.
> The burial of Jonah was inscribed into that of Christ
> This mystery made the son of the Hebrews descend to
> the sea.
> A wonder to speak, an amazing thing to be silent that
> they were buried:
> Jonah while he was alive and the Lord of Jonah while
> he made all live.

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[22] 35. 422:15–16.

[23] 35. 422:17–423:3.

> Where have you seen a buried one who prayed, except
> Jonah?
> or a person who was killed and made the dead live,
> except our Lord?
> On this road full of mysteries Jonah ran
> and on account of this the *mēmrā* concerning him is
> exalted above us. ::[24]

At this point in the *mēmrā*, Jacob's filling out of the Christological typologies leads him to raise Jonah close to an exalted status, a prophet who has come the closest to typifying Jesus Christ, albeit not by words, the usual tools of the prophet, but by his actions. Nevertheless, while Jacob may have waxed eloquently over the character of Jonah as a prefiguring of Christ—by association a high status indeed—the Biblical narrative holds Jacob's primary allegiance and draws him back to a more realistic and less sympathetic view of Jonah. Now that Jonah has been expelled from death, the story begins anew and Jonah is not always portrayed by Jacob in as flattering an image. Taking on the terrible persona of the prophet proclaiming imminent doom to the people of Nineveh, Jonah has regained his confidence as well as his arrogance, assuming that he is uttering God's very words. Nineveh and its king get the message in no uncertain terms, trembling not only before God, but also before the solitary figure of Jonah.

In the 57th section, Nineveh having fulfilled all its penance and anxiously awaiting the 40th day, Jacob draws some boundaries around what has taken place. The repentance of Nineveh is an indictment against the disobedience of Zion. Because Jonah and Jesus' missions are so closely linked, Jacob points to Zion's denial of Jesus' excellence and the shame and dishonour it dealt him. The contrasts between Jonah and Jesus also become more evident: Jonah spoke only words, but was obeyed and honoured; whereas Jesus performed acts, but was beaten and dishonoured.[25] Jonah, Jacob implies, was a mere prefiguring of Christ, not at all his equivalent. The Christological typology trickles down to nil following Jonah's re-commissioning and entry into Nineveh. Except for this delineation of Jonah's functions in relation to Jesus' and the not too subtle anti-Judaism, Jacob focuses upon the

[24] 35. 423:6–15.

[25] 57. 461:1–464:2.

canonical story for its own witness, mentioning Christian concepts significantly only by the personification of grace involved in the judgment of Nineveh[26] and the subsequent appearance of the Gospel in Nineveh on the 40th day.[27]

3. Repentance and Grace

A worthy place to linger is in the long sections on the repentance of Nineveh and how its ascetical offering, led and modeled by its righteous and penitent king, provoked a response of Grace personified to plead successfully Nineveh's case before the judge of heaven. The repentance of Nineveh is the major theme of Ephrem and Narsai and other patristic writers, for this action presented the clearest example for imitation to a Christian audience.

Jonah preached repentance and judgment to the people of Nineveh, but left little room for redemption and salvation. "Jonah spoke, 'there is no way to bring to an end the anger; Iniquity prevails and repentance reaches to vex you.'"[28] The king of Nineveh, more afraid of Jonah than a large army,[29] decides immediately to take to heart the call to repentance, putting on sackcloth and calling for fasting among his armies and the population. Using military vocabulary to fight hard this new kind of battle for repentance,[30] the king is determined to counter Jonah's desire to see Nineveh destroyed. The king knows that the Lord God has the authority to redeem Nineveh despite the declarations of Jonah. Jonah full of the arrogance of his prophecy appears to have forgotten this subtlety.

> See, the Hebrew threatens and warns concerning our destruction
> Let us devise a way so he does not rejoice over us when he defeats us.
> He is not silent who calls for the wrath (*rigzā*) over our desolation
> Let us not be silent so that we might call for mercy to rescue us.

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[26] 61–62. 471:4–474:12.

[27] 63–64. 474:13–477:11.

[28] 49. 446:18–19.

[29] 50. 448:12–16.

[30] 51. 449:11–450:6.

> The man seeks to raise up his word because he is a prophet
> Allow [him] to preach and come to his Lord so that we might pray before him.
> He is not convinced that it is not his [right] to refute his words
> His Lord has authority over him to reverse lest he destroys us.[31]

This is the juncture at which the moral balance of Jacob's typologies shifts. Jonah's near Christ-like functions find their glow ebbing in the heat of his angry proclamation, while the pagan king of Nineveh recognizes the spirit and authority of the God for whom Jonah prophesies and increasingly becomes the model of humility, penitence, and righteousness for the Christian audience of Jacob's *memrā*.

The description of the fast so ordered by the king adopts an ascetical and monastic tone. The universal fast and wearing of sackcloth includes all creatures, including cattle, urging all to eliminate iniquity so that the wrath to come may be averted by their individual and communal repentance.[32] Led by the king who becomes the lord of mourning to his people, brides and grooms put on sackcloth and ashes, even infants fast and are weaned,[33] and as all put on black clothing (the dress of a monk) the city becomes dark ("the city a monastery").[34] The people gather anxiously, but are portrayed as earnestly and authentically determined to correct and transform their iniquitous ways and begin again a virtuous life.[35]

The leadership of the king of Nineveh was vigorous as he bore the diseases of the people and healed them—a Christological trait—and his leadership is a type or model for all cities. Nineveh,

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[31] 51. 450:7–14.

[32] 52. 451:6–453:4.

[33] Ephrem in *Hymn on Virginity 47* (str. 1–2), McVey, p. 452, refers to a similar fast for infants:

> The Ninevites repented to give offerings: a pure fast of pure babes.
> Flowing breasts they withheld from babes, that they might suck floods of mercy.

[34] 54. 454:3–458:2.

[35] 55. 458:3–459:5.

for that matter, teaches the world about repentance, while fasting, prayer, ashes and sackcloth are its armour instead of the military weapons which were its former renown.[36] Forty days Nineveh prayed and made a festival for repentance, but as the 40th day approaches the city is full of dread and anxiety.[37]

Jacob then switches literary motifs and personifies Grace as someone who receives the petitions and prayers of the Ninevites in the heavenly realms and then pleads their case before the judge.[38] Grace asks the Lord not to reject their fasting and weeping, for then no human being will believe that there would ever be any hope to be redeemed. "If you reject this entire weeping of Nineveh, then whoever sins will laugh that there is no discernment."[39]

And the Lord accepted Grace's persuasion and the onset of the wrath was halted, although all the forces of heaven were set and ready to strike. "The morning came and brought the Gospel to the sons of the city and brought to an end the evil which was threatened against its walls."[40] The city awoke that morning with great joy—"They saw one another as departed ones after resurrection, and they shouted prudently to the one who resurrects the dead."[41] The Ninevites in joy and gratitude praise their king, "May the new Gospel gladden you, O king who has come to life with us."[42]

In the final section 72, Jacob states plainly that "[God] made Jonah a parable for the mercy of his creation."[43] Jacob's normal approach to exegesis has been to perceive the Old Testament narrative unapologetically through evangelical and Christological lenses. Typologies abound in dizzying procession, yet note that Jacob never veers too far from the canonical sequence of events, though more than a little midrashic retelling is his wont. Jonah's Ninevites, because they begin without knowledge of the God of

[36] 56. 459:6–460:21.
[37] 59. 466:21–468:18.
[38] 61. 471:4–473:17.
[39] 61. 473:2–3.
[40] 63. 475:20–476:1.
[41] 64. 476:8–9.
[42] 64. 476:19.
[43] 72. 490:3.

the Hebrew Bible, are able to experience Christian revelation without explicitly mentioning Christ.

4. THE *MĒMRĀ* AS ACTOR IN THE *MĒMRĀ*

Post-modern literary criticism has often driven home the fact that any text, and certainly an ancient text, acquires a life of its own, independent from the author's original intentions and meanings, and that is especially the case with Jacob's Jonah. A curious feature throughout is Jacob referring to the *mēmrā* in the third person as an actor in its own play. The *mēmrā* has its own agenda, urging, pushing the story along. Jacob, perhaps with tongue in cheek, complains that all he can do is hang on for the ride, for the powerful physics of the *mēmrā* are beyond his management, as if the *mēmrā* were alive. The effect is to endow the *mēmrā* with the qualities of the Gospel, the Word which shall not be silenced.

The beginning of the 8th section following the scourging of Jonah by the storm at sea is where Jacob initiates the Christological theme. "In the *mēmrā* of Jonah the story of our Lord is explained; As it was also said this was the one who had fled."[44] Jesus is the one who has fled from heaven into the world—a concept widely circulating, for instance, in Jerome who sees Christ fleeing to Tarshish, "the sea of the world," the theme mentioned above that Jacob immediately takes up in the next verses. Jerome and Maximus the Confessor also understand Jonah's flight to be a sign of the incarnate Christ, who "abandons his father's house and country, and becomes flesh"[45]—a Prodigal Son motif as well.

As the second major section of the poem begins, Jacob personifies the *mēmrā*:

> The *mēmrā* of Jonah stands over me like an inquisitor
> so that I will journey in its story quickly until the end.
> With the tale of the sea I will not cease from the story
> of that one who fled whom the sign (*remzā*) captured
> among the floods.
> Not from the path of the *mēmrā* have I departed,
> O discerning ones

[44] 8. 378:15–16.

[45] Jerome, *In Ionam*, 1–3a; Maximus the Confessor, *Quaestio 64 ad Thallassium*.

> He is the man who drew me to the sea so that I might
> speak regarding him.
> He is the prophet who set out his way among the
> floods
> and the *mēmrā* which is about him journeys after him
> where he was walking.[46]

The *mēmrā* is attributed with an odd function of guidance and supervision. It appears as pre-ordained—the path it must run—yet it follows Jacob making sure that Jonah and Jacob go in the correct direction. Nevertheless, Jacob's attempt to keep on track and complete the *mēmrā* runs not so much into obstacles as side-roads that are of the utmost importance.

> The road of the *mēmrā* is hastened to go to completion
> but the mysteries of the Son do not allow me to go.
> It begins with one thing and meets another thing in me
> for the son of the living one is depicted in everything to
> those who look at him.
> The entire road of the son of the Hebrews was
> depicted in him
> for there is no place where it begins and goes on a
> journey without him.[47]

Yet Jacob is not able to totally tame the *mēmrā*. The great fish has swallowed Jonah, but the *mēmrā* keeps going despite Jacob's attempt to limit and rein it in.[48] Jonah's soft prayer from the fish empowers the *mēmrā*,[49] so now the principal actor is enabling the story about him to continue. Jacob then enters into the *mēmrā* and the Biblical narrative to resurrect Jonah from the prison of the fish.[50]

In the briefest section, number 40, Jacob takes another respite after the fish was commanded by God to vomit Jonah out on to dry land to a new birth and resurrection. Here Jacob recapitulates the tale thus far, reveling in the beauty of the *mēmrā* in its telling.

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[46] 16. 393:13–20.
[47] 30. 415:20–416:4.
[48] 37. 427:14–15.
[49] 37. 428:20–429:8.
[50] 37. 429:9–20.

Here the beauty of the *mēmrā* flowed to him from the tongue
for the prophet was completely immersed in Our Lord luminously.
Through the word of our Lord the son of the Hebrews explained his road
for on account of him it was all inscribed clearly.
An evil generation seeks a sign for the people,[51] he said
and the sign of Jonah was given to it so that it might understand it.
For just as he was in the heart of the earth for three days
through this example I will be lowered to the depths of Sheol.
The mystery was guarded and Our Lord explained it clearly
Then Our Lord is all of the beauty of the *mēmrā*.
He dove into death just as Jonah dove into the sea
and he gave this sign to the people who searched for a sign.
In the belly of death he was silenced for three days
just like the Hebrew who was in the fish three days.[52]

The *mēmrā* is therefore not just a regurgitation of the events, but a recreation and expansion of the beauty of the divine providence connecting Jonah's and Jesus' three days—"the sign of Jonah" according to Jacob.

The final scene for the *mēmrā* is the same juncture following Nineveh's desperate fast and penitence, the last time Jacob offers explicit typologies between Christ and Jonah. While Jacob had almost despaired of keeping the *mēmrā* in line, now he admits his joy in expounding it. "Now I will repeat its great story since I love and I do not tire of the *mēmrā* which is full of all profits."[53] While Jacob exploits the standard rhetorical niceties for this kind of literary work, it seems evident that for him this *mēmrā* is different, that it has captured his soul in a way not many others have. It is this literary device of the living *mēmrā* exerting its beauty and will upon him that indicates that this one *mēmrā* had become bigger

[51] Mt 13:39.

[52] 40. 432:3–16.

[53] 57. 461:1–2.

than he could initially manage. Grace too brings Jacob home and allows him to put down his pen, but only when all has been said about Jonah, God, Jesus, and the *mēmrā* itself.

Is Jacob of Serug's rendition of Jonah original and unique? It is too early to say in a definitive way—certainly Jacob had heard the story retold and interpreted in many ways. Many observations are not unique in patristic exegesis, but how he has woven numerous Christian typologies into the familiar tale, yet retained the integrity of the Old Testament book and the ambiguity of Jonah's character and actions, is remarkable, indeed, overwhelming. Never has so much been written about so little so beautifully. Fortunately, for our merely human endurance, the *mēmrā* finally did end.

APPENDIX

Jacob of Serug. *Mēmrā* 122: "On Jonah the prophet"
Homiliae Selectae, P. Bedjan, edit., Paris, 1908, Vol. 4:368–490
(*underlined indicate Christological typologies*)

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
368:1–369:17	**I**	1	—	Author's prayer for inspiration and effectiveness in his interpretation of Scripture.
369:18–371:13		**2**	Jonah 1:1–2	Jonah is a type of Christ. God commands Jonah to preach destruction & repentance.
371:14–373:20		3	Jonah 1:3	Jonah flees from God to the sea. What did Jonah think? That he could actually run away from God? He was educated properly. But, if he had not fled he would not have become a sign for Jesus Christ.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
374:1–375:3	**I**	4	—	If Jonah wasn't intended to be a sign, all of this is folly.
375:4–376:15		5	Jonah 1:4	Jonah flees, seeing the Lord's punishment full of mercy. Lord sends storm to retrieve the one who had fled from God.
376:16–377:10		6	—	Jonah—you tried to escape dry land where God is, but God is in the sea and will find you everywhere.
377:11–378:14		7	—	The sea scourges Jonah as a teacher corrects a wayward student. The sea attacks the ship, but grace preserves it.
378:15–380:11		8	—	The story of our Lord is told in the *mēmrā* of Jonah. The sea is similar to the world, but the world's sins are more dangerous than waves. May the cross be an oar that rescues me. Mary was a ship for Jesus Christ to sail the earth. Jesus Christ is greater than Jonah who prefigured him.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
380:12–382:4	**I**	9	Jonah 1:5	A storm rises up against Jonah, holding him back from his road. Sailors are disturbed by the anger of the unusual storm, throwing cargo overboard to lighten the ship, but the weight of Jonah is submerging it.
382:5–383:19		10	—	Homiletic excursus on which treasure/cargo not to throw overboard.
383:20–385:6		11	—	The soul is held on to rather than pearls. In face of death all possessions are excessive in order to keep the soul free from bondage.
385:7–387:10		12	Jonah 1:5	Sailors cast away all of their wealth but the sea only wanted Jonah. Oblivious, Jonah goes down into ship to sleep, weighed down by his sadness and anxiety. Sailors cry out each to their own god.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
387:11–388:19	**I**	13	Lk 8:22–25	Jonah slept from depression, but he typified the sleep of Jesus in the stormy sea. Disciples, alarmed by storm, woke Jesus. Sailors too are distressed by storm.
388:20–390:7		14	Jonah 1:6	Jonah slept while sailors called on their gods so One God would not be mixed up with them. Captain came to awaken Jonah, asking him to pray to his God.
390:8–393:12		15	Gen 1:6–7	Jonah wakes up, frightened by the surrounding storm. Excursus on how the sea depicts the awesome power of the creator.
393:13–395:8	**II**	16	—	The *mēmrā*, personified, pushes Jacob to continue. Ships were made to subdue and travel the sea.
395:9–396:21		17	Jonah 1:7a	Sailors seeing the tempest like none other and understanding the sea wanted one person, decide to cast lots to see who is at fault.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
397:1–398:9	**II**	18	Jonah 1:7b	They cast lots and the lot falls on Jonah, the one who is the cause of the storm.
398:10–399:16		19	Jonah 1:8	Sailors angrily demand from Jonah, "What have you done and where are you from that you have stirred up the sea so violently?"
399:17–402:11		20	Jonah 1:9	Besieged by sailors and sea, Jonah confesses he is a Hebrew, whose Lord has authority over sea and land. Recital of Hebrews who have conquered & divided the sea. Because he refused God to preach to Nineveh waves battered him.
402:12–404:5		21	Jonah 1:10–11	Through Jonah the sailors become wise, recognizing God's omnipotence and asking Jonah as wise man what they should do to calm the sea.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
404:6–405:18	**II**	22	Jonah 1:12	Jonah tells them they have to cast him overboard to calm the sea for the tempest is his fault. He will be a parable since the sea has imprisoned him because he has fled from the Lord of the seas.
405:19–407:16		23	Jonah 1:13–14	The sailors are sorry for Jonah and struggle to make it to land, but the sea threatens, 'If I do not receive him, I will not be calm.' When they have to give up, they call out to God to release them from guilt for Jonah's blood. They recognize it is God's will whether to save Jonah or not.
407:17–409:19		24	—	Jonah's teaching was successful with the sailors, for they let go of their gods and worship the Lord. Jonah had refused to preach to Nineveh, but now preaches in the midst of the sea and acquires disciples.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
409:20–410:15	**II**	25	Jonah 1:14 Mt 13:1–9	The word of the Lord is the fertile good seed sown, even in the sea. The sailors pray to God, not wishing to destroy Jonah, who ashamed, prepares himself.
410:16–412:6		26		Sailors sadly bind up Jonah giving thanks for their new faith in the Lord, wishing Jonah peace and pray that by his atoning blood keep them from sinking, and pray that Lord will do a new thing, change the nature of the deep, and keep him alive.
412:7–412:18		27	Jonah 1:15	Sailors cast out Jonah and the sea and tempest become calm, freeing the ship.
412:19–413:15		28	Jonah 1:16	Sailors increase in fear and worship of Lord seeing all that had happened. They make sacrifices and 'take refuge in the household of Adonai.'

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
413:16–415:19	**II**	29	—	Jonah descends into deepest part of sea to depict type of Son of God, a sign of the murder of the Son who descends to Sheol and empties it. "Become in the dead sea a living one without parallel." He stood before the questioning of sailors as our Lord did before Pilate. The judge washed his hands of blood and tried to save the innocent one—the captain and Pilate.
415:20–416:14		30	—	The path of the *mēmrā* wants to keep going, but the mysteries of the Son do not allow Jacob to go. Everything on the Son's journey is depicted in Jonah's.
416:15–418:8		31	Jonah 1:17a	Lord sends a fish to swallow Jonah as a sign of grace to protect him on his journey, riding in a new ship, unwrecked. Depicted as a new infant which entered through the mouth to the belly of his mother, a miraculous conception without intercourse.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
418:9–419:17	**II**	32	—	The *mēmrā* of Jonah is deep like his journey. A solitary one, for he alone walked under the seas. The old man became again a fetus in the bowels of the fish. The fish was a citadel for him, a bridal chamber.
419:18–420:18		33	—	Excursus on how Creator provides for a fetus in a narrow belly without air—an analogy of Jonah in the fish. A small place amidst affliction, a dark prison, yet a palace full of blessings.
420:19–422:10		34		Analogy of God providing living space to Jonah in the fish, normally the bowels of death, similar to Jesus in the tomb. Fish swallowed, not ate, Jonah. This is a unique and wondrous story about Jonah at which we are amazed.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
422:11–424:16	**III**	35	Jonah 1:17b 2:1	Jonah is in the fish for three days, depicting the Son and this is the cause for this *mēmrā* to be spoken. Explicit typology between Jonah and Jesus—the dead ones who became the reason for life by their actions. Jonah, realizing—yet puzzled—he is not dead, begins a prayer in his heart in the heart of the earth.
424:17–427:13		36	Jonah 2:2–9	Amplification of prayer of Jonah from within the belly of the fish.
427:14–429:20		37	—	The *mēmrā* keeps going despite Jacob's attempts to limit it. Jonah's soft prayer from the fish empowers the *mēmrā*. Jacob pleads with God to resurrect Jonah from the prison of the fish.
429:21–431:6		38	—	The prayer of Jonah ascends to God with sweetness, attracting the attention of the angels and the response of God.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
431:7–432:2	**III**	39	Jonah 2:10	Lord commands the fish to vomit out Jonah, raising the dead one to life and back on to dry land.
432:3–16		40	—	The *mēmrā* is the vehicle for the story of our Lord, three days in the tomb as Jonah was three days in the fish. Gives to readers "the sign of Jonah."
432:17–434:10		41	—	Jonah's story, along with other prophets, describes how the Son will be coming, painting a portrait mixing different colors. Other Messianic prefigurations cited.
434:11–435:11		42	—	Jonah speaks to his prophetic colleagues who do not want him to speak about the atoning one, but he shows how his journey is very similar to Christ's.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
435:12–437:9	**III**	43		Jonah elevated his story of the Savior by his own suffering. Jonah did not preach about the Savior, but went silently to belly of death and ascended without harm.
437:10–440:2		44	Jonah 3:1–2	Revelation of Lord comes a second time to Jonah to preach to Nineveh. Jonah is reluctant, but knows he has no choice. This time he will preach exactly what Lord has told him.
440:3–443:6		45	Jonah 3:3–4	Jonah walks to Nineveh and preaches threateningly of upheaval and wrath within forty days. Nineveh will be a desolate mound of dirt.
443:7–444:7		46	—	Jonah's terrifying words were heard by Nineveh which was greatly alarmed by this one man.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
444:8–445:13	**III**	47	Jonah 3:5–6a	Ninevites hear Jonah and are afraid, fasting and putting on sackcloth. Word reaches king of Nineveh and servants ask, "Who is this one who despises you?"
445:14–446:17		48	—	Jonah, set on fire by the divine revelations, accepts no bribes or flattery and fears no authority. People ask him, "How do we heal our disease?"
446:18–448:11		49	—	Jonah says there is no way to bring an end to the wrath, describing an angry Lord who wreaks punishment on sinners and citing catena of prior judgments.
448:12–449:10		50	Jonah 3:6b	King of Nineveh is more afraid of Jonah than an army, puts on sackcloth, and calls for fasting among his armies and the population.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
449:11–451:5	**III**	51	Jonah 3:7–9	King exhorts his troops and population to fight hard this new battle of repentance, fasting and sackcloth, especially to counter Jonah's desire to see Nineveh destroyed. The Lord has authority to redeem us despite Jonah.
451:6–453:4	**IV**	52	Jonah 3:7–9	King sends out commandment for universal fast and sackcloth, including cattle, urging all to eliminate iniquity so that the wrath may be averted by repentance.
453:5–454:2		53	Jonah 3:9	The people respond, led by the militant example of the king who extends hope. King admits that he is afraid of Jonah as he has never been of armies.
454:3–458:2		54	—	Lengthy depiction of acts of repentance by Nineveh. Bride & bridegroom put on sackcloth and ashes. King becomes lord of mourning to his people. All put on black clothing and the city becomes dark. Even

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
				infants fast and are weaned.
458:3–459:5	**IV**	55	—	The people gathered speak with resolve to correct and transform their iniquitous ways and begin again a virtuous life.
459:6–460:21		56	—	The leadership of king of Nineveh is vigorous, bearing diseases of the people and healing them, and is a type for all cities. Nineveh teaches the world about repentance: fasting, prayer, ashes and sackcloth are its armor.
461:1–464:2		57	—	Jacob returns to the *mēmrā* which he does not tire of telling. Contrast between Jonah & Jesus: while Jonah spoke and did not perform acts like Jesus, he was honored; but Jesus was beaten and dishonored. The *mēmrā* shows the repentance of Nineveh as a judgment against Zion.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
464:3–466:20	**IV**	58	—	Nineveh's petition and prayer to God for mercy to preserve it from destruction.
466:21–468:18		59	—	Forty days Nineveh prays, making a festival for repentance, terrified by Jonah's words. Sleep is invaded by nightmares of destruction.
468:19–471:3		60	—	Jonah's forty day period of warning is completed. No one wants to look at one another, as all anticipate with great anxiety on its eve the day of judgment.
471:4–473:17		61	—	The prayers of Nineveh ascend to heaven, where Grace receives the petition and pleads their case before the judge. Grace asks the Lord not to reject their fasting and weeping, for then no human will believe there is any hope to be redeemed.
473:18–474:12		62	—	Grace's persuasion stops the onset of the wrath, though all the forces of heaven were set and ready to strike.

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
474:13–476:2	**IV**	63	Jonah 3:10	The judge relinquishes the punishment appropriate to the city, for repentance ascended to establish love with him. The morning comes and brings Gospel to the city.
476:3–477:11		64	—	Ninevites awake that morning full of joy and praise, transforming their weeping. They praise the diligence of the wise king whose effort had brought an end to the wrath. The city revels in the Gospel.
477:12–478:8		65	—	Jonah withdrew from Nineveh after his preaching, but goes back to see what has happened. Yet the walls and towers are still standing at the end of the days.
478:9–479:21		66	Jonah 4:1–2	There being no collapse of Nineveh, Jonah weeps & complains to God. I know you are merciful and that is why I fled the first time. You compelled me to come a second time and preach for an

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
				upheaval and now there is none.
480:1–482:2	**IV**	67	Jonah 4:3	Jonah blames God for the mercy shown to Nineveh and bitterly requests to die, lest he is accused of false prophecy.
482:3–484:9		68	Jonah 4:6	The Lord sees that Jonah is very zealous in tradition of Elijah, a solitary one without any possessions. God commands a plant to grow over him and makes a booth in order to tempt Jonah to take pleasure in it. Jonah takes comfort in the shade and in his suddenly acquired house, and his sorrow vanishes.
484:10–486:5		69	Jonah 4:7–8	Then the Lord commands the plant and it dries up. A parching wind is sent and the booth collapses and heat beats down on Jonah. He thinks it might be the upheaval, but when he sees Nineveh still standing he prays to God for death. Nineveh was evil and stands; the

(Page)	Part	[Section]	Biblical	Synopsis
				innocent booth and plant are pulled down.
486:6–488:22	**IV**	70	Jonah 4:10–11	Lord rebukes Jonah, why find fault with my mercy? You are sorry for the plant which you did not make or own, yet it upsets you. The city belongs to God, why did you not have pity when it repented? Do not desire suffering for others. You think you alone suffer and the suffering of others does not concern you."
489:1–490:2		71	—	God teaches Jonah about mercy through craftiness, not compulsion. We are both owners, Jonah of the plant, God of human beings. You were distressed for the plant, I had pity on Nineveh. Through the sorrow of Jonah we see mercy of God.
490:3–16		72	—	God made Jonah a parable for the mercy of his creation. The image is of repentance which God responds to mercifully when called upon.

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EXPECTATIONS OF THE END IN EARLY SYRIAC CHRISTIANITY

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ABSTRACT

Apocalyptic imagery was widespread in the Greek and Latin patristic literature but occurs relatively seldom in the early Syriac sources. This paper surveys the eschatologies of Bardaisan, the Odes of Solomon, and the Acts of Thomas and suggests specific theological, sociological, and historical reasons why apocalyptic motifs were not employed on a large scale. Bardaisan's opposition to Marcion would have made him reluctant to draw on any type of dualistic imagery, and his social setting at the center, not at the margins of his community was not one that typically gave rise to apocalyptic discourse. The Odes' joyful praise of salvation experienced already now leaves no room for looming disasters or cosmic battles. Only the Acts of Thomas contain one element found in apocalyptic literature: a tour of hell, which in the Acts serves a parenetic function. This paper also suggests that the scarcity of apocalyptic motifs in early Syriac Christianity can to some extent be attributed to the location of these Christians at the frontier.

Apocalypses and apocalyptic images are widespread in the Greek and Latin patristic literature.[1] In this paper, I shall ask whether these apocalyptic traditions played a similarly prominent role for the earliest Syriac-speaking Christians. Early Syriac Christianity was diverse, and one site of multiple early Christianities was the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia, later to become one of the great centers of Syriac Christian theology and spirituality. By the late second century various Christian groups existed here side by side: Gnostics, Marcionites, Bardaisanites, and the so-called Palutians, predecessors of the later normative church.[2] Of the earliest

[1] On the subject of apocalyptic literature in early Christianity, see for example B. Daley, "Apocalypticism in Early Christian Theology," in: *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, ed. B. McGinn, vol. 2 (New York: Continuum, 1998), 3–47 (with further literature); P. Vielhauer and G. Strecker, "Apocalyptic in Early Christianity. Introduction," in: *New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, vol. 2 (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 569–602 (with further literature). On the subject of patristic eschatology more generally, see B. Daley, *The Hope of the Early Church: A Handbook of Patristic Eschatology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). Ancient Near Eastern, Christian, and Jewish apocalyptic traditions are addressed by the essays in D. Hellholm, ed., *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism, Uppsala, August 12–17, 1979*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989). On the question of what constitutes apocalyptic literature, see J.J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), ch. 1: "The Apocalyptic Genre," p. 1–42 and his earlier study "Towards the Morphology of a Genre," *Semeia* 14 (1979), 1–20.

[2] An excellent overview of the beginnings of Syriac Christianity is given by R. Murray, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition*, revised ed. (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004), 1–38. For a "heretical" origin of Edessan Christianity argued long ago W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, German first ed. 1934, Engl. tr. ed. R.A. Kraft (Mifflintown, PA: Sigler Press, 1996), 1–43. The Marcionite presence in Syriac-speaking regions is addressed by H.J.W. Drijvers, "Marcionism in Syria: Principles, Problems, Polemics," *Second Century* 6 (1987/88), 153–172 and D. Bundy, "Marcion and the Marcionites in Early Syriac Apologetics," *Muséon* 101 (1988), 21–32. In the fourth century, Ephrem still much polemicized against Marcionite Christians in his *Prose*

Edessan Christian communities, it was the group around Bardaisan (d. 222) that has left the most extensive—although still rather fragmentary—written record. We shall first ask how Bardaisan and his community envisioned the end, and then interpret their eschatological expectations within the social context of the early Bardaisanite community. In addition, two further bodies of early Syriac Christian literature shall be examined here with regard to their imagination of the end, namely the *Odes of Solomon* and the *Acts of Thomas*, composed most likely in the second and early third centuries, respectively. Both the *Odes* and the *Acts of Thomas* originated in approximately the same era in which Bardaisan flourished, but they can not easily be associated with a particular locality, so that it becomes much more difficult to interpret them within their social contexts. How did these early Syriac Christians envision the end? What expectations did they hold concerning the last judgment and the world to come? Did they employ apocalyptic imagery to describe the end? And if not, why not? We shall begin this survey with Bardaisan, the theologian from Edessa.

1. BARDAISAN

While the *Odes* and the *Acts of Thomas* are of unknown provenance, it is quite certain that Bardaisan flourished in the city of Edessa in northern Mesopotamia, for not only is he named after the river Daisan that flows through the city, but an eyewitness account of his activity at the king's court has come down to us from the pen of Julius Africanus.[3] Bardaisan's thought is preserved in fragments of his own writings, in refutations by later opponents, and in the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*—the only contiguous text from Bardaisan's community that has come down to us—compiled by a disciple in the early third century.[4] Although Bardaisan's later

Refutations, ed. with English tr. C.W. Mitchell, A.A. Bevan, and F.C. Burkitt, *S. Ephraim's Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion, and Bardaisan*, 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1912–1921) (hereafter *PR*).

[3] Sextus Julius Africanus, *Kestoi* I, 20,39–53, ed. with French tr. J.-R. Vieillefond, *Les "Cestes" de Julius Africanus* (Paris: Didier, 1970), p. 185.

[4] The *editio princeps* of the *Book of the Laws of the Countries* was published with English tr. by W. Cureton, *Spicilegium syriacum, containing remains of Bardesan, Meliton, Ambrose, and Mara bar Serapion* (London: Rivingtons,

followers came to be regarded as heretical on account of their inability to adapt to the emerging doctrinal consensus, Bardaisan in

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1855), 1–21 (text) and 1–34 (translation). Also ed. F. Nau, *Patrologia Syriaca* 1.2 (1907; reprint, 1993). Nau's edition was reprinted with English tr. by H.J.W. Drijvers, *The Book of the Laws of Countries: Dialogue on Fate of Bardaiṣan of Edessa*, Semitic Texts with Translations 3 (Assen: van Gorcum, 1965; reprint Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007). German tr. T. Krannich and P. Stein, "Das 'Buch der Gesetze der Länder' des Bardesanes von Edessa," *ZAC* 8 (2004), 203–229. The *Book of the Laws* (hereafter *BLC*) is here cited from Drijvers' edition; translations are mine. The chapter numbers are from Nau's edition and were not reproduced by Drijvers.

The most important witness for Bardaisan's theology, besides the *BLC*, is Ephrem, who repeatedly refers to Bardaisan's ideas and occasionally quotes short fragments of Bardaisan's writings in his *Prose Refutations* (see note 2) and his *Hymns against Heresies* (hereafter *CH*), ed. with German tr. E. Beck, *Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen contra haereses*, CSCO 169–170, Syr. 76–77 (Louvain, 1957). Ephrem's polemics, though biased, constitute a valuable source for Bardaisan's thought and for the teachings of his community in the later fourth century.

The numerous other witnesses to Bardaisan's teachings in the Syriac, Greek, Latin, Armenian and Arabic literature, some of which are highly unreliable, can not be surveyed here. Most of these are discussed by H.J.W. Drijvers, *Bardaiṣan of Edessa*, Studia Semitica Neerlandica 6 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1966). Porphyry's citations from a Bardaisanite treatise on India are edited with a German translation and interpreted by F. Winter, *Bardesanes von Edessa über Indien: Ein früher syrischer Theologe schreibt über ein fremdes Land*, Frühes Christentum. Forschungen und Perspektiven 5 (Thaur: Druck- und Verlagshaus Thaur, 1999). Some of the Arabic sources on the Daysaniya are discussed by W. Madelung, "Abū 'Īsā al-Warrāq über die Bardesaniten, Marcioniten und Kantäer," in: *Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Vorderen Orients: Festschrift für Berthold Spuler zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, ed. H.R. Roemer and A. Noth (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 210–224; G. Vajda, "Le témoigne de al-Māturidī sur la doctrine des Manichéens, des Daiṣānites et des Marcionites," *Arabica* 13 (1966), 1–38; J. van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam,* 6 vols. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1990–1995); G. Monnot, *Penseurs musulmans et religions iraniennes: 'Abd al-Jabbār et ses devanciers*, Études musulmanes XVI (Paris: J. Vrin, 1974).

his time was regarded as a champion of orthodoxy[5] and made significant contributions to the theological discourse among Syriac-speaking Christians.[6] Bardaisan, a philosopher, a former astrologer, and an adult convert to Christianity, formulated his theology in the culturally and religiously diverse Edessan milieu.[7]

Scholars of apocalyptic literature, such as Hultgård in his work on Persian apocalypticism, have stressed that there is a coherence between an author's theology of the end of the world and his theology of its beginning, his cosmogony.[8] A similar coherence should be observable between an author's theology of the end of an individual and his theology of human nature, his anthropology. This connection is clearly evident in Bardaisan. Just as Bardaisan's cosmogony informed his cosmic eschatology, so did his anthropology form the basis of his individual eschatology. It is the latter, his individual eschatology, to which I shall turn first.

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[5] Eusebius praises Bardaisan's defense of Christian doctrine in *Hist. eccl.* 4.30.1, ed. E. Schwartz and Th. Mommsen, *Eusebius, Werke II*, GCS N. F. 6 (Berlin, 1999), 392,19–20. A positive view of Bardaisan's defense of orthodoxy against the Marcionites is presented also in the *Vita Abercii*, ed. Th. Nissen, *S. Abercii Vita* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1912).

[6] In particular, Bardaisan's arguments against fatalism had a *Nachleben* in the Syriac Christian communities. Ephrem draws on them in *CH* 4,15.

[7] On Edessa in late antiquity, see the classic study by J.B. Segal, *Edessa 'The Blessed City'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970; reprint, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2001). The city's culture and its political history are discussed by S.K. Ross, *Roman Edessa: Politics and culture on the eastern fringes of the Roman Empire, 114–242 CE* (London: Routledge, 2001); F. Millar, *The Roman Near East. 31 BC – AD 337* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993); M. Sommer, *Roms orientalische Steppengrenze. Palmyra—Edessa—Dura-Europos—Hatra. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Pompeius bis Diocletian*, Oriens et Occidens 9 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005). Several encyclopedia entries provide overviews: K.E. McVey, "Edessa," *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 2 (1992), 284–287; H.J.W. Drijvers, "Edessa," *TRE* 9 (1982), 277–288; E. Kirsten, "Edessa," *RAC* 4 (1959), 552–597; E. Meyer, "Edessa in Osrhoene," *RE* 5:2 (1905), 1933–1938.

[8] A. Hultgård, "Persian Apocalypticism," in: *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, ed. J.J. Collins, vol. 1 (New York: Continuum, 1998), 39–83, esp. 44.

1.1. The Individual Resurrection

Bardaisan upheld the Christian teaching of the resurrection of the individual, yet he believed that only the human soul, not the body, would rise from death. In my previous research I have shown that Bardaisan's belief about the resurrection of the soul alone is rooted in his anthropology, which was principally intended to refute fatalism.[9] To summarize the argument briefly, Bardaisan held that human beings, created by God, are charged to follow the divine commandments,[10] and as beings endowed with free will they are capable of choosing the good and right behavior. Indeed, acting rightly is natural to humankind, Bardaisan argued, for when a person acts rightly, feelings of joy and gladness arise, whereas evil deeds result in feelings of anger and shame[11]—an interesting precursor to the Ignatian "discernment of spirits"![12] Yet many challenged Bardaisan's doctrine of free will, arguing instead that human behavior is conditioned by fate. Bardaisan therefore needed to formulate an anthropology which on the one hand maintained human freedom, and on the other hand could explain the misfortunes of life that inevitably befall some people, but are generally undesired, such as illness, poverty, or breakdown in human relationships.[13] Bardaisan's anthropological solution was to concede that the body—but only the body—may be subject to disturbing planetary influences, which are understood to be the cause of life's uncontrollable misfortunes.[14] Human freedom, however, is not subject to fate, and in order to uphold this position, Bardaisan had to posit that free will, the ability to fulfill the divine commandments, must be independent of one's bodily

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[9] U. Possekel, "Bardaisan of Edessa on the Resurrection: Early Syriac Eschatology in its Religious-Historical Context," *Oriens Christianus* 88 (2004), 1–28.

[10] *BLC* 11, ed. Drijvers 14,24–16,4.

[11] *BLC* 12 and 14, ed. Drijvers 18,5–7; 18,21–24; 20,2–9.

[12] Philosophers in antiquity often engaged in spiritual exercises. On this, see P. Hadot and A.I. Davidson, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995); P. Rabbow, *Seelenführung. Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike* (München: Kösel, 1954).

[13] He gives divorce or estranged children as examples for the latter. *BLC* 19, ed. Drijvers 30,4–24; *BLC* 21, ed. Drijvers 34,17–21.

[14] *BLC* 19–24, ed. Drijvers 30,3–38,7.

constitution.[15] Consequently, he located human identity in the mind or soul—the seat of free will—drawing on Greek philosophy rather than on the biblical notion of a human being as a psychosomatic unity. Bardaisan regarded the human body as only a secondary constituent of human nature, which "even without the sin of Adam would turn to its dust."[16] Out of this anthropology, which locates personhood in the human soul, arose his conviction that only the soul would rise at the resurrection.

Bardaisan substantiated his view of the resurrection of the soul by means of exegetical arguments. Unfortunately, these are only very partially preserved in Ephrem's later refutation of Bardaisan, a text which itself only exists in the form of a palimpsest. The exegetical fragments that were thus preserved address the fall of humankind, words spoken by Jesus, and the story of Christ's descent into Sheol.

With regard to the fall, Bardaisan noted that according to the Genesis account the consequence of Adam's sin would be death (Gen 2:17). Yet it was not Adam, but Abel killed by Cain who was the first to die, and hence Bardaisan concluded that the death which would be the recompense of sin (Rom 6:23) must be the death not of the body, but of the soul.[17] Among Jesus' words recorded in the Gospel, Bardaisan found confirmation of his resurrection theology in the text of John 8:51, in which Jesus promises: "Everyone who keeps my word will not taste death

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[15] He emphasizes that neither physical strength, nor social status, nor professional skill are required to obey the Golden Rule, to follow the commandments, and to avoid stealing, lying, adultery, or hate (*BLC* 12, ed. Drijvers 16,4–18,5). Doing good is possible and it is easy, and thus each person is able to "live according to his own (free) will, and to do everything that he is able to do, if he wishes it, or if he does not wish, not to do it. And he may justify himself or become guilty." (*BLC* 8, ed. Drijvers 12,13–15).

[16] Ephrem, *PR* II, 143,1–4 (no. 1). Body, by nature heavy, can not cleave to the soul, which is light. At the time of death, Bardaisan argues, the soul, the light part, departs "and like a breath it is for a time and it flies away lightly." (*PR* II, 160,14–16 [no. 65]).

[17] Ephrem, *PR* II, 151,11–152,2 (no. 32–34); *PR* II, 153,20–154,2 (no. 40–41).

forever."[18] Bardaisan observed that, despite this promise of immortality, Jesus' followers had physically died. Therefore, Jesus must have used the word "death" to refer to the death of soul. Thirdly, Bardaisan pointed to the story of Christ's descent to Sheol to support his belief that only the soul will be resurrected. Had the consequence of Adam's sin been death of the body, he reasoned, Christ ought to have brought back from Sheol the bodies, which evidently was not the case. Bardaisan wondered: "Our Lord, who was raised, why did he not raise all their bodies, so that as their destruction was by Adam, so their resurrection should be by our Lord?"[19]

Bardaisan's individual eschatology was thus shaped by two major conceptions. The first was an understanding of human nature which locates personhood exclusively in the soul, an anthropology which he formulated with the apologetic purpose of rejecting the astrologers' claim that planetary constellations determine human actions, a position that he himself had formerly embraced.[20] The second major component of Bardaisan's individual eschatology was a salvation-historical approach: the consequence of Adam's sin was death—understood as death of soul, the essential part of human nature; death was overcome by Christ, whose teachings enabled the soul, hitherto condemned to Sheol, to rise up and pass over into the kingdom.[21]

1.2. Bardaisan's Cosmogony

Bardaisan's general eschatology, as has been mentioned above, is rooted in his cosmogony. For Bardaisan, the cosmos is the work of God the creator, but he does not consider this as a creation from nothing. The concept of a *creatio ex nihilo* was just emerging as normative Christian doctrine in his time, and Bardaisan was not

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[18] Ephrem, *PR* II, 164,20–22 (no. 80) and 165,10–12 (no. 83).

[19] Ephrem, *PR* II, 162,32–39 (no. 74). The Diatessaron, which presumably was available to Bardaisan, in its earliest versions did not include the canonical text of Mt. 25:52, as was shown by W.L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship*, SVigChr 25 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 404–414. Cf. also Possekel, "Bardaisan of Edessa on the Resurrection," 10–11.

[20] *BLC* 18, ed. Drijvers 26,19–22.

[21] Ephrem, *PR* II, 164,41–165,8 (no. 82), cf. no. 81, 83.

alone in assuming the existence of primordial matter.[22] Bardaisan assumed the pre-existence of several elements which possessed some kind of power.[23] Out of these, God fashioned the world. The elements now occur in a mixture, not in their originally pure state, yet they retain some of their primeval power. In particular, the heavenly bodies retain some of this power—which for Bardaisan constitutes fate—but at the same time, they are subject to the laws imposed by God, the creator.

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[22] The best discussion of the subject is G. May, *Creatio ex nihilo: The Doctrine of 'Creation out of Nothing' in Early Christian Thought*, German ed. published in 1978, English tr. A.S. Worrall (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994). Justin, in *1 Apol.* 10,2 refers to a creation out of unformed matter (ἐξ ἀμόρφου ὕλης), ed. M. Marcovich, *Iustini Martyris Apologiae pro Christianis*, PTS 38 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994); cf. *1 Apol.* 59. On creation theologies in the Syriac Christian literature, see A. Guillaumont, "Genèse 1, 1–2 selon les commentateurs syriaques," in: *In Principio: Interprétations des premiers versets de la Genèse*, Collections des Études Augustiniennes. Série Antiquité 38 (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1973), 115–132. On *creatio ex nihilo* in Jewish literature, see H.-F. Weiss, *Untersuchungen zur Kosmologie des hellenistischen und palästinischen Judentums*, TU 97 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1966), 59–74; M.R. Niehoff, "*Creatio ex Nihilo* Theology in *Genesis Rabbah* in Light of Christian Exegesis," *HTR* 99 (2005), 37–64; see also M. Kister, "Tohu wa-Bohu, Primordial Elements and Creatio ex Nihilo," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* (forthcoming).

[23] That the primordial elements have a power of their own is stated in *BLC* 10 and 46, ed. Drijvers, 14,13–18 and 62,9–13. According to Bardaisan, the primordial elements are water, fire, wind, and air. The element of wind (ܪܘܚܐ, *ruḥa*) was probably included for exegetical reasons. On the interpretation of the *ruaḥ elohim* (Gen 1:2) among Syriac Christians, cf. S. Brock, "The *Ruaḥ Elohim* of Gen 1,2 and its Reception History in the Syriac Tradition," in: *Lectures et relectures de la Bible. Festschrift P.-M. Bogaert*, ed. J.-M. Auwers and A. Wénin, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 144 (Louvain: Peeters, 1999), 327–349. Bardaisan's elements therefore differ from the Empedoclean ones (air, fire, water, earth). Most early Christian authors accepted the existence of the Empedoclean elements, which they believed to have been created by God. According to some of the later Syriac sources, Bardaisan posited the existence of a primordial darkness below the primal elements, and of God above them, but it remains questionable whether such a system goes back to Bardaisan.

It should be emphasized that this cosmogony is not a dualistic creation myth, as can be found among some Gnostic groups or in the Iranian apocalyptic tradition.[24] To be sure, Bardaisan acknowledges the existence of evil, which is the work of the enemy.[25] Evil occurs when a person does not act rightly, does not follow his or her natural inclination to do good, or is perturbed or unwell in his or her nature.[26] In Bardaisan's thought, however, evil clearly is not a cosmic force, battling with the good God on the level of equals. Indeed, throughout the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*, Bardaisan strongly emphasizes the goodness and one-ness of God the creator, thereby taking an explicitly anti-Marcionite position, as has been argued by Han Drijvers.[27] The anti-Marcionite

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[24] Gnostic texts often regard the created world as negative, as work of the demiurge. An overview of Gnostic apocalyptic texts is given by F. Fallon, "The Gnostic Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979), 123–158; see also M. Krause, "Die literarischen Gattungen der Apokalypsen von Nag Hammadi," in: *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World*, 621–637. In Zoroastrianism, dualism does not consist of contrasting matter and spirit, but two opposing divine principles. On Zoroastrian apocalypticism, see for example Hultgård, "Persian Apocalypticism," 39–83. On Zoroastrian religious ideas more generally, see M. Boyce, *A History of Zoroastrianism*, 3 vols., Handbuch der Orientalistik (Leiden: Brill, 1989); M. Boyce, *Zoroastrians, Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge, 1979). Zervanism, however, seeks to overcome the dualist system and proposes a highest god, cf. R.C. Zaehner, *Zurvan. A Zoroastrian Dilemma* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955). The antiquity of Persian apocalypticism is a matter of debate since the most important texts date in their current form from the ninth century. The problems are summarized by Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 29–33 (with further bibliography). For an argument that the most ancient layer of Iranian apocalyptic originated not before the Sassanian period, see P. Gignoux, "L'apocalyptique iranienne est-elle vraiment ancienne?" *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 216 (1999), 213–277.

[25] *BLC* 11, ed. Drijvers 14,22–24; *BLC* 14, ed. Drijvers 18,22–23.

[26] *BLC* 14, ed. Drijvers 18,20–24.

[27] Drijvers, *Bardaiṣan of Edessa* 75f., 82f., and passim; H.J.W. Drijvers, "Bardaisan's Doctrine of Free Will, the Pseudo-Clementines, and Marcionism in Syria," in: *Liberté chrétienne et libre arbitre: Textes de l'enseignement de troisième cycle des facultés romandes de théologie*, ed. G. Bedouelle and O. Fatio (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1994), 13–30.

orientation of Bardaisan's theology is of significance for his eschatology, and I will come back to it below.

1.3. The Last Judgment

Repeatedly, Bardaisan in the *Book of the Laws of the Countries* refers to the end of the world, and to the judgment to be held on the last day.[28] History, then, is regarded neither as infinite—although Bardaisan postulates the pre-existence of elements—nor as cyclic; rather, it is conceived as having a beginning and an end in time. On the last day, judgment will be made of all, based on whether or not they used their free will, a gift from God, to act according to the divine commandments.[29] Bardaisan stated: "And it is given to (a human being) that he should live according to his own (free) will, and do all that he is able to do, if he wishes to do it, or if he does not wish, not to do it. And he may justify himself or become guilty."[30] This emphasis on the freedom of the human will and its ability to perform good deeds worthy of eternal life, although rejected by the Protestant reformers in the sixteenth century, was shared by many other early theologians, who, like Bardaisan, wished to refute the fatalism so widespread in late antique society. It is not a harmful native horoscope, nor the influence of maleficent stars that leads people to sin, they maintained, but a person's free will.[31]

Whereas Bardaisan's understanding of a last judgment of people, based on their deeds, was within the mainstream of early

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[28] *BLC* 9, ed. Drijvers 14,10–11; *BLC* 10, ed. Drijvers 14,16–18.

[29] Bardaisan does not develop a doctrine of atonement. By following Christ's commandments, one can obtain justification and salvation.

[30] *BLC* 9, ed. Drijvers 12,12–15.

[31] Justin Martyr argued that "punishments and good rewards are given according to the quality of each man's actions. If this were not so, but all things happened in accordance with destiny, nothing at all would be left up to us. … And if the human race does not have the power by free choice to avoid what is shameful and to choose what is right, then there is no responsibility for actions of any kind." *1 Apol.* 43, ed. Marcovich 92,5–11, tr. C. Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers* (New York: Macmillan, 1970), 269. On the question of fatalism and its refutation in antiquity, cf. D. Amand de Mendieta, *Fatalisme et liberté dans l'antiquité grecque* (Louvain, 1945; reprint Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1973).

Christianity, another aspect of his eschatology was not. According to the theologian from Edessa, not only human beings, but also some elements of the cosmos will be subjected to judgment. Although he continually emphasized God's sovereignty over all of creation, he conceded that the elements and heavenly bodies did not lose all of their power due to the mixture of creation. To be sure, whatever power they still have is granted to them by God, but on account of this remaining freedom they, too, will be judged, as Bardaisan explained to his somewhat puzzled disciples.

> But know that those things [ܣܒܬ̈ܝ, *sebwatha*, i.e., heavenly bodies], which I said were subject to the commandments, are not completely deprived of all freedom. And therefore they will all be subjected to judgment on the Last Day.[32]

One of his followers immediately wondered how those that lie under determination could be judged, to which the teacher responded:

> Not for that in which they are fixed... will the elements [ܐܣܛܘܟܣܐ, *'estokse*][33] be judged, but for that over which they have power. For the heavenly bodies [ܐܝܬܝ, *'ityе*] were not deprived of their own nature when they were created, but the energy of their essence was lessened through the conjunction[34] of one with the other, and they were subjected to the power of their creator. For that in which they are subjected they are not judged, but for that which is their own.[35]

The last judgment is thus envisioned as a cosmic event that involves all creatures with any kind of freedom.

1.4. A New World

As was noted earlier, Bardaisan understood world history as a process with a clear beginning and an end. This universe was

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[32] *BLC* 9, ed. Drijvers 14,8–11.

[33] The word *'estokse* here refers to the heavenly bodies.

[34] The Syriac word here, ܡܙܓܐ, *muzaga*, can mean "mixture," but it can also denote a planetary conjunction. Bardaisan plays on both of these meanings, as I will show in detail in my forthcoming monograph.

[35] *BLC* 10, ed. Drijvers 14,13–18.

ordered in a particular way by divine decree, and this order was to remain "until the course is completed and measure and number have been fulfilled, as it was ordained beforehand by him who commanded what the course should be and the completion of all creatures and the constitution of all elements (*'ityę*) and natures (*kyane*)."[36] World history is thus aimed at perfection, at completion of its prescribed course. It does not depend on human action, but will occur according to the divine decree.[37] At the end of time, according to Bardaisan, there will be a new world, which will be perfect and free of strife. Again, as in his cosmogony, the metaphor of mixture plays a prominent role in his description of the world to come. The new world will be founded upon a different intermixture, in which even the remaining freedom of the elements, which potentially could cause harm, will disappear. There will be, Bardaisan explained, different planetary conjunctions that will no longer produce strife and misery. In the world to come, there will be no place for inequalities, misfortunes, and even foolishness! Bardaisan described this peacefulness and perfection of the eschatological aeon in the conclusion of the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*: "In the constitution of this new world all evil impulses will have ceased and all rebellions will have ended, and the foolish will be convinced and every want filled, and there will be tranquility and peace through the gift of the Lord of all natures."[38]

Bardaisan's expectations of the end thus form a coherent system of thought that is based upon his anthropology and his cosmogony. Yet perhaps somewhat surprisingly, we find little detail in the remaining literature of the Bardaisanites about the end of time. There are no references to a cosmic battle, to natural

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[36] *BLC* 24, ed Drijvers, 38,3–7.

[37] Thereby, Bardaisan's thought is more in conformity with the biblical tradition that we do not know the day and hour of the *parousia* (cf. Mk 13:32) than with the Gnostic concept that human beings by their actions can contribute to the destruction of the cosmos. Cf. H.G. Kippenberg, "Ein Vergleich jüdischer, christlicher und gnostischer Apokalyptik," in: *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World*, 751–768, esp. 762. On apocalyptic motifs in the Gnostic literature, see also G. MacRae, "Apocalyptic Eschatology in Gnosticism," in: *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World*, 317–325.

[38] *BLC* 46, ed. Drijvers 62,15–18.

catastrophes, or other images typical of apocalyptic literature. Yet we may assume that Bardaisan, a bilingual man and an educated philosopher, was familiar with some form of apocalypticism, for it was widely spread across linguistic and cultural boundaries, as is evident from Jewish apocalypses, Graeco-Roman oracles, and the Sibyllines.[39] The thirteenth chapter of Mark presents a picture of the end times, and this text was at least partially included in the Diatessaron and thus available to Syriac-speaking Christians. In the second century, a number of apocalyptic writings were produced by Christian communities in the Roman Empire, and several early Christian writings, even if they were not apocalypses *per se*, made use of apocalyptic ideas and images.[40] Moreover, other systems of thought prevalent in Mesopotamia, such as Zoroastrianism, have

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[39] That the Sibyllines were known among Syriac-speaking Christians is illustrated by the *Letter of Mara bar Serapion to his Son*, in which the author alludes to the Sibyllines, ed. with English tr. Cureton, *Spicilegium syriacum* 43–48 (text), 70–76 (translation). A short overview of the Sibyllines with further literature is given by L.R. Ubigli, "Sibyllinen," *TRE* 31 (2000), 240–245. Jewish apocalypses from the first two centuries of the common era include IV Esra and syr. Baruch. See the overview by K. Müller, "Apokalyptik/Apokalypsen III. Die jüdische Apokalyptik. Anfänge und Merkmale," *TRE* 3 (1978), 202–251. A survey of Jewish apocalyptic literature is given by Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination.*

[40] The *Apocalypse of Peter* and the *Ascension of Isaiah* are both productions of Christian communities in the second century. Both texts are tr. with introductions by C.D.G. Müller, in: *NTApo* 2, 603–638. On the *Apocalypse of Peter*, see for example A. Dieterich, *Nekyia: Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1893), who interprets the text with regard to Greek stories of descent into Hades; M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), who emphasizes Jewish influence on the *Apocalypse of Peter*; J.N. Bremmer and I. Czachesz, eds., *The Apocalypse of Peter*, Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha 7 (Louvain: Peeters, 2003). See also the *Shepherd of Hermas* (ed. M. Whittaker, *Der Hirt des Hermas*, 2nd ed., GCS 48 [1967]) and *Didache* 16 (ed. with French tr. W. Rordorf and A. Tulier, *La doctrine des douze apôtres [Didachè]*, SC 248 [Paris: Cerf, 1978], 194–198). Apocalyptic themes also occur in the visions of Perpetua and in the writings of Tertullian and Hippolytus. Cf. Daley, "Apocalypticism in Early Christian Theology," 10–13.

produced elaborate apocalyptic treatises.[41] Why then, we are led to wonder, did Bardaisan refrain from employing apocalyptic imagery?

1.5. Theological and Social Context

Bardaisan's omission of apocalyptic language was, I think, a deliberate decision on his part. Two reasons—one theological, the other sociological—suggest that this was the case. First, apocalyptic images often present the rising up of evil powers that challenge the existing order, and are finally overcome by God, who establishes a new creation.[42] This type of imagery is dualistic in spirit, even if it does not picture the opposition of two nearly equal divine figures, such as Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu in Persian apocalypticism. Bardaisan, it seems, would have avoided at all costs the introduction of such imagery into his theological discourse, for one of his major goals was to refute the Marcionite claim of the existence of two gods. His anti-Marcionite stance, which earned him praise from Eusebius, would have been reason enough to avoid images of a final cosmic battle.

The second reason why Bardaisan might not have been inclined to employ apocalyptic elements in his theology pertains to the social setting, the *Sitz im Leben*, of apocalypticism. Scholars such as Isenberg, Hanson, Nickelsburg, and Frankfurter have studied the cultural setting of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic movements and have suggested that apocalyptic literature often arises in communities who feel marginalized by the social or religious majority. Nickelsburg sums up Hanson's approach:

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[41] See for example Hultgård, "Persian Apocalypticism," with further literature. See also note 24 above.

[42] Perpetua, for instance, has a vision of fighting with and winning over an Egyptian man, who is later identified as Satan. Text ed. with French tr. J. Amat, *Passion de Perpétue et de Félicité suivi des Actes*, SC 417 (Paris: Cerf, 1996). On Perpetua's visions, see P. Habermehl, *Perpetua und der Ägypter oder Bilder des Bösen im frühen afrikanischen Christentum. Ein Versuch zur Passio sanctarum Perpetua [sic] et Felicitatis*, 2nd ed., TU 140 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2004); F.J. LeMoine, "Apocalyptic Experience and the Conversion of Women in Early Christianity," in: *Fearful Hope: Approaching the New Millennium*, ed. C. Kleinhenz and F.J. LeMoine (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 201–206.

> Ancient apocalyptic movements have a common *social setting* in which a group experiences alienation due to the disintegration of the life-sustaining socio-religious structures and their supporting myths. Institutional structures may be physically destroyed or a community may find itself excluded from the dominant society and its symbolic universe.[43]

What then, was the situation in Edessa in the time of Bardaisan? Our reconstruction of the Edessan milieu in the early third century must rely largely on material remains, reports by Roman historians, and later literary sources, for indigenous literary productions from this era are lacking (apart from the remains of Bardaisan's corpus). Nonetheless, careful interpretation of the sources gives much insight into Edessan culture in late antiquity. By the end of the second century, Edessa had been an independent kingdom for more than three hundred years,[44] striving to balance

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[43] G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "Social Aspects of Palestinian Jewish Apocalypticism," in: *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World*, 641–654, quote on p. 645. See also S.R. Isenberg, "Millenarism in Greco-Roman Palestine," *Religion* 4 (1974), 26–46; P.D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*, revised ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979). Nickelsburg stresses that apocalyptic and wisdom traditions are closely associated in Jewish literature. Both originate in similar social settings of scribes, cf. G.W.E. Nickelsburg, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism in Early Judaism: Some Points for Discussion," in: *Conflicted Boundaries in Wisdom and Apocalypticism*, ed. B.G. Wright and L.M. Wills (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 17–37; reprint in J. Neusner and A.J. Avery-Peck, eds., *George W.E. Nickelsburg in Perspective. An Ongoing Dialogue*, vol. 1, Supplements to the Study of Judaism 80 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 267–287. See also W. Meeks, "Social Function of Apocalyptic Language in Pauline Christianity," in: *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World*, 687–705. A similar interpretive model guides the work of B. Daley: "I will also assume that ancient apocalypses were normally 'sectarian' productions: written for a community of faith that saw itself beleaguered or marginalized by the dominant religious and political systems of the society to which it belonged...". (Daley, "Apocalypticism in Early Christian Theology," 4). See also D. Frankfurter, "Early Christian Apocalypticism: Literature and Social World," in: *Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* 1, 415–453, esp. 432–434.

[44] Since 132 B.C.; on Edessa's early history, cf. Segal, *Edessa*, 1–15.

alliances with the adjacent "superpowers" Rome and Parthia.[45] During Bardaisan's adulthood in the 190s, King Abgar VIII attempted to regain independence, but Septimius Severus (193–211) occupied the region and established Osrhoene as a Roman province in the year 195. Thereafter, the Edessan king adopted an attitude of greater loyalty to Rome. He took a Roman name, sent his sons as political hostages to Rome, offered the emperor the services of his world-renowned archers, and personally visited the imperial capital.[46] Edessa became a Roman *colonia* under Caracalla (in 213), but the kingship continued, at least nominally, until the 240s AD.[47] This political turmoil, and the disastrous flooding of the

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[45] These efforts were sometimes viewed as betrayal by the Roman historians. Cassius Dio, for instance, blames Abgar for the disastrous defeat of Crassus (*Hist.* 40.20–27), ed. with English tr. E. Cary, *Dio's Roman History*, vol. 3, LCL (London: Heinemann, 1914; reprint 1954). H.J.W. Drijvers emphasizes that there is no evidence for Abgar's responsibility of the defeat, cf. "Hatra, Palmyra und Edessa. Die Städte der syrisch-mesopotamischen Wüste in politischer, kulturgeschichtlicher und religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung," *ANRW* II 8 (1977), 799–906, esp. 871.

In 116 AD Trajan subjected Edessa to Roman control, but territories east of the Euphrates were subsequently given up by Hadrian. In the 160s, Edessa came under Parthian dominance, but soon Rome regained control and established Edessa as a client state. The king, Ma'nu, now took on the title *philorhomaios*, for which there is numismatic evidence. The subject is discussed by Sommer, *Roms orientalische Steppengrenze*, 238f.; Ross, *Roman Edessa*, passim. On the topic of client kingship more generally, see D. Braund, *Rome and the Friendly King. The Character of Client Kingship* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984).

[46] Herodian reports that Abgar's sons became political hostages and that the king offered his archers to support the emperor in his *History* 3.9.2, ed. and tr. C.R. Whittaker, *Herodian*, 2 vols., LCL (London: Heinemann, 1969–1970). On the fame of the Osrhoenean archers, see also Herodian, *Hist.* 6.7.8. Abgar's visit to Rome, where he was lavishly received, is noted by Cassius Dio 80.16.2.

[47] The later history of the Edessan kingdom is complicated and its chronology is difficult to reconstruct on account of contradictory statements in the sources. It is usually assumed that the kingship lasted until either 242 or 248 AD. On this, see J. Teixidor, "Les derniers rois d'Édesse d'après deux nouveaux documents syriaques," *Zeitschrift für*

city in the year 201, however, does not appear to have destabilized Edessan society, for many of Edessa's physical remains, in particular the astonishing mosaics, date from the early third century and indicate a flourishing city, self-confident in its artistic and cultural expressions. Moreover, Bardaisan's group was far from being a marginalized community in search of a symbolic universe. Bardaisan was a nobleman, prominent at the Edessan court, a superb archer (as Julius Africanus relates), a musician, and a capable disputant. He believed that he defended Christian orthodoxy in his apologies against Marcionites, Gnostics, and astrologers. His group stood at the center of early third-century Syriac Christianity, not at its margins. Bardaisan's expectations of the end, the judgment, resurrection, and the world to come are shaped by his cosmogony and his anthropology. The remaining fragments of his writings do not suggest use of apocalyptic imagery, which, I think, can at least be partially explained by his opposition to Marcionite dualism and by his prominent position in early Edessan society.

2. THE ODES OF SOLOMON

Let us now turn to a very different literary production of the early Syriac church, the *Odes of Solomon*, and the eschatological expectations expressed therein.[48] Unlike Bardaisan's writings, this poetic collection can not easily be associated with a particular Christian community. Although efforts have been made to locate the *Odes* in the early Edessan church, no specific internal or external evidence supports this hypothesis.

Papyrologie und Epigraphik 76 (1989), 219–222; M. Gawlikowski, "The Last Kings of Edessa," in: *Symposium Syriacum VII*, ed. R. Lavenant, *OCA 256* (Rome: Pontifico Istituto Orientale, 1998), 421–428; A. Luther, "Elias von Nisibis und die Chronologie der edessenischen Könige," *Klio* 81 (1999), 180–198; L. van Rompay, "Jacob of Edessa and the Early History of Edessa," in: *After Bardaisan: Studies on Continuity and Change in Syriac Christianity*, ed. G.J. Reinink and A.J. Klugkist (Louvain: Peeters, 1999), 269–286.

[48] Text ed. with English tr. J.H. Charlesworth, *The Odes of Solomon. The Syriac texts, edited with translation and notes*, SLB Texts and Translations 13. Pseudepigrapha 7 (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1977).

Space here does not permit an exhaustive treatment of the eschatology of the *Odes*, and it must suffice to highlight some of the major themes.[49] The odist repeatedly expresses the joy that he feels for being united to the Lord, whom he has "put on."[50] He extols the eternal life that he has acquired by joining himself to the Immortal One.[51] He knows himself already crowned with the Lord,[52] a crown that brings salvation.[53] The Lord has already given him eternal rest.[54] The Lord has rescued the poet from the "depth of Sheol" and has freed him from the "mouth of death."[55] The odist is certain that he will not die,[56] for he is now already justified.[57] Already he has received salvation by leaving the way of error.[58] It is thus a realized eschatology that we find expressed in the *Odes of Solomon*, one in which apocalyptic imagery, such as details of the coming judgment, or frightful descriptions of the disasters and crises that will accompany the end times, are lacking. There is no apocalyptic tour of hell, but there is a visionary glimpse of paradise with its abundance of vegetation, a land irrigated by the river of gladness.[59] Themes of joy, comfort, and trust dominate in these poems.

As dissimilar as the eschatology of the *Odes* is from that of Bardaisan, neither one takes recourse to apocalyptic imagery. Moreover, they both employ the same striking image of crossing over into eternal life. Bardaisan teaches that the souls, previously

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[49] A brief discussion of the *Odes'* eschatology can be found in Daley, *Hope of the Early Church*, 15–16; a more detailed examination is D.E. Aune, *The Cultic Setting of Realized Eschatology in Early Christianity*, NovTestSuppl 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 166–194.

[50] *Odes* 3,1; 7,4; 15,1; 23,1; 28,2.

[51] *Odes* 3,8; 28,7.

[52] *Odes* 1,1; 17,1.

[53] *Odes* 1,5.

[54] *Odes* 11,12; 38,3.

[55] *Odes* 29,4.

[56] *Odes* 5,14.

[57] *Odes* 17,2.

[58] *Odes* 15,6; cf. 15,8.

[59] *Odes* 11,16–24. In his *Hymns on Paradise*, Ephrem gives a visionary description of paradise, ed. with German tr. E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de Paradiso*, CSCO 174–175, Syr. 78–79 (Louvain, 1957); English tr. S. Brock, *St. Ephrem the Syrian. Hymns on Paradise* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990).

unable to enter paradise—for they were hindered "at the crossing-place" (ܡܥܒܪܬܐ, *maʿbarta*) by the sin of Adam—are now able, on account of Christ's work, to cross at the crossing-place and to enter the bridal chamber of light.[60] Ephrem summarizes Bardaisan's doctrine:

> "And the life," [Bardaisan said,] "that our Lord brought in
> is that he taught truth and ascended,
> and allowed them to pass over into the kingdom."[61]

While for Bardaisan it is only the soul that crosses over into eternity, for the author of the *Odes* the entire human person is able, through faith in the Lord, to cross the "raging rivers." The odist's poetic language does not spell out that this crossing takes the person from this world into the next, but the eschatological subtext of the hymn seems evident.

> But those who cross them [i.e., the raging rivers]
> in faith
> Shall not be disturbed.
> And those who walk on them faultlessly
> Shall not be shaken.
> Because the sign on them is the Lord,
> And the sign is the way for those who cross in the
> name of the Lord.
> Therefore, put on the name of the most high and know
> him,
> And you shall cross without danger,
> Because rivers shall be obedient to you.
> The Lord has bridged them by his word,
> And he walked and crossed them on foot.
> And his footsteps stand firm upon the waters, and were
> not destroyed,
> But they are like a beam of wood that is constructed on
> truth.
> ...
> And the way has been appointed for those who cross
> over after him,
> And for those who adhere to the path of his faith
> And who adore his name.[62]

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[60] Ephrem, *PR* II, 164,33–165,19 (no. 81–83).

[61] Ephrem, *PR* II, 164,41–165,8 (no. 82); cf. *PR* II, 165,9–19 (no. 83).

[62] *Odes* 39,5–10.13, tr. Charlesworth (adapted).

Imagery drawn from the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament is woven into this hymn to emphasize that faith in the Lord will enable the Christian to cross at the "crossing-places" (*maʿbarta*).[63] This may refer to overcoming obstacles and being persistent in the faith in this world, but the hymn also has an eschatological dimension.

3. The Acts of Thomas

The *Acts of Thomas*, written in the form of an ancient novel, relate the missionary journeys of the apostle Thomas to India.[64] The *Acts* as a whole do not constitute apocalyptic literature,[65] but one element commonly found in apocalyptic treatises does occur in the *Acts of Thomas*, namely a visionary description of the punishments

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[63] *Odes* 39,2. Allusions to the biblical tradition of crossing the Red Sea (e.g., LXX Ex. 14; Ps. 76,16–20; 77,11–16; Isa. 19,1–10) are highlighted by M. Lattke, *Oden Salomos. Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, vol. 3, Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus 41/3 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 189–211. Charlesworth, *Odes*, 137, sees in *Ode* 39,10 a reference to the tradition that Jesus walked on water. Lattke, *Oden*, 202, on the other hand, rejects this thesis.

[64] The *Acts of Thomas* are preserved in both a Syriac and a Greek version. Whereas it is generally acknowledged that the text was originally composed in Syriac, in many passages the Greek text has preserved a more ancient version of the *Acts*. Syriac text ed. with English tr. W. Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles. Edited from Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum and Other Libraries*, 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1871; reprint Hildesheim: Olms, 1990); Greek text ed. R.A. Lipisus and M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, vol. 2.2 (Leipzig: 1898; reprint, Hildesheim, 1959), 99–291. English tr. of the Greek text H.J.W. Drijvers, *NTApo* 2, 339–411.

[65] On the question of genre, see Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 2–21; idem, "Towards the Morphology of a Genre." In order to be classified as apocalyptic there needs to be a conjunction of several literary elements, a "significant cluster of traits," (Collins) such as a narrative framework, visions, a revelation by an otherworldly being mediated to a human recipient, disclosure of a transcendent reality, and a final judgment. John Collins observes that "[t]he genre is not constituted by one or more distinctive themes but by a distinctive combination of elements, all of which are also found elsewhere." (Collins, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, 12).

of hell.[66] While the details of the account in the sixth act differ in the Greek and Syriac versions, the main story line is the same. Upon hearing Thomas' preaching of a life of *enkrateia*, a young man strove to persuade the woman he loved to become his "consort in chastity and pure conduct."[67] Much to his chagrin, the woman refused, and lest she have intercourse with others, the young man killed her. His crime was revealed when his hands withered up as he received the Eucharist. He related the events to Thomas the apostle, who first healed the man's disease and then accompanied him, followed by a great throng of people, to the woman's house. She was raised to life and told of her extraordinary tour of hell and the punishments there to be suffered for various kinds of sins. Upon her revival, the woman converted, and so did the multitude of onlookers.[68]

The dead woman's vision of hell functions in the *Acts of Thomas* to instill in the audience fear of future punishments in order to enforce a certain moral code. Similar stories are preserved from other eras of Christian history, and they usually serve the same parenetic function. Bede, for example, relates that the medieval Englishman Drythelm chose to enter the monastic life after his tour of heaven and hell during a near-death experience revealed to him what was at stake.[69] The inclusion of this apocalyptic episode in the *Acts of Thomas* shows that Syriac Christians were aware of apocalyptic literature and occasionally availed themselves of such themes,[70] but it remains a somewhat isolated example among the literature of the early Syriac church.

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[66] On the subject of visions of hell in Jewish and early Christian literature, see Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell*.

[67] *ATh* 51, tr. Drijvers, 361.

[68] *ATh* 51–59, tr. Drijvers, 360–364.

[69] Bede, *Hist. eccl.* V 12, ed. B. Colgrave and R.A.B. Mynors, *Bede's Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992); English tr. L. Sherley-Price, *Bede, Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, revised ed. (New York: Penguin, 1990).

[70] The vision of hell in the *ATh* bears certain resemblances to *Apocalypse of Peter* 7–12. See for example A. Jacob, "The Reception of the *Apocalypse of Peter* in Ancient Christianity," in: *The Apocalypse of Peter*, ed. J.N. Bremmer and I. Czachesz, Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha 7

4. CONCLUSION

Among the earliest Syriac-speaking Christians, the traditions surrounding both Bardaisan and the *Odes of Solomon* show a marked absence of apocalyptic imagery, a somewhat surprising result considering the relative popularity of apocalyptic themes in the second century. For Bardaisan, the Edessan theologian about whose social setting we are fairly well informed, I have suggested specific theological and sociological reasons as to why he might have avoided apocalyptic symbols. Such considerations are impossible for the *Odes*, for their provenance remains unknown. The attribution of this collection of poems to Solomon, however, indicates that the author was more attuned to the themes of wisdom literature than to those of apocalyptic writing.[71] The *Acts of Thomas* include a visionary description of the punishments of hell, one element often found in apocalyptic literature, but as a whole they do not belong to the genre of apocalyptic. The *Acts* thereby support our claim that early Syriac Christians were familiar with apocalyptic themes, but generally chose not to convey their theologies through the medium of apocalyptic.

Even in a social context of severe distress, some early Syriac Christians counseled wisdom and patience, rather than casting their situation into an apocalyptic framework. Mara bar Serapion, a prisoner of war en route to his exile in a foreign land, writes to his son with parental advice and admonition.[72] In his letter, probably composed in the third century,[73] he counsels his son to pursue

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(Louvain: Peeters, 2003), 174–186. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell*, 132–134 suggests that both treatises draw on the same Jewish traditions.

[71] Of course, as Nickelsburg has argued extensively, elements of wisdom literature appear in apocalyptic writing and vice versa, but nonetheless they remain two distinct approaches. Cf. Nickelsburg, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism."

[72] Mara bar Serapion, *Letter to his Son* (see above n. 39). It should be noted that it is debated among scholars whether the letter is of Christian or pagan authorship.

[73] As is the case wish many of the early Syriac Christian documents, date and provenance of Mara bar Serapion's *Letter* are difficult to determine. The letter has been dated to the first century by I. Ramelli, "Stoicismo e cristianesimo in area siriaca nella seconda metà del I secolo d. C." *Sileno* 25 (1999), 197–212. A second-century date was suggested by

wisdom and to meditate upon learning. The youth is to avoid the vanities of life, for worldly riches, fame, and beauty all may vanish. Wisdom, on the other hand, can not so easily be taken away, and can become for him a father and mother.

Why is it that apocalyptic images are so sparse in the early Syriac Christian literature? It is difficult to make generalizations, and any number of cultural factors might explain why the early Syriac Christians felt more drawn to wisdom traditions, as was the anonymous author of the *Odes of Solomon*, or to a philosophical approach, as were Bardaisan and Mara bar Serapion. It may be attributable to their residence in a region constantly embattled by two empires, neither of which could easily be associated with good or evil. Such a geopolitical situation may have made them less inclined to develop a symbolic universe in which good and evil forces engage in a cosmic battle. It was only in later centuries that the Syriac-speaking communities availed themselves of apocalyptic imagery, when more clearly defined hostile empires threatened their very existence. In the fourth century, Aphrahat, the Persian sage, drew on the apocalyptic passages in the Book of Daniel and intimated the eventual demise of the Sassanian Empire.[74] And in the seventh century, in the context of the Arab conquests of the Near East, anonymous Syriac authors ascribed full-fledged

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Cureton, *Spicilegium syriacum*, xiii–xv, and a third-century date by F. Schulthess, "Der Brief des Mara bar Sarapion. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der syrischen Litteratur," *ZDMG* 51 (1897), 366–375, esp. 376–381. A fourth-century date was suggested by S.P. Brock, *A Brief Outline of Syriac Literature*, Moran Etho 9 (Baker Hill, Kottayam: SEERI, 1997), 18. K.E. McVey, "A Fresh Look at the Letter of Mara bar Sarapion to his Son," in: *V Symposium Syriacum 1988*, ed. R. Lavenant, OCA 236 (1990), 269f., 272 suggests a third or fourth-century date. C. Chin, "Rhetorical Practice in the Chreia Elaboration of Mara bar Serapion," *Hugoye* 9.2 (2006) argues that the letter constitutes a rhetorical exercise. I follow the arguments for a third-century date presented by Schulthess.

[74] Aphrahat, *Demonstration* 5, ed. J. Parisot, *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes* I–XXII, Patrologia Syriaca 1.1 (Paris, 1894), German tr. P. Bruns, *Aphrahat, Unterweisungen*, vol. 1, Fontes Christiani 5/1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1991).

apocalyptic sermons to the authority of two ancient and venerated figures, Ephrem and Methodius.[75]

[75] In the seventh century, apocalyptic treatises by Ps.-Ephrem and Ps.-Methodius refer to the Arab invasion in prophecies that are *vaticinia ex eventu*. Ps.-Ephrem's *Sermon on the End of the World* is ed. with German tr. E. Beck, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones III*, CSCO 320–321, Syr. 138–139 (Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1970), *sermo* 5, p. 60–71 (text) and p. 79–94 (tr.). Beck dates it to the second half of the seventh century (Introduction to the tr., p. IX–X). An apocalyptic Latin sermon, variously ascribed to Ephrem and to Isidore of Seville, is ed. by C.P. Caspari, *Briefe, Abhandlungen und Predigten aus den zwei letzten Jahrhunderten des kirchlichen Alterthums und dem Anfang des Mittelalters* (1890; reprint, Brussels: Culture et Civilization, 1964). On this Latin sermon, see B. McGinn, *Visions of the End. Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 60–61. The treatise by Ps.-Methodius, originally composed in Syriac, was soon translated into Greek and Latin. Syriac text ed. with German tr. G.J. Reinink, *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, CSCO 540–541, Syr. 220–221 (Louvain: Peeters, 1993). Reinink dates the apocalypse to ca. 691/2 (p. XII–XV). The Greek versions were ed. (without full knowledge of the Syriac text) by A. Lolos, *Die Apokalypse des Ps-Methodius* (Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1976); A. Lolos, *Die dritte und vierte Redaktion des Ps.-Methodius* (Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1978). See now W.J. Aerts and G.A.A. Kortekaas, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius. Die ältesten griechischen und lateinischen Übersetzungen*, 2 vols., CSCO 569–570, Sub. 97–98 (Louvain: Peeters, 1998). On the apocalyptic themes in Ps.-Methodius, see for example G.J. Reinink, "Pseudo-Methodius und die Legende vom römischen Endkaiser," in: *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst, and A. Welkenhuysen (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 82–111. Note should be made here of several sermons "On the End" by Jacob of Sarug (d. 521), the study of which exceeds the scope of this paper. These are sermons numbered 31–32, 67–68, 192–195, ed. P. Bedjan, *Homiliae selectae Mar Jacobi Sarugensis*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1905, reprint in 6 vols. with additional material Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2006). The French tr. of Jacob's sermons on the end by I. Isebaert-Cauuet, *Jacques de Saroug, Homélies eschatologiques sur la fin du monde* (Paris: Migne, 2005) was not available. An excerpt of an apocalyptic sermon attributed to Jacob is tr. in McGinn, *Visions of the End.*

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PROJECT REPORT

THE STATE OF PRESERVATION OF THE BYZANTINE MOSAICS OF THE SAINT GABRIEL MONASTERY OF QARTAMIN, TUR ABDIN (SOUTH-WEST TURKEY) OCTOBER 10TH–14TH, 2006

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ABSTRACT

A mission organized by Alain Desreumaux and Sébastien de Courtois, on the request of His Eminence Mor Timotheos Samuel Aktas, Metropolitan of Tur Abdin conducted over five days of study in October 2006 to evaluate the state of preservation of the Byzantine mosaics adorning the sanctuary of the church of Saint Gabriel Monastery in Tur Abdin and proposed solutions for the mosaics' long-term safeguard and maintenance.

The goal of this mission, conducted over five days in October 2006, was to evaluate the state of preservation of the Byzantine mosaics adorning the sanctuary of the church of Saint Gabriel Monastery in Tur Abdin, and to propose solutions for the mosaics' long-term safeguard and maintenance. Organized by Alain Desreumaux, researcher at the CNRS (Workshop on Ancient Semitic Studies at the Collège de France's Institute of Semitic Studies: Eastern Mediterranean UMR) and by Sébastien de Courtois, doctoral student at the EHESS, the mission was completed thanks only to the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and especially of Michel Pierre, who generously covered all transportation costs.

LOCATION

The Monastery of Saint Gabriel, or Mar Gabriel, is located in the region called Tur Abdin (in Syriac, "Mountain of the Servants"), a mountain range in southeast Turkey that overlooks the Mesopotamian plain to the southeast of Diyarbekir. Southeast of Midyat, the monastery is located 5 kilometers from the village of Qartamin, 60 kilometers from the Syrian, and 90 miles from the Iraqi border. At present, the monastery belongs to the Syriac Orthodox Church, and wields special spiritual influence in Tur Abdin thanks to the presence of Archbishop Mor Timotheos Samuel Aktas, the diocesan bishop who resides there.

HISTORY

At the heart of Tur Abdin history, the Mar Gabriel Monastery has long been a center of Christianity and Syriac culture in the Middle East. With its monuments and manuscripts, with its many illustrious ascetic saints, monks, bishops, scribes and writers, Tur Abdin has figured prominently in Syrian and Mesopotamian history from the 3rd century to the present.

The founding of Mar Gabriel likely dates to when Persians murdered Bishop Karpos during a raid on Roman Nisibe in the middle of the fourth century. A Syriac manuscript most probably dating from the thirteenth century (British Museum manuscript, Add. 17265, which is completed by Sachau manuscript 221 of Berlin's *Staatsbibliothek*, dated to the seventeenth century) explains the origins of the monastery founded in 397 A.D. by Samuel,

Karpos' spiritual son and a native of Mardin. One of his disciples, Simeon, succeeded him in 408; Simeon had buildings erected and transformed the hermit's retreat into a spiritual hub sheltering hundreds of monks. Because of its strategic location on the Roman Empire's eastern frontier, vast construction was undertaken, first under Emperor Arcadius, then under Theodosius II. But it was only Emperor Anastasius' generosity that allowed the monks to build a large church, finally completed in 512. As the British Museum's manuscript tells us, Anastasius sent the monks not just gold, but also skilled specialized workers-builders, goldsmiths, sculptors, painters and mosaicists credited with the sanctuary's mosaic.

In the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, several European travelers visited the monastery: H. Pognon in 1899, C. Preusser in 1909, Miss G. Bell in 1909 and 1911. Then, from 1918 to 1954, Tur Abdin became a military zone closed to tourism. In 1954, J. Leroy, researcher at the CNRS, was the first European allowed to see the monastery again. These visitors left descriptions that provide useful testimony on the state of the mosaics' preservation.

Gertrude Lowthian Bell, who visited the monastery on two separate occasions, took photographs and compiled a map of the buildings, which she published along with two drawings of the ceiling's mosaics. In 1958, Abbot Jules Leroy briefly mentioned two mosaics he had seen in 1954: "The first (published in Preusser, 1911) shows geometric designs with borders containing aces and spades". Concerning the second mosaic, he wrote, "one can make out... a cross surrounded by vines. According to [G. Bell in Van Berchem and Strzygowski, *Amida*, [1910,] p. 272, this is the oldest example of wall mosaic in Mesopotamia." Though the mosaic in question is the same that decorates the barrel vaulted ceiling. After each having stayed at the monastery in 1972, Ernest J. W. Hawkins and Marlia C. Mundell conducted further study on the mosaics, and published their findings in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, together with a fine photographic illustration (*DOP*, 27, 1973, pp. 279–296, 49 fig.).

DESCRIPTION OF THE DECOR

The mosaics in question adorn one room of the main church, situated in the eastern section of the monastery. This space-called

"presbyterium" by G. Bell and "sanctuary" by E. Hawkins and M. Mundell-forms the church's choir, and is partially occupied by a modern altar affixed to the floor. The room measures 4.33 X 5.83 meters; at its center, the barrel vault rises to 5.36 meters.

The description found in the British Museum's thirteenth-century manuscript states, "The sanctuary's floor is covered with mosaics of white, black, yellow, purple and maroon marble, with various figures. Its circular walls are covered by marble slabs, and overhead, on the vaulted ceiling, there are mosaics of golden cubes."

THE PAVEMENT

G. Bell mentioned that the pavement was decorated with polychromatic marble, of which J. Leroy offered a brief description upon which E. Hawkins and M. Mundell further elaborated, also presenting three photographs: "The floor of the sanctuary is paved with *opus sectile* of black, red, and white marbles. A rectangular panel fills the west doorway (fig. 49). The main floor has a rectangular design with a border around the walls and a circular centerpiece with a spiraling pattern around a small grey and white variegated marble disc (32 cm. in diameter), now partly covered by the step in front of the modern altar (figs. 47, 48)."

Covering a surface of about 25.25 m^2, the flooring is trichromatic *opus sectile* (black, white, red). Along the checkerboard walls (whose squares are decorated with alternating hourglasses and florets with two spear-shaped petals each), the flooring's bordering zone is delimited towards the center by a row of white triangles on a black background. The central part of the floor mosaic is adorned with a grid of rows of adjacent squares, which form large quadrangles occupied in turn by four white squares around further black or red squares, all of which are decorated with a four-petal floret of contrasting colors. At the center of this composition, there is a large circle decorated with a "triangle shield" with a double border-one border on a white background being decorated with alternating black beads and black squares and inscribed with a white square; the other border being decorated with alternating black/red and white squares marked with florets of contrasting colors. The center of the shield is marked with a marble disk bordered by a line of red and black triangles.

FIRST DESCRIPTIONS OF THE WALL MOSAICS

Of the wall mosaics on the vaulted ceiling and lunettes, of which about 45 m² are preserved, G. Bell left precise descriptions: "Of the presbyterium mosaic a precious fragment remains. The barrel vault is covered with a spreading vine, the spirals of which encircle leaves and bunches of grapes (Fig. 21 [drawing from a photograph]) … At each of the four corners, the vine springs from a double handled vase. The body of the vase is divided into two zones by a narrow band; in the lower zone a geometric design springs up from the pointed base. In the centre of the vine, at the top of the vault, there is a rayed *crux gemmata* enclosed in a circle (Fig. 22 [drawing of the motif]). The vault is bordered by three bands of ornament. The first is a forked pattern worked in three colours; the second a row of hollow 8-pointed stars with a white dot in every point and an ivy leaf in the hollow centre; the third a series of rhomboids, separated from each other by a cross band of three jewels, the whole closely resembling the jewelled bands which occur in Byzantine mosaics of the 6th century. On the S. wall of the chamber, under the vault, there are fragments of mosaic in which it is possible to make out a small domed tabernacle, the dome carried on two pairs of columns. On the N. wall also there are traces of mosaic, and upon the floor there is a pavement of different coloured marbles. The mosaic on the vault is carried out in red, a pale greenish blue, and white, upon a gold ground… The execution of the vine is fine and delicate in detail, and the realistic treatment is unlike mosaics of the Moslem period."

This description was further elaborated upon by M.C. Mundell, who was able closely to examine part of the mosaic during her stay at the monastery in August 1972. The stylistic analysis that she gave was accompanied by many photographs of details, which are especially helpful for comparisons as we document of the decor's present state of preservation.

THE CEILING IN 2006

The ceiling presents a decor of vine leaves springing from four canthari vases set in the corners. To accentuate the effect of height, the vines narrow towards the center of the ceiling, which is marked by a radiating *crux gemmata* drawn onto a starry background, inside a circle made of a row of trisected calices set alternately top to

bottom (diam. 1.40 m). In smaller medallions, two other crosses standing on steps face each other on the vaulted ceiling's spring: one is situated over the west door and is bordered by a guilloche (diam. 59 cm); the other, less complete, is located over the east apse and is bordered by a two-stranded braid (diam. 66 cm). The field is limited by three borders (width: 82 cm): these are, from the inside outwards, a line of nesting chevrons; a strip of eight-pointed stars (each point accented with a little circle) decorated with circles marked with a heart-shaped leaf; and finally a gem-studded line with alternating large and small squares on edge.

Less complete, the southern and northern lunettes present figurative decorations: to the south, framed by two trees (cypresses?), a domed tabernacle supported by columns shelters an altar (?) with two chalices, and oil-lamps hung on each side of the tabernacle; to the north, the decoration, in a ruinous state, seems to have been similar, though only the two side trees and the tabernacle's dome remain. Made of glass tesserae, a Greek inscription is still partially preserved under the tabernacle of the south lunette. This inscription, studied by C. Mango (*DOP*, 27, 1973, p. 296), likely gave the sponsors', or perhaps the mosaicists' signature.

The backgrounds' tesserae have gold leaf. In the lunettes, these tesserae are set in regular horizontal lines that are widely spaced, and their surface is tilted slightly down. Jutting out in this way, these tesserae's reflections are more fetching, catching the light better. The lines' wide spacing also allowed for savings on tesserae.

IDENTIFICATION OF OTHER DECORATION

During our brief mission, only the choir's decor could be studied, though the monastery also possesses vestiges of other mosaics. According to G. Bell, "Local tradition insists that the vault of the nave was once covered with mosaics like the vault of the *presbyterium*; possibly a careful examination of the brickwork might yield some evidence as to the truth of this tale." E. Hawkins and M. Mandel also mentioned the presence of a destroyed mosaic in the choir' small apse: "The shallow apse bears traces of destroyed mosaic decoration… All the mosaic in the shallow apse recess has been lost, but an irregular area of setting-bed (1.15 m. x 0.75 m.) bearing traces of the frescoes design is exposed on the north side

of the original window opening and it is possible that more extends around to the other side underneath comparatively modern renderings. The design on the setting-bed is not immediately apparent thought it seems to be a foliate decoration. Four years ago, as a security precaution, the apse window was almost entirely blocked up…" In a space situated further to the north, Hawkins and Mandel made the following observation: "On the south, east, and north walls of the 'tomb chamber' chapel to the north of the northern compartment of the sanctuary, there are areas of the characteristic intermediate rendering for mosaics which bears a rough herringbone pattern of incised lines. This plaster is similar to that which can be seen in some places where mosaic has been lost in the sanctuary (fig. 20), and it is reasonable to suppose that this chamber was decorated with mosaic at the same time as the sanctuary."

STATE OF PRESERVATION

Already in 1909, Miss Bell noticed that "the vault is much blackened by smoke; if it were cleaned every detail would be visible." This remark was echoed a half-century later by Abbot Leroy: "The ceiling's mosaic is difficult to see because of the filth." Ten years later, in 1968, when he alerted the scientific community to "The present state of Christian monuments in southeast Turkey (Tur Abdin and surroundings)" (*CRAI*, 1968, p. 483), this same Abbot Leroy painted a sad picture of the mosaics' condition: the painting in the two lunettes were "destroyed", he wrote, and "wide sections [of the ceiling] are in danger of immediate collapse".

But E. Hawkins, who conducted precise observations in November 1972, gave a more detailed description of the mosaics' state of preservation, also analyzing the remains of ancient mortar. To further his examination, Hawkins mentioned that he had been able to perform a limited cleaning: "The mosaics…cover the vault and lateral lunettes... The lower halves of the walls are now bare, except for some relatively recent wall paintings… The colors of the tesserae are overcast, in some places totally obscured, by thin deposits of lime and soot which give to the whole a light gray or blackened appearance... The deposits on the mosaics were probably created by lime, carried down by rain water from the masonry above, combining with soot from the smoke of frequent fires

below. Around its lower parts the mosaic has been partly obscured by splashes and smears of later rough renderings of the walls below… Most of the mosaic of the vault survives, but there are several losses, notably to the west of the center and along the lower part on the west, and to the east behind the top of the modern altar. In the south lunette most of the lower and middle parts of the mosaic has fallen. The greater part of the north lunette mosaic has been lost and of what remains much is in imminent danger of collapse. Other areas where further falls could occur are at the left side of the south lunette and near the center of the vault."

Hawkins described the mosaic's mortar setting: "As might be expected over a brick vault, there are three renderings of lime plaster; the first roughly finished, the intermediate keyed with the point of a sharp tool with lines in a broad herringbone pattern for the reception of the setting-bed..."

Concerned that certain parts of the mosaics were in danger of collapsing, Hawkins made sure to stress that "Adequate scaffolding, time, and skilled workmanship will be necessary if this is to be averted. There is indeed an urgent need for steps to be taken to save this unique decoration." (*DOP*, 1973, p. 283).

Despite his warnings, no serious conservation work seems to have been undertaken until 1997. At that time, the whole interior of the church was "restored", the walls were cleaned and all traces of the ancient coating was removed. The stones were bared and repointed with white cement mortar. This also seems to have been when the gaps in the mosaics of the vault's spring were plugged with beige mortar, underlining the vault's lower section. A comparison of the present state of preservation with the photographs Hawkins and Mundell included in their article reveals that tesserae have disappeared in places, especially in the southern lunette's inscription. The damage probably occurred in the course of this restoration work.

More recently, in 2001 or 2002, the region's governor called in a team of Italian restorers who were working on mosaics found during emergency excavations conducted because of the construction of a dam on the Euphrates, which flooded part of the ancient city of Zeugma. This team's work lasted two days, and consisted of gluing a layer of gauze to the mosaic to maintain the most weakened sections of the ceiling and lunettes. This gauze is still in place.

STATE OF PRESERVATION IN 2006

We are faced with architecture that was entirely renovated without concern for the materials used in the fifth century. The mortars used in ancient times were made up of a lime binder with a mineral mixture (sand, terra cotta, gravel) which let water vapor through. Since it was not hard, it possessed a certain elasticity that allowed it to give without breaking. This is not the case with the modern cement mortars, waterproof and very hard, that were set in place in the twentieth century. Overly hard compared to the ancient materials, they are already detaching.

Therefore, in years to come, we can expect many problems with the architecture (fissures, buckling) which will risk altering the buildings and their decorated parts. This deterioration may have a direct influence on the mosaics' preservation, since these have been weakened by the mortar's failure to stick to the walls.

It is regrettable that the restoration work done thus far was conducted without archeological input. This is particularly sad given G. Bell's photograph showing vestiges of wall paintings, and also Hawkins and Mundell's examination of the vestiges of mortar that still bore traces of the tesserae lost in other parts of the monastery.

THE *OPUS SECTILE*

In the very irregular *opus sectile* flooring, ancient restorations are still visible. These restorations were carried out using grey cement and scattered marble fragments. Though the marble pieces remain in place, several parts have cracks that show the ancient mortar. The floor is normally covered with carpets which have also served to protect it.

THE MOSAIC

On the mosaic of the barrel vault and lunettes, which was noted in Miss Bell's first descriptions, a blackish layer has formed on the tesserae's surface. This layer is composed of chalky concretions, dust and the black smoke rising from candles and incense used in religious ceremonies, but also resulting from general sootiness, even if it seems that at some unknown date, the decor may have

been dusted off. We were able to locate the part cleaned by Hawkins in 1972.

However, our examination brought to light graver damage, very worrisome unless action is taken quickly. In many places, the stone and brick masonry has detached from the first layer of gross mortar. This has taken place both in the north lunettes and on the ceiling. This detachment may cause large chunks of the mosaic to fall, particularly in light of the region's vulnerability to seismic activity and aftershocks. The Italian team recently called in reinforced many of the detached parts, but this can only be a stop-gap measure until true restoration work can be undertaken.

In the south lunette, the lower section has many lacunae, and is plugged with the grey cement mortar seen already in the photographs Hawkins and Mundell took in 1972. This cracked mortar no longer sticks to the wall. In the center of the pictured tabernacle, an older crack was filled with glazed blue ceramic elements (already visible in 1972). It was on this lunette that we located Hawkins' cleaning test. In comparison with the 1972 photograph, the Greek inscription under the tabernacle has lost several tesserae, probably when the mortar was repointed in 1997.

By comparison with the earliest illustrations, one can see that the north lunette is much more damaged, and a large section of the west side has detached, which is already visible in the single photograph that we possess of the ceiling, taken in 1911. The cracks have been plugged with the same sort of grey cement mortar. However, though the mosaic seems to have shifted only slightly since Hawkins' stay, all of the mosaics contained in this lunette are in utter decay.

The ceiling also shows cracks: one large crack above the doorway leading in from the central nave, on the western arch, already visible in G. Bell's photograph; another large crack above the apse and behind the modern altar -this crack was plugged, probably in 1997, with a beige mortar similar to the one that borders the vault's spring; besides those, there are numerous smaller cracks, which are old and sooty. Our examination of the vault showed that even if the mortar is barely sticking to the stone, the tesserae are at least satisfactorily adhering to their mortar.

Over the course of our stay, besides the attentive examination of the remains, we were also able to conduct a few cleaning tests

on the mosaics of the south lunette, and at the bottom of the vault in the northeast corner.

The entirety of the decor is composed of colored, opaque glass tesserae (dark blue with nuances of light blue, green, red, brown and black), of translucent glass tesserae with a gold and silver backing, of tesserae of white, pink or grayish limestone (or marble? "Pink marble" according to M.C. Mundell). As G. Bell, E. Hawkins and M. Mundell stressed, a gentle cleaning would certainly sharpen the palette and help identify the materials used.

The tesserae are irregular in shape, measuring from about 0.8 to 1 cm along their edge. The tesserae with silver leaf are slightly smaller than the others. Several motifs are rendered by plaques with specific forms (circles, droplets, etc.)

Our observations, however limited, revealed that the limestone, colored glass tesserae, and gold-leafed tesserae are in good condition. Those with silver leaf are less well preserved since the metal at the edges of the tesserae has oxidized (silver oxide). No exfoliation of the glass was noted.

The joints are very sooty, particularly since in this type of wall mosaic, the joints are deeply recessed, which increases chances for dirt deposit.

On the ceiling, we noted the presence of metal clamps stuck into the mosaic, flush with the tesserae's surface. These hooks reinforce the mortar's hold on the wall. Because of the general sootiness and our limited time, we were unable to check the regularity of their placement. A list will have to be drawn up, and a more detailed study will need to be conducted of the metal's state of preservation. Depending on the results, it may be necessary to replace them.

On the ceiling's western spring, a large hole is visible in the interior of the structure, in the mosaic and its mortars as well as in the wall itself, but a corresponding hole was not found on the ceiling's exterior. It is most probably the opening for a conduit whose function we were unable to ascertain. The mosaic and its mortar incline slightly into the conduit, proof that the conduit already existed when the mosaics were being laid.

Moreover, we also observed various hooks from which light fixtures have been hung over the centuries. The insertion of these hooks broke numerous holes into the mosaic.

CLEANING

During the October 2006 mission, we conducted two cleaning tests: the first on the tree pictured on the left side of the south lunette (tesserae of colored glass and with gold-leaf), the second at the bottom of the ceiling, in the northeast corner (tesserae with gold leaf and silver leaf, glass tesserae and limestone tesserae). These tests, which were conducted mechanically (with scalpels) revealed a good overall preservation of the tesserae, except for the silver leaf tesserae.

PUBLICATIONS AND BOOK REVIEWS

Recent Books on Syriac Topics

SEBASTIAN P. BROCK, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, PUSEY LANE, OXFORD

The present listing continues on from previous listings in the first number of Hugoye for each of the years 1998–2007. Once again, reprints are not included (for a number of important ones, see http://www.gorgiaspress.com).

[no date]

Behnam Keryo (tr.), ܬܘܬܘܠ ܡܐܡܪܢܐ (Kottayam: SEERI).

2005

Jean-Maurice Fiey (ed. M. Kropp), *Al-qiddisun al-Suryan* (Beirut: Orient Institut). [For French edition of 2004, see the listing of Recent Books in *Hugoye* 2006/1]

Kreis Aramäischer Studierender Heidelberg (tr.), *Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, Malkuno Zʿuro* / ܡܠܟܘܢܐ ܙܥܘܪܐ (Neckarsteinach: Tintenfass).

S. Seppälä, *Iisak Niniveäinen, Kootut teokset* (Valamo Monastery, Finland). [Finnish tr. of Isaac of Niniveh, Parts I and II].

Siman Makdesi Elyas, *Tekso itonoyo bleczo turoyo* (Amsterdam: the author). [Turoyo translation of texts for Sundays and main feasts].

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P.G. Borbone, A. Mengozzi and M. Tosco (eds.), *Loquentes linguis. Studi linguistici e orientali in onore di Fabrizio A. Pennacchietti* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz). [Includes several contributions of Syriac and Modern Syriac interest].

J.F. Coakley, *The Typography of Syriac* (New Castle, Delaware/London: Oak Knoll Press and British Library).

Evgin Dag (tr.), ܐܢܛܘܢ ܕܗ ܣܢܬ-ܐܟܣܘܦܪܝ، ܐܡܝܪܐ ܙܥܘܪܐ (Neckarsteinach: Tintenfass). [Classical Syriac tr.]

D.M. Gurtner, *Introduction to Syriac: Key to Exercises and English-Syriac Vocabulary* (Bethesda MD: Ibex). [Key to W.M. Thackston, *An Introduction to Syriac,* 1999.]

C.B. Horn, *Asceticism and Christological Controversy in Fifth-Century Palestine. The Career of Peter the Iberian* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: University Press).

N. Kelley, *Knowledge and Religious Authority in the Pseudo-Clementines. Situating the Recognitions in Fourth-Century Syria* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchen zum Neuen Testament 2/213).

P. Naaman (ed.), *Essai sur les Maronites. Leur origine, leur nom et leur religion, par Fauste Nairon de Bane, Maronite, Rome 1679. Texte latin et traduction française* [par Benoîte] (Bibliothèque de l'Université Saint-Esprit XLIX).

C. Pasquet, *L'Homme, image de Dieu, Seigneur de l'Univers. Interprétation de Gn 1,26 dans la tradition syriaque orientale* (2 vols., Paris: Diffusion ANRT).

F. Pericoli Ridolfini, *Le "Dimostrazioni" del 'Sapiente Persiano'. Traduzione italiana con introduzione e note* (Verba Seniorum n.s. 14; Rome). [Dem. I–X].

R.B. ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *The Peshitta: its Use in Literature and Liturgy. Papers read at the Third Peshitta Symposium* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute, Leiden, 15; Leiden: Brill).

A. Toepel, *Die Adam- und Seth-Legenden in syrischen Buch der Schatzhöhle. Eine quellenkritische Untersuchungen* (CSCO 618; Subsidia 119; Leuven: Peeters).

P.S.F. van Keulen and W.Th. van Peursen (eds.), *Corpus Linguistics and Textual History: a Computer-Assisted Interdisciplinary Approach to the Peshitta* (Studia Semitica Neerlandica 48; Assen: van Gorcum).

E. Vergani and S. Chialà (eds.), *Storia, cristologia et tradizioni della Chiesa Siro-orientale* Atti del 3o Incontro sull'Oriente Cristiano di tradizione siriaca (Milan: Centro Ambrosiano).

J. Yacoub, *I cristiani d'Iraq* (Milan). [Translated from French edition, Tours, 2003].

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—, *Ewangeliyon qadisho (diyatiqi hdato) dMoran Yeshu' Mshiho lfut Pshitto dMardin* (Monastery of Mor Gabriel, Turkey). [NT, including Minor Catholic Epistles and Revelation, with biblical references and notes].

G.B. Behnam (tr. M. Moosa), *Theodora* (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias).

Y. Bilge, *Father Esmer Bilge, a Priest of the Syriac Church* (Örebrö). [English, Turkish and Syriac]

Centre d'Études et de Recherches Orientales (CERO), *Saint Éphrem. Un poète pour notre temps* (Patrimoine Syriaque: Actes du Colloque XI; Antélias: CERO).

S. de Courtois, *Chrétiens d'Orient sur la route de la Soie, dans les pas des nestoriens* (Paris: La Table Ronde).

Eliyo Dere and Tomas Isik (eds.), ܬܫܥܝܬܐ ܕܥܡ̈ܐ ܕܗܘܣܝܢ ܕܘܠܐܝܐ (Södertälje: The Assyrian Federation).

Ghattas (Denho) Makdisi Elias (ed. A. Nouro; Introduction by Mar Gregorios Yuhanon Ibrahim), ܦܐܪ̈ܐ ܠܡܪ̈ܕܝܢܐ (Aleppo: Mardin Publishing House).

J. Ishaq, *Le rite du Bapême dans la liturgie chaldéo-assyrienne* [in Arabic] (Baghdad: Najm al-Mashriq).

H. Kaufhold, *Kleines Lexikon des Christlichen Orients* (2nd edn, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz).

N. Khayyat, *Jean de Dalyatha. Les Homélies I–XV* (Sources syriaques 2; Antelias: CERO). [Introduction, and text with facing French translation].

G.A. Kiraz, *The New Syriac Primer. Introduction to Syriac with a CD* (Gorgias Handbooks 4; Piscataway NJ: Gorgias).

E. Lemoine (ed. R. Lavenant and M-G. Guérard), *Philoxène de Mabboug, Homélies* (Sources chrétiennes 44bis; Paris: du Cerf).

J.A. Lund, *The Book of the Laws of Countries: a Dialogue on Free Will versus Fate. A Key-Word-in-Context Concordance* (Piscataway NJ: Gorgias).

P. Maniyattu (ed.), *East Syriac Theology* (Satna: Ephrem's Publications). [ISBN 81-88065-04-8]

A. Mustafa and J. Tubach (eds.), *Die Inkulturation des Christentums im Sasanidenreich* (Wiesbaden: Reichert).

H. Oberkampf, *Evangeliare der Syrisch Orthodoxen Kirche im Tur Abdin. Bilder, Gedanken, Besinnungen, ergänzt durch Fotos aus dem Tur Abdin* (Bad Saulgau: the author). [horst.oberkampf@t-online.de]

A. O'Mahony (ed.), *Christianity in the Middle East. Studies in Modern History, Theology and Politics* (London: Melisende).

J. Puthuparampil (ed.), *Theologizing in the Malankara Catholic Church* (Pune: Bethany Vedavijnana Peeth Publications).

A. Schmidt and D. Gonnet (eds.), *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque* (Études syriaques 4; Paris: Geuthner).

S. Seppälä, *Johannes Viiniköynnös, Palava ruoko* (Kirjapaja). [Finnish tr. of John of Dalyatha].

Mar Bawai Soro, *The Church of the East: Apostolic and Orthodox* (San Jose). [ISBN 978-1-60402-514-9]

F. Tamas, *L'Unzione degli infermi nella chiesa siro-antiochena cattolica* (Bibliotheca "Ephemerides Liturgicae"—Subsidia 139; Rome: C.L.V. Edizioni Liturgiche).

W. Toma, *The Mystery of the Church. Syriac Critical Edition and Translation of the Rite of the Consecration of the Altar with Oil and the Chapter 'On the Consecration of the Church' from the Book of the Seven Causes of the Mysteries of the Church by Patriarch Timothy II (1318–1332)* (Diss. Rome: PIO).

R.M.M. Tuschling, *Angels and Orthodoxy. A Study in their Development in Syria and Palestine from the Qumran Texts to Ephrem the Syrian* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 40; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck).

B. Vadakkekara, *Origin of Christianity in India. A historiographical Critique* (Delhi: Media House). [Updated from 1995 edition].

W.J. van Bekkum, J.W. Drijvers, A.C. Klugkist (eds.), *Syriac Polemics. Studies in Honour of Gerrit Jan Reinink* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 170; Leuven: Peeters).

W.Th. van Peursen, *Language and Interpretation in the Syriac Text of Ben Sira. A Comparative Linguistic and Literary Study* (Monographs of the Peshitta Institute 16; Leiden: Brill).

S.G. Vashalomidze and L. Greisiger (eds.), *Der Christliche Orient und seine Umwelt. Gesammelte Studien zu Ehren Jürgen Tubach anlässlich seines 60. Geburtstag* (Studies in Oriental Religions 56; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz). [Several contributions are of Syriac concern]

C.W. Yacoub, *Surma l'Assyro-Chaldéenne (1883–1975): Dans la tourmente de Mésopotamie* Paris: L'Harmattan).

2008

I. Ramelli, *Atti di Mar Mari* (Testi del Vicino Oriente Antico 7, Letteratura della Siria cristiana 2; Brescia: Paideia).

Jerome Alan Lund, *The Book of the Laws of the Countries, A Dialogue on Free Will Versus Fate: A Key-Word-in-Context Concordance* (Gorgias Press: Piscataway, NJ, 2007) Pp. xiii + 236. Hardback, $ 128.00.

KRISTIAN S. HEAL, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY, PROVO, USA

Students of Syriac literature are once again indebted to Jerome Lund for providing an extremely useful *instrument de travail*. Following on the heels of his concordance of the *Old Syriac Gospels* (2004, reviewed by David G. K. Taylor in *Hugoye* 9.2), this slim volume breaks new ground by being the first key-word-in-context (KWIC) concordance of a non-biblical Syriac text. Of course, we have the valuable word lists for the works published in the three *Patrologia Syriaca* volumes (a pattern that carried over into some of the early Patrologia Orientalis fascicles), as well as the indices that accompany the editions of the industrious Werner Strothmann, but up until now we have no actual concordances for Syriac literary texts.

The primary value of a KWIC concordance is the convenient manner in which it allows one to explore and examine the language of a given text. Whether one wants to describe the linguistic complexion of a text, or to simply identify whether a certain word appears within that text, the first tool that one would chose is a concordance. At least this has been the case up until recently. Now, with the growth of the digital humanities, one often has the choice between a traditional concordance or an electronically searchable corpus. This is certainly the case for those working in biblical studies, or with the Dead Sea Scrolls, to name only two fields benefiting from both traditional concordances and searchable electronic corpora. It is also the case, moreover, for those scholars working with Bardaisan's *Book of the Laws of the Countries*, since the concordance under review "finds its origin in the database of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon [CAL] directed by Dr. Stephen A. Kaufman" (vii).

Though there is a genetic relationship between the CAL database and Lund's concordance, the two resources are far from identical, or even equally useful. Lund has clearly done a lot of work with the data he obtained from CAL before presenting it for publication. He has imposed a rational order on his material, separating out personal (233–34) and geographic names (235–36),

for example. Also, the creation of a concordance has obviously provided numerous opportunities to check and correct the data. Thus, many of the glosses in the concordance are improved over those provided on CAL's KWIC Search, and a number of entries have been refined or corrected. Most importantly to this reviewer, however, are the substantial aesthetic advances made by the concordance. It is simply easier and more pleasant to find information in the concordance than through CAL's database, at least as presently constituted. One can easily locate a lemma in the concordance, and quickly see the forms in which that lemma appears in the text, where it appears in the printed edition (by page and line number), and in what context.

It seems to this reviewer that Lund's concordance should find a welcome home in every good university library, and will be coveted by all scholars working with early Syriac literature.

Martin Zammit, *ʿEnbe men Karmo Suryoyo (Bunches of Grapes from the Syriac Vineyard): A Syriac Chrestomathy* (Gorgias Press: Piscataway, NJ, 2006) Pp. xii + 206. Hardback, $ 85.00.

Anonymous, *The Book of Crumbs: An Anthology of Syriac Texts.* (Gorgias Press: Piscataway, NJ, 2006) Pp. x + 387. Hardback, $ 102.00.

KRISTIAN S. HEAL, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY, PROVO, USA

Zammit's chrestomathy aims not only to deepen the linguistic competence of those "students who have covered the essentials of Syriac morphology and syntax," but also to expose them to some of the "varied range" of Syriac prose and poetry (viii). In one hundred pages of annotated readings employing all three scripts, the reader is taken chronologically through extracts from twenty-six sources that span the third to the thirteenth centuries (3–103). The texts appear in the script in which they were originally published, and preserve the original editors punctuation, and vocalization when present. The annotations do not presume familiarity with any particular Syriac grammar, but are entirely self contained. Following the texts is a complete Syriac-English glossary (105–51). The last quarter of the volume is taken up by an English-Syriac glossary, which is something of an unexpected bonus (153–197). A useful Index of Grammatical Points follows (198–201), and the volume concludes with a Bibliography. A Preface by Sebastian Brock contains details of a number of other useful chrestomathies, most of which are now out of print.

The *Book of Crumbs* was originally published under the title *Kthabuna d-parthuthe* (*The Little Book of Scraps*) by the Archbishop of Canterbury's mission to Urmia in 1898. The volume contains a substantial anthology (more than 370 pages) of Syriac literature presented in a vocalized East Syriac script, drawing on texts from the fourth to the sixteenth centuries. The table of contents gives a rough guide to what is included in the volume, and the indices that conclude the work will help the user ascertain more precisely what texts and authors are represented. The printed text is almost uniformly clear, and even the introductions and notes, which are in a much smaller font, are quite legible. The volume is comprised of texts in a variety of genres, written in both verse and prose, and includes representatives from both the East and West Syrian

traditions. Thus Jacob of Edessa sits alongside Babai the Great, and Bar Hebraeus alongside Giwargis Warda. The volume is especially good in its coverage of extracts from later authors.

In reviewing volumes such as these, one cannot help noting ways that things could have been done differently. Perhaps Zammit would have been advised to include references to Nöldeke's *Compendious Syriac Grammar*, or to the standard teaching grammars, in his grammatical explanations for example. Similarly, it would seem that both volumes could benefit from some bibliographical notes to indicate where a reader may go to read more by, or about, a particular author that has piqued their interest. Perhaps a simple reference to Brock's very useful bibliography in Muraoka's grammar would suffice on this account (*Classical Syriac*, 127–56). However, such observations should not distract from the value of the volumes under consideration.

What both of these volumes have in common is their aim to introduce the reader to the breadth of the Syriac literary tradition. This is a valuable objective, especially since it is still very much the case that the majority of students learning Syriac are doing so in order to work with a very small part of the literature. It can only be hoped that such focused learners of Syriac will take the time to read through one of these volumes, or indeed any of the numerous other anthologies and Chrestomathies that have been published over the last two centuries, and in doing so will be convinced that there is more to be sought and found in this literature than they first supposed.

W.Th. van Peursen and R.B. ter Haar Romeny eds., *Text, translation, and Tradition: Studies on the Peshitta and its Use in the Syriac Tradition Presented to Konrad D. Jenner on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. MPIL 14; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006. Pp. xiv + 266. ISBN-13: 978 90 04 15300 4; ISBN-10: 90 04 15300 4

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During his long association with the Peshitta Institute, Konrad Jenner has warmly welcomed Peshitta scholars from around the world and stimulated their research. This volume celebrates the fruits of his efforts. It begins with his academic biography and an abstract of each article. As the title of the volume indicates, the articles treat textual questions, translation techniques, and the history of the Peshitta's reception.

The volume opens with Pier G. Borbone's study of a funerary tile from Chifeng (ca. 350 km north-east of Beijing) that contains a Syriac inscription of Ps 34:6. This inscription is compared with that on the Fangshan stone and the Peshitta text. By way of conclusion, Borbone wonders if "the quotations of Ps 34:6 in the Chifeng and Fangshan bears witness to the use of decorated Syriac MSS in the Far East" (p. 10). In another text critical contribution, Sebastian Brock, returning to his Isaiah edition in the *Vetus Testament Syriace,* discusses a text of unknown provenance that was added to Peshitta ms 17a1 and 17a4. He translates this text and discusses its curious additions. Janet Dyk and Percy van Keulen study the Peshitta translation of 2 Kgs 24:14 to illustrate the relationship "between translation strategy and the requirements of the language system, both at the level of the choice of words and at the level of phrase structure" (p. 56). Jan Joosten adduces evidence to show that the Hebrew text behind the Peshitta in Deut 1:44 ("and chased you as bees driven out by smoke") is the more original reading than the MT ("and chased you as bees do"). Arie van der Kooij questions the role that MS 9a1 can play in establishing the earliest Peshitta text. After discussing several of its readings he concludes that the value of 9a1 "as a witness of the earliest (attainable) text is limited indeed" (p. 76). Marinus D. Koster considers the possibility that the Lectionary MS 10l1 together with MS 5b1 represent an earlier stage of the Peshitta (closer to the Hebrew). His results for Genesis are "unequivocal": "there is no relationship whatsoever of 10l1 with 5b1 and its additions 8/5b1 and 10/5b1" (p. 84–85). The

situation does not change for other books of the OT. Michaël N. van der Meer examines the Peshitta reading in Jos 1:7 and concludes that the translation of ܢܡܘܣܐ for Hebrew התורה was influenced by the context. Lucas Van Rompay focuses on a version of Syriac Judith discovered in Kerala twenty years ago (the Trivandrum MS). When compared with the Peshitta, this MS is longer, closer to the Greek, and reflects a different state of the language. It turns out to be a revision of the Peshitta with help from the Greek. Van Rompay dates the Peshitta text prior to the fifth-century while the Trivandrum MS , because of its similarities to the Syro-Hexapla and the Harklean version of the Gospels, reflects a sixth- or seventh-century text. A curious insertion that identifies Nebuchadnezzar with the Persian king Cambyses is "a response to those critics who, on the basis of its historical errors, were willing to dismiss the book of Judith as irrelevant" (p. 228).

On the question of translation technique, Gillian Greenberg's study of lexical choices in Isaiah and Jeremiah reveals that Peshitta translators "apparently felt free to deviate occasionally from a word-for-word rendering of their Vorlagen" (p. 62). Donald M. Walter shows Peshitta MS 7a1 and related MSS of Jeremiah represent a deliberate revision (as he has already shown in 1 and 2 Kings). Takamitsu Muraoka studies the particle ܗܘ and concludes that its use as a "pure copula was not totally foreign to the 'spirit' of the Syriac language and its development was reinforced by constant exposure on the part of some Syriac writers to Greek" (p. 134). Wido van Peursen considers the discourse structure and clause hierarchy in Sirach 14:20–27 and concludes that his clause hierarchical analysis "leads to an unequivocal division of this section into three units" (p. 148). Eep Talstra and Janet Dyk suggest how computer assisted research can do more than simply imitate "classical instruments." Without a doubt, Syriac readers hope that their expectations for the computer can be realized in the near future.

On the question of text reception history, David Lane's article reminds us of how much we miss his insights and wit. He studies the origins of the "Rogation of the Ninevites," a popular devotion among Syriac Christians in Kerala, to reveal the use of scripture in this liturgy. Bas ter Haar Romeny examines the reception of Peshitta Isaiah among the Syriac Fathers. His careful discussion of the Syriac commentary tradition underscores the challenges of

identifying Peshitta citations and the importance of such citations for understanding the textual history of the Syriac versions within the cultural history of Syriac Christianity. Harry F. van Rooy examines the Syriac text of the Psalms in the shorter of the two Syriac versions of Athanasius' Greek Commentary on Psalms. He concludes: "In the case of the text used in the shorter version of the commentary, traces can be found of the text used in the longer version, as well as the text of the Peshitta and the Syro-Hexapla" (p. 174). Alison Salvesen responds to questions posed by Konrad Jenner in his 1993 paper at the Peshitta Symposium regarding the nature of Jacob of Edessa's version of the OT. She considers three passages from this version and concludes that Jacob's notion of "correction" was "to amplify the Peshitta text with secondary readings from the Greek, or to replace difficult sections in it with less ambiguous phrasing from the Septuagint" (p. 188). Piet Dirksen traces the recent developments in the reception of the Peshitta through a concise history of the Peshitta Institute and a review of the research accomplished through its impetus.

This volume presents the current state of Peshitta research to a beloved scholar who has been a vital stimulus through his graceful presence at the Peshitta Institute in recent decades. This reviewer would like to add his voice to this chorus of gratitude to Konrad Jenner for his kind welcome to me in Leiden over the years. Ad moltos annos!

P.S.F van Keulen and W.Th. van Peursen, eds., *Corpus Linguistics and Textual History: A Computer-Assisted Interdisciplinary Approach to the Peshitta*, Koninklijke Van Gorcum BV, 2006

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The invitation to review this book was accepted with some trepidation; half of the topics mentioned in the title were quite familiar, but the others less so. Fortunately, the editors' goal was to build a conceptual and methodological bridge between two disciplines, and reading the book was very much an experience in leaving behind comfortable territory and crossing over into unfamiliar realms. Ultimately the traversal was successful, enlightening, and perspective-enhancing, and was punctuated with only occasional desires to climb over the railing and jump or otherwise escape.

This review is written from the perspective of one who is a computational linguist with extensive experience in corpus development as well as translation theory and practice, having a good knowledge of biblical Hebrew and a growing acquaintance with Syriac, but with very little knowledge of (albeit increasing interest in) textual criticism and exegesis. Anyone who shares any subset (or superset) of these interests will find the book compelling, though those with narrow specialties will find themselves correspondingly stretched.

The content includes, and extends, material presented at a seminar held in the Netherlands in 2003 that focused on the Computer-Assisted Linguistic Analysis of the Peshitta (CALAP) project. Evidently the effort combines two teams, one specializing in the development of computational tools for Hebrew, then Syriac, linguistic analysis (WIVU), and the other (PIL) with a history of analyzing the Peshitta from text historical, critical, exegetical, and translation-theoretic perspectives. The attempt to unify these two traditionally separate undertakings under one umbrella effort seemed initially to this reader an intriguing but Herculean (pardon the pagan reference!) task. The body of the text is intended to convince the skeptical, and for this reader it did.

The first chapter is a wonderful 30-page survey of the motivating factors for the project: to create a truly interdisciplinary approach—complete with the requisite tools—to linguistic and textual analysis, and to illustrate its usefulness with a nontrivial

application (no less than the Peshitta). A broad discussion of such topics as the document itself, linguistic factors in Old Testament exegesis, synchronic vs. diachronic analyses, translation theory, the cultural context of language(s), language use, and stylistics lays the linguistic groundwork for this effort. A brief overview of relevant manuscripts and other texts sets the focus on the target of the approach. This enjoyable chapter could serve very well as a standalone tutorial on this constellation of topics.

The next 40-page chapter includes a technical description of the computational approach that WIVU used in annotating the Biblical Hebrew data, and how their methods were adapted for processing the linguistic content of Syriac text. The discussion is replete with data listings that may be intimidating to some, but the narrative is expertly crafted to help initiate the non-computational to the myriad of levels of analysis, descriptive labels and features, and processing stages that the text is subjected to. The formatting and layout of the data examples is impressive and very readable, and the technology described is noteworthy, if not well documented so far in the usual computational linguistics publication venues elsewhere.

The balance of the first third of the book consists of several chapters laying out the technical issues involving the tools development effort, linguistic analysis conventions, and annotation schemes. These will be of interest to anyone undertaking similar linguistic annotation projects, or specialists who will someday use such tools. After accessible discussions by project members on these topics, responses by others raise issues about coverage, evaluation, ambiguity, overall project goals, assumptions about linguistic theory, and the tensions about empirical versus rational analyses. The discussion is informative and interesting.

The next third of the book involves two back-and-forth dialogues and highlights the role that CALAP's offerings can play in these discussions. The first centers on a syntactic issue, that of nominal clauses and the role of the enclitic personal pronoun. An introductory chapter summarizes three prevailing approaches, and then the proponent of each responds in subsequent chapters. The discussion is interesting for its linguistic implications, but too involved to mention further here. The topics involve such current issues as predication, clitics, and definiteness. Linguists looking for language data to sound out various theoretical approaches to

morphosyntax will find a treasure trove in this exchange. The second discussion illustrates questions germane to the other side of the "bridge", that of analyzing textual variants. The issue at hand is where the Targum and the Peshitta agree and diverge, with respect to each other and to the MT. The investigation was, again, very carefully written and was perfectly tractable to this reader, who was now in largely unfamiliar territory. One of the respondents points out the problem—independently apparent to this reader as well—that no mention was made in this latter study of how the CALAP material was used, though clearly it was to some degree.

The last third of the book answers the question so often posed to corpus developers by potential end-users: "Now that I have the corpus, what can I do with it?" To this end a nine-verse passage in 1 Kings 2 is strategically chosen to illustrate the possibilities that an extensively annotated corpus provides to researchers. A wide array of perspectives is applied in viewing the contents of the text in these verses from formalist and functionalist angles, and the result is an impressive illustration of CALAP's capabilities (as well as a few of its shortcomings). An epilogue serves to reiterate how well the interdisciplinary approach bridges the interests of a wide range of researchers.

One has the impression that in some aspects of CALAP's technology, the 2003 snapshot we are given can be updated (and perhaps it has): there is no mention of current topics such as best practices in corpus annotation, morphological parsing tools could be analyzed in a more versatile way using finite-state technologies, statistical analyses could be a little more developed, and machine learning is more viable in corpus annotation work today. Still, the theoretical and methodological work is sound, even solid, and the demonstrations of its effectiveness are impressive.

Finally, some low-level remarks are perhaps in order. The text is replete with examples, quotes, data, and footnotes in several languages, and therefore assumes some familiarity on the part of the reader with French, German, Italian, Greek, Latin, Slavic, and (naturally) Semitic languages. A superb work was performed in editing such a complicated text; only a dozen or so errors, mostly in English spelling, were detected. Reflecting the bipartite nature of this text, some chapters had their extensive citations, footnotes, and textual apparata notated at the bottom of each page, which to

this reader was a little unwieldy; the others had this material at the end of each chapter.

Overall, this book is a remarkable work and will stand as one of the memorable examples of how to design, implement, successfully realize, and document a large-scale, multi-layered linguistic development project. It also serves as a model of how to build an interdisciplinary bridge across theoretical and methodological gaps that need to be addressed if we are to better appreciate language and its use.

Sebastian Brock, *Fire from Heaven: Studies in Syriac Theology and Liturgy* [Variorum Collected Studies Series 863; Ashgate Variorum; Aldershot, 2006; ISBN 0-7546-5908-9] xiv + 352 pp.; hardcover.

DAVID G.K. TAYLOR, THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, PUSEY LANE, OXFORD, UNITED KINGDOM

'Fire from Heaven' is the fourth volume of Sebastian Brock's collected articles in the Variorum Collected Studies Series[1] (the titles of all the papers are listed in full at the end of this review), and as the title of the volume suggests, a majority of the papers (10 out of 17) are related to the invocation and descent of the Holy Spirit in Syriac sources. Four of these (X–XIII) explore the history and development of the technical vocabulary used in Syriac to describe this descent (primarily *aggen*, but also *shrā*, *nhet*, *rahhep*) in biblical, liturgical, and homiletic texts. Other papers (V–VI) address the visualisation of this descent in the form of fire, and the Syriac development of the concept that the Holy Spirit is essentially female, leading certain writers and texts to describe her as 'Mother'. Three papers (VII–IX) focus on the eucharistic anaphoras and epicleses, and it is worth noting that VIII includes a very useful table listing all 71 of the known West Syrian anaphoras, together with references to available editions or, if unpublished, inclusion in key manuscripts. A final paper (XIV) in this section examines the debate among Syriac writers about how best to translate *ruah elohim* in Genesis 1.2.

The volume begins with three important articles on the christology of the Church of the East which will be of great assistance to anyone who has to grapple with the theological complexities involved. All three include variant versions of a table which graphically demonstrates the extraordinary range of christological opinions that were being expounded in the fifth to seventh centuries, and seeks to undermine the arguments of reductionists who wish to focus on just two or three rival schools of thought. This table will be well-known to Sebastian's colleagues and former students, nearly all of whom have copied it and made

[1] The previous volumes were: *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity* (VCSS 199, 1984); *Studies in Syriac Christianity* (VCSS 357, 1992); *From Ephrem to Romanos: Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity* (VCSS 664, 1999).

use of it shamelessly in their own teaching! (The version of the table in paper II is the most complete, but cross-reference to the others will add clarification.) The fourth paper is a stimulating discussion of the theme of Christ as hostage, *ḥmayrā*, in East Syriac thought.

The volume ends with three articles on early Syriac liturgical commentaries. Papers XV and XVI provide an edition, translation, and analysis of a single short, but highly influential, commentary on the baptismal and eucharistic liturgies which predates the fifth-century church divisions and is preserved in Syriac in Melkite and Syrian Orthodox manuscripts, as well as in a fragmentary Soghdian translation produced by the Church of the East. Article XVII is a translation and study of the early seventh-century commentary on the liturgy by Gabriel of Qatar. (Unfortunately the lengthy Syriac edition of the text, included in the original article, is not reprinted here, but can be consulted online in *Hugoye* Vol. 6.2 [July 2003]).

Sebastian Brock's scholarship is, as always, ground-breaking and of outstanding quality, and given that his work is frequently published in a diverse range of journals and Festschriften, some more easily found in libraries than others, the convenience of having these articles collected together in a single volume will clearly recommend it to Syriac scholars and to libraries with an interest in Syriac Christianity, Patristic theology, or liturgical studies.

Contents of *Fire from Heaven: Studies in Syriac Theology and Liturgy*

VI. 'Come, compassionate Mother ..., come Holy Spirit': a forgotten aspect of early Eastern Christian imagery (1991)
VII. The epiklesis in the Antiochene baptismal *ordines* (1974)
VIII. Towards a typology of the epicleses in the West Syrian anaphoras (2000)
IX. Invocations to/for the Holy Spirit in Syriac liturgical texts: some comparative approaches (2001)
X. The lost Old Syriac at Luke 1:35 and the earliest Syriac terms for the Incarnation (1989)
XI. An early interpretation of *pāsaḥ:'aggēn* in the Palestinian Targum (1982)
XII. Passover, Annunciation and Epiclesis. Some remarks on the term *aggen* in the Syriac versions of Lk. 1:35 (1982)
XIII. From Annunciation to Pentecost: the travels of a technical term (1993)
XIV. The *ruaḥ elōhīm* of Gen. 1,2 and its reception history in the Syriac tradition (1999)

EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS
XV. Some early Syriac baptismal commentaries (1980)
XVI. An early Syriac commentary on the liturgy (1986)
XVII. Gabriel of Qatar's commentary on the liturgy (2003)

Readers of this online review may perhaps find it useful to have a listing of the articles found in Sebastian Brock's earlier volumes, and so these are provided below.

Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity **(VCSS 199, 1984)**

GENERAL THEMES
I. Early Syrian Asceticism (1973)
II. Greek into Syriac and Syriac into Greek (1977)
III. Aspects of Translation Technique in Antiquity (1979)
IV. Some Aspects of Greek Words in Syriac (1975)
V. From Antagonism to Assimilation: Syriac Attitudes to Greek Learning (1982)
VI. Christians in the Sasanid Empire: A Case of Divided Loyalties (1982)
VII. Syriac Sources for Seventh-Century History (1976)
VIII. Syriac Views of Emergent Islam (1982)

NEW TEXTS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

IX. A Martyr at the Sasanid Court under Vahran II: Candida (1978)
X. A Letter attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem on the Rebuilding of the Temple under Julian (1977)
XI. The Orthodox-Oriental Orthodox Conversations of 532 (1980)
XII. An Early Syriac Life of Maximus the Confessor (1973)
XIII. A Syriac Fragment on the Sixth Council (1973)
XIV. John of Nhel: An Episode in Early Seventh-Century Monastic History (1978)
XV. Notes on Some Monasteries on Mount Izla (1980/1)

Studies in Syriac Christianity: History, Literature and Theology **(VCSS 357, 1992)**

I. Syriac Historical Writing: A Survey of the Main Sources (1979/80)
II. North Mesopotamia in the Late Seventh Century: Book XV of John bar Penkāyē's *Rīš Mellē* (1987)
III. Syriac Inscriptions: A Preliminary Check List of European Publications (1978)
IV. Jewish Traditions in Syriac Sources (1979)
V. A Piece of Wisdom Literature in Syriac (1968)
VI. Syriac and Greek Hymnography: Problems of Origins (1985)
VII. A Syriac Collection of Prophecies of the Pagan Philosophers (1983)
VIII. The Laments of the Philosophers over Alexander in Syriac (1970)
IX. Secundus the Silent Philosopher: Some Notes on the Syriac Tradition (1978)
X. Towards a History of Syriac Translation Technique (1983)
XI. Clothing Metaphors as a Means of Theological Expression in Syriac Tradition (1982)
XII. The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries: Preliminary Considerations and Materials (1985)
XIII. The Conversations with the Syrian Orthodox under Justinian (532) (1981)

XIV. A Monothelete Florilegium in Syriac (1985)
XV. Two Sets of Monothelete Questions to the Maximianists (1986)

***From Ephrem to Romanos: Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity* (VCSS 664, 1999)**

I. Greek and Syriac in Late Antique Syria (1994)
II. Eusebius and Syriac Christianity (1992)
III. The Syriac Background to the World of Theodore of Tarsus (1995)
IV. From Ephrem to Romanos (1989)
V. Ephrem's Verse Homily on Jonah and the Repentance of Nineveh: Notes on the Textual Tradition (1994)
VI. Two Syriac Verse Homilies on the Binding of Isaac (1986)
VII. Syriac Dispute Poems: The Various Types (1987)
VIII. A Dispute of the Months and Some Related Syriac Texts (1985)
IX. Tales of Two Beloved Brothers: Syriac Dialogues between Body and Soul (1995)
X. The Baptist's Diet in Syriac Sources (1970)
XI. Two Syriac Poems on the Invention of the Cross (1992)
XII. Some Uses of the Term Theoria in the Writings of Isaac of Nineveh (1995)
XIII. The Syriac Commentary Tradition [on Aristotle] (1993)
XIV. The Syriac Background to Hunayn's Translation Techniques (1991)
XV. Greek Words in Syriac: Some General Features (1996)
XVI. 'The Scribe reaches Harbour' (1995)

CONFERENCE REPORTS

International Syriac Language Project Ljubljana, Slovenia. July 2007

TERRY FALLA AND BERYL TURNER, WHITLEY COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

The annual meeting of the International Syriac Language Project (ISLP) was recently held at the XIXth Congress of IOSOT (International Organization for the Study of the Old Testament) in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where a number of the participants were also involved in the Bible of Edessa meetings and presentations.

The meetings and sessions were all held in the superbly appointed Faculty of Law Building. The organizers and the IOSOT president, Prof. Dr. Jože Krašovec, are to be congratulated on a splendidly well organized and resourced conference. Such was the efficiency that there was even a conference staff member present for the duration of every presentation and meeting to ensure that all needs were met. Conference delegates were generously treated to a number of musical entertainments and receptions in the city, including a welcome by the Prime Minister of Slovenia, Mayor of Ljubljana, and other dignitaries, and a thrilling rendition of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, performed under the stars in the city square.

The ISLP held its business meeting on the morning of Monday 16 July, and a dinner for any involved with Syriac and lexicography that evening. Papers were delivered and discussed in two sessions, on the Tuesday and Thursday, with Wednesday given to sightseeing. The next meetings will be at the Symposium Syriacum in Granada 2008, and the IOSOT congress in Helsinki 2010.

The following papers were given, and will be published as peer-reviewed essays in a volume edited by Bas ter Haar Romeny and Kristian Heal in the series *Foundations for Syriac Lexicography*, part of the ISLP series *Perspectives on Syriac Linguistics* published by Gorgias Press.

1. Janet Dyk, "The Hebrew and Syriac Cognate Verbs sin, yod, mem and semkath, waw, mim in the Books of Kings: Similarities and Differences"

2. David G.K. Taylor and Kristian S. Heal, "Towards an Electronic Corpus of Syriac Texts"
3. Deryle Lonsdale, "A Computational Perspective on Syriac Corpus Development and Annotation"
4. Michael Sokoloff, "The Translation and Updating of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum: Progress Report"
5. Regina Hunziker-Rodewald, "On Polysemy and Homonymy"
6. Beryl Turner, "Towards a New Syriac Dictionary: Lexical Reconsideration of the Term "kay" in the Peshitta Bible, Old Syriac Gospels, and Harklean Text"
7. Reinier De Blois, "Wine to Gladden the Heart of Man: How to discover the meaning of different terms for wine"
8. Percy van Keulen, "Feminine Nominal Endings in Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac: Derivation or Inflection?"
9. Wido van Peursen and Dirk Bakker, "Lemmatization and Grammatical Categorisation: The case of "haymen" in Classical Syriac"
10. Terry C. Falla, "Towards a New Syriac Dictionary: Lexical Reconsideration of the Particle "kadh" in Classical Syriac"
11. Andreas Juckel, "Comparative features in a future lexicon of the Syriac New Testament"

1. JANET DYK, VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT, AMSTERDAM

The Hebrew and Syriac Cognate Verbs sin, yod, mem and semkath, waw, mim in the Books of Kings: Similarities and Differences

In a joint effort of the Peshitta Institute of Leiden and the Werkgroep Informatica of the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, an electronic database has been developed in which the Masoretic text and the Peshitta of the Books of Kings have been analyzed from morpheme level up through a clause-level synopsis. On the basis of the synopsis, sentence constituents are matched, providing the basis for matching phrases within clauses, and for matching words within phrases. One of the products is an electronic translation concordance which provides the translation correspondences occurring within Kings. It should be stressed that the item that occurs at a specific point in a particular text is not necessarily a lexicon-based translation; rather, it is a "correspondence" of that

item. In this manner, both similarities and differences are brought to light.

In Peshitta Kings the Syriac verb *semkath-waw-mim* is found as the rendering of the Hebrew verb *sin-yod-mem* in nearly half of the occurrences. These verbs, so similar in sound, shape and meaning do not overlap entirely. In an attempt to explain the observed data, the valence patterns of the Hebrew verb are compared with those of the Syriac verb. Both systematic tendencies and individual deviances from these are presented.

2. DAVID G.K. TAYLOR, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, AND KRISTIAN S. HEAL, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

Towards an Electronic Corpus of Syriac Texts

The desirability of an electronic corpus of Syriac texts has long been recognized (most recently in Lucas Van Rompay's January 2007 *Hugoye* article). Several localized and limited steps have been made in this direction, most significantly with the Peshitta, and as part of the Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon project. However, no coordinated and large scale effort has yet been attempted. This paper reports on a joint initiative by Oxford University and Brigham Young University to create a comprehensive electronic corpus of Syriac texts. We outline our plans for building the corpus, including our methodological approach. We describe the work that has been completed thus far, giving details of the 2.5 million word corpus that we have already assembled. The heart of our current initiative is the task of preparing a concordance to the complete works of Ephrem. The presentation will conclude with a discussion of the status of this particular project.

3. DERYLE LONSDALE, BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

A Computational Perspective on Syriac Corpus Development and Annotation

This paper discusses current efforts to develop the computational infrastructure for collecting, analyzing, annotating, and deploying large-scale lexical and textual resources for the Syriac language.

Since Syriac is a Semitic language, its morphological structure is complicated and multifaceted. We discuss our efforts to develop a morphological processor for Syriac word forms and compare the

result to previous efforts by others. The presentation mentions development of morphology rules, encoding of lexical items, and generation of analysis hypotheses. Of particular interest is the treatment of clitics and diacritics.

Lexical information for the morphological engine relies on an XML encoding of useful entries from dictionary resources for Syriac. We describe how we follow current best practices for lexical content markup, and how this information serves as a crucial resource for linguistic processing.

The text corpus situated at the centre of this effort is based on Ephrem's writings and has been introduced elsewhere. In this presentation, though, we discuss our choice for encoding and marking up the content of the text, and give examples of how interested scholars will be able to benefit from the final product of our efforts.

We also sketch our approach for annotating the corpus, particularly for part-of-speech information and morphological substructure. A state-of-the-art tagger is presented, and we discuss its use of salient features (including results from morphological parsing) for machine learning. An active learning approach allows us to maximize human annotator cost.

Finally, we discuss issues about user interface tools, data visualization, and other questions about deployment of the corpus and related lexical data to developers and to end users.

4. MICHAEL SOKOLOFF, BAR ILAN UNIVERSITY, RAMAT GAN

The Translation and Updating of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum: Progress Report (July 2007)

Since my report at the Philadelphia SBL Meeting, much progress has been accomplished and the completion of the project is now in sight:

1. Approximately 95% of the primary references in *LS* (ca. 86,000) have now been checked in the original sources. A large number of errors was found in the original references and most of these have now been corrected. A residue of errors that could not be located has been marked as "n. fnd." [= not found].
2. Complete or partial citations of the cited texts have been added to the dictionary for a great majority of the references. As a

result of this, a great number of multivalent Latin glosses in the original have now been clarified.
3. The dictionary database has been completed and refined by the programmer employed on the project. A demonstration of it will be given during this presentation.
4. The speaker intends to begin working on the updating of the etymologies this summer and hopes to complete this phase of the project in 2008.

5. REGINA HUNZIKER-RODEWALD,
UNIVERSITY OF SWITZERLAND

On Polysemy and Homonymy

Lexicographers of the Hebrew Bible are faced with the challenge of semantically categorizing a growing number of lemmas as homonyms and as hapax legomena. In doing so, roots need to be split up, which leads to some lexicons—e.g., HALOT and DCH—being flooded with so-called "new words". This tendency may well be counteracted by using comparative etymology and by thus tracing polysemy. The presentation will exemplify how the Swiss team, working on KAHAL (a revision of HALAT), is proceeding with the task of reducing the number of homonymous roots.

6. BERYL TURNER, WHITLEY COLLEGE,
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Towards a New Syriac Dictionary: Lexical Reconsideration of the Term "kay" in the Peshitta Bible, Old Syriac Gospels, and Harklean Text

Our best comprehensive Classical Syriac dictionaries are more than a century old. Inevitably, their lexicalization of words is often partial or outdated in its taxonomy, parts of speech, and syntactic and semantic analysis. Thus today's reader of Classical Syriac often encounters in a text a word or syntagm with a function and/or meaning that is not cited in Syriac lexica, or if it is, is either misleading or generalized to the extent that it is difficult to know whether it is applicable to the instantiation in question.

This paper examines the particle *kay* in its contexts in the Peshitta Bible, Old Syriac Gospels and the Harklean text, and in relation to the Greek underlying it. It will be seen that grammatical

classifications given to this term do not adequately define the quite distinctive ways in which it functions in the text. A new proposal will be offered as to how to define the term, and a lexical entry is presented that will appear in the third volume of the lexical work *A Key to the Peshitta Gospels*, and form a basis for its reconsideration in other early Classical Syriac literature and subsequent inclusion in a future comprehensive Syriac-English lexicon.

7. REINIER DE BLOIS, UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

Wine to Gladden the Heart of Man:
How to discover the meaning of different terms for wine

Most modern lexicographers agree that the meaning of a lexical entry should be described in the form of a definition rather than a gloss or a set of glosses. Writing definitions, however, is an art in itself. What many lexicographers forget is that definitions should be formulated in a way that enables the user to compare the meanings of related words in such a way that s/he will be able to detect different nuances in meaning among the different words. This is not easy unless the compiler follows a clearly outlined methodology. This methodology is illustrated in this paper with the help of examples from the Semantic Dictionary of Biblical Hebrew. It focuses on the different terms for wine in the Hebrew Old Testament, and shows how this methodology helps both the dictionary compiler and its user to get a clear overview of all relevant aspects of the meaning of each individual word, including its metaphorical usage. This method provides the compiler with the building blocks on the basis of which a useful and helpful definition can be written.

8. PERCY VAN KEULEN, PESHITTA INSTITUTE LEIDEN

Feminine Nominal Endings in Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac:
Derivation or Inflection?

It is in the interest of both morphological analysis and lexicography to have a clear perception of the nature of feminine endings in the absolute state. Classic dictionaries and grammars often appear to be inconsistent in their treatment of substantives with feminine endings. Still, on the basis of a strict distinction between derivational and inflectional endings a consistent approach seems possible.

**9. WIDO VAN PEURSEN AND DIRK BAKKER,
PESHITTA INSTITUTE LEIDEN**

**Lemmatization and Grammatical Categorisation:
The case of "haymen" in Classical Syriac**

Decisions concerning grammatical categorization have a considerable impact on the lexicographer's work. An example is the treatment of *haymen* in Syriac grammars and dictionaries: Is it a Payel (Payne Smith), a Pael (Muraoka) or a Haphel (Costaz) of the verb >MN? Or is it a denominative verb (Duval), or a Hifil borrowed from Hebrew (Brockelmann)? And how should we account for the He (rather than Alaph)? Is it part of the Hebrew loan word (Brockelmann)? Or is it due to strengthening (Duval) or the preservation of an ancient form (Nöldeke)? These questions will be addressed in our paper. It will appear that they are relevant also to other lexemes, because they touch upon the crucial interaction of lexicography and grammatical analysis.

**10. TERRY C. FALLA, WHITLEY COLLEGE,
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**

Towards a New Syriac Dictionary: Lexical Reconsideration of the Particle "kadh" in Classical Syriac

Our best comprehensive Classical Syriac dictionaries are more than a century old. Inevitably, their lexicalization of words is often partial or outdated in its taxonomy, parts of speech, and syntactic and semantic analysis. Thus today's reader of Classical Syriac often encounters in a text a word or syntagm with a function and/or meaning that is not cited in Syriac lexica, or if it is, is either misleading or generalized to the extent that it is difficult to know whether it is applicable to the occurrence in question.

By way of example, this paper examines the grammatical classification, syntactic functions and meanings of the particle *kadh*. It will be argued that, in the Syriac Gospels alone, the uses and meanings of this term goes beyond those recorded in existing Syriac lexica. The lexeme is anaylzed in its Syriac contexts and in relation to the Greek underlying it.

The study of this term has two specific aims: its preparation as an entry for the third volume of the lexical work *A Key to the Peshitta Gospels*, and as a basis for its reconsideration in other early Classical

Syriac literature and subsequent inclusion in a future comprehensive Syriac-English lexicon.

11. ANDREAS JUCKEL, INSTITUTE FOR NEW TESTAMENT TEXTUAL RESEARCH, MÜNSTER

Comparative features in a future lexicon of the Syriac New Testament[1]

By their history the Syriac versions of the New Testament (Old Syriac, Peshitta, Philoxenian, and Harklean) are a corpus of texts connected by revisional development towards an increasingly better formal adaptation to the Greek. This development is set out in comparative editions which cover (almost) the complete Syriac New Testament. A future lexicon of the Syriac New Testament (based on the Peshitta) should include comparative information to set out those translational properties of the Peshitta in greater detail, which are "essential to the study of the Peshitta as a translation of the Greek and as a literary work in its own right" (T. Falla, *A Key to the Peshitta Gospels I, xix*). These details refer to 1. orthography (esp. to proper nouns), 2. to word formation (esp. to adjectives, adverbs, and to the translation of Greek compounds), and 3. to semantics (esp. to the semantic difference existing between the Old Syriac/Peshitta and the Greek). The purpose of comparison is not to inscribe the revisional development of the Syriac NT corpus into the lexicon, but solely to serve the study of the Peshitta.

To set out the still idiomatic and non-formalized translation of the Peshitta as well as the linguistic restrictions of representing Greek word formation and semantics, the Greek correspondences and their Harklean calques should be given in a special "comparative section" (similar to the section of "Syriac-Greek correspondences" in T. Falla's *Key*). The purpose of the Harklean calques is to represent the "corrections" to the Peshitta as they actually occurred in the history of the Syriac NT corpus. Although these "corrections" refer to translation technique only and intend the reduction of Syriac semantics to Greek semantics, they are helpful for understanding the translational limits, restrictions, and quality of the Peshitta.

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[1] This eleventh paper, while not delivered at the conference, will be published in the volume with the above.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

'Antioch': A New Initiative for the Study of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch

SEBASTIAN P. BROCK, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, PUSEY LANE, OXFORD

In 2006 a new charity, named 'Antioch', was set up and registered with the aim of promoting research on the cultural heritage of the Rum Orthodox (Chalcedonian) Patriarchate of Antioch. Although the early period, up to the time of the Arab conquests, is comparatively well known, the subsequent centuries have been very little studied, despite their importance, both for the history of the Orthodox Church as a whole, and for that of the Middle East in general. Discoveries of medieval wall paintings in Syria and Lebanon, as well as of hitherto unknown manuscripts, forgotten saints, and the identification of new Christian archaeological sites in recent years are just one indication of some of the new and unexpected aspects that are coming to light. At present, however, 'Antioch' is concentrating its attention on the very large number of manuscripts of Antiochian Orthodox provenance, written in four different languages, Greek, Syriac, Christian Palestinian Aramaic and Arabic. At the end of many of these the copyist has provided a colophon with notes stating where, when and for whom the manuscript was written; quite often, further information of a historical or topographical nature is also given. Work on these manuscripts has already brought to light a forgotten saint, besides providing a lot of new and valuable historical information. Once all this information has been collected together, it will make it possible to write a much more authoritative and reliable history of the Rum Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch than is at present available.

At the present time 'Antioch' is supporting the research of Monk Elia Khalifeh, an Orthodox monk from Lebanon who is currently residing in Oxford, where he is able to benefit from the resources of the University's libraries, above all from its manuscripts and its collection of microfilms from St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai. He has already made an inventory of several thousand manuscripts in Syriac, Christian Palestinian Aramaic and

Arabic, and is in the process of entering all the varied information contained in their colophons into a carefully designed data base. The aim of 'Antioch' is eventually to be able to make all this information available to scholars in the form of a fully searchable database, as well as to support and publish research on the Antiochian Orthodox heritage in general. In due course it is hoped that it will also be possible to organize conferences on the Antiochian Orthodox tradition, and, ideally, to establish a physical Centre to further promote research and to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge about this neglected and little-known tradition to a wider public.

Needless to say, the future success and development of 'Antioch' depends on financial support for its work. Further information about 'Antioch' in general, and about how to support it, can be found on its website, www.AntiochCentre.net.

Xth Syriac Symposium
VIIIth Conference of Christian Arabic Studies
Granada 22–27 September 2008

The Xth Syriac Symposium and the VIIIth conference on Christian Arab Studies will take place in Granada, Spain from Monday, September 22 to Saturday, September 27, 2008, hosted by the International Center for the Study of the Christian Orient.

The dead line for submitting communications is on the 15th of July 2008 and should be emailed to symposium08@icsco.org. (To allow for organizing the provisional program, a summary of a maximum of 10 lines was expected by the 30th April 2008.) The presentations should not exceed 20 minutes with an additional 10 minutes for questions.

For further information, visit
http://www.icsco.org/simposio.html.

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+34 913644010

Symposium on Jacob of Sarug and His Times
Studies in Sixth Century Syriac Christianity

260 Elm Ave, Teaneck, NJ
October 24–26, 2008

Call for Registration

St. Mark's Cathedral, on the occasion of its 50th Anniversary, is holding an international symposium on Jacob of Sarug and His Times: Studies in Sixth Century Syriac Christianity. The symposium will be held on October 24–26, 2008 at 260 Elm Ave, Teaneck, NJ.

The symposium speakers are:

~ Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Brown University
~ Sharbil Alexandre Bcheiry, Syriac Orthodox Archdiocese
~ Sebastian P. Brock, University of Oxford
~ Sidney Griffith, The Catholic University of America
~ Mary Hansbury, Philadelphia
~ Amir Harrak, University of Toronto
~ George A. Kiraz, Beth Mardutho & Gorgias Press
~ Edward G. Mathews, St. Nerses Seminary
~ Kathleen McVey, Princeton Theological Seminary
~ Aho Shemunkasho, University of Salzburg
~ Lucas Van Rompay, Duke University

Symposium Chair: George A. Kiraz
Symposium Secretary: Jack C. Darakjy, Esq.

To attend the Symposium, download the Attendance Registration From (early registration ends September 1, 2008) from the following link:

http://www.gorgiaspress.com/bookshop/
t-JacobofSarugSymposium.aspx

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HUGOYE

JOURNAL OF SYRIAC STUDIES

A Publication of Beth Mardutho: The Syriac Institute

Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies, Vol. 11.2, 141–159

PAPERS

SYRIAC MANUSCRIPTS IN NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

REV. DR ISKANDAR BCHEIRY

During the course of the summer of 2006, I had the opportunity to uncover and catalogue Syriac manuscripts, which have not been fully described, and some are unidentified, in the Division of Manuscripts and Archives in the New York Public Library. The Division holds a collection of 3 Syriac manuscripts, dating from the 18th and 19th centuries, all of which focus on charms to cure and protect against diseases.[1] These books of charms reflect folk belief and folk medicine practices, experienced by the Eastern Syriac community, who lived in the neighboring plains of Azerbaijan, in northwestern Iran, and in the mountainous region of eastern Turkey, where the charms were used to cure diseases or avert dangers and mischief, to protect them from dangers and drive away bodily distempers.

[1] A charm basically means a chant or incantation recited in order to produce some good or bad effect (the term charm means to sing). An object may be charmed in this manner, or the charm may be written down. Such charms when worn or carried are amulets. The distinction between a recited charm and an amulet is generally overlooked and consequently the amulet itself, which has been charmed, is usually called a charm. Cf. Joseph Bingham, *Origines Ecclesiasticae; or, the Antiquities of the Christian Church, and other works* in 9 vols. (London: William Straker, 1834), vol. VI, 226–233.

This collection of manuscripts came from various donors and purchases according to the simple description found among the papers of the oriental collection catalogue:

> ***Syriac manuscript***
>
> *No.1*
>
> *Evangelistarium, the four gospels in Syriac. [Returned to the American Bible Society]*
>
> *No. 2*
>
> *Book of charms to cure disease,*[2] *c17th cent. Manuscript on paper in Syriac characters on 26 leaves, the last leaf lacking, 32mo. [rev. Alexander McLachlan?]*[3]
>
> *No. 3*
>
> *Book of charms to cure disease, 19th cent. Illustrated manuscript on paper in Syriac characters on 62 leaves, 16mo. [Anna Palmer Draper fund, 1913].*[4]

[2] This manuscript was presented to the NYPL in 1896 by John S. Kennedy, the last president of Lenox Library and one of the original Trustees of New York Public Library. Cf. Richard Gottheil, "Description of a Syriac Manuscript", *NYPL Bulletin* vol. II (1898), 178, where a brief description of the manuscript was found.

[3] Rev. Alexander McLachlan, an American missionary in Smyrna, Turkey, at the end of the 19th century, according to a card found with this manuscript.

[4] Mary Anna Palmer a wealthy socialite, daughter and heiress to Courtlandt Palmer who made a fortune in hardware and New York real estate. In 1867 Mary Anna Palmer married Henry Draper (1837–1882) an American doctor and astronomer. After his death from double pleurisy, his widow established the Henry Draper Memorial to support photographic research in astronomy. Cf. Edward T. James, editor, *Notable American Women, 1607–1950: A Biographical Dictionary* 3 vols. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971), vol. 1, 518–519.

No. 4

Magical prayers against demons, late 17th cent. Syriac manuscript on paper from Kurdistan. [Eames Collection].[5]

These three Syriac manuscripts present a source from which to study superstition through charms, prayers and amulets, in one of the Eastern Christian communities in the Near East.[6] Another important aspect of these manuscripts is the linguistic one; they have the vowel signs throughout, thus leaving little doubt as to the pronunciation especially of the proper names cited therein. This fact gives us an idea about the pronunciation and vocalization of the Syriac dialect close to Urmia, Persia. Finally, the importance of these manuscripts lies also in the 500 hundred proverbs and sayings through which, as through the old songs, legends, traditions, superstitions, we can trace the moral and ethical development of this community.

SYRIAC MS NO. 2

Description: XVIIIth century, Persia. The scribe called Eliyā. Book of charms to cure diseases.

Paper, size: 115x90 mm, consisting of 27 leaves, foliated in Arabic numbers in pencil at the top of the left margin (1–26), the last leaf, number 27, is stuck to the cover.

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[5] Wilberforce Eames, 1855–1937, an American bibliographer, born in Newark, N.J. He joined the staff of the Lenox Library in New York City in 1885 and became its librarian in 1895. After 1911 he was bibliographer of the New York Public Library, of which the Lenox had become a part. Eames was honored for the scholarliness of his work on Americana. Much of Eames's private library at the time of his death, including his collection of Babylonian tablets and seals, was bequeathed to the New York Public Library. Cf. John A. Garraty and Mark C. Carnes, editors, *American National Biography*, in 24 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), vol. 7, 220–221.

[6] See Hermann Gollancz, *The Book of Protection* (London & Oxford: Henry Frowde & Oxford University Press; 1912). This is a classic work, containing the first translation of two Syriac manuscripts whose existence was first made public in 1897, along with a third manuscript included for comparison.

Collation: I[10] (folio 1 was the first leaf of the fourth quire, which has been wrongly placed upside down at the beginning of this quire when the manuscript was rebound) [1–11], II[10] (lacks one leaf) [12–20], III[10] (lacks three leaves and the last leaf of this quire is stuck to the inner side of the cover and aren't foliated) [21–26]. Before folio 1, there are remains of two leaves of a lost quire. There is the original Syriac numbering of the quires which are 4 in number, and the first quire is lost.

Single column, 24 lines, Eastern Syriac Ser<7, black ink but the titles are in red. The text is not ruled, no chainlines, found a watermark on fol. 13. The scribe called Eliyā (ܐܠܝܐ ܩܫܝܫܐ ܒܪ ܫܠܡܐ ܕܥܠ fol. 27[r]). The cover of the manuscript consists of six leaves stuck together. These leaves belong to another manuscript (Syriac bible, Genesis, the story of Joseph in the prison), covered by a double layer of stacked cloth and black leather. In the middle of the spine area is a mark on which is written *Syriac No. 2*.

The content of the manuscript: Book of Charms to Cure Diseases.

I—**Charm helps to cure sickness and illness** (2[r]). The first half of this Charm is lost due to the damage.

II—**Charm of St. Tomas helps to cure insomnia** (2[r]–3[r]):

ܫܢܝܢ ܒܪܬ ܫܚܪܐ ܕܥܒܕ ܠܝܠܐ ܕܡܬܝ ܒܬ ܫܡܫܐ ܕܡܬܝ

Folio 2[v], there is a picture inside of a frame of a man, St. Tomas, riding a horse and holding a spear with which he hits a woman, leaving her lying dead on the ground. The woman is a figuration of the *daughter of the moon* (insomnia).

Syriac inscription: ܡܬܝ ܒܬ ܫܡ ,ܡܝܡܪ ܒܪ ܬܐܡ

1—Binding the arrows and all implements of war (fols. 3[r]–4[v]): ܫܒ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܙܝܢ ܕܩܪܒ ܘ ܫܝܚ ܘܩܛܠ ܕܚܪܒ ܘ ܩܫܬ

Folio 3v, an illustration of sword ܚܪܒ; dagger ܫܝܚ; hatchet[7] ܬܒܪ; bow and arrow ܘ ܩܫܬ ܒܐܪ; morgenstern ܟܘܒܪ; war

[7] Persian word means Hatchet.

hammer or axe ܒܠܟ; saddle-hatchet[8] ܛܒܪܙܝܢ; short sword ܚܪܒܐ; spear ܪܡܚܐ; pistol ܩܛܝܢ.

2—Pounding headache (fols. 4ᵛ–5ʳ): ܡܢܥ ܩܕܚܐ

3—For the start of a prosperous hunting season of the chase (fols. 5ʳ–6ᵛ): ܫܪܝ ܩܛܝܪ

Fol. 5ᵛ an illustration of different animals: fox ܫܥܠܐ; Capricorn ܓܕܝ; donkey ܥܝܪ; ram ܟܒܠܐ ܛܒܐ; dove ܝܘܢܐ; owl ܟܘܟܐ; goat ܥܙ; and in folio 7ᵛ, an illustration of different weapons: pistols and matchlocks.

4—For the riches (or sustenance) of a man (fol. 6ᵛ): ܒܨܘܪ ܩܛܝܢ ܒܨܘܡ

5—Binding the guns and the engine of war (fol. 7ʳᵛ): ܩܛܠܐ ܟܐܡ ܡܕܒܚܢ

6—For toothaches (fols. 7ᵛ–8ʳ): ܕܨܚܐ ܡܕܥܩܐ

7—Concerning peace among men (fols. 8ʳ–8ᵛ): ܠܡ ܩܒܝܠ ܒܥܝܢ ܫܠܡܐ

8—For protection from the spiders (fol. 9ʳ) ܩܒܘܨܝܢ

9—Concerning heartache (fol. 9ʳ–9ᵛ): ܒܝܫ ܩܐܒ

10—Binding the thieves (fol. 9ᵛ): ܩܛܠ ܟܐܡ

III—**Charm of Saint Gabriel the archangel helps to cure the Evil Eye** (9ᵛ–10ᵛ):

ܫܒܥ ܩܒܠ ܥܡ ܒܥܝ ܠܚܢ ܩܛܠ ܒܪ ܫܒܥ

Folio 10ʳ an illustration of Saint Gabriel, the archangel, riding a white horse and holding a spear with which he hits a woman, leaving her lying dead on the ground. The woman is a figuration of the *evil eye*.

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[8] Persian word "Tabr Zan" sometimes translated "saddle-hatchet," is the traditional battle axe of Persia and Iran. It bears one or two crescent-shaped blades. The long form of the tabar was about seven feet long, while a shorter version was about three feet long. What made the Persian axe unique is the very thin handle, which is very light and always metallic. The *tabr* is sometimes carried as a symbolic weapon by wandering dervishes (Muslim acetic worshippers).

1—For the cow or bull which dislikes, or is anxious toward her owner (fol. 10v–11r): ܫܒܝܩ ܡܢ ܫܘܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܚܒܒ ܠܗ ܠܒܥܠܗ

2—Protection from stomach cramp (fol. 11r): ܠܡܥܩܬܐ ܕܒܛܢ

3—For the pestilence among cattle and sheep (fol. 11r–11v): ܠܡܒܛܠ ܡܬܐ ܕܒܥܝܪ ܘܥܢܐ

IV—**Charm of Mar Hūrmezdā the Persian helps to protect from the raging dog** (11v–12v):

ܐܝܟ ܕܡܪ ܗܘܪܡܙܕ ܦܪܣܝܐ ܪܟܒ ܥܠ ܣܘܣܝܐ ܐܕܡܝܐ ܘܒܝܕܗ ܪܡܚ ܕܡܬܒܪ ܒܗ ܠܟܠܒܐ ܕܡܬܓܪ

Folio 12r an illustration of Mar Hūrmezdā the Persian riding a red horse and holding a spear with which he hits an animal, leaving it lying dead on the ground. The animal is a figuration of a *lion*. Syriac inscription: ܗܘܪܡܙܕ ܦܪܣܝܐ ܕܡܪ ,ܐܪܡ ܕܡ

1—Preventing the fever (fol. 12v): ܠܡܒܥܕ ܐܝܟ

2—Benediction for vineyards and corn-fields (fol. 12v–13r): ܠܡܒܪܟ ܟܪܡܐ ܘܚܩܠܐ

3—For reconciliation in the household (fol. 13r): ܠܡܕܡ ܒܝܬܐ

4—For the merchant's fruitful journey (fol. 13r–13v): ܠܬܓܪܐ ܠܡܗܠܟ ܒܬܓܪܘܬܗ ܘܒܐܝܟ ܠܐ

5—For a safe trip by night (fol. 13v–14r): ܠܐ ܢܣܒ ܠܓܒܪܐ ܒܠܠܝܐ ܠܡܐ ܕܢܣܒ

6—For the noises and sounds that trouble the mind of a man (fol. 14r–14v): ܠܡܫܬܠܝ ܠܐ ܕܡܫܡܥ

7—For the prosperity of the household (fol. 14v–15r): ܠܫܘܚܪܗ ܕܒܝܬܐ

8—Binding false dreams (fol. 15r–15v): ܠܐ ܢܫܬܟ ܕܚܠܡ ܐܝܟ

V—**Charm of Daniel the prophet helps to protect from wild animals (wolf)** (15v–16r):

ܐܝܟ ܕܡܪ ,ܕܢܝܐܝܠ ܢܒܝܐ ܕܐܬܐ ܥܠ ܐܪܡ ܕܡ ܒܗ ܘܡܬܒܪ ܒܗ ܠܟܠܒܐ

Folio 16r, an illustration of Daniel the prophet, riding a yellow horse, and holding a spear with which he hits an animal, leaving it lying dead on the ground. The animal is a figuration of a *black wolf*. Syriac inscription: ܕܢܝܐܝܠ ,ܚܙ ܕܡ ,ܐܪܡ ܕܡ

1—Binding the serpents (fol. 16rv): ܟܬܒܐ ܕܚܝܐ

Folio 16v, an illustration of two serpents, with Syriac inscription: ܚܝܐ ܟܬܒܐ

2—Binding the mouths of the scorpions (fol. 16v–17r): ܕܚܝܐ ܕܟܘܡܪ̈ܐ ܕܥܩܪ̈ܒ̈ܐ

Folio 17r an illustration of two scorpions.

3—As protecting the cattle from the Evil Eye (17r–17v): ܠܟ ܕܡܫܐ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܝܢ ܒܝܫܐ ܠܒܗܡܬܐ ܕܒܝܬܟ

4—For obtaining favor from those people in charge (17v–18r): ܒܓܝܪ ܚܠܦ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܫܘܠܛܢ̈ܐ

5—The names on the Ring of King Solomon which give courage to stand before the kings (18r): ܫܡ̈ܗܬ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܥܠ ܛܒܥܐ ܕܫܠܝܡܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܡܬܠ ܠܡܥܡܕ ܩܕܡ ܡܠ̈ܟ̈ܐ

Folio 18v, an illustration of the ring of King Solomon.

6—Binding false tongues (fol. 18v–19r): ܟܬܒܐ ܕܠܫܢ̈ܐ ܟܕ̈ܒ̈ܐ ܕܚܝܐ

VI—**Charm of Mar Šalīṭā of Rīš῾aynā helps to cure *wind burn*** (19r):

ܟܬܒܐ ܕܡܪ ܫܠܝܛܐ ܕܪܝܫܥܝܢܐ ܥܠ ܣܘܣܝܐ ܕܣܡܩ ܥܠ ܚܘܪ ܒܪ ܚܘܪ

Folio 19v, an illustration of Mar Šalīṭā of Rīš῾aynā riding a red horse, and holding a spear with which he hits the *wind burn*. Syriac inscription: ܕܟܬܒ̈ܐ ܠܥܠ ܚܘܪ ܒܪ ,ܡܪ ܫܠܝܛܐ ܕܪܝܫܥܝܢܐ ܣܘܣܝܐ ܕܣܡ

1—Binding the mouth of the scorpions and birds (19v–20r): ܕܚܝܐ ܕܥ̈ܩ̈ܪ̈ܒ̈ܐ ܕܥ̈ܦ̈ܪ̈ܐ ܕܟܘܡܪ̈ܐ

2—Binding the fire from the stalks and corn (fol. 20r–21v): ܕܚܝܐ ܕܢܘܪ ܡܢ ܟܠ ܟ̈ܦ̈ܐ ܕܚܝܐ

3—Concerning blood running from the nostril (20v–1v): ܟܬܒܐ ܕܐܣܬܪ̈ܐ ܕܕܡܐ

4—For boys not to cry (fol. 1v): ܠܡ̈ܐ ܠܟ ܟܬܒܐ ܕܠܐ

5—Protection from people practicing sorcery (fol. 1v): ܒܓܝܪ ܚܪ̈ܫ̈ܐ ܕܟܬܒܐ ܕܥ̈ܩ̈ܪ̈ܒ̈ܐ

VII—**Charm of the fathers helps to cure all kinds of sickness and illness** (1v, 21r–22r):

ܣܡܝܗ ܠܟܠ ܡܟ ܟܠ ܐܒܗ ܩܕܝܫ ܩܢ

Folio 21v, an illustration of the Garden of Eden: a tree standing in the middle, on which many birds are sitting. On the right side is a figure of Enoch and on the left side shows the figure of Elijah. Syriac inscription: ܐܠܝ ,ܚܢܟ

1—For a method to determine the cause of an illness (fol. 22r–23v): ܠܡ ܐܝܟ ܡܐ ܕܐ ܩܒܬ ܐܒܕܗ ܩܡܟ ܐܠܝ ܕܚܫ ܕܐ

2—Eliminating the itch (boil) (23v–24r): ܩܝܢܐ ܡܡܡ

3—Binding the worms (fol. 24rv): ܩܛܘܢ ܩܝܡ

4— [?] (24v–25r): [?]

5—For the bees neither to separate from each other nor leave their swarms (25r): ܠܡܫܡ ܒܡ ܐܡ ܩܢ ܡܡܡ ܐܠ ܩܬܕ

6—Binding the bees (25v): ܩܬܐ ܩܝܡ

7—Preventing stomach cramps (fol. 25v): ܩܒܠܐ ܩܒܢܐ

Folio 27r, an illustration of a Cross and on the four corners of it is written: ܐܠܝ ܩܠܒ ܠܟ ܠܝ *pray for the weak Eliyā.*

Folio 3r, 5v, 8v, 20r 22r, 26r there are frame lines which separate one chapter from another. The edge of folio 1 is damaged in the middle. The lower half of folio 24 and the upper half of folio 26 are both damaged.

What remains from the colophon in folio 26v is the following:

ܒܟܬܐ ܩܬܒ ܩܟܝܢ ܒܡܐ ܝܢ ܩܢܝ ܩܝܢ ܩܝ ܩܒܢܒ ܒܟܠ [؟] ܐ ܒܫܒ ܩܡܡܢ ܩܒܝ

This writing (of this manuscript) finished on Wednesday, in the blessed month of March, in the middle of the Great Fast in the year 1 [???].

Furthermore, there are two cards with recent English inscriptions:

The first card:

With my compliments, Rev.d Alexander Mc Lachlan, American Mission Smyrna Turkey.

The second card:

A Book of charms, with which various sicknesses are to be cured. Unfortunately the last page and half of the page next to the last are cut away, so that the name of the writer and the date can not be given. From the writing (Syriac) I should say that it is about 200 years old. The illustrations are very interesting; the Book is also interesting for the history of folk medicine.

R. G.[9]

At the upper right of this card is written a recently dated inscription in pencil: *dated Aug. 15, 1893*.

On the back of the card is written the following: *Father Rafael*[10] *77, Washington st., Syro Arabian Church.*[11]

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[9] Richard James Horatio Gottheil (1862–1936), the director of the Oriental department at the New York Public Library from 1897 until 1936. Joshua Bloch, "Richard James Horatio Gottheil 1862–1936," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 56, no. 4 (1936): 472–489.

[10] Raphael of Brooklyn (November 20, 1860–February 27, 1915) was born as Raphael Hawaweeny in Damascus, Syria. He was educated at the Patriarchal School in Damascus, the Patriarchical Halki seminary in Turkey, and at the Theological Academy in Kiev, Ukraine. In 1904 he became the first Orthodox bishop to be consecrated in North America. He served as Bishop of Brooklyn until his death. During the course of his ministry as an auxiliary bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church in America St. Raphael founded the present-day cathedral of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America, established twenty-nine parishes, and assisted in the founding of St. Tikhon's Orthodox Monastery. Bishop Raphael was glorified by the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA) in its March 2000 session. He is commemorated by the OCA on February 27, the anniversary of his death, and by the Antiochian Orthodox Church on the first Saturday of November. Cf. Basil Essey, editor, *Our Father Among the Saints Raphael Bishop of Brooklyn: Good Shepherd of the Lost Sheep in America* (Englewood, N.J.: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, 2000).

[11] Father Raphael set up a chapel at 77 Washington Street.

SYRIAC MS NO. 3

Description: XIXth century (1893 A.D), Persia, The scribe called David son of ‘Abd Yešū’. Book of charms to cure diseases.

Paper, size: 170x105 mm, consisting of 62 leaves. Not foliated or paginated.

Collation: I^{6} [i, 1–5], II^{6} [6–11], III^{6} [12–17], IV^{6} [18–23], V^{4} [24–27], VI^{6} [28–33], VII^{6} [34–40], VIII^{6} [41–46], IX^{6} [47–52], X^{6} [53–58], XI^{4} (one blank leaf) [59–62].

Single column, 19 lines, Eastern Syriac Serṭō, black ink, the titles in red. The text is ruled, no water marks or chainlines. The scribe called David son of ‘Abd Yešū’. The cover is cardboard and covered with dark brown leather. At the inner side of the cover is typed *Anna Palmer Draper Fund to the memory of her father Courtlandt Palmer, Sr.* also is found a sign of a star and moon which represents the Ottoman flag, beside that a stamped date *Jan 15 1913*.

A—**Book of Charms to Cure Diseases** (fols. 1–27).

Preliminary words acknowledging divine aid (fol. 1):

ܥܠ ܚܝܠܗ ܕܡܪܢ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܡܫܪܝܢ ܠܡܟܬܒ ܚܪ̈ܫܐ ܕܩܘܕ̈ܫܐ ܘܕܐܘܢܓܠܝܣ̈ܛܐ، ܩܕܡܝܬ ܫܘܒܚܐ ܕܨܠܘܬܐ، ܒܫܡ ܐܒܐ ܘܒܪܐ ܘ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܩܘܕ̈ܫܐ، ܩܕܝܫ ܩܕܝܫ ܩܕܝܫ ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܠܬܢܐ ܕܡܠܝܢ ܫܡ̈ܝܐ ܘܐܪܥܐ ܡܢ ܬܫܒ̈ܘܚܬܗ ܘܡܢ ܒܢ ܐܝܬܘܬܗ ܘܡܢ ܗܕܪܐ ܕܝܘܗ ܡܫܒܚܢܐ ܐܡܝܢܐ ܕܫܡ̈ܝܐ ܡܠܝܢ ܡܢܗ: ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܠܬܢܐ، ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܟ ܐܠܗܐ، ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܟ ܐܠܗܐ، ܫܘܒܚܐ ܠܬܠܝܬܝܘܬܐ ܡܫܒܚܬܐ ܒܪܝܟ ܕܐܬܐ ܘܐܬܐ ܒܫܡܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ، ܐܒܐ ܘܒܪܐ ܘܪܘܚܐ ܕܩܘܕ̈ܫܐ ܠܥܠܡܝܢ.

I—**The prayer of the angels** (fol. 1^{r}): ܨܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܠܐܟ̈ܐ

II—**The prayer of Adam** (fol. 1^{r}): ܨܠܘܬܐ ܕܐܕܡ

III—**The prayer of the Fathers** (fol. 1^{rv}): ܨܠܘܬܐ ܕܐܒ̈ܗܬܐ

IV—**The Lord’s Prayer** (fol. 2^{r}): ܨܠܘܬܐ ܕܡܪܢ

V—**The preaching of St. John** (fol. 2^{rv}): ܟܪܘܙܘܬܐ ܕܝܘܚܢܢ

Folio 2^{r}, an illustration of Saint Matthew and Mark, wearing colored clothes, with hats on their heads. At the same time, they are holding a staff. Syriac inscription in Esṭrangelō: ܡܬܝ, ܡܪܩܘܣ, also in Arabic: متى, مرقس

Folio 2v, an illustration of Saint John and Luke (Persian-Chinese facial features), wearing colored clothes, with hats on their heads and their hands over their chests. Syriac inscription in Eṣtrangelō: ܣܘܡ ,ܠܘܩܐ, also in Arabic: لوقا, يوحنا

Also is found on fol.2v a square divided into thirty smaller spaces, containing the words of St. John chapter 1.

VI—**Charm of Saint George helps cure fear and anxiety** (2v):

ܣܓܝܐ ܡܪܝ ܓܝܘܪܓܝ ܕܢܨܚ ܠܚܝܠܐ ܘܕܚܠܬܐ ܕܟܠ ܒܢܝ ܐܢܫܐ ܕܢܗܘܢ

Folio 3v, an illustration of Saint George riding a red horse, and holding a spear with which he hits a dragon leaving it lying dead on the ground.

Syriac inscription: ܓܝܘ ,ܡܪܝ ,ܚܝܠ ,ܟܠ also in Arabic inscription: مار جرجس, التنين

1—For courage to stand before Kings, Judges and governors (4r–4v): ܠܡܩܡ ܩܕܡ ܡܠܟܐ ܘܫܠܝܛܐ ܘܚܟܝܡܐ

2—For courage to stand before a King (4v–5v): ܩܕܡ ܡܠܟܐ

VII—**Charm of Saint Pollā gives courage to stand before kings, judges and governors** (5v–6r):

ܣܓܝܐ ܕܢܨܚ ܦܠܐ ܕܡܥܡ ܠܡܩܡ ܩܕܡ ܡܠܟܐ ܘܫܠܝܛܐ ܘܚܟܝܡܐ

VIII—**Charm of King Solomon helps cure Backache** (6r–6v):

ܣܓܝܐ ܕܚܠܬܐ ܒܟܠ ܒܥܢ ܠܐܣܝܐ ܕܫܠܡܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ

Folio 6r, an illustration of Mar Šalīṭā wearing colored clothes and smoking a pipe, furthermore, a picture of a dagger ܣܟܝܢ; sword ܣܝܦ; pistol ܟܕܪ; pipe ܒܘܒ; ? ܩܠܦ.

IX—**Charm of Saint Zayʿā helps to cure fatal malignant disease** (6v–7v):

ܣܓܝܐ ܕܢܨܚ ܐܢܐ ܒܥܢ ܠܥܢܡܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ

Folio 7r illustration of Mār Zayʿā riding a blue horse, and holding a spear with which he hits the Angel of Death, which is symbolized by a figure of a beast holding an axe and lying dead on the ground. Syriac inscription: ܡܪܝ ,ܟܠ ,ܚܝܠ ,ܐܢܐ ,ܕܢܨܚ ܕܡܘܬܐ, Also an Arabic inscription in pencil is found in the outer margin of folio 7r: مار زيا ملاك الموت

1—Spell for sickness (7v–8r), ܕܡܚ ܚܡ ܐ

X—**Charm of Saint Tomas helps cure insomnia** (8r–8v):

ܐܝܡܐ ܒܪܐ ܕܡܪܝ ܠܥܠ ܡܚܫܒܬܐ ,ܒܪ ܕܡ ܐܝܡܐ

Folio 8v, an illustration of St. Tomas riding a red horse, and holding a spear with which he hits a woman leaving her lying dead on the ground. The woman is a figuration of the *daughter of the moon* (insomnia). Syriac inscription: ܒܪܐ ܕܡܪܝ ܕܡ ,ܡܚܫܒܬܐ ,ܒܪ ܕܡ ܐܝܡܐ, also in Arabic an inscription is found: حمة القمر, مار تمسيس

1—Binding the arrow and bows, swords, daggers, and all implements of war (fol. 8v–9v): ܐܟܣܣ ܘ ܟܩܣܘ ܐܟܝܟ ܘ ܐܝܡܐ ܟܒ ܡܢ ܒܪ ܟܩܘܫܐ

Folio 9r, an illustration of weapons: sword ܟܣܡ; axe ܒܪܐ; dagger ܐܟܣܣ; rocks ܟܩܒ; bow and arrow ܘ ܐܝܟ ܟܫܥ; morgenstern ܟܩܘܫ; short sword ܟܫܒܚܡ; war hammer or axe ܟܟ.

2—Pounding headache (fol. 9v–10r): ܟܥܢ ܟܥܡܣ

3—For the start of a prosperous hunting season of the chase (10r–11v): ܟܕ ܕܝ ܟܥܩ

Folio 10v, an illustration of different animals: birds, fox, cow, donkey, goat, doves etc. …

Inscriptions in Syriac: ܟܠܐ ,ܟܕܟ ,ܚܘܥ ,ܟܠܫ ,ܟܕ, also inscription in Arabic: ايل، الجدي، حمام, حمار, ثعلب, عنز

4—For the riches (or sustenance) of man (fol. 10v–11r): ܟܘܢ ܫܒܡܣ ܫܒܒܘܐ

5—Binding the guns and the engine of war (fol. 11r–12r): ܐܝܡܐ ܣܡܟܒܕܘ ܟܩܘܫ

Folio 11v illustration of guns: *these are rifles* ܐܠܐ ܟܒܒ ܕܒܠ ܡ *these are pistols* ܐܠܐ ܟܒܩܘܫ ܒܠ ܡ

6—For toothache (fol. 12r): ܟܒܒ ܕܥܢܥ ܟܒܒ

7—Concerning peace among men (fol. 12r–12v): ܒܒ ܟܩܐܟ ܟܥܢ ܟܐܢ

8—For protection from the spiders (fol. 12v–13r): ܟܫܩܒܟ

9—Concerning heartache (fol. 13r): ܟܠܒ ܟܘܢ

10—Binding the thieves (fol. 13v): ܟܬܝܪ ܕ ܟܬܒ

XI—**Charm of Saint Gabriel the archangel helps to cure the Evil Eye** (13v–14v):

ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܣܥܪ ܠܚܕ ܥܠ ܣܘܣ ܟܬܒ ,ܓܒܪܝܠ ܟܬܒ

Folio 14r, an illustration of Saint Gabriel, the archangel, riding a white horse and holding a spear with which he hits a woman leaving her lying dead on the ground. The woman is a figuration of the *evil eye*. Syriac inscription: ܓܒܪܝܠ ,ܟܬܒ ܣܥܪ ܠܚܕ ܥܠ ܣܘܣ ; also in Arabic inscription: جبرائيل, عين الشرير

1—For the cow and bull to obey her owner (fol. 14v): ܠܥ ܟܬܝܐܢ ܕ ܒܬܝ ܕܐ ܒܬ ܕ ܒܩܪ ܟܬܒ

2—Protection from stomach cramp (fol. 14v–15r): ܟܬܒ ܟܬܝ ܕ ܒܝܠ

3—For the pestilence among cattle and sheep (fol. 15r): ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܕ ܒܟ ܘ ܒܟ

XII—**Charm of Mar Hūrmezdā the Persian helps to protect from the raging dog** (15v–16r):

ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܣܥܪ ܠܚܕ ܥܠ ܕ ܡܪ ܗܘܪܡܙܕ ܦܪܣ

Folio 15v, an illustration of Mar Hūrmezdā the Persian riding a purple horse, and holding a spear with which he hits an animal leaving it lying dead on the ground. The animal is a figuration of a *raging dog*. Syriac inscription: ܟܠܒ ,ܡܪ ܗܘܪܡܙܕ ܦܪܣ ,ܟܬܒ ; also in Arabic inscription: كلب مكلوب, مار هرمس الفارسي

1—Binding the fever (fol. 16r): ܟܬܒ ܕ ܒܗܬ ܟܬܒ

2—Benediction for vineyards and corn-fields (fol. 16rv): ܟܬܒ ܟܬܒ ܕ ܒܟ ܘ ܒܟ

3—For reconciliation in the household (fol. 16v): ܟܬܒ ܕ ܒܟ ܟܬܒ

4—For fruitful merchandise (fol. 16v–17r): ܒܟ ܟܬܒ ܟܬ ܟܬܒ

5—For a safe trip by night (fol. 17r–17v): ܟܬ ܟܬܒ ܟܬ ܕ ܒܟ ܟ ܒܟ

6—For the noises and sounds that trouble the mind of a man ܟܬ ܒ ܟܬ

7—For the prosperity of the household (fol. 18r): ܘܬܪܥܐ ܕܒܝܬܐ

8—Binding false dreams (fol. 18rv): ܐܣܘܪܐ ܕܚܠܡ̈ܐ ܒܝܫ̈ܐ ܕܠܠ̈ܝܐ

XIII—**Charm of Daniel the prophet helps to protect from the black wolf (wild animals)** (18v–19v):

ܐܣܘܪܐ ܕܐܒ̈ܐ ܡܢ ܒܢ̈ܐ ܡܢ ܡܫܝܢܐ, ܣܘܥܪܢܐ ܕܡܪܝ, ܕܢܝܐܝܠ

Folio 19r, an illustration of Daniel the prophet riding a green horse, and holding a spear with which he hits an animal leaving it lying dead on the ground. The animal is a figuration of a *black wolf*. Syriac inscription: ܗܢܐ ܡܪܝ, ܕܢܝܐܝܠ, ܕܐܒܐ; also in Arabic inscription: مار دانيال, ذيب

1—Binding the serpents (fol. 19v): ܐܣܘܪܐ ܕܚܘܘ̈ܬܐ

Folio 19v, an illustration of two serpents. Syriac inscription: ܚܘܘ̈ܬܐ ܐܬܝܗܘܢ; also in Arabic: حيات

2—Binding the scorpions (fol. 19v–20r): ܐܣܘܪܐ ܕܥܩܪ̈ܒܐ

Folio 20r, an illustration of four scorpions.

3—To protect the cattle from the Evil Eye (fol. 20r–20V): ܕܒܥܝܪܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܛܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܥܝܢܐ ܒܝܫܬܐ

4—For obtaining the favor of those people in charge (20v–21r): ܪܚܡܘܬܐ ܕܠܘܬ ܟܠܢܫ

5—The names of the ring of Solomon, gives courage to stand before the king, judge, and governor (21rv):

ܫܡ̈ܗܐ ܕܥܙܩܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܫܠܝܡܘܢ ܕܢܣܒ ܠܡܩܡ ܡܠܟܐ, ܘܕܝܢܐ, ܘܫܠܝܛܢܐ

Folio 21r, an illustration of the ring of King Solomon. Arabic inscription: سـليمان خـاتم

Folio 21v, an illustration of King Solomon riding a red horse, and holding a spear with which he hits Satan, named Ašmadī. Syriac inscriptions: ܦܫܚܡܘܪ, ܫܠܝܡܘܢ; also ܫܠܝܡܘܢ ܡܠܟܐ, ܫܐܕܐ ܫܡܗ ܐܫܡܕܝ, also an Arabic inscription: ملك سليمان, اشمدي الشيطان

6—Binding the false tongues (fol. 21v–22r): ܐܣܘܪܐ ܕܠܫܢ̈ܐ ܒܝܫ̈ܐ

7—For a woman that has difficulty bearing children (fol. 22r): ܐܢܬܬܐ ܕܚܒܫ ܠܕܐ

8—Spell for cow, oxen or sheep that (their) milk will not spoil (22rv):

ܕܚܠܒ ܠܐ ܢܚܠܒ ܟܬ ܥܠ ܦܓܪܗ ܘܥܠ ܟܠ ܕܒܥܐ ܠܗ ܕܢܚܠܒ

9—For reconciliation in the household (22v): ܠܫܠܡ ܒܝܬܐ ܫܪܝܪ

XIV—**Charm of Mar Šalīṭā helps to cure wind burn** (22v–23r):

ܫܠܝܛܐ ܡܪܝ ܒܥܐ ܠܗ ,ܥܠ ,ܚܝ ܡܪ

Folio 23r, an illustration of Mar Šalīṭā riding a red horse, and holding a spear with which he hits the wind burn. Syriac inscription: ܫܠܝܛܐ ܡܪܝ ܡܪ ,ܠܗ ,ܥܠ ,ܚܝ ܡܪ; also in Arabic inscription: مار شليطا, روح الأحمر

1—For toothaches (fol. 23rv): ܠܫܢܐ ܕܫܢܐ ܘ ܚܒܫ

2—Binding the mouth of scorpions and bird (fol. 23v–24r): ܫܪܝܪ ܦܘܡ ܕܥܩܪܒܐ ܘܕܨܦܪ

3—Concerning blood running from the nostril (24r): ܫܠܚ ܕܡܐ ܕܢܚܪ ܡܢܚܪܗ

4—For a child not to be disturbed in his sleeping (fol. 24r): ܠܛܠܐ ܫܠܝܛ ܕܠܐ ܢܙܥ

5—For the man upon whom sorcery shall not be practiced (24rv): ܡܢ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܫܚܪ ܠܐ ܢܬܥܒܕ

XV—**The charm of the fathers helps to cure all kinds of sickness and illness** (24v–26r):

ܫܡܥܘܢ ܐܒܗܬ ܕܥܠ ܟܠ ܡܢ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܟܐܒܐ ܘܟܠ ܡܝܢ ܕܒܝܫܐ

Folio 25r, an illustration of the Garden of Eden: a tree carrying fruits. On the right side is a figure of Enoch and on the left side shows a figure of Elijah. Syriac inscription: ܐܠܝܐ ,ܚܢܘܟ ܣܡ ܡܪ; also in Arabic: خنوخ الكاتب, نبي إليا

1—Eliminating the itch (boil) (26rv): ܦܘܣܐ ܕܚܙܐ ܕܦܘܣܐ

2—Another prayer for eliminating the itch (boil) (26v): ܫܢܝܐ ܕܚܙܐ ܕܦܘܣܐ

3—Binding the mouth of dogs (26v): ܠܟܠܒ ܕܟܦܐ ܕܢܚܪ

Fol. 27 is a blank leave.

B—Proverbs and sayings: ܡܠܦܢ (fols. 28–44).

Five hundred proverbs and sayings, mostly in Syriac dialect, numbered in red at the beginning of each proverb.

Fols. 33v–34r and 45–46 are blank leaves.

C—The story of Saint George the martyr (fols. 47–62).

ܒܫܡ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܐܚܠ ܐܢܐ ܠܡܟܬܒ ܣܗܕܘܬܐ ܕܡܪܝ ܓܝܘܪܓܝ ...

By the help of Jesus Christ we begin to write the story of the martyr Saint George…

Colophon (fol. 62):

ܫܠܡ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܕܐ ܥܠ ܝܕ ܕܘܝܕ ܒܪ ܥܒܕ ܝܫܘܥ ܒܪ ܟܗܢܐ ܕܐܠܦܣ ܒܪ [...] ܕ ܩܘܬܦܐ ܡܢ ܟܘܬܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܚܡܫ ܡܐܐ ܕܫܐܠܐ ܕܐܘܢܓܠܝܣܛܐ ܘܣܦܘܪ ܕܡܪܝ ܓܝܘܪܓܝ ܗܘ ܨܠܘܬܗ ܥܡ ܟܠܢ. ܫܠܡ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܕܐ ܥܠ ܝܘܡ ܚܡܫܐ ܒܐܒ ܫܢܬ ܐܠܦ ܘܬܡܢ ܡܝܐ ܘܬܫܥܝܢ ܠܡܪܝܐ ܐܡܝܢ.

This book was finished by David son of 'Abd Yešū', son of the priest Alḥas son of [?]Yūḥannān, from Gūtefeh[12]*, Amen. In this book there are five hundred proverbs, charms of the Evangelists, and the story of the martyr saint George, his prayer be with us. This book finished (copied) August 5th 1893 A.D, Amen.*

On the inner side of the cover a paper fastened on which is typed the following: *Anna Palmer Draper. Fund in the memory of her father Gourtland Palmer. Sr.*

Also a card is found with the following writing: BOOK OF CHARMS TO CURE DISEASE. MS. ON PRAYER, IN SYRIAC CHARACTERS XIXTH CENTURY.

On a second card is written the following: *Scribe:- David, son of Odeeshoo, Urmi (1890) near Tabriz.*

SYRIAC MS NO. 4

Description: XIXth (1813), Persia, the scribe called Zerwandad son of Safar. Book of charms to cure diseases.

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[12] Village in Urmia district, northwestern Iran.

Ms. on roll, paper, size: 2250x87mm, 8mm margin from each side, Eastern Syriac Serṭō, rubricated. The text is not ruled, and a water mark is found (1808), no chainlines. On the spine of the box where the roll is preserved is written the following: MAGICAL PRAYERS AGAINST DEMONS—SYRIAC MS. ROLL FROM KURDISTAN—LATE XVII CENT.

Contents: Charms to Cure Diseases

1—**Charm helps to cure from sickness, illness and demons**. The first half of this charm is lost.

Illustration of Saint Mary holding a staff, Jesus and the Evangelist John. Another illustration of four people: Joseph, Zebulon, Yūstos and Manase holding staffs in their hands except Joseph.

2—**Charm of Saint Mary helps to cure all sicknesses, illnesses and demons**.

ܟܬܒ ܠܗ ܟܬܝܒܐ ܟܕ ܐܡܠܠ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒ ܒܝܬ ,ܒܝܬ ܟܝ ܕܐܒ

An illustration of horse-shoe border or vignette with certain ornaments hanging. Also an illustration of the entrance of Christ to Jerusalem riding a donkey and holding a palm in his hand, and the inscription in Syriac: ܗܢܘ ܝܫܘܥ ܕ ܥܠ ܐܝܟ ܕܡ *This is Jesus entering Jerusalem*. Also shows two people in front of Christ holding palms in their hands, and two inscriptions in Syriac: ܐܠܝܢ ܒܢܝ ܘܒܢܬ ܕܐܝ ܫܪܝܠ ܒܐܝܕܝܗܘܢ ܕܡܚܙܩ ܐܢܘܢ *these are the children and sons of Israel holding palms in their hands*.

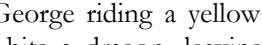
Beside the illustration is a recent Syriac inscription: ܟܬܒ ܕ ܐܠܗ

3—**Charm of the ascetic ʿAbd helps women giving birth to a still born child**.

ܟܬܒ ܠܗ ܟܬܒ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܟܝܪܝܣ ܒܚܕ ,ܒܝܬ ܟܝ ܕܐܒ ܠܡ ܚܝܐ ܟܬܒ

Illustration of the ascetic ʿAbd riding a black horse, and holding a spear with which he hits a woman leaving her lying dead on the ground. The woman is a figuration of the *evil eye*. Syriac inscription: ܟܬܒ ܚܝܐ ܟܬ ,ܒܚܕ ܒܝܬ ܟܝ

4—**Charm of Saint George helps to cure from fear and anxiety**.

Illustration of Saint George riding a yellow horse, and holding a spear with which he hits a dragon, leaving it lying dead on the ground. Syriac inscription: 

5—**Charm of Saint Simon Cephas helps to cure against a demon who strangles children.**

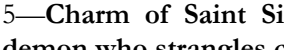
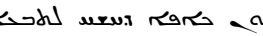
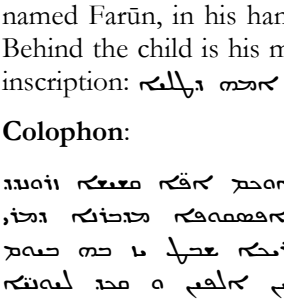


Illustration of Saint Simon Cephas forcefully restraining a demon named Farūn, in his hand. The Demon is trying to attack a child. Behind the child is his mother who is trying to protect him. Syriac inscription: 

Colophon:



The colophon of this manuscript reveals that this roll was finished on Tuesday, the 17th of February in 2124 of the *blessed Greeks* (A.D. 1813). The copying of the roll was in the time of Mar Yūḥannān the bishop of the monastery of Mar Ḥazqiyel.[13] The scribe is priest

[13] "A monastery of Mār Ezekiel, located near Rustāqā, and therefore to be sought in the Shemsdīn district, is mentioned in a number of manuscript colophons between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. The monastery (not mentioned in the report of 1607 and 1610, and perhaps a rather large church) is first mentioned in 1599, when a manuscript was copied for its superior the priest Wardā, son of the deacon Mūshe. The bishop Yōḥannān of Anzel, who died shortly before 1755, is mentioned as the monastery's superior in colophons of 1804 and 1815, and is said to have built Mār Ezekiel on the border of Daryan in colophon of 1824 implying that he was responsible for restoring the monastery. The colophon of a manuscript in 1826 by his nephew the

Zerwandad, son of the late Safar, the nephew of the bishop Yūḥannān, from the village of Garabaš.[14]

On the back of the roll is an inscription: *Chaldean mss prayer roll 1024 date about 1650 Kurdistan mountain.*

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priest Zerwandad, son of Safar, mentions that the scribe came from the village of Mār Ezekiel of Shemsdīn. A manuscript copied in 1897 in Ūrmi mentions the muṭrān's archdeacon Denḥā of Tūleki, archdeacon of the monastery of Mār Ezekiel by Rustāqā". David Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organization of the Church of the East, 1318–1913. CSCO*, 582/Subs. 104 (Louvain: Aedibus Peeters, 2002), 306.

[14] "Zerwandad, son of Safar, nephew of bishop Yōḥannān, son of Abbas, son of Wardā (priest), son of Abraham (priest and administrator of the monastery of Mār Ezekiel in Daryan)". David Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organization of the Church of the East, 1318–1913. CSCO*, 582/Subs. 104 (Louvain: Aedibus Peeters, 2002), 543.

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EARLY CHRISTIAN ANGELOMORPHIC PNEUMATOLOGY: APHRAHAT THE PERSIAN SAGE

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ABSTRACT

This article pursues the intersection of angelology and Pneumatology in the writings of the so-called Persian Sage. The first part of the article takes its cue from the critique of Aphrahat's Pneumatology contained in a seventh-century letter by George, the monophysite bishop of the Arabs, and demonstrates that Aphrahat uses a cluster of biblical verses (Zech 3:9; 4:10; Isa 11:2–3; Matt 18:10) to support what is best designated as "angelomorphic Pneumatology." The second part of the article attempts to integrate Aphrahat's angelomorphic Pneumatology within the larger theological framework described by earlier scholarship, that is, in relation to Spirit Christology, and within a theological framework of marked binitarian character.

INTRODUCTION[1]

In the conclusion of his article entitled "The Angelic Spirit in Early Judaism," John Levison invited the scholarly community to use his work as "a suitable foundation for discussion of the angelic spirit" in early Christianity.[2] A few years later, Charles Gieschen's work on angelomorphic Christology and Mehrdad Fatehi's study of Pauline Pneumatology also included dense but necessarily brief surveys of early Jewish and Christian instances of "angelomorphic Pneumatology."[3] The case for angelomorphic Pneumatology has been argued at length with respect to the Book of Revelation, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Justin Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria.[4] In what follows, I shall pursue the occurrence of angelomorphic Pneumatology in the writings of Aphrahat the Persian Sage.[5]

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[1] I am grateful to Dr. Deirdre Dempsey (Marquette University), who shepherded me through the Syriac of Aphrahat and George of the Arabs, as well as to Fr. Alexander Golitzin (Marquette University) and Dr. Susan Ashbrook (Brown University) for their generous feedback.

[2] Levison, "The Angelic Spirit in Early Judaism," *SBLSP* 34 (1995): 464–93, at 492. See also his book *The Spirit in First Century Judaism* (AGJU 29; Leiden: Brill, 1997).

[3] Gieschen, *Angelomorphic Christology: Antecedents and Early Evidence* (AGJU 42; Leiden: Brill, 1998), 114–19; Fatehi, *The Spirit's Relation to the Risen Lord in Paul* (WUNT 128; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 133–37.

[4] Bogdan G. Bucur, "Hierarchy, Prophecy, and the Angelomorphic Spirit: A Contribution to the Study of the Book of Revelation's Wirkungsgeschichte," *JBL* 127 (2008): 183–204; "The Son of God and the Angelomorphic Holy Spirit: A Rereading of the *Shepherd's* Christology," *ZNW* 98 (2007): 120–43; "The Angelic Spirit in Early Christianity: Justin, the Martyr and Philosopher," *JR* 88 (2008): 190–208; "Revisiting Christian Oeyen: 'The Other Clement' on Father, Son, and the Angelomorphic Spirit," *VC* 61 (2007): 381–413. This direction of research is profoundly indebted to the study of Christian Oeyen, "Eine frühchristliche Engelpneumatologie bei Klemens von Alexandrien," *IKZ* 55 (1965): 102–120; 56 (1966): 27–47.

[5] For details on Aphrahat's life and works, see Peter Bruns, *Das Christusbild Aphrahats des Persischen Weisen* (Bonn: Borengässer, 1990), 69–81, and the introductory studies by Marie-Joseph Pierre, in *Aphraate le Sage Persan: Les Exposés* (SC 349; Paris: Cerf, 1988), 33–199, and Bruns, in

This author is judged to represent "Christianity in its most semitic form, still largely free from Greek cultural and theological influences."[6] It is the unanimous judgment of scholars that Aphrahat is "entirely traditional," in the sense that "he transmits the teaching that he received, lays out *testimonia* pertaining to each topic, in order to convince or reassure a reader whose intelligence functions according to this logic of faith."[7] His *Demonstrations* are noted for their "archaism" or "traditionalism," and represent, as has been said, a unique treasure-trove of older exegetical and doctrinal traditions.[8] This is why, even though he flourished in the fourth century, Aphrahat provides invaluable insight into earlier Christian doctrines and practices.

Aphrahat's Pneumatology has not been a neglected topic in scholarship. The pioneering studies by Friedrich Loofs and Ignatius Ortiz de Urbina, which to this day remain indispensable for the study of Aphrahat's Christology, contain much material of

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Aphrahat: Unterweisungen (FC 5/1; New York; Freiburg: Herder, 1991), 35–71.

[6] Kuriakose Valavanolickal, *Aphrahat: Demonstrations* (Catholic Theological Studies of India 3; Changanassery: HIRS, 1999), 1.

[7] Pierre, "Introduction," in *Aphraate Le Sage Persan: Les Exposés*, 66. For the difference between Aphrahat and Ephrem on the issue of "traditionalism," see Robert Murray, "Some Rhetorical Patterns in Early Syriac Literature," in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus* (ed. R. H. Fischer; Chicago: The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1977), 110. Aphrahat represents "an *unicum* in the history of Christian dogma, because his "singularly archaic" Christology is "independent of Nicaea and . . . of the development of Greco-Roman Christology." See Loofs, *Theophilus*, 260; Bruns, *Aphrahat*: *Unterweisungen*, 208–9; Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," *OCP* 31 (1933): 5, 22. More recently, William L. Petersen argued the same thesis, even though his views of Aphrahat's Christology are quite different: Aphrahat is "untouched by the Hellenistic world and Nicaea," he represents a subordinationist Christology, which is the "Christology confessed by early Syrian Christians, a relic inherited from primitive Semitic or Judaic Christianity" ("The Christology of Aphrahat, the Persian Sage: An Excursus on the 17th *Demonstration," VC* 46 [1992]: 241, 251).

[8] Arthur Vööbus, "Methodologisches zum Studium der Anweisungen Aphrahats," *OrChr* 46 (1962): 32.

pneumatological relevance.[9] The above-mentioned study by Fredrikson on the opposition between the good and the evil spirits in the *Shepherd of Hermas* also discusses Aphrahat's treatment of this topic.[10] Winfrid Cramer's book on early Syriac Pneumatology dedicates some thirty pages to Aphrahat, which were hailed as "the most thorough and . . . without doubt the best study on this aspect of Aphrahat's theology."[11] More recently, in a 2005 doctoral dissertation, Stephanie K. Skoyles Jarkins makes some valuable observations on the Sage, including his views on the Holy Spirit.[12]

In what follows I shall take my cue from a critique of Aphrahat's Pneumatology contained in a seventh-century letter addressed by George, the monophysite bishop of the Arabs, to a certain hieromonk Išo.[13] The third chapter of this epistle bears the following title: "Third Chapter, concerning that which the Persian writer also said, that, when people die, the animal spirit (ܪܘܚܐ ܕܚܝܐ = τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ψυχικόν) is buried in the body,

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[9] Loofs, *Theophilus*, 257–99: "Die trinitarischen und christologischen Anschauungen des Afraates"; Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," esp. 124–38: "Der göttliche Geist der in Christus wohnt." See also Francesco Pericoli Ridolfini, "Problema trinitario e problema cristologico nelle 'Dimostrazioni' del 'Sapiente Persiano,'" *SROC* 2 (1979): 99–125, esp. 109–10, 120–21.

[10] Fredrikson, "L'Esprit Saint et les esprits mauvais," esp. 273–75.

[11] Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes und des Menschen in frühsyricher Theologie* (MBT 46; Münster: Aschendorff, 1979), 59–85; see Robert Murray's review in *JTS* n.s. 32 (1981): 260–61.

[12] Skoyles Jarkins, "Aphrahat the Persian Sage and the Temple of God: A Study of Early Syriac Theological Anthropology" (Ph.D. diss., Marquette University, 2005), 174–84, forthcoming, Gorgias Press.

[13] *Georgii Arabum episcopi epistula*, in *Analecta Syriaca* (ed. Paul Lagarde; Osnabrück: Otto Zeller, 1967 [1858]), 108–34. George became bishop of Akoula in 686 and died in 724. He translated Aristotle's *Organon*, composed a treatise "On the Sacraments of the Church," wrote scholia on the Scriptures and Gregory of de Nazianzus, and brought to completion Jacob of Edessa's *Hexaemeron*. His long epistle to Išo, dated 714–718, is part of a rich epistolary activity. See William Wright, *A Short History of Syriac Literature* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2001 [1887], 156–59); Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur mit Ausschluss der christlich-palästinensischen Texte* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1968 [1922]), 257–58.

being [lit. "which (= the animal spirit) is"] unconscious."[14] It is, however, not the sleep of the soul in Syriac tradition, a topic already treated in scholarship, that I intend to discuss here.[15] I shall rather expand upon a remark in bishop George's letter, and argue that Aphrahat offers a valuable witness to the early Christian exegesis of Zech 3:9, Isa 11:2–3, and Matt 18:10 in support of an angelomorphic Pneumatology. Finally, I shall integrate Aphrahat's angelomorphic Pneumatology within the larger theological framework described by earlier scholarship, that is, in relation to Spirit Christology, and within a theological framework of marked binitarian character.

The terms "angelomorphic" and "angelomorphism" require some clarification. According to Crispin Fletcher-Louis, these terms are to be used "wherever there are signs that an individual or community possesses specifically angelic characteristics or status, though for whom identity cannot be reduced to that of an angel."[16] The virtue of this definition—and the reason for my substituting the term "angelomorphic pneumatology" for Levison's "angelic Spirit"—is that it signals the use of angelic *characteristics* in descriptions of God or humans, while not necessarily implying that the latter are angels *stricto sensu:* neither "angelomorphic Christology" nor "angelomorphic Pneumatology" imply the simple identification of Christ or the Holy Spirit with angels.[17]

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[14] Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 117.4–6.

[15] In fact, "there is hardly any feature of the teaching of Aphrahat which has occasioned so universal comment" (Frank Gavin, "The Sleep of the Soul in the Early Syriac Church," *JAOS* 40 [1920]: 104). See also Pierre, "Introduction," in *Aphraate le Sage Persan: Les Exposés*, 1:191–99; Ridolfini, "Note sull'antropologia e sul' escatologia del 'Sapiente Persiano,'" *SROC* 1/1 (1978): 5–17. See also Nicholas Constas, "An Apology for the Cult of Saints in Late Antiquity: Eustratius Presbyter of Constantinople, On the State of Souls after Death (CPG 7522)," *JECS* 10 (2002): 267–85.

[16] C. Fletcher-Louis, *Luke-Acts: Angels, Christology and Soteriology* (WUNT 2/94; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 14–15.

[17] See Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964), 118.

APHRAHAT'S PNEUMATOLOGY: "MANY ABERRATIONS AND VERY CRASS STATEMENTS"

According to the seventh-century Bishop George of the Arabs, one should not waste much sleep over the writings of the "Persian Sage."[18] This otherwise unknown writer could not have been Ephrem's disciple, because the character [ܕܡܘܬܐ = εἰκών] of his teaching is unlike that of Mār Ephrem's.[19] Indeed, Aphrahat was "not among those who confessed the approved teachings (ܕܡܬܬܐ ܕܡܐܠܦܢ) of the teachers that were approved."[20] His writings contain "many aberrations and very crass statements."[21]

Clearly, Bishop George does not think very highly of the Persian Sage. His addressee, on the other hand, has read the *Demonstrations* front to back, and is most likely an admirer of Aphrahat's. This is why the bishop proceeds with caution: he concedes that the Persian writer was of a "sharp nature," and that he studied (lit. "ploughed") the Scriptures with great diligence. Some of the flaws, such as, for instance, the grave misunderstanding of Pauline statements in 1 Corinthians 15, might be due to the fact that Aphrahat did not have access to correct versions of the Scriptures.[22] Or perhaps, in his time and place, he did not have the possibility "to apply himself (lit. "his heart", ܠܒܗ ܕܢܫܬܡ ܠܟܠ) and conform his opinions (ܕܥܡܗ)" to the teachings of more trustworthy writers.[23]

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[18] "It befits your Fraternity's wisdom not to consider or number that man, the Persian writer, among the approved writers, and [his writings] among the writings that are approved, so as to wear yourself out with questions and become clouded over in your mind in order to make sense of and understand the import of all the words written in the book of the *Demonstrations*" (Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 117.18–22).

[19] ܠܐ ܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܡܢ ܕܡܐܠܦܢ ܕܐܬ ܡܬܬܐ ܕܡܐܠܦܢ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܐܢܐ (Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 111.1–2).

[20] Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 117.24–25.

[21] ܫܓܝܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܐܬ ܡܢ ܕܐܠܦ ܕܐܬ ܕܫܓܝܐ ܕܐܬ (Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 117.27–28).

[22] Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 118.1–12.

[23] Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 117.26–27. This, of course, does not mean that Aphrahat should be "excused" for some of his views on grounds that he represents an earlier stage of theological reflection. Such an interpretation would reflect the mindset of modern Patristics more

At one point, however, Bishop George seems to have run out of sugarcoating, for he bluntly states that Aphrahat's views about the Holy Spirit are both stupid and blasphemous. Just as the ideas about the animal spirit are an example of "crassness and boorish ignorance (ܕܥܒܝܘܬܐ ܘܠܐ ܠܦܘܬܐ ܣܘܪܚܬܐ)," so also are those statements that seem to equate the Holy Spirit with the angels:

> You see, my brother, the crassness of the conceptions (ܥܒܝܘܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܥܝܢܐ); what sort of honor they ascribe to the Holy Spirit; how he understands the angels of the believers, of whom our Lord has said that they always see the face of his Father. He also holds this opinion in that which he says towards the end of the *Demonstration* On the Resurrection of the Dead.[24]

Bishop George refers, first, to *Dem*. 6.15, where, as I shall show later, Aphrahat uses Matt 18:10 to illustrate the intercessory activity of the Holy Spirit. The "crassness of the conceptions" (ܥܒܝܘܬܐ ܕܪ̈ܥܝܢܐ) does not refer to words or expressions but to Aphrahat's notion of the Holy Spirit as interceding like an angel, and the underlying exegesis of Matt 18:10.

The second reference is most likely to *Dem*. 8.23 (I/404), a text using the same imagery of the Spirit as intercessor before the throne of God, albeit without the reference to Matt 18:10. Bishop George's point is that Aphrahat's bothersome connection between the angels of Matt 18:10 and the Holy Spirit was not a slip of the pen, due to lack of attention or doctrinal vigilance, but rather a case of repeated, consistent, and therefore characteristic "crassness and boorish ignorance."

So much for the reception of Aphrahat's Pneumatology by the guardians of later Orthodoxy. Needless to say, the advice not to waste much time over the Persian Sage offers just the right incentive for us to start looking more closely at Aphrahat, and specifically at the passages that caused the most outrage.

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than the mind of patristic authors. It is rather a rhetorical maneuver on the part of the bishop, designed to pacify those fond of Aphrahat.

[24] Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 119.10; 120.2–6.

The Seven Operations of the Spirit are Six

The following passage occurs in Aphrahat's first *Demonstrations*:

> And concerning this Stone he stated and showed: *on this stone, behold, I open seven eyes* [Zech 3:9]. And what are the seven eyes opened on the stone other than the Spirit of God that dwelt (ܕܫܪܬ) upon Christ with seven operations (ܣܘܥܪܢܝܢ)? As Isaiah the prophet said, *There will rest* (ܬܬܢܝܚ) *and dwell* (ܘܬܫܪܐ) *upon him God's Spirit of wisdom and of understanding and of counsel and of courage, and of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord* [Isa 11:2–3]. These are the seven eyes that were opened upon the stone [Zech 3:9], and *these are the seven eyes of the Lord which look upon all the earth* [Zech 4:10].[25]

Aphrahat combines Isaiah's seven gifts of the Spirit with Zechariah's seven eyes on the stone (Zech 3:9), and "the eyes of the LORD [i.e., his angelic servants], which look upon all the earth" (Zech 4:10). Isaiah 11:2 is quoted in a distinctly Syriac form, with an additional verb (*šrā*) complementing the single "to rest" in the Hebrew and Greek.[26] Nothing extraordinary here; except that,

[25] Aphrahat, *Dem.* 1.9 [I/20]. The numbers between square brackets indicate volume and page in Jean Parisot, ed., *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes* (PS I; Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1894).

[26] Aside from Isa 11:2, *šrā* is used in the OT, in passages describing the Spirit's intimate relationship with certain individuals (Num 11:26; 2 Kgs 2:15; 2 Chr 15:1; 20:14). In the NT, it is not used in this sense. *Šrā* as "indwelling" occurs, however, in the invocations of the Holy Spirit over baptismal water, the eucharistic elements, or the baptismal oil, in the *Acts of Thomas* (chs. 27, 133, 156, 157), and in later patristic quotations from and allusions to Luke 1:35. After examining the divergence between the use of *aggen ʿal–* in all Syriac versions of Luke 1:35, and the use of *šrā b-* for the same verse in Ephrem and Philoxenus, Sebastian Brock ("The Lost Old Syriac at Luke 1:35 and the Earliest Syriac Terms for the Incarnation," in *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Origins, Recensions, Text, and Transmission* [ed. W. Petersen; Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989], 117–31) concluded that *šrā b–* does not reflect the lost Old Syriac of Luke 1:35 but rather a Jewish Aramaic background to the *oral* Syriac kerygma. Columba Stewart (*"Working the Earth of the Heart": The Messalian Controversy in History, Texts, and Language to AD 431* [Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford: Clarendon, 1991], 212) also

on closer examination, Aphrahat's "seven operations" of the Spirit are only six: wisdom, understanding, counsel, courage, knowledge, and fear of the Lord![27]

Neither the Hebrew of Isa 11:2–3 (whether MT or the *Great Isaiah Scroll* at Qumran), nor the Peshittā, nor the Syriac quoted by Aphrahat, nor the Targum Jonathan, mention a seventh "spirit" at Isa 11:3.[28] While the messianic interpretation of Isa 11:1–2 is not unknown in rabbinic Judaism,[29] the use of this verse to support the notion of the *sevenfold* spirit resting on the Messiah seems absent from both Second Temple apocalyptic writings and rabbinic literature.[30] It is noteworthy that the *Midrash Rabbah* uses Isa 11:2 in

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thinks that the occurrence of *šrā* in later authors, such as Aphrahat or Ephrem, points to "a common liturgical or catechetical source."

[27] Schlütz (*Isaias 11:2*, 35) thinks that Aphrahat might have counted "the Spirit of God" as one of the seven gifts of the Spirit. I find this very unlikely. First, Aphrahat speaks about two terms: the Spirit and the seven operations of the Spirit. Second, there is an obvious parallelism between "the Spirit of God that abode on Christ with seven operations," and the immediately following proof text from Isa 11:2–3: "*The Spirit of God shall rest and dwell upon him,"* followed by the "seven" (in reality six) gifts of the Spirit. Finally, all patristic writers who echo this tradition count, without exception, *seven* gifts of the Spirit as distinct from "the Spirit of God."

[28] Schlütz (*Isaias 11:2*, 2–11) provides a detailed treatment of the versions and their relationship. For Qumran, I have consulted *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* (ed. M. Abegg Jr., P. Flint, E. Ulrich; San Francisco, Calif.: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999). See also J. F. Stenning, ed., *The Targum of Isaiah* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1949), 41.

[29] See references in Bobichon, *Justin Martyr*, 803 n. 4.

[30] Schlütz, *Isaias 11:2*, 8. In *1 En.* 61.11 the sevenfold angelic praise is said to rise up "in the spirit of faith, in the spirit of wisdom and patience, in the spirit of mercy, in the spirit of justice and peace, and in the spirit of generosity." Yet, as Schlütz (*Isaias 11:2*, 20) notes, this is in no way connected to Isa. 11:2–3. Moreover, in *1 En.* 49.3 the Spirit resting over the coming Messiah is fivefold: "In him dwells the spirit of wisdom, the spirit which gives thoughtfulness, the spirit of knowledge and strength, and the spirit of those who have fallen asleep in righteousness" (*OTP* 1.36). The numerous patristic references to Isaiah 11 and the Holy Spirit adduced by Schlütz have no counterpart in the rabbinic literature surveyed by Peter Schäfer, in his work *Die Vorstellung vom Heiligen Geist in der*

a speculation about the *six* spirits on the Messiah.[31] This is similar to the Ps.-Philonic homily "On Samson," which also enumerates six spirits by referring to the "fear of the Lord" only once, as πνεῦμα φόβου θεοῦ.[32] This seems to be a Jewish precursor of the idea of seven spirits resting on the Messiah in Isa 11:2–3, universally disseminated among Christian writers, which opens up the possibility of combining this text with Zech 3:9 and 4:10.[33]

It is the very strong Christian tradition about the seven spirits resting on the Messiah that functions as Aphrahat's hermeneutical

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rabbinischen Literatur (Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 28; Munich: Kösel, 1972).

[31] "Furthermore, in connection with the offering of Nahshon of the tribe of Judah it is written, And his offering was one silver dish (Num 7:13); whereas in connection with all the others it states, 'his offering.' Thus a *waw* was added to Nahshon, hinting that six righteous men would come forth from his tribe, each of whom was blessed with six virtues. [Next, the text enumerates David, the three youths, Hezekiah, and Daniel, each of which are shown to have been endowed with six virtues]. Finally, of the royal Messiah it is written, And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord (Isa 11:2)" (*Gen. Rab.* 97; English version from *Midrash Rabbah*: *Genesis* [tr. H. Freedman; London: Soncino, 1983], 2:902. According to Friedert, this text constitutes an exception, inasmuch as the Rabbis had ceased to use Isa 11:2.

[32] "On Samson," 24. This homily was most likely composed in Alexandria, in the first century CE. It survives in a very literal Armenian translation, dated to the early sixth century, alongside the genuine works of Philo. It should be noted that there are no literary connections between the homily and early Christian literature prior to the Armenian translation. See Folker Siegert, Jacques de Roulet, with Jean-Jacques Aubert and Nicolas Cochand, eds. and trans., *Pseudo-Philon: Prédications synagogales* (SC 345; Paris: Cerf, 1999), 19–20, 38–39, 41; Siegert, ed. and trans., *Drei hellenistisch-jüdische Predigten: Ps.-Philon, "Über Jona", "Über Jona" <Fragment> und "Über Simson"* (WUNT 61; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 48, 51.

[33] For the patristic exegesis of the passage, see Schlütz, *Isaias 11:2*, passim. Siegert (*Drei hellenistisch-jüdische Predigten*, 2:275) refers to the homily's use of Isa 11:2 as "eine jüdische Vorstufe" to the Christian tradition.

presupposition, allowing him to speak of seven operations of the Spirit, even though his biblical text only mentions six.[34]

"THE SPIRIT IS NOT ALWAYS FOUND WITH THOSE THAT RECEIVE IT . . ."

I now move to a text that provoked Bishop George's outrage:

> Anyone who has preserved the Spirit of Christ in purity: when it [the Spirit] goes to him [Christ], it [the Spirit] speaks to him thus: *the body to which I went and which put me on* [ܠܒܫܢ] *in the waters of baptism, has preserved me in holiness*. And the Holy Spirit entreats [ܡܫܬܥܐ] Christ for the resurrection of the body that preserved it in a pure manner. . . . And anyone who receives the Spirit from the waters [of baptism] and wearies [ܡܚܡ] it: it [the Spirit] departs from that person . . . and goes to its nature, [namely] unto Christ, and accuses that man of having grieved it . . . And, indeed, my beloved, this Spirit, which the Prophets have received, and which we, too, have received, is not at all times found with those that receive it; rather it sometimes goes to him that sent it, and sometimes it goes to him that received it. Hearken to that which our Lord said, *Do not despise any one of these little ones that believe in me, for their angels in heaven always gaze on the face of my Father*. Indeed, this Spirit is at all times on the move [ܡܗܠܟ ܠܥܠ], and stands before God and beholds his face; and it will accuse before God whomsoever injures the temple in which it dwells.[35]

These passages are usually discussed in reference to Aphrahat's doctrine of "the sleep of the soul" and his distinction between the "animal spirit" (ܪܘܚܐ ܕܢܦܫܐ) that slumbers in the grave with the body and the "holy spirit" (ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ)—or "heavenly spirit" (ܪܘܚܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ), or "spirit of Christ" (ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ)—which

[34] Something similar occurs in Jerome. The Vulgate's Isa 11:2–3 follows not the Hebrew but the Greek, and Jerome's attachment to the tradition of the seven spirits resting on the Messiah is evident in his commentaries (*On Isaiah* 4.11; *On Zechariah* 1.3; *On Job* 38.31; 41). For details, see Schlütz, *Isaias 11:2*, 16.

[35] Aphrahat, *Dem.* 6.14–15 [I/293, 296, 297].

clothes "the spirituals" (ܪܘܚܢܝ̈ = οἱ πνευματικοί) at baptism and later returns "to its nature, unto Christ."[36]

One must not lose sight, however, of the fact that the passage is part of the *Demonstration* "On the Sons of the Covenant," and that Aphrahat argues here one of the axioms of his ascetic theory, namely that the Holy Spirit departs from a sinful person and goes to accuse that person before the throne of God. According to the Sage, Christians receive the Spirit at Baptism. If one keeps the Spirit in purity, the latter will advocate for that person before the throne of God; if, on the contrary, one indulges in sinful behavior, the Spirit leaves the house of the soul—which allows the adversary to break in and occupy it (*Dem.* 6.17)—and goes to accuse the person before God.[37]

Indication that this is an inherited tradition can be found in the striking similarities with the *Shepherd of Hermas*.[38] There are, however, no Syriac manuscripts of the *Shepherd*, and no references to this work among Syriac writers.[39] Fredrikson raises the

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[36] Bishop George is the first to ponder these questions. He does so in his usual dismissive style: "And there is also another thing that he said, that, as soon as people die, the holy spirit, which people receive when they are baptized, goes to its nature, [namely] to Christ. And that which goes to the Lord is the Spirit of Christ; since I do not know what he understands by 'to our Lord' other than Christ. Now, this is crassness and boorish ignorance" (Lagarde, *Analecta Syriaca*, 119.6–10).

[37] According to Skoyles Jarkins ("Aphrahat and the Temple," 183), "[t]he Spirit may be either, as it were, a defense lawyer or a prosecuting attorney before the tribunal of the Lord." Cf. Pierre, *Aphraate le Sage Persan*, 402 n. 93: "L'Esprit saint est à la fois intercesseur et procureur."

[38] According to the *Shepherd*, the πνεῦμα inhabits the believer (Herm. *Mand.* 10.2.5) and, under normal circumstances, intercedes *on behalf* of that person. Yet, the *Shepherd* warns that the Holy Spirit is easily grieved and driven away by sadness (Herm. *Mand.* 10.1.3; 10.2.1), case in which case he will depart and intercede to God *against* the person (Herm. *Mand.* 10.41.5).

[39] Leutzsch, *Papiasfragmente. Hirt des Hermas*, 120–21. According to Baumstark (*Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, 75–77), the pre-Nicene writers translated into Syriac starting with the early decades of the fifth century—that is, decades after Aphrahat—are Ignatius, Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Aristides, Gregory Thaumaturgs, Hippolytus, and Eusebius of Caesarea. Meanwhile, "Hermas, Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria

hypothesis of a common source behind both Aphrahat and the *Shepherd*, a source whose views of spiritual dualism and divine indwelling would have been similar to that of the Community Rule at Qumran.[40] We must perhaps consider the idea of a massive Palestinian-Syriac cluster of ascetic vocabulary and imagery, passed on by the earliest Christian missionaries to communities in Syria and Alexandria.[41] In fact, there is good reason to suppose that early Christian asceticism originated with Jesus himself.[42]

For Aphrahat, then, the notion that the Spirit can be present in the believer, and subsequently leave, being driven away by evil spirits, was part of a traditional ascetic theory. In the course of the

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and Origen are conspicuous by their absence" (Brock, "The Syriac Background to the World of Theodore of Tarsus," in his volume *From Ephrem to Romanos* [Aldershot / Brookfield / Singapore / Sydney: Ashgate Variorum, 1999], 37).

[40] Fredrikson, "L'Esprit saint et les esprits mauvais," 273, 277, 278. Cf. also the older studies by Pierre Audet ("Affinités littéraires et doctrinales du Manuel de Discipline," *RB* 59 [1953]: 218–38; 60 [1953]: 41–82), and A. T. Hanson ("Hodayoth vi and viii and Hermas Herm. *Sim.* VIII," *StPatr* 10 [1970]/ TU 107: 105–8). The similarities between Aphrahat's ascetic theology and the Qumran documents have been further investigated in Golitzin's ample study entitled "Recovering the 'Glory of Adam': 'Divine Light' Traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Christian Ascetical Literature of Fourth-Century Syro-Mesopotamia," published in *The Dead Sea Scrolls as Background to Postbiblical Judaism and Early Christianity: Papers from an International Conference at St. Andrews in 2001* (ed. J. R. Davila; STDJ 46; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 275–308.

[41] A fresh and compelling view has been proposed recently by April De Conick, *Recovering The Original Gospel of Thomas: A History of The Gospel And Its Growth* (LNTS 286; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2005), 236–41. See also Kretschmar, "Ein Beitrag zur Frage nach dem Ursprung frühchristlicher Askese," *ZTK* 64 (1961): 27–67; Peter Nagel, *Die Motivierung der Askese in der alten Kirche und der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (TU 95; Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1966); Murray, "An Exhortation to Candidates for Ascetical Vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syriac Church," *NTS* 21 (1974): 59–80; "The Features of the Earliest Christian Asceticism," in *Christian Spirituality: Essays in Honour of E. G. Rupp* (ed. P. Brooks; London: SCM, 1975), 65–77.

[42] See the extensive argumentation in Allison, *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1998), 172–216

Messalian controversy this view became highly controversial. Most significant in this respect is the treatise *On the Inhabitation of the Holy Spirit* composed by Philoxenus of Mabbug († 523) with the express aim of showing that "the Holy Spirit whom, by the grace of God, we have received from the waters of baptism at the moment when we were baptized, we did not receive so that he would sometimes remain with us and some other times abide afar from us. . . ."[43] According to Philoxenus, the Spirit "does not flee from the soul in which he dwelled at the moment of sin and return when it would repent, as was the assertion of one who blurted out stupidly."[44]

It is noteworthy, however, that even while he writes to dismantle the ascetic theories espoused in the *Demonstrations*, Philoxenus continues to use the very same imagery and biblical passages (albeit to opposite ends), thus confirming the traditional character and widespread appeal of the theology set forth by the Sage.[45]

What seems to have been overlooked is the intimate link between Aphrahat's notion of the Spirit departing to intercede for or against the believer, on the one hand, and the angelomorphic representation of the Holy Spirit, on the other. Indeed, Aphrahat describes the work of the Holy Spirit in unmistakably angelic imagery: the Spirit "is always on the move," he stands before the divine throne, beholds the Face of God, entreats Christ on behalf

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[43] ܠܐ ܙܒܢܝܢ ܢܩܘܐ ܠܘܬܢ ܘܙܒܢܝܢ ܕܢܬܪܚܩ ܡܢܢ ܢܩܒܠܢܝܗܝ ܠܗ (Antoine Tanghe, "Memra de Philoxène de Mabboug sur l'inhabitation du Saint-Esprit," *Mus* 73 [1960], 43).

[44] ܐܝܟ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܕܡܦܩܪ ܗܕܝܘܛܐܝܬ (Tanghe, "Memra de Philoxène," 50). The doctrine attacked here is abundantly illustrated by Aphrahat and the *Liber Graduum*. Could the author whose explanations Philoxenus finds awkward or idiotic (ܗܕܝܘܛܐܝܬ, derived from ἰδιωτεία) be Aphrahat? The connection with Bishop George's verdict of "crassness and boorish ignorance" is tempting.

[45] Particularly striking is his description of the "mechanics" of temptation and sin (Tanghe, "Memra de Philoxène," 50). When tempted by sin, the believer's conscience has a choice of accepting or rejecting the inner admonition coming from the Holy Spirit. If the admonition is accepted, the believer will refrain from sinning, and will be filled with light and joy from the Spirit. In the opposite case, even though the Spirit does not leave, the house of the soul becomes dim and is filled with smoke and sadness.

of the worthy ascetics, accuses the unworthy, etc. It is significant that the action of carrying prayers from earth to the throne of God is sometimes ascribed to the archangel Gabriel.[46] This is again similar to the *Shepherd* (Herm. *Sim.* 8.2.5), where the archangel Michael states that, in addition to the inspection of the believers' good deeds by one of his angelic subordinates, he will personally test every soul again, at the heavenly altar (ἐγὼ αὐτοὺς ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον δοκιμάσω). Both Aphrahat and the *Shepherd* deploy the traditional imagery of angels carrying up the prayer of humans to the heavenly altar.[47]

In the case of Aphrahat, the angelomorphic element is even more pronounced, given that the Spirit's to-and-fro between earth and heaven, and his intercession before the divine throne, are "documented" with an unlikely proof-text, namely Matt 18:10 ("their angels in heaven always behold the face of my Father"). In his commentary on the Diatessaron, Ephrem Syrus interprets "the angels of the little ones" as a metaphor for the prayers of the believers, which reach up to the highest heavens. Later Syriac authors (Jacob of Edessa, Išodad of Merv, Dionysius Bar Salibi) use Matt 18:10 as a proof-text for the existence of guardian angels.[48] For Aphrahat, however, the angels of Matt 18:10 illustrate the intercessory activity *of the Holy Spirit*.

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[46] "You who pray should remember that you are making an offering before God: let not Gabriel who presents the prayers be ashamed by an offering that has a blemish . . . In such a case . . . Gabriel, who presents prayers, does not want to take it from earth because, on inspection, he has found a blemish in your offering . . . he will say to you: *I shall not bring your unclean offering before the sacred throne*" (*Dem.* 4:13; trans. Brock, in his *The Syriac Fathers on Prayer and the Spiritual Life* [Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1987], 17–18, 19).

[47] See the references to Stuckenbruck and Haas in an earlier note.

[48] Cramer, "Mt 18, 10 in frühsyrischer Deutung," *OrChr* 59 (1975): 130–46.

AN OLDER EXEGETICAL TRADITION

Cramer versus Kretschmar

Scholars disagree on how the data presented above are to be interpreted. According to Georg Kretschmar, Aphrahat does not distinguish clearly between the guardian angel, the many (angelic) spirits, and the one Spirit of God; neither does he distinguish between "spirit" as impersonal gift and "spirit" as a personal angel. The Sage's use of Matt 18:10 would be an instance in which the Spirit is placed on the same level as the angels: "der Geist [wird] also mit den Engeln gleichgesetzt."[49]

Winfrid Cramer reacted sharply, asserting that Kretschmar had completely misunderstood the relevant texts and misrepresented Aphrahat's thought by means of infelicitous formulations, which led to further unwarranted and aberrant conjectures.[50] In his view, the equation between angels and the Spirit is improbable, because Aphrahat never uses ܪܘܚܐ for angelic entities; moreover, the Sage does not use Matt 18:10 in a literal sense, but rather understands "the angels of the little ones" as a metaphorical expression for the Spirit.[51]

I agree with some elements in Cramer's critique, but disagree with much of what he affirms. Kretschmar's association with the guardian angel is indeed textually unfounded, although the confusion is perhaps understandable.[52] An earlier scholar of

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[49] Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie*, 75, 76, 119.

[50] "Daß man Aphrahat . . . völlig mißverstehen kann, zeigt Kretschmar. . . ." (Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes*, 81 n. 65); " Kretschmar . . . sieht die Beziehung zwischen *ruḥā* und *malakē*, formuliert aber unglücklich. . . . Daß Kretschmar die Engel, die—nach seiner Meinung—dem Geist gleichgesetzt werden, außerdem noch unbegründet als Schutzengel versteht, führt ihn dann zu abwegigen Kombinationen" (Cramer, "Mt 18, 10 in frühsyrischer Deutung," 132 n. 8).

[51] Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes*, 60 n. 3; "Mt 18, 10 in frühsyrischer Deutung," 132.

[52] Aphrahat draws a connection between the angels of Matt 18:10 and the Holy Spirit, but does not refer to the guardian angel. This was already noted by Loofs (*Theophilus*, 270 n. 3). Other patristic writers use Matt 18:10 as a proof-text for the existence of guardian angels, but make no reference to the Spirit (e.g., Basil, *Adv. Eun.* 3.1; Cramer's article also

Aphrahat, Paul Schwen, proceeds with more cautioun, writing that the notion of the guardian angel is an occasional contributor to Aphrahat's "hesitant and inconsistent" Pneumatology.[53] It is also true that a simple "Gleichstellung" of the Holy Spirit with the angels, as in Kretschmar's formulation, does not account for the complexity of the Sage's thought. More precisely, even though *Dem.* 6 uses the angels of Matt 18:10 to illustrate the intercessory activity *of the Holy Spirit*, this is neither the only way in which Aphrahat interprets Matt 18:10 nor the only image he uses for the Holy Spirit.[54]

I doubt, however, that Cramer's use of the phrases "literal sense," "proper sense," and "metaphorical expression" is any more felicitous or appropriate for describing Aphrahat's exegesis. After all, the Sage's statements about the Spirit were later deemed scandalous precisely because of their handling of "the angels of the believers" in Matt 18:10 and "the sort of honor they ascribed to the Holy Spirit." At least in the eyes of Bishop George, the problem was that Aphrahat interpreted the angels of the little ones quite "properly" and "literally," to use Cramer's phrases, as the Holy Spirit. As for the argument that Aphrahat did not call angels

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refers to later Syriac authors: Jacob of Edessa, Išodad of Merv, Dionysius Bar Salibi). Finally, in Valentianian quarters (and later in certain strands of Islam), the guardian angel seems to have been identified as the Holy Spirit, but with no reference to Matt 18:10. See Quispel, "Das ewige Ebenbild des Menschen: Zur Begegnung mit dem Selbst in der Gnosis," in *Gnostic Studies* I, esp. 147–57; Henry Corbin, *L'Ange et l'homme* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1978), 64–65; *L'archange empourpré: quinze traités et récits mystiques de Shihâboddîn Yahyâ Sohravardî*. Traduits du persan et de l'arabe, présentés et annotés par Henry Corbin (Paris: Fayard, 1976), xviii–xix, 215 n. 9, 224, 258 n. 7.

[53] Schwen, *Afrahat: Seine Person und sein Verständnis des Christentums* (Berlin: Trowitz & Sohn, 1907), 91: "so daß schließlich die Vorstellung des Schutzengels hineinspielt."

[54] In *Dem.* 2.20, a loose combination of Matt 18:3 and Matt 18:10 is used to exhort the readers not despise the little ones, whose angels in heaven behold the Father. See Cramer, "Mt 18, 10 in frühsyrischer Deutung," 130–31. Aphrahat also views the Spirit as God's "spouse," as "mother" of the Son and of all creation, as "medicine," and as the "breath" constituting the divine image imparted to Adam. For more details, see Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes*.

"spirits," the widespread occurrence of the "angelic spirit" (in the Hebrew Bible, the LXX, the Dead Sea Scrolls, various authors of the Alexandrian diaspora, and the New Testament), which I have mentioned repeatedly in this study, suggests the existence of a tradition that the Sage would have considered authoritative. Whether the *Demonstrations* explicitly call angels "spirits" becomes irrelevant.

It is interesting that Cramer is ready to speak of "anthropomorphic traits" in Aphrahat's depiction of the Spirit's eschatological actions.[55] The imagery of the relevant passage (*Dem.* 6.14 [I/296]), however, is clearly angelomorphic rather than anthropomorphic: the end-time ministry of the Spirit includes going before Christ, opening the graves, clothing the resurrected in glorious garments, and leading them to the heavenly king.[56] This description is immediately followed by the reference to "this Spirit" being constantly on the move between heaven and earth, and the biblical proof text—Matt 18:10!

I conclude, agreeing with Kretschmar, that the Sage does provide a witness to the tradition of angelomorphic Pneumatology. "Tradition" is the proper term to use, because Aphrahat is by no means an exception in his time. As I mentioned earlier, this way of thinking about the Holy Spirit was still an option in the fourth century.[57] Aphrahat's contemporary, Eusebius of Caesarea, writes the following:

> . . . the Holy Spirit is also eternally present at the throne of God, since also "thousands of thousand are present before him," according to Daniel (Dan 7:10); he also was sent, at one time in the form of a dove over the Son of man, at another time over each of the prophets and apostles. Therefore he also was said to come forth

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[55] Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes*, 68, 81. Cf. Ridolfini, "Note sull'antropologia e sul' escatologia del 'Sapiente Persiano,'" *SROC* 1/1 (1978): 12–13: the Spirit belongs "ontologically" to God, but manifests itself as a *divine* angelic guardian.

[56] *Pace* Bruns (*Christusbild*, 188 n. 20), who dismisses the passage as simply "a literary device" of no theological relevance.

[57] See the brief summary in Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 122–23 and n. 270.

> from the Father. And why are you amazed? About the devil it was also said, "and the devil went forth from the Lord" (Job 1:12); and again, a second time, was it said "so the devil went forth from the Lord" (Job 2:7). And you would also find about Ahab where the Scripture adds "and there went forth the evil spirit and stood before the Lord and said 'I shall trick him'" (1 Kgs 22:21). But these are adverse spirits, and now is not the proper time to investigate just how and in what way this was said.[58]

Eusebius' imagery here is angelic; it is significant that one of the biblical passages quoted, 1 Kgs 22:19–22, together with the language of "Holy Spirit and angelic spirit," had been earlier problematized by Origen (*Comm. Jo.* 20.29.263). Like Origen, Eusebius is aware of traditions that failed to distinguish the Holy Spirit from the angels; however, as several statements in the same work make it clear, he distinguishes unequivocally between the two.[59] Similar ideas occur a few decades later in the *Apostolic Constitutions*, a pseudepigraphic compilation redacted in the area of Antioch around 377–393 from sources "that are themselves compilations, and seem originally to have been written also as a manual of church life."[60] Several passages in the *Apostolic Constitutions* paint a hierarchical worldview featuring the Father and the Son, followed by the Holy Spirit and "the orders of ministering holy spirits"—that is the various angelic ranks.[61] These passages

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[58] Eusebius of Caesarea, *Eccl. Theol.* 3.4.7–8.

[59] E.g., Eusebius of Caesarea, *Eccl. theol.* 3.5.17–21 (GCS 14:162–163). For an examination of Eusebius' Pneumatology, see Holger Strutwolf, *Die Trinitätstheologie und Christologie des Euseb von Caesarea: Eine dogmengeschichtliche Untersuchung seiner Platonismusrezeption und Wirkungsgeschichte* (FKDG 72; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 184–237.

[60] David A. Fiensy, *Prayers Alleged to Be Jewish: An Examination of the Constitutiones Apostolorum* (BJS 65; Chico, Ca: Scholars, 1985), 19. For details on the composite character of this work, and questions of dating and authorship, see Marcel Metzger, "Introduction: Le genre littéraire et les origines des *CA*" (SC 320:13–62); Joseph G. Mueller, *L'ancien Testament dans l'ecclésiologie des pères: une lecture des "Constitutions apostoliques"* (IPM 41; Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 36–53; 86–91.

[61] *Const. ap.* 8.4.5 (SC 336:142): The ordaining bishop asks all the faithful if they are certain of the worthiness of the candidate, "as if they

offer unmistakable indications of the redactor's pneumatomachian leanings: rather than being numbered with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is counted with the cherubim, seraphim, aeons, armies, powers, authorities, principalities, thrones, archangels, and angels.[62] In this respect, the *Apostolic Constitutions* are characterized, much like Aphrahat, by "a certain archaism" that is perfectly understandable for a compilation of older traditions.[63]

To return to Aphrahat, the use of Matt 18:10 as a pneumatological proof-text does not mean, however, that Aphrahat himself consciously and actively promoted an angelomorphic Pneumatology. First, the "angelomorphic Spirit" is one representation of the Holy Spirit among several others in the *Demonstrations*. To paraphrase Bruns' presentation of Aphrahat's Christology, it could be said that the Sage's Pneumatology is "open," inasmuch as the accumulation of symbols (mother, spouse, medicine, angels of the face) moves asymptotically towards the inexhaustible experience of the Spirit, resulting in a multicolored

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were at the tribunal of God and of Christ and in the presence also of the Holy Spirit and of all the ministering holy spirits (ὡς ἐπὶ δικαστῇ Θεῷ καὶ Χριστῷ, παρόντος δηλαδὴ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος καὶ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων καὶ λειτουργικῶν πνευμάτων); *Const. ap.* 6.11.2 (SC 329:324): We confess "one God, Father of one Son and not of more, the maker, through Christ, of the one Paraclete and of the other orders" (ἑνὸς παρακλήτου διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ταγμάτων ποιητήν); *Const. ap.* 8.12.8 (SC 336:182): Through the Son, God has created, before all else, "the Spirit of Truth, the interpreter and minister of the Only Begotten," and after him the various heavenly choirs (πρὸ πάντων ποιήσας τὸ Πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, τὸν τοῦ μονογενοῦς ὑποφήτην καὶ διάκονον, καὶ μετ' αὐτὸν τὰ Χερουβὶμ καὶ τὰ Σεραφίμ, αἰῶνάς τε καὶ στρατιάς, δυνάμεις τε καὶ ἐξουσίας, ἀρχάς τε καὶ θρόνους, ἀρχαγγέλους τε καὶ ἀγγέλους).

[62] Mueller, *Une lecture des "Constitutions apostoliques,"* 101–105.

[63] Metzger, "Introduction: La théologie des CA" (SC 329: 10–39, at 32). This does not preclude Mueller's recent and original thesis that the low Pneumatology of the Const. ap. is a distinct element of the redactor's theological agenda, and is intimately linked with his "hyper-episcopal ecclesiology," with his refusal of any soteriology of deification, and with the very pseudepigraphic nature of these writings (*Une lecture des "Constitutions apostoliques,"* 104, 107–110, 547–50, 560–61, 577).

picture book of pneumatological impressions, rather than a unitary theology of the Holy Spirit.[64]

Second, it is quite obvious, from the way he writes, that Aphrahat does not see himself as proposing anything new or unusual. This is in keeping with the general character of his theology. It is very likely, therefore, that Aphrahat's use of Matt 18:10 is one such received tradition.

The passages from *Dem.* 6 and *Dem.* 1, quoted above, share the same theme (the Holy Spirit), and the same formal structure (both provide proof from Scripture for the activity of the Holy Spirit). The connection between Zech 4:10, Isa 11:1–3, and Matt 18:10 illustrates very well what Pierre calls a "network of scriptural traditions," which Aphrahat inherited from earlier Christian tradition.[65] That this is, indeed, the case, is made clear by the occurrence of the same cluster of biblical verses and echoes of angelomorphic Pneumatology in Clement of Alexandria.

Aphrahat and Clement of Alexandria

On the basis of a tradition ascribed to an older generation of charismatic teachers, Clement of Alexandria furnishes a detailed description of the spiritual universe. This hierarchical worldview, similar to that of *2 Enoch*, *Ascension of Isaiah,* or the *Epistula Apostolorum*, features, in descending order, the Face of God, the

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[64] Bruns speaks of the "open character" of Aphrahat's Christology, noting that the accumulation of symbols (e.g., *Dem.* 17.2, 11) "moves asymptotically towards the inexhaustible reality of Christ," resulting in "a multicolored picture book of christological impressions," rather than a unitary christological vision. Bruns, *Christusbild*, 183, 214. See also Vööbus, "Methodologisches," 27; Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes*, 67.

[65] Some of these traditions were embodied in a "series of *testimonia* that might have circulated orally and been transmitted independently from the known biblical text." As a matter of fact, Aphrahat is "one of the richest witnesses" to the use of *testimonia*, with *Dem.* 16 furnishing "the largest collection ever realized by a Father." See Pierre, "Introduction," in *Aphraate, "Les Exposés,"* 115, 138, 68. See also Murray, "Rhetorical Patterns," 110; *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Tradition* (2nd ed.; London/ New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 289–90; Schlütz, *Isaias 11:2*, 33–34, 40, 58.

seven first created angels, the archangels, finally the angels.[66] For Clement, it is Christ, the Logos, who is the "Face of God," the πρόσωπον of Matt 18:10, the χαρακτήρ of Heb. 1:3, and the εἰκών of Col 1:15.[67] As for the "angels ever contemplating the Face of God" in Matt 18:10, Clement identifies them with the "thrones" of Col 1:16, and "the seven eyes of the Lord" in Zech 3:9, 4:10, and Rev 5:6.[68] He understands all these passages to be descriptions of the seven "first-born princes of the angels" (πρωτόγονοι ἀγγέλων ἄρχοντες), elsewhere called the seven πρωτόκτιστοι.

> The golden lamp conveys another enigma as a symbol of Christ … in his casting light, "at sundry times and diverse manners," on those who believe in Him and hope and see by means of the ministry of the *protoctists* (διὰ τῆς τῶν πρωτοκτίστων διακονίας). And they say that the seven eyes of the Lord are the seven spirits resting on the rod that springs from the root of Jesse.[69]

Of these celestial beings "first created" Clement says the following:

> Among the seven, there has not been given more to the one and less to the other; nor is any of them lacking in advancement; [they] have received perfection from the beginning, at the first [moment of their] coming into being, from God through the Son*;* … their liturgy is common and undivided.[70]

There can be no doubt that Clement of Alexandria echoes Second Temple Jewish angelological speculations, and that among the direct predecessors of his *protoctist* one should count the seven spirits of Revelation (Rev 1:4, 3:1, 4:5, 5:6; 8:2), the "first created

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[66] *Excerpta* 10.6; 12.1. Cf. *Paed.* 1.57; 1.124.4; *Strom.* 7.10.58. See Daniélou, "Les traditions secrètes des Apôtres," *ErJb* 31 (1962): 199–215; Oeyen, *Engelpneumatologie*; Bucur, "The Other Clement of Alexandria: Cosmic Hierarchy and Interiorized Apocalypticism," *VC* 60 (2006): 251–268.

[67] *Strom.* 7.10.58; *Excerpta* 19.4.

[68] *Strom.* 5.6.35; *Eclogae* 57.1; *Excerpta* 10.

[69] *Strom.* 5.6.35.

[70] *Excerpta* 10.3–4; *Excerpta* 11.4.

ones" (πρῶτοι κτισθέντες) in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, possibly also the Marcosian "seven powers praising the Logos."[71]

Clement's seven *protoctists*, however, also carry a definite pneumatological content, since they are identified not only with the first created angels, but also with the "seven spirits resting on the rod that springs from the root of Jesse" (Isa 11:2–3, LXX) and "the heptad of the Spirit."[72] It appears, in conclusion, that, in Clement's interpretation of Matt 18:10, "the face of God" is a Christological title, while the angels contemplating the Face occupy a theological area at the confluence of angelology and Pneumatology.[73]

The exegesis of Clement of Alexandria and that of Aphrahat offer a surprising convergence. Both writers use the same cluster of biblical verses: "the seven eyes of the Lord" (Zech 3:9; 4:10), "the seven gifts of the Spirit" (Isa 11:2–3), and "the angels of the little ones" (Matt 18:10); both echo the tradition about the highest angelic company; finally, both use angelic imagery to express a definite pneumatological content. This is one of several convergences between Aphrahat and earlier writers in the West, which, as I have stated earlier, cannot be explained by direct literary connection.[74]

Gilles Quispel was convinced that behind both Clement and Aphrahat lies a tradition that goes back to Jewish Christian missionaries "who brought the new religion to Mesopotamia," and were also "the founding fathers of the church in Alexandria."[75] Be

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[71] For details, see the articles by Bucur and Oeyen noted earlier.

[72] *Strom.* 5.6.35; *Paed.* 3.12.87.

[73] This is the conclusion reached by Bucur, "Matt. 18:10 in Early Christology and Pneumatology: A Contribution to the Study of Matthean *Wirkungsgeschichte*," *NovT* 49 (2007): 209–31, at 223.

[74] I have already mentioned the resemblance with the *Shepherd of Hermas*. Another case refers to the striking resemblance between the exegesis of Jude 7:4–8 by Aphrahat (*Dem.* 7.19–21) and Origen (*Hom in Jud.* 9.2). R. H. Connolly ("Aphraates and Monasticism," *JTS* 6 [1905]: 538–39) hypothesized that the Sage might have read Origen. In response, Loofs (*Theophilus*, 258–59) stated that a common source is a far more likely explanation.

[75] Quispel, "Genius and Spirit," 160, 164. See also Schlütz, *Isaias 11:2*, 33–34: "die Sicherheit der Aussage bei Aphraat [kann] am besten mit der

this as it may, the angelomorphic Pneumatology detected in the writings of Clement and Aphrahat represents an echo of older views, which in their times were still acceptable.

THE LARGER THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR APHRAHAT'S ANGELOMORPHIC PNEUMATOLOGY

At this point it is important to inquire about the place of angelomorphic Pneumatology in the larger theological framework of the *Demonstrations*. I am especially interested in the relationship between angelomorphic Pneumatology, on the one hand, and other theological phenomena discussed by students of the *Demonstrations*, namely Aphrahat's *Geistchristologie* and binitarianism.[76]

Difficulties of Aphrahat's Pneumatology

How does Aphrahat think about God as Trinity? He does not know the terms *tlitāyutā* (τρίας) and *qnomā* (ὑπόστασις), and holds a non-philosophical notion of *ḳyanā*.[77] It is rather a soteriological and history-of-salvation perspective that comes to be expressed in the various formulas of Aphrahat:

> Glory and honor to the Father, and to his Son, and to his living and holy Spirit, from the mouth of all who glorify him there above and here below, unto ages of ages, Amen and Amen!
>
> We know only this much, that God is one, and one his Christ, and one the Spirit, and one the faith, and one the baptism.

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theologischen Tradition aus den tagen der palästinensischen Gemeinde erklärt werden."

[76] Some of the major scholars writing about Aphrahat, such as Schwen and Loofs, have used "binitarian," "binitarianism," "ditheism," "binity" (*Zweieinigkeit*), and *Geistchristologie* in ways that could easily lead to confusion. I ask the reader to refer to the definitions of these terms that I proposed in the Introduction.

[77] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 99, 143; Alois Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (2nd, rev. ed.; tr. J. Bowden; Atlanta, Ga.: John Knox, 1975), 216–17; Pierre, "Introduction," 162 n. 58; Ridolfini, "Problema trinitario e problema cristologico," 99.

> . . . the three mighty and glorious names—Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit—invoked upon your head when you received the mark of your life . . .[78]

Aphrahat is undoubtedly familiar with the liturgical usage of the terms "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit." Occasionally, as noted by Bruns, the *taxis* underlying such creedal statements seems to be Father—Spirit—Christ.[79] In *Dem.* 1.19, for instance, "the faith of the Church" is presented as follows:

> Now, this is the faith: one should believe in God, the Lord of all, who made heaven and earth and the seas and all that is in them, and made Adam in his image, and gave the Law to Moses, and sent [a portion] of his Spirit upon the prophets [ܘܫܕܪ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܗ ܥܠ ܢܒܝܐ], and, moreover [ܒܬܪ], sent his Christ into the world. . . . This is the faith of the Church of God.[80]

Such formulaic statements allow only limited insight into the Sage's theology. It is certain that "trinitarian elements" are present in Aphrahat's various doxologies.[81] Yet to say that *Dem.* 23.63, for instance, which I have quoted earlier, offers "an example of Aprahat being obviously Trinitarian," is to overlook the fact that such passages are derived from liturgical practice.[82] If these are, in the words of Schwen, "eben nur Formeln, übernommene Bruchstücke fremder Anschauung," they tell us very little about Aphrahat's theological thought.[83]

Still formulaic, but more elaborate and personal, is the following passage in the *Letter to an Inquirer*.

> As for me, I just believe firmly that God is one, who made the heavens and the earth from the beginning . . . and spoke with Moses on account of his meekness, and himself spoke with all the prophets, and, moreover [ܒܬܪ], sent his Christ into the world.[84]

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[78] *Dem.* 23.61 [II/128]; 23.60 [II/124]; 23.63 [II/133].

[79] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 97.

[80] *Dem.* 1.19 [I/44].

[81] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 94.

[82] Skoyles Jarkins, "Aphrahat and the Temple of God," 118 n. 108.

[83] Schwen, *Afrahat*, 91.

[84] Aphrahat, *Letter to an Inquirer* 2 [I/4].

It is noteworthy that this passage contains nothing about the Holy Spirit, and that the similar composition in *Dem.* 1.19, quoted earlier, contains merely an oblique reference to Christ sending from his Spirit into the prophets.[85] It is true, on the other hand, that, when Aphrahat elsewhere treats the "moments" preceding the sending of the Spirit in the Creed (namely cosmogony, anthropogony, the giving of the Law, and the inspiration of the prophets) he usually mentions the Spirit.[86] The fact remains, however, that the Creed refers to the Spirit only in its fourth article, and that this reference does not contain anything specifically Christian. As Cramer notes, the statement could just as well have been made by Philo.[87]

As early as 1907, Schwen noted that Aphrahat's notion of the Spirit was hesitant and inconsistent.[88] Far from being conceived of as a divine person, on par with the Father and the Son, Aphrahat's "Holy Spirit" is at times indistinguishable from the ascended Christ (e.g., *Dem.* 6.10 [I/281]), at other times simply an impersonal divine power, similar to the rays of the sun (e.g., *Dem.* 6.11 [I/284]), and occasionally merged with the notion of the guardian angel (e.g., *Dem.* 6.14 [I/296]).[89] For Bruns also, and even for Ortiz de Urbina, who is a defender of Aphrahat's fundamental orthodoxy, many passages in the *Demonstrations* present the Spirit as an impersonal divine "grace" or "power."[90] The personal elements would only

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[85] Loofs, *Theophilus*, 260 n. 9: ". . . ist des Geistes nur in dem Satzteile gedacht." Note the parallel that obtains between *Letter to an Inquirer* 2 [I/4] and *Dem.* 1.19 [I/44]:

"he spoke in all the prophets and sent his Christ into the world"

"he sent from his Spirit upon the prophets and sent his Christ into the world."

[86] Pierre, "Introduction," 165 n. 70.

[87] Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes*, 70.

[88] Schwen, *Afrahat*, 90.

[89] Schwen, *Afrahat*, 91: "Als besondere göttliche Person im Sinne des ökumenischen Konzils von 381, dem Vater und dem Sohne gleichgeordnet, ist er nicht gedacht."

[90] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 188; Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 137. "Spirit" and "Spirit of Christ" are used "interchangeably" (Skoyles Jarkins, "Aphrahat and the Temple of God," 117 n. 107). So also Ridolfini, "Problema trinitario e problema cristologico," 109–10, 121.

occur in the "dramatism" of the eschatological scene, the "saddening" of the spirit, and the mother-image.[91]

In several instances (*Dem.* 6.11 [I/286]; 20.16 [I/919]), Aphrahat focuses exclusively on "God and his Christ" so that, according to Loofs, "there is no place left for the Spirit."[92] Moreover, the *Demonstrations* seem to use "Spirit," "Spirit of Christ," and "Christ" interchangeably. Especially with respect to the inhabitation of God in the believers, any distinction vanishes.[93]

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[91] Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 134–35.

[92] Loofs, *Theophilus*, 260. At one point (*Dem.* 18.10 [I/839]), however, God is represented as "divine couple"—God as Father and the Spirit as Mother. Loofs (*Theophilus*, 275 n. 6) explains that "für die erbauliche Verwendung von Gen. 2, 24, an der ihm hier lag, allein der Geist, weil im Syrischen ein Femininum, sich eignete, nicht aber 'der Messias' (Christus)." In fact, as the context shows, Aphrahat's interest is more than vaguely "edifying": he is here thinking of God and his Spirit-consort as genitors of the transformed ascetics, and is interested in linking the "spirituals" with their "mother," the Spirit. Moreover, he is also bowing to the pressure of an already traditional reading of Gen 2:24 in the Syriac milieu (e.g., *Acts Thom.* 110), which connects Eve and the Holy Spirit and, implicitly, adopts the *taxis* Father—Spirit—Son. Other texts can be adduced from *Gos. Heb.*, Tatian, and Ps.-Macarius; see Quispel, *Makarius, das Thomasevangelium, und das Lied der Perle* (NovTSup 15; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 9–13; Winkler, "Die Tauf-Hymnen der Armenier: Ihre Affinität mit Syrischem Gedankengut," in *Liturgie und Dichtung* (2 vols; ed. H. Becker and R. Kaczynski; Munich: St. Ottilian, 1983), 1:381–420; Susan Ashbrook Harvey, "Feminine Imagery for the Divine: the Holy Spirit, the Odes of Solomon, and Early Syriac Tradition," SVTQ 37 (1993): 111–40. Brock, "The Holy Spirit as Feminine in Early Syriac Literature," in *After Eve* (ed. Janet Martin Soskice; London: Collins, 1990), 73–88; Emmanuel Kaniyamparampil, "Feminine-Maternal Images of the Spirit in Early Syriac Tradition," *Letter & Spirit* 3 (2007): 169–88.

[93] Skoyles Jarkins ("Aphrahat and the Temple of God," 117 n. 107) suggests that this "may be due to the influence of Pauline texts (e.g., Rom 8:9 in *Dem.* 23.47 [II/91.24–25], *Dem.* 8.5 [I/370.9–10]) upon Aphrahat. This does not explain much about Aphrahat, but simply moves Pandora's box in the field of biblical studies, where the issue of Pauline "spirit Christology" happens to be a fiercely debated issue. For an introduction to the debate, see Fatehi, *Relation*, 23–43; Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 831–45.

Cramer noted that the Sage "almost" identifies Christ and the Spirit—"almost," because the use of "spirit" in trinitarian formulas would prevent full identification.[94] In light of my earlier statements above, I find Cramer's recourse to formulas unconvincing. At first sight at least, it is more accurate to conclude with Schwen that the Sage had no doctrine of the Trinity "in the sense of later Church dogma," and that his thought would be better termed "binitarian" than "trinitarian."[95]

Loofs attempted to place Aphrahat's "Geistchristologie" and "binitarianism" in a larger religio-historical perspective. In his interpretation, "spirit" is, for Aphrahat, simply a way of referring to the divinity of Christ prior to the Incarnation. "Spirit" should not, however, be understood by analogy with the Logos-hypostasis of other patristic writers, as a second hypostasis alongside the Father, since, for Aphrahat, the differentiation of the Spirit from the Father occurred only at the Incarnation. Prior to the Incarnation, the Spirit represents, by analogy with Power, Wisdom, or Presence in pre-Christian Jewish thought, a divine attribute rather than a distinct entity.[96] Aphrahat distinguishes "Spirit" and "Christ" only when speaking about the man Jesus, and it is this historical Jesus Christ that Aphrahat has in mind when he uses the phrase "God and his Christ." According to Loofs, the Sage's perspective switches back and forth between the preexisting πνεῦμα and the historical Jesus Christ.[97] Finally, this formula does not introduce any alteration of strict monotheism, given that the reign of the Son is seen as temporary, ultimately to end by being delivered to the

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[94] Cramer, *Der Geist Gottes,* 65, 67.

[95] Schwen, *Afrahat*, 91; 92: "Man darf wohl sagen daß die Anschauung Afrahats nicht trinitarisch, sondern binitarisch ist: 'Gott und sein Christus' oder 'Gott und der heilige Geist."

[96] Loofs, *Theophilus*, 273 n. 2, 274, 278.

[97] Loofs, *Theophilus*, 270 n. 3, 274, 275: "vor seinem geistigen Auge steht die einheitliche Person des geschichtlichen und erhöhten Herrn, aber Aphrahat sieht in ihr, abwechselnd, hier das πνεῦμα, dort den Menschen"; Loofs, *Theophilus*, 277 n. 5: "In einem Satze kann die Betrachtungsweise wechseln: Unser Herr (hier: das πνεῦμα) nahm von uns ein Pfand (die σάρξ, das Menschsein) und ging (hier der ganze Christus) und ließ uns ein Pfand von dem Seinen (den Geist) und wurde erhöht (das gilt nur vom Menschen in ihm)."

sole God (*Dem.* 6.12 [I/287]).[98] Loofs' conclusions were severely criticized by Ortiz de Urbina, later also by Vööbus and Bruns, who all argued that Aphrahat views Christ as pre-existent with the Father prior to the Incarnation, and that he has a clear understanding of the distinction between the risen Christ and the Spirit.[99]

The texts remain, however, ambiguous. One of the passages invoked by Ortiz de Urbina, *Dem.* 6.10 [I/281]), is quite telling. Aphrahat speaks here about the Logos becoming flesh (quoting John 1:14), then returning to God with "that which he had not brought with him"—thus raising humanity to heaven (quoting Eph 2:6)—and sending the Spirit in his stead. This seems to affirm the preexistence of Christ as Logos, as well as the clear distinction between the ascended Christ and the Spirit he sends to his disciples. Yet the sending of the Spirit is documented not with a reference to the paraclete, but rather with Matt 28:20, a christological text: "when he went to his Father, he sent to us his Spirit and said to us *I am with you until the end of the world.*"[100]

What, then, of the relation between "Christ," "the Spirit of Christ," and "the Holy Spirit" in Aphrahat? Bruns notes that "the

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[98] Loofs, *Theophilus*, 280. For similarities with "dynamic monarchianism," see Loofs, *Theophilus*, 278; Schwen (*Afrahat*, 83) notes to a similarity with Paul of Samosata. *Contra*, convincingly, Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 123.

[99] Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 80–88, 136–37; Vööbus, "Methodologisches," 24–25; Bruns, *Christusbild*, 133–44.

[100] This recalls *Ep. Apos.* 17: " 'Will you really leave us until your coming? Where will we find a teacher?' And he answered and said to us, 'Do you not know that until now I am both here and there with him who sent me? . . . I am wholly in the Father and the Father in me.'" The long treatment of the relation between Christ and his disciples after the ascension, even though heavily indebted to the farewell discourse in the Gospel of John, diverges from the latter precisely on the problem of the paraclete. According to Julian Hills (*Tradition and Composition in the Epistula Apostolorum* [HDR 24; Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1990], 123), "[t]he crisis of the Lord's departure is resolved in the Fourth Gospel by the coming of the Spirit . . . In the Epistula it turns on the presence of the risen Lord among the disciples . . ." Instead of the paraclete, *Ep. Apos.* insists on the perfect unity of Christ with the Father and, implicitly, on Christ's ubiquity.

sending of the Spirit is identical with the presence of Christ," and suggests that the Spirit is the medium through which Christ dwells in the believers and, especially, in the prophets.[101] In other words, Christ dwells in the Spirit, and the Spirit dwells in the human being—which suggested Skoyles Jarkins' phrase "matroshki-doll Christology."[102] More needs to be said, however, about this indwelling.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE MOVE FROM UNITY TO MULTIPLICITY

The difficulties outlined in the previous section never seem to have existed as such for Aphrahat. The reason is quite simple: the Sage's point of departure is not metaphysical—God in Godself, or the "ad intra" relation of "divine Persons"—but rather, to use Bruns' very apt phrase, "die Anrufbarkeit und liturgische Erfahrbarkeit des einen Gottes in drei Namen."[103] For Aphrahat, then, the "problem" of explaining the relation between the Father and the Spirit, or between Christ (whether "preincarnate" or "post-resurrectional") and the Spirit simply did not present itself as such. His statements about the Spirit come in response to a different set of questions:

> Since Christ is one, and one his Father, how is it that Christ and his Father dwell in the believers?
>
> Now, Christ is seated at the right hand of his Father, and Christ dwells in human beings . . . And though he dwells among many, he is seated at the right hand of his Father.[104]

Aphrahat's notion of the Spirit will become more easily understandable if we consider these questions, and inquire about the role of the Holy Spirit in the multiplicity of creation and the charismatic life of the Church. Although it is certainly not a novelty

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[101] Bruns, *Unterweisungen*, 200 n. 21; *Christusbild*, 187.

[102] Skoyles Jarkins, "Aphrahat and the Temple of God," 117 n. 196.

[103] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 156.

[104] *Dem.* 6.11 [I/284]; 6.10 [I/281].

in scholarship, this perspective has so far not been given enough attention.[105] I now return to Aphrahat:

> Our Lord . . . left us a pledge of his own (ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܝܠܗ) when he ascended. . . . it behooves us also to honor that which is his, which we have received . . . let us honor that which is his, according to his own nature. If we honor it, we shall go to him. . . . But if we despise it, he will take away from us that which he has given us; and if we abuse his pledge (ܪܘܚܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܛܪ ܥܒܕ), he will there take away that which is his, and will deprive us of that which he has promised us.[106]

It is quite evident that "the pledge" (ܪܘܚܐ, ἀῤῥαβών) refers to the Spirit. There is, first, the allusion to biblical texts (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14); then, also, the obvious parallels with statements made elsewhere in *Dem.* 6, where the same is said in reference to the Holy Spirit.[107]

To explain how it is that Christ is divided among believers and dwells in them without thereby forsaking his unity and dignity, Aphrahat suggests several comparisons. Just as the one sun is

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[105] Cf. Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 129 n. 16: "Bei Afrahat vermehrt sich Christus durch seinen Geist"; Bruns, *Christusbild*, 188: "der Heilige Geist hat vornehmlich die Funktion, die Universalisierung und individuelle Aneignung der Christusgeschehens zu garantieren."

[106] *Dem.* 6.10 [I/279–280]. The root of ܢܛܪ means "to cover up, conceal." Hence, the verb can mean "to appropriate secretly," "to defraud," "to refuse to return," "to keep in or suppress until the thing is spoiled."

[107] In the text just quoted, Christ leaves his pledge upon his ascension, just as in another passage "when he went to his Father, he sent to us his Spirit" (*Dem.* 6.10 [I/282]); the exhortation to "honor the pledge" finds counterpart in an earlier exhortation, to "honor the spirit of Christ, that we may receive grace from him" (*Dem.* 6.1 [I/241]); the characterization of the pledge as "that which is of his [Christ's] own nature" is very similar to the statement about the Spirit going "to its nature, [namely] unto Christ" (*Dem.* 6.14 [I/296]); the "two-way" discourse on the required attitude towards the pledge corresponds perfectly to the ascetic theory of the same *Demonstration*, which opposes those who "preserve the Spirit of Christ in purity" and those who defile the Spirit (*Dem.* 6.14–15).

manifested to a multiplicity of receivers in that "its power is poured out in the earth"—that is, by means of the multiplicity of his rays—so also "God and his Christ, though they are one, yet dwell in human beings, who are many."[108]

EXCURSUS: "WISDOM" AND "POWER" AS PNEUMATOLOGICAL TERMS

Towards the end of his comparison between Christ and the sun, Aphrahat mentions the power of God (ܚܝܠܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ): "the sun in heaven is not diminished when it sends out its power upon the earth. How much greater is the power of God, since it is by the power of God that the sun itself subsists."[109] Bruns is probably right in speaking about the Spirit as (non-hypostatic) "göttlich-dynamische Kraft" mediating between the transcendent God and the world.[110] Earlier, Aphrahat had stated that Christ, even though one, "is able to [be] above and beneath" and "dwell in many," by means of his Father's wisdom (ܒܚܟܡܬܗ ܕܐܒܘܗܝ).[111] This prompted Ortiz de Urbina to suggest that Aphrahat may have equated ܪܘܚܐ (πνεῦμα) with ܚܟܡܬܐ (σοφία), two words that were feminine in his time.[112]

I think that more can be added to this discussion. In *Dem.* 10.8, "wisdom" seems to constitute a divine gift imparted freely to the Christian "shepherds," which, therefore, calls for generous transmission from the clergy to the Christian people. Christ is "the steward of wisdom." This coheres well with the earlier statement in *Dem.* 6: "And Christ received the Spirit not by measure, but his Father loved him and delivered all into his hands, *and gave him authority over all his treasure*."[113] Moreover, just as Aphrahat had said earlier (*Dem.* 6.10–12) about the Spirit of Christ, "this wisdom is divided among many (ܐܬܦܠܓܬ ܠܣܓܝܐܐ) yet is in no way diminished, as I have shown to you above: the prophets received of the spirit of Christ (ܕܡܢ ܪܘܚܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܢܣܒܘ ܢܒܝܐ), yet Christ was in

[108] *Dem.* 6.11 [I/285].

[109] *Dem.* 6.11 [I/285].

[110] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 205.

[111] *Dem.* 6.10 [I/281].

[112] Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 128.

[113] *Dem.* 6.12 [I/288].

no way diminished."[114] Obviously, the Sage takes "wisdom" and "Spirit of Christ" as synonyms.

In conclusion, "wisdom" refers to the Spirit understood as divine power, presence, gift, etc., while Christ is the treasurer and giver of the Spirit. Aphrahat seems to have felt a certain tension between this view and that expressed in 1 Cor 1:24, because he feels compelled to quote this verse without, however, offering any explanation: "And while he is the steward of the wisdom, again, as the Apostle said: *Christ is the power of God and his wisdom.*"

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Aphrahat has of course much more to offer than comparisons drawn from nature. His argumentation from Scripture is particularly interesting. According to *Dem.* 14, the believers are like the fertile ground that accepted the seed sown by the Lord (Luke 8:15). The seeds are nothing else than the Spirit of the Lord, poured out over all the flesh (Joel 3:1), but accepted only by a few.[115] The prophets "received [a portion] from the Spirit of Christ, each one of them as he was able to bear."[116] In the new dispensation, "[a portion] from the Spirit of Christ (ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ) is again poured forth today upon all flesh [Joel 3:1]."[117] As a result, Christ now overshadows all believers—each of them severally (ܚܕ ܚܕ).[118]

Obviously, for Aphrahat the Spirit "multiplies" Christ, making him available to the prophets and all believers. The imagery is quite crude, as the Sage seems particularly fond of "part-to-whole" explanations. Several times he refers to God sending "[a portion] of his Spirit upon the prophets": the prophets received [a portion] from the Spirit of Christ; John the Baptist, the greatest among prophets, still received the Spirit "according to measure" (ܒܡܫܝܚܐ); [a portion] from the Spirit of Christ is again poured forth today upon all flesh [Joel 3:1]; Christ overshadows each of the believers severally; at Baptism, believers receive the Holy Spirit "from a little

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[114] *Dem.* 10.8 [I/464].

[115] *Dem.* 14.47 [I/716].

[116] ܡܫܝܚܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܝܗܒ ܒܗ ܒܗ : ܟܬܒ ܠܗ ܠܫܠܝܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܡܢ ܪܘܚܗ ܕܡܫܝܚܐ ܠܟܠ ܚܕ ܘܚܕ ܠܡܕܡ ܒܡܐ ܕܝܟܠ ܠܡܩܒܠ (*Dem.* 6.12 [I/288]).

[117] *Dem.* 6.12 [I/288].

[118] *Dem.* 6.10 [I/281].

portion of the Godhead."[119] The insertion of "portion" in my English rendering of the phrase is justified. In his footnotes to the German translation of the *Demonstrations*, Bruns points to the "exceedingly materialistic" imagery of expressions such as ܡܢܬܐ ܡܢܬܐ ("severally," "one by one") for the presence of the Spirit in the prophets, or ܡܢ ܡܢܝܐ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ ("a little portion/ particle of the Godhead"), for the gift of the Spirit received at Baptism.[120]

The difference between the Spirit present in the prophets and the Spirit in the historical Jesus Christ is one of degree: partially present in the prophets, the Spirit is fully present in Christ.[121] In *Dem.* 6.12 [I/285], the proof-text for Christ is John 3:34: "it was not by measure that his Father gave the Spirit unto him." For the partial presence of the Spirit in the prophets, on the other hand, Aphrahat quotes Num 11:17 (God taking "from the Spirit" of Moses to endow the seventy elders).[122] But he also refers to something that "the blessed apostle said": *God distributed from the Spirit of Christ and sent it into the prophets.*[123]

Even though scholarship is not unanimous on this point, I find it indisputable that Aphrahat is quoting "the blessed apostle" according to *3 Cor.*, an apocryphal text that Aphrahat and Ephrem seem to have regarded as canonical.[124] The relevant verse (*3 Cor.*

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119 *Dem.* 6.12 [I/288]; 10.8 [I/464]; 1.19 [I/44]; 6.13 [I/288]; 6.12 [I/288]; 6.10 [I/281]; 6.14 [I/293].

120 Bruns, *Unterweisungen*, 200 n. 22, 205 n. 26. The passages are *Dem.* 6.10 [I/281] and *Dem.* 6.14 [I/293].

121 So also Ortiz de Urbina, "Die Gottheit Christi bei Aphrahat," 127; Bruns, *Christusbild*, 140.

122 On the "massive presence" of this verse in rabbinic literature, see Pierre, *Exposés*, 395 n. 73.

123 ܕܦܠܓ ܐܠܗܐ ܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܝܚܗ ܘܫܕܪ ܒܢܒܝ̈ܐ (*Dem.* 6.12 [I/285]).

124 On *3 Cor.*, see Vahan Hovhanessian, *Third Corinthians: Reclaiming Paul for Christian Orthodoxy* (Studies in Biblical Literature 18; New York: Peter Lang, 2000); Loofs, *Theophilus*, 148–53. Pierre expresses extreme reservation on the issue of Aphrahat's use of *3 Cor.* She notes ("Introduction," 139 n. 73) that the Sage may "perhaps" have known 3 Corinthians, but does not think that Aphrahat's Creed (*Dem.* 1.19 [I/44]) echoes this text. Nowhere in the critical apparatus to the *Demonstrations* is there any reference to *3 Cor.* On the contrary, Bruns (*Christusbild*, 187 n. 13) states that Aphrahat is "very obviously" quoting *3 Cor.* 3.10. In *Dem.* 23 [II/64] also, where Aphrahat again mentions "the

2.10) reads as follows: "For he [God] desired to save the house of Israel. Therefore, distributing from the Spirit of Christ, he sent it into the prophets" (μερίσας οὖν ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἔπεμψεν εἰς τοὺς προφήτας).[125]

The notion of a partial endowment of the prophets with the gifts of the Spirit, and the comparison of this partial charismatic endowment with the complete and sovereign possession of the Spirit by Jesus Christ, are ancient and widespread themes. Aside from 3 Cor., mentioned earlier, it features prominently in Justin Martyr's Dialog with Trypho. According to Justin, Jesus Christ preexisted as bearer of the seven "powers of the Holy Spirit." Similarly to the Ps.-Philonic homily "On Samson," Justin notes that the prophets received "some one or two powers from God": Solomon had the spirit of wisdom, Daniel, that of understanding and counsel, Moses, that of strength and piety, Elijah, that of fear; Isaiah, that of knowledge. By contrast, the seven powers of the Spirit enumerated in Isa 11:1–2 were reassembled in Jesus Christ, "the Lord of the powers" (Dial. 87.4). Specifically, the Spirit "ceased" (ἐπαύσατο) from being poured out fragmentarily upon the prophets when it is said to have "rested" (ἀνεπαύσατο) upon him (Dial. 87.3) at the Jordan baptism. If Aphrahat identifies the "pledge" or the "Spirit" as the spiritual gifts that the Church received from the ascended Christ in fulfillment of Joel 3:1 ("I shall pour out my Spirit on all flesh"), Justin articulates the very same idea by combining Joel 3:1 with Isa 11:2–3 (the gifts of the Spirit) and Ps 67/68:19 (the ascension: "He ascended on high, he led captivity captive, he gave gifts to the sons of men").[126]

Apostle who bears witness: Jesus Christ was born of the Holy Spirit by Mary of the house of David," Pierre believes this to be an echo of Rom 1:3–4. Yet, *3 Cor.* 2.5 offers a closer match: "Christ Jesus [some mss: Jesus Christ] was born of Mary of the seed of David by the Holy Spirit." Cf. Ignatius, *Eph.* 18.2: Jesus Christ was "borne by Mary according to God's providence, namely from (ἐκ) the seed of David, but from the Holy Spirit."

[125] Greek text in Hovhanessian, *Third Corinthians*, 149.

[126] Justin, Dial. 87.6. For a more detailed analysis of the relevant passages in Justin, see Oeyen, "Die Lehre von den göttlichen Kräften bei Justin," *StPatr* 11 (1972): 214–21; Bucur, "The Angelic Spirit in Early Christianity: Justin, the Martyr and Philosopher," *JR* 88 (2008): 190–208.

The texts I have discussed so far lead to the conclusion that Aphrahat's Pneumatology can be considered from at least two vantage-points. On the one hand, the *Demonstrations* are passing on received formulas, most of which contain references to "spirit." On the other hand, the meaning of "spirit" in these formulas is given by reflection on the charismatic endowment of the prophets and the "pledge" of Christ received at Baptism. In this light, "spirit" is understood as divine "operations" (ܡܥܒܕܢܐ) in the believer, which convey the presence of Christ, with all that derives from such presence.

In Aphrahat's thought, the intimate relation between Christ and the Spirit is likened to the relation between the sun and the rays of sun, the sower and the seeds, or the treasure-holder and the riches of the treasure-house. In more abstract terms, it is the relationship between simple unity and unity-as-multiplicity, i.e., divine unity become accessible to the religious experience. For further elucidation of this aspect, it is necessary to return briefly to the topic of angelomorphic Pneumatology.

THE "FRAGMENTARY" GIFT OF THE SPIRIT AND ANGELOMORPHIC PNEUMATOLOGY

It may seem that the angelomorphic Pneumatology discussed in the first part of this section and the pneumatological conceptions presented in the second part are not necessarily related. Such is not the case, however.

In *Dem.* 6.10 [I/277–280], Christians are asked not to *despise* "the pledge"—i.e., the gift of the Holy Spirit—received at Baptism. The notion of "despising" the Spirit is significant here. Aphrahat returns to it later in the same *Demonstration*, also supplying a fitting Scriptural proof: "the Spirit that the prophets received, and which we, too, have received" is indicated by something "that our Lord said, *Do not despise any of these little ones that believe in Me, for their angels in heaven always gaze on the face of my Father.*"[127]

Aphrahat's notion of "fragmentary" Spirit-endowment and his angelomorphic Pneumatology should be considered jointly, as in the case of Justin and Clement. These writers understand the seven gifts of the Spirit in the Isaiah passage as seven highest angelic

[127] *Dem.* 6.14–15 [I/292, 297].

powers; Clement even identified the seven spirits with the "angels" of Matt 18:10. In Aphrahat this identification is not explicit. Unlike Justin Martyr, who uses Isa 11:1–3 to contrast the "partial" outpouring of the Spirit over the prophets and Christ's "full" and sovereign possession of the Spirit, Aphrahat only uses the Isaiah verse to illustrate the latter.[128] In other words, Isa 11:2 serves, in *Dem.* 1, the same role as John 3:34 in *Dem.* 6. Aphrahat does say that the prophets received only "[a portion] from the Spirit of Christ, each one of them as he was able to bear"—but he prefers to use *3 Cor.* 2.10 rather than Isa 11:2 in support of this statement. Matthew 18:10 is therefore never connected with Isa 11:2 to affirm the dynamism of divine indwelling, the partial endowment of prophets and baptized Christians, and the intercessory activity of the Spirit. In Aphrahat, Matt 18:10 is instead linked to other texts such as 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14; *3 Cor.* 2.10; Num 11:17; 2 Sam 16:14–23 (the evil spirit sent to Saul).

It is true that this particular arrangement of the proof-texts is determined by the necessities of the discourse, and that, in other contexts, Aphrahat would most likely have furnished a different "constellation" using the same passages. As the texts stand, however, the scriptural support for Aphrahat's doctrine of "partial versus complete" possession of the Spirit does differ, albeit only slightly, from that of Justin and Clement. By way of consequence, the link between the notion of "fragmentary Spirit" and angelomorphic Pneumatology is also less clear than it is in these authors.

CONCLUSIONS

I noted in the beginning that John Levison documented the widespread use, in pre- and post-exilic Judaism, of the term "spirit" as a designation of angelic presence. This tradition continued, of course, in Christianity, and recent scholarship has documented its presence in the New Testament, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, Justin Martyr, and Clement of Alexandria. In the first part of this article, I

[128] *Dem.* 1.9 [I/20]: "And concerning this Stone he stated and showed: *on this stone, behold, I open seven eyes* [Zech 3:9]. And what are the seven eyes opened on the stone other than the Spirit of God that abode on Christ with seven operations? As Isaiah the prophet said . . . [Isa. 11:2–3]."

have argued that Aphrahat witnesses to the existence of angelomorphic Pneumatology in the early Syriac tradition, which was supported by an exegesis of biblical texts (Matt 18:10; Zech 3:9; 4:10; Isa 11:2–3) very similar to that of earlier and unrelated strands of Christianity. From a historical perspective, angelomorphic pneumatology was a significant phase in Christian reflection on the Holy Spirit. Still an option in the fourth century, and traditional not only for Aphrahat, angelomorphic pneumatology was bound to be discarded in the wake of the Arian and Pneumatomachian controversies. The associated use of Matt 18:10 was also discontinued.[129]

The connection, in Aphrahat's *Demonstrations*, between the ascetic doctrine of the indwelling Spirit, on the one hand, and the angelomorphic representation of the Spirit, on the other, is also significant from a history-of-ideas perspective. As mentioned above, the idea that the Spirit would depart from the sinful person was rejected in the course of the Messalian controversy. The ascetic doctrine, however, survived in an altered form, as can be seen in Isaac of Nineveh: if the Holy Spirit, once received in baptism, does not leave, it is the guardian angel who is driven away by one's sins, and this departure leaves the house of the soul open to demonic influences.[130] In other words, the angelomorphism of the older

[129] Matt 18:10 must have played a role in Pneumatomachian exegesis, because Basil the Great (*On the Holy Spirit*, 38) and Gregory of Nyssa (*To Eustathius*, 13) are reacting to it. See Bucur, "Matt 18:10 in Early Christology and Pneumatology."

[130] Isaac of Nineveh, *Homily* 57: "First a man withdraws his mind from his proper care and thereafter the spirit of pride approaches him. When he tarries in pride, the angel of providence, who is near him and stirs in him care for righteousness, withdraws from him. And when a man wrongs his angel and the angel departs from him, then the alien [the devil] draws nigh him, and from henceforth he has no care whatever for righteousness." The English translation is that of Dana Miller (*The Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian* [Boston, Mass.: The Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1984], 283). In his homily on Ps. 33:8 (PG 29: 364 B), a verse that reads "the angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear him and will deliver them" (LXX), Basil writes: "An angel attends to anyone who has believed unto the Lord, unless we chase him away (ἀποδιώξωμεν) ourselves by evil deeds. Just as smoke drives away (φυγαδεύει) bees, and foul odor repels (ἐξελαύνει) doves, so also does

Pneumatology was relegated to a "real" (guardian) angel, while the pneumatological content was conformed to the conciliar theology of the Spirit and the sacraments.

In the second part of the article I have discussed Aphrahat's treatment of the Spirit in relation to Christ, and concluded that the blurring of lines between "Christ," "Spirit of Christ," and "Holy Spirit" is best understood as an attempt to convey the "multiplication" of Christ in the world in (or through) the work of the Spirit. In all likelihood, Aphrahat did not view the angelic imagery and the notion of "particles of the Spirit" as distinct elements. I submit that this represents one of the layers of tradition that Aphrahat has preserved, and which can be identified more specifically with the primitive stage of trinitarian thought proposed by Kretschmar, namely "die Trias Gott-Christus-Engel."[131] This theological complex is still visible in Aphrahat's *Demonstrations*, and it can be verified by recourse to earlier authors, most notably Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria.

I have shown how Aphrahat's angelomorphic Pneumatology is an integral part of his ascetic theory. It is true that the angelomorphism of the Spirit is one way (among several others) of expressing the subordination of Pneumatology to Christology, which is one of the characteristic features of Aphrahat's thought.[132] There is no doubt that Aphrahat is aware of trinitarian formulas. Nevertheless, in his own reflection on the Holy Spirit, the Sage is mostly concerned with the Spirit's "operations" that make possible the experience of divine indwelling. In agreement with Loofs and Bruns, I conclude that he speaks of the Holy Spirit not as an independent hypostasis, but rather as divine power from Christ. Within this overall binitarian framework of the *Demonstrations*, the experience of the Spirit is expressed by recourse to traditional angelomorphic language.

Measuring Aphrahat's angelomorphic Pneumatology against the standard of later Orthodoxy, Bishop George had good reason to decry the heretical "aberrations," "crassness," and "boorish

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the ill-smelling and lamentable sin remove (ἀφίστησιν) the angel who is the guardian of our life."

[131] Kretschmar, *Trinitätstheologie,* 213.

[132] Bruns, *Christusbild*, 186, 188, 204. Cf. Cramer (*Der Geist Gottes,* 65), who speaks of the "christological anchoring of the doctrine of the Spirit."

ignorance" of the *Demonstrations*. Considered from a different perspective, however, these same writings are the invaluable "treasure trove" described by Vööbus. It is therefore imperative to do just what the bishop counseled against, namely "wear ourselves out with questions and become clouded over in our minds in order to make sense of and understand the import of all the words written in the book of the *Demonstrations*."

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JOHN OF DAMASCUS AND THE CHURCH IN SYRIA IN THE UMAYYAD ERA: THE INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL MILIEU OF ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD OF ISLAM

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ABSTRACT

St. John of Damascus (c. 675 – c. 749) was a contemporary of the Umayyad caliphs (661–750). The twin social processes comprising the 'Arabicization' and the concomitant 'Islamicization' of the public domain of the caliphate at the turn of the eighth century set the stage for the first Christian responses to the social and religious challenges of Islam. St. John of Damascus and his Arabic-speaking heirs were the spokesmen who upheld the 'Melkite' tradition and provided the basic principles for the self-definition of 'Melkite' Orthodoxy in the world of Islam. The interests of the emerging community of 'Melkite' Orthodox Christians in the Umayyad era in Syria/Palestine furnish the most immediate frame of reference for appreciating the significance of the works of St. John of Damascus.

I

The lifetime of St. John of Damascus (c. 675 – c. 749) coincided almost exactly with the length of years during which the Umayyad line of caliphs ruled in the world of Islam (661–750).[1] They had established their capital from the beginning of their dynasty in John's native city of Damascus, thereby moving the center of Islamic government away from Medina in Arabia, Islam's birthplace, across the former *limes arabicus* of the Roman Empire, into the cosmopolitan world of Rome's former provinces of Syria and Palestine, where Greek and Syriac-speaking Christians far outnumbered the Arabic-speaking Muslims. In this milieu, as a recent study describes its own purview of the geopolitical situation in Umayyad times,

> Syria-Palestine is seen first... as a land in which a combination of a well established Aramaean, Hellenistic, Byzantine, Christian legacy interacted with the new Arab Islamic rule and cultural values. Secondly, it is viewed as an important province in an emerging Arab Islamic empire of which it became the political centre.[2]

It was during the Umayyad period, and particularly during the reigns of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (685–705) and his sons and successors that the twin social processes of Arabicization and Islamicization began in earnest in the territories of the Levant which the Muslim Arabs had conquered and occupied in the generation prior to John's birth.[3] These were also the territories of the Roman Empire's three ecclesiastical patriarchates, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. The Umayyads mounted a concerted

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[1] On the Umayyad and their policies see G. R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate A.D. 661–750* (London: Croom Helm, 1986); M. A. Shaban, *Islamic History A.D. 600–750 (A.H. 132)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

[2] Ahmad Shboul & Alan Walmsley, "Identity and Self-Image in Syria-Palestine in the Transition from Byzantine to Early Islamic Rule: Arab Christians and Muslims," *Mediterranean Archaeology* 11 (1998), p. 255. In connection with these issues, see also Robert Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1996).

[3] See Chase F. Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik* (Makers of the Muslim World; Oxford: One World, 2005).

campaign to claim the occupied territories for Islam, and it was during their reign, in the years around the turn of the eighth century, when "Syria underwent a reorientation by 180 degrees in strategic and geopolitical terms,"[4] that the local Christian communities themselves first registered their awareness that the invading and occupying Arabs had established a new religious hegemony in the land.

The construction of the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem in the days of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik,[5] and the building of the Great Umayyad Mosque of Damascus on the ruins of the church of St. John the Baptist in the time of the caliph al-Walīd (705–715)[6] were undertakings which monumentally testified to the on-going campaign of the Umayyad government to co-opt the public space in Syria/Palestine for Islam. Numerous other enterprises of a humbler sort undertaken at the same time, such as the minting of a distinctive Islamic coinage,[7] mandating the

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[4] Shboul & Walmsley, "Identity and Self-Image in Syria-Palestine," p. 256.

[5] See Julian Raby & Jeremy Johns (eds.), *Bayt al-Maqdis: 'Abd al-Malik's Jerusalem* (Part I; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Oleg Grabar, *The Shape of the Holy: Early Islamic Jerusalem* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

[6] See K.A.C. Cresswell, *Early Muslim Architecture: Umayyads A.D. 622–750* (2nd ed. In 2 parts, vol. I, pt. II; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), esp. pp. 246–290. The caliph reportedly said to the Christians of Damascus, "We want to add this church of yours, the church of St. John, onto our mosque; it is an exceedingly beautiful church, and there is nothing else like it in the land of Syria." L. Cheikho *et al.* (eds.), *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales* (CSCO, vol. 51; Paris: Carolus Poussielegue, 1909), p. 42.

[7] See J.B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien: patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche 1166–1199* (4 vols.; Paris: E. Leroux, 1899–1910), vol. II, p. 473: "In the year 1008 (i.e., A.D. 697) the *Tayyâyê* began to strike *dinars, zuzê*, and *oboloi* on which there was no image at all, but only inscriptions." See Philip Grierson, "The Monetary Reforms of 'Abd al-Malik, their Metrological Basis and their Financial Repercussions," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 3 (1960), pp. 241–264; G.C. Miles, "The Iconography of Umayyad Coinage," *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959), pp. 207–213; Michael Bates, "History, Geography and Numismatices in the First Century of Islamic Coinage," *Schweizerische Numismatische Rundschau* 65

use of Arabic instead of Greek in the maintenance of the public records,[8] and even the design of road signs positively served the same purpose.[9] Negatively, the concomitant Umayyad campaign to remove the public display of the ensigns and emblems of an earlier Christian hegemony, such as the hitherto ubiquitous sign of the cross and the open exhibition of Christian icons, also helped to change the public appearance of the cityscape of Jerusalem and Damascus alike, to name only the most prominent urban localities of Syria/Palestine.[10] As a recent historian of the Umayyad era points out, the period of the combined reigns of the caliphs 'Abd al-Malik and his son al-Walīd "was in some ways the high point of Umayyad power, witnessing significant territorial advances... and the emergence of a more marked Arabic and Islamic character in the state's public face."[11]

The twin social processes comprising the 'Arabicization' and the concomitant 'Islamicization' of the public domain of the caliphate at the turn of the eighth century set the stage for the first

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(1986), pp. 231–163; *idem*, "Byzantine Coinage and its Imitations: Arab Coinage and its Imitations: Arab-Byzantine Coinage," *ARAM* 6 (1994), pp. 381–403.

[8] See J.B. Chabot, *Anonymi Auctoris Chronicon ad Annum Christi 1234 Pertinens* (CSCO, vol. 81; Paris: J. Gabalda, 1920), pp. 298–299: "Walīd, the king of the *Ṭayyāyê*, ordered that in his chancery, i.e., the treasury, which these *Ṭayyāyê* call the *diwān*, one should not write in Greek but in the Arabic language, because up to that time the ledgers of the kings of the *Ṭayyāyê* were in Greek.

[9] See, e.g., Moshe Sharon, "An Arabic Inscription from the Time of 'Abd al-Malik," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 29 (1966), pp. 367–372.

[10] See A.A. Vasiliev, "The Iconoclastic Edict of Yazid II AD 721," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 9/10 (1956), pp. 25–47; Sidney H. Griffith, "Images, Islam and Christian Icons: A Moment in the Christian/Muslim Encounter in Early Islamic Times," in Pierre Canivet & Jean-Paul Rey-Coquais (eds.), *La Syrie de Byzance à l'islam VIIe–VIIIe siècles: Actes du colloque international, Lyon-Maison de l'Orient Méditerranéen, Paris-Institut du Monde Arabe, 11–15 Septembre 1990* (Damas: Institut Français de Damas, 1992), pp. 121–138. See also the discussion in Garth Fowden, *Empire to Commonwealth: Consequences of Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[11] Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam*, p. 58.

Christian responses to the social and religious challenges of Islam. The earliest ones included polemical attacks, such as the one contained in the *De Haeresibus* section of St. John of Damascus' *Pēgē Gnoseos*, written in Greek,[12] as well as a number of apocalyptic texts written in Syriac, such as the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*,[13] and apologetic texts such as the *Dialogue of a Monk of Bêt Hālê* with a Muslim Notable, written in Syriac.[14] As the eighth century stretched into the early years of the ninth century, the Christian communities in the world of Islam, and especially those who would soon be called 'Melkites' in Syria/Palestine, whose ecclesiastical center for all practical purposes was the see of Jerusalem with her attendant monastic communities in Judea and the Sinai, adopted Arabic not only as their public language in the caliphate but as an ecclesiastical language as well, and their writers were the first among the subject Christians to address issues of public religious behavior in the Islamic realm and to make claims for a public presence of Arabophone Christians in the 'World of Islam' (*dār al-islām*).[15]

II

For a century and more in the Roman Empire, from the time of the emperor Justinian I (527–565) and the council of Constantinople II (553) until the council of Constantinople III (681) in the time of the emperor Constantine IV (668–685),

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[12] See Raymond Le Coz (ed. & trans.), *Jean Damascène: Écrits sur l'islam: présentation, commentaires et traduction* (Sources Chrétiens, no. 383; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1992).

[13] See G.J. Reinink, *Die syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodios* (CSCO vols, 54 & 541; Louvain: Peeters, 1993). See also G.J. Reinink, "Ps.-Methodius: A Concept of History in Response to the Rise of Islam," in Averil Cameron & Lawrence I. Conrad (eds.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East: Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 1; Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1992), pp. 149–187.

[14] See Sidney H. Griffith, "Disputing with Islam in Syriac: The Case of the Monk of Bêt Hālê and a Muslim Emir," *Hugoye* vol. 3, no. 1 (January, 2000): http://syrcom.cua.edu/Hugoye.

[15] See Sidney H. Griffith, "From Aramaic to Arabic: The Languages of the Monasteries of Palestine in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods." *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), pp. 11–31.

Christians in the east were embroiled in the church-dividing struggles precipitated by the Christological controversies which followed upon the decisions of the councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) in the fifth century. The theological and confessional struggles were exacerbated and complicated by the multiplicity of languages and cultures into which the seminal texts and doctrinal formulae of the several interested parties, in the several different geographical areas, were translated from their originally Greek sources.[16]

In the case of Syria/Palestine, where the so-called 'dyophysite' or Chalcedonian orthodoxy came to hold sway from the later fifth century onward,[17] and where Greek was the dominant ecclesiastical language in the numerous international monastic communities,[18] the Aramaic dialect of the local churches was Christian Palestinian Aramaic.[19] In the hinterlands of Syria and Mesopotamia, the far-flung territories of the patriarchate of Antioch, where the local Christian communities straddled the frontiers of the Roman and Persian empires, and where 'Byzantine' imperial orthodoxy was widely rejected by both the so-called 'Monophysite' 'Jacobites' and the 'Dyophysite' 'Nestorians'; Syriac was the Aramaic dialect which served as the dominant ecclesiastical language. In Egypt, Coptic

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[16] On the multiple vicissitudes involved in such an enterprise, see the pertinent parts of the discussion in John F.A. Sawyer, *Sacred Languages and Sacred Texts* (London & New York: Routledge, 1999).

[17] See Lorenzo Perrone, *La Chiesa di Palestine e le Controversie Cristologiche* (Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1980); Alois Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche* (Band 2/3, "Die Kirchen von Jerusalem und Antiochien nach 451 bis 600," hrsg. T. Hainthaler; Freiburg: Herder, 2002).

[18] See John Binns, *Ascetics and Ambassadors of Christ: The Monasteries of Palestine, 314–631* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Joseph Patrich, *Sabas, Leader of Palestinian Monasticism: A Comparative Study in Eastern Monasticims, Fourth to Seventh Centuries* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1995). See also Sidney H. Griffith, "The Signs and Wonders of Orthodoxy: Miracles and Monks' Lives in Sixth-Century Palestine," in John C. Cavadini (ed.), *Miracles in Jewish and Christian Antiquity: Imagining Truth* (Notre Dame Studies in Theology, vol. 3; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp. 139–168.

[19] See Griffith, "From Aramaic to Arabic."

and Greek were the languages of the burgeoning Coptic Orthodox Church,[20] while Ethiopic and Armenian quickly became the ecclesiastical languages of their own respective homelands.[21] Most Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopic and Armenian-speaking Christians in the early Islamic period accepted Christological formulae articulated the most effectively either originally in Greek by Severus of Antioch (c. 465–538) and in Syriac by Philoxenus of Mabbug (c. 440–523), echoing the earlier theology of the Greek-speaking St. Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444),[22] or in Syriac by Narsai (d. 503) and Babai the Great (551/2–628), reflecting the positions of Theodore of Mopsuestia (c. 350–428), composed originally in Greek a hundred years earlier.[23] After the middle third of the sixth century, double hierarchies for the competing communions arose in the patriarchates of Alexandria (535) and Antioch (557). In Persia, the ancient 'Church of the East' had its own Metropolitan bishop, sometimes styled 'Catholicos', and later 'patriarch', seated in the capital city of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. This church accepted the Nicene faith at the synod of 410, and thereafter, in a series of councils and synods stretching into the eighth century, articulated its own distinctive creed, based on the teaching of Theodore of Mopsuestia, which most other churches eventually characterized as 'Nestorian'.[24]

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[20] See A. Gerhards & H. Brakman (eds.), *Die koptische Kirche: Einfürung in das ägyptische Christentum* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1994).

[21] See S. Munro-Hay, *Axum: An African Civilization of Late Antiquity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991) and the magisterial study by Nina Garsoïan, *L'Église arménienne et le grand schisme d'Orient* (CSCO, vol. 574; Lovanii: Peeters, 1999).

[22] See the essays on 'Jacobite' theology in Syriac by Tanios Bou Mansour and Luise Abramowski in Grillmeier, *Jesus der Christus*, Band 2/3, pp. 438–647.

[23] See the collected studies on the history and theology of the 'Church of the East' in Alfred Stirnemann & Gerhard Wilflinger (eds.), *Syriac Dialogue* (3 vols., 'Non-Official Consultation on Dialogue within the Syriac Tradition'; Vienna: Foundation Pro Oriente, 1994, 1996, 1998).

[24] See Sebastian P. Brock, "The Christology of the Church of the East in the Synods of the Fifth to Early Seventh Centuries: Preliminary Considerations and Materials," in G. Dragas (ed.), *Aksum-Thyateira: A Festschrift for Archbishop Methodios* (London/Athens: Thyateira House, 1985), pp. 125–142; Sebastian P. Brock, "The 'Nestorian' Church:

In the early years of Umayyad times, all of these ecclesial communities had interests in the Holy Land. The see of Jerusalem, with its single officially 'Chalcedonian' hierarchical establishment, nevertheless remained the pilgrimage center for all Christians and under Muslim rule Syrian and Armenian 'Jacobites' and 'Nestorians' were a notable presence in the environs of the church of the Anastasis, the Holy Sepulchre.[25] Here the adherents of all the principal confessional allegiances met and often argued their respective cases.

Meanwhile, for much of the seventh century, Chalcedonian Christians living under Muslim rule in Syria/Palestine, writing in Greek, Christian Palestinian Aramaic and Syriac, became very much involved in controversy with their own co-religionists both at home and abroad over the issues of the Byzantine emperors' promotion of the doctrines of 'Monenergism' and 'Monotheletism' among the Chalcedonians in an effort to heal the doctrinal rift between them and the so-called 'Jacobites' or 'Monophysites' in the patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch.[26] The chronology of the promotion of the doctrine of 'Monotheletism' among the Byzantine Orthodox spanned the years of the consecutive Persian (614–628) and Islamic (634–640) occupations of the territories of

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A Lamentable Misnomer," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 78 (1996), pp. 23–35.

[25] See J.M. Fiey, "Le pèlerinage des Nestoriens et Jacobites à Jérusalem," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale; Xe–XIIe Siècles* 12 (1969), pp. 113–126; S. P. Cowe, "An Armenian Job Fragment from Sinai and Its Implications," *Oriens Christianus* 76 (1992), pp. 123–157; Andrew Palmer, "The History of the Syrian Orthodox in Jerusalem," *Oriens Christianus* 75 (1991), pp. 16–43; Andrew Palmer, "The History of the Syrian Orthodox in Jerusalem, Part Two: Queen Melisende and the Jacobite Estates," *Oriens Christianus* 76 (1992), pp. 74–94; Johannes Pahlitzsch, "St. Maria Magdalena, St. Thomas und St. Markus: Tradition und Geschichte dreier syrisch-orthodoxer Kirchen in Jerusalem," *Oriens Christianus* 18 (1997), pp. 82–106.

[26] See V. Grumel, "Recherches sur l'histoire du monothélisme," *Échos d'Orient* 27 (1928), pp. 6–16, 257–277; 28 (1929), pp. 19–34, 272–282; 29 (1930), pp. 16–28; P. Verghese, "The Monothelite Controversy—a Historical Survey," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 13 (1968), pp. 196–211.

Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria;[27] it was promoted for political and strategic reasons during the reign of the emperor Heraclius (610–641),[28] and was finally anathematized only at the council of Constantinople III (681),[29] well into the Umayyad era. In Syria/Palestine, the controversy over this issue involved all parties, including most notably both 'Jacobites' and Chalcedonians, and in due course it provided the immediate theological and ecclesial context for the emergence of the 'Melkites' as a distinct denomination of Christians in the world of Islam, among whom St. John of Damascus was destined to become the principal theological spokesman, as we shall discuss below.

III

Among the Greek-speaking theologians of the seventh century who attacked 'Monotheletism', none was more successful in the long run than St. Maximus the Confessor (c. 580–662). It seems entirely plausible, in spite of an astonishing unwillingness on the part of some scholars seriously to consider the pertinent evidence,[30] that like his sometime companion and older contemporary, Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem (c. 560–638), who was born in

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[27] See Bernard Flusin, *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'histoire de la Palestine au debut du VIIe siècle* (2 vols.; Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1992).

[28] See Walter Kaegi, *Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[29] See Leo Donald Davis, *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils (325–787): Their History and Theology* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1983), pp. 258–289; Norman Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (2 vols.; Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1990), vol. I, pp. 124–130.

[30] See, e.g., the doctrinaire decision of Aidan Nichols, while all but admitting the plausibility of the evidence, blithely to discount it without further discussion in favor of what he calls "its main rival," i.e., a much later hagiographical *Vita*, composed in Greek. See Aidan Nichols, *Byzantine Gospel: Maximus the Confessor in Modern Scholarship* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1993), p. 15. For more nuanced views see I.-H. Dalmais, "La vie de saint Maxime le Confesseur reconsidérée," *Studia Patristica* 17 (1982), pp. 26–30; Andrew Louth, *Maximus the Confessor* (The Early Church Fathers; London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 4–7, 199, nn. 10 & 11.

Damascus,[31] Maximus was also a Syro-Palestinian by birth and that his early religious formation was not in Constantinople as his hagiographical *Vita* alleges, but in the Chalcedonian monastery of St. Chariton in the Judean desert.[32] This much is claimed by virtually contemporary documents in Syriac composed by Maximus' theological adversaries.[33] These adversaries, who were in all likelihood themselves staunchly 'Chalcedonian' Maronites,[34] wrote from within the theological context of the Syriac-speaking churches in Syria/Palestine which were at the time all under the strong influence of the ecclesiastical center of Edessa in Syria, where the 'Jacobites' formed the dominant theological school of thought among the Syriac speakers, with the redoubtable Jacob of Edessa (c. 640–708) eventually emerging as their principal spokesman.[35]

The attraction of 'Monotheletism' for Syriac-speaking Chalcedonians in the Syro-Palestinian milieu was precisely what they undoubtedly perceived to be its ecumenical potential for better relations with the dominant 'Jacobites' in an era of crisis, when religious harmony would be an aid in defense of the

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[31] See Christoph von Schöborn, *Sophrone de Jérusalem: vie monastique et confession dogmatique* (Théologie Historique, 20; Paris: Beauchesne, 1972).

[32] This monastery, often called the 'Old Lavra', was an important center of Byzantine Orthodox thought well into Islamic times; its monks were active in the production of Arabic texts for the 'Melkite' community long after St. John of Damascus' lifetime. See Sidney H. Griffith, *Arabic Christianity in the Monasteries of Ninth-Century Palestine* (Variorum Reprints; Aldershot, Hamps.: Ashgate, 1992). See also Yizhar Hirschfeld, *The Judean Desert Monasteries in the Byzantine Period* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[33] See Sebastian P. Brock, "An Early Syriac Life of Maximus the Confessor," *Analecta Bollandiana* 91 (1973), pp. 299–346; S.P. Brock, "A Syriac Fragment on the Sixth Council," *Oriens Christianus* 57 (1973), pp. 63–71.

[34] See Brock, "An Early Syriac Life," esp. pp. 332–336, 344–346.

[35] See H.J.W. Drijvers, "Jakob von Edessa (633–708," in *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (vol. 16; Berlin: DeGruyter, 1993), pp. 468–470; Dirk Kruisheer & Lucas Van Rompay, "A Bibliographical *Clavis* to the Works of Jacob of Edessa," *Hugoye* 1 (1998), http://syrcom.cua.edu/Hugoye/Vol1No1/Clavis.html.

Christian commonweal, not least in Jerusalem and the Holy Land.[36] The crisis was first precipitated by the invading Persians from 614 to 628,[37] and it was immediately followed a half dozen years later by the final demise of Roman rule in the area and the consequent occupation of the Aramean homelands by the Muslim Arabs. Arab rule then removed all the restraints which the Byzantine emperors had imposed upon religious communities who dissented from Chalcedonian orthodoxy, so from the mid-seventh century onward the Chalcedonians in the world of Islam faced renewed challenges from both the 'Jacobites' and the 'Nestorians', both of which groups far outnumbered the remaining Chalcedonians among the local Arameans and Arabs, especially after the flight of so many 'Romans' (*ar-Rūm*)[38] in the aftermath of the conquest, an exodus which would reach its apogee in Abbasid times, in the first decades of the ninth century.[39]

From the late seventh century onward, Syriac and then Arabic-speaking 'Jacobites' regularly referred to their Chalcedonian adversaries within the Islamic world with the polemical terms 'Maximists' or 'Melkites'; 'Maximists' because they accepted the

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[36] See Milka Levy-Rubin, "The Role of the Judaean Desert Monasteries in the Monothelite Controversy in Seventh-Century Palestine," in Joseph Patrich (ed.), *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta, 98; Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters en Departement Oosterse Studies, 2001), pp. 282–300.

[37] See the studies of Flusin, *Saint Anastase le Perse.*

[38] On the significance of the term *ar-Rūm*, 'Romans', as it was used by Arabophone Christians and Muslims in the Islamic world see S.K. Samir, "Quelques notes sur les termes *rūm* et *rūmī* dans la tradition arabe; étude de sémantique historique," in *La Nozione de "Romano" tra Cittadinanza et Universalità* (Atti del il Seminario Internazionale di Studi Storici, "Da Roma alla Terza Roma," 21–23 Aprile 1982; Roma, 1984), pp. 461–478.

[39] See Sidney H. Griffith, "Byzantium and the Christians in the World of Islam: Constantinople and the Church in the Holy Land in the Ninth Century," *Medieval Encounters* 3 (1997), pp. 231–265; S.H. Griffith, "What has Constantinople to do with Jerusalem? Palestine in the ninth century: Byzantine Orthodoxy in the world of Islam," in Leslie Brubaker (ed.), *Byzantium in the Ninth Century: Dead or Alive?* (Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies Publications, 5; Aldershot, Hamps.: Ashgate/Variorum, 1998), pp. 181–194.

Christology of Maximus the Confessor as definitive, and 'Melkites', or 'Royalists'/'Imperialists', because they accepted creedal formulae approved by the church council called by the Roman emperor Constantine IV, the ecumenical council, Constantinople III (681).[40] From the time of that council onward, among the Christians in the world of Islam, first in Greek and then in Aramaic/Syriac, and eventually in Arabic,[41] the see of Jerusalem and its associated monastic communities became the champions of imperial, Byzantine Orthodoxy throughout Syria, Palestine and Egypt. Indeed in due course they became a distinct Christian denomination whom both their Christian adversaries and the Muslims alike regularly called 'Melkites';[42] the see of Jerusalem remained their ecclesiastical center, and for centuries Jerusalem, and especially the monastery of Mar Saba, exerted a strong spiritual and intellectual influence even in the 'Melkite' communities of the patriarchates of Alexandria and Antioch.[43]

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[40] See Sidney H. Griffith, " 'Melkites', 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies in Arabic in Third/Ninth-Century Syria," in David Thomas (ed.), *Syrian Christians under Islam: The First Thousand Years* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 9–55; S.H. Griffith, "Muslims and Church Councils: The Apology of Theodore Abū Qurrah," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Patristica* (vol. 25; Louvain: Peeters, 1993), pp. 270–299.

[41] See Sidney H. Griffith, "From Aramiac to Arabic: The Languages of the Monasteries of Palestine in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), pp. 11–31.

[42] Two difficulties beset the use of the term 'Melkites'. On the one hand, scholars have regularly used the term anachronistically to refer to the 'Chalcedonians' from the fifth century onward, whereas it did not in fact come into currency until well after the time of Constantinople III in 681 and its primary reference was to those Christians in the Islamic world who accepted the teachings of that council. On the other hand, in modern times the term has been used almost exclusively to refer to members of this community who came into union with the see of Rome in the eighteenth century. See Sidney H. Griffith, "The Church of Jerusalem and the 'Melkites': The Making of an 'Arab Orthodox' Christian Identity in the World of Islam; 750–1050 CE," in press.

[43] For the extent of Jerusalem's sway see Sidney H. Griffith, "The *Life of Theodore of Edessa*: History, Hagiography and Religious Apologetics in Mar Saba Monastery in Early Abbasid Times," in Patrich, *The Sabaite Heritage*, pp. 147–169.

St. John of Damascus and his Arabic-speaking heirs, like Theodore Abū Qurrah (c. 755 – c. 830), were the spokesmen who upheld the 'Melkite' tradition. They wrote in reaction not only to the largely Syriac-speaking 'Jacobites' and 'Nestorians', but also against the multiple religious challenges of the era in Syria/Palestine, including those coming from Muslims and Manichees, as well as from new movements among the Christians themselves, such as an enthusiasm for iconophobia which arose among some Christians living under Muslim rule in the eighth century. When iconoclasm was then adopted as an imperial policy in Byzantium in the early eighth century, it exacerbated the embarrassment of orthodox Christians living under the Muslims, especially in the Holy Land, as we shall see.

IV

St. John of Damascus was one of a number of Greek writers in Syria/Palestine in the seventh and early eighth centuries who defended the cause of imperial, Byzantine orthodoxy as it was defined in the first six ecumenical councils. At the time, although they lived among the Muslims and had a local audience as their primary frame of reference, these writers were in fact the most prominent Greek writers of their day. As Cyril Mango as notably observed, "practically nothing was written at Constantinople down to the 780's, not even hagiography... The most active centre of Greek culture in the 8th century lay in Palestine, notably in Jerusalem and the neighbouring monasteries."[44] But these monasteries were not simply outposts of Constantinopolitan faith and culture left over for a season in a conquered territory, as modern Byzantinists sometimes have a tendency to portray them.[45] On the contrary, from the eighth century to the mid-eleventh century they composed the inspirational center for a wide-ranging

[44] Cyril Mango, "Greek Culture in Palestine after the Arab Conquest," in G. Cavallo, G. De Gregorio, M. Maniaci (eds.), *Scritture, Libri e Testi nelle Aree Provinciali di Bisanzio* (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1988), pp. 149–150. See also R.P. Blake, "La littérature grecque en Palestine au VIIIe siècle," *Le Muséon* 78 (1965), pp. 367–380.

[45] See, e.g., J. Binns, *Ascetics and Ambassadors of Christ: The Monasteries of Palestine, 314–631* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

network of 'Melkite' communities in the Levant.[46] This much one can glean from a number of sources, but one of the most instructive is the *Life of St. Stephen the Sabaïte* (d. 794) by Leontius of Damascus, written in Greek around the year 807 but surviving only in Arabic; from it alone, to name no other source, one can trace the geographical network of 'Melkite' relationships between Alexandria, Sinai, Jerusalem, Edessa and Baghdad.[47] These locations, all in the Islamic world, name the points on the horizon within which the 'Melkites' thought and wrote, first in Greek and then in Arabic, and these same locations provided the immediate frame of reference and the cultural context within which the 'Melkites' defended their faith against their Christian, Muslim and Manichaean adversaries. Constantinople lay beyond this horizon, but it was arguably never completely out of mind, albeit that the doctrinal and political concerns of the Roman world would not have been the most pressing issues for the 'Melkites'. Until the early decades of the ninth century 'Melkites' seem to have had some regular contact with Constantinople and even to have exercised some considerable influence there, largely through the activities of émigré monks.[48] But from around the year 825 until well after the mid-tenth century the ties seem to have been completely broken; they were restored for a season (969–1085) in the territories of Antioch; they were not restored in Jerusalem until the reign of the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (1042–

[46] For more on this topic see Griffith, "The Church of Jerusalem and the 'Melkites'.

[47] See John C. Lamoreaux (ed. & trans.), *The Life of St. Stephen of Mar Sabas* (CSCO, vols. 578 & 579; Lovanii: Peeters, 1999); Bartolomeo Pirone (ed. & trans.), *Leonizio di Damasco; Vita di Santo Stefano Sabaita* (Studia Orientalia Christiana Monographiae, no. 4; Cairo/Jerusalem: The Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 1991).

[48] See M.-F. Auzepy, "De la Palestine à Constantinople (VIIIe–IXe siècles): Étienne le Sabaïte et Jean Damascène," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 183–218. See also J. Gouillard, "Un 'quartier' d'emigrés palestiniens à Constantinople au IXe siècle?" *Revue des Études Sud-Est Européenes* 7 (1969), pp. 73–76.

1055).[49] But these observations take us beyond our immediate concern with the era of St. John of Damascus.

At the turn of the seventh and eighth centuries, during the years immediately following the council of Constantinople III (681), in Syria/Palestine Anastasius of Sinai (d. after 700) was arguably the most significant, proto-'Melkite' writer.[50] In his landmark book, the *Hodegos*, written in Greek,[51] Anastasius set out Byzantine orthodox Christology, largely in reaction to doctrines current in the 'Jacobite' community, the 'Monophysites' as he called them, and against the 'Monothelites', in a way that uncannily anticipated difficulties to come.[52] For example, his emphasis on the full humanity of Christ led him graphically to portray Jesus' tortured and dead body on the cross in an icon which he included in his text.[53] In the years to come, this kind of a portrayal of the crucifixion would become a point of controversy between Christians, Muslims and Christian iconophobes, as we shall see below. What is more, in this same work Anastasius became one of the first Christian writers on record to take cognizance of the religious ideas of the Muslim Arabs and even to quote the Qur'ān; he argued that the heretical notions of the 'Jacobites' had misled the Arabs.[54] Another work attributed to Anastasius of Sinai is usually called *Quaestiones et Responsiones*, seemingly also largely excerpted in the pseudo-Athanasian *Quaestiones ad Antiochum Ducem*.

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[49] See Griffith, "What has Constantinople to do with Jerusalem?" and "Byzantium and the Christians in the World of Islam."

[50] See John Haldon, "The Works of Anastasius of Sinai: A Key Source for the History of Seventh-Century East Mediterranean Society and Belief," in Averil Cameron & Lawrence I. Conrad (eds.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East: I—Problems in the Literary Source Material* (Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 1; Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1992), pp. 107–147.

[51] See K. H. Uthemann (ed.), *Anastasii Sinaitae Viae Dux* (Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca, 8; Turnhout & Louvain: Brepols & University Press, 1981).

[52] See T. Spáčil, "La teologia di s. Anastasio Sinaita," *Bessarione* 26 (1922), pp. 157–178; 27 (1923), pp. 15–44.

[53] See Anna Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

[54] See Sidney H. Griffith, "Anastasios of Sinai, the *Hodegos* and the Muslims," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 32 (1987), pp. 341–358.

While modern scholars have not paid much attention to this widely copied and often expanded text, early 'Melkite' writers were very fond of it and they frequently quoted from it and referred to it, not least in Arabic.[55] Clearly Anastasius' was an important voice in the rising generation of 'Melkite' thinkers who in the seventh century and the first half of the eighth century in Syria/Palestine articulated the first doctrinal synthesis of what we moderns are inclined to call 'Byzantine Orthodoxy', but which the locals more aptly defended as simply the 'Orthodoxy of the Six Councils'. It was the religious backbone of the cultural transformation which Byzantinist John Haldon has so evocatively sketched.[56]

Modern Byzantinists have not been slow to recognize the accomplishments of the remarkable, Greek-speaking, Syro/Palestinian scholars of the eighth century, with St. John of Damascus occupying the first place among them. They included poets, hagiographers, hymnographers and theologians of the caliber of Andrew of Crete (c. 669 – c. 740), sometime 'Monothelite' but notable poet and preacher, Leontius of Damascus the hagiographer, whom we have already mentioned, Cosmas of Maiuma, 'the Melode' (c. 675 – c. 752), and of course John of Damascus himself, to name only those with the most immediate name recognition in modern times.[57] Indeed there has even been the sense among some Byzantinists, while strangely discounting the immediate local relevance of their work, nevertheless to recognize the defining character of the Syro/Palestinian writers' contributions to Orthodox theology in the larger world, especially the work of St. John of Damascus,[58]

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[55] See Haldon, "The Works of Anastasius of Sinai."

[56] See J. F. Haldon, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century: The Transformation of a Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[57] See Mango, "Greek Culture in Palestine;" and Blake, "La littérature en Palestine." See also the long discussion of the merits and accomplishments of these writers in Daniel J. Sahas, "Cultural Interaction during the Ummayad Period: The 'Circle' of John of Damascus," *ARAM* 6 (1994), pp. 35–66.

[58] See, e.g., Andrew Louth, "Palestine under the Arabs 650–750: The Crucible of Byzantine Orthodoxy," in R.N. Swanson (ed.), *The Holy Land, Holy Lands, and Christian History* (Studies in Church History, vol. 36; London: The Boydell Press for The Ecclesiastical History Society, 2000),

albeit that his achievement was only belatedly recognized in Constantinople, where in the mid-eighth century he was still being characterized as stubbornly 'Saracen-minded'.[59]

Two important, but now anonymous, theological reference works in Greek of great influence in the promotion of 'Byzantine Orthodoxy' in our period were produced in this Syro/Palestinian milieu, the *Doctrina Patrum* and the ever popular *Sacra Parallela*, both of which served Arabic-speaking 'Melkite' writers well into the Middle Ages. The *Doctrina Patrum* has sometimes, probably wrongly, been attributed to Anastasius of Sinai; it seems to be the older compilation of the two, reflecting the teachings of Maximus the Confessor, and those of both the sixth century Leontius of Byzantium and Leontius of Jerusalem.[60] The compilation of the *Sacra Parallela* has often been ascribed to St. John of Damascus, again probably wrongly, but its doctrinal tenor is certainly consistent with his allegiances.[61] Both of these *florilegia* were of immense significance in shaping the doctrinal profile of the 'Melkite' community.

It is not unlikely that one impetus for the remarkable efflorescence of 'Melkite' thought in Syria/Palestine in the first half of the eighth century was the new stability brought to ecclesiastical

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pp. 67–77; A. Louth, "John of Damascus and the Making of the Byzantine Theological Synthesis," in Patrich, *The Sabaite Heritage*, pp. 301–304.

[59] See the text cited from the proceedings of the Iconoclast council of 754 in the *Acta* of the seventh Ecumenical Council, Nicea II, 784, in Daniel J. Sahas, *Icon and Logos: Sources in Eighth-Century Iconoclasm* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), p. 168.

[60] See F. Diekamp, *Doctrina Patrum de Incarnatione Verbi: ein griechisches Florilegium aus der Wende des 7. und 8. Jahrhunderts* (2nd ed.; Münster: Aschendorff, 1981). For the two Leontii see Aloys Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition* (vol. II, part 2; trans. John Cawte & Pauline Allen; London & Louisville, KY: Mowbray & Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), pp. 181–312.

[61] See Karl Holl, *Die Sacra Parallela des Johannes Damascenus* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs,1896). It is interesting that an illustrated MS of this text, possibly of Palestinian origin, includes numerous marginal portraits of authors, including biblical writers, whose texts are included in the compilation. See Kurt Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

affairs in Jerusalem by the inception of the thirty year reign of Patriarch John V (705–735) at the beginning of the century, coming in the wake of the ecclesiastical and civil crises of episcopal succession in Jerusalem during the almost seventy years which followed the death of Patriarch Sophronius (d. 638)[62] and the formal separation of the Orient from Roman government brought about by inauguration of the new Islamic hegemony in the area. Another factor which must also have influenced especially the defensive and reactive intellectual posture of the first 'Melkite' theologians and prompted their summarizing and systematizing efforts, most notably those of St. John of Damascus, was the contemporary growth and development not only of the doctrines of their newly socially empowered Christian adversaries but also of the emergence and active careers of new Islamic religious thinkers as well.

V

As was noted at the beginning of this essay, the last years of the seventh century and the first quarter of the eighth century witnessed the campaign of the Umayyad caliphs, especially 'Abd al-Malik and his sons and successors, publicly and symbolically to claim the Arab occupied territories for Islam, and especially the cities of Jerusalem and Damascus. This effort went hand in hand with important steps in the growth and development of early Islamic religious thought. In the beginning, more theoretical considerations had been overshadowed by what moderns would call political concerns. But concomitant with the elaboration of different ideas about how the Islamic community should be governed after the death of the prophet Muhammad, the nascent class of Muslim 'scholars' (*ulamā'*) in the caliphate were already devising the methods of transmitting the authoritative prophetic traditions (*hadīth*, pl., *ahādīth*) which for the burgeoning majority of the so-called 'Sunnī' Muslims would go together with the Qur'ān as the principal sources for determining both the faith and the civil

[62] For the basic facts of the succession as we know them, see Giorgio Fedalto, *Hierarchia Ecclesiastica Orientalis: Series Episcoporum Eddlesiarum Christianarum Orientalium* (2 vols.; Padova: Messaggero, 1988), vol. II, pp. 1001–1002.

order of the dominant Islamic community (*ummah*).[63] At the same time, the authors of the early biographies of the prophet Muhammad, such as Muhammad ibn Ishāq (d. 767), a near contemporary of St. John of Damascus, and the authors of the first Qur'ān commentaries and the standard accounts of the earliest exploits of the Muslims,[64] were structuring their narratives in an obviously apologetic and even polemic cast, clearly making claims for the religious verisimilitude of Islam vis-à-vis the claims of the Jews and Christians, following the patterns of the earlier Jewish and Christian narratives according to a suitably altered, Islamic perspective. A number of these early scholars and writers lived in Damascus in St. John of Damascus' lifetime.[65] So pronounced was the apologetic penchant in their works that the modern scholar who has done the most to make the point clear to latter day readers, John Wansbrough, has characterized the whole enterprise and the era itself as the *Sectarian Milieu* of early Islam.[66]

By St. John of Damascus' day certain more theoretical religious concerns were already emerging among Muslim intellectuals which would have interesting analogues in John's own work. Some of the thinkers whose names are prominent in the early intellectual history of Islam and who were St. John's contemporaries include Maʿbad al-Juhanī (d. 704), al-Hasan al-Basrī (642–728), Ghaylān ad-Dimashqī (d.c. 743), Jahm ibn Safwān (d. 745), Wāsil ibn ʿA ta' (d. 748) and ʿAmr ibn ʿUbayd (d. 762). These were the thinkers of record who were raising questions and taking positions on the controversial issues of the day among Muslims such as the freedom of the will, the proper understanding of God's attributes, the status of the Qur'ān as the Word of God and the rightful stance to be

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[63] For a good summary of these developments see Patricia Crone, *God's Rule: Government and Islam; Six Centuries of Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).

[64] On the early origins of these materials see now Gregor Schoeler, *Écrire et transmettre dans les débuts de l'islam* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002).

[65] See Ahmad Shboul, "Change and Continuity in Early Islamic Damascus," *ARAM* 6 (1994), pp. 67–102.

[66] See John Wansbrough, *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (London Oriental Series, vol. 34; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.

taken toward governmental authority.[67] Most of these men were associated in one way or another with the rising 'Muʿtazilite' movement among the early practitioners of the Islamic *ʿilm al-kalām*, the dialogic science of discussing and understanding points of religious doctrine according to the principles of theoretical Arabic grammar, itself in the early stages of development at the time.[68] The names of all of these thinkers and their ideas were well known in Umayyad Damascus and much discussed at the caliphal court; there is every reason to think that St. John of Damascus would therefore have been thoroughly familiar with them, especially since many of their issues *mutatis mutandis* were of much concern to him in his own Christian thought.

Muslims and 'Melkites' had some doctrinal adversaries in common in the eighth century and the scholars of both communities devoted considerable attention to refuting them. The most prominent and persistent of these adversaries were the Manichees, whom the Arabic-speaking Muslims classed among the dualist freethinkers, a category they designated by an originally Persian term taken over into Arabic as *zindīq* (pl. *zanādiqah*).[69] Greek, Syriac, and even Latin-speaking Christians had long been composing tracts against the Manichees; in Syriac Christian texts they were classed among the 'gentiles',[70] called *hanpê* (sing. *hanpâ*) in

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[67] See W. Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973); Josef van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam* (6 vols.; Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991–1995), esp. vol. II, pp. 1–343.

[68] See Shlomo Pines, "A Note on an Early Meaning of the Term *Mutakallimūn*," *Israel Oriental Studies* 1 (1971), pp. 224–240; J. Van Ess, "Disputationspraxis in der islamischen Theologie, eine vorläufige Skizze," *Revue des Études Islamiques* 44 (1976), pp. 23–60; M. A. Cook, "The Origins of Kalām," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 43 (1980), pp. 32–43; R. M. Frank, "The Science of Kalām," *Arabic Science and Philosophy* 2 (1992), pp. 9–37.

[69] See Melhem Chokr, *Zandaqa et zindiqs en islam au second siècle de l'Hégire* (Damas: Institut Français de Damas, 1993); Van Ess, *Theologie und Gesellschaft*, vol. I, pp. 416–426.

[70] For this understanding of the sense of the term *„anpê* see François DeBlois, "*Nasrani* (Ναζωραιος) and *hanif* (εθνικος): Studies on the

Syriac, those who were neither Jews nor Christians and who worshipped gods considered to be strange.[71] In Syria/Palestine in the eighth and ninth centuries, Manichaean doctrines proved to be very attractive to many intellectuals in both the Christian and the Islamic communities. It was for this reason that a considerable number of both Christian and Muslim polemicists paid close attention to the refutation of Manichaean doctrines and composed a good number of texts against them, including St. John of Damascus, who addressed the problem in a number of his works.[72]

Modern scholars, and even some Medieval Muslim ones, have made efforts to find connections and influences between contemporary Christian thinkers of the east, and particularly St. John of Damascus, and some of the early Muslim scholars whom we have named above.[73] This has been especially the case in regard to the debate which arose among the Muslims in the early eighth century between the upholders of the doctrine of the freedom of human will, the so-called 'Qadarites' (*al-qadariyyah*), and the advocates of predestination, the so-called 'Mujbirites' (*al-mujbirah/al-jabriyyah*), as their adversaries called them, or, as they would have referred to themselves, 'the people of determination' (*ahl al-ithbāt*), meaning those who maintain that the determination of human actions belongs to God alone.[74]

Modern scholars such as Morris Seale and Harry Austryn Wolfson have argued that the 'Qadarites' were influenced by contemporary Christian ideas and terms about the freedom of the will of the sort that can be found in the works of St. John of

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Religious Vocabulary of Christianity and Islam," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 65 (2002), pp. 1–30.

[71] See Moshe Gil, "The Creed of Abū ʿAmīr," *Israel Oriental Studies* 12 (1992), pp. 9–57.

[72] On St. John and the Manichees see the discussion in Andrew Louth, *St John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 61–71.

[73] See, e.g., the discussion of Roger Arnaldez, *A la croisée des trois monotheisms: Une communauté de pensée au Moyen-Age* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1993), pp. 63–83.

[74] See the discussion of the terms in Watt, *The Formative Period*, pp. 116–118.

Damascus.[75] Meanwhile, Michael Cook has proposed that at the same time there was a widespread determinist mood abroad in Umayyad times, even in Christian circles and especially among Syriac-speaking thinkers such as Jacob of Edessa, which could have had an influence on the Muslim determinists.[76] In the same vein, Shlomo Pines suggested that there are parallels to be observed in the methodological composition of the works of the early Muslim *mutakallimūn*, the practitioners of the apologetic *ʿilm al-kalām*, especially among the 'Muʿtazilites', and the compositional procedures at work in St. John of Damascus' largely apologetic *De Fide Orthodoxa*; he argued that the parallels may disclose influence or dependence.[77] Contrariwise, Carl Becker thought that it was St. John of Damascus who reacted to the Muslim thinkers, all of whom he took to be determinists, rather than the other way around, especially in the discussion about the freedom of the will.[78] While none of these allegations can be pressed with any confidence, they do nevertheless all call attention to the fact that some of the intellectual concerns both of St. John of Damascus and of his Muslim contemporaries were in a kind of sympathetic vibration, even if he and the Muslims were not in direct dialogue with one another.

VI

Everything we know about the life and works of St. John of Damascus shows how well he and his concerns fit within the

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[75] See Morris S. Seale, *Muslim Theology: A Study of Origins with Reference to the Church Fathers* (London: Luzac, 1964), esp. pp. 74 ff.; Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), esp. pp. 613–624.

[76] See Michael Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma: A Source Critical Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 151 ff.

[77] See Shlomo Pines, "Some Traits of Christian Theological Writing in Relation to Moslem *Kalam* and to Jewish Thought," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of the Sciences and the Humanities* 5 (1976), esp. pp. 112–115.

[78] See Carl H. Becker, "Christliche Polemik und islamische Dogmenbildung," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 25 (1911), pp. 175–195, reprinted in the author's *Vom Werden und Wesen der islamischen Welt: Islamstudien von C.H. Becker* (2 vols.; Leipzig: Quelle und Meyer, 1924–1932), vol. I, pp. 439 ff.

intellectual and cultural world of Syria/Palestine in Umayyad times, from the perspective of both its Christian and its Islamic frames of reference.[79] In this context, one can readily see that John wrote with a pastoral concern for the whole 'Melkite' church and not just for monks,[80] albeit that the monks of Jerusalem and of the monasteries of the Judean desert, especially the monastery of Mar Saba, were the principal teachers of the 'Melkites'.[81] Concomitantly, John shows little or no concern in his works for Constantinople or Byzantium,[82] where what he wrote came to be appreciated only long after his death and where in his lifetime he was despised. It is especially important to make this point because the prevailing view among modern scholars to the contrary is still strongly upheld. In fact it is a thoroughly anachronistic view, based on a reading of John's works through lenses crafted long after his time in Byzantium and long after the final triumph of 'Orthodoxy' in Constantinople in the ninth century. This approach co-opts John of Damascus out of his own milieu and into a Byzantine frame of reference which was never his own, often discounting the issues which were in fact most important to him and highlighting others which reflect more the concerns of latter day scholars of Byzantine theology.

In all likelihood, given the evidence of his name and what we know of the history of his family, John was of Aramaean, maybe even Arab stock. It is notable that in 'Melkite' Arabic sources neither he nor his ancestors are ever listed among the Romans (*ar-Rūm*), or the 'Byzantines',[83] as modern historians prefer to call

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[79] See the present author's earlier effort to make this case in Griffith, "'Melkites', 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies," in Thomas, *Syrian Christians under Islam*, esp. pp. 19–38.

[80] *Pace* Andrew Louth, *St John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 37.

[81] See Griffith, "The Church of Jerusalem and the 'Melkites'.

[82] Again, *pace* Andrew Louth who speaks of Byzantium as "that empire in which he [i.e. John of Damascus] never set foot, though he seems to have felt he belonged there." Louth, *St John Damascene*, p. 27.

[83] In this connection one thinks in particular of the 'Melkite' historian, Eutychius of Alexandria (877–940), and of his account of how St. John's ancestor handed Damascus over to the invading Muslims at the

them. Rather, he came from an indigenous family whose members enjoyed a high civil status, both under Roman rule and under the early caliphs.[84] The fact that John wrote only in Greek and not, so far as we know, in Aramaic or Arabic is no indication of Greek ancestry; Greek was the liturgical and scholarly language of choice for all the members of his church during his lifetime. Greek inscriptions are to be found in Arabian churches built or restored in the eighth century, well beyond the date of St. John of Damascus' demise.[85] Only in the next generation, did the 'Melkites' adopt Arabic as an ecclesiastical language, but even then they did not simply drop Greek or Christian Palestinian Aramaic, albeit that the cultivation of Greek letters underwent an eclipse in their communities thereafter.[86] By the tenth century the 'Melkites' were already translating the most important of St. John of Damascus' works into Arabic.[87]

Here is not the place to delve into the biography of St. John of Damascus in any detail, or to study his works closely; these considerations are among the topics assigned to other scholars

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time of the conquest; Eutychius clearly distinguishes the local Christians and the Mansūr family from 'the Romans' (*ar-Rūm*). See L. Cheikho *et al.* (eds.), *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales* (CSCO vols. 50 & 51; Paris: Carolus Poussielgue, 1906 & 1909), vol. 51, pp. 15–16.

[84] What we know of St. John's biography comes from hagiographical tradition; for the traditional account see J. Nasrallah, *Saint Jean de Damas: son époque, sa vie, son oeuvre* (Harissa: Imprimerie Grecque Melchite de Saint Paul, 1950). The earliest extant Arabic account seems to come from the eleventh century. See Rocio Daga Portillo, "The Arabic Life of St. John of Damascus," *Parole de l'Orient* 21 (1996), pp. 157–188. For recent scholarly reviews and reassessments of what we know about the biography see Le Coz, *Jean Damascène: Écrits sur l'islam*; Auzépy, "De la Palestine à Constantinople."

[85] See in particular Michele Piccirillo, *Arabia Christiana dalla Provincia Imperiale al Primo Periodo Islamico* (Milano: Jaca Book, 2002).

[86] See Griffith, "From Aramaic to Arabic."

[87] See A.S. Atiya, "St. John Damascene: Survey of the Unpublished Arabic Versions of His Works in Sinai," in George Makdisi (ed.), *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A.R. Gibb* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965, distributed by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA), pp. 73–83: Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* (5 vols.; Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944–1953), vol. I, pp. 377–379.

participating in the conference. Suffice it now to call attention to certain aspects of St. John's second career, his entrance into the monastic life in the Holy Land and his pastorally motivated apostolate of the pen in the service of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, John V (705–735). This was the patriarch who finally consolidated ecclesiastical affairs in Jerusalem after the disruptions and vacancies caused by the Islamic conquest just over sixty years earlier.[88] Once again, albeit in reduced circumstances, and due in large part to the efforts of Patriarch John V, Jerusalem would become in fact as well as in name, 'the mother of churches', as Cyril of Scythopolis had called her in the sixth century,[89] a title which in later Islamic times 'Melkite' writers loved to apply to her in their efforts to counter Muslim claims to the Holy City,[90] when Jerusalem had become the *de facto* if not the *de jure* center of Orthodox life in the caliphate.

We do not know just when St. John left his civil servant career in Damascus to come to Jerusalem to enter the monastic life. The common opinion seems to be that the move coincided with the beginning of the reign of the caliph al-Walīd (705–715),[91] when this Umayyad prince mandated the change from Greek to Arabic in the chancery (*ad-dīwān*) of the caliphate and began the construction of the Umayyad Mosque on the site of Damascus' earlier Church of St. John the Baptist. (In this connection one notices in passing that the reigns of Caliph al-Walīd and Patriarch John V began in the same year, 705.) Neither do we know for sure to which of the Holy Land monasteries John of Damascus repaired. Hagiographical

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[88] On the desperate situation of the 'Melkite' hierarchy in the period after the conquest see Hugh Kennedy, "The Melkite Church from the Islamic Conquest to the Crusades: Continuity and Adaptation in the Byzantine Legacy," in *The 17th International Byzantine Congress: Major Papers* (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas, 1986), pp. 325–343.

[89] Cyril of Scythopolis (c. 525 – c. 558) used this epithet a number of times in his *Lives of the Monks of Palestine*. Presumably he borrowed it from Jerusalem's liturgy of St. James. See Robert L. Wilken, *The Land Called Holy: Palestine in Christian History and Thought* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 171.

[90] See Andreas Feldtkeller, *Die 'Mutter der Kirchen' im 'Haus des Islam': Gegenseitige Wahrnehmungen von arabischen Christen und Muslimen im West-und Ostjordanland* (Erlangen: Erlanger Verlag für Mission und Ökumene, 1998).

[91] See Portillo, "The Arabic Life," p. 164.

tradition claims him for a monk of Mar Saba monastery in the Judean desert, but recent scholarly inquiry has cast some doubt on the historicity of this claim.[92] What seems to be settled is that Patriarch John V ordained John of Damascus a priest in Jerusalem not too long after the beginning of the patriarch's reign and that St. John spent his remaining years composing both theological tracts and religious poetry and hymnody in Greek to meet the needs of the local church of Jerusalem as well as the wider network of 'Melkites' in the caliphate who looked to Jerusalem and her monastic communities for guidance.

The years of St. John of Damascus' monastic career correspond both with the years of the culminating development of the definitive 'Melkite' Christological and canonical self-definition over against the 'Nestorian' and 'Jacobite' challenges, largely accomplished in John's own works, and the period of the burgeoning of the new Islamic sciences and the campaign of the Umayyad caliphs to claim the public domain for Islam. It is also the era in which the first Christian responses in Greek and Syriac to the religious challenge of Islam appeared, and to this enterprise St. John also made a major contribution as is well known.

It is striking how readily the topical profile of St. John of Damascus' works corresponds both sociologically and theologically with the church-defining concerns of the Christian communities in Syria/Palestine in the days of his Jerusalem ministry. In particular, the refutation of Mesallians, Monotheletes, Jacobites, Nestorians and Manichees, all active in his immediate milieu, pressingly concerned him. Nowhere else in the world of Chalcedonian Orthodoxy at the time was the press of these challenges, in the ensemble and in just this particular topical array, so acutely a

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[92] See Auzépy, "De la Palestine à Constantinople," pp. 183–218; Auzépy, "Les Sabaïtes et l'iconoclasme," in Patrich, *The Sabaite Heritage*, pp. 305–314, esp. p. 305, n. 4, where the author propses that given his close association with Patriarch John V, it is more likely that John of Damascus "était un Spoudaios, c'est-à-dire un moine de l'Anastasis." See also Andrew Louth, "St. John Damascene: Preacher and Poet," in Mary B. Cunningham & Pauline Allen (eds.), *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christian and Byzantine Homiletics* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), p. 249, where the author acknowledges the uncertainty about which monastery John inhabited.

problem. There seems to have been a special urgency on St. John's part, both definitively and summarily to present systematically coherent resolutions to these issues in a hostile environment, largely in terms borrowed from what he consistently represented as the teaching of the fathers.[93] Even his signature topic as far as many modern scholars are concerned, the theology of the holy icons, had a local as well as a broader, even Constantinopolitan, point of reference, as we shall see.

St. John of Damascus' response to the religious challenge of the Muslims was not limited to the few works in which he explicitly addressed Islam, such as Chapter 100 of the *De Haeresibus* and the *Disputation between a Saracen and a Christian*.[94] Rather, one must consider that the full range of the developing Islamic sciences in the first half of the eighth century presented an almost unprecedented, comprehensive challenge both to Christianity's principal articles of faith and to the Christian way of life. In response, the challenge called for a comprehensive, summary exposition of the truths of Christian faith, along with a compendium of definitions of the philosophical terms in which the Christian doctrines were expressed, and a catalog of the errors in refutation of which many of the doctrines were first articulated. John of Damascus' *Pēgē Gnoseos* answered this need for the 'Melkites' and Theodore Bar Kônî's *Scholion* served the same purpose for the 'Nestorians'. Among the 'Jacobites', the works of Jacob of Edessa (d. 708)[95] and George, Bishop of the Arabs, (d. 724)[96] met this challenge, together with the remarkable promotion of Aristotelian logic in this community, in translations, commentaries and lexicons,[97] geared principally to the precise

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[93] See Griffith, "'Melkites', 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies."

[94] See Le Coz, *Jean Damascène: Écrits sur l'islam*. See also Igor Pochoshajew, "Johannes von Damaskos: De Heresibus 100," *Islamochristiana* 30 (2004), pp. 65–75.

[95] See the references in n. 35 above.

[96] See the introductory study and bibliography in Kathleen E. McVey (ed. & trans.), *George, Bishop of the Arabs: A Homily on Blessed Mar Severus, Patriarch of Antioch* (CSCO, vols. 530 & 531; Louvain: Peeters, 1993).

[97] For an orientation to studies of this important phenomenon see Henri Hugonnard-Roche, *La logique d'Aristote du grec au syriaque: Études sur*

definition and deployment of the philosophical terms used in Christology, the issue which most poignantly both divided the Christians and aroused the obloquy of the Muslims. In the Islamic milieu, the hostile intellectual circumstances required the Christian controversialists of each denomination summarily to address not only the challenges of Islam but in virtually the same process also to provide responses to their own intra-Christian adversaries. In later times Muslim writers would focus their anti-Christian polemic on precisely these church-dividing differences in Christian thought and allegiance.[98]

VII

Throughout most of the seventh century and for the better part of the eighth century, the Orthodox monks of Syria/Palestine found themselves perennially in opposition to the religious and civil authorities in Byzantine Constantinople[99] who promoted doctrines and ecclesiastical policies which would finally be condemned as heretical in Ecumenical Councils in 681 (Monotheletism) and 787 (Iconoclasm) respectively, but which were left behind completely only with the 'Triumph of Orthodoxy' in the ninth century (843),[100] well into the classical period of Islamic culture, in which the

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la transmission des texts de l'Organon et leur interpretation philosophique (Textes et Traditions, 9; Paris: Vrin, 2004).

[98] For two prominent early Muslims' approaches to Christian denominationalism see David Thomas, *Anti-Christian Polemic in Early Islam: Abū ʿĪsā al-Warrāq's "Against the Trinity"* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 45; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); David Thomas, *Early Muslim Polemic against Christianity: Abū ʿĪsā al-Warrāq's 'Against the Incarnation'* (University of Cambridge Oriental Publications, 59; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Gabriel Said Reynolds, *A Muslim Theologian in the Sectarian Milieu: ʿAbd al-Jabbār and the Critique of Christian Origins* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[99] On the earlier phase of this estrangement see F. Thomas Noonan, *Political Thought in Greek Palestinian Hagiography (ca. 526-ca.630)* (Unpublished, Ph.D. dissertation; Chicago: University of Chicago, 1975). See also the remarks of John Moorhead, "The Monophysite Response to the Arab Invasions," *Byzantion* 51 (1981), pp. 579–581.

[100] See J.M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 62–68.

churches of the Orient were by then thoroughly immersed. St. John of Damascus vigorously combated both of these heresies which had arisen in the Chalcedonian community, but in the instance of his defense of the veneration of the holy icons he wrote in the context of opposition both from a significant number Christians in Syria/Palestine, who in the face of Jewish and Islamic polemic were becoming iconophobic and abandoning the practice of publicly venerating the cross and the icons,[101] as well as from reports of the imperial policy of iconoclasm promoted by the Byzantine emperor in Constantinople.

In light of this double frame of reference, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the impetus for St. John of Damascus' composition of his *Orations against the Calumniators of the Icons* was supplied by news reaching Jerusalem of the iconoclastic policies dramatically inaugurated in Constantinople by the emperor Leo III (717–741) in the year 726.[102] In Jerusalem and its environs, the pastoral problem of how to deal with iconophobic Christians in the Islamic milieu seems already to have arisen somewhat earlier in the century.[103] The arrival of the news of Constantinople's iconoclastic policies could only have exacerbated the already existing local problem. From this perspective, one might reasonably conclude that even St. John's *Orations against the Calumniators of the Icons*, like his other works, were written with an audience of 'Melkites' in Syria/Palestine primarily in mind. They seem to have found an audience in Byzantium only in the next century.[104] And even in Syria/Palestine among the 'Melkites', John's was perhaps only a minority voice on this issue in his

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[101] See the discussions in Robert Schick, *The Christian Communities of Palestine from Byzantine to Islamic Rule: A Historical and Archaeological Study* (Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 2; Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1995), esp. pp. 180–224; Susanna Ognibene, *Umm al-Rasas: La Chiesa di Santo Stefano ed il «Problema Iconofobico»* (Roma: «L'Erma» di Bretschneider, 2002), esp. pp. 95–147.

[102] The present writer attempted to make this case in an earlier publication; see Sidney H. Griffith, "'Melkites', 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies," esp. pp. 26–34.

[103] See Ognibene, *La Chiesa di Santo Stefano*, pp. 143–147.

[104] See Auzépy, "Les Sabaïtes et l'iconoclasme."

lifetime;[105] it was taken up again with vigor in the next generation by Theodore Abū Qurrah (c. 755 – c. 830) in his Arabic tract on the duty of Christians in the caliphate to make prostration to the cross and to the holy icons of Christ and his saints, in spite of opposition and obloquy from "anti-Christians, especially ones claiming to have in hand a scripture sent down from God."[106] In this manner the teaching of St. John of Damascus on the holy icons came to inform 'Melkite' Orthodoxy for generations to come, without any reference at all until the tenth century, especially in Arabic sources, to the teaching of Byzantium's seventh Ecumenical Council, Nicea II, in 787.[107]

It has been the thesis of the present communication that the interests of the emerging community of 'Melkite', Orthodox Christians in the Umayyad era in Syria/Palestine furnish the most immediate frame of reference for appreciating the significance of the works of St. John of Damascus in his lifetime. The fact that in later times his works achieved a defining status in the Greek Orthodox Church of Byzantium should not prevent modern scholars from looking beyond that nearer horizon to our own times for the more distant one within which St. John actually produced his works in his own Islamic homeland in the first half of the eighth century. Anachronistically to consider John and his works only from the perspective of the later synthesis of Orthodox theology, of which his works eventually came to form an important

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[105] See Auzépy, "De la Palestine à Constantinople."

[106] Sidney H. Griffith (trans.), *A Treatise on the Veneration of the Holy Icons Written in Arabic by Theodore Abū Qurrah, Bishop of Harrān (c. 755 – c. 830 A.D.)* (Early Christian Texts in Translation, 1; Louvain: Peeters, 1997), p. 29.

[107] It was the practice among the 'Melkites' for a long time to speak of the orthodoxy of the 'six councils'. See J. B. Darblade, *La collection canonique arabe des Melkites (XIIIe-XVIIe siècles* (S. Congregazione per la Chiesa Orientale, Codificazione Canonica Orientale, Fonti, serie II, Fascicolo XIII; Harissa: Imprimerie Grecque Melchite de Saint Paul, 1946), pp. 154–155. The earliest reference to Nicea II in an Arabic source which the present writer has found is in a 'Melkite' creed of the tenth century. See Sidney H. Griffith, "Theology and the Arab Christian: The Case of the 'Melkite' Creed," in David Thomas (ed.), *A Faithful Presence: Essays for Kenneth Cragg* (London: Melisende, 2003), pp. 184–200.

part, is to obscure their crucial role in providing the basic principles for the self-definition of 'Melkite' Orthodoxy in his own immediate environment, in the world of Islam. When we read his works with a heightened understanding of their own immediate context, they present us in the ensemble with a theological and ecclesial profile in which we can recognize the emerging contours of the Orthodox Church in Syria in the Umayyad era. In later years, in Abbasid times (750–1258), Arabic-speaking, 'Melkite' theologians in the caliphate continued St. John of Damascus' theological work, developing it to respond more pointedly to the challenges of Muslims.[108] But that is a story for another venue.

[108] See the early history of this development presented in Sidney H. Griffith, "The View of Islam from the Monasteries of Palestine in the Early ʿAbbasid Period: Theodore Abū Qurrah and the *Summa Theologiae Arabica*," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 7 (1996), pp. 9–28; S.H. Griffith, "Arab Christian Culture in the Early Abbasid Period," *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies* 1 (1999), pp. 23–44.

PUBLICATIONS AND BOOK REVIEWS

J. F. Coakley, *The Typography of Syriac: A Historical Catalogue of Printing Types, 1537–1958* (New Castle, DE, and London: Oak Knoll Press and the British Library, 2006). Pp. xxxiv + 272. ISBN: 1-58456-192-0

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Typography, in general, is the art of printing, but it may refer more specifically to the craft of typeface design, as it does here. Many catalogs and histories of the typography of the Latin script have been written, but much rarer are studies of non-Western typefaces and typography. J.F. Coakley's *The Typography of Syriac: A Historical Catalogue of Printing Types, 1537–1958,* is exceptional both for its subject matter and its exhaustive character. It is similar to John H. Bowman's *Greek Printing Types in Britain* (1998), but where Bowman covers just a century and a half of Greek typography[1] in one region, Coakley treats the entirety of Syriac metal type design and usage.

Coakley is uniquely suited to author this work, due both to his affiliation with the Houghton Library in Harvard, with its superb manuscript and typographic collection, and as the typographer for his own Jericho Press, which publishes examples, quite unique in our day, of hand-set Syriac type. But it is his exhaustive research and passion for the subject that has produced such a superlative work.

The book opens with two prefaces, one for students or typography and the other for scholars of Syriac. Addressing syriacists, Coakley first expresses a sentiment I expect many have had. "One of the reasons I was first attracted to Syriac studies, though I was perhaps hardly aware of it then, was aesthetic. The Syriac book-hand is one of the most graceful scripts that has ever been invented, and simply to be able to read and write it oneself was thrilling." While there has been almost nothing published by syriacists on this topic before now, he continues, "Yet I am sure

[1] A subject on which Coakley has also published. See J.F. Coakley, "The Oxford University Press and Robert Proctor's Greek Types," *Matrix* 13 (1993): 179–89.

that most of us do have feelings, conscious or sub-conscious, about the script on the page we are looking at, and I hope the readers of the present book will find it satisfying to inform those feelings with some historical information and criticism" (xiii).

An introduction provides a very brief history of Syriac printing (1–4),[2] followed by a thorough survey of the Syriac script in its various forms (4–16) and a discussion of the mechanics of designing and producing Syriac metal type (17–24). The author then introduces the scheme of his type catalog (25–26), which groups together all letterpress Syriac typefaces according to script (serto [W], estrangelo [S] and East Syriac [E]) and assigns each an alphanumeric designation based on script-type and chronological order. Thus the familiar Drugulin serto used in Nöldeke's grammar is designated W61, the estrangelo used in Overbeck's *Opera selecta* is S14, etc. This referencing system is convenient and also a practical necessity, given the numerous internal references. Following the letterpress type catalog is a history of Syriac mechanical typesetting, i.e., Linotype and Monotype (251–65), and concluding the book is an appendix of "Evidence for types not shown" (266–67) and a general index (268–72).

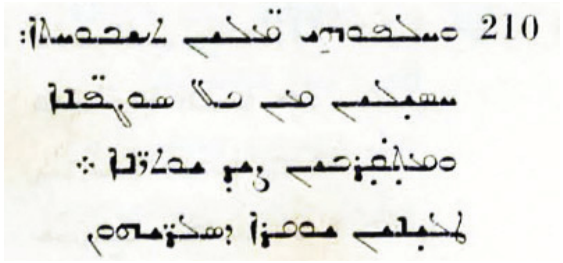
The heart of the work, then, is an exhaustive catalog of all known letterpress Syriac typefaces (27–250). Each entry his headed by an alphanumeric reference, as just described, the name of the type designer and/or foundry, and the date when the type was struck or when the first example is attested in print. A sample of each typeface and any derivative fonts is reproduced alongside its history and a description of notable facts and features. The author apologizes for presenting his data in prose, rather than in the technical and tabular format of most catalogs (25n82), but Coakley has produced hereby a highly readable narrative work rather than simply a reference tool.

As Coakley says, this books has value for Syriac scholars, apart from any inherent interest they may have in typography, by

[2] A fuller history the author has published elsewhere: J.F. Coakley, "Printing in Syriac, 1539–1985," in Eva-Maria Hanebutt-Benz, Dagmar Glaß and Geoffrey Roper, eds., *Sprachen des Nahen Ostens und die Drukrevolution: eine interkulturelle Begegnung / Middle Eastern Languages and the Print Revolution: A Cross-cultural Encounter* (Westhofen: Skulima, 2002), 93–115.

informing their aesthetic sense of Syriac typefaces "with some historical information and criticism" (xiii). In this digital age, when Syriac scholars not only can but at times *must* be typographers of their own work, having some knowledge of "good" or "bad" typeface design, and a historical sense of Syriac type usage, is also desirable. In this regard I found interesting, for example, the history of "gothic" serto scripts.

Unlike standard Greek and (Roman) Latin typefaces, Syriac typefaces were from the beginning modeled on Syriac handwriting. It is unusual for Syriac type to be highly stylized in the way Greek and Latin typefaces may be. A striking exception is the serto type produced by Johannes Richter in 1611, a monolinear and eccentric design which strongly departs from handwritten Syriac. The design influenced a large number of subsequent, predominantly German typefaces which Coakley terms "gothic" (49).[3]



Example of "gothic" serto (W50)
from Pius Zingerle's *Monumenta syriaca* (1869).]

Due to its influence, Richter's typeface has the distinction of marking "the most important step in the degradation of Syriac type-face design in Northern Europe down to the nineteenth century" (49). Peter de Lagarde was even more pointed: „Kein Syrer hat jemals so geschrieben... der verrückteste Syrer in seinen

[3] Gothic type is a class of Latin typefaces which are monolinear, sans serif, and somewhat geometric. Coakley explains alternatively, "'Gothic' suggests what is both North European and what is dark and grotesque" (49n65). Gothic types are sometimes also called "grotesques," reportedly because, when first introduced by 19th-century advertisers, the public was shocked at their spare and non-traditional character.

verrücktesten Stunden hat es nicht gethan."[4] While many texts were printed in this typeface up to the twentieth century, it has rightly fallen almost entirely out of use.

Coakley's book is well edited and nicely produced, typeset by the author himself and demonstrating his practical knowledge of the craft. One minor desideratum would be to have the typeface references (W61, S14, etc.) included in the header of the relevant pages, perhaps in square brackets at the inside margin, to facilitate the constant cross-referencing the reader will certainly do. Otherwise, I only find myself wishing the author could have included data he necessarily omits (26), namely, a more full listing of the printers and publications which employed a particular typeface. Coakley includes many such references, and I find this information interesting and valuable. To do this comprehensively would fall outside the scope of a type catalog, certainly, but this catalog thankfully provides future researchers a solid point of departure from which to accomplish that task.

The author rightly titles his work a "Historical Catalogue," and this is certainly a historical work of the first order. While more purely technical data might be tabulated at some future day, or some particular item expanded upon, I cannot imagine this work as a whole being superseded. Such a definitive work requires exceptional labor. The author remarks, "Both of my daughters have been born and have grown up since this project was begun" (xv). The author's long and careful labors are abundantly evident and have resulted in a benchmark work, deserving of our thanks and congratulations.

[4] „Die neuen syrischen Typen des Hauses Drugulin," *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften und der Georg-August-Universität zu Göttingen,* 1888, no. 14, 377. Cited by Coakley, 49n66.

Marthe Mahieu-De Praetere, *Kurisumala—Francis Mahieu Acharya: a Pioneer of Christian Monasticiam in India* (trans.Van Winkle, Susan) Pp. xv + 394, Paperback; a) Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 2007, ISBN 978-0-87907-614-6, $79.95; b) Asian Trading Corporation, Bangalore/ Sopanam, Kottayam, India, 2008, ISBN 81-7086-470-4, IR 200.

BERNARD KILROY, HARTLEY WINTNEY, HOOK, HAMPSHIRE, UK

The name of Francis Mahieu Acharya (1912–2002) is not new to *Hugoye*; his work has been praised by both the Director of SEERI (St Ephrem Ecumenical Research Institute, S India)[1] and Professor Sebastian Brock[2] who also noted this biography published in its original French in 2001 (without ISBN). However, the English translation now opens up its availability, especially because the Indian edition is at an Indian price.

Abbot Francis's main significance is to have extended the use of Syriac liturgical spirituality in his still living monastery of Kurisumala (S India), including with the first English translation[3] of the West Syrian *Penqitho* published by the Dominican Press in Mosul, Iraq 1886–96 as well as a later translation and commentary of the *The Ritual of the Clothing of Monks in the Antiochean Tradition.*[4]

Although the biography does not tell us more about the texts, if read selectively it is useful in showing how they came to be created and used in their present liturgical context, which appears to be exceptional.

Francis and his English Benedictine monk collaborator Fr Bede Griffiths began in 1956 by chanting the Syriac *Shhimo* Common Prayer (subsequently translated into prose by Bede and

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[1] Thekkeparambil, Jacob *Hugoye* Vol. 5 No. 2, July 2002.

[2] Para. 31, 'The Contribution of Departed Syriacists', 1997–2006, *Hugoye* Vol. 10 No. 1, January 2007.

[3] *Prayer with the Harp of the Spirit: The prayer of the Asian Churches,* Kurisumala Ashram, Vagamon, Kerala 685 503 (Nil ISBN); Vol I [*Shhimo*—Weekday Common Prayer] (1980) 3rd Rev 1983; Vol II [Annunication to Ephipany] (1982) 2nd Rev 1999; Vol III [Fast to Resurrection] (1985) tbp 2008; Vol IV [season of Resurrection to Exaltation of the Cross] 1986. e-mail <kurisumala@yahoo.com>.

[4] Trans. from *Book of Priestly Rites* (*Ktobo d-takse kumroye*) Sharfeh, Lebabon, 1952: series Moran Etho 13 (SEERI, Kottayam, 1999).

later by Francis into rhythmic chant) but found the 'Pampakuda' (Kerala) edition of the *Penqitho* for Sundays and feast days too abbreviated. In 1961, after unproductive searches in Kerala, he set off on an unyielding hunt in Beirut, Aleppo, Damascus and Jerusalem, nowhere it seems finding the full Syriac *Penqitho* in or out of use. He finally located it under a layer of dust in a store-room back in Mosul, Iraq where the new Syrian Catholic Bishop Benni (now Archbishop) was happy to sell him the entire remainder stock of seven sets of seven folio volumes, because (he said) there was no longer any call for it. Neither, nor the biographer either, apparently knew of the parallel interest by Chorepiscopo (later Bishop) Boutros Gemayel of the Maronite Church who published a selective *Penqitho* translation in French in Beirut during (I surmise) the 1970's, which was translated into English and published in USA during the 1980's.[5]

The Kurisumala English translation is because the Kerala monks, whose mother tongue is Malayalam, use English as a second language because it is the *lingua franca* of India; learning Syriac proved a real obstacle. Beyond the Syriac text the value has been its spirituality: a) being language of the heart; b) having a breviary not based so exclusively on the Judaic Psalms of the Old Covenant (as in the West) but on hymns and prayers which celebrate the New; c) being more integrated within the 'Economy of Salvation'; d) which in turn is reinforced by the dramatic unfolding of the Syrian Orthodox (or Syro-Malankara in the case of Kurisumala) liturgical calendar.

The systemic inter-connectedness may not emerge through the biography, partly because of Francis' involvement with Hindu-Christian theology and partly because Francis' pivotal but unpublished *Lectionary,* which contains the adapted calendar, is not mentioned, though the unpublished Menology with its many Eastern saints is. However, there is ample compensation in the description of the extraordinary love affair which Francis had with

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[5] Gemayel, Boutros (Chor-Bishop) *Prayer of the Faithful According to the Maronite Liturgical Year*, St. Maron Publications, Brooklyn NY, Vol I 1982, Vol II 1983, Vol III 1985, trans. with adaptation from *Les Prières des Croyants selon l'Année Liturgique Maronite,* Beirut, nd—collated from texts at Bkerke and 'various ancient monasteries'.

the Eastern Fathers, especially the Syrians, from his first years as a novice Trappist monk in his native Belgium.

The most significant feature of the spirituality of Francis was the steady revelation of an Asian Christ, which displaced for him the classical western versions of the Greco-Roman tradition in which he was brought up. Even though his Asian Christ was an amalgam of Middle East and Indian spirituality, the significance lies in the vibrant originality of his monastic foundation through the use of the Syrian transplant.

Unfortunately the biography does not speculate why the influence of Kurisumala has been limited. It has not been imitated elsewhere and the liturgical office is not used by any other Community (so far as I know) although Francis understandably hoped it would become an adaptable model for the Asian Churches. Although many seminarians and Sisters are sent to Kurisumala for an 'ashram experience' retreat, spontaneous engagement is probably small, including among lay people. For reasons which deserve to be explored, the spirituality of Kurisumala has not enjoyed a fraction of the local appeal of charismatic retreat centres or the cult of Blessed Alphonsa or indeed Pentecostalism.

There are other features which are mentioned only in passing and deserve the future interest of researchers, in particular his translation and use of the *Odes of Solomon* as a devotional work. Another is an unpublished manual for monk novices on monasticism as a universal phenomenon, from its cradle in ancient India and through its apparently spontaneous apparition in Palestine, in parallel to Egyptian monasticism, and subsequent flowering in Europe.

Some scholars may object to the *Penqitho* translation because a) it is of two major Hours only (*Ramsho* and *Lilyo*); b) it inserts some foreign feast days with new text; c) a few psalms and prayers are trimmed; d) for the sake of rhythm it may depart from the literal Syriac. All true. In addition, Volume I, the *Shhimo*, incorporates some Indian scriptures. Francis (and others) would answer that there is no such thing as an authoritative text because in the West Syrian tradition each monastery varied and adapted; what matters is the core of living and authentic spirituality.

Sebastian P. Brock & George A. Kiraz, *Ephrem the Syrian Select Poems Vocalized Syriac text with English translation, introduction, and notes*. Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University 2006 xvi + 279 pp. $39.95. ISBN-13: 978-0-934893-65-7, ISBN-10: 0-934893-65-9.

PAUL S. RUSSELL, ST. JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA ANGLICAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, BERKELEY

Students and teachers of Greek and Latin have long had a wide array of tools to assist them in learning the languages and literatures of their area of study. Original language texts with notes, vocabularies and commentary abound and are pitched at every level of expertise from the beginner to the professional scholar. Students of Biblical Hebrew and New Testament Greek have many helps in their tasks, as well, in the form of vocabularies and readers, though their field still is more likely to expect its students to be involved in professional training and so does not offer the same array of help on varied levels. How far from this has been the plight of the student of Syriac!

In response to this gap in the materials for the study of Syriac, Sebastian Brock and George Kiraz have published a volume that offers students of Syriac language and literature (and their teachers) an entry into the study of the poetry of St. Ephrem the Syrian as well as a doorway into the whole exciting field of Syriac Studies.

The volume contains a brief introduction offering an overview of St. Ephrem's life and work, the transmission of his texts and the meters in which they are composed. Then follow 20 texts, facing an English translation, drawn from 11 of the collections in which the works come down to us. The texts are ordered "according to the outline of Ephrem's concept of salvation history", which allows the volume to teach its readers another important fact about Ephrem: that his many and varied works were all pieces in a delicately drawn picture of reality that is not always in step with our own. Cautious instructors will be glad that this choice of a theological ordering will enable them to avoid long and confusing discussions of different modern schemes of dating Ephrem's works and students will benefit by the push to think of Ephrem's words as he would have done. Appendices that contain a listing of the main editions and English translations of Ephrem's works, an index of the *Qale* according to which the poems are composed and an index of

Scripture citations in the texts add greatly to the usefulness of the volume for the private owner.

Each of the 20 texts is prefaced by an introduction that helps to situate it in Ephrem's over-all pattern of thought, discusses its particular meter and offers information on where it survives in manuscript collections. Scriptural citations and allusions are noted in the margin of the translation page and occasional footnotes discuss obscure points and situate the reader in Ephrem's large corpus by drawing connections that only very wide knowledge of Ephrem's work allows. An added voice comes from Andrew Palmer, who has offered a number of contributions to the notes that are marked with his initials.

Many students of Semitic languages who have also worked in Latin and Greek find it difficult to appreciate the reluctance of Semitic scholars to publish critical texts. The long custom of reading the margins and the apparatus at the foot of the page along with the base text seems one that could well be dispensed with. This volume takes a step in that direction by moving the authors' suggested readings into the main text. This makes the experience of struggling through the text much more encouraging for the student. The words he labors to read actually make sense and can be construed successfully. Every beginning student in Semitics knows the bitter moment of realization that one has forgotten to replace a corrupted reading with one drawn from a better text and hidden in the apparatus, out of sight and out of mind. That may become less frequent if this volume's example is more widely followed.

What does this volume offer an instructor in search of a text for a class in Syriac or a student looking for something to read to polish his Syriac skills? The Syriac text is printed in a beautiful, cleanly designed *serto* script that has been fully vocalized. The lines are well laid out on the pages with ample space between them, an encouragement to reading aloud or study. These practical details make using this volume an exercise in language study for the student rather than a drudgery of deciphering smeared and cramped lettering. The translation tracks with the Syriac line by line, so each pair of pages can be viewed on its own. The notes, which are not found on every page, offer a variety of kinds of help. Some seem designed to aid in teaching critical reading. Note 5 on page 227, attached to stanza 2 of the first of the *Carmina Nisibena*, is

an excellent example. The translation offered on the page above is "the deadly flood". The note offers five other possibilities, including two different emendations. An energetic instructor could use this note to devote a good portion of a class meeting to approaches to analyzing the text one sees on the page and how to draw meaning from an idiom very different from modern English.

The primary task of those teaching Syriac studies (as opposed to those pursuing research in the field) is always to draw more students into the area by showing them how fascinating and rewarding it can be. Drs. Brock and Kiraz offer support to that endeavor in more than one way. This volume allows for an engagement with the original text of a great early Syrian theologian and poet. It helps the reader gain a sense of Ephrem's theological vision of the rise of sin and working out of salvation in the world. It demonstrates Ephrem's use of Scripture in his writing. An interested reader, innocent of Syriac, who read the English pages of the book from beginning to end would learn a great deal of theology, some history and gain a sense of a new voice from the Christian past. I think that groups of interested lay Christians could make very successful use of this collection as a selection for their Bible Study or book groups. Individual hymns could certainly be drawn into discussions based outside Syriac Studies. I think this book should be on the shelf of every student of Syriac, but also in parish libraries, as well as college and university collections.

I cannot close without noting, as someone who has been involved in both proof-reading and printing books, that this is an astonishingly elegant and attractive book. I discovered no misprints at all in the course of reading it with quite close attention. Only experience can reveal the amount of effort required to produce such a fine result. I hope that this will be the first of many similar volumes to issue from the Brigham Young University Press.

Wilhelm Baum and Dietmar W. Winkler. *The Church of the East: A Concise History*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, xii + 204 pp; hardcover. $130.

JOEL WALKER, UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, SEATTLE

How does one write a "concise" account of a Church, whose history spans three continents and seventeen centuries? In this learned little survey, Austrian scholars Wilhelm Baum and Dietmar Winkler make a valiant effort to provide an introductory overview to the entire history of the Church of the East. The book is an unrevised English translation of its German original published in 2000.[1] As such, it fills a conspicuous hole in the English-language historiography, which has not seen a monograph-length survey of the Church of the East since 1929.[2] The authors composed "with a non-specialist audience in mind"—hence, the absence of footnotes and diacritical marks in transliteration. The results are mixed, though the book offers much of interest for advanced students and serious general readers.

After a sensible introduction to the thorny issue of how to refer to the Church of the East—also known as the Nestorian, the East Syriac, or the Assyrian Church—chapter one explores the origins of Christianity in Iraq and the institutional development of Christianity in the Sasanian Empire (224–642). Winkler (sole author of this section) is perceptive on the development of the East-Syrian patriarchate and theology. The chapter concludes with his spirited defense of the orthodoxy of the East-Syrian creed, which was

[1] Wilhelm Baum and Dietmar Winkler, *Die Apostolische Kirche des Ostens: Geschichte der sogenannten Nestorianer* (Klagenfurt, Austria: Verlag Kitab, 2000). Winkler is credited with authorship of chapters 1 (on the origins of the Church of the East) and 5 (its modern history), while Baum composed the central three chapters on the Church's history under Islamic rule.

[2] W. A. Wigram, *The Assyrians and their Neighbours* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1929; reprint: Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2002). The Church of the East does, however, receive extensive coverage in general surveys of Christianity in pre-modern Asia. See esp. Ian Gillman and Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

presented to the Sasanian court in 612 and remains valid for the "entire" Church of the East today.

Chapters two and three survey the Church of the East's history under Arab and then Mongol rule, emphasizing its international and multi-ethnic character extending across large stretches of Asia. Baum briefly describes the patriarchate of Ishoyabh III (580–658) and the East-Syrian monastic movement, which led to the foundation of more than one hundred forty monasteries whose locations have been determined in Mesopotamia, western Iran, and the Persian Gulf. Baum also highlights the well-documented role of East-Syrian doctors and philosophers in the intellectual accomplishments of the Abbasid translation movement. But his chief interest—and arguably the most important contribution of this book—lies in the story of the Church of East's vigorous expansion into Central Asia, China, and southern India. Baum devotes particular attention to the conditions that facilitated the translation of Syriac Christian texts into Sogdian, Uighur, and Chinese. In doing so, he offers valuable context for understanding the famous bilingual Chinese and Syriac stele erected at Xi'an in northern China in 781 and dedicated to a priest from Balkh (Afghanistan). A Buddhist document of the same decade describes, for instance, how an Indian scholar translated texts from Uighur with the help of a "Persian" Christian monk named King-tsing (Adam), who was already renowned for his translations into Chinese.

Baum's account juxtaposes archaeological evidence from across Asia, introducing documents preserved in a wide array of languages and formats. A page from the ninth or tenth-century Sogdian lectionary found at Bulayiq, north of the Turfan oasis in northwestern China, belongs to the detritus of the trilingual monastic library excavated there by the German Theodor Bartus in 1904. Hundreds of Syriac fragments from the same excavation still await publication more than a century later. Baum occasionally taps into documentary sources in non-Christian languages. In a series of copper plates inscribed in Tamil, a regional king of ninth-century south India guarantees the privileges of the Christian merchants of Kerala. But the relationship between these documents and the subsequent development of Malayalam-speaking Christianity in the same region remains frustratingly obscure. The contours of the Church become a bit clearer in the Mongol period, where Baum's narrative leads the reader through whole clusters of new literary

and documentary sources in Syriac, Armenian, Latin, Persian, and Chinese. The wealth of information crammed into these chapters can be disorienting, but it also serves to underscore the need for new in-depth studies of particular segments in the pre-modern religious history of Asia.

The book's fourth chapter investigates the growing turmoil of East-Syrian communities under Ottoman rule, as papal emissaries negotiated with the two (and often three) patriarchates of the Church of the East based in northern Mesopotamia. The tangled ecclesiastical history of this period unfolds against the backdrop of the competing patriarchal sees at Diyarbakir, the monastery of Rabban Hormizd near Nineveh, and in the highlands of Kochanes on the upper reaches of the Great Zab River. The chapter has much less to say about the social and cultural history of the Church under Ottoman rule. The German original arrived too late to take advantage of David Wilmshurst's massive catalogue of East-Syrian colophons, the majority of them dating to the Ottoman period.[3] The recent work of Heleen Murre-van den Berg brilliantly illustrates how such colophons can be used to write the social history of this period.[4] One hopes that future surveys will also be able to integrate the evidence of later Aramaic literature by writers such as the poet Israel of Alqos (†1632).

The latter half of chapter four and chapter five survey the multi-faceted relations between the Christians of northern Mesopotamia and various scholars, diplomats, and missionaries from Europe, Russia, and America. Baum's account offers a refreshingly European perspective on these contacts. His list of characters includes: Anna Hafner Forneris, an Austrian who traveled from Tbilisi to Tabriz in 1830 and left a scandalized description of a drunken Eucharist among the "mountain Nestorians;" the great Orientalist Edward Sachau, who transported more than 250 Syriac manuscripts back to Berlin in 1880; and the popular novelist Karl May (d. 1912), who provided generations of German readers with an image of the region's Christians as a noble

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[3] David Wilmshurst, *The Ecclesiastical Organization of the Church of the East, 1318–1913*. CSCO 582; Subsidia 104 (Louvain: Peeters, 2004).

[4] Heleen Murre-van den Berg, "Generous Women in the Church of the East between 1550 and 1850." *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* vol. 7, no. 1 (January, 2004): 1–57.

but endangered people. In *Durch das wilde Kurdistan*, published in 1892, May describes the region's Christians as "the remnants of the once so powerful Assyrian people, [who] see the sword of the Turks and the dagger of the Kurds hanging forever over them and have endured in more recent times atrocities which would make your hair stand on end" (131). Winkler's account of the fate of those "Nestorians" before, during, and in the wake of the First World War offers a sobering narrative of persecution, combat, flight, starvation, and broken diplomatic promises.[5] The last portion of chapter five traces the history of the Church of the East to the end of the twentieth century, sketching the formation of the North American and European Diaspora and the growth of ecumenical dialogue. Chapter six gives a very brief overview of the Church of the East's literature preserved in Syriac and other languages.

In sum, Baum and Winkler's survey constitutes a welcome addition to the growing literature on Christianity in pre-modern Asia. The text is probably too dense with names and details to be effective for the "non-specialist" readers named as its target audience. It is also prohibitively expensive. But research libraries should certainly include the title on their shelves. Sixteen illustrations and two maps complement and enhance the text. The sixteen-page bibliography, organized by chapter, provides a valuable guide to further reading and is particularly strong on German-language scholarship that is often overlooked in North American publications. Few bibliographies are without blemishes, but the book's hefty price tag should have paid for better copy-editing.[6]

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[5] On these same themes, see now John Joseph's *The Modern Assyrians of the Middle East: Encounters with Western Christian missions, archaeologists, and colonial powers* (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2000), 106–73.

[6] I list a few examples. The bibliographic citation for Samuel Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia: Volume I: Beginnings to 1500* (Mary Knoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1998) has mistakes in author's name, the book's title, and its publication information. E.A.W. Budge translated rather than edited *The Monks of Kublai Khan* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1928), although the publication includes a facsimile of the Syriac manuscript. Jean-Maurice Fiey attacked the credibility of the *Chronique d'Arbèles*, and the volume and pagination for *The Chronicle of Séert* and several other primary texts are incomplete. These and other mistakes could be easily corrected if there is a second edition.

Andrzej Uciecha, *Ascetyczna nauka w "Mowach" Afrahata* [= Ascetic teaching in Aphrahat's "Expositions"], (Studia i Materialy Wydzialu Teologicznego Uniwesytetu Slaskiego w Katowicach, Nr 3), Katowice: Ksiegarnia Sw. Jacka, 2002, 192 pp.

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The present book is a doctoral dissertation written and defended at the Theological Faculty of the Academy of Catholic Theology (now: Catholic University of Stefan Wyszynski) in Warsaw in 2001. The author is a Catholic priest who is now working at the Theological Faculty of the Silesian University at Katowice in Southern Poland. The book is written in Polish, which is to be regretted, as all the potential readers in Poland would be able to read English, German or French, while few such readers abroad are able to read Polish. There is however a *Summary* in English (pp. 186–192).

Aphrahat (ca. 270–ca. 345), called "The Persian Sage", is one of the earliest Syriac Church Fathers, which is perhaps the reason for his never-ceasing popularity among the Syriac scholars. His work "*Expositions*", or "*Demonstrations*" (Syr. *Taḥwəyāthā*), contains 23 homilies or treatises, of which the first 22 begin with the letters of the Syriac alphabet in order. U. renders the title in Polish with the word "*Mowy*"—'speeches', which seems too general. 'Homilie' or 'wyklady' might have been a better choice.

The "*Expositions*" make up one of the most famous Syriac compositions. They have been translated into German (twice: 1888 by Bert, 1991 by Bruns), Latin (1894–1907, Parisot), English (1869 Gwynn, 1971 Neusner, both partial) and French (1988–89 Pierre), an honour that few Syriac compositions share. The popularity of the "*Expositions*" is, however, nothing new, as already in Late Antiquity and Middle Ages they were translated (at least partially) into Armenian and Ethiopic (although in both languages they are attributed to Jacob of Nisibis), furthermore into Georgian (attr. to Hippolytus) and Arabic (attr. to Ephrem).

The work of Aphrahat bears witness to early Syriac theological thought at a time when it had still been little influenced by Western, i.e. Greek, theology (the Church of the East accepted Nicea as late as 410 A.D., at the synod of Catholicos Ishaq) and has been the object of lively discussion. In particular the character of

the "proto-monasticism", to which the so-called "covenanters" devoted themselves, has attracted several scholars since the discovery of Aphrahat's homilies in the middle of the 19th century. It is known that these were ascetics, but the exact kind of asceticism they were devoted to is uncertain. The term in question, "covenanters" (Syr. ***bənay qəyāmā*** and fem. ***bənāth qəyāmā***; U. neither uses *schwa*, nor does he mark spirantization of the *beghadhkephath* consonants), changed its meaning several times, so that that the meaning found in the text of the sixth century—'monks'—has hardly any bearing on its semantic value in Aphrahat's writings.

To render the term ***bənay qəyāmā*** U. uses the expression *synowie przymierza*—'the sons of the covenant'. This translation should be avoided in English as it is unnecessarily literal and in point of fact incomprehensible (notwithstanding the fact that it has been used by some scholars), just as the Syriac expression *bar* (sing. of ***bənay***) ***təlāthīn šənīn***, meaning 'a person thirty years old', would be incomprehensible if rendered verbatim: 'the son of thirty years'. It is, however, not easy to provide an adequate and meaningful Polish translation of the term in question: perhaps 'sprzymierzeniec' or 'sprzymierzony' would fit, despite some connotations which the Syriac term may lack.

In addition to an introduction and a conclusion U.'s book contains four chapters. In the introduction U. sketches the development of Aphrahat's studies, showing his acquaintance with the abundant literature on "the Persian sage". This literature is to a high degree coextensive with studies on the intricate problem of the charcter of the "covenanters", the topic which is dealt with in chapter 1, section 1. Here U. examines other terms which were used interchangeably with that of ***bənay qəyāmā***, an analysis which allows him to get a better grasp of the meaning of the term in question. These terms are ***īḥīdhāyā***—'single', ***qaddišā***—'celibate, continent', ***bəthūlā***—'virgin (masc.)'—all of them unequivocally pointing to celibacy—and ***bənay ʿē(d)ttā***—'the children of the church', which poses the problem of their place within the church and of their relation to the regular faithful.

The chapter as a whole is devoted to the historical context of Aphrahat's ascetic teaching, and since this context is not limited to the milieu of the Christian ***bənay qəyāmā***, also non-Orthodox (Markionites) and non-Christian (Manichaean, Gnostic, Jewish)

ascetic traditions are presented, similar phenomena occurring in these. Aphrahat himself, although conscious of close parallels between his Christian ascetic teaching and those of the "heretics", dismissed any such parallels using the argument of theological context: it is not ascetic practice in itself which leads to salvation, but the context of the faith: if your belief is "wrong" your ascetic practice will not help you (p. 53). Of interest is his polemic against the Jews to whom the ideal of celibacy was contradictory to God's command in *Genesis* 9,18. Aphrahat first rejected the Jewish opposition, caused, according to him, by the lasciviousness (***paḥzūthā***) and licensiousness (***ṣaḥnūthā***) of the Jews (*Exp.* 18,1), but went on to explain that God's intention was not a large quantity of progeny, but its quality, while the ideal of sexual abstinence was not unknown to many *Old Testament* figures (pp. 58–59).

In chapter 2, entitled "Anthropological elements in the ascetic teaching of Aphrahat", U. analyses a number of notions such as 'body' (***paghrā, besrā***), 'soul' (***naphšā***), 'heart' (***lebbā***) and 'spirit' (***rūḥā***), and their role for ascetics. Also women are treated here: they are an impediment in the ascetics' path to achieving perfection or, in other words, the tool of the Devil. This anti-feminist attitude (*Exp.* 6,3 is a veritable hymn of misogyny!) is only weakly mitigated by his providing some positive female examples from the *Old Testament* (p. 97), which U., correctly, does not highlight.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the theological dimension of asceticism in the eyes of Aphrahat. Here the most important factors are Christological. For an ascetic Christ provides a model as the conqueror of Satan and death, as a model of humanity and as an ***īḥīdhāyā***, although the term as applied to Christ does not mean 'solitary' but '*unigenitus*'. Two subsequent sections in the same chapter take up pneumatological and eschatological aspects.

In chaper 4 U. resumes the topic of the "covenanters", this time taking up their ascetic ideals. He analyses notions such as ***ʾathlēṭā***—which in addition to the original meaning of 'a champion' acquires in the context discussed the meaning of 'a spiritual athlete', i.e. 'an ascetic', ***ʾakhsenyā***—i.e. keeping distance from the world (also known as ***nukhrāyūthā***—'being a stranger' scil. to the world), a distance involving liberation from things material. Other ideals of the "covenanters" are the *vita angelica*, i.e. continuous vigilance (scil. against the deceits of Satan), sexual

purity; and finally an *imitatio Christi*, in prayer, in separation from the world, and even in suffering.

All the assertions are supported by abundant text samples taken from the *Expositions*. These are provided in as many as three forms: the Syriac vocalised text, a transcription (in footnotes), and a Polish translation. The latter wherever I checked is good. What is a bit odd is the presence of transcription and its rules. Since the Syriac text is printed vocalised I see no point in providing a transliteration, for it is a conventional rendering of the *script*, not of a *pronunciation* that U. gives here. It is the more surprising that the convention he uses is difficult, at least for the present reviewer, to accept.

Transcription of *īhīdāya*, i.e. with short last *–a* (on p. 28 twice, p. 29 and 31) may be regarded as a typing error (multiplied by computer 'copy' function), but the use of the short *–e* (without *ʾālaph*) in plural ending of nouns is met with systematically. This is not a good transcription rule because Classical Syriac does not have short vowels in open syllables. On the other hand one finds on p. 47, footnote 110, ***nešbūq***, i.e. a long vowel, where one should have a short one (and in Classical Syriac *-o-*, not *-u-*). Traditionally in transcribing Semitic languages macrons are used as marks of the length of vowels, no matter what signs (*matres lectionis* or vowels) are used in the original script, whereas in order to note the presence of *matres lectionis* the circumflex signs are employed.

To what further unfortunate consequences U.'s transliteration system leads can also be seen in (for example) footnote 109, where we find *marqyun*, which renders the name 'Markion': a simple –o- would suffice. Even more strange is ***walentināws*** in the same footnote. U. follows the unfortunate vocalisation provided by Jean Parisot in his edition in *Patrologia Syriaca*. This was printed in the Serto writng, whose vocalisation is far from adequate where texts in early Classical Syriac are concerned. In the ending of Valentinos' name, Parisot printed *zəqāphā* over *-n-* and then *waw* (and *semkath*). He almost certainly pronounced *zəqāphā* as 'o', and thus this vowel sign only provided the pronunciation already indicated by *waw* as a *mater lectionis*, namely the vowel 'o', and not the consonant 'w'. (Incidentally, such vocalisation: *zəqāphā* and *waw*, would never be used in a real Syriac manuscript). It seems that Parisot used *zəqāphā* as other editors of Syriac texts would use a dot over *waw*, i.e. just to mark its being pronounced as 'o' (and not 'u'). Thus to

transliterate the ending in question as *-āws* is, to say the least, confusing.

Another example of this inadequate convention in which U. unfortunately follows Parisot can be found in *ᶜidtā* (p. 31, last two lines). This is a typical Western Syriac pronunciation, which does not apply in the case of a writer of the 4th century, who would have used the Classical Syriac pronunciation *ᶜē(d)ttā*. On the next page, first line, we find *ᶜidtā daʾlaha* instead of *d-(ʾ)allāhā*. It is to be regretted that U. has not marked the reduplication of the consonants, a feature so characteristic of Classical Syriac, as opposed to Late Western Classical Syriac, the so-called *Kthobonoyo*. But, again, Aphrahat lived in the fourth century, not in the epoch of, say, Bar'Ebroyo.

The last example of an unfortunate vocalisation, although one which has nothing to do with Classical vs. post-Classical Syriac problems, is met with on p. 28, l4: *wau* (the name of the sixth consonant in Syriac alphabet). Neither in Polish pronunciation nor in English (and even less so in French) makes such spelling any sense.

Some minor lapses in other areas than transcription can be found too, as for instance taking Manichaeans and Valentinians for "heretics" (p. 41), or attributing the authorship of some "*Chronicles*" (p. 24) to Isaac of Niniveh.

As to the scholarly literarature taken into account, although this is quite extensive, the author missed Robert Murray's *Symbols of Church and Kingdom*, Cambridge 1975, which deals *inter alia* with Aphrahat and which has already become a classic (2nd ed. publ. by Gorgias Press, Piscataway 2004). For works more directly relevant for U.'s topic perhaps the most conspicuous omission is the work of Shafiq AbouZayd, *Iḥidayutha: a study of the life of singleness in the Syrian Orient: from Ignatius of Antioch to Chalcedon 452 A.D.*, Oxford: ARAM Society for Syro-Mesopotamian Studies, 1993. AbouZayd devotes a whole chapter to "Aphrahat and the covenanters" (pp. 51–106), and some of his analyses are on precisely the notions dealt with by U. Another work of some importance for the theme of U.'s dissertation is Michael Breydy's, 'Les laïcs et les Bnay Qyomo dans l'ancienne tradition de l'Église Syrienne', *Kanon*, 3 (1977), pp. 51–75. When referring to K. Brockelmann's *Lexicon Syriacum* (in a footnote and in the bibliography) U. says "b.m.w." (Polish *sine loco*). This is strange, since both the original edition

(1928) and the reprint (1992), at least in my copy, provide the place of publication: Halis Saxonum (= Halle am Saale).

All the remarks above should not, however, be taken as strongly critical of the book under review. It has the merit of providing an in-depth study of the intricate topic of Aphrahat's asceting teaching. For Polish readers U.'s book will make useful reading on the topic, and it is in fact the first of its kind in Polish. The work is a sign that Syriac studies in Poland have gathered momentum.

CONFERENCE REPORTS

Mor Jacob of Edessa Symposium. Aleppo, Syria, June 9–12th, 2008

KHALID DINNO

A Symposium commemorating the 1300th anniversary of the passing away of Mor Jacob of Edessa, the prominent Syrian polymath was held in Aleppo, Syria, June 9–12th, 2008.

The Participants who came from Austria, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States as well as Lebanon and Syria enjoyed the papers presented at the Symposium, included contributions from scholars and specialists in Syriac studies. These contributions, which included twelve papers that were delivered in five sessions, discussed the writings of the celebrated scholar Mor Jacob of Edessa as a chronicler, man of letters, grammarian, exegete, theologian, and as a major contributor to church liturgy and canon law.

The proceedings of the Symposium also included an opening session in which a welcoming address was delivered by Mor Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, Metropolitan of Aleppo and a keynote lecture by Sebastian Brock, as well as a final session.

The Symposium programme included visits to a number of archaeological locations of Syrian monasteries that for centuries were beacons of knowledge. These included the Monastery of Tell'Ada, where Mor Jacob lived the last ten years of his celebrated life, and where he died and was buried on June 5th, 708; the Monastery of St. Simeon the Stylite, a major fifth century cathedral that was named after St. Simeon the Stylite, the founder of the Stylite Monastic practice; the recently uncovered Monastery of Qenneshrin, which was founded by Yohanna Bar Aphtonia in 538 and which remained active up to the thirteenth century; and the town of Mabug, the birth place of Theodora, the Syrian Queen, and the seat of Mor Philoxenus of Mabug (+ 523).

In its final session, the Symposium resolved the following: The proceedings of the Symposium will be published in English by Gorgias Press and in Arabic by Mardin Publishing House. The full texts of the papers should be submitted to Gorgias Press by October 1st, 2008 and the Arabic translation of the texts to be

completed by March 1st, 2009. Encouraged by the immense success of the Symposium and in order to promote continuity in the study of the Syriac literary heritage, and in recognition of Aleppo's special place in this heritage, it was decided that a series of colloquia will be held, each under the title Aleppo Syriac Colloquium (A.S.C.), every two years. Each colloquium will be devoted to one theme or studying the works of one renowned historic Syriac Scholar. The subject of the colloquium will be defined one year in advance and expert scholars will be invited to participate. In this respect it was resolved to hold the next colloquium during the second half of June, 2010 in Aleppo and will address the work of the outstanding Syrian polymath Mor Gregorios Yohanna Abu al-Faraj Barhebraeus (+1286). The participants expressed their profound appreciation and thanks to the host of the Symposium, Mor Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim, for his initiative in organizing the Symposium, for his tireless efforts which ensured its complete success, and for the generous hospitality. As a token of this appreciation, the participants presented the metropolitan with a book authored by George Kiraz that included on its initial pages hand written notes that expressed their appreciation. The participants also expressed their deep thanks to the secretariat of the Symposium, to the monks and deacons and members of the different working groups of the Aleppo Syrian Orthodox Archdiocese, particularly the board of trustees of St George Church in Hay Al-Syrian, which accommodated the venue of the Symposium.

Scholars in Attendance:

~ Metropolitan Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim (Syria)
~ Sebastian Brock (UK)
~ Rev. Abdo Badwi (Lebanon)
~ Khalid Dinno (Canada)
~ Theresia Hainthaler (Germany)
~ Amir Harrak (Canada)
~ Andreas Juckel (Germany)
~ George Kiraz (USA)
~ Rev. Richard Price (UK)
~ Alison Salvesen (UK)
~ Aho Shemunkasho (Austria)
~ Rev. Columba Stewart (USA)
~ Jack Tannous (USA).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Research on the Church of the East in China and Central Asia
Salzburg, June 4–9, 2009

First Announcement

The 3rd International Conference "Research on the Church of the East in China and Central Asia" will be held at the Conference Center St. Virgil in Salzburg, Austria, June 4–9, 2009.

GENERAL PROGRAM:
June 4, 2009: Opening Session at 7.00pm
June 5–8, 2009: Conference sessions
June 9, 2009: Departure after breakfast
There will be an organised excursion and an evening concert.

PAPERS
We welcome papers from disciplines such as Philology, Archaeology, Sinology, Syrology, History, Theology/Religious Studies, Cultural and Asian Studies to explore and discuss various aspects of the Church of the East ("Nestorian" or East Syriac Christianity) in China and Central Asia. A small number of papers on East Syriac Christianity in India or other areas in Asia may also be accepted. Papers should be original, concise and to the point. They should take 20 minutes to deliver and be presented in English.

PROCEEDINGS
Proceedings will be published. Participants will be informed about the publication guidelines during the conference. Papers presented at the 1st conference (2003) were published in: Jingjiao: The Church of the East in China and Central Asia. Ed. by Roman Malek in connection with Peter Hofrichter. (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica, 2006) ISBN 3-8050-0534-2. The publication of the 2nd conference papers (2006) is forthcoming in fall 2008.

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