

UNPUBLISHED TEXTS FROM THE ARAB ORTHODOX
TRADITION (1): *ON THE ORIGIN OF THE TERM
“MELKITE” AND ON THE DESTRUCTION OF THE
MARYAMIYYA CATHEDRAL IN DAMASCUS*

ALEXANDER TREIGER¹

The purpose of the present article—the first installment in what I hope will become a series—is to make accessible two documents from the Orthodox Christian tradition in Arabic. The two texts share a number of features and therefore deserve to be studied together. They are both anonymous, written in a fairly colloquial style, and are extant in the same unicum seventeenth-century manuscript—Saint Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, B1220²—copied in 1642 by the famous Arab Orthodox writer Paul of Aleppo, the author of the celebrated account of the travels of his father, the Patriarch of Antioch Macarius III Ibn al-Za‘īm (r. 1647-1672), to the Romanian principalities, Ukraine, and Russia.³ In what follows, I shall introduce the two texts in the order in which they appear in the manuscript and offer an edition and an annotated English translation of each.

On the Origin of the Term “Melkite”

It is well known that the Arabic and Aramaic-speaking Orthodox Christians of the Middle East were traditionally called “Melkites” (Griffith

¹ Dalhousie University (Halifax, Nova Scotia).

² I gratefully acknowledge the kind help of Dr. Irina F. Popova, the director of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, in allowing me access to the Institute’s precious collections during my visits to Saint Petersburg over the years.

³ On Macarius III Ibn al-Za‘īm, his son Paul of Aleppo, and the Arab Orthodox tradition in general see the Anthology of Arab Orthodox literature from the “forgotten” millennium, 700-1700 AD (Noble & Treiger 2014) and the ground-breaking recent monograph—written in Russian—on the Arab Orthodox under the Ottomans (Panchenko 2012a).

2006).⁴ This term means “people of the emperor” or “royalists” (from the Aramaic *malkā* / Arabic *malik*, “king”), and the Arab Orthodox were so called in recognition of their adoption of the imperial Byzantine Christology, which endorsed Chalcedon. Some Arab Christian authors identify the “king” in question as the Roman emperor Marcian (r. 450-457), who convened the Council of Chalcedon (Elias of Nisibis 1886: 37-38; Hāshimī & Kindī 1885: 5 and French trans. Tartar 1985: 89).

Of course, it is the Melkites’ Christological opponents, the “Jacobites” and the “Nestorians,” who originally coined the term “Melkites” as a pejorative label for their rivals,⁵ yet soon enough the Arab Orthodox themselves adopted this sobriquet for self-designation (alongside other terms, such as “*Rūm*,” lit. Romans). “Melkites” is also the chief name by which Orthodox Christians of the Middle East are known to Muslim polemicists and historians from the ninth century on (Ḥamrūnī 2009).

Surprisingly, the text edited and translated below turns the tables on this commonly accepted history and argues that the Melkites are so called not on account of their affiliation with an earthly king (the Byzantine emperor), but because of their faithfulness to the Heavenly King, God Himself. As a result, it constructs an, it seems, largely fictitious historical narrative, which is nevertheless instructive in what it teaches us regarding the Arab Orthodox identity in the late Middle Ages (cf. Panchenko 2012c: 313, where a very similar explanation of the term “Melkite” is offered by the fifteenth-century Arab Orthodox theologian and bishop of Tripoli Anastasius ibn Mujallā).⁶

The introduction to the story relates that it was found among the books of a certain virtuous Christian man—initially a high-ranking official (perhaps in the Mamluk or Ottoman administration), and later a monk in Jerusalem—after his death. We do not know who wrote the story, though it is certainly possible that this unidentified Christian man was himself the author. The

⁴ The term is no longer used by the Arab Orthodox themselves, and is kept today only by the Arabic-speaking Eastern Catholics, united with Rome since 1724.

⁵ The earliest documented use of the term in Syriac appears to be the Nestorian Patriarch Timothy’s *Letter 48*, written in 799, where he speaks of “the patriarch of the Melkites” (*patriyarkā d-malkāyē*, Timothy 2012: I 92; Heimgarten’s German trans. II 77; English trans. and commentary Brock 1999: 239, 242, 246). In Arabic, the term appears frequently in the writings of Abū Rā’iṭa al-Tikrītī (early ninth century AD) (see index in Abū Rā’iṭa al-Tikrītī 1951: 171).

⁶ Interestingly enough, Anastasius’ treatise is preserved in the same Saint Petersburg manuscript (B1220) as the two texts discussed in the present study.

story was written before the seventeenth century (given that it is preserved in a seventeenth-century manuscript), but we do not know how old it is. It is reasonable to assume that it is of Palestinian Arab Orthodox Christian origin, both because it was found in Jerusalem and because it accords St. Sophronius—the Patriarch of Jerusalem at the time of the Muslim conquest of Palestine—a place of pride in the narrative.

Perhaps one of the most prominent features of the text is its polemic against rival religious groups—the heretics, the Muslims, and the Jews—combined with a curious emphasis on the meaning of confessional and religious designations (in addition to “Melkite,” the terms “Orthodox,” “Nazorean,”⁷ “Jewish,” and “Muslim” are also discussed and explained). In his polemic against the Muslims, the author argues that their strict emphasis on God’s oneness (*tawhīd*) in fact denigrates God in that it denies the doctrine of the Trinity.⁸ Against the Jews, he argues that, contrary to their own claims of following the Law (the Torah), they have in fact no law.⁹ This is because they belong neither to the Old Covenant (for the Old Covenant had prophecy, priesthood, and kingship, none of which is preserved in contemporary Judaism) nor to the New Covenant (which they never entered, as they rejected Christ).

The following edition, as well as the edition of the subsequent text, closely follows the manuscript, retaining the grammar and the spelling of the original though it frequently departs from Classical usage (e.g. ادّعوا المخالفين instead of ادّعى المخالفون and the rather frequent use of *dāl* instead of *dhāl* and the occasional use of *dhāl* instead of *dāl*, *thā’* instead of *tā’*, and *zā’* instead of *dād*, reflecting colloquial pronunciation). The *hamzas* are reproduced only when they appear in the manuscript. The diacritical dots on the *tā’ marbūṭa*, inconsistently represented in the manuscript, have always been restored. Occasional punctuation has been added for the convenience of modern readers. The few suggested emendations have been discussed in footnotes.

⁷ This is the Qur’anic term for Christians (Griffith 2011).

⁸ In his *De haeresibus*, St. John of Damascus famously calls the Muslims “mutilators of God” (*koptas ... tou Theou*), for the same reason (John of Damascus 1969-1988: IV 63-64; Sahas 1972: 81-84, 136-137).

⁹ The Jews are often called “lawless” (Gr. *anomoī*) in Orthodox Christian theological and liturgical texts.

Edition

(١٢٨ب) نكتب بعون الله سبحانه خبر (!) وجده بعض المؤمنين في كتب كانت عنده بيت المقدس، وهذه الكتب صارت اليه من رجل فاضل معروف بالفضل والمعرفة ومن فضايله انه كان كاتب وكانت منزلته شريفة فتركها وترهب وسكن القدس وهناك اجاز بقية حياته كما ينبغي. ويذكر عنه من شاهده انه كان على حالة مستقيمة من العقل والفضل وجودة الحظ وحسن العبارة حتى ان كثيرين من المسلمين كانوا يقصدونه ويفضلونه ويجلونونه لما كان يظهر لهم من عقله وفضله. ومن بعد وفاته صار لهذا الاخ جزوا (!) من كتبه فوجد فيهم (!) هذا الخبر، ولما راي انه خبر ظريف ما كاد يجد في كثير من الكتب قال: من الواجب ان اثبته واسطره ليكون معروف (!) عند من اختار ذلك من المؤمنين.

وهذا الخبر يذل^{١٠} على تمحل^{١١} المخالفين وتجريهم^{١٢} وانفرادهم برايهم الاعوج وخروجهم عن الحزب الارثوذكسي و<اتباعهم^{١٣} اصحاب البدع وذوي المقالات الشنعة المخالفة لكنيسة الله الجامعة المقدسة وذلك ان من الميلاق الذي جرى فيه الخلف وسو الراي كانت كنيسة الله في حزن وفي سجن شديد لما يروا من سو فعل المخالفين وخروجهم عن الواجب، نعم وما كانوا يكتفون بما قد دخلوا فيه مما يهلك انفسهم الا ويزدادوا في السجس والادية للمؤمنين. واذا قويت شوكتهم اضطهدوا وقتلوا كل من قويوا (!) عليه من المؤمنين وكانوا يعملوا اعمال قبيحة اكثرها قد ثبتت في ديوان الكنيسة ولم يكن في ذلك الوقت يعرف يعقوبي | (١٢٩أ) ولا نستوري معروف ولكن كل حزب منهم كان يدعي انه ارثوذكسي وهذا الاسم تفسيره المستقيم المجد وكان مخصوص بالملوك الافاضل المؤمنين وسائر الناس خرستياني اي مسيحيين.

ولم تزل الناس على هذا الى ان ظهرت دولة الاسلام واستولت مملكتهم على بلد سوريا وحصل لهم عسكر الى بيت المقدس مع رجل من اكابرهم يعرف بعمر ابن الخطاب وكان يؤيد البطريرك على بيت المقدس صفرونيوس فم المسيح وكان رجل فاضل قديس فلما قرب عسكر المسلمين من المدينة ولم يكن عسكر كبير ولا ذو قوة لكن الامر لله الذي يقدم من يشا ويعد من يشا وان البطريرك جمع وجوه الشعب وقال لهم: ما الذي ترون في امر هذا العدو، لانهم قد كانت قلوبهم تحبه لاجل قداسته وكان قد جرى على البلد قبل هذا بزمان يسير من الفرس المردة ما اثروه في البلد من القتل والسبي والخراب فقالت له الجماعة: الامر لله ولك ونحن في يد الله

¹⁰ Classical Arabic (CA): يدل.

¹¹ My emendation. MS: تمحل.

¹² CA: وتجروهم.

¹³ My emendation. MS: واتباعهم.

ويديك والذي تراه صواب افعله، فعمل صلوات وصوم وسهر هو وهم وطلبوا من الله يخير لهم فاوحى اليه من الله يقول له: افتح لهم ولا تقاومهم فقد اعطيتهم مدة، فعرف الشعب ذلك وفتح لهم البلد بالامان وحمل اليهم هدايا وكرامات وصار له عندهم وجه بسيط وكان في كل وقت يخرج اليهم ويسلم على اميرهم عمر ويداري وقته معهم.

ولما قويت عساكرهم في البلد وملكوا فلسطين طلبوا خراج الجزية عن الروس وحينئذ استمروا المؤمنين (!) الدخول تحت سلطانهم وايسوا مما كانوا فيه، فاما اهل | (١٢٩ ب) العقل والمعرفة فاستولى عليهم الحزن وعلمو ان الخطايا والذنوب اوجبت ذلك، واما الجهال فما اكثرثوا ولكنهم سارعوا اليه وسالوه ان يثبت اسمائهم مفردة، واول من خرج اليه مقدم اليعاقبة وقومه ومن ذلك الوقت تبروا من كنيسة الله الجامعة وتسموا يعاقبة، وكذلك النساطرة لما راوا ما فعلوا اليعاقبة مضوا مع صاحبهم واثبتوا اسمائهم وتسموا نساطرة.

فلما خرج اليه البطريرك صفرونيوس القديس قال له عمر بن الخطاب: بماذا انت يا بطريرك تسمي نفسك؟ قال له القديس: انا مسيحي. قال له الامير: قد جاووني فرقتين من النصراري وقالوا انهم مسيحيين ولكنهم انتسبوا الى انتساب غير اسم المسيحيين حتى يعرفوا بها وانت يا بطريرك عرفني من اي طائفة انت تحب ان تكون حتى نضيفك اليها، وان كنت مخالف لهم انظر لنفسك واختار لك اسم تنتسب اليه انت وجماعتك.

فلما راي القديس انه امر لا بد منه ساله ان يؤخره ثلاثة ايام فاجابه الى ذلك. وانه جمع الكهنة والرهبان وكل من قدر عليه وتقدم اليهم ان يصوموا ويصلوا ويتضرعوا الى الله ان يخلصهم من هذه القضية، وكان اجتماعهم في القيامة المقدسة فاقاموا يومين صائمين ملازمين الصلاة والسهر ببكاء وحزن وتضرع يسالوا الله الرحوم ان ينظر اليهم، وفي اليوم الثالث في السحر كان البطريرك جالس في كرسيه في الوقت الذي ينبغي الجلوس فيه فغفا غفوة، فاذا ملاك الله قد ظهر له | (١٣٠ أ) وقال له: قم ولا تحزن واسمع ما يقول الشماس وسمي نفسك انت والمسيحيين وخاطب به عدوك هذا وانتسب الى الاله ملك السماء، فاستفاق وهو مرعوب واذا بعض الشاماسة يقول المزمور الخامس من المزامير الذي اوله "لكلماتي افهم يا رب تفتن في صراخي يا ملكي والاهي" وانتهى الى هذا الحد، حينئذ عرف قوة الكلام وفهم المعنى وفرح فرحا تام واخبر من كان بالقرب منه بالرويا.

ولما اصبح الصبح جمع الشعب وقال لهم ان الرب قد خلع علينا من الان اسم جديد وفضلنا به على ساير المخالفين وجعلنا خاصته وابناء ملكوته فسيبنا ان نشكره على هذه النعمة ونعرف حقها، ومضى لوقته الى الامير واثبت اسمه واسم اصحابه ملكية وصارت هذه نسبتنا الى اليوم والى الابد.

فان ادعوا المخالفين انما انتسب الى الملك لدين النصرانية فالملك داخل معنا في هذه الشريعة ويلزمه منها ما يلزم غيره من المؤمنين وانما تفضل بالملك الى غيره، وان قالوا ان هذا

مذهب اخترعه بعض الملوك والعياد بالله خرج عن مذهب الارثوذكسية لما لزم الناس ان يتبعوه، الا ترى ان انسطاسيوس الملك لما فعل هذا لم تقبل منه كنيسة الله الجامعة ولكن الامة المخالفة للارثوذكسية¹⁴ وافقوه في هذا موافقة عظيمة، ولم تنزل الحروم ترشقه واللعنات حتى اهلكه الله اشهر هلاك.

ومن الدلائل ايضا انه لو يعلم عمر بن الخطاب انهم الى ملك الروم ينتسبوا | (١٣٠ب) لم يكن يطابقهم على ذلك ولا اجاز لهم ولولا ان هذا امر من الله لم يكونوا المسلمين وغيرهم قد قنعوا به.

ومن الدلائل ايضا انه لما اجتمعت المجامع الاولى قد كان ايضا ذلك بمحض من الملوك الافاضل ولم يكونوا اتوا في هذا عندهم بشيء ولا كان غرضهم الا لخدمة الله ونصرة الحق، وايضا فليس يلزمنا الا ما اعترفنا به ونحن فليس نعتز ولا ننتسب الا الى ملكنا والاهنا وسيدنا يسوع المسيح ولا نطابق الا من كان هذا مذهب، وكما انه لو قيل لبعض المخالفين يعقوبي ام نستوري او غير ذلك انك من الملة الفلانية ثم انه انكر ما جاز للقائل¹⁵ ان يقول له: نعم، بل انك منها، ومن وجه آخر قد صح ان هذا الامرا من الله، وحجة المخالفين ودعواهم فيه زور وباطل.

وايضا فانه من بعد ظهور المسلمين سميوا اصحابنا المؤمنين نصارى ولم يكونوا من قبل ذلك الوقت <الا>¹⁶ مسيحيين كما تقدم القول. فان قال قائل في ان كتاب الابركسيس الشريف يقول ان في مدينة انطاكية قويت الامانة وظهر دين المسيح وسميوا مسيحيين، لان هذه اللفظة ليس هي رومية ولا يونانية ولا سريانية ولا هي من لغة العرب بل من الهام روح القدس كان ذلك لان معنى النصرانية يدل على طابعين لانهم اطاعوا الاوامر الانجيلية، ويدل ايضا على نصرته¹⁷ لانهم نصرروا الحق بينات¹⁸ صادقة فنصر<وا>¹⁹ به فهم ناصرين ومنصورين، وايضا ففي هذا الاسم اشتقاق من اسماء السيد | (١٣١أ) يسوع المسيح الناصري.

واما المسلمين ايضا لم يكونوا دعيوا مسلمين من قبل ولكن لما اشتقت المداهب خلع عليهم هذا الاسم، واما في قديم امرهم فانهم كانوا جاهلية وعباد الاصنام وهمج لا يعرفون شي حتى لما تديروا وسكنوا العمران سميوا مسلمين ومعناه السالمين (!) والمتسلمين الملك، فالسالمين من اجل سلامتهم من عبادة الاصنام والكفر الذي كانوا فيه اولا والمتسلمين فلانهم امنوا بالله²⁰

¹⁴ Originally written الامة الارثوذكسية, then corrected to الامة المخالفة للارثوذكسية.

¹⁵ My emendation. MS: القائل.

¹⁶ My emendation. MS: absent.

¹⁷ My emendation. MS: نصرانية.

¹⁸ My emendation. MS: بينات.

¹⁹ My emendation. MS: فنصر.

²⁰ There seems to be an unmarked lacuna here.

واتباعهم لاصحابهم، والدليل على ذلك انهم يعتقدون في الباري جل ثناوه انه واحد احد فرد صمد، وهذا من اقبح الصفات الذي يجب ان يتنزه الخالق جل ثناوه عنها، وكل من لا يؤمن ان الله تقديست اسماءه جوهرًا واحدًا ازلًا قادر يجمع الخواص الثلاثة في الجوهر الواحد والا فليس له امانة ولا فيه معرفة كما قال سيدنا ومخلصنا لتلاميذه الاطهار: امضوا الى ساير الامم وعمدوهم بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس، ومن يؤمن ويعتمد يخلص ومن لا يؤمن يدان.

فاما اليهود فليس هم تحت شرع ولا لهم دين معروف، قالوا انهم متمسكين بناموس موسى فناموس موسى يجمع الكهنوت والنبوة والملك وهم ليس في ايديهم شي من هذا لانهم خالفوا وكفروا بواضع الناموس ومرسل الانبياء ومقدس الكهنة، ومع هذا ولموسى قد خالفوا ايضا لان موسى قد تقدم وقال لهم ان الله سيقم لكم من اخوتكم نبيا مثلي فكل نفس لا تسمع له وتطيع فلتهلك تلك النفس من شعبها، دل على ان الناموس انما كان سياقة (١٣١ب) واشارة الى سيدنا يسوع المسيح، فلما جاء ولم يقبلوه فاسقطهم فلا ناموس العتيق بقي لهم ولا الجديد حصل لهم فهم مخلايين مثل غنم ظالة²¹ وانما اسم اليهودية الواقع عليهم منسوب الى يهودا ابن يعقوب وان كان يهودا ايضا بعيد منهم وهم غرباء منه لان النسب الجسداني اذا لم يكن معه ايمان لن يعني²² شيئا، وانما تركهم الله في العالم اية يقر بها من فيه معرفة ويحدر مما حل بهم.

والان فقد صح من كل وجه اننا معشر المؤمنين بالسيد المسيح نحن هم المنتخبين المخصوصين بالنبوة²³ اللاهوتية ليس مثل اليهود المرذولين ولا مثل الامم البرانيين ولا مثل المخالفين المطرودين، فيجب ان نعرف حق هذه النعمة ونشكر عليها ونتمسك بها ويكسبنا فخرها ونتحايد الاعمال المنافرة لها ونعتمد ما يثبتها علينا لنلقا سيدنا والاهنا بوجوه مسفرة وقلوب طاهرة ومصاييح مزهرة فننور بما لم تبصره عين ولم تستمع به اذن ولم يخطر على قلب بشري.

فاما معنى قول موسى «يقيم لكم نبي مثلي» ليس انه نبي مثل ساير الانبياء ولكنه علة الانبياء وتمام نبوتهم، وقوله «مثلي» يعني لابس جسد وواضع ناموس، فله يجب السجود مع ابيه وروح قدسه الان ودائما والى اباد الدهور كلها، آمين.

²¹ ضالة: CA.

²² My emendation. MS: يعني.

²³ My emendation. MS: بالنبوة. "Divine sonship" (i.e. becoming sons of God by grace) is a common expression in Christian theology, while "divine prophecy" would make little sense in the context.

Translation

(128v) With God's help, praise be to Him, we are copying a narrative (*khavar*) that a certain believer found among the books he owned in Jerusalem (*bayt al-maqdis*). He had inherited these books from an excellent man, famous for his virtue and knowledge. One of his virtues was that he used to be a high-ranking official (*kātib*), but later resigned his post and became a monk. He came to live in Jerusalem and spent the rest of his life there, as one ought. Those who knew him mention that he was a man of considerable intelligence and virtue, talented and articulate, so much so that even many Muslims would flock to him, honour him, and show him respect, for they too recognized his intelligence and virtue. After his death, this [believing] brother inherited some of his books, and it was there that he found this narrative. He saw that this narrative was elegantly written and was, moreover, not to be found in many books. So he said: I should record it and write it down so that believers may have access to it if they so choose.

This story speaks about the heretics (*al-mukhālifīn*), how they acted deceitfully and with impudence, how they went their own way with their crooked belief, left the Orthodox party, and followed the heresiarchs (*aṣḥāb al-bida'*) and those who hold abhorrent beliefs at variance with the Holy Universal Church of God. As a result of this deviation [into heresy] with the ensuing dissent and erroneous belief, the Church of God was in great sorrow and anguish, seeing the wicked deeds of the heretics and how they transgressed the mandatory [bounds of the Faith]. Moreover, they did not only accept a [teaching] that will cause perdition to their own souls, but also continued to cause trouble and bring damage to the faithful. Whenever they gained power they would oppress and kill as many as they could among the faithful. They would do evil deeds, most of which are recorded in the annals of the Church. At that time, no one was yet called a "Jacobite" | **(129r)** or a "Nestorian," but each and every party among them would claim that they were Orthodox. This last term means "right in glory," and it was [originally] used exclusively for the faithful and virtuous kings, while other people were called "*khristianoī*," i.e. Christians.

This was the state of affairs when Islamic rule first emerged and their kingdom took over the country of Syria. Their army reached Jerusalem, with

one of their leaders, named ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, [at its head].²⁴ At that time, Sophronius, the “mouth of Christ,” was the patriarch of Jerusalem. He was a virtuous man and a saint. When the Muslim army approached the city, it was neither big nor powerful, but the decision [as to who is victorious] belongs to God alone, who brings near whomever He wishes and drives back whomever He wishes. The patriarch gathered the leaders of the people and said to them: “What do you think regarding this enemy?” [The people of Jerusalem] loved Sophronius with all their heart, for he was a saint. Moreover, only a short time previously the impious Persians had afflicted the city, bringing about murder, imprisonment, and destruction.²⁵ So the assembly told him: “The decision belongs to God and to you. We are in God’s hands and in yours. Whatever you think is right, do it.” Together with them, he prayed, fasted, and kept vigils, asking God to show them the best course of action. Then an inspiration from God came, instructing him as follows: “Open the city to the [Muslims] and do not fight them, for I have given them [power] for some time.” Sophronius informed the people and opened the city to the [Muslims] in exchange for a guarantee of safety. He brought them gifts and tokens of honour. He was well received among them and so would go out [of the city] to their [camp] at any time, to greet their commander ‘Umar and to spend time with them.

However, when the [Muslim] armies have strengthened their hold on the land and have conquered Palestine, they demanded the payment of *jizya*, which is the head tax. At that time, many more faithful continued to submit to their rule, having lost hope of return [to Christian rule]. People of | (129v) intelligence and insight were overcome with grief, for they realized that all this had come about on account of their sins and transgressions. The ignorant ones, on the other hand, did not take heed. Instead, they went straight to ‘Umar and pleaded with him to have themselves registered as separate denominations. The first who came to him was the leader of the Jacobites and of their people. From that point, they left the Universal Church of God and came to be known as Jacobites. The Nestorians likewise saw what the Jacobites had done and came to [‘Umar] with their leader to have their denomination registered, and were called Nestorians.

When the holy patriarch Sophronius next appeared, ‘Umar ibn al-

²⁴ The second Muslim caliph (r. 634-644).

²⁵ On the Persian conquest of Jerusalem in 614 AD see Garitte 1960; Garitte 1973-1974; Stoyanov 2011.

Khaṭṭāb said to him: “You patriarch, what do you wish to call yourself?” “I am a Christian,” responded the saint. “Well, two groups of Nazoreans (*naṣārā*)²⁶ just came to me,” said the commander, “They told me they were Christians (*masīḥiyyīn*), but they also had an affiliation separate from the name ‘Christian’ by which they wished to be known. So what about you, patriarch? Tell me, which religious sect (*tā’ifa*) do you wish to belong to so we can assign you to it? And if you hold a belief different from theirs, then make up your mind and choose another name by which you and your community wish to be designated.”

When the saint saw that there was no way to avoid this, he asked ‘Umar to grant him three days [to make up his mind]. ‘Umar agreed. Then Sophronius assembled the clergy and the monks, everyone he could find. He directed them to fast, to pray, and to beseech God to deliver them from this quandary. They met at the Holy Anastasis (*al-qiyāma al-muqaddasa*)²⁷ and spent two days fasting, praying, and holding vigils in tears, sorrow, and supplication, asking the merciful God to look down upon them. At the dawn [service] (*al-saḥar*)²⁸ of the third day, the patriarch was sitting on his throne²⁹—when it was appropriate for him to sit—and suddenly he fell asleep. Then an angel of God appeared to him [in a dream] | (130r) saying: “Arise and do not grieve; instead, listen to what the deacon is saying. This is the [new] name for you and for the Christians. Tell your enemy about it. You shall be affiliated with God Himself, the Heavenly King (*malik al-samā’*).” Sophronius woke up in fear, and behold, one of the deacons was chanting the fifth psalm, which begins as follows: “Understand my words, O Lord, hear my cry, O my King and my God (*malikī wa-ilāhī*).”³⁰ The deacon had just reached this point. Here, Sophronius realized the full power of the words and understood their meaning. He rejoiced greatly and told all those near him of his vision.

When morning came, he gathered the entire people and announced to them: “From now on, the Lord has given us a new name by which He has made us exalted over all the heretics. He has designated us as His special

²⁶ See note 7 above.

²⁷ The Church of the Resurrection (the Holy Sepulchre) in Jerusalem.

²⁸ Though the word *saḥar* often designates the service of Matins, it is probably the office of the First Hour that is meant here, because of the liturgical setting described. See note 29 below.

²⁹ The episcopal throne is typically located on the right (southern) side of the nave, close to the altar.

³⁰ This psalm is still chanted during the office of the First Hour, very early in the morning. For all we know, this practice has its origin in the Palestinian milieu of the early Islamic period (Taft 1986: 207).

people and the sons of His Kingdom. We should be thankful to Him for this blessing and understand its full significance!” Right away, he went to [‘Umar] the commander and registered himself and his community as “Melkites” [i.e. people of the Heavenly King]. This is our affiliation until this day, and it will remain so forever.

If the heretics claim that our affiliation is with an [earthly] king of the Nazorean faith, [how can this be], for this king himself belongs, together with us, to the [Christian] religion and has the same obligations as any other believer, with the only difference that he has been granted the royal status! If they say that a certain emperor who (God forbid!) had left the Orthodox teaching invented this doctrine (*madhhab*), [this too is wrong], for [had this been the case] the people would no longer follow him. Do you not see that when emperor Anastasius did this, the Universal Church of God did not accept this, while the heretical nation opposed to Orthodoxy, to the contrary, embraced his views wholeheartedly!³¹ Anastasius was continuously anathematized and cursed [by the Church], until God brought about his end in the most terrible manner.

Another argument [against the heretics] is that had ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb known that the [Melkites] are named after the Byzantine emperor, | (130v) he would not have accepted this or permitted them [to have this designation]. Had it not been by God’s command [that the Melkites were to be so named] neither the Muslims nor anyone else would have tolerated this.

Another argument [against the heretics] is that though the first Church Councils were indeed convened in the presence of virtuous kings, this was not done so that the people could affirm their [allegiance] to them; rather, the kings’ intention was simply to serve God and to support the Truth. Moreover, we have no other obligations except those resulting from what we confess, and the only One whom we confess and with whom we are affiliated is our King, our God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. We do not follow any [ruler] who does not teach this doctrine.³² Similarly, if it were said to any of the heretics—

³¹ The emperor Anastasius I (r. 491-518) was strongly Miaphysite in his beliefs. He appointed Miaphysite patriarchs in Constantinople (511) and Antioch (512), provoking riots in the capital and a rebellion in Thrace. His attempts to install a Miaphysite patriarch in Jerusalem were unsuccessful.

³² The implication is that since it is the Orthodox doctrine that determines whether or not the Melkites would follow any given ruler (i.e. the doctrine is primary, and following a particular ruler is merely a consequence), it is nonsensical to argue that the Melkites are so named on account of their affiliation with any earthly king.

whether a Jacobite, or a Nestorian, or anyone else—“You belong to the community named after such-and-such,” and that person were to deny [that he followed Jacob or Nestorius], it would be unreasonable to insist: “Oh yes, you are from that community.”³³ Thus, it has been established that [calling the Melkites by this name] was God’s decision, while the arguments and claims of the heretics [to the contrary] are deceitful and false.

Another point to keep in mind is that once the Muslims came, our believing community was dubbed “Nazoreans” (*naṣārā*), while before that we had only been called “Christians” (*masīhiyyīn*), as just explained. If someone says, “The holy book of Acts [of the Apostles] testifies that it was in the city of Antioch that the faith grew strong, the religion of Christ appeared, and they were called Christians,³⁴ [so why this new name Nazoreans?],” [we answer]: “This [new] term is neither Roman, nor Greek, nor Syriac, nor does it belong to the Arabic language. It was established by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. ‘Nazoreans’ means ‘obedient ones,’ for they have been obedient to the commandments of the Gospel. It also alludes to ‘help,’³⁵ for they have helped the Truth with solid proofs,³⁶ and have been helped by [the Truth] in return, and so they are both ‘helpers’ and ‘those who are helped’ (*nāṣirīn wa-manṣūrīn*). Additionally, this term is derived from [one of] the names of the Lord | (131r) Jesus Christ, who is the ‘Nazarene’ (*al-nāṣirī*).”

The Muslims, too, were not initially called Muslims. It is only when the different doctrines split up that they got the name. In the ancient times, they had been pagans (*jāhiliyya*), idol-worshippers, and complete savages (*hamaj*) who did not know a thing. But when they have become sedentarized and came to dwell in an inhabited land, they were called Muslims. The term means that they are “safe” (*sālimīn*) and that they have “received” (*mutasallimīn*) [earthly] rule. They are “safe” because they have been delivered from their previous state of idolatry and unbelief, and they have “received” [earthly rule] because they came to believe in God and followed their leaders. Indeed, they believe that the Creator (may His praise be exalted!) is one, unique, singular, and everlasting (*wāḥid, aḥad, fard, ṣamad*). This [thoroughgoing

³³ The argument is a bit obscure here. Probably the author wishes to argue that since the Melkites *deny* that they are so named because they follow an earthly king, their denial should be accepted at face value, and it would be unreasonable to continue to insist on a position contrary to their own self-definition.

³⁴ Acts 11:26.

³⁵ The translation follows the emendation suggested in note 16 above.

³⁶ The translation follows the emendation suggested in note 17 above. The manuscript reads “intentions.”

oneness], however, is one of the most degrading features that the Creator (may His praise be exalted!) must be declared free from (*yatanazzah ... 'anhā*).³⁷ Anyone who does not believe that God (hallowed be His names!), this one eternal and powerful Substance, embraces in this one Substance three qualities has no faith at all, and no understanding! Our Lord and Saviour said to His pure disciples: “Go to all the nations and baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”³⁸ Whoever believes [this] and is baptized will be saved, and whoever disbelieves will be judged.

The Jews, too, have no law and no known religion. They claim that they hold fast to the Law of Moses, but the Law of Moses includes priesthood, prophecy, and kingdom, while they have none of these. This is because they have rejected and disbelieved the Giver of the Law, who sends prophets and consecrates priests. Moreover, they have also rejected Moses, for Moses had previously announced to them: “God shall raise up unto you from your brethren a Prophet like myself. Every soul who does not listen to Him and does not obey Him, let it perish from its people.”³⁹ This indicates that the Law [of Moses] does nothing more than leads | **(131v)** and points forward to our Lord Jesus Christ. When He came and they rejected Him, He abandoned them. As a result, they no longer have the Law of the Old Covenant, nor did they enter the New Covenant. They are left alone like stray sheep. The term “Jews,” by which they are known, comes from Judah, son of Jacob, even though he too is far away from them, and they, alien to him. As long as bodily lineage is not accompanied by faith it means nothing. The only reason God allowed the Jews to remain in the world is so that they may be a [warning] sign for all those who have understanding to take heed: so people can steer away from what has befallen them.

It has now been established in every possible way that we, the community of those who have faith in the Lord Christ, are the chosen ones who have been granted the divine sonship⁴⁰—unlike the depraved Jews, the non-Christian nations (*al-umam al-barrāniyyīn*), or the banished heretics. We should realize the magnitude of this blessing, be grateful for it, hold fast to it, take pride in it, and refrain from actions that undermine it. We should, on the contrary, be

³⁷ This is a striking polemic against the Muslim doctrine of “oneness of God,” *tawhīd*. According to the author, oneness is “degrading,” unless it is trinitarian. Cf. note 7 above.

³⁸ Matt. 28:19.

³⁹ Deut. 18:15,18-19.

⁴⁰ The translation follows the emendation suggested in note 22 above. The manuscript reads “prophecy.”

determined in pursuing what will make this blessing to abide in us, so that we may meet our Lord and our God with unveiled faces,⁴¹ pure hearts,⁴² and radiant lamps⁴³ and may gain “what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man.”⁴⁴

To come back to Moses’ phrase “[God] shall raise up unto you a Prophet like myself,” it is not to be understood that [Christ] is merely a prophet like the rest of the prophets,⁴⁵ but He is the Cause of the prophets and the Perfection of their prophecy. “Like myself” means that He is endowed with flesh [like Moses] and is a legislator. To Him is due worship together with His Father and His Holy Spirit now and ever and unto the ages of all ages, Amen.

On the Destruction of the Maryamiyya Cathedral in Damascus

In a recent study, the Russian scholar Constantine Panchenko announced the discovery of a fascinating text on the destruction of the Orthodox Christian Cathedral of Our Lady in Damascus, the so-called Maryamiyya (Panchenko 2012b). The text bears the following title: *An Account of the Burning of the Cathedral of Our Lady Mary in Damascus, the Destruction of Other Churches, the Expulsion of Priests Stripped of Their Vestments [lit. Naked], the Plunder of Church Property, and the Terrible Calamities that Befell All the Christians of Damascus.*⁴⁶

Before I discuss the crucial question of the dating of this text, let me review some of its most striking features. First, the *Account of the Burning* is a lamentation over the loss of a landmark Christian cathedral. The author calls the cathedral “the second Jerusalem” (*bayt al-maqdis al-thāniya*) and “equal to Sion” (*naḏīrat Ṣahyūn*), drawing frequent parallels between the destruction

⁴¹ Cf. 2 Cor. 3:18.

⁴² Cf. Matt. 5:8.

⁴³ Cf. the Gospel parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13).

⁴⁴ 1 Cor. 2:9. In Muslim texts, this New Testament phrase often circulates as a prophetic ḥadīth (see references in Treiger 2012: 137n81).

⁴⁵ Here the author implicitly polemicalizes against the Muslim view of Christ as a prophet like the rest of the prophets.

⁴⁶ In the following analysis, I have re-used the material assembled in my brief description of this text in *Christian-Muslim Relations*, vol. 5 (Treiger 2013). It is important to check whether MS Damascus, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate 290 (year 1669), No. 4 might perhaps contain another copy of this text (Jabbāra 1988: 50 describes it as (خبر كنائسي (بنهايته ناقص).

of the Maryamiyya and the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem during the Persian conquest in 614 AD. In its eloquence and power, the text knows few rivals.⁴⁷

Second, the author indicates that the cathedral was built in the year 880 after the Incarnation (*li-l-tajassud al-ilāhī*; if the so-called “Melkite era of the Incarnation” is meant, the implied date is 871/2 AD—see Samir 1987). He also indicates that this was very long ago. Though repeated twice in the text, this information is, obviously, inconsistent with historical facts. The Muslim historian Ibn ‘Asākir reports that the Maryamiyya was built prior to the Muslim conquest (Ibn ‘Asākir 1995-2001: II 355-356), and the author himself acknowledges this when he describes the dome as going back to “Roman/Byzantine times” (*mundhu zaman al-rūm*). The obvious solution is to assume a mistake in the date: for instance, to correct the era of the Incarnation to the Seleucid era. 880 of the Seleucid era (“anno Graecorum”) would convert to 568/9 AD, certainly a possible date for the Maryamiyya’s construction.⁴⁸ The simplest explanation of the evidence at hand is that the author knew the date from a Greek inscription marking the beginning of construction, but was mistaken about the era according to which it was dated.

Third, the text provides valuable historical evidence on the techniques used to destroy Christian churches, indicating, for instance, that burning wood was lifted to the ceiling by means of windlasses (*bakar*) to ensure that the ceiling would catch on fire and collapse. As convincingly argued by Panchenko, these techniques are similar to those used elsewhere, e.g. in the destruction of the church in ‘Asqalān ca. 940 (Panchenko 2012b: 352-353).

Unfortunately, this eyewitness account of the event bears no date, except the indication that the destruction took place on a Holy Saturday (*yawm al-sabt al-‘azīm*), the eve of Orthodox Easter. The major problem therefore is to determine which of the four known destructions of the Maryamiyya prior to

⁴⁷ Sulaymān al-Ashlūḥī’s poem on the Mamluk conquest of Tripoli offers an interesting comparison (Jabre-Mouawad 2004). On the Muslim side, one can mention al-Ghuzūlī’s poem on Tamerlane’s destruction of Damascus (Cooperson 2009).

⁴⁸ This would put it in the reign of Justin II (r. 565-578). It might be significant that some twenty years prior to this date, in 547, Justinian founded the famous convent of Saidnaya in Syria, also dedicated to the Mother of God. Panchenko favours an alternative explanation, suggesting that 880 AD was the date of a massive reconstruction of the cathedral (which is why, according to him, Eutychius of Alexandria, writing shortly thereafter, was able to know that the church cost 200,000 dinars) (Panchenko 2012b: 348). This explanation, however, is at odds with the text’s specific indication that 880 was the date when construction began (*ibtidā’ imāratihā*) and that this was “ages ago” (*mundhu l-dahr*).

the seventeenth century is described in the text. The Maryamiyya Cathedral has certainly had a turbulent history. We know, first, of its demolition in the Damascene riots of 924; second, of the destruction of the cathedral on the Fāṭimid caliph al-Ḥākim's orders in 1009; third, of the destruction in the wake of the Mongol defeat at 'Ayn Jālūt in 1260; and fourth, of the pillage and (probable) destruction of the cathedral during Tamerlane's sack of Damascus in 1401 (Nasrallah 1985: 50-53).⁴⁹

The forthcoming catalogue of Arab Christian manuscripts of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts in Saint Petersburg tentatively assigns the document to 924 (Serikoff, Polosin, Polosin & Frantsouzoff forthcoming).⁵⁰ Panchenko follows this opinion (Panchenko 2012b: 341). There are, however, two difficulties with this dating. First, in his *Annals*, the Arab Orthodox historian and Patriarch of Alexandria Eutychius (Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq) mentions that the first destruction of the Maryamiyya took place in mid-Rajab 312 AH, which corresponds to mid-October 924 AD (Eutychius 1906-1909: II 83; not in Breydy's edition).⁵¹ This is at odds with our author's specific indication that the destruction took place on Holy Saturday.⁵² Additionally, in my (admittedly subjective) judgment, the language and style of the present text are indicative

⁴⁹ Still later destructions of the Maryamiyya—the damage in the earthquake of 1759 and the destruction in the massacres of 1860—are, of course, unknown to the copyist, Paul of Aleppo, and are not relevant to the document under discussion.

⁵⁰ I am deeply grateful to Dr. Nikolaj Serikoff for generously sharing with me relevant information from this precious catalogue prior to publication.

⁵¹ Another (hitherto unnoticed) report on the Damascene riot of 924 and the destruction of the Maryamiyya that year is the Muslim historian Ibn 'Asākir, who adds the crucial detail that the Maryamiyya was burned on account of a certain Christian scribe, named Abū l-Ḥusayn ibn Miklāj (unknown from other sources), "because of a scandal he was involved in" (*li-qīṣṣa kānat lahu*, Ibn 'Asākir 1995-2001: XXXI 78-79). Though the printed text of Ibn 'Asākir gives the date as 311 AH, this is probably a mistake, as evidenced by Ibn Manẓūr's *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn 'Asākir, which gives the date correctly as 312 AH (Ibn Manẓūr 1984-1996: XIII 152).

Eutychius' information is repeated nearly verbatim by two Copto-Arabic authors: Abū l-Makārim (Abū l-Makārim 2000: III 43-44) and al-Makīn Jirjis ibn al-'Amīd (Makīn 1625: 196; also MS Paris BNF 295, fol. 48r/49r; cf. Panchenko 2012b: 351). Interestingly, al-Makīn adds that the destruction took place *on a Saturday* and specifies that the Muslim rioters "burned" (*aḥraqū*) the cathedral, while Eutychius says merely that they "destroyed" it (*hadamū*). It seems therefore that al-Makīn had an additional source at his disposal. Could this be our *Account of the Burning*? If that is the case, then clearly al-Makīn assigned it to the events of 924 (presumably by default, because he was unaware of another destruction in 1009); moreover, he must have suppressed our text's indication that the burning took place on *Holy Saturday* (the eve of Orthodox Easter) and not just on an ordinary Saturday—probably because he knew that this information was incompatible with the date (Rajab 312 AH) provided by Eutychius.

⁵² This difficulty can, of course, be overcome if one supposes that Eutychius is mistaken about the date.

of a period later than the early tenth century, as the text lacks any obvious archaic features.

As I have argued elsewhere, it is perhaps more likely that the text dates to 1009, rather than 924 (Treiger 2013). If this is the case, the *Account of the Burning* may be an important, and hitherto unexplored source on the caliph al-Ḥākim's unprecedented anti-Christian campaign. The date when the Maryamiyya was destroyed on al-Ḥākim's orders is supplied by Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī (with some manuscripts specifying only the year, while others, containing perhaps Yaḥyā's later version of the text, specifying both the year and the month). This is Rajab 399 AH, corresponding to March 1-30, 1009 (Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī 1924-1932: II 490 [282]).⁵³ Easter that year fell on April 17 (and Holy Saturday on April 16), and so we are again facing a chronological discrepancy between the *Account of the Burning* and a major historical work. However, in this case (as compared to 924), the discrepancy is minor: less than one month. If we are to assume that Yaḥyā's date is one month off (due perhaps to the carelessness of his source), both texts would be in agreement.⁵⁴

The third time the Maryamiyya was burned down was in 1260, shortly after the Mongol defeat at 'Ayn Jālūt, when Muslim rioters took revenge on the Christians for their insolence during the brief period of Mongol rule. (Reportedly, under Mongol protection, Christians in Damascus had been triumphantly raising the crosses, cursing Islam, and even pouring wine into mosques.) The battle at 'Ayn Jālūt took place on September 3, 1260, and one can assume that news of the Mongol defeat reached Damascus soon thereafter. The riots, therefore, must have broken out already in September-October that year, as soon as the Mongol administration had fled the city. It seems unlikely that the Muslim rioters, scandalized by Christian insolence, would have "waited" till the following Holy Saturday (April 23, 1261) to take revenge and burn down the Christian cathedral.

The sack of Damascus by Tamerlane in 1401 is also not a chronologically viable option. The Muslim historian Ibn Taghrībirdī reports that when Tamerlane conquered Damascus, the city suffered a terrible massacre for 19 days *ending* on Rajab 28, 803 AH (March 14, 1401). Subsequently, the city was

⁵³ Interestingly, the Arab Orthodox translator Ibn Saḥqūq rendered the *Dionysian Corpus* and the *Kathismatarion* from Greek into Arabic in Damascus shortly after the destruction. His colophons are dated to Šafar 400 AH (September-October 1009) and Shawwāl 400 AH (May-June 1010) (Treiger 2005: 229-235).

⁵⁴ Notably, in the previous *hijrī* year, 398 AH, Holy Saturday did fall in Rajab.

plundered; then Tamerlane left Damascus on Saturday Sha‘bān 3 (March 19, 1401), having been there (including the time of the siege) for 80 days. By that time, the whole city had burned (Ibn Taghrībirdī 1992: XII 194-195). These events thus took place three-four weeks *before* the Christian Easter, which fell that year on April 3. This does not match our text’s specific indication that the cathedral was burned on Holy Saturday. Moreover, our author’s reassuring remark that “God has protected us and saved his people from death by the sword” can hardly apply to Tamerlane’s conquest of Damascus, which was one of the bloodiest massacres in the city’s history.

Thus, though 924 cannot be categorically ruled out, 1009 emerges as perhaps the more likely date. One further consideration strengthens this impression. As argued by Marius Canard, al-Ḥākim’s order to demolish the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem—issued in 398 AH/summer 1008 AD (if we are to follow the Muslim historians, Ibn al-Qalānisī and others, rather than Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī’s somewhat different chronology)—was a reaction to the miracle of the Holy Fire, which takes place annually, at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, on Holy Saturday and which Muslims have always suspected to be a fraud (Canard 1965). Though the Holy Sepulchre itself was not destroyed on a Holy Saturday,⁵⁵ it is perhaps not too far-fetched to suppose that the destruction of other major churches in the Fāṭimid caliphate—including the Maryamiyya in Damascus—could have been specifically timed to coincide with the next Holy Saturday (399 AH / April 16, 1009). If that is the case, this would give us additional reasons to believe that our text speaks of the destruction of the Maryamiyya in 1009 on al-Ḥākim’s orders. If that is the case, as seems likely in light of the somewhat inconclusive evidence at hand, the *Account of the Burning* is a unique eyewitness account of the destruction of a key Christian landmark cathedral on the orders of the controversial Fāṭimid caliph. But, as one says in Arabic in such situations, الله أعلم بالصواب.

⁵⁵ The date provided by Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī is Ṣafar 5, 400 AH / September 28, 1009 AD. The Muslim historians (e.g. Ibn al-Qalānisī) give the impression that it was destroyed earlier, perhaps in the autumn of 399 / 1008.

Edition

(١١٣٢) نبتدي بعون الله وحسن توفيقه نكتب خبر عن احراق كنيسة السيدة مرثيم الكاثوليكي بمدينة دمشق وخراب باقي الكنائس واخراج الكهنة منها عراة ونهب ما كان بها وما كان من المصايب العظيمة التي اصاب جميع نصارى مدينة دمشق.

اريد اخبركم واقص عليكم انا المسكين الخاطي واعلمكم بالمصايب والاحزان والبكاء والنوح والتنهد الشديد وانقطاع القلوب الذي حل بمدينة الله دمشق وكنيسته من الخراب وهدم الكنائس المقدسة وحريقها بالنار فكل من فيه خوف الله اذا سمع هذا الكلام الهائل لاكثر^{٥٦} من البكاء والنوح.

يا اخوتي، اخبركم بما بلينا وكيف كان خراب كنيسة مرثيم الكاثوليكي التي كانت فرحا وسرورا ام الكنائس نظيرة صهيون العروس المجلية الفردوس الارضي المينا الهادي والعز لكل من دخلها ولجا اليها فرح الارثوذكسية وفرح لمن نظر اليها والى حسناتها وجمالها الذي قد بلغ خبرها الى كل الافاق.

بالحقيقة اقول ان اورشليم السماوية تبكي عليها وتحزن على خرابها وتذكر حسناتها وحسن مديحتها المنير المبهج. وفي زماننا هذا في جميع البلدان هي المينا الهادي والبرج المرتفع المزين بكل نوع الجامعة^{٥٧} كل الفضائل، وكيف اذكرها ولا ابكي عليها، يا اخوتي واحباي، وابكي معي كل من يسمع كلامي | (١٣٢ب) لانها كانت بيت المقدس الثانية لان في بيت المقدس كانت عجائب المسيح والقيامة وهذه كان فيها تقديس جسد المسيح لمغفرة خطايا من ياخده في هيكل والدة الاله، وكانت عندنا موضع كل سرور وفرح. بيت المقدس سبوا اليهود وقتلوهم وهذه احترقت بالنار ونهبوا اليهود رحلتها، بيت المقدس خرج منها البطريرك زاخاريا مسبي يحمل الصليب على عنقه وهذه خرجوا الكهنة منها عراة محروقين. لقد حلت بنا الاحزان وعظمت علينا المصايب ولكن نشكر السيد المسيح الذي خلصنا من القتل لان الله سبحانه كما الجرم السباع عن دانيال هو الذي خلصنا والجم ايادي الاعداء عنا، وكما حفظ يونان في بطن الحوت^{٥٨} في عمق البحر هو الذي حفظنا وخلص شعبه من قتل السيف، ولكن نقول فيك عن كل شيء: امنا بك واعترفنا باسمك قدام ملايكتك، يا يسوع المسيح.

ولكن الان يا سيدي عوض الهيكل الذي خرب واحرق على يد هولاء القوم ارجوا منك واسالك ان يكون لهم كما كان لفرعون الذي غرقته واهلكته، كذلك يكون لمن سعا في خراب هيكل والدتك الطاهرة، ونسالك يا مخلصنا بان تسترنا من الافات برحمتك، امين.

⁵⁶ Originally written لكان اكثر, then corrected in the margin to لاكثر.

⁵⁷ The sudden switch to the feminine is unaccounted for.

⁵⁸ CA: الحوت.

فماذا تقولون يا اخوتي في كنيسة كان طولها ستون خطوة وعرضها مع دايرها مائة وعشرون خطوة وارتفاعها اربعون ذراعا | (أ١٣٣) وكان بها ستون قنطرة ومائة وعشرون عموداً⁵⁹ ومن الارض الى العمدة رخام من كل جانب ومن فوق العمدة الى السقف فسيفسة فصوص من كل لون وكل حكمة تدهش العقول لحسنها وجمالها وكان حسنها يذكر وحسن مديحتها المنير المبهج وكان فوق المائدة المقدسة قبة نحاس مخزومة وفوقها قبة اخرى الطف منها يحملهم اربعة عمد نحاس مفتولة وداخل العمدة عمد اخرى حديد اعني قابلهم والنحاس ملتبس عليهم وقواعد العمدة المذكورة كانت من رصاص ورووس العمدة كانت نحاس مذهب، وكان حقوها (?) ايضا من نحاس وشراحيها بما يدور حول المذبح نحاس وعمدة القبة الفوقانية منها وكلها مطلية بالذهب يتلالا لامعا، ولعمري ان ما يبلغ عقلي يا اخوة صفة هذه القبة ولا الصياغ الدين في زماننا هذا يدروا ما قيمتها ولا اعلم انه يوجد قط اكثر من جميع النحاس والحديد الذي كان في كل جانب منها الذي هو مند زمن الروم ولا يعمل في دهرنا هذا مثله ومن ذلك الذهب والفضة الكثيرة الذي كانوا بها.

واخبركم ببعض ما وقفت عليه، انه كان لها ستون كاس من الفضة واربعون ثيمياطن⁶⁰ فضة وثلاثة عشر جوز مراوح فضة وثلاثون صينية فضة واربعة صلبان كبار وعشرة صلبان صغار وقله ذهب وقله فضة وعشرة مراوح من الذهب، واما الاشياء المترقمة⁶¹ الكثيرة الثمن فكان لكل عيد حلة على حده ما لا يحصى وكان بها خزانة | (ب١٣٣) من الكتب بغير احصاء مند الدهر لان ابتداء عمارتها كان من سنة ثمانماية وثمانون لتجسد الالهي.

وهكذا كان خراب هذه الكنيسة المقدسة وحريقها، وذلك ان المسيحيين بمدينة دمشق كان زيهم حسن والعين اليهم منظورة ولم يكن احدا يلحقهم في كل شيء غير ان الخطية هي راس كل شيء وبليّة وكانت قد كثرت وقامت فبمساحة من الله اراد ان يجربنا ويخلي يده منا لنبلا ليعرفنا ضعفنا وقلّة ثباتنا الا ان سيدنا المسيح كما ابذل نفسه في البدي عنا وفداننا كذلك صنع بنا هاهنا لانه لم يخلينا من عنايته ولا فارقنا رحمته.

يا اخوتي، في يوم الجمعة العظيمة في وقت صلب المسيح كان ابتداء الرجفة بدمشق وارعبت الكنائس في الساعة التي عُلق فيها تعالى اسمه على الصليب. عظمت الخطايا علينا،

⁵⁹ Here *is* written in the manuscript, then crossed out. وكان خشبها من الارز.

⁶⁰ This is a relatively rare term for "censer." See Graf 1954: 30 (s.v. *ثيمياطن*) and 33 (s.v. *ثوماطي*, with reference to the Maronite *Kitāb al-Hudā*); Sachau 1899: II 872b (in a text ascribed to St. Basil in MS Berlin 317, fols. 202r-203v) and II 878a (in a fifteenth-century Old Testament lectionary, MS Berlin 320, translating *thusiastērion* in Ex. 40:5; I owe this last reference to Dmitry A. Morozov); also the ninth-century MS Bryn Mawr BV69, fol. 15r (*ثيمياطن البخور*). The more common Arabic translation of *thusiastērion* is *madhbah* (e.g. MSS Sinai ar. 3, fol. 163v [Ex. 40:5]; Sinai ar. 85, fol. 18r [Rev. 8:3]; Sinai ar. 151, fol. 25r [Rom. 11:3]).

⁶¹ My emendation. MS: *الترفعة*.

وفي يوم السبت كان لنا عجيح، في هذا اليوم كان المسيح في البدي في القبر وها نحن في الحزن والنهب، يوم السبت كانوا اليهود فرحين لما دفنوا المسيح والتلاميذ في حزن، وفي يوم السبت تبددت رعية المسيح عن الكنيسة وانطلقوا اليهود الى الناوس⁶² ونهبوا بيت الله، وذلك انه لما كان وقت ساعتين من سحر يوم السبت العظيم حرك الشيطان اجناده فخرجوا الى كنيسة مرمريم الطاهرة ونهبوا كلما كان فيها الى ستة ساعات ومن ذلك اخذت الصلبان المعلقة مع التناير والصنارات واخذوا اعوان الشيطان حُصِر الكنيسة مع الدفوف التي كانت بها وربطوها | (أ١٣٤) في جبال الصنابير والصلبان التي كان يسرج فيها وجعلوا النار فيها وجروها بالبكر الى السقف ولما كان الخشب معمولاً من الارز مند ثمانماية وثمانون سنة كما ذكرنا اخذت النار به ولم تزل تشعل⁶³ وتضطرم مند ستة ساعات من يوم السبت الى ستة ساعات من يوم الفصح، فنظرنا حينئذ الى الكنيسة الطاهرة وقد تحركت وتقلقت واضطربت وماجت ملتبهة بالنار.

فكنا نصرخ الى الشهداء الذي كان ذكرهم واعيادهم في كل يوم بتسايح وتماجد في الكنيسة الجامعة ان يطلبوا من الرب بان لا يصرف وجهه عن ضعفنا بشفاعة الطاهرة والدته فمن كان ينظر الى هذا المنظر يا اخوتي ولا يتبته عقله ويذهب لبه لان في يوم احد الفصح اشتدت النار علينا واحرقت البيت المقدس.

في يوم احد الفصح المقدس ظهرت الروح القدس ظهرت الروح القدس للتلاميذ في صهيون ونحن في هذا اليوم انفيانا من الكنيسة الطاهرة ونحن صارخون وقائلون: يا رب، لا تسلمنا في يدي⁶⁴ الاعداء، يا رب، لا ترفض صياح وضجيج رعيتك الضعيفة، يا رب، لا تصرف وجهك عنا، يا رب، اسرع علينا برحمتك، وان كنا ليس باهلا (!) من اجل خطايانا ودنوبنا. يا مرمريم، قد كثر حزن الدين كانوا فيك يصلون، يا مرمريم، منك خرج النهب، يا مرمريم، كم من فرح وسرور كان لنا فيك وكم من حزن ونوح صار لنا فيك، اذكرينا يا مرمريم ولا تنسي عجيح بنيك،⁶⁵ يا مرمريم، اذكرينا بين يدي المسيح لاننا ما نسينا الحزن الذي حل بنا فيك بعد الفرح، نبكي عليك يا كنيسة | (ب١٣٤) مرمريم الطاهرة، يا شبيهة⁶⁶ صهيون، لان فيك يا طاهرة حلت كلمة الله الازلية الخالقة.

ولم يزل النهب والنار لا يزول ولا يبرح مدة خمسة عشر يوماً فاشتدت الاشياء من بعد هذه ولم يكن نصراني يظهر، ومن بعد ذلك وثبوا الى كنيسة الصوتيرس⁶⁷ فاخربوها وكذلك الى

⁶² My emendation (=Greek *naos*). MS: الناموس.

⁶³ My emendation. MS: تعمل.

⁶⁴ CA: أيدي.

⁶⁵ Originally written شعبك, then corrected in the margin to بنيك.

⁶⁶ My emendation. MS: شبيهة.

⁶⁷ This is the Greek genitive of *Sōtēr*, "Saviour."

كنيسة يقال لها ماري سابا،⁶⁸ فمن ذا لا يبكي ولا يحزن وينوح ويشهق على شدة ما نزل بنا وما اصابنا.

واشد الاشياء انهم كانوا كما قالوا للمسيح في القديم: ان كنت انت حقا ملك اليهود فخلص نفسك، هكذا قالوا هولاي لما اخدوا الصليب: اما انت الذي صلب عليك المسيح، افلا يخلصك من يدنا.⁶⁹

فاطلبوا الان يا اخوتي الى المسيح ان يخلصنا من التجارب والشدايد وان يستر كنيسته يمينه القوية وبقدرة صليبه بشفاعة الطاهرة والدته ولا يسلمنا من اجل خطايانا. وايضا نذكر لمحبتكم يا اخوتي عن موضع الاخوة الذي كان عزاء وملجاء وفرجا لمن لجأ اليه لانه كان فيه كثرة من الاسارى رجال ونساء وكان فيه زمنى ومقعدين وعميان وكانوا يعيشون من فضل كنيسة مرتريم الطاهرة وفضل من يدخلها من رعية المسيح.

فماذا تقولون فيمن احاطت بهم الاعداء والنار والنهب وهم يطلبون الهرب ولا يقدرين عليه لما بهم من الضعف مع الشدة، وكان حزن هولاي زيادة على مصيبتنا عندما كنا نسمع بهم ونراهم ولا نقدر لهم على خلاص، فمن ذا لا يبكي ويحزن على ما نزل بنا وعلى ما اصابنا لان امورنا كانت قد تجوز المقدرة واحزاننا فوق كل حزن، فكيف لا يكثر علينا الحزن والبكاء واعيادنا متواترة⁷⁰ ...

(هكذا وجدنا هذه النسخة في كتابين قديمة (!) في محروسة دمشق ناقصة الى هنا لا غير.)

Translation

(132r) With God's help and good guidance we begin to copy an account of the burning of the Cathedral of Our Lady Mary [=the Mother of God] in Damascus, the destruction of other churches, the expulsion of priests stripped of their vestments [lit. naked], the plunder of church property, and the terrible calamities that befell all the Christians of Damascus.

A wretched sinner that I am, I wish to tell you, relate to you, and make known to you the story of the calamities, sorrow, weeping, crying, great lamentation, and heartfelt grief that have befallen God's city Damascus and its church, how it was destroyed, and how other holy churches were razed and burned by fire. Anyone who has the fear of God in him will weep and lament greatly upon hearing this terrible story.

⁶⁸ Should this perhaps be emended to ماري حنانيا—the church of Mar Ananias in Damascus?

⁶⁹ CA: أيدينا.

⁷⁰ CA: متواترة.

Brothers, I shall tell you of our afflictions: how the Cathedral of Our Lady Mary was destroyed—this Cathedral which had been a source of joy and happiness, the mother of the churches,⁷¹ equal to Sion, the unveiled bride, the earthly paradise, the quiet harbour and fortress for all those who entered it and flocked under its protection. It was the joy of the Orthodox and the joy of all those who saw it, with its beauty and splendour, renowned world over.

Truly I say to you that the Heavenly Jerusalem weeps over it and laments its destruction, remembering its beauty and the beauty of its luminous, splendid altar. In our own time, through all the countries it had been the quiet harbour and the lofty tower, ornated in every manner and combining all the virtues. How can I mention it and not weep over it, my brothers and my beloved! I shall make everyone hearing my story lament with me, | (132v) for it had been the second Jerusalem. Whereas Christ's miracles and His Resurrection took place in Jerusalem, whoever entered this temple of the Mother of God would receive consecrated Body of Christ unto remission of his sins. For us, it was the source of all happiness and joy. Whereas Jerusalem was taken captive by the Jews, who killed [its inhabitants],⁷² this church was burned by fire, and the Jews plundered its possessions (?). The Patriarch Zacharias was taken captive and led away from Jerusalem carrying the [True] Cross on his neck,⁷³ whereas from this church the priests fled naked and burned. Sorrows have overcome us and calamities befallen us, but we thank Christ our Lord who saved us from massacre. Just as God, may He be praised, kept the wild beasts from devouring Daniel [in days of old], so also the same God has saved us and kept the enemies' hands away from us. Just as He preserved Jonah in the depths of the sea in the belly of the fish, so also the same God has protected us and delivered His people from death by the sword. We say to You in all things: we believe in You and confess Your name before Your angels, O Jesus Christ.

But now, O Lord, for the sake of the temple destroyed and burned by these people, I pray and beseech You that they will receive the punishment of Pharaoh, whom You have drowned and caused to perish. Let those who dared to destroy the temple of Your pure Mother face the same destiny. We pray to You, O Saviour, that You protect us from all danger by Your mercy, Amen.

⁷¹ This term usually applies to Jerusalem. The comparison with Jerusalem continues in what follows.

⁷² See note 24 above.

⁷³ In 614, the Patriarch of Jerusalem Zacharias (r. 609-632), went to captivity to Persia, along with the True Cross. The relic was returned to Jerusalem in 628, after Heraclius' victory over the Persians.

What else can you say, brothers, about a church whose length was 60 paces, width together with its circumference 120 paces,⁷⁴ and height 40 cubits!⁷⁵ | **(133r)** It had 60 arches and 120 columns.⁷⁶ From the floor all the way up to the columns it was covered with marble on every side. Above the columns all the way to the ceiling, it had a mosaic of precious stones of every colour and every art, which startled the mind in its beauty and splendour. Its beauty was famous [the world over], and so was the beauty of its luminous, splendid altar. Above the holy table, it had a filigree dome made of copper, and above it, another dome, even more delicate. Four twisted copper columns supported it, while inside these columns there were other columns, made of iron, which formed the filling, while copper covered them on the outside. The foundations of these columns were made of lead, while their capitals were made of gilded copper. Its -----⁷⁷ as well as the lamps surrounding the altar and the columns supporting the upper dome were also made of copper, all of them plated with gold and shining radiantly. By my life, brothers, my mind is too weak to adequately describe this dome, and not even the goldsmiths in our own time know its worth. I do not think more than this copper and iron can be found elsewhere, which you saw there on every side. It remained from the time of the Romans, but in our own time they no longer produce anything like this, particularly all the gold and silver present there in such quantities.

I shall relate to you some of the things I know. The [cathedral] had 60 silver chalices, 40 silver censers (*thīmiyāṭun*), 13 pairs of silver processional fans (*marāwiḥ* = Gr. *ripidia*), 30 silver patens (*ṣīniyya* = Gr. *diskoi*), four big crosses and ten small crosses, some made of gold and some made of silver, and ten golden processional fans. As for the precious embroidered⁷⁸ things, they had a separate set of vestments for every feast, beyond number. The [cathedral] also had a library (*khizāna min al-kutub*) | **(133v)** with countless books that had been there from ages ago, for its construction began in the year 880 after the divine Incarnation.

⁷⁴ If we take the pace (*khutwa*) as being ca. 2½ feet, the implied (probably exaggerated) length and width (with circumference, *dā'ira*, i.e. probably the courtyard and adjacent buildings) are 150 feet (45 metres) and 300 feet (90 metres) respectively.

⁷⁵ If we take the cubit (*dhirā'*) as being ca. two feet, the implied (probably exaggerated) height is approximately 80 feet (27 metres). On the various types of cubit see Hinz 1965; for a slightly different estimate see Panchenko 2012b: 345.

⁷⁶ We are to imagine that every arch (*qanṭara*) is supported by two columns.

⁷⁷ Though the word حَقْوَهَا is written very clearly in the manuscript, its sense is obscure.

⁷⁸ The translation follows the emendation suggested in note 60 above. The manuscript reads "exalted."

This is how the destruction and the burning of this holy church came about. The Christians in the city of Damascus would always wear nice clothes, the eyes [of all] would look towards them, and no one would do them any harm,⁷⁹ but sin is the beginning of every affliction. It had multiplied and surged, and so [this came about] by God's permission. He wanted to try us and thus lifted His hand from us, so that we would suffer. He wanted to show us in this manner how weak we are and how unstable our condition. But just as our Lord Christ sacrificed Himself for our sake and redeemed us in the days of old, so also He has treated us now, for He has never left us bereft of His providential care, and His mercy has never departed from us.

Brothers, on Great Friday, at the time of Christ's crucifixion, the tremor (*al-rajfa*) began in Damascus.⁸⁰ The churches shook at the time when [Christ], may His name be exalted, hang on the cross. Our sins had multiplied greatly, and on Saturday we cried out loud. That day, in the days of old, Christ was laid in the tomb, and we too have been afflicted by grief and plunder. On that other Saturday, the Jews rejoiced having buried Christ, while the disciples mourned. On this Saturday, likewise, Christ's flock was scattered away from the church, while the Jews set out to this temple⁸¹ and plundered the house of God.⁸² On the morning of Great Saturday, at the second hour [=8am],⁸³ Satan moved his forces and they set out to the pure church of Our Lady Mary and plundered all its property till the sixth hour [=noon]. The suspended crosses were taken, together with lamps (*tanānīr*)⁸⁴ and hooks (? *ṣanānīr*). Satan's accomplices then took the carpets (*huṣur*) of the church together with the timbrels (? *dufūf*) that were there and tied them together | (134r) to the piles of hooks (?) and crosses. All of this was ignited and set ablaze, and lifted with windlasses to the ceiling. As the [ceiling] was made of cedar wood, going all

⁷⁹ This is an interesting indication of the high social status that Christians had enjoyed in the city prior to the events described in this text.

⁸⁰ This could refer to an earthquake, but could also be understood as a symbolic reference to the outburst of the riots. This echoes the earthquake during Christ's crucifixion.

⁸¹ The translation follows the emendation suggested in note 61 above. The manuscript reads "law."

⁸² It is unclear whether the author means that the local Damascene Jews participated in the plunder of the Cathedral (Panchenko 2012b: 352) or he calls the rioters (whoever they were) "Jews" metaphorically. The Muslims are often referred to as the "new Jews" in Arab Christian literature.

⁸³ Here and below, the text uses the traditional system of time calculation, when the day began with dawn at 6am. In Christian Arabic literature, this system was still in use in the seventeenth century (e.g. in Paul of Aleppo's *Travels of the Patriarch Macarius*).

⁸⁴ On this meaning of the term see Dozy 1881: I 153.

the way back to the year 880,⁸⁵ as we have mentioned, it caught on fire and continued to burn from the sixth hour [=noon] on Saturday until the sixth hour [=noon] of Easter Sunday. All this time, we were watching the pure church moving and shaking, swaying and surging, engulfed with fire.

We cried out to the martyrs who had been commemorated and celebrated on their feastdays with hymns and praises in this cathedral every single day. [We implored them] to ask the Lord not to turn His face away from our weakness, through the intercession of His pure Mother. Brothers, who could look at this [frightful] sight and would not have his mind stirred up and his heart taken away! On Easter Sunday the fire intensified further and burned the holy temple down.

It was on Holy Easter Sunday that the Holy Spirit appeared to the disciples on Sion,⁸⁶ whereas we on that same day were deprived of our pure church. We would cry out, saying: “Lord, do not deliver us into the hands of the enemies! Lord, do not reject the cries and the pleas of Your destitute flock! Lord, do not turn Your face away from us! Hasten to help us in Your mercy, unworthy though we are on account of our sins and transgressions! O Our Lady Mary, those who have been praying in your [temple] are overcome with grief! O Our Lady Mary, it is your [temple] that has been pillaged. O Our Lady Mary, how much rejoicing and jubilation did we have on account of you, and how much grief and affliction has affected us now on account of your [temple]! Remember us, O Our Lady Mary, and do not neglect the weeping of your children! Remember us before Christ, for we cannot forget the grief afflicting us now, after [so much] joy, on account of your [temple]. We are grieving over you, the pure church of | (134v) Our Lady Mary, similar to Sion, because in you, O pure One, dwelt the pre-eternal creative Word of God.”

The pillage and fire continued unabated for the period of 15 days, and after that too the situation remained difficult, so much so that Christians [were afraid] to appear [in the streets]. After that, the church of the Saviour (*kanīsat al-Šūtīrus*) was attacked and destroyed, and likewise the church called St. Sabas.⁸⁷ Who would not weep, grieve, mourn, and lament the terrible calamities that have afflicted us!

⁸⁵ This could also be read to say “going back 880 years.” Still, in light of the previous occurrence of the date, the translation offered here seems preferable.

⁸⁶ This happened, of course, on Pentecost, not on Easter!

⁸⁷ These two churches are unknown from other sources (but see note 67 above).

The most terrible thing was that just as in the days of old [the crucifiers] mocked Christ, “Save yourself, if you are truly the King of the Jews,”⁸⁸ so also those who now took away the cross said: “Was it not upon you that Christ was crucified? If so, why does he not come to save you from our hands?”

Pray to Christ, brothers, that He may deliver us from tribulations and calamities and that He may protect His Church by His mighty Right Hand, through the power of His Cross, through the intercession of His pure Mother, lest He deliver us [into the hands of the enemies] on account of our sins. We also remind you, beloved brothers, that [this cathedral] was a place of fraternal love, that it was always a consolation, a safe haven, and a place of deliverance for all those flocking to it. It had many [former?] prisoners, both men and women, [many] people who were gravely ill, crippled, and blind. All of them lived on the charity that they received from the pure church of Our Lady Mary and from those of the flock of Christ who would frequent it.

What can you say regarding the plight of those surrounded by the enemies, amidst fire and pillage, who wanted to flee, but could not, because they were too weak while [the enemies] were strong! Their grief further exacerbated our own predicament, for we could hear them and see them, but were unable to help them! Who will not weep and grieve over our calamities and afflictions, for our predicament was too difficult to bear, and our grief was beyond every grief! And how could we not grieve and not lament greatly, when our feasts came one after another ... [*here the text breaks off*].

([The copyist’s comment:] We found it truncated in this way in two old manuscripts in the divinely-protected city of Damascus; [the text goes] up to this point and does not continue.)

June 2013

⁸⁸ Luke 23:27.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ABŪ L-MAKĀRIM, 2000, *Tārīkh Abū [sic] l-Makārim*, ed. Bishop Samuel of Shibīn al-Qanāṭir, 4 vols., Cairo, al-Na‘ām li-l-ṭibā‘a wa-l-tawrīdāt.
- ABŪ RĀ’IṬA AL-TIKRĪTĪ, 1951, *Die Schriften des Jacobiten ḥabīb ibn ḥidma Abū Rā’iṭa*, ed. G. Graf, CSCO 130 / Scriptoros Arabici 14, Louvain, Imprimerie Orientaliste L. Durbecq.
- BROCK S.P., 1999, “Two Letters of the Patriarch Timothy from the Late Eighth Century on Translations from Greek,” *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 9, pp. 233-246.
- CANARD M., 1965, “La destruction de l’Église de la Résurrection par le calife Hâkim et l’histoire de la descente du feu sacré,” *Byzantion*, 25, pp. 16-43; reprinted in M. CANARD, 1973, *Byzance et les Musulmans du Proche Orient*, London, Variorum, Essay XX.
- COOPERSON M., 2009, “‘Alā’ al-Dīn al-Ghuzūlī,” in *Essays in Arabic Literary Biography II (1350-1850)*, ed. J.E. Lowry and D.J. Stewart, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, pp. 107-117.
- DOZY R., 1881, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, 2 vols., Leiden, E.J. Brill.
- ELIAS OF NISIBIS, 1886, *Des Metropolitens Elias von Nisibis Buch vom Beweis der Wahrheit des Glaubens*, trans. L. Horst, Colmar, Eugen Barth.
- EUTYCHIUS, 1906-1909, *Eutychiei Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales*, ed. L. Cheikho, B. Carra de Vaux & H. Zayyat, 2 vols., CSCO 50-51 / Scriptoros Arabici III.6-7, Beirut, E typographeo Catholico.
- GARITTE G., 1960, *La prise de Jérusalem par les Perses en 614*, CSCO 202-203 / Scriptoros Iberici 11-12, Louvain, Secrétariat du CorpusSCO.
- GARITTE G., ed., 1973-1974, *Expugnationis Hierosolymae A.D. 614 recensione arabicae*, CSCO 340-341, 347-348 / Scriptoros Arabici 26-29, Louvain, Secrétariat du CorpusSCO.
- GRAF G., 1954, *Verzeichnis arabischer kirchlicher Termini*, CSCO 147 / Subsidia 8, Louvain, Imprimerie Orientaliste L. Durbecq.
- GRIFFITH S.H., 2006, “The Church of Jerusalem and the ‘Melkites’: The Making of an ‘Arab Orthodox’ Christian Identity in the World of Islam, 750-1050 CE,” in *Christians and Christianity in the Holy Land: From the Origins to the Latin Kingdoms*, ed. O. Limor & G.G. Stroumsa, Turnhout, Brepols, pp. 173-202.

- GRIFFITH S.H., 2011, "Al-Naşārā in the Qur'ān: A Hermeneutical Reflection," in *New Perspectives on the Qur'ān: The Qur'ān in its Historical Context* 2, ed. G.S. Reynolds, London & New York, Routledge, pp. 358-371.
- ḤAMRŪNĪ Kh. al-, 2009, "al-Masīḥiyya al-Malkāniyya fī l-maşādir al-islāmiyya," *Parole de l'Orient* 34, pp. 113-141.
- HĀSHIMĪ & KINDĪ, 1885, *Risālat 'Abd Allāh ibn Ismā'īl al-Hāshimī ilā 'Abd al-Masīḥ ibn Ishāq al-Kindī yad'ūhu bihā ilā l-Islām, wa-risālat 'Abd al-Masīḥ ilā l-Hāshimī yaruddu bihā 'alayhi wa-yad'ūhu ilā l-naşrāniyya*, ed. A. Tien, London, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.
- HINZ W., 1965, "Dhirā'," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, ed. B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat & J. Schacht, vol. II, Leiden, E.J. Brill, pp. 231-232.
- IBN 'ASĀKIR, 1995-2001, *Tārīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. Muḥibb al-Dīn Abū Sa'īd 'Umar ibn Gharāma al-'Amrawī, 80 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Fikr.
- IBN MANZŪR, 1984-1996, *Mukhtaşar Tārīkh Dimashq*, ed. Rūḥiyyat al-Naḥḥās, Riyāḍ 'Abd al-Ḥamīd Murād, and Muḥammad Muṭī' al-Ḥāfiẓ, 31 vols., Damascus, Dār al-Fikr.
- IBN TAGHRĪBIRDĪ, 1992, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Mişr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn, 16 vols., Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-'ilmiyya.
- JABBĀRA I., 1988, *al-Makḥtūtāt al-'arabiyya fī maktabat Baṭriyarkiiyyat Anṭākiya wa-sā'ir al-mashriq li-l-Rūm al-Urthūdhuks*, Beirut, Markaz al-dirāsāt al-Urthūdhuksī al-Anṭākī.
- JABRE-MOUAWAD R., 2004, "Un témoin melkite de la prise de Tripoli par les Mameluks (27 avril 1287)," in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage in Honour of Father Prof. Dr. Samir Khalil Samir S.I. at the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. R. Ebied & H. Teule, Leuven, Peeters, pp. 133-161.
- JOHN OF DAMASCUS, 1969-1988, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, ed. B. Kotter, 5 vols., Berlin, Walter de Gruyter & Co.
- MAKĪN Jirjis ibn al-'Amīd al-, 1625, *Historia saracenicā qua res gestae muslimorum ... explicantur*, ed. and trans. T. Erpenius, Leiden, Ex Typographia Erpeniana.
- NASRALLAH J., 1985, "Damas et la Damascène: leurs églises à l'époque byzantine," *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, 35, pp. 37-58 and 264-276.
- NOBLE S. & A. TREIGER, eds., 2014, *The Orthodox Church in the Arab World (700-1700): An Anthology of Sources*, with a forward by Metropolitan Ephrem Kyriakos, DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press.

- PANCHENKO C., 2012a, *Blizhnevostochnoe Pravoslavie pod osmanskim vladychestvom* [Middle Eastern Orthodox Christianity under Ottoman Rule], Moscow, Indrik.
- PANCHENKO C., 2012b, "Razrushenie damasskoj tserkvi Mart Marjam v 924g.: Svidetel'stvo ochevidtca" [The Destruction of the Church of Our Lady Mary in Damascus in 924: An Eyewitness Account], *Simvol*, 61, pp. 339-356.
- PANCHENKO C., 2012c, "The Antiochian Greek-Orthodox Patriarchate and Rome in the Late 16th C.: A Polemic Response of the Metropolitan Anastasius Ibn Mujallā to the Pope," in *Actes du Symposium International "Le Livre. La Roumanie. L'Europe," Bibliothèque Métropolitaine de Bucarest, 4ème édition, 20-23 Septembre 2011*, vol. 3, Bucharest, Biblioteca Bucureștilor, pp. 302-315.
- SACHAU E., 1899, *Verzeichniss der syrischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Berlin, A. Asher & Co.
- SAHAS D.J., 1972, *John of Damascus on Islam: The "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"*, Leiden, E.J. Brill.
- SAMIR S.K., 1987, "L'ère de l'Incarnation dans les manuscrits arabes melkites du 11e au 14e siècle," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 53, pp. 193-201.
- SERIKOFF N., ed., V. POLOSIN, VI. POLOSIN & S. FRANTSOUZOFF, forthcoming. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Christian Arabic Manuscripts of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy*, Louvain, Peeters.
- STOYANOV Y., 2011, *Defenders and Enemies of the True Cross: The Sasanian Conquest of Jerusalem in 614 and Byzantine Ideology of Anti-Persian Warfare*, Vienna, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- TAFT R., 1986, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: The Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, Collegeville, MN, The Liturgical Press.
- TARTAR G., 1985, *Dialogue islamo-chrétien sous le Calife al-Mâmûn (813-834): Les épîtres d'al-Hâshimî et d'al-Kindî*, Paris, Nouvelles Éditions Latines.
- TIMOTHY, Patriarch of the Church of the East, 2012, *Die Briefe 42-58 des ostsyrischen Patriarchen Timotheos I.*, ed. and trans. M. Heimgartner, 2 vols., CSCO 644-645 / Scriptorum Syri 248-249, Louvain, Peeters.

- TREIGER A., 2005, "New Evidence on the Arabic Versions of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*," *Le Muséon*, 118, pp. 219-240.
- TREIGER A., 2012, *Inspired Knowledge in Islamic Thought: Al-Ghazālī's Theory of Mystical Cognition and Its Avicennian Foundation*, London, Routledge.
- TREIGER A., 2013, "Destruction of the Cathedral of Our Lady Mart Maryam in Damascus," in *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, ed. D. Thomas & A. Mallett, vol. 5, Leiden, Brill, pp. 698-704.
- YAḤYĀ AL-ANṬĀKĪ, 1924-1932, *Histoire de Yaḥyā-ibn-Sa'īd d'Antioche, continuateur de Sa'īd-ibn-Biṭrīq*, ed. and trans. I. Kratchkovsky and A. Vasiliev, 2 vols., *Patrologia Orientalis* XVIII.5 and XXIII.3, Paris, Firmin-Didot.