Ambassadors, Artists, Theologians
Byzantine Relations with the Near East from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Centuries

Zachary Chitwood · Johannes Pahlitzsch (eds)



Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus Mainz
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Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums | Mainz | 2019

Redaktion: Stefan Albrecht (RGZM)
Satz: Stefan Albrecht (RGZM)
Umschlaggestaltung: Claudia Nickel (RGZM); Bild: Johannes von Damaskus und Ephraim der Syrer; Ikone Sinaikloster, 14. Jh. (Bildarchiv Abt. Christliche Archäologie, Universität Freiburg i. Br.)

Bibliografische Information der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek

Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über **http://dnb.d-nb.de** abrufbar.

ISBN 978-3-88467-314-0

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Druck: Memminger MedienCentrum Druckerei und Verlags-AG
Printed in Germany.

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Zachary Chitwood · Johannes Pahlitzsch

Introduction

In Constantinople during the reign of the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042-1055), indeed sometime in 1044/1045, the Armenian nobleman Gregory Magistros chanced to have met a Muslim Arab, the courtier, theologian and poet Abū Naṣr al-Manāzī[1]. Though a scion of the princely Pahlavuni clan, Gregory had entered Byzantine service shortly before the final annexation of his native Ani, and, following the quintessentially Byzantine method of assimilating foreign elites, exchanged his ancestral estates for lands and castles near Edessa, in the empire's borderland between southeastern Asia Minor and northern Mesopotamia. Gregory claimed that al-Manāzī engaged him over several days with all manner of complex and thought-provoking questions. Eventually, al-Manāzī proceeded to criticize the Christian scriptures, stating that they were a rough miscellany of different texts rather than a unitary document like the Qur'an. Moreover, according to al-Manāzī, the Scriptures lacked the poetic qualities of the Islamic holy book.

Being eager to refute the assertion of his heady interlocutor and seeking inspiration from the Holy Spirit to do so, Gregory stated that he could write an account of Christian history in four days, as opposed to the forty years over which Muhammad had recorded his revelation. Moreover, he would compose it in the rhyming meter (*qāfīyā*) of Arabic poetry. By Gregory's own account, he managed to perform this feat within the span of four days, as he had promised, at the conclusion of which al-Manāzī is to have »confessed with astonishment that the God of the Christians is great«. The result of Gregory's fevered composition, variously termed in scholarship the »Mighty Acts of God« (*Magnalia Dei*), the »To Manuche« (Առ Մանուչէ) or »Of a Thousand Lines« (Հազաբտողեան), is the first major biblical epic of medieval Armenian literature[2].

Gregory's encounter with al-Manāzī in the medieval metropolis on the Bosporus encapsulates an element of Byzantine history that has yet to be fully realized either by Byzantinists or by their colleagues in related disciplines: namely, that the medieval Eastern Roman Empire, in contrast to the picture of an almost uniformly Hellenic and Orthodox polity often painted by Byzantine writers, which it was at certain points in its history, was nonetheless an immensely diverse place. Moreover, this shift from relative homogeneity to profound diversity and vice-versa could occur within startlingly short amounts of time. A transformation of this sort certainly occurred in the seventh century. More pertinent for our period, Anthony Kaldellis has recently described the rapid shift in the ethnic composition of the empire brought about in the seventy-year period ending with the death of Basil II in 1025:

»In 955, Romanía was relatively homogeneous. There were some Slavic ethnic minorities in Greece and the Peloponnese, Lombards in Apulia, and some Armenian and other foreign populations along the eastern frontier, but otherwise the population of the so-called empire consisted overwhelmingly of Greek-speaking Orthodox Romans [...]. By 1025, however, the balance had moved in the direction of multiethnic empire. The territory ruled from New Rome had expanded by a third. Crete and Cyprus were mostly Roman in population already. But most inhabitants of the Bulgarian state were not Roman, and neither were those of Armenia and Georgia. Antioch was mostly Chalcedonian Christian, albeit Arabic-speaking, mixed with Roman settlers and immigrants from Syria and Egypt. There were also Syrian Monophysites and Muslims. Many small frontier themes were settled by Romans and Armenians. Byzantium was more of a multiethnic empire now than it had ever been, even though in relative terms it still did not match the diversity of most multiethnic empires in history[3]«.

This cornucopia of peoples in and around Byzantium at that time could and did lead to some fascinating examples of cultural hybridization. Gregory Magistros, for instance, embodies the interaction of different, in some respects antagonistic, aspects of Byzantium and Armenia. A recent analysis of his 88 dense and profoundly erudite letters emphasizes that his entering Byzantine service, notably as *doux* of Mesopotamia, did not entail complete cultural subjugation to his Eastern Roman paymasters[4]. A proud adherent of the Armenian Orthodox church, and therefore ipso facto an opponent of Byzantine Orthodoxy, whose family would dominate the

1 The account of this meeting between Gregory and al-Manāzī is given in the former's preface to his biblical epic in verse: Gregory Magistros, Magnalia Dei 33-35 (English translation), 107-110 (Armenian text). On Gregory Magistros, see the literature listed in Robert Thomson's bibliographies to Armenian literature: Thomson, Bibliography 127 f.; Thomson, Supplement 186 f. Since the publication of the supplement, see especially van Lint, Grigor Magistros; van Lint, Armenische Kultur; Weller, Byzantinophilia.

2 On the Magnalia Dei, see the overview with references to the scholarly literature in van Lint, Aṙ Manuč'ē.

3 Kaldellis, Streams of Gold 145 f.

4 Weller, Byzantinophilia.

office of *katholikos* over several generations, his scholarship and writings were nonetheless deeply imbued with Hellenism.

Yet, as Gregory's interaction with al-Manāzī demonstrates, the Armenian aristocrat's worldview, shaped by a life spent campaigning, administering and philosophizing in the borderlands between the Byzantine Empire and the Caliphate, was also profoundly influenced by Islamicate culture. Unique in his collection of missives are two letters addressed to a certain Emir Ibrahim, whose parents were an Armenian Christian mother and a Muslim father[5]. The first letter, Gregory's longest, answered his queries concerning the Christian faith and invited him to convert. Even in this intensely theological epistle, which sought to refute Muslim beliefs, Gregory was able to praise the caliph al-Maʾmūn as a ruler in the mold of Solomon, »who desired treasure that cannot be plundered, that is, the treasure of wisdom[6]«.

Less happy than Gregory's sojourn in the Byzantine capital was that of another poet almost a century earlier, that of Abū Firās (932-968), the cousin of the Hamdanid ruler of Aleppo, Sayf ad-Dawla. Like the emir Ibrahim or the fictional Digenes Akrites of Byzantine epic, Abū Firās was of mixed parentage: his father was Abū l-ʿAlāʾ Saʿīd, a high-ranking personage in Abbasid service, his mother was Byzantine. Though her exact origin remains unclear, it seems likely that she was captured by a raid into Byzantine territory led by Abū Firās' father in the year 931. It was his mother, a so-called *umm walad*, i.e. a slave mother usually of foreign extraction who by virtue of giving birth to the son of her master could no longer be sold and was guaranteed freedom after the death of her owner, and was often granted this earlier – who played a particularly prominent role in the »Byzantine« poems (*ar-rūmīyāt*) of Abū Firās[7]. Abū Firās composed these poems during his four-year captivity (962-966), much of which was also spent in the Byzantine capital. Throughout this period, as Sayf ad-Dawla seemed powerless to secure Abū Firās' release, his mother continued to intercede on his behalf and hope for his return.

It is the role both of Gregory Magistros and of Abū Firās as so-called cultural brokers between the Byzantine Empire and Arab Near East that serves as a useful entrée for the contents of the edited volume presented here. The contributions stem from a conference entitled »Monks, Merchants and Artists in the Eastern Mediterranean. The Relations of Byzantium to the Arab Near East (9th to 15th c.)« and held at the Leibniz Institute for European History in Mainz, Germany, on 17-18 October 2012. It was organized by Johannes Pahlitzsch and Vasiliki Tsamakda and sponsored by the Leibniz-ScienceCampus Mainz: »Byzantium between Orient and Occident«. The organizers envisaged the conference as a way of enhancing interdisciplinary cooperation, and as such invited experts from such disciplines as History, Art History and Archaeology, Theology and Islamic Studies. Thanks are due both to the participants of the conference and for their cooperation and patience during the extended gestation period of this volume.

We have divided the fourteen articles of this volume into six thematic sections: 1) »Boundaries and Borderlands«; 2) »Coexistence and Continuity«; 3) »Diplomacy and Mediation«; 4) »Melkite Artists as Intermediaries«; 5) »Mutual Artistic Interactions«; and finally 6) »Between Philosophy and Theology«.

Gregory spent most of his life and political career in what was very much a borderland region in the eleventh century, and indeed »Boundaries and »Borderlands« figure to a lesser or greater degree in all of the contributions presented here. Asa Eger, drawing upon his profound expertise in archaeology coupled with nuanced readings of the relevant literary sources, challenges the traditional narrative of the Byzantine-Arabic/Islamic borderland as a ravaged war zone through the presentation of convincing evidence for considerable, and in many cases state-sponsored, irrigation in the Early Islamic period. In »Coexistence and Continuity« Ute Verstegen examines the diachronic sharing of sacred sites in the Holy Land. Thereafter Robert Schick attempts to reconstruct the enigmatic history of the Christian community in Jordan in the ninth and tenth centuries.

Though the articles in the section »Diplomacy and Mediation« are more traditionally grounded in the *histoire événementielle* strand of scholarship on Byzantine-Arab relations, their authors nonetheless show that much remains to be done within this venerable field of scholarly inquiry. In his essay Nicolas Drocourt examines the mechanics of diplomatic exchange with Byzantium: the characteristics of Arabic-speaking ambassadors, the journeys of diplomatic missions to Constantinople and the conditions of their stay in the imperial capital. On the basis of Arabic sources Bettina Krönung intensively examines how Christian mediators were selected by Muslim potentates and how this process converged and differed within different polities. Alexander Beihammer explores shifting court strategies and ideologies at two critical junctures, namely around the 1050s as Seljuk incursions upset the preexisting diplomatic dynamic on Byzantium's eastern frontier, as well as the last Byzantine expedition to Syria under John II Komnenos in 1138.

Mat Immerzeel in the leading essay of »Melkite Artists as Intermediaries« examines how highly-prized Byzantine artists were often employed by patrons of other Christian creeds and their effect on autochthonous artistic traditions. In her wide-ranging examination Lucy-Anne Hunt connects different artistic sites and objects under the leitmotif of the reassertion of Byzantine imperial prestige under Michael VIII.

A triad of art historical essays fill the penultimate section of the volume, »Mutual Artistic Interactions«. Elizabeth Williams

5 Gregory Magistros, Letters, nos 70 and 71. On these letters to the emir Ibrahim, see van Lint, Aŕ Ibrahim amirayin.

6 Gregory Magistros, Letters 202 (no. 70).

7 On the mother of Abū Firās, see now Pahlitzsch, Prosopographische Notizen.

problematizes the confessional boundaries of dress and fashion postulated by older scholarship as well as the relationship between center and periphery in the dissemination of fashion trends. In her examination of the role of Pseudo-Arabic in the spectacular Church of Hosios Loukas, Alicia Walker highlights the hitherto neglected role of the church's monastic community in the creation of the foundation's iconographic program. Finally, Robert Hillenbrand offers an erudite analysis of how Byzantine artistic forms were adapted and transformed within the tradition of Islamic book painting.

Benjamin de Lee begins the volume's final section (»Between Philosophy and Theology«) with a contribution on the revival of Aristotelian thought in Niketas Byzantios' writings against Islam. Niketas, about whom we know far too little, is the first writer in the Byzantine tradition to have used a Greek translation of the Qur'an, which he cites extensively in his polemic. Via the Melkite polymath 'Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, Alexander Treiger introduces us to the intellectual ferment of Antioch under Byzantine rule and the remarkable spate of translations from Greek into Arabic it fostered. This literary activity constitutes an undeservedly understudied translation movement which the author favorably compares with its more famous Abbasid forerunner. In the concluding essay of this volume Sidney Griffith shows us the broad sweep of the development of the »Melkite« tradition in the Islamicate world.

Last but not least the editors would like to express their gratitude to Martin Dennert and Antje Bosselmann-Ruickbie for providing their art historical expertise, as well as Benjamin Fourlas, the coordinator of the Leibniz-ScienceCampus, and Stefan Albrecht of the Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, for facilitating the publication of this edited volume.

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Boundaries and Borderlands

Asa Eger

The Agricultural Landscape of the Umayyad North and the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier *

The Islamic-Byzantine frontier has become the centre of scholarly attention and, as a result, redefined. Recent archaeological and textual work on the *ṯuġūr* or Islamic-Byzantine frontier, supports the presence of settlements, communities, and people traversing back and forth and refute the notion of a »no-man's land«. However, textual evidence, mainly from Abbasid period sources, largely dates these activities from the mid-eighth to tenth centuries[1]. Evidence from archaeological surveys and excavations also supports more intensive settlement in the eighth to tenth centuries. Nevertheless, the idea of an unsettled frontier, as a default, should not necessarily include the period from the mid-seventh to mid-eighth centuries, implying an initial century of frontier fighting over a depopulated no-man's land. Focusing on the initial settlement of the frontier bears important implications for understanding the relationships between locals and between locals and the Umayyad ruling elite. This paper will utilize results from surveys and excavation combined with textual evidence from Greek, Arabic, and Syriac sources to closely examine the nature of settlement and social organization in the newly-acquired Islamic lands of the *ṯuġūr* in the seventh and eighth centuries. During this century, the Umayyad state and local, predominately Miaphysite Syriac-speaking Christian communities, both autonomously and in cooperation, developed key agricultural settlements alongside irrigation systems on the frontier.

Both Islamic and Christian sources say that when the Arab armies arrived, they found the frontier a wilderness, a no-man's land whose forts were destroyed and whose inhabitants had been deliberately removed in a scorched-earth policy in the wake of the Byzantine emperor Heraclius' retreat. Balāḏurī, the ninth-century Islamic historian recorded: »What is known to us is that Heraclius moved the men from these forts, which he *unsettled* [*šaʿaṯaha*]. So, when the Muslims made their raids, they found them vacant[2]«. From Arabic sources, upon leaving, Heraclius allegedly utters his famous farewell, from the Cilician Gates north of Ṭarsūs: »Peace unto thee, O Syria, and what an excellent country this is for the enemy […] What a benefit you will be to your enemy, because of all the pasturage, fertile soil, and other amenities you provide[3]«. Indeed, Islamic sources state that when the Arab armies arrived at Ṭarsūs, they found it abandoned and in ruin. Similarly, other Cilician sites were abandoned by the Byzantines, who fled to the mountains and left these cities to fall into ruin[4]. Accounts use the word *ʿimāra* (rebuild), but whose root has a greater range of implications than simply restoring buildings. The word refers to cultivated land, crops, or food supplies unavailable to the Arab armies due to Heraclius' destruction of the land[5]. In a larger sense, the word connotes becoming prosperous, populous, and civilized, implying a sense of organization that reverses *šaʿaṯaha*. These wider meanings add a level of necessity to rebuilding: the need to build from the ashes something that was better than its predecessor. This perspective, with its connotations of rebirth from ruin, is part literary topos, yet it has become thoroughly entrenched in subsequent scholarship that repeatedly projects the no-man's land of Cilicia onto the entirety of the Islamic-Byzantine frontier.

The vision of a no-man's land dominated by a line of castles is borne out by texts that describe the next three centuries, from the seventh to the tenth, as one of perpetual war between Byzantine and Islamic lands. From these frontier settlements, religious warriors would undertake summer annual raids or *ṣawāʾif* (singular *ṣāʾifa*) or *ǧihād* against

* This paper is mainly taken from Chapter 7 of The Islamic-Byzantine Frontier: Interaction and Exchange Among Muslim and Christian Communities (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014). I would like to thank Kyle Brunner; some of the more recent ideas evolved out of our independent study and his subsequent undergraduate thesis, »Umayyad Islamization: A Perspective into the Administrative and Economic Development of the Umayyad North«. I am grateful to Claire Ebert for her help in preparing the figures.

1 Bonner, Violence; Sivers, Thughūr 79-99.

2 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 164. Translation mostly following Hitti, Origins 253. The emphasis is mine. Hitti translated the verb *šaʿaṯa* as »to shatter«, however the word implies a less aggressive act of disuniting, scattering, dissolving, or disorganizing. This suggests that Heraclius did not destroy the forts but allowed them to fall into disrepair. Interestingly, of the Syriac authors only Dionysius of Tel Mahrē includes this account of North Syrian devastation, leading some to suggest a Miaphysite polemic against Heraclius; see Hoyland, Theophilus 107 with n. 231.

3 The quote in two parts comes from two sources. The first: Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 137. Translation following Hitti, Origins 210. The second of Azdī, Taʾrīḫ futūḥ aš-Šām 236,17-20. Translation following Conrad, Heraclius 145. It is interesting to note the tradition of a letter supposedly sent by the Prophet Muḥammad to the emperor Heraclius. In the letter, written several centuries later, the Prophet invokes the sin of the *arīsīyīn* (husbandmen or tillers of other's soil) on the Byzantines. Conrad has analyzed this to read a reference to the Parable of the Husbandmen in Matthew 21:33-41 but redirected whereby Heraclius and his Byzantine Christians should convert or else be »driven out of the vineyard«, and replaced by the Arabs who would better respect and rule in the name of God, the ultimate landowner: Ibidem 128-30.

4 This occurred in either 711-712/712-713 according to Ibn Šaddād, al-ʿAlāq al-Ḫaṭīra 2,127 and others, or 808-809/809-810, Balāḏurī [after al-Wāqidī], Futūḥ al-buldān 261-263. Ibn Šaddād, al-ʿAlāq al-Ḫaṭīra 153 (for Ṭarsūs), 128 (for Marʿaš), 127 (for Sīs).

5 Conrad, Heraclius 146.

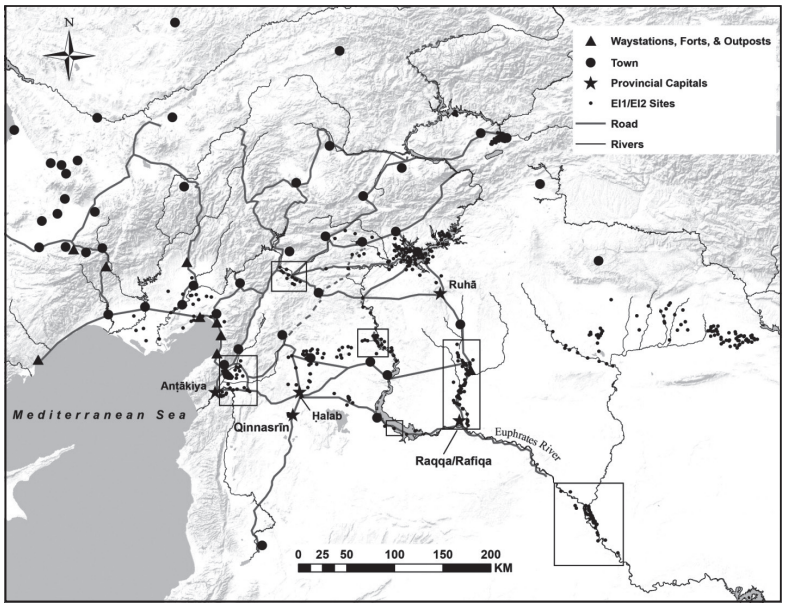

Fig. 1 The *ṯuġūr* and Ǧazīra regions of the Umayyad North with close-up maps indicated. – (Map prepared by C. Ebert).

non-Muslims north into Byzantine lands – a process recorded in the literature for virtually every year from around the death of Sulaymān and reign of ʿUmar II (c. 717) until the Byzantine reconquest (c. 965), in a perpetual war between Islamic lands and Byzantine lands, the *dār al-Islām* and *dār al-ḥarb*, or, as it was sometimes known, *bilād al-kufr* –»land of the infidel« – as it appears in juridical writings. The frontier in scholarship then has largely taken on the role of a backdrop to larger trans-imperial events; the role of local individuals or communities diminished to extra bodies on a stage.

The landscape of the *ṯuġūr* was neither a backdrop, nor empty, nor passive, but an inhabited, porous and connected region (**fig. 1**). The frontier zone is laid out roughly southwest to northeast along the Taurus Mountains that create a natural divide between uplands and lowlands. This divide was permeable. Furthermore, it was criss-crossed with roads connecting settlements: large cities that had functioned as important urban centres in the preceding centuries; towns and forts, way stations, small villages, farms, and monasteries, inhabited by Syriac-speaking Christians; and pastoral camps of Arab tribes, often invisible in texts, who roamed the area before the arrival of Islam. Travellers, pilgrims, diplomats, merchants, and armies all moved between Islamic and Byzantine lands across this landscape, as the varied papers in this volume show. Yet, if we focus our attention on the first Islamic century, a more nuanced picture emerges – not a no-man's land or fortified landscape, but that of a thinly settled landscape with newly founded agricultural settlements and irrigation systems, a partial validation of the concept of *ʿimāra*. This paper will present this archaeological landscape focusing on the seventh/eighth centuries and the Umayyad North comprising the *ṯuġūr,* (later *ʿawāṣim* in the early Abbasid period)*,* and *Ǧazīra* regions. The model of analysis used for all the data is derived from extensive/high resolution/large-area surveys where Early Islamic sites have been identified, and seventh/eighth-century and eighth/tenth-century settlements largely differentiated. These include the two large plains of the western central frontier*:* the ʿAmūq Plain of Antioch (Anṭākiya) in *al-ʿawāṣim* and the Kahramanmaraş Plain of Marʿaš, the forward post of Anṭākiya in *aṯ-ṯuġūr*; the Euphrates regions around Karkamış/Carchemish (Qennešre) and Bālis/Dibsī Farağ (Qāṣirīn) in the eastern central frontier of *al-ʿawāṣim*. The Balīḫ and Middle Euphrates river valleys in the Ǧazīra will also be examined for comparison. Data for the elusive Late Roman to Early Islamic period transition can be gleaned from many (around thirty-five) other recent high-resolution surveys and older low-resolution surveys from both the *ṯuġūr* and *ʿawāṣim* and also the *Ǧazīra* regions (in total, the Umayyad North), reassessed to produce a clear image of settlement patterns during this time. Dating (and re-dating) of sites comes mainly from ceramic analysis of key seventh and eighth century types and establishing whether sites were already preexisting or established *de novo*[6]. Canals, notoriously difficult to date, are dated by their attendant sites on their banks.

As the first level of analysis from surveys is often the number of settlements for each period, this is a good starting point in which to view the *ṯuġūr* landscape. Settlement favoured the Late Hellenistic/Roman/Early Byzantine pattern of dispersed small sites rather than nucleation on ancient Bronze and Iron Age tells. But, the overall number of settlements varied significantly. Throughout most of the frontier – in the ʿAmūq and Marʿaš plains and Upper Euphrates, the

6 These include Late Roman C 4, 10, and 14, Cypriot Red Slip and Egyptian Red Slip and key brittleware types. For a discussion of the methodology and results of each survey for these periods, please see Eger, Frontier 23-31.

overall number was roughly half that of the Early Byzantine period. In the Marʿaš plain, the number of Early Islamic sites was half that of the ʿAmūq. It is easy and indeed tempting to assign the powerful socio-political changes taking place to three early causative factors, including the voluntary emigration – and, in some cases, depopulation – of major Late Roman period settled areas to the uplands; the proportional rise (and advent) of pastoralist groups; and the effects of war and conquest on local populations. However, these last two are fairly invisible in the archaeological record and on the ground. Not all parts of the Umayyad North were less widely settled. Archaeological evidence does support continuing occupations of some (though not all) sites that avoided the uplands almost entirely, and were sited on the open plains, often unwalled, and neither heavily defended nor strategically inaccessible. Certain patterns of settlement already established in the Late Roman period persisted, such as the choice to occupy low mounds or flat sites rather than tells, the appearance of a small number of dispersed new sites, the consolidation of pre-existing sites, the rise of minor towns as self-sufficient polities, coupled with the reduction of major urban cities. Antioch, as an example, contracted within its Late Roman walls; the abandoned spaces forming agricultural and pasturelands[7]. This immediately challenges our textual assumptions of a no-man's land or battleground – the frontier, while not as *widely*, settled was still populated with denser larger farms, villages, or towns. As the dust settled following these political and military upheavals, two interlocking processes of settlement and interaction developed as early as c. 700 CE. Environmental change and the growth of marshlands led to new adaptations in settlement. While many pre-existing communities remained, following the same patterns of settlement as in the Late Roman period, a small number of new seventh-century rural estates were founded along canals and rivers and tied to agricultural, caliphal, and local entrepreneurship and land use. Hydraulic systems for transport, irrigation, and milling were important economic infrastructures that appeared alongside these new settlements. These processes offer other scenarios to the standard Muslim-Christian conflict narratives; they reveal gradual accommodation and adaptation among frontier groups and the involvement of the Umayyads in the largely Syriac-speaking agricultural lands of the north.

Canal and River Agricultural Estates

New sites were noticeably different, not only in number and location, but also type from Late Roman settlements. They appeared early in the seventh century and were linked to agricultural, state, and local entrepreneurship; land ownership; and local economic development. While river and canal

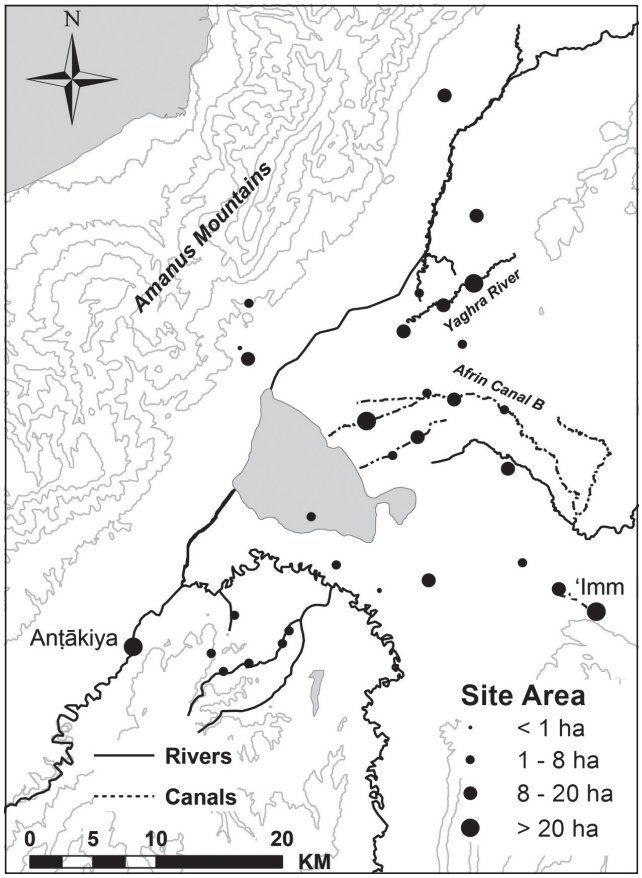

Fig. 2 The ʿAmūq Plain in the seventh/eighth century. – (Draft C. Ebert).

sites, along with canal building, had continued since the Late Roman period, new canals and their attendant communities became the first foci for seventh- and eighth-century settlement. These utilized systems of water sharing and canal management that were either cooperative or managed by one large estate.

In the ʿAmūq, Kahramanmaraş, and Balīḫ Valley Surveys, the biggest sites and those with the largest assemblage occurred as low mounds or flat scatters along canal systems, rivers, and within or on the edges of expanding lakes and wetlands. These sites also reflect the gradual expansion and permanence of the marsh. Canal and river settlements were linearly arranged, evenly spaced, and sometimes constituted double sites, set on either bank, as seen in the ʿAmūq Plain (ʿAfrīn Canal, ʿImm Canal, and Yaġrā River sites). Frequently, these sites were newly established. In the ʿAmūq, four out of eight newly established sites were located on canals and were also among the largest in size and assemblage, with similar parallels in the Kahramanmaraş Plain (such as the site of Domuztepe) showing that great importance was placed on irrigating the plain and controlling water resources from the onset of the Early Islamic period (**figs 2-3**). Two of the remaining newly founded sites were along the Kara Su River.

7 Eger, (Re)Mapping 95-134.

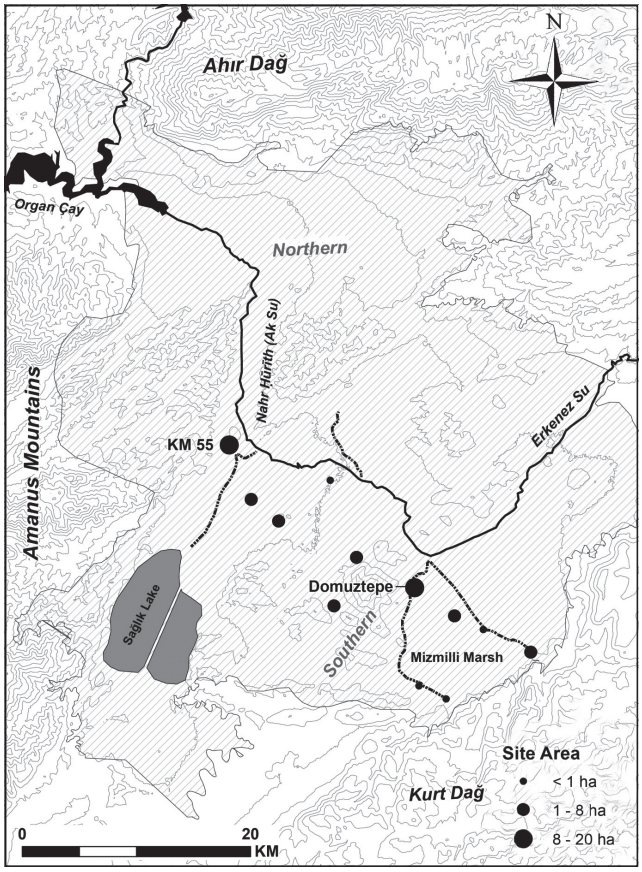

Fig. 3 The Marʿaš Plain in the seventh/eighth century. – (Map prepared by C. Ebert).

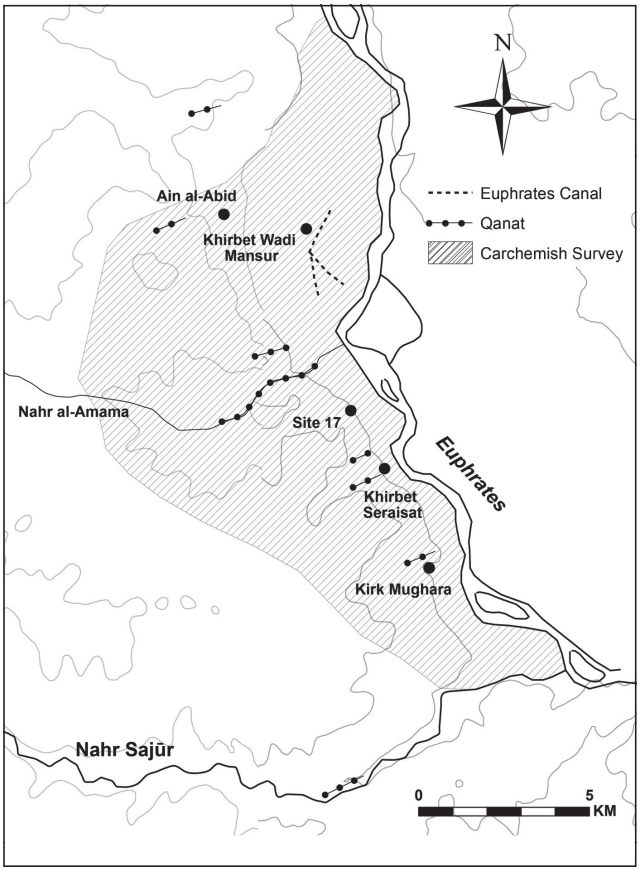

Fig. 4 The Euphrates around Karkamış/Carchemish in the Early Islamic period. – (Map based on Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes fig. 7, prepared by C. Ebert).

The double sites would have spanned a mill dam. Some terminated in a series of watermills used for grinding grain. Some of these sites can be hypothesized as Christian sites such as Yaġrā and ʿImm in the ʿAmūq Plain, based on textual sources; and Domuztepe, based on excavated material remains (such as chancel screen fragments, burials, and faunal assemblages)[8].

From the Ǧabbūl Plain, Tabqa Reservoir, and Tabqa Dam Surveys more sites in the Late Roman and Early Islamic periods appeared in the dryer eastern-steppe plain towards the Euphrates, linked with evidence of *qanāt* and canal systems dated by their proximal sites. Several of these sites were rather large, measuring between 10 and 30 ha in size, with no defensive walls, such as the site of Qaṣīrīn (Byzantine Neocaesarea/Dibsī Farağ). They were similar to the ʿAfrīn canal sites and were interpreted as estates or regional centers, while small 1 ha sites were interspersed among them – a pattern also noted in the Tabqa Dam Survey. Canals around Ǧarābulus (Jerablus)/Karkamış (Carchemish) (near Europos, the monastery of Qennešre), drawing from the Euphrates, were observed by the surveyors who recorded four types: earthen, dug canals; rock-cut channels; built stone channels; and *qanāt*s (**fig. 4**). Of the five Early Islamic sites, three were evenly spaced along the Euphrates (Ḫirbat Seraisat/Site 1, on the lower town of the tell; Kirk Muġara/Site 16 at the junction of the Sajur tributary; and Ḫirbat Wādī Manṣūr/Site 7 on a floodplain terrace) and two were clustered together on an upper terrace (350-400 m a.s.l.) west of the river (ʿAyn al-ʿAbīd/Site 4, a flat site; and Site 5, a low tell). In this area, nearly all Early Islamic sites were founded on pre-existing Late Roman ones. Sites 4 and 7 were only Late Roman/Early Islamic sites. The sole single-period settlement was Site 17, a way station. Notably, this small area featured extensive canal systems – also pre-existing, and continuing to be used in the Early Islamic period. A 9-14-m-wide canal on the west bank of the Euphrates ran parallel to the river and was flanked by evenly spaced Late Roman sites, one of which continued into the Early Islamic period, indicating that the canal may have been in use similarly. Flowing into this network, a wadi system was canalized with a rock-cut channel probably in the Roman period and remained in use into the Early Islamic, evident as flowing past Sites 4 and 5, and possibly connecting to a water mill near Site 7. Artificial stone canals channelled water from the Wādī Seraisat to flow into Site 1's lower town, and possibly also into a penstock water mill. Close by was evidence for baking lime and pottery manufacture. The overall system was of a main parallel feeder

8 Eger, Frontier 50-55.

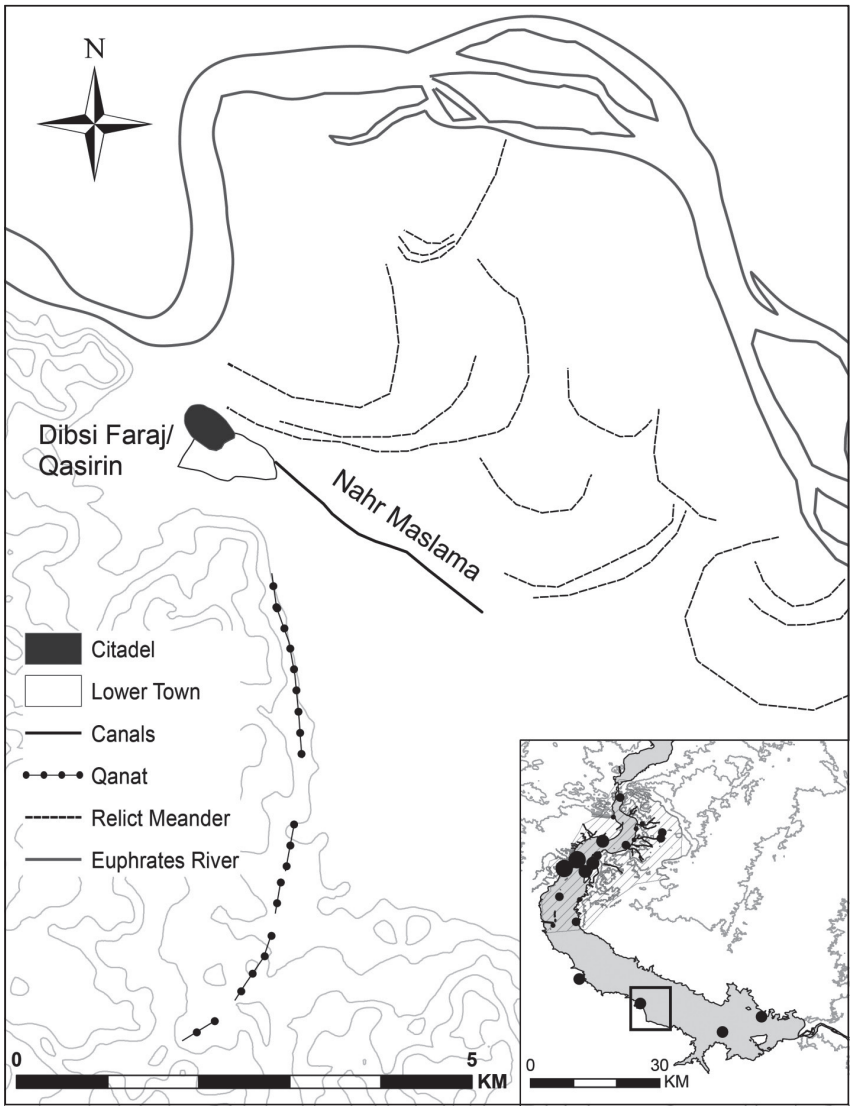

Fig. 5 The Euphrates around Dibsī Faraǧ (Early Islamic Qāṣirīn). – (Draft based on Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes fig. 6, prepared by C. Ebert).

canal alongside the Euphrates with eight recorded smaller, perpendicular side channels along each tributary wadi, 20-100 cm wide, 30-100 cm deep, cut into bedrock or lined with ashlar blocks to augment water collected from annual rainfall[9]. Some of these may have functioned as *qanāts*.

Canals and a *qanāt* were also found to be associated with Dibsī Faraǧ/Qāṣirīn (**fig. 5**). A main canal was dated by Early Islamic coins from the excavated fill. The Early Islamic canal replaced a previous canal system, which was perhaps also associated with small agricultural Late Roman and Early Islamic sites near the settlement. A 4 km-long *qanāt* brought water from the southern limestone steppe north towards the lower town of the settlement. The *qanāt* may date to the Late Roman occupation[10].

In the Ǧazīra, both the Balīḫ and Middle Euphrates valleys experienced an explosion of settlement in the eighth century as compared to the Late Roman or Sasanian periods. Evidence for the seventh/eighth century is less robust. Sites were newly founded all along the Balīḫ River between Raqqa and Ḥarrān (**fig. 6**). Extensive canal systems, including a long parallel primary canal and several secondary and tertiary conduits, were also identified. Although the surveyors dated nearly all of these to the Abbasid period, they mentioned that this was likely due to a difficulty in identifying the coarsewares. Textual evidence corroborates the presence of seventh/eighth century settlement and irrigation activity in the region. Most of the eighty sites were farmsteads, under 1 ha. Three sites were medium-sized villages (5-10 ha) while four were large villages between 10 and 40 ha. Interestingly, twelve sites exhibited Roman to Islamic period continuity. Seven of these twelve were at the larger end of the small class (3-5 ha) of farmsteads, suggesting growth and consolidation of smaller sites[11]. This implies that the remaining 68 sites were founded *de novo*. One of the most important sites was Ḥiṣn Maslama,

9 Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes 128; Wilkinson et al., Archaeology 239, 244.
10 Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes 128.
11 De Jong, Resettling 519.

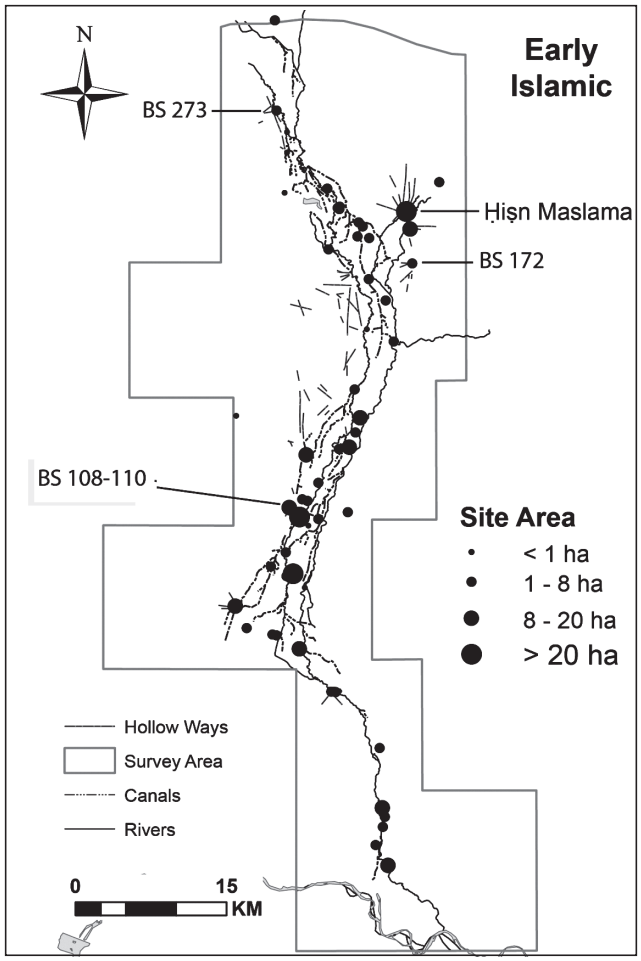

Fig. 6 The Balīḫ River in the Early Islamic period. – (Map based on Bartl, Balīh 345, 348 Map prepared by C. Ebert).

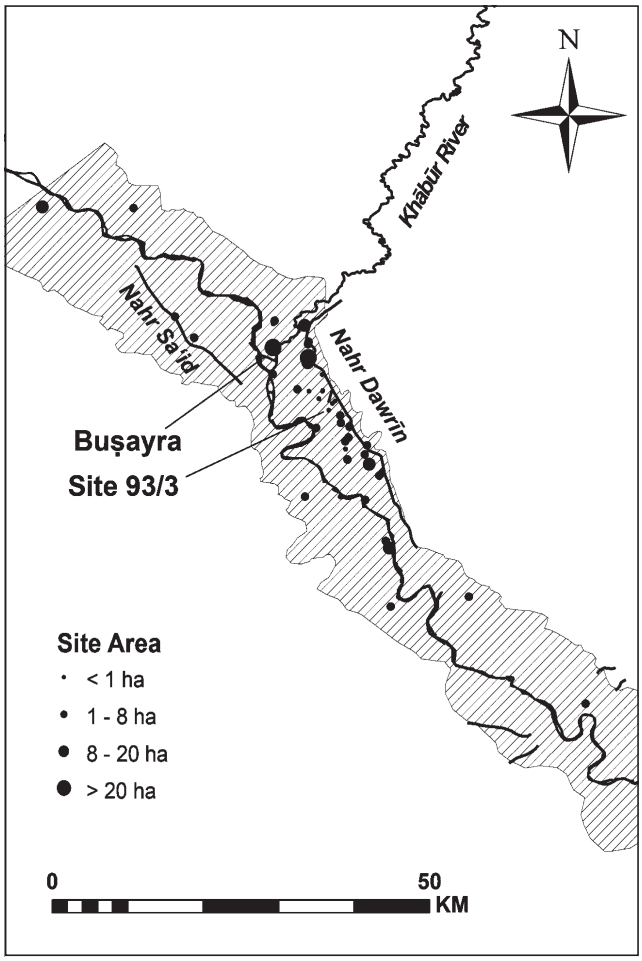

Fig. 7 The Middle Euphrates in the seventh/eighth century. – (Based on Berthier, Peuplement, Map D, prepared by C. Ebert).

a square enclosure measuring 330 × 330 m (over 100 ha) surrounded by canals 3 km away. The possibly identified settlement of Bāġarwān/BS 108-110 was a double-site, similar to those in the ʿAmūq. These sites would have been watered by an irrigation system comprising a main parallel feeder canal and secondary and tertiary canals that would have branched off, as suggested by the presence of sluice stones found at intervals. Many Early Islamic period field scatters alongside canals show archaeological evidence for the manuring and cultivation of irrigated land.

The Middle Euphrates region at the confluence of the Ḫābūr and Euphrates Rivers near Raḥba and Buṣayra (Qarqīsiyā) was also a locus of settlement and irrigation with many seventh/eighth-century sites increasing into the Abbasid period (fig. 7). Two long parallel canals, one on each side of the Euphrates, are corroborated by texts. The sites were irrigated by the Nahr Semiramis on the east bank. Several sites, notably tells, in the immediate vicinity of Buṣayra continued into the seventh to eighth centuries. Early Islamic settlements flourished, but were confined to a 60-km length of the river encompassing two major canal systems, one on either side of the Euphrates. As main feeder channels, both followed the parallel course seen in all Euphrates, Balīḫ, and Ḫābūr canals attested on surveys but were unlike the ʿAfrīn in the ʿAmūq, whose channels were bifurcated and channelized, or the Ak Su in Maraş, where dendritic perpendicular canals began at the source. Beginning in the second half of the seventh century, settlement flourished on the east bank of the Euphrates. The sites here were mainly organized along a newly-built canal, the Nahr Dawrīn, which was visible intermittently for 50 km. Some 36 sites were situated along this canal, 26 of which were from the seventh to eighth centuries. Most continued past the eighth century and more were founded and occupied until the end of the ninth century, from which period sedimentation was noted. The canal took water from the Ḫābūr and irrigated all of the Euphrates terrace land for a stretch of about 30 km downstream. Most sites were flat and small. Excavations of Site 93/3 revealed a square enclosure, 15.5 × 15.5 m with 60 cm-wide walls. The walls enclosed six rooms and an entry chamber around an internal courtyard. The Nahr Saʿīd flowed parallel to the Euphrates on its western bank for an intermittent length of 33 km. Settlement along it was less dense than on the Nahr Dawrīn, with only 14 associated sites – several of them tell sites. The use of tell sites is an interesting pattern, as many were not terribly high (maximum 6 m) and were newly founded Islamic period sites, i. e.

not pre-Islamic. They would have been in an advantageous position to avoid erosion caused by river avulsion, seen also with the Yaġrā River sites in the ʿAmūq. Soundings across the canal and the dating of proximal sites by ceramics and radiocarbon, however, uniformly attest to a later date for this canal, beginning from the ninth century. While the high point of settlement occurred in the Abbasid period and was linked to the increased population and demands of the capital of Baghdad and the city of Raqqa, settlement in these valleys began already in the Umayyad period.

Many of these locations lay within the marginal rainfall zone, which averaged 250 mm p. a. Although yields were not as robust as those in southern Iraq, these canal systems were less vulnerable to the constant effects of sedimentation and salinization experienced in the Sawād lands south of Baghdad. Yet it is remarkable to note canal-building efforts in the ʿAmūq Plain, which although having very low precipitation in the summer received enough rainfall per year, and sustained permanent wetlands, so as to make irrigation less of a necessity but more of an economic investment that offered a secure cushion during drier years.

Land Tenure

Canal systems and sites are well attested in the Early Islamic period on the Syro-Anatolian frontier. Yet, how these hydraulic estates or villages were settled, canals built, and water distribution organized are more complicated questions. So, too, are issues of land tenure and taxation in relation to these systems. Ideas of irrigation and social organization have developed significantly since K. Wittfogel's theory of Oriental Despotism, which stated that totalitarian empire-regimes became what they were because they were able to carry out and capitalize on large-scale irrigation projects using forced labour and to control water access through a hierarchical system. It is, rather, the reverse which holds true: large-scale empires enabled the development and spread of irrigation and water management in the Near East[12]. Scholars, in recognizing that local and chronological variations are paramount in any such claim, typically have argued for one of two revisionist models: either that irrigation was completely locally or tribally organized, or that canal- or *qanāt*-building projects were initiated and encouraged as a state enterprise but maintained on a local level, thus partially embracing Wittfogel's scheme[13]. Archaeology alone cannot resolve this issue, not least because many examples of irrigation works, such as canals or water mills, are not easily dated. Without ceramic or inscription evidence, such features are best dated via their associated sites as an overall system, a technique which has already been demonstrated.

The Umayyad state was not an absolutist empire. Rather, it represented a dominant family within a minority group of Muslims in the largely Christian Levant. In this sense, the Umayyads early on utilized the fragmented nature of Muslim and Arab groups in the Near East to their advantage by typically employing policies of indirect administration, with incentives of wealth and prestige by conquest, to cohere tribes and Christian communities gradually. These policies may have been part of sedentarization strategies employed with nomadic groups or soldiers on the frontier. They also functioned in granting larger autonomy to the Umayyad North, which was largely non-Muslim but mainly Miaphysite. Lands still occupied by non-Muslims were preserved but taxed with the *ḫarāǧ* land levy. Monasteries were included within this system, as is shown in the case of a young officer by the name of Sargīs (possibly a Christian) who was sent by Ilūšṭrayya, the *qāʾid* (leader) of Sumaysāt, to collect the *ḫarāǧ* and *ǧizya* taxes on the Dayr Mār Sarǧiyūs al-ʿArīḍ (Monastery of Mar Sergios the Broad) located near Ḥiṣn Qalawḏiya[14]. Another example is shown when Iyād ibn Ġanm conquered Raqqa and its region, leaving the majority of its land with already-established farmers (*al-fallāḥīn* or *al-arīsīyīn*)[15]. In other cases, Christian tenants paid their rents to Muslim landlords or agents[16]. From the sources, land tenure and tax as they related to the survival and relative autonomy of Christian communities are difficult issues to quantify chronologically or geographically, as are individual cases of conversion, although general remarks can be made[17].

In short, agricultural lands and estates were developed both privately and by the state. State or caliphal lands (*ṣawāfī*) were legally defined as lands appropriated during the time of conquests that had been abandoned because its occupants fled or were killed, that belonged to former Byzantine or Sasanian elites, or that comprised wetlands, post-houses, or mills[18]. Until the time of Muʿāwiya, these lands were for Muslim fighters but were then transferred to the state. Lands were also granted to Muslims in two main ways: as plots of land to soldiers on the frontier and as agricultural estates mainly to elites. *Qaṭīʿa* (pl. *qaṭāʾiʿ*) were lands given over to private ownership, often as estates, but whose produce was shared (*fayʾ*) or owners paid the *ʿušr*,

12 Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes 126 f.

13 For a recent example, see Braemer/Genequand et al., Water 36-57, esp. 46-50 for local development; and Braemer/Geyer, Conquest 110, for both local and centralized irrigation development. For al-Andalus, see Glick, Castle.

14 Life of Theodota of Amida (d. 698), section 85; in section 127 we learn of a monastery that becomes exempt from the *ǧizya*. Abu Yusuf (d. 798), in his *Kitab al-Ḫarāǧ*, states that *ǧizya* was only taken from monks living in monasteries if they were wealthy. If they were poor, it was to be paid on their behalf by wealthy monks. *Ǧizya* was also paid by ascetics who lived in towers (*ahl al-ṣawāmiʿ*, or stylites) only if they were wealthy; otherwise, monasteries paid for them. Abū Yūsuf, Kitāb al-ḫarāǧ 5,70, via Tannous, Syria 364.

15 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 237.

16 Humphreys, Communities 52 f.

17 For the most recent work, see the exhaustive study by Katbi, Land Tax, who demonstrates the shifts and complexities of this tax from region to region and over time and more recently Kennedy, Landholding.

18 The definitions vary slightly in sources; see ibidem 231 f.

or tithe, rather than the steeper *ḫarāǧ* land tax. The *qaṭāʾiʿ* lands could also be small, agricultural (*mazāriʿ*) or building (*masākin* or *manāzil*) plots with housing, given to soldiers who paid little or no tax or paid directly to the ruler (*īǧǧār*), and could be passed down as inheritance. After Muʿāwiya, instances of land grants increase, for example ʿAbd al-Malik gifts lands to frontier fighters in Maṣṣīṣa, the *ṭuġūr,* and the Ǧazīra[19]. His son al-Walīd gives soldiers from Antioch the land of Salūqiya (Seleucia ad Pieria) on the coast as a *qaṭīʿa* as long as they cultivated the land and paid a tax of one dinar and one *mudd* (about one dry litre) of wheat per *ǧarīb* (about 1592 m²)[20]. These were incentives for soldiers to remain and settle the frontier and continued into the early Abbasid period. A similar process had been used in the Roman and Late Roman periods as an impetus for veterans to settle the uplands. The second type of land tenure involved entrepreneurs, mainly Umayyad elites, who developed abandoned or previously non-agricultural lands with irrigation systems for cultivation. They were rewarded for their revitalization efforts on otherwise »dead« lands (*mawāt*) by becoming landowners with tax exemptions on account of their prior investments. In both types of land grants, the owner's tenure was secure; he or she could sell the lands or pass them down to kin[21]. Thus, whether directly, by owning lands, or indirectly, by granting them, the ruling Umayyad family took a personal interest in the frontier.

Irrigation – State or Local Initiatives?

Irrigation, particularly in the form of canal digging, was a costly enterprise, and one that subsequently required considerable upkeep to maintain the accompanying dams and outflows; remove sediment and overgrowth; and, particularly in southern Iraq, to deal with saline (*sabḫa*) accumulations. Mention by Michael the Syrian of an unfinished canal project under Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiya attests to this fact[22]. Frequent references in Balāḏurī and Ṭabarī, as well as in Syriac accounts, attest to numerous canal-building activities by Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, princes, local rulers and governors, and members of the elite (most notably, the sons of ʿAbd al-Malik)[23]. They all built »estates« (*ḍiyāʿ*) to support the intensive greening of both naturally fertile and previously uncultivated parts of the landscape.

The canal at Dibsī Farağ/Qāṣirīn can be identified as the Nahr Maslama that Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik (d. 738) had built in the first quarter of the eighth century, and which flowed from Bālis to Buwaylis (»Little Bālis«, unidentified) to Qāṣirīn, ʿAbidīn, and to Ṣiffīn according to Balāḏurī and the Syriac *Chronicle of Zuqnīn*[24]. The latter chronicler adds that he built forts and villages along the canal. As the former inhabitants of this land had fled, it was initially granted to fighters and Syrian Arabs who converted and settled. Inhabitants of five villages requested that Maslama build them a canal or Maslama himself take on the project. In any case, Maslama developed the lands and so retained them as *qaṭīʿa*[25]. Opposite the river was a canal 15 km long, beginning near Qalʿat Namrud and ending at the confluence of the Balīḫ with the Euphrates. It can be identified as the Hanī Canal, attributed to Hišām in the *Chronicle of Zuqnīn.* Agapius (d. 941/942) and the *Chronicle of 1234* mention the destruction of the estates of Hišām along the Euphrates by Marwān II, indirectly alluding to the presence of caliphal lands.

Ṭabarī mentioned a former companion of Marwān and one of his cavalry officers named Abū l-Ward (Mağzaʾa ibn Kawṯar ibn Zufar ibn al-Kilābī), who swore an oath of allegiance to the Abbasids. He lived with Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik's descendants at Bālis and a village called Nāʿūra (»Waterwheel«), located between Ḥalab and Bālis, in 749/750[26]. Although as yet unidentified, from the toponym we can surmise that this last site was built along a canal or tributary and involved in irrigation and perhaps milling. As-Saraḫsī (d. 899), traveling between Ḥalab and Bālis, stopped at the settlement and noted that there was a small stone fort belonging to Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik. About 13 km east was the village of Muḥammad ibn al-ʿAbbās al-Kilābī, known as Qaryat aṯ-Ṯalǧ. As-Saraḫsī observed that it was well-watered with canals from the Nahr Quwayq that runs through Ḥalab[27].

In the Balīḫ Valley, Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik built a canal (Nahr Maslama), diverting the Balīḫ River to supply water to a large cistern measuring about 5.8 m square and 22 m deep, and both canal and cistern irrigated (*yusaqī*) lands around Ḥiṣn Maslama (BS 187/Madīnat al-Fār) at the local inhabitants' request[28]. He also established the settlement of Ḥiṣn Maslama itself, for Muslims who had recently received or occupied land possessions[29]. Heidemann argues that Ḥiṣn Maslama may have functioned as a self-sufficient estate turned local administrative center for surrounding Balīḫ estates and ag-

19 Ibidem 247.
20 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 148, and Kennedy, Landholding 164.
21 See Qudāma ibn Ǧaʿfar, Kitāb al-ḫarāǧ 32; Kennedy, Feeding 181 f.; Bonner, Violence 140-145.
22 Michael the Syrian, Chronique 3,470; 4,446; Morony, Michael 143.
23 For examples in Iraq and Iran, see Lapidus, Development 177-208; Kennedy, Rule 291.
24 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 151. In Pseudo-Dionysius of Tell Maḥrē, Chronicle of Zuqnīn 160 f. both Hišām and Maslama dug a canal known as the Bēth Bališ in or around 717-718.
25 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 151; Kennedy, Incomes 143; Katbi, Land Tax 239 f., 249; Kennedy, Landholding 166.
26 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīḫ ar-rusūl wa-l-mulūk, 3,1,52 (Arabic) and Ṭabarī, 'Abbasid Revolution 176 (English). This may be the same as Nauar, used by Baldwin in 1121 as a base to attack Aṯārib; cf. Asbridge, Principality 82. See Dussaud, Topographie 474; Ibn aš-Šiḥna, Ad-Durr 40.
27 Rosenthal, Manuscripts 138 f.
28 Yāqūt, Muʿǧam (1990), 2,306; Ibn Serapion, Description 59. Maslama also built canals in southern Iraq on *qaṭīʿa* lands that he received, thereby gaining prestige among farmers; Kennedy, Feeding 179.
29 Haase, Foundation 245-253, 247; Haase, al-Far 167; Heidemann, Mudar 501.

ricultural activities, such as those given to retainers. Yāqūt states that Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik gave the land (*āqṭʿa* as *qaṭīʿa*) to one of his captains, Āsīd of the Sulaym, who walled the village and built it up[30]. It is also possible that the Nahr Maslama is the same as the Nahr al-Abbara, dated to the sixth to eighth centuries, as both flowed along the east side of the Balīḫ where all of the major Early Islamic period sites (including Bāġaddā/probably BS 172, Mahrē/BS 142, and Bāġarwān/probably BS 108-10) were found. A secondary canal, flowing from the main Nahr al-Abbara to the settlement of Ḥiṣn Maslama, was recorded (**fig. 6**)[31]. The canal may be identified with one built by Hišām as caliph in 724, based on Syriac accounts such as that by Agapius of Manbiǧ who said: »He opened up many abundant water channels and it was he who drew water from the river above Callinicum (Raqqa)« and, similarly, the anonymous author of the *Chronicle of 819*: »and he [Hišām] diverted a river from the Euphrates to irrigate the plantations and the fields which he made near it[32]«. Raʾs al-ʿAyn was irrigated by canals, as was a town of Maslama ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, given as a land grant to one of his men, Usayd as-Sulamī, and possibly identified as Bāġaddā[33].

The Nahr Dawrīn is not attested in historical accounts. Ṭabarī mentions the donation of a piece of desolate (*ḫarāb*) land called Dawrīn, along with its villages, to the as yet not caliph Hišām, which the latter then turned into an estate from which he received revenue[34]. Textual sources indicate that the Nahr Saʿīd was a large canal, built in Umayyad times on land that was formerly overgrown (*ǧayda*) and full of lions, that diverted waters from the Euphrates in a loop to irrigate the district capital of Raḥba, and which flowed from Qarqīsiyā to Dāliya (**fig. 7**). The land was given as a *qaṭīʿa* by Walīd to his brother Saʿīd al-Ḫayr ibn ʿAbd al-Malik, who built the canal and other buildings. Soundings across the canal and the dating of proximal sites by ceramics and radiocarbon, however, uniformly attest to a later date for this canal, beginning from the ninth century, as such, diverging from the textual evidence[35]. It may have been dug by the Umayyads but developed later as part of the Abbasid ascendancy in the region.

Euphrates' canals, due to the deeply incised nature of the northern portion of the river and high banks, would have required lifting devices such as waterwheels (*naʿūra* and *sāqiya*) to bring the water to the canals. Fragments of *qadūs* jars found at Dibsī Faraǧ support the presence of such installations. In the Middle Euphrates, intact vessels of a *qadūs* or *sāqiya* type, but more spherical, were discovered at seven sites and related to water-lifting devices mainly from the end of the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. These would have brought water to higher terraces and secondary canals, whose perpendicular traces were noted. Other waterwheels are inferred by villages named after water-lifting-device terms, such as Nāʿūra, between Ḥalab and Bālis near the Ǧabbūl Lake, and ad-Dāliya (waterwheel) near ar-Raḥba and the Nahr Saʿīd on the Euphrates. Hārūn ar-Rašīd, while traveling down the Euphrates, observed *naʿūra* waterwheels at ar-Raḥba. Similarly, to the major ʿAfrīn canal sites, many of these settlements were Early Islamic period foundations or else flourished in the Early Islamic period under the Umayyads, and were largely abandoned by the tenth century.

From textual references, we see that Maslama and Hišām's canal-building projects are entrepreneurial and represent an investment in assuring their own elite status, bringing provincial funds to the state capital, and food to major towns and cities A poem by Ǧarīr ibn ʿAṭīya (c. 650 - c. 728), implies that Hišām's construction of the Hanī was a costly and enormous effort:

»You (Hišām) hewed out from the Euphrates flowing canals, blessed, and they have been constructed just as you wished

The mountains bowed to your wish; they were mute, while cut up by iron.

You arrived at the Hanī *[canal]* and there gave thanks, for the solid mountain was leveled.

Olives give a rich yield there and clusters of black grapes weigh down *[the boughs of the vine]*.

The Hanī has become an earthy paradise, even the envious acknowledging that it is the everlasting *[garden]*.

They bite their fingertips *[with frustration and envy]* when they see these orchards ready for harvesting

[and they see] pairs of fruit trees and date palms bearing a ripe yield[36]«.

Not only court poets took note, but also Syriac accounts all mention the activities of Caliph Hišām, who built canals and diverted water in the Balīḫ and »established plantations and enclosed gardens and spent much money on creating these things«. Agapius states that he was the »first of the Arabs to take on estates for himself« and received revenue from all of this. The Hanī Canal's revenue, according to Michael the Syrian, surpassed the amount collected from taxes in the entire empire[37]. Michael the Syrian and the author of the *Chronicle of 1234* also allude to high taxation and tribute. This latter, anonymous, author also mentioned that Hišām

30 Yāqūt, Muʿǧam 1,382.
31 Wilkinson, Settlement 75.
32 Theophilus of Edessa, Chronicle 224.
33 For Raʾs ʿAyn see Saraḫsī via Yāqūt, Muʿǧam 3,15f.; Rosenthal, as-Saraḫsî 71 (English translation). For Bāǧaddā, see Saraḫsī via Yāqūt, Muʿǧam (1955), 1,372; Rosenthal, as-Saraḫsî 73.
34 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīḫ ar-rusūl wa-l-mulūk, 2, 3,1735 (Arabic) and Ṭabarī, Waning 77f. (English). See also Agapius and the *Chronicle of 1234*, in Theophilus of Edessa, Chronicle 258f.
35 Berthier, Peuplement.
36 Ǧarīr, Dīwān 1,291, lines 39-45. I am grateful to Tahera Qutbuddin for assistance with the translation. For »bite their fingertips« (line 6), cf. Qurʾan 3:119; for »pairs of fruit trees and date palms« (line 7), cf. Qurʾan 50:10 and 55:52. See Nadler, Umayyadenkalifen 262.
37 The location of the Zaytūna Canal, mentioned in the Chronicle of Zuqnīn as having been built by Hišām along »towns and forts and many villages« in 717-718, is not completely known but thought to be in the same region, around Raqqa. Pseudo-Dionysius, The Chronicle of Zuqnin 160f.; Michael the Syrian, Chronique 3,490; 4,457; Sarre/Herzfeld, Reise; see Rousset, Vallée 565, n. 79. See Robinson, Empire 87 with n. 189. Morony, Source 143.

used »free and forced labour« in the undertaking of these canals[38]. In most cases, caliphs would have had a caretaker (*wakīl*) to manage the estate, usually worked on by *mawālī*[39]. Apart from the standard paraphrasing that exists in the Syriac texts, these anecdotes do illustrate caliphal irrigation activity in the Ǧazīra. Yet, and this cannot be overstated: caliphal or central-state initiatives as such must not be assumed to have been general practice. Even the Syriac authors allude to the fact that no other caliph before Hišām did any of these things. References to managing estates under the *diwān ad-ḍiyāʿ* (office of estates) and *diwān al-mawāriṯ* (office of estate inheritances) in the growing administrative framework of the Abbasid state suggest that by the ninth century, other landowners were running estates, however, the intensity of caliphal initiatives for irrigation projects and agricultural estates greatly diminished after the caliphates of Manṣūr and Mahdī at the end of the eighth century[40].

Were agricultural estates in the north only to finance the Umayyad's own treasury or feed its major settlements to the south? Caliphal patronage of irrigation and associated estates in the north necessitates mention of the more famous *quṣūr* or »desert castles«. Some of the *quṣūr* or »desert castles«, many which have elaborate irrigation and garden systems and mills and oil presses such as Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Ġarbī, Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Šarqī, Qasr al-Hallabāt, and Ruṣāfa, can also be strongly considered as agricultural estates[41]. Their role as part of region-specific patronage, such as Hišām and Maslama's activities in the north, has been argued before[42]. Undoubtedly, they were important for their location on major caravan and migration routes. What is also evident in all of these examples is caliphal intervention in greening the largely Syriac-speaking Miaphysite rural north: the eastern central *ṭuġūr* later in the early Abbasid period known as *al-ʿawāṣim* and the Ǧazīra. Further, many of these places such as at Dayr az-Zakkā at Raqqa, Ruṣāfa, and Qaṣr al-Hayr al-Ġarbī were continuing Christian and monastic communities[43]. As such, these estates may have facilitated political and economic relationships between the Umayyad elites and local non-Muslim villages and monasteries[44]. This could have been done by administering and collecting taxes from non-Muslim neighbours whose lands benefited from the irrigation enterprises and by using these estates as centres of local economic distribution.

Evidence also exists for local initiatives on both the level of monastery and of village/town. Again, Syriac texts provide some insight, but rarely, as most are devoted to the *Lives* of saints. The canals around the monastery at Europos on the Euphrates, can be perhaps be identified with a mention, in the *Life* of Theodota of Amida, of irrigation ditches feeding fields of grain, fruit, and produce around Qennešre[45]. As no person is associated, these may be indicative of local activity, although this is conjecture and uncertain. More tangible evidence for local initiative is found with Symeon of the Olives who built, in Naṣībīn (Greek Nisibis) and all around the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn, numerous monasteries equipped or associated with shops, inns, animal enclosures, olive groves, irrigation channels, and mills. He even built a »large and beautiful mosque« next to the church in Naṣībīn, a *madrasa,* and a *pandocheion*, or hostel. He paid for this work using gold and silver that his nephew found hidden as a hoard, a likely exception for the norm of funding monasteries by private donation and alms from wealthy urban elites or holy men who had died and willed their possessions. Proceeds from agricultural production and rent went to the monasteries themselves. Indeed monasteries, particularly large ones like Qartmīn (Mor Gabriel on the Ṭūr ʿAbdīn), could own other monasteries[46]. Qudāma ibn Ǧaʿfar alludes to local canal-digging in his discussion of sharing water rights, providing examples both hypothetical and anecdotal of individual and village irrigation efforts[47]. Such excavation was a shared activity, but cleaning out, damming, and supervising the canals was directed by the Imām »from the moneys of the Muslims«. He also details the sharing and equalization of water rights between landowners upstream and downstream along rivers and canals, even the issue of giving more rights to the downstream farmer. The Muslims from five villages around and including Bālis asked Maslama to build them a canal (the second Nahr Maslama) and in return gave him one-third of its produce (*ġullātihim*) as a tithe for the government (*ʿušr as-sulṭān*)[48]. Normal *ʿušr* – the tribute paid by Muslims, as opposed to the higher-rate, *ḫarāǧ*, tax paid by non-Muslims – of lands watered by artificial means was one-twentieth, or five percent, as opposed to one-tenth or ten percent, as the name implies. This demonstrates the tax-incentive quality to irrigated lands common on the frontier. This is more apparent during the reign of the caliph 'Umar II, when a double *ʿušr* (essentially a *ḫarāǧ)* was levied on lands that used water from existing irrigation systems and neighbouring lands, rather than develop their own[49]. In Bālis, the lands were subject both to the Muslim tithe to the state and yields to the landowner or patron[50]. Furthermore, this shows that local groups required state authority to assist them in land development and reclamation, at least concerning irrigation from the Euphrates, Tigris, and other major rivers of the region. Maslama, in his role as governor of the frontier from Cilicia to Mesopotamia,

38 Hoyland, Chronicle 223 f.
39 Kennedy, Rule 292.
40 Lapidus, Development 187 f. Lapidus argues that the focus then shifted to building up Baghdad and Sāmarrāʾ.
41 Originally put forth by Sauvaget, Chateaux 1-49; then Kennedy, Rule 291-297. See most recently, Genequand, Proche-Orient.
42 Bacharach, Building 30 f.
43 Genequand, Ghassanids 63-83; Fowden, Plain 71 f. for agricultural activities.
44 For a discussion on the relationship between monasteries and quṣūr as points of interaction between Umayyads and local inhabitants and tribes, from the perspective of Ḫirbat al-Mafǧar, see Jennings, Khirbet al-Mafjar 164-174.
45 Life of Theodota of Amida 175.
46 Life of St. Simeon of the Olives 371.
47 Qudāma ibn Ǧaʿfar, Kitāb al-ḫarāǧ 60-62.
48 Balāḏurī, Futūḥ al-buldān 151.
49 Abū Yūsuf, Kitāb al-ḫarāǧ 146.
50 Kennedy, Incomes 142 f.

helped develop land with large-scale irrigation efforts, but the maintenance, organization, and control was most likely left to the local communities. In this fashion, canal-building projects were »agents in the settlement and colonization of areas that formerly had been sparsely settled«, although, to be sure, they were not new innovations and in many cases replaced older hydraulic systems[51].

Water milling was directly tied to irrigation practices, and was similarly a caliphal/state or private investment. In the Ḫābūr and Ṭūr ʿAbdīn and Tigris regions, mills had been known since at least the fourth century[52]. Caliphal mills (ʿ*urūb*) were built at a high cost around Mawṣil, beginning in the Marwānid period, and were a major source of revenue[53]. Mills were similarly constructed at great expense by Hišām. They were also described at Naṣībīn and Qennešre along the Euphrates. They could also become »privatized«. What did the State gain from these irrigation and milling enterprises? Beyond a portion of the yields and a major source of revenue, these public works were incentives for frontier inhabitants, nomads and soldiers, to settle down and channel a degree of loyalty to the central state, thereby affording the latter a level of control. They also cemented ties with non-Muslim groups who were the majority population. Further research, which correlates areas of irrigation temporally and geographically with taxation records, can consider if such intensive irrigation projects were also designed to meet or mitigate the burdens of an increasingly demanding taxation system[54]. What can be considered here is how settlements and irrigation systems were organized spatially and socially.

A salient observation is that these canal systems, as seen from both archaeological and textual evidence, were rather conservative and localized *in scale*. None of them resembled the 230 km-long Nahrawān Canal built in the sixth-century Sasanian Empire, which was capable of irrigating 8000 km² (800 000 ha) of land. Even the potentially largest of the *ṭuġūr* and Ǧazīra systems, such as the Nahr Dawrin or the Ḫābūr River zone, was estimated to irrigate only 30 000 ha. Based on this size, although the central administration continued to have a political and economic hand in irrigation works, canal construction, maintenance, and organization was on the scale of a town – or the collective authority of multiple hydraulic villages. The evidence shows that great importance was placed on irrigating the plain and controlling water resources from the onset of the Early Islamic period in the Syriac-speaking, Christian-dominated north. Configuring the artefactual and textual datasets together, each with their coarse or fine built-in chronologies, these activities can be first dated to at least ca. 700.

Archaeology can offer some spatial interpretation. In the ʿAmūq, the sites on ʿAfrīn Canal B are 4.48, 6, 1, and 35 ha in size from east to west, in the direction of its flow; the largest site sits at the end of the canal. For the ʿImm Canal system, the sites are 2.25, 1, and 4.5 ha; the largest is also at the end point, where a system of water mills was found. In the eastern Marʿaš Plain, of the two canals recorded in the Mizmilli Marsh, the eastern one's sites were 1.13, 0.79, and 6 ha in area, while the western canal sites were 6, 2, and 4 ha. With all of these canals, the estimated site sizes were not equal and the middle site(s) were the smallest. In three examples, the last site on the system was the largest. Water rights would have been allocated in proportion to the amount of lands and site size. The first and last positions on the canal would have been the most important, however: the former to manage the head dam, diverting water, and the latter as this was the most likely location for milling industries (as seen at ʿImm), which were placed at the end of the system so as not to unfairly reduce water supply downstream. By contrast with an artificial system, the Yaġrā River sites were all the same size (around 12 ha each).

The use of tells in the Marʿaš canal systems may be similar to patterns in al-Andalus. In the west, defence was secondary to water supply. Forts that protected water systems and major canals, or were militarily strategic, and villages that administered water systems and canals were not mutually exclusive to any area. They were all part of the landscape, and often their roles cannot be clearly discerned. For example, tell sites with forts may be perceived as control points on higher ground. In the area around Torrent and Picanya, south of Valencia, six out of a group of ten villages had an associated tower-refuge[55]. In some cases, the fort was built on a tell and located at one end of the canal. It also stands to reason that a tell site in the centre of a canal group could similarly have protected the supply. Both examples occur in the Marʿaš canals, and they underscore an association of defence with water supply – particularly necessary in areas so close to the Taurus frontier, as in the Marʿaš Plain.

The textual evidence for local-authority, state, or even caliphal-sponsored waterworks is significant and at the same time biased towards lauding the efforts of rulers in making even the most marginal areas fertile and economically viable. Community-initiated canal systems would, perforce, be invisible in the historical record, and inscriptions are scarce. With this state of evidence, we can suggest three levels, following K. Butzer's tripartite system based on scale[56]. The macro scale involved state building projects on major rivers such as those for the long Euphrates, Balīḫ, and Ḫābūr Canals. It also in-

51 Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes 138.
52 Wilson, Water-Mills 231-236.
53 Robinson, Empires 85; Braemer/Genequand, Water 50.
54 See Wilkinson/Rayne, Landscapes 138, and also for a chart and discussion showing that post-Iron Age irrigation works occurred in areas where there was more rainfall, and therefore supplemented a variety of functions including water supply to baths, latrines, nymphaea, and ablution areas in mosques.
55 Pérez Medina, València 603-617. See the foundational work by Bazzana/Cressier/Guichard, d'Al-Andalus. See, also, an example of recent work by Gilotte, Estrémadure.
56 Butzer et al., Agrosystems 490.

cluded caliphal/state lands (*ṣawāfī*) and estates, such as those of Hišām on the Euphrates. Surveys indicate that these were between 25-64 km. At the meso scale, although the central administration continued to have a political and economic hand in irrigation works, canal construction, maintenance, and organization was carried out by a collective authority of multiple villages or estates – as in the ʿAmūq Plain for the ʿAfrīn and ʿImm Canals, and in the Marʿaš Plain, as well as for Bālis or Dibsī Farağ off the Euphrates. The influence of the caliph could offer a measure of support and protection, particularly in frontier lands. Those projects orchestrated with elite funds tended to appear in documents – as in the case of the *ṣawāfī* lands around Bālis, given as *qaṭīʿa* – while the ʿAmūq and Marʿaš Canals may have been more in the way of community initiatives, and thus not mentioned in texts. These were about 12 km long. Lastly, the micro scale would involve a system in which only communities beyond the influence of the central state, such as those in the Syrian Ǧibāl, were digging out their own irrigation systems, »invisible« to the textual record.

In all examples, however, local maintenance and organization would have been needed. Since irrigation strategies reduced water flow both in the main rivers and in subsidiary canals, settlement arrangements would have demanded cooperative and local systems of resource sharing, suggested by the relatively even distribution of sites along the channels. The exceptional work done in al-Andalus on irrigation and social organization is useful for suggesting models of community interaction and exchange on the Syro-Anatolian frontier[57]. These hydraulic villages, occupying equidistant plots of land along canals and rivers, may have been organized by tribal, clan, or religious affiliation (and exhibited differing tax status). Muslim and Christian communities may have shared the same water system, as perhaps they did at the Yaġrā River sites, at ʿImm and its satellite sites, and Domuztepe. Ethnographic first-person accounts by a villager and canal worker in southern Iraq show that community leaders and village or tribal *šayḫs* made decisions cooperatively in periodic meetings and determined how to divide up the responsibility of maintaining the irrigation system, including assigning families rotational guard duties[58]. In many cases, knowledge of how to build and maintain canals was locally transmitted from pre-existing farmers who were managing these systems before the Islamic conquest.

The *ṭuġūr,* (later ʿ*awāṣim*), and *Ǧazīra* regions, comprising the Umayyad North in the mid-seventh to mid-eighth centuries was not a no-man's land, but an agrarian developed landscape. Though not densely settled as in the Roman and Late Roman periods in all parts, new settlements appeared. As shown from survey, excavation, and mainly Syriac and Arabic textual accounts, the Umayyad state and local communities, both autonomously and in cooperation, developed key agricultural settlements alongside irrigation systems on the frontier, the ʿ*imāra* from texts. Focusing on the initial settlement of the frontier bears important implications for understanding the relationships between different local Miaphysite Christian communities, nomadic and settled groups, and between these locals and the Umayyad ruling elite and raises larger issues for future work on Umayyad patronage in the Christian north in the seventh/eighth century and the degree of Islamicization over time.

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57 Bardhan, Commons 87-92, esp. 90; Glick, Castle 69. See also Barceló, al-Andalus; Martínez Sanmartín, Hidráulicos 90-93; Kirchner, Design 151-168.

58 Rost/Hamdani, Iraq 213 f.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Agricultural Landscape of the Umayyad North and the Islamic-Byzantine Frontier

The *ṯuġūr*, (later *ʿawāṣim*), and Ǧazīra regions, comprising the Umayyad North in the mid-seventh to mid-eighth centuries, was not a no-man's land, but an agrarian developed landscape. Though not densely settled as in the Roman and Late Roman periods in all parts, new settlements appeared. As shown from survey, excavation, and mainly Syriac, Greek, and Arabic textual accounts, the Umayyad state and local mainly Miaphysite Syriac-speaking Christian communities, both autonomously and in cooperation, developed key agricultural settlements alongside irrigation systems on the frontier.

Die Agrarlandschaft des umayyadischen Nordens und des islamisch-byzantinischen Grenzgebiets

Die *ṯuġūr*-Region (später *ʿawāṣim*) und die Ǧazīra, von der Mitte des 7. bis zur Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts den umayyadischen Norden bildeten, waren kein Niemandsland, sondern eine landwirtschaftlich entwickelte Landschaft. Obwohl diese Region nicht so dicht besiedelt war wie in der römischen und spätrömischen Zeit, entstanden doch im ganzen Gebiet neue Siedlungen. Wie aus Surveys, Ausgrabungen und hauptsächlich syrischen, griechischen und arabischen Texten hervorgeht, entwickelten der umayyadische Staat und lokale, hauptsächlich miaphysitische syrischsprachige christliche Gemeinden, sowohl selbständig als auch in Kooperation, wichtige landwirtschaftliche Siedlungen entlang der Bewässerungsanlagen an der Grenze.

Coexistence and Continuity

Ute Verstegen

How to Share a Sacred Place – The Parallel Christian and Muslim Use of the Major Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem

As a memorial that is claimed by two world religions with competing traditions, the Temple Mount in Jerusalem today is a prime example of a site of confessional conflict. It is, however, the turbulent history of several other locations in Jerusalem considered by different religions or confessions to be holy sites which provides examples of spaces used for inter-religious and multi-religious purposes. Some of these sites are considered sacred by two religions, a few even by members of all three local faiths, Christians, Jews, and Muslims. The Israeli historian Ora Limor has already discussed important aspects of this topic in her paper »Sharing Sacred Space: Holy Places in Jerusalem between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam« published in 2007[1]. Her research focused on tombs of holy persons that were – or still are – venerated by members of more than one religion, David's Tomb on Mount Zion being a prominent example[2].

In this paper another phenomenon shall be discussed: the use of memorials of Christian salvation in Jerusalem and Bethlehem by both Christians and Muslims from the Muslim conquest of the region in the 630s through the Middle Ages[3]. Some later references in Ottoman sources will also be mentioned. It will be shown how a common use of these places by Christians and Muslims was established, by whom and by what means these »arrangements« were attempted through architecture, media and ritual.

At first glance, it might seem astonishing that Christians and Muslims set up places of worship within the same buildings. However, in an essay published in 1991 in the journal »The Muslim World«, Suliman Bashear showed that during the first and early second centuries after the rise of Islam Muslims praying in churches was a common practice[4]. For example, the handover agreements of settlements frequently contained the regulation that a quarter or half of an existing church had to be assigned to the Muslim conquerors as a place of worship[5]. This indicates that in some areas mosques were established within existing churches, while the Christian community still used the same building[6]. Recently, Mattia Guidetti has shown that the newly-installed Muslim places of worship were mainly located in adjacent parts within the wider building precinct, such as in courtyards or baptisteries, and not within the main Christian church building itself[7].

But how can one imagine such a shared use of one building complex? According to a tradition from the first half of the tenth century, an early Islamic legal scholar named Abū ʿAbd Allāh Ǧaʿfar ibn Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣādiq (born 699/700 or 702/703 in Medina; died 765) allowed Muslim prayer in churches. On the question of how a Muslim should behave when non-Muslims made use of the same place, he answered that one should turn towards the *qibla* wall and ignore them[8]. Only after separate mosques had been built for the Muslim population, or existing buildings had been entirely converted into Muslim places of worship, can it be suggested that this practice declined.

Places where Christians had commemorated the life and Passion of Jesus and Mary held a special position for both Muslims and Christians, as in the Qurʾān the Prophet ʿĪsā and his virgin mother Maryam play an important role as well[9]. As Bashear pointed out, according to early Muslim traditions

1 Limor, Sharing. Meri, Cult discusses examples of shared rituals in tombs of local saints in Syria; Berger, Veneration discusses tombs venerated by Jews and Muslims in Palestine. Basic analysis of different types of sharing the holy: Kedar, Convergences; Weltecke, Loca Sancta.

2 Limor, Sharing 224-226. On the practice of Muslim veneration of local Christian saints see also: Key Fowden, The Barbarian Plain; Key Fowden, Sharing Holy Places; Weltecke, Loca Sancta; Irwin, Palestine. On the modern situation see e. g.: Bowman, Nationalizing the Sacred. For general approaches to multi-faith sites from a cultural history perspective see: Albera, Mixing; Albera/Baskar, Religions; Albera/Couroucli, Sharing; Albera/Marquette/Penicaud, Lieux saints partagés; Beinhauer-Köhler, al-Aqsa; Beinhauer-Köhler/Schwarz-Boenneke/Roth, Viele Religionen; Bowman, Sharing; Choulia, Holy Places; Couroucli, Shared Sacred Spaces; Hamilton, Saidnaya; Holmes, Shared Worlds; Kedar, Convergences; Kofsky/Stroumsa, Sharing; Mersch, Churches; Olympios, Shared Devotions; Verstegen, Multireligiöse Gebetsräume; Verstegen, Normalität oder Ausnahmesituation; Verstegen, Trennung.

3 A shorter version of this article has been published in German in: Verstegen, Geteiltes Gedenken. Some of these places are mentioned by Elad, Medieval Jerusalem; Peri, Christianity; Verstegen, Multireligiöse Gebetsräume; Verstegen, Normalität oder Ausnahmesituation. On St Mary's tomb: Arce, Cult.

4 Bashear, Qibla. See also Tritton, Caliphs 39f. (sources); Elad, Medieval Jerusalem 138.

5 Busse, ʿUmar-Moschee 80. For the general study of these contracts: Noth, Verträge 282-314; Cohen, Pact of ʿUmar; Noth, Problems of Differentiation. See also comments in Guidetti, Contiguity 231 with n. 8; 252-255.

6 Busse, ʿUmar-Moschee 74. Examples were the bishop's cathedral of Damascus and the Church of St. Sergius at Resafa (both Syria), where Muslim places of prayer were established in the courtyards.

7 Guidetti, Byzantine Heritage; Guidetti, Contiguity.

8 Bashear, Qibla 280 (with reference to a tradition that goes back to first half of tenth c.). Commentaries on how to behave when a Muslim was confronted by a Christian in a place of worship usually refer to Sura 17,85: »Say: ›Every man works according to his own manner; but your Lord knows very well what man is best guided as to the way‹«. (Surat al-ʾIsrāʾ/The night journey).

9 Mourad, Stories; Mourad, Mary in the Qurʾān; Mourad, Jesus in the Qurʾan; Abboud, Mary in the Qurʾan.

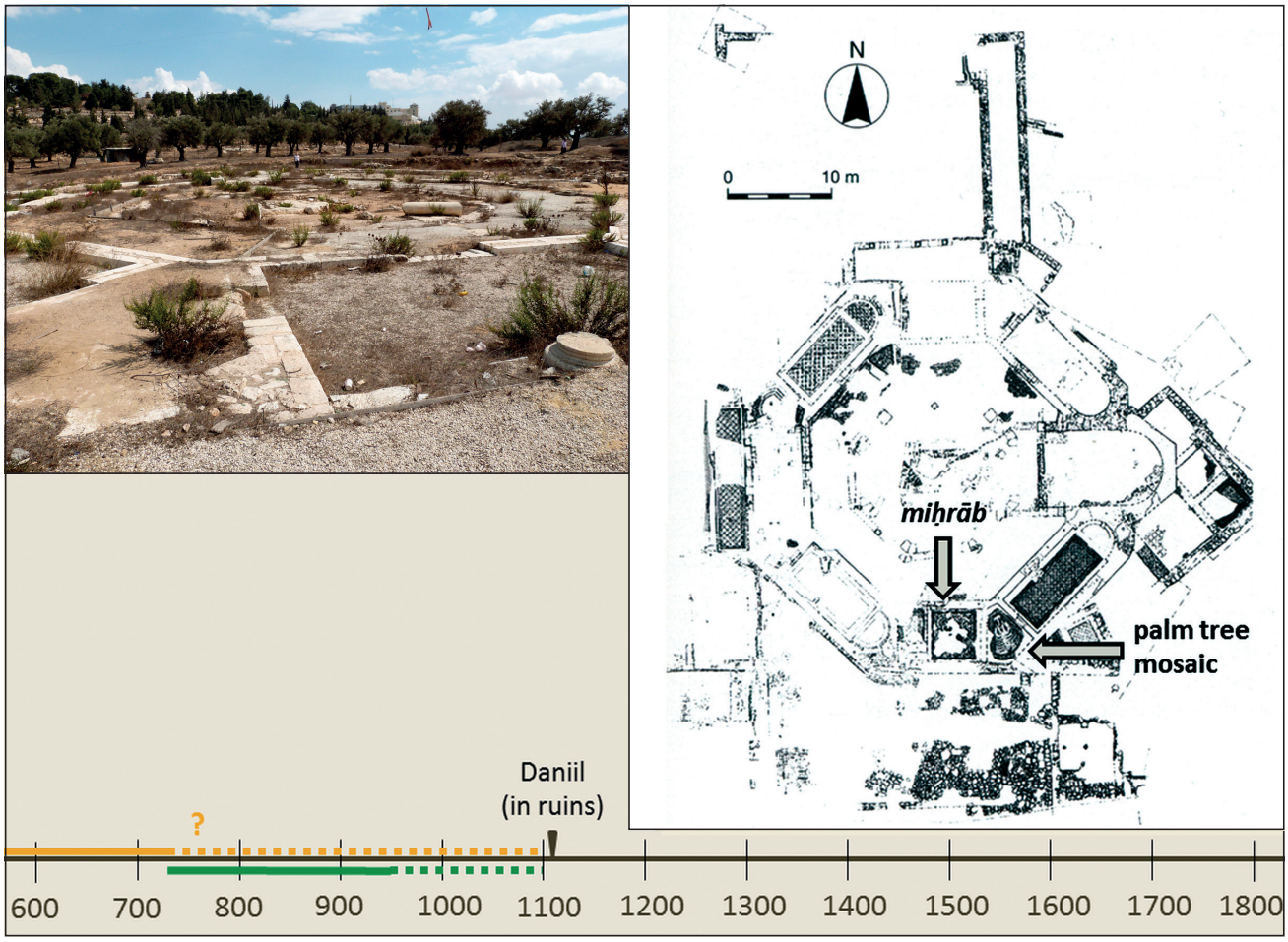

Fig. 1 Jerusalem, road to Bethlehem. Church of the Kathisma. Ground plan (Avner) and view. – (Plate Verstegen, 2015; Plan Avner, Recovery of the Kathisma fig. 13. Photo Seetheholyland.net, 2018, Wikimedia Commons, CC-BY-SA-2.0).

in some cases even Mohammed himself, his entourage and successors were said to have visited these memorial sites and to have prayed there[10]. In the following, some examples of how Christians and Muslims arranged solutions for their clashing interests of owning and visiting these holy places will be presented.

Church of the Kathisma

The earliest known example of a transformation of a Christian sacred place into a Muslim place of worship is the Church of the Kathisma situated at the third mile along the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem[11]. This building was excavated between 1993 and 2000 by the Israel Antiquities Authority under the direction of Rina Avner[12]. The excavations uncovered the lower parts of the walls of an octagonal central building that incorporated a flat rock in its centre (**fig. 1**). A ring of columns or pillars surrounded the central space and separated it from an ambulatory. From there doors gave access to a ring of surrounding rooms in which four larger chapel-like spaces and some smaller rectangular and interstitial spaces were located. The entrances to the building were originally situated in the west, north, and south, while towards the east an apse projected out of the octagon[13].

Historical sources give a wide range of information about this building. For example, around 520 the author of the *vita* of the monk Theodosios tells us that a rich noblewoman named Ikelia financed the building of a church and an adjoining monastery of the so-called »Old Kathisma« in the time of Juvenal, who was bishop of Jerusalem from about 422 to 458[14]. Based on this historical text and on archaeological sources, the dating of the original construction of the church ranges from 431-439 to 450-458[15]. The text also states that

10 Bashear, Qibla 273-277.
11 See also Verstegen, Trennung; Guidetti, Contiguity 250 f.
12 Rina Avner has published a number of articles on the church, see e. g.: Avner, Mar Elias; Avner, Recovery of the Kathisma; Avner, Kathisma; Avner, Initial Tradition; Avner, Dome of the Rock. See also Shoemaker, Traditions 81-98; Shalev-Hurvitz, Holy Sites Encircled 117-141. Rina Avner's PhD thesis on the Kathisma church (Hebrew University at Jerusalem, 2004) is still unpublished.
13 Shalev-Hurvitz, Holy Sites Encircled 117-141. The author argues that initially the church of the Kathisma was constructed without an apse, which might have been added in the 6th c.
14 Theodorus Petraeus, Vita Sancti Theodosii 12,4-14,4 (ed. Usener 13 f.); Kyrillos von Skythopolis, Vita Theodosii 236 f.
15 Avner, Mar Elias 139; Shalev-Hurvitz, Holy Sites Encircled 120; 146-156.

the church was dedicated to Mary the Theotokos and had been built halfway from Jerusalem to Bethlehem at the place of Mary's rest (the meaning of the Greek word *kathisma* is »seat«). A resting place of Mary on the way to Bethlehem had already been mentioned in the apocryphal *Infancy Gospel of James* in the middle of the second century[16], so that a local tradition of this place related to the rock might have existed before the church was built[17]. Around 570 the Piacenza pilgrim tells us that meanwhile a water basin had been installed around the rock that was filled by a spring from which Mary was said to have drunk during her rest on the flight to Egypt[18]. This basin might be identified with the remains of a complete remodelling of the central part of the octagon in a second phase, which, according to the archaeological results, took place in the sixth century[19]. It was not until 1107/1108 in the report of the Russian pilgrim Abbot Daniel that this building was mentioned again. The traveller described the ruins of a beautiful church, which at that time apparently was no longer in use[20]. The written sources do not provide any information about what had happened to the building in the meantime.

Therefore, it is even more surprising that the recent excavations discovered a third construction phase in the first half of the eighth century, in which the building was adapted to the requirements of a Muslim place of worship[21]. For this purpose, the southern door was bricked up and replaced by a *miḥrāb* niche[22]. The building was partially provided with new floor mosaics. The apse was dismantled, and an L-shaped annex oriented to the southeast was erected there instead. In one of its rooms a lavish mosaic with pearl medallions was laid out on the floor. These changes indicate that the building was not used as a church anymore (at least not primarily), and that the prayer direction in the eastern part may have been changed to the southeast, while in the central space the *miḥrāb* pointed southwards[23].

Apparently, the building still retained its former role as a place of worship for Mary, connected with the notion of Mary in Sura 19, verses 22-25, which describe the events in the context of the virginal conception and the birth of Jesus:

»So she conceived him, and she withdrew with him to a distant place. And the birth pangs surprised her by the trunk of the palm-tree. She said, ›Would I had died ere this, and become a thing forgotten!‹ But the one that was below her called to her, ›Nay, do not sorrow; see, thy Lord has set below thee a rivulet. Shake also to thee the palm-trunk, and there shall come tumbling upon thee dates fresh and ripe‹«.

The connection between the place and this passage in the Qurʾān was reflected by the iconographic program of the newly-designed mosaic floor: in one of the southern interstitial spaces a mosaic pavement showed a large, fruit-bearing date palm, which was flanked by two little trees[24].

It cannot be determined conclusively whether later the building was attended by Muslims only. Maybe the outer ring of chapel-like rooms could have been used by non-Muslims as places of prayer, so that Muslims and Christians might both have visited the place[25]. In the eighth or ninth century a mosaic inscription bearing a cross symbol was laid out in one of the outer rooms[26]. This detail supports the assumption of an enduring Christian presence in the Kathisma building[27]. It is furthermore an interesting fact that the motives of the bowing palm tree and the refreshing waters were also present or taken over in Christian tradition in a slightly altered way in the apocryphal »Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew«, written between the middle of the sixth and the end of the eighth century[28].

One explanation why the Kathisma church underwent one of the earliest Muslim adoptions of a Christian holy site might be the fact that the building had already lost its former importance in the Christian liturgical calendar before the Muslim conquest of the region. Around 600, a new church for the Mother of God had been erected over her venerated tomb in the Kidron valley, commissioned by the Byzantine emperor Maurice (r. 582-602)[29]. Later, one of the most important liturgical Marian traditions celebrated on the 15th of August that had formerly been commemorated in the church of the Kathisma, was taken over by the new church of St Mary, and only the dedication feast of the Kathisma church was still celebrated there two days earlier[30]. There are no sources testifying exactly how long the latter tradition was practised or when the building started to fall into ruins.

Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem

The worship of Mary in the former Church of the Kathisma might have come to an end in the first half of the tenth century at the latest. For it was at this time that Muslim pilgrims started venerating the remains of a palm tree that was said to have served as a resting place for Mary on her way to Beth-

16 Gospel of James 17,3. See Apokryphen 427.
17 This corresponds to the reference of a feast of Mary, celebrated in August, in the liturgical calendars of Jerusalem, e. g. in the Armenian lectionary (compiled before 442), and in the Georgian lectionary. Cf. Renoux, Codex 354-357; Garitte, Calendrier 301.
18 Antonini Placentini Itinerarium 28 (CCSL 175, 143).
19 Shalev-Hurvitz, Holy Sites Encircled 120; 123-126.
20 Leskien, Pilgerfahrt 39.
21 Avner, Recovery of the Kathisma 180. The date is based on coins finds, which give a *terminus post quem* 715-730, under the mosaics belonging to this third phase.
22 Avner, Recovery of the Kathisma 180 fig. 13; Guidetti, Contiguity 251 fig. 13.
23 I am grateful to Rina Avner for this information and interpretation of the archaeological record. Perhaps the room was set up as the »eastern place« where Mary drew aside from her family, according to Sura Maryam 19, verses 16 f.
24 An iconographic parallel can be found in the Umayyad mosaics of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. See Avner, Recovery of the Kathisma 182.
25 Avner, Recovery of the Kathisma 182.
26 Cotton et al., Corpus II 531 f. App. 11 (Leah Di Segni).
27 I here agree with Avner, Dome of the Rock 42.
28 Ps-Matthew 20,1-2. For a comparison of both texts see: Mourad, From Hellenism to Christianity; Mourad, Mary in the Qurʾān 166-169.
29 Küchler, Jerusalem 683-697; Pringle, Churches III 287-306; Shalev-Hurvitz, Holy Sites Encircled 141-167 (with a differing date to the fifth c.); 401 fig. 13.
30 Tarchnischvili, Lectionnaire 1,29 f.; 2,26 f.

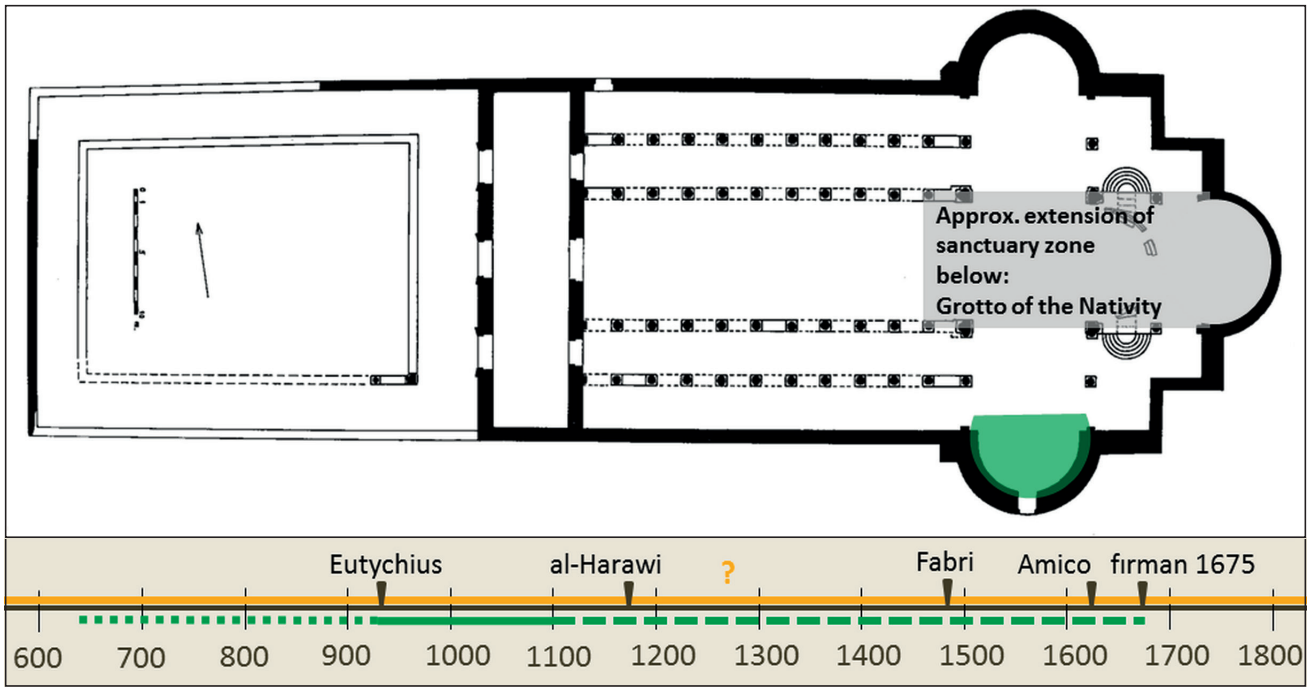

Fig. 2 Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity. Ground plan. – (Plate Verstegen 2015; Plan Ovadiah, Corpus fig. 22b).

lehem and was now shown in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem (fig. 2)[31]. There was also a Christian author who testified that in the first half of the tenth century Muslims used parts of the Church of the Nativity as a prayer hall. The *Annals* of Eutychios (Saʿīd ibn al-Baṭrīq, the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria who died around 940) handed down a legendary account about ʿUmar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb (r. 634-644), who was a close confidant of Mohammed and the second caliph. While visiting the Church of the Nativity at prayer time, he asked Jerusalem's Patriarch Sophronios (634-638) where he could perform a prayer[32]. Sophronios is said to have pointed towards the »southern vault«. Eutychios goes on by writing that in fact this part of the building later became a Muslim place of worship, while ʿUmar allegedly assured special privileges to the church by contract. It is interesting that Eutychios tells us that in his day, which means about 935, the Muslims did not comply with these regulations. The result had been that in those parts of the church older wall paintings or mosaics with Christian iconography had been eliminated and replaced by Qurʾānic verses. In addition, Muslims would not enter one by one, which Christians would apparently have considered to be acceptable, but assembled at prayer times, and a muezzin even called them to prayer[33].

For a reconstruction of where the Muslim place of prayer might have been installed inside the precinct of the Church of the Nativity according to the descriptions in Eutychios' account (a vaulted place in the south of the building containing Christian imagery, and being spacious enough for a communal prayer), the most probable part of the building would be the southern apse of the triconch church that had been erected in the sixth century in place of an earlier Constantinian church. Probably the reason for the Muslim use of the southern apse as a place of prayer was that this part of the church pointed towards Mecca, like a *miḥrāb*, and thus suited the needs or convention of accentuating the *qibla*, the Muslim prayer direction. But maybe there were some more reasons rooted in the structure and interior appearance of the building in the seventh century onwards.

As recent investigations by a mainly Italian team of the University of Ferrara have shown, the triconch building replaced the Constantinian foundation shortly before the Muslim conquest of the region[34]. Radiocarbon analyses of the wooden beams of the building give a date of 605 ± 50 years[35]. In addition to other historical and archaeological criteria I suggest that the rebuilding took place from the 560s onwards[36]. While in the west and north of the building the archaeological investigations have revealed adjoining buildings (e. g. of a monastery), to date no early Byzantine structures are known on the southern side of the church, besides an entrance to burial chambers below the church.

31 The Persian author al-Iṣṭaḫrī stated that a fragment of this palm tree was shown in the Church of the Nativity (before 951). This was repeated by Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Baṭṭūṭa) in 1355. See Baldi, Enchiridion nos 120f.

32 Eutychios, Annalenwerk 120.

33 Eutychios, Annalenwerk 120.

34 Bacci et al., Church of the Nativity. For general introductions to the history and archaeology of the Church of the Nativity see: Bagatti, Betlemme; Restle, Bethlehem; Ovadiah, Corpus 33-37; Stekelis / Avi-Yonah / Tzaferis, Bethlehem.

35 Bacci et al., Church of the Nativity e25.

36 Verstegen, Heiliger Ort 449-455.



Fig. 3 Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity. Exterior view of the southern conch, upper level. – (Photo Verstegen, 2010).

Each apse of the triconch was lit by three windows that were placed at a high level in the walls. In the southern apse the one in the middle is now used as a door giving access to a high level terrace (**fig. 3**), and the recent investigations suggested that in the beginning all three windows might have served as doors. More on-site research is needed concerning this point. If there was at least one door in the original plan, then it is possible that Muslim believers could have entered their place of prayer without crossing the nave of the church.

One more reason for the use of the southern apse as a separate Muslim place of prayer might have been the situation of the liturgical arrangements in the eastern part of the Church of the Nativity (see **fig. 2**). It was typical for churches at that time that the most sacred areas were separated by low barriers, so that only privileged persons like clerics could enter them. In the Church of the Nativity, this sanctuary zone probably was the area marked in grey in the reconstruction. The sanctuary contained the altar placed under a *ciborium*, the seats of the clerics in the eastern apse and a baptismal font next to them. Flights of steps at the northern and the southern side of the sanctuary led down to the grotto of the Nativity with the birthplace of Jesus and made this holy place accessible for pilgrims. It is quite clear that both side apses did not belong to the sanctuary and thus to the liturgically most important and most frequented part of the building. As there were no altars, relics or other important »points of interest« situated there, perhaps it was quite easy to pass the southern apse over to the Muslim community.

During the time of the common use of the eastern parts of the church by Christians and Muslims, no permanent installations seem to have been established to separate the two religious groups. At least, no such arrangement has been demonstrated so far[37]. It is likely that a separation was achieved either by the use of lightweight materials such as a wooden screen or textiles, or by differing time-spans in which the groups were allowed to enter the building. Whether there was ever any form of separation at all cannot be determined yet.

Later, in the Crusader period, Muslims continued to be given the opportunity to visit the Church of the Nativity as pilgrims[38]. The Muslim place of prayer in the southern conch did not exist any longer, as the whole building was refurbished and decorated with a new Christian iconographic programme[39]. Even after Saladin's conquest of the Holy Land and the departure of the Crusaders, the church remained in

37 Harvey, Structural Survey VI already noted this point in 1935. The latest investigations of the building were done in 2010/2011 by an Italian team conducted by Claudio Alessandri. See: Alessandri/Mallardo, Structural Assessments.

38 Mentioned by al-Harawi in 1173. See Harawī, Kitāb az-ziyārāt 29 (ed. Sourdel-Thomine 69 f.).

39 Kühnel, Ausschmückungsprogramm; Kühnel, Decoration; Keshman, Crusader Wall Mosaics.

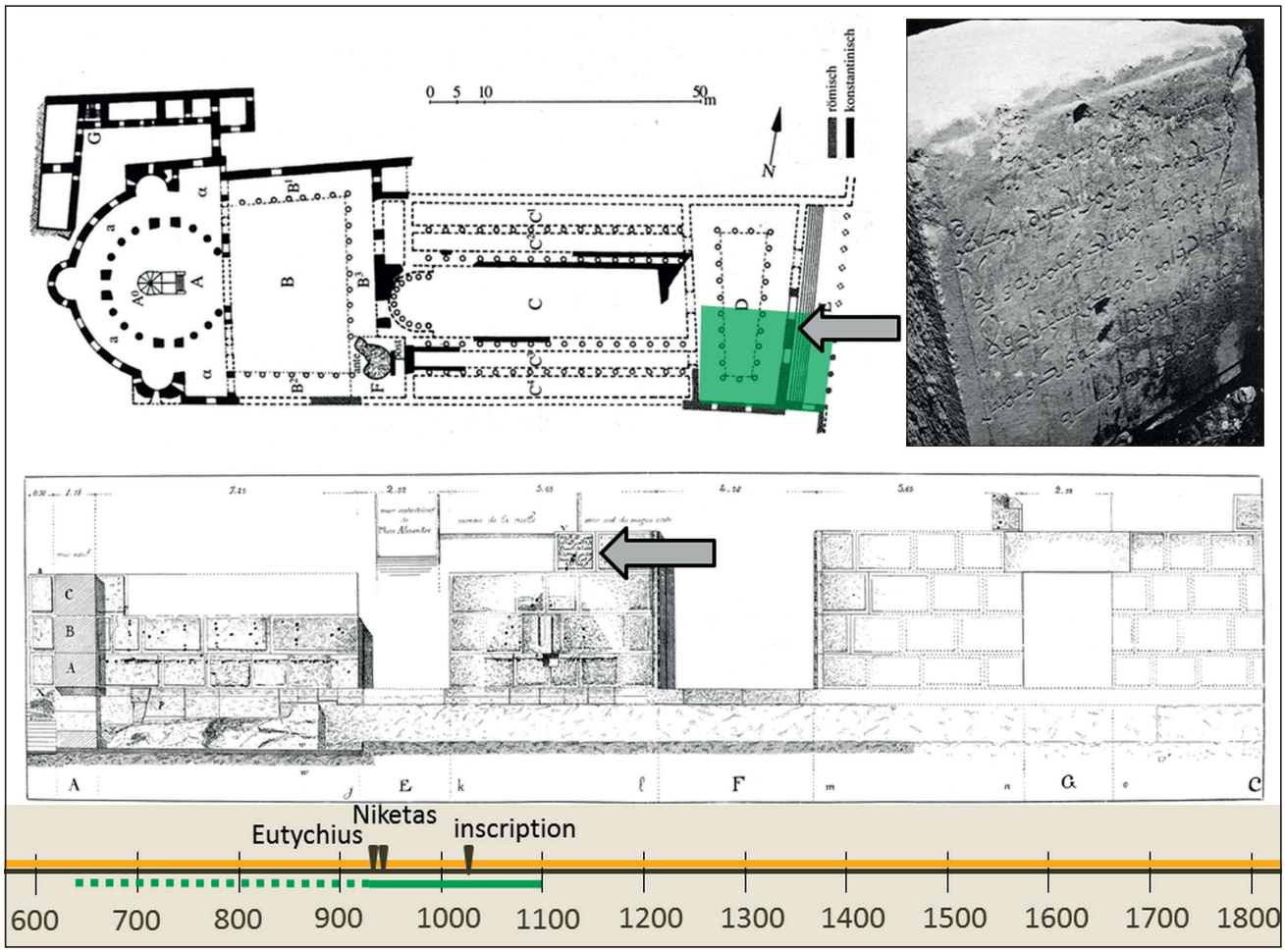

Fig. 4 Jerusalem, Church of the Resurrection (Holy Sepulchre). Ground plan (Krüger), the area of the mosque (green), and the place of the inscription (arrows) are marked. – (Plate Verstegen, 2015; Plan Küchler, Jerusalem fig. 232; Photo Vincent/Abel: Jérusalem pl. VI).

Christian hands and was administered by the local Orthodox clergy[40]. The treaty of 1229 between Frederick II and Sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil stipulated that the Latin Church would take over the property again, and that Muslims had the right to make a pilgrimage to the church and to pray there[41].

This practice is also documented in later sources. In the 1480s, the Dominican pilgrim Felix Fabri reported simultaneous visits to the cave of the Nativity by Muslims and Christians, describing their behaviour as following: »Many times I have seen pagans falling down at the place kissing it with a sigh and weeping«[42]. In 1620, Bernardino Amico still mentioned Muslims visiting the Grotto of the Nativity[43], and an official decree (*firman*) of the Ottoman government given in 1609 confirms that it was common practice for Muslims from the Jerusalem region to undertake pilgrimages to the Church of the Nativity and to perform prayers in the grotto[44]. In 1675, there was a dispute between local Christian and Muslim authorities on the accessibility of the Church of the Nativity, based on a judgement that Muslim dignitaries from Jerusalem could initiate a great common annual pilgrimage to the Grotto of the Nativity, culminating in a ceremonial prayer[45]. As a result of this debate, the Grand Mufti Ali in Istanbul, the highest religious authority in the Ottoman Empire, issued a *firman* which finally condemned Muslims entering the Church of the Nativity[46].

Church of the Resurrection (Holy Sepulchre) in Jerusalem

In the aforementioned *Annals* of Eutychios, the author also provides information about the Church of the Resurrection

40 See Harvey, Structural Survey XI; Peri, Christianity 67. A *firman* executed by the Ottoman government in 1589 confirmed the Christian property in the Churches of the Nativity in Bethlehem and of the Resurrection in Jerusalem, see Peri, Christianity 69.
41 Harvey, Structural survey XI.
42 Felix Fabri, Pilgerfahrt 55: »Ich hab' oft gesehen, daß die Heiden da auf der Stätte niederfielen auf ihr Angesicht und die Statt mit Seufzen und Weinen geküßt haben«.
43 Amico, Trattato 12.
44 Peri, Christianity 70.
45 Peri, Christianity 70.
46 Peri, Christianity 73.



Fig. 5 Jerusalem, Church of the Resurrection (Holy Sepulchre). Aerial view with the Ayyubid ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb mosque (bottom centre). – (Photo Ilan Arad, 2012; Israel Heritage Building Foto Nr. 1-3000-2013; Wikimedia Commons CC-BY-SA-3.0).

in Jerusalem, a church that originated in the Constantinian period[47]. The author reported that »in our times« – he wrote about 935 – Muslims gathered there to pray and were called by a muezzin to do so[48]. Again, in reference to a legendary prayer of ʿUmar on the steps of the church entrance[49], he said that Muslims would pray on the steps »which are in front of the gates of Constantine. They took half of the court, built a mosque there and called it ›Mosque of ʿOmar‹«[50]. Since the church of the fourth century is well known through excavations and research results[51], the described location of the mosque can be reconstructed (**fig. 4**). It was situated in the eastern courtyard of the church that was entered by a series of steps from one of the municipal main streets. After this courtyard, which possibly was surrounded by porticoes, visitors entered a huge basilica with five naves and upper galleries, and behind it, another open courtyard, and the rotunda of the Anastasis (»resurrection«) with Jesus' tomb in its centre.

The rest of the southern enclosure wall of the eastern atrium is still visible today. However, these walls do not show any structural evidence for the former existence of a mosque at this place. For example, any indication of a *miḥrāb* is lacking[52]. However, there is also a Muslim source testifying that the eastern atrium housed a mosque during a certain time span. An Arabic inscription was set into the wall on the left side of the main entrance to the atrium, giving the instructions »to preserve and restore this mosque and to forbid all non-Muslims to enter here, for whatsoever reason, even for the purpose of paying the poll tax (*istiḥrāğ*) or for any other reason. Any transgression of this is hereby warned against. This decree should be carried out literally, God willing«[53]. The

47 Since the Crusader period the term »Holy Sepulchre« has become established in the West.

48 Eutychios, Annalenwerk 120.

49 See Tamcke, Christsein 270 for a critical exegesis of Eutychios' account. The text clearly intends to preserve the Christian privileges at the holy sites.

50 Eutychios, Annalenwerk 120. See also: Busse, ʿUmar-Moschee 75-79; Küchler, Jerusalem 447.

51 Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem 40-300; fasc. 5: pls III-XXXIII; Corbo, Santo Sepolcro; Bieberstein/Bloedhorn, Jerusalem II 183-216; Krüger, Grabeskirche 40-70; Küchler, Jerusalem 409-483; Verstegen, Heiliger Ort 47-177; Shalev-Hurvitz, Holy Sites Encircled 43-78.

52 However, several openings in the wall were documented. In comparison with the archaeological record at the Church of the Kathisma, one might suppose that a *miḥrāb* could have been installed in one of the former openings.

53 Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem fasc. 5: VI.b; van Berchem, Corpus 53-67 no. 24; fig. 13; pl. 5; Hirschberg, Mount of Olives (drawing, date to the end of ninth/beginning of tenth century differs); Busse, ʿUmar-Moschee 75 f.; Bahat, Physical Infrastructure 59 f.; Gil, History of Palestine 146 f.; Bieberstein/Bloedhorn, Jerusalem II 211 f.; Krüger, Grabeskirche fig. 66; Küchler, Jerusalem 411; 447. The English translation cited above is based on Bahat, Physical Infrastructure 60 (incomplete reading). I am indebted to Amikam Elad, Jerusalem, for the complete reading and interpretation of the text. The original stone today is kept in the Türk ve İslâm Eserleri Müzesi at Istanbul. Concerning the perception of Muslim inscriptions at Christian churches by Christians, see the contribution of Alicia Walker in the present volume.



Fig. 6 Jerusalem, Crusader Church of St Anne. Foundation inscription of the Madrasa al-Ṣalāḥiyya in 1192 CE/588 AH, set in the wall over the main entrance portal. – (Photo U. Verstegen).

stone inscription is datable to the first half of the eleventh century, i. e. in Fatimid times, by palaeographic criteria[54]. This might imply that the place still went on to serve as a mosque after the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (r. 996-1021) had given the order to demolish the Church of the Resurrection in the year 1009, and the building had been rebuilt in part by the Christian congregation. After the Crusaders had erected new buildings in this area in the twelfth century, the mosque must have disappeared. As a substitute for it, the new ʿUmar ibn al-Ḫaṭṭāb Mosque (or Ǧāmiʿ al-Afḍal) (**fig. 5**) was built in 1193/589 AH following the recapture of the city by Muslim troops. This new mosque has flanked the (new) main entrance of the Holy Sepulchre Church on the south side since then, continuing the tradition of the legendary prayer of ʿUmar on the steps of the Church of the Resurrection[55].

In the tenth century, the direct vicinity of church and mosque had at least twice been the origin of conflicts between the religious communities. In 939 and 966, riots started from the mosque which led to Muslims pillaging and looting the church complex[56]. Nevertheless, the written sources show that at the same time Muslims were involved in or were at least present at Christian liturgical ceremonies in the Church of the Resurrection.

For example, since the ninth century, Christian and Muslim sources attest to the Holy Fire ceremony that is celebrated even today in the Anastasis rotunda on each Holy Saturday of Easter week[57]. While Muslim authors mainly criticize the ritual as quackery (giving explanations that the fire was lit by an invisible wire)[58], beginning in the tenth century both Muslim and Christian sources describe Muslims as attending the ceremony, and that the Muslim authorities were even involved in the ceremony. For example, in a letter addressed to the Byzantine emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, written in 947, the author Niketas mentioned that the Muslim governor of the city and the emir from Baghdad attended the cere-

54 Busse, ʿUmar-Moschee 76; Bahat, Physical Infrastructure 59 f.; Gil, History of Palestine 146.

55 Pahlitzsch, Transformation 52 f.; Korn, Structure 77 f. (function as a Friday mosque); Hawari, Ayyubid Jerusalem 49-51; Maoz/Nusseibeh, Jerusalem 140.

56 Eutychios, Annales 87. For the events cited in the following, see: Yaḥyā al-Antākī, Histoire 801-803. See also: Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem 245-247; Bieberstein, Gesandtenaustausch 162; Bieberstein/Bloedhorn, Jerusalem 185.

57 Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem 228-230; Canard, Déstruction 27-41; Meinardus, Holy Fire; Onasch, Lichthöhle 238 n. 79 (with more references); Gil, History of Palestine 466-468; Kratchkovsky, Feu béni; Pratsch, Grabeskirche; Jotischky, Holy Fire; Lidov, Holy Fire. The earliest descriptions of the ceremony are given by the Frankish monk Bernhard (c. 870) and in the chapter on the several kinds of fire in the »Book of Animals« of the Muslim author al-Ǧāḥiẓ (died 868/869). See: Bernhard, Itinerarium col. 572; Canard, Déstruction 28 f. (Latin); Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims 266 (English translation). Ǧāḥiẓ, Kitāb al-ḥayawān 4,383; 6,201 f.; Canard, Déstruction 34 f. (French translation).

58 Sources are discussed at length in: Canard, Déstruction; Kratchkovsky, Feu béni; Gil, History of Palestine 466 f. In the tenth century, the Muslim author al-Masʿūdī wrote that the fire came down from heaven. At the same time, another Muslim author described that the fire emerged in the air and ran through the cupola of the Anastasis rotunda without burning its wooden construction.

mony at the gallery of the rotunda[59]. Citing older texts from the tenth century, the Iranian scholar al-Bīrūnī (973-1048) similarly described that Muslims looked down at the ceremony from the galleries inside the Holy Sepulchre rotunda[60]. Religious and secular Muslim representatives, the muezzin and the imam »of the mosque«, and the governor of the city had brought lights and placed those on Jesus' tomb, while it was still closed[61]. The Christians had previously extinguished their candles and lights, and then the whole audience waited until a clear white light appeared and ignited a lamp inside the tomb. By the light of this lamp all the lighting devices in the church and the mosque were lit, and a report on all the ceremonial events was sent to the caliph. Al-Bīrūnī's report documents an astonishing interweaving between Christian and Muslim contributions to the ceremony, and apparently the mosque of the Church of the Resurrection was closely involved in the religious practice as well.

The Holy Fire ceremony was not the only religious event in the Christian liturgical calendar of Jerusalem that clearly incorporated attendance by Muslim authorities. At the beginning of the eleventh century, the Christian Melkite chronicler Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd al-Anṭākī (died 1066) described the Christian procession on Palm Sunday starting at the Church of al-ʿĀzarīya – the Lazarion (memorial church at Lazarus' tomb) in Bethany – and ending at the Church of the Resurrection. The account tells us that the Christians carried with them a huge olive tree trunk all the way through the city[62]. All streets were crowded with people holding crosses, praying and singing, while the Muslim governor rode ahead with his entire entourage and opened the way for the procession[63]. When the procession had reached the Church of the Resurrection, the tree was placed in front of the rock of Golgotha symbolizing the crucifixion of Jesus[64]. In 1007, the procession was forbidden by the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh. With this prohibition not only did the Christian ritual presence in the public space of Jerusalem come to an end, but also the active involvement of Muslim authorities in local Christian religious traditions.

Mount of Olives: Church of the Ascension

Following the reconquest of Jerusalem by the Ayyubid sultan Saladin in 1187, many buildings at Christian holy places remained unscathed, especially if they also were of a certain importance for Muslim believers. However, several sites of Christian property were dispossessed by the Muslim authorities. The Crusader Church of St Anne at the place of Mary's birth, for example, remained intact, but was converted into an institution for higher religious and juridical education (*madrasa*) by Saladin in 1192/588 AH, popularly named as the Madrasa al-Ṣalāḥīya (**fig. 6**)[65]. Thereafter, Christian pilgrims were no longer allowed to enter the building, and, according to pilgrims' accounts, only in a few cases did they manage to do so, sometimes by climbing down adventurously through a window to reach the crypt[66]. During his visit to Jerusalem in the 1330s, the German pilgrim Ludolf von Sudheim had the opportunity to enter the church. In his account, he described surprisingly that Christian frescoes showing Anne, Joachim and the birth of Mary were still visible inside the building, and that a local Muslim woman reinterpreted them as scenes from the life of Muhammad[67].

The Mount of Olives as a whole also came into Muslim hands. On top of the Mount of Olives, where once a circular building from the early Christian period had existed, the Crusaders had erected an octagonal church in the 1140s/1150s[68]. The revered place of Christ's ascension to heaven in the centre of the building was surrounded by a vaulted ambulatory. In the middle of the octagon there was a round chapel that contained the stone that showed Christ's footprint and therefore was said to mark the place of the Ascension. In its main features, this small circular building has been preserved until today, whereas the surrounding octagon gradually declined over the centuries. Today, only parts of the former exterior walls still exist, now surrounding the courtyard of the *aedicule* (**fig. 7**).

After the fall of Jerusalem in 1187, the octagonal church remained intact at first and was converted into a Muslim memorial building or mosque[69]. The former adjacent Crusader collegiate foundation had to be abandoned. In 1211/1212, the later bishop of Utrecht, Willibrand of Oldenburg, reported that at the place of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives »a faithless Saracen has established an oratory in honour of Mahomet«[70]. This is the first source of a new tradition that proves a continuous usage of the building by Muslims since then. However, in the following centuries Christian pilgrims apparently did not have problems entering the octagonal building and visiting the place of the Ascension. In the middle of the fourteenth century, the Italian Franciscan Friar Nicolas of Poggibonsi gave an account for the first

59 Canard, Déstruction 33; Gil, History of Palestine 466-468; Kratchkovsky, Feu béni 263 f.
60 Canard, Déstruction 36 f.; Gil, History of Palestine 466; Kratchkovsky, Feu béni 263 f.
61 On the inspection of the tomb by the local political authorities, see: Peri, Christianity 119 f.
62 Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem 230 (with French translation); Gil, History of Palestine 465; Cuffel, Disasters 116 f. (with English translation).
63 This was a clear violation of several rules given in the Pact of ʿUmar concerning behavioural modes of *ḏimmīs* (non-Muslims), e. g. it was forbidden for Christians to carry crosses or to sing loudly in public. See Cuffel, Disasters 117.
64 Following the Typikon 1,4 of the Anastasis. See Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem 238.
65 Bieberstein/Bloedhorn, Jerusalem III 170-173; Pahlitzsch, Transformation 48 f.; 53-55; Küchler, Jerusalem 336; Pringle, Churches III 143 (with sources); Hawari, Ayyubid Jerusalem 28; 187-189; Irwin, Palestine 314 f. The founding inscription over the main portal is documented in: van Berchem, Corpus 91-95 no. 35 pl. 34; Hawari, Ayyubid Jerusalem 188.
66 Pringle, Churches III 143 f. (with sources).
67 Ludolph, De de itinere terrae sanctae liber 38 (ed. Dycks 76).
68 Vincent/Abel, Jérusalem 360-419 pls XL-XLII; Bieberstein/Bloedhorn, Jerusalem III 299-303; Pringle, Churches III 72-88 (with abundant references); Küchler, Jerusalem 876-897.
69 Korn, Structure 78.
70 Willibrand von Oldenburg, Itinerarium sancte terre, see Baldi, Enchiridion no. 641; Küchler, Jerusalem 892; Pringle, Churches III 75.

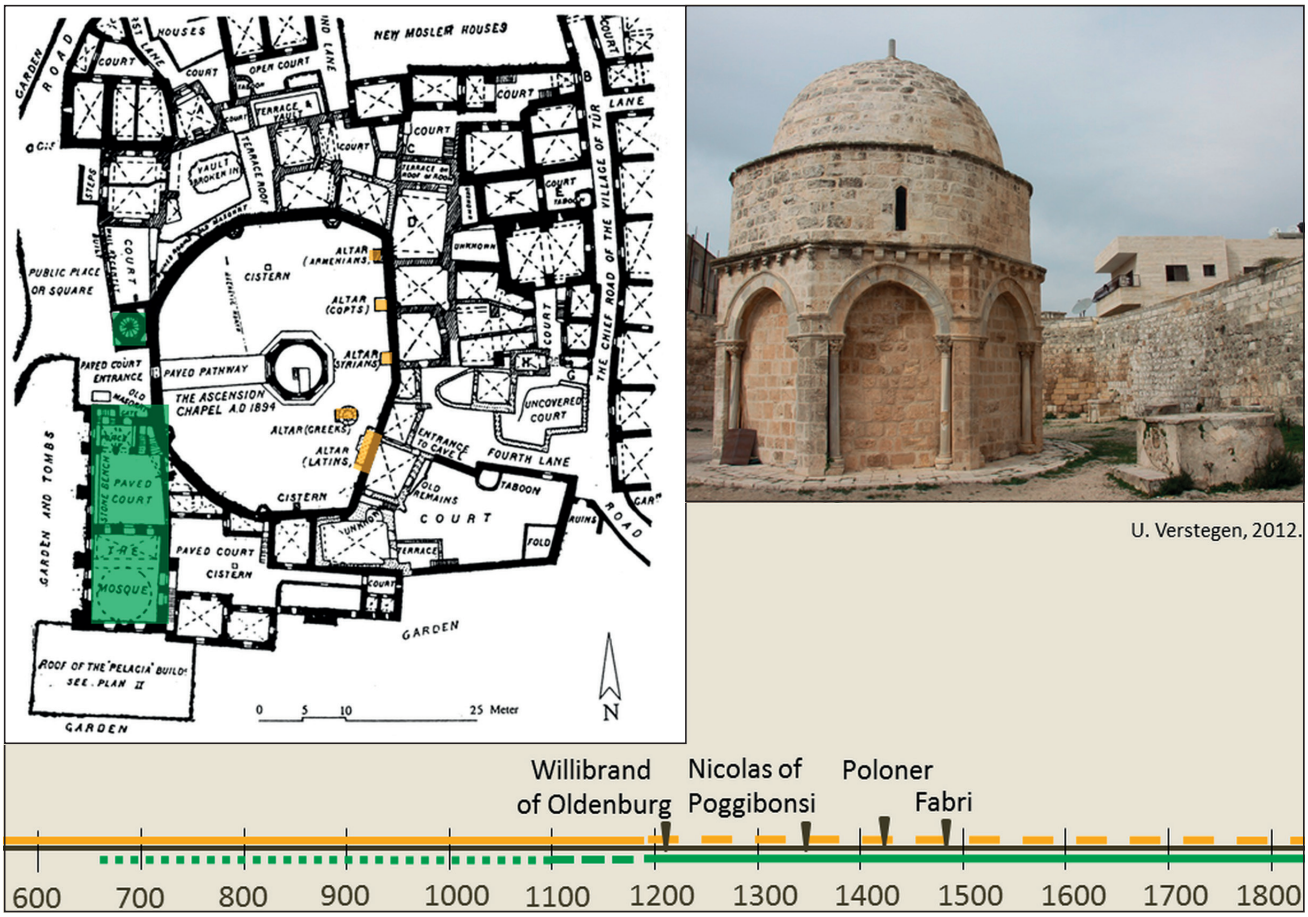

Fig. 7 Jerusalem, Mount of Olives, Church of the Ascension. Plan [Schick] and exterior view. The altars of the Christian congregations are marked in yellow, the Muslim derwish monastery in green. – (Plate Verstegen, 2015; Plan C. Schick, Palestine Exploration Quarterly 28, 1896, 313; Photo U. Verstegen, 2012).

time that half a drachma was demanded from pilgrims as an admission fee[71].

In 1422, John Poloner mentioned that the *aedicule* was used as a mosque and that an Arabic inscription had been placed over its entrance[72]. In addition to the occasional visits by pilgrims, since the fifteenth century the sources testify that the various Christian confessions (Latins, Greeks, Armenians, and so-called »Indians«) gathered in the building on Ascension Day and celebrated the Mass or Divine Liturgy[73]. Apparently, they were allowed to perform a regular, official celebration on the feast day, which in the liturgical calendar commemorated the event that had traditionally been connected to this place[74]. Probably at that time, the altars for the various Christian confessions were built at the east end of the court (see **fig. 7**).

Meanwhile the octagonal church had fallen into ruins, the eastern parts were missing, and the sumptuous interior decoration (columns, marble floor and wall coverings) had been removed. Just the *aedicule* had stayed untouched, as Jesus' footprints were revered by Muslims as well[75]. No altar existed within the *aedicule* – and does not exist to this day[76]. At the end of the sixteenth century, it became more and more difficult for Christians to get permission to enter the small building[77].

71 Nicolas of Poggibonsi, see Baldi, Enchiridion no. 645; Pringle, Churches III 75 (English translation).

72 John Poloner, see Baldi, Enchiridion no. 648; Pringle, Churches III 76. Poloner translated the text as »I am the gate of mercy.«

73 Louis de Rochechouart, see Baldi, Enchiridion no. 649; Pringle, Churches III 76.

74 On the different sources mentioning these liturgical assemblies, see Pringle, Churches III 76f.

75 Description by the Dominican pilgrim Felix Fabri 1480-1483, see Baldi, Enchiridion no. 650. Felix Fabri is the first one to mention a wall that cut the formerly regular enclosure wall in the east of the court. He blames the Muslims for removing the original architectural decoration.

76 Quaresmi, Elucidatio terrae sanctae 313. See also Baldi, Enchiridion no. 652; Pringle, Churches III 77 (English translation).

77 A Muslim custodian had to give Christian pilgrims permission to enter the building. Additionally, the Franciscans, who were responsible for the support of Latin Christian pilgrims since the Late Middle Ages, were in possession of a key to the chapel. See Pringle, Churches III 76 (with sources). In his pilgrims' guide of 1586, Giovanni Zuallardo notes the difficult situation as follows: »In quella Capella nel pauimento, si vede la forma d'vno de'piedi del nostro Saluatore, restataui impressa, come se fusse in cera, nella pietra: E sono gl'vltimi vestigij, che lasciò, salendo al Cielo, essendo quella dell'altro por tata, e posta nel Tempio moderno di Salomone, per i Turchi, & iui da loro tenuto in gran riuerenza, si come anco questa già detta, essendo a'Christiani la detta Cappellai stata tolta, e vietatagli l'entrata, sotto pena di ducati ducento d'oro, e fattone vna Moschea. Il che è stato cagione, che non habbiamo hauuto tanto bene di poterla vedere di dentro; anzi fù forza contentarsi di salutarla da 1ontano, e per la Porta del detto muro. / Alle volte auiene, che dando qualche cortesia al Santone, che n'ha la cura (massimamente quando è solo) ch'egli permette secretamente l'adito; mà non bisogna, se non entrare,& vscire, dubitando di esser visto, e tradito; / Quelli, e principalmente i Religiosi, che vi sono stati introdotti, dicono questa forma



Fig. 8 Jerusalem, Mount of Olives, Church of the Ascension. Interior view with the *miḥrāb* in the southern part of the building. – (Photo U. Verstegen, 2012).

In 1023 AH/1614-1615 and in the following years, a mosque, a dervish convent (*zāwiya*, the so-called zāwiya Asʿadiyya), and probably the minaret (still existing north of the portal) were erected in the south and west of the court[78]. At the same time, the Ascension Chapel was largely renovated, and a tambour and dome were added[79]. Because of the masonry details and the surrounding moulding, Denys Pringle supposed that the *miḥrāb* niche in the interior southern wall of the *aedicule* (**fig. 8**) was established during this renovation[80]. There is no clear evidence that a Muslim prayer niche had existed at the same place before (e. g. in 1422).

Summary

The examined buildings at sites that were venerated by Christians and Muslims in Jerusalem and Bethlehem in the period between the Muslim conquest of Palestine in the seventh century and the late Middle Ages provide clear evidence for parallel use by Muslims and Christians. Until the Crusader period specific areas were marked in existing Christian buildings where Muslims set up their own places of worship, where members of the local Muslim population could gather at the regular prayer times and where Muslim pilgrims could pray as well. These Muslim areas were located at very different spots in the building and, according to the specific situation, could result either in a more intense or in a slighter contact between the two communities and their respective practices of prayer and worship. Muslims who wanted to pray in the southern apse of the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem possibly had to cross the nave (or could enter by a separate entrance in the southern conch?). There might not have existed any acoustic separation of the different activities that took place in the choir. Muslims, however, who prayed in the eastern atrium of the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem, might have come in contact with Christians much less, and they would not have been disturbed by the official Christian liturgy and individual prayer. While the situation in Jerusalem corresponds to the concept of the contiguity of church and mosque – which Mattia Guidetti has demonstrated as being a common practice in early Muslim times – in Bethlehem the Muslim place of worship probably was installed in the immediate vicinity of the Christian liturgical centre of the building. In the Kathisma Church the main memorial building might have been taken over and adopted by the Muslim congregation.

essere la più polita& d'vn piede il più bello, che si possa trouare nel Mondo.« See Zuallardo, Viaggio 162.

78 Tobler, Siloahquelle 123; Küchler, Jerusalem 893; Ze'evi, Ottoman Century 72 f.; Natsheh, Mount of Olives 136-138. The minaret was possibly erected on walls of the former Crusader bell tower, see Pringle, Churches III 86.

79 Tobler, Siloahquelle 123. The dome was restored in 1720/1721, collapsed in an earthquake in 1834, and was subsequently renovated by the Latins, Greeks and Armenians. See Pringle, Churches III 77.

80 Pringle, Churches III 81 f. He supposed that the interior surface of the wall had been the result of the restoration in 1617. The smaller flanking niches, he thus assumed, could be part of the original Crusader construction.

The written sources show that even in Christian liturgical processions and celebrations such as the Holy Fire during Easter, Muslims were at least temporarily involved and/or present as spectators. The staging of the event at the holy site therefore influenced not only the collective memory of the Christian community of Jerusalem and of the visiting pilgrims, but also of the Muslims who inhabited the same spaces.

After the Crusader period, many Christian holy sites went into Muslim hands, and not all of them remained accessible for Christians thereafter. In addition to the altars of different Christian confessions, Muslim prayer niches were installed, e. g. at the Chapel of the Ascension or in the Tomb of Mary. The reason for building new mosques in front of the entrances of these places in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries might have been that the older chapels were too small for use by Muslims during the regular prayer times.

Apart from that, the simultaneous use of the places seems to have posed hardly any problem, since Muslims and Christians either did not bother each other or agreed on different times of use[81]. Christian pilgrims, for example, were advised to visit Mary's Tomb or the Chapel of the Ascension before sunrise. Regular services as well as larger liturgical celebrations on the feast days which commemorated the events at a specific holy place seem to have been permitted for the Christian congregations.

The buildings studied so far offer only very few indications concerning the framing of the holy places with religious imagery and symbols. In the course of the restructuring of the Kathisma Church for Muslim purposes, new mosaic floors were laid out which by their iconography suited Islamic religious beliefs and traditions. When an additional Muslim place of worship was set up in the Church of the Nativity, older Christian images in the surrounding walls were destroyed and replaced by Qurʾānic texts. The appearance of the building's interior would probably have been quite hybrid by today's viewing habits. When the Crusader Church of St Anne was converted into a madrasa at the end of the twelfth century, somewhere in the building images of Christian figures seemingly were not whitewashed and remained visible. Further historical and archaeological research thus might reveal new insights into the processes of the material and visual adoptions of religious sites in relation to their shared religious usage.

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81 Peri, Christianity 85 stresses the very low number of complaints in Ottoman times.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

How to Share a Sacred Place – The Parallel Christian and Muslim Use of the Major Christian Holy Sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem

Due to the importance of Jesus/ʿĪsā and Maria/Maryam in the Quran, after the Arab-Islamic expansion in the former East Roman provinces of the Levant there arose a praxis of religious use at certain existing Christian sites of remembrance by Muslims as well. On the basis of examples from Jerusalem and Bethlehem, this contribution discusses the phenomenon of multireligious use of sacred spaces by Christians and Muslims in the period between the conquest of the region in the 630s and the Late Middle Ages, supplemented by glimpses into the Ottoman Period. It is also shown with what architectural, medial and ritual elements plural arrangements of space were implemented and established.

Wie man einen heiligen Ort teilt – Die Parallelnutzung der großen christlichen heiligen Stätten in Jerusalem und Bethlehem durch Christen und Muslime

Aufgrund der Bedeutung, die Jesus/ʿĪsā und Maria/Maryam im Koran einnehmen, etablierte sich nach der arabisch-islamischen Expansion in den vormals oströmischen Gebieten der Levante an einigen bestehenden christlichen Erinnerungsstätten auch eine Praxis der Religionsausübung durch Muslime. Anhand von Fallbeispielen aus Jerusalem und Bethlehem diskutiert der vorliegende Beitrag das Phänomen der multireligiösen Nutzung religiöser Räume durch Christen und Muslime im Zeitraum zwischen der Eroberung der Region in den 630er Jahren und dem Spätmittelalter, erweitert um Ausblicke in die osmanische Zeit. Es wird aufgezeigt, mit welchen architektonischen, medialen und rituellen Elementen plurale Raumarrangements implementiert und etabliert wurden.

Robert Schick

The Christian Presence in Jordan in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

The Christians in the area of modern-day Jordan continued to thrive after the Muslim Conquests of the 630s AD and throughout the Umayyad period up to 750 and beyond into the first decades of the Abbasid period and they continued to have ties with what remained of the Byzantine Empire. But by the early ninth century, the Christians in Jordan had begun to dwindle into small remnant communities and any further relations with the Byzantine Empire are scarcely attested.

This article will examine the state of the remnant Christians in the area of modern-day Jordan during the years of the Abbasid period between the death of the Abbasid caliph Hārūn ar-Rašīd in 809 and the takeover of the region by the Fatimid caliphs in Egypt in 970 and focus on the extent to which there is historical or archaeological evidence for a continued Christian presence, including pilgrimage, in that century and a half[1].

General Political History

The political situation of the area of modern-day Jordan in the Abbasid period was unstable[2]. After the Abbasid Revolution of 749-750 the region was ruled by the dynasty of Abbasid caliphs in Iraq. Central authority was broken for a time after the death of Hārūn ar-Rašīd by the anarchy of the civil war in 809-813 between his sons al-Amīn and al-Maʾmūn and seriously weakened further in the course of the ninth century, especially after the assassination of the caliph al-Mutawakkil in 861. That weakening of central Abbasid authority enabled the largely autonomous governor of Egypt, Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn, to extend his authority to Palestine in 878, which he ruled until his death in 884, followed by his son Ḫumārawayh up his death in 896 and his two grandsons Ǧayš and Hārūn up to 905. In 905 the Abbasid caliphs in Iraq regained tenuous administrative control of Syria for the next thirty years until Muḥammad ibn Ṭuǧǧ al-Iḫšīd, the governor of Palestine since 928 and Syria since 931, became the governor of Egypt in 935 as well. He was largely independent until his death in 946, succeeded by Kāfūr and others in the Iḫšīdid line until the takeover by the Fatimids, starting in 970.

The period ending in 970 was at the beginning of an epoch of regional collapse in the eastern Mediterranean from 950 to 1072 induced by prolonged drought and severe winters, which Ellenblum has recently studied[3]. He notes droughts in 949 and 953-955 and most notably a seven-year drought in Egypt from 963 to 969 and argues that the social breakdown caused by the severe drought of the 960s contributed to the collapse of Iḫšīdid rule and the Fatimid takeover[4]. He also points to the droughts of the mid-eleventh century, especially the seven-year drought of 1065 to 1072, and the resulting social breakdown, as contributing to an archaeologically observable abrupt decline in such cities as Tiberias, Caesarea and ar-Ramla and a rapid decline in the strength of the minority Christian communities in the region[5]. The area of modern-day Jordan would hardly have been immune from such collapse and social crisis, but the archaeological investigation of the period in Jordan is not yet developed enough for such effects to be detected, such as the discovery of hoards noted by Ellenblum[6], which are so numerous in Palestine for the eleventh century.

Historical Geography

The Abbasid-period Arab geographers[7], most notably al-Maqdisī writing around 985[8], mention the major cities and towns in the area of modern-day Jordan in the Abbasid period and identify the area as mostly within the province (*ǧund*) of Dimašq, while the northwest area east of the Jordan River between the Yarmuk and Zarqa Rivers, was within the Ǧund of al-Urdunn. The geographers, however, have nothing to say about the presence of Christians beyond the statement of al-Yaʿqūbī[9], writing in 891, concerning the districts of Fiḥl (Pella), Ǧaraš and the Sawād in northern Jordan within the Ǧund of al-Urdunn that »the population of these districts is a mixture of Arabs and Greeks (*ʿAǧam*)«. One might also

1 This article covers the period between the end of the period covered in Schick, Christian Communities; Schick, Settlement and the start of the period covered in Schick, Southern Jordan.
2 For the general history of the period, see Gil, History 279-334; for the period up to 878, see Cobb, White Banners.
3 Ellenblum, Collapse.
4 Ibidem 41-45.
5 Ibidem 214-224, 240-248.
6 Ibidem 44 f., 216-220.
7 See Le Strange, Palestine; Walmsley, Administrative Structure.
8 Maqdisī, Aḥsan.
9 Yaʿqūbī, Buldān 327 f.; Le Strange, Palestine 439, 462 and 532 f.

consider Christians to have been among the »mixture of people« that al-Yaʿqūbī identified in the districts of Maʾāb (Rabba) and Zuġar (Ġawr aṣ-Ṣāfī)[10]; otherwise he identified the inhabitants in the various districts as members of various Arab tribes.

Historical Events in Jordan

The area of modern-day Jordan is rarely attested in historical accounts of the ninth and tenth centuries. In one such account, in the reign of al-Maʾmūn (197-218/813-833) an Umayyad rebel destroyed a fortress at Fudayn (Mafraq) in northern Jordan and then fortified himself in Masuh, and laid waste to Ziza, and stayed at a strong fortress at Hesban, all locations in central Jordan south of Amman[11]. Christians are not mentioned in connection with these events.

Another time when events occurred in the area that were important enough to be mentioned in the Arabic sources is the devastating attacks in the early tenth century in southern Syria by the Qarmatians, who plundered and killed at Tiberias, as well as at Buṣrā, Derʿa, and the regions of Baṭanīya and Ḥawrān in southern Syria in 293/905-906, and attacked the pilgrimage caravans in the south in 294/906[12]. Additional Arab tribal attacks on the Syrian and Egyptian Haǧǧ pilgrimage caravans are recorded in the periods of ʻAbbasid and Iḫšīdid control in 306/918-919[13] and 354/965[14]. Christians are not specifically attested in connection with these events.

The Christians in Jerusalem and the Monasteries West of the Jordan River

Christians in Palestine west of the Jordan River are better attested than the Christians east of the Jordan River in the ninth and tenth centuries. Some developments west of the Jordan are worth citing that the area east of the Jordan River would also have undergone. Christians remained the majority of the population in Palestine during the Abbasid period and Greek culture continued to flourish through the eighth century; indeed Jerusalem and the monasteries to the east were a leading center of Greek culture at the time[15]. The thriving condition of the church institutions in Palestine is exceptionally well-documented at the beginning of the ninth century in a document prepared for the emperor Charlemagne[16], during the exchange of embassies between Charlemagne, the caliph Hārūn ar-Rašīd in Baghdad and the patriarch of Jerusalem[17].

But the early ninth century marked the end of the golden age for the Christians in Jerusalem and the monasteries to the east. A breakdown in overall security in the region led to several episodes of the monasteries east of Jerusalem being attacked or sacked and monks leaving as refugees to the Byzantine Empire. The insecurity culminated during the civil war between 809 and 813, when churches in Jerusalem itself were made desolate or profaned for the first time, as were the monasteries to the east, resulting in another wave of refugee monks leaving for the Byzantine Empire[18]. Among those refugee monks were Michael the Synkellos, a native of Jerusalem born in 761, and Theodore and Theophanes Graptoi, natives of Maʾāb (Rabba), born in 775 and 778, who were educated in Jerusalem and became monks in the monastery of Mar Saba. The three of them played a major role in support of the veneration of icons in the Byzantine Empire during the second period of iconoclasm between 815 and 843[19].

The refugee monks from Palestine also played a major role in the Byzantine Empire in the revival of learning and the adoption of the minuscule Greek script in the ninth century. The need for a more efficient means of copying Greek manuscripts may have developed in the monasteries of the Wilderness of Judaea and the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mt Sinai, due to their reduced resources in isolation under Muslim rule and the challenge to produce writings that would refute iconoclasm. The refugee monks would have taken their manuscripts and techniques with them[20].

The Christians continued to be the majority of the population in Palestine, perhaps still up to the time of the Crusades, but by the time of the Fatimid takeover, the Muslim population was firmly entrenched, if not yet a majority.

But these historical accounts say little about the area east of the Jordan River. The document of Charlemagne mentions only the Baptism Site on the Jordan River: a »monument at the Jordan, a monastery of St John and another church where the Lord was baptized«[21], among the other monasteries between Jerusalem and the Jordan River. But one can infer that if overall security was breaking down and the Christians were under belligerent attack in the areas west of the Jordan River, then the Christians east of the Jordan were experiencing much the same. However, that assumption is based on the idea that there were still sizable numbers of Christians around in the area of modern-day Jordan in the ninth and tenth centuries in the first place who would have been affected. The degree to which that was the case, however, is an issue to which we must now turn.

10 Yaʿqūbī, Buldān 326.
11 Yāqūt, Muʿǧam 3,859; Grabar, Small Episode.
12 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīḫ 3,4, 2257f., 2270-2273.
13 Ibn Ḫallikān 5,91, no. 664, 5,57.
14 Miskawayh 2,215.
15 Mango, Culture; Mango, Greek.
16 Charlemagne's Survey.
17 For a chronology of those embassies and all other travels between Europe and Jerusalem between roughly 700 and 900, see McCormick, Origins 852-972.
18 Theophanes, Chronicle 665 (AM 6301) and 683 (AM 6305); see Gil, History, 473f. and most recently Auzépy, Role.
19 Theophanes of Caesarea, Praise; Life of Michael the Synkellos; Kolia-Dermitzaki, Michael the Synkellos; Sode, Life.
20 Mango, Culture; Herrin, Formation 404-407.
21 Charlemagne's Survey 210f., 228-230.

Christians in Jordan in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

Individual Christians in the area of modern-day Jordan continue to be attested by name through the end of the eighth century. For example, Theodore and Theophanes, the *Graptoi* brothers mentioned earlier, were born in Maʾāb (Rabba) in 775 and 778. Christians and Christian sites in Jordan are also attested in the Life of St Stephen the Sabaite for the mid to late eighth century at Ǧaraš[22], al-Quwaysma, south of Amman[23], Arnon (Wādī Muǧib)[24], St Lot (Ġawr aṣ-Ṣāfī)[25], St Aaron (Ǧabal Hārūn)[26], Maʾāb (Rabba)[27], and the Baptism Site on the Jordan River[28]. Saint Stephen and other monks used to wander in the Wilderness of Judaea and walk around the Dead Sea during Lent and at other times without fear of attack by Arab tribesmen, although once God had to protect Stephen from the consequences of stumbling into a Bedouin encampment at night[29]. Among the places in Jordan where the monks stopped during their walks are caves of the holy fathers in Arnon (Wādī Muǧib), and St Lot (Ġawr aṣ-Ṣāfī) and St Aaron (Ǧabal Hārūn)[30].

But only one Christian is attested by name in the ninth and tenth centuries – Peter of Bayt Raʾs in northern Jordan, from the ninth century[31]. He was the author of a work in Arabic, *The Book of the Demonstration (Kitāb al-burhān)*, erroneously attributed to Eutychios, the tenth-century patriarch of Alexandria[32]. He is not to be confused with the Peter of Bayt Raʾs who was martyred in 715[33]. In this work of Melkite Christian apologetics, Peter of Bayt Raʾs, who was either a deacon or bishop, lists some of the major Christian holy places in Jerusalem and Palestine that bear witness to the life of Christ. For the area east of the Jordan River the list includes only the Church of the River Jordan where Christ was baptized[34].

In addition, a number of pilgrims are known to have come to Jerusalem in the ninth and tenth centuries[35], although only three are specifically stated to have come to the Jordan River, and none went any farther into Jordan than that: Germanus of Kosinitza, who came in the mid-ninth century and became a monk at the monastery of St John the Baptist on the Jordan River[36], Elias the Younger, who came around 878-900 and visited the Jordan River[37]; and Lazaros of Mount Galesion, who came in the late tenth-early eleventh century and spent six years at Mar Saba; during Lent Lazaros would wander in the desert and once visited the place where Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt[38]. That is presumably located at the same place near the Baptism site where Epiphanios the Monk had noticed it, perhaps in the late eighth century[39].

There continued to be a church hierarchy in Jerusalem, and a very few bishops are attested in Palestine in the ninth and tenth centuries, although the numbers given in the report about the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch, 185 bishops, 17 abbots, and 1153 monks meeting in an anti-iconoclastic synod in Jerusalem in 836 and sending a letter to the emperor Theophilos are not plausible[40]. But no bishops in Jordan are attested in the ninth and tenth centuries. There are attestations of bishoprics in Jordan in a list from the eleventh century, but they appear to have been titular only, given to church officials resident in Jerusalem[41]. That list could suggest that the bishoprics within the old Byzantine province of Arabia (northern Jordan and southern Syria) had been transferred from the patriarchate of Antioch to Jerusalem sometime after the Muslim conquests.

There was only limited contact between the patriarchs of Jerusalem and the Byzantine Empire in the ninth and tenth centuries, after the waves of refugees from Jerusalem in the early ninth century. Some exchanges of letters between the pope, the patriarch of Constantinople, and the Oriental patriarchs continue to be attested later, such as the letter to the emperor Theophilos in 836[42], just mentioned, and especially later in the ninth century during the time of Photios[43], but nothing points to Christians in Jordan being involved.

Nonetheless, there were substantial numbers of Christians around, based on the statements of al-Yaʿqūbī, writing in 891, as already mentioned, about Fiḥl (Pella), Ǧaraš, and the Sawād in northern Jordan that »its population was a mixture of Arabs and Greeks«[44]. Christians are also attested in Jordan in the Crusader period, especially in the area of southern Jordan, including Kerak and Šawbak, that became part of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, as for example in 1107 in Wādī Mūsā/Petra[45]. But in the period from the end of the eighth century up to the start of the twelfth century, the presence of Christians in Jordan is scarcely demonstrable from historical sources.

22 Leontios, Life 7.1.
23 Leontios, Life 8.1.
24 Leontios, Life 16.2.
25 Leontios, Life 16.2.
26 Leontios, Life 16.2.
27 Leontios, Life 39.1, 49.2.
28 Leontios, Life, 37.2, 46.2.
29 Leontios, Life 15.
30 Leontios, Life 14.9, 16.2.
31 Swanson, Peter 1,902-906.
32 Eutychios of Alexandria, Book.
33 Passion de s. Pierre de Capitolias; Efthymiadis, Martyrdom 1,419-422.
34 Eutychios of Alexandria, Book 168 (Arabic text); 135 f. (English translation).
35 Re, Italy to Jerusalem; Talbot, Byzantine; Pahlitzsch, Byzantine Monasticism.
36 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 102, 109.
37 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 102, 109; Re, Italy to Jerusalem, 173 f.
38 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 102 f., 109.
39 Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims, 121.
40 See most recently Signes Codoñer, Theophilos 367-408.
41 Gelzer, Bistümerverzeichnisse 281 f.
42 Signes Codoñer, Theophilos 367-408; Signes Codoñer, Die melkitischen Patriarchen.
43 Dvornik, Photian Schism, 95 f.; 97; 41, 51, 141, 151; 118-120; 174, 184 f., 191-194.
44 Yaʿqūbī, Buldān, 327 f.; Le Strange, Palestine, 532 f., 439 and 462.
45 Albert of Aachen, Historia 10,28-31, 644 f.; see Mayer, Kreuzfahrerherrschaft; Pringle, Churches I, A-K 251 f., 286-295; Pringle, Churches, II L-Z 304-314, 373-377; and most recently Sinibaldi, Settlement for other references.

Christian Sites East of the Jordan in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

There are only a few archaeological sites with any physical evidence for Christians after the eighth century; that evidence will be summarized here. There are a larger number of other major sites known to have been inhabited in the ninth and tenth centuries, as well as sites with Christian occupation attested in the second half of the eighth century that may well have continued into the ninth century or beyond, but unless that Christian presence can be definitely demonstrated, those sites are not cited here[46].

The Baptism Site at Bethany Beyond the Jordan

The site of the baptism of Christ on the east bank of the Jordan River was the prime pilgrimage site in the Byzantine period within the area of modern-day Jordan. Over the centuries most every Christian pilgrim who came to Jerusalem also wanted to go to the Jordan River, so the Jordan River always remained a focus of Christian pilgrimage[47]. The specific location on the Jordan River, however, where the Byzantine and early Islamic period Christians had focused their attention and built multiple churches, had fallen into unoccupied ruins by the Mamluk period.

In the early Islamic period, the pilgrim Willibald had gone to the Baptism Site in 724. He had previously visited places around the Sea of Galilee and then from Caesarea Philippi, he walked south along the Jordan Valley, without mentioning any stops such as Pella, to the Monastery of John the Baptist which had about twenty monks, and then went on a mile or more to the Jordan, where the Lord was baptized[48]. The pilgrim Epiphanios the Monk also came, perhaps sometime around the second half of the eighth century[49]. Also Anthony ar-Ruwaḥ, who was martyred in 799, was baptised in the Jordan River at the Monastery of Mar John the Baptist[50].

For the ninth and tenth centuries, the document of Charlemagne mentioned earlier listed a »monument at the Jordan, a monastery of St John and another church where the Lord was baptised«[51]. The pilgrim Bernard the Monk referred to the Baptism Site in 870: »Furthermore to the east of Jerusalem, at a distance of thirty miles, is the Jordan, and above it the monastery of St John the Baptist. In that district there are also many other monasteries«[52]. Peter of Bayt Raʾs in the ninth century, the author of the *Book of the Demonstration – Kitāb al-burhān,* falsely attributed to Eutychios of Alexandria, included the Church of the River Jordan where Christ was baptized in his list of holy places that witness to the life of Christ[53]. Germanus of Kosinitza came to the Holy Land in the mid-ninth century and became a monk at the Monastery of St John the Baptist on the Jordan River[54], and Elias the Younger came as a pilgrim around 878-900 and visited the Jordan River[55].

After the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan in 1994, extensive archaeological excavations were carried out by the Department of Antiquities of Jordan in the former military zone around the Baptism Site and the nearby hill (Tell al-Ḥarrar) 2 km to the east associated with traditions of the Prophet Elijah and his ascension to heaven (2 Kings 2). The excavations started in 1997, but the results have not been well published, mostly in a series of short articles in the *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* by Mohammad Waheeb and Rustum Mkhjian[56], so the excavations contribute less than they should to our understanding of the Baptism Site and Elijah's Hill in the Abbasid period.

The main phases of construction at the two sites date to the fifth and sixth centuries, but for how long those buildings stayed in use remains unclear; Elijah's Hill, where a cluster of buildings included a monastery, may have not lasted long into the early Islamic period, while pottery from the early Islamic periods was found at the Baptism Site[57]. In any case, the Russian pilgrim Daniel the Abbot who came in 1106-1107, as well as other Crusader-period authors, mentioned various buildings and caves associated with the baptism as well as with Elijah[58], showing a continuity of Christian interest in the site.

ʿAqaba

The Christian presence in ʿAqaba, ancient Ayla, in the early Islamic period is obscure. The city was a thriving port in the Byzantine period, excavated extensively between 1994 and 2003 under the direction of S. Thomas Parker[59], but no church remains are known beyond the building from the third century that possibly was a church, but that in any case went out of use as a result of the 363 AD earthquake[60]. In the mid-seventh century the new Muslim rulers established their incipient settlement nearby, which continued up to the start of the Crusades, excavated by Donald Whitcomb[61], and later by Belgian and Danish teams[62], but no church remains are

46 See Schick, Christian Communities; for general surveys of the archaeology of Jordan in the early Islamic periods see Walmsley, Middle Islamic and Crusader Periods and Whitcomb, Umayyad and Abbasid Periods; for archaeological evidence for churches in general, see Michel, Les églises.
47 Ruben/Taylor, Beyond the Jordan.
48 Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims 128f.
49 Donner, Palästinabeschreibung; Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims 120.
50 Dick, Passion 123; Vila, Anthony.
51 McCormick, Charlemagne's Survey 210f., 228-230.
52 Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrims 144.
53 Eutychios of Alexandria, Book 168 (Arabic text); 135f., paragraph 315 (English translation).
54 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 102, 109.
55 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 102, 109; Re, Italy to Jerusalem 173f.
56 See also Waheeb, Bethany; Waheeb, Elijah's Hill; Waheeb/Balaʾawi/Al-Shawabkeh, Hermit Caves; Waheeb/Abdelaziz/al-Masri, Unique Byzantine Complex; see Ruben/Taylor, Beyond the Jordan.
57 Abu Shmeis/Waheeb, Recent Discoveries.
58 Wilkinson, Jerusalem Pilgrimage 136-138.
59 Parker/Smith, Roman Aqaba Project.
60 Parker, Brief Notice.
61 Whitcomb, Misr, among other articles, Whitcomb, Ayla.
62 Damgard, Castrum; Damgard, Fatimid Jordan.

known there either. Only a few scattered Christian architectural elements and marble fragments have been found over the years to point to a Christian presence. In the early Islamic period site, reused Christian marble fragments and other Christian objects are usually found in stratigraphic contexts no earlier than the ninth or tenth century, indicating that whatever churches from which they were taken were not robbed out before then[63].

ʿAqaba was a bishopric, so Christians are well-attested in historical sources in the Byzantine period up to the seventh century[64], but rarely beyond. Al-Bakrī, an eleventh-century geographer, records a monastery in Ayla in the Umayyad period by the name of Dayr al-Qunfuḏ (Monastery of the Hedgehog)[65]; Shahid connects the name with the Qunfuḏ clan of the Balī tribe that lived in the area[66]. ʿAbd al-Masīḥ, a monk at the Monastery of St Catherine at Mount Sinai who was martyred in the 860s[67], often came here to deal with tax officials[68], but his trips do not necessarily imply a substantial remnant Christian community there at the time. Muslims, on the other hand, are well-attested[69], but the Muslim historical sources have nothing to say about Christians in the Abbasid period.

Ġawr aṣ-Ṣāfī

Ġawr aṣ-Ṣāfī, in a fertile area at the south end of the Dead Sea, has been occupied over the millennia; two Christian sites in particular need to be mentioned.

The monastery at Lot's Cave (Dayr ʿAyn ʿAbata) to the north of the modern city commemorated where Lot and his daughters stayed after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:30-38). In the Byzantine and early Islamic periods it was a prime Christian pilgrimage site, with substantial accommodations for pilgrims built as part of the cave church and monastery compound[70]. The church was renewed in 572-573, 605-607 and 692, as recorded by inscriptions in the mosaic pavements[71].

The monastery would have continued into the late eighth century. Saint Stephen, a monk from the monastery of Mar Saba who died in 794, came to Mar Lot during his wanderings around the Dead Sea during Lent, according to his *Vita*[72]. But the last phase of occupation at the site in the ninth century represents a final short-term, casual post-church occupation[73]. Seemingly already in the ninth century, there was no longer any functioning church or monastery and nothing for a pilgrim to want to come for[74].

Ḫirbat aš-Šayḫ ʿĪsā, the main urban site of the Byzantine and early Islamic periods, has been under excavation in recent years, directed by Konstantinos Politis[75]. The ongoing excavations, as yet unpublished, have uncovered a large early Christian church with clear evidence for the post-church use of the still intact building starting in the early Abbasid period.

Madaba

Madaba was a major Christian city in the Byzantine and Umayyad periods, but seemingly did not remain so for long into the Abbasid period[76]. The last mosaic floors with inscriptions in the city date to the second half of the eighth century. Excavations in 1992-1993 in the area of the Madaba city center around a building known as the »Burnt Palace« showed that the palatial building from the Byzantine period suffered a major destruction by fire around the middle of the eighth century, plausibly due to the 749 earthquake, but that the building was partially cleared and reused later into the ninth century[77]. One might want to think that the people who reoccupied the building after the mid-eighth century destruction were Christians, but that is not demonstrable from the archaeological remains.

In the excavations at the Tell Madaba site on the west side of the city since 1996, which have not been well published beyond articles in the *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* since 2000, remains from throughout the Byzantine and early Islamic period were uncovered. Of special interest is a mansion in Field C, similar to the Burnt Palace, with mosaic pavements and fragments of Greek inscriptions painted on plaster that was abandoned by the early ninth century[78], around the time that the city as a whole may have ended as a major urban center.

Mar Ilyās

Ḫirbat Mar Ilyās, near the village of Listib in northern Jordan, was a pilgrimage site, identified as Tišbe, the birthplace of the Prophet Elijah (1 Kings 17:1)[79]. The main church at Ḫirbat Mar Ilyās, with its latest dedicatory inscription dated to 622 AD, seems to have continued in use at least into the eighth century but for how much later is uncertain, because the results of the excavations there have been inadequately published. In any case, local Muslim and Christian tradition has maintained an interest in the site up to the present.

63 Whitcomb, Ayla 14 f.
64 Green/Di Segni/Tsafrir, Iudaea 59 f.
65 Bakrī, Mu ʿǧam 2,593 f.
66 Shahid, Byzantium 309.
67 Vila, ʿAbd al-Masīḥ.
68 ʿAbd al-Masīḥ al-Ġassānī, Account 365-372; Swanson, Martyrdom.
69 Cobb, Scholars.
70 Politis, Sanctuary.
71 Politis, Sanctuary 393-409.
72 Leontios, Life 16.2.
73 Politis, Sanctuary 538.
74 Ibidem.
75 Politis/Sampson/O'Hea, Ghawr aṣ-Ṣāfī.
76 Piccirillo, Madaba.
77 Schick, work in progress.
78 Foran et al., Tall Mādabā; Foran, Urban Residence.
79 MacDonald, Pilgrimage 69-81; Ruben/Taylor, Beyond the Jordan 106 f.

Mount Nebo

The Memorial of Moses on Mount Nebo was a prime pilgrimage site for Christians in the Byzantine period, visited most notably by the pilgrim Egeria around 400 and Peter the Iberian around 430 and again around 477, but no pilgrim account survives from between the Piacenza pilgrim around 570 and Magister Thetmarus in 1217[80]. The site was marked by a large basilica and a monastery complex around it on the summit of Mount Nebo, as well as a separate cluster of churches and monasteries in the valley of ʻUyūn Mūsā to the north of Mount Nebo, and another Monastery of the Theotokos at ʿAyn al-Kanīsa in the valley to the south, all in use in the Byzantine and Umayyad periods.

But for how long the various components of the Memorial of Moses remained in use beyond the mid-eighth century is difficult to determine from the scanty evidence in the published reports of the excavation results[81]. A number of post-reform Umayyad coins were found dating c. 720-750, but none later[82]. The last person from Mount Nebo known by name was Kaium, »monk and presbyter of Phisga«, attested in 756 in a mosaic inscription from the Church of Saint Stephen at Umm ar-Raṣāṣ[83].

The monastery of the Theotokos at Ayn al-Kanīsa at the foot of Mount Nebo[84], originally built in the sixth century, has evidence for continued use into the mid-eighth century, based on an inscription recording its rebuilding in 762 AD in the days of Bishop Job of Madaba and George the Recluse[85]. Seemingly the small monastery was rebuilt for the use of George and a small group of disciples supporting him, but the site may not have continued to be occupied once George the Recluse would have died around the end of the eighth century.

Mountain of Aaron

The Mountain of Aaron (Ǧabal Hārūn), located just west of Petra and marking the traditional location of the tomb of Aaron, was a pilgrimage site in the Byzantine and early Islamic periods, consisting of a church at the summit of the mountain and a monastery on a plateau just below the summit[86].

During their first raid into the region of southern Jordan in 1100, the Crusaders came across the monastery there, previously unknown to them, as reported by Fulcher of Chartres[87]. But the results of the archaeological excavations point to the monastery having been in ruins since long before. The monastery and church suffered from the 749 earthquake (Phase 8). There was later limited domestic occupation in the site during the second half of the eighth century (Phase 9), followed by another destruction sometime around the later eighth or early ninth century (Phase 10), after which there was no longer any ecclesiastical use to the church and chapel, although there was limited continued domestic occupation in the ninth century (Phase 11), with a final destruction in the very late ninth or tenth century (Phase 12). There seemingly could have been something for pilgrims to come see up to that point, but none are attested after the time of Saint Stephen the Sabaite, a monk in the second half of the eighth century, who came to Mar Aaron among the other places he visited while walking around the Dead Sea during Lent[88]. The Muslim author al-Masʿūdī, writing in 344-345/955-956 also listed it as one of the holy mountains of the Christians in the possession of Melkites[89]. Whether that statement implies a continued substantial Christian occupation in the mid-tenth century, which is not evidenced by the archaeological remains, is debatable. Crusader sources document other Christians in the Wādī Mūsā / Petra area, as mentioned earlier[90], but there seems to be no archaeological trace of them other than here at the Mountain of Aaron in the ninth and tenth centuries.

Al-Quwaysma

A monastery at al-Quwaysma, south of Amman, and its abbot Kosmas, is attested in the Life of Saint Stephen the Sabaite in the 730s-740s[91]. The monastery continued into the ninth century at least, as the results of archaeological excavation have shown[92]. A burial chamber to the west of the church contained pottery lamps of the pear-shaped type characteristic of the ninth century. But the monastery seemingly did not continue long into the tenth century or later.

Rihab

Another small town, east of Ǧaraš, had a number of churches in use in the eighth century[93], but the absence of much of any information about the excavation results beyond the mosaic floors that were uncovered makes it difficult to say when the Christian presence came to an end. One hint at a continued Christian presence in the early ninth century comes from the Church of Saint Constantine, where two enigmatic Greek letters in its mosaic floor might indicate repairs to the deliberately damaged images in the floor in 832 AD, but that interpretation of the letters and its possible relevance to

80 Piccirillo/Alliata, Mount Nebo 71-83, 218.
81 Piccirillo/Alliata, Mount Nebo 179.
82 Gitler, Coins 563.
83 Piccirillo/Alliata, Umm al-Rasas 251 no. 8a.
84 Piccirillo/Alliata, Mount Nebo 209-216.
85 Piccirillo/Alliata, Mount Nebo 197; Di Segni, Inscriptions 448-450 no. 56.
86 Fiema/Frösén, Petra.
87 Fulcher of Chartres, Historia Book 2 V, 9; Frösén/Meittunen, Aaron 13f.
88 Leontios, Life 16.2.
89 Masʿūdī, Tanbīh, 143f.
90 See Mayer, Kreuzfahrerherrschaft; Frösén/Miettunen, Aaron; Pringle, Churches, II L-Z, 373-377; Sinibaldi, Settlement.
91 Leontios, Life 8.1.
92 Schick/Suleiman, Preliminary Report.
93 Piccirillo, Giordania; Husan, New Archaeological Discoveries.

the question of the date of the damage to the images are speculative[94].

Umm Qays

Umm Qays (Gadara) was a major city of the Decapolis[95]. There is no historical attestation for Christians after the account of the martyrdom of Peter of Capitolias in 715 AD[96], while wine production is attested in Arabic poetry in the early Islamic period. A five-aisled basilica and pilgrimage church in the city center was damaged in the 749 AD earthquake. It was rebuilt in reduced form later, but remained in use as a church, although for how long is not clear from the excavation report. It was later converted into a mosque, seemingly in the Ayyubid period[97].

Umm ar-Raṣāṣ

This Christian site with its multiple churches certainly continued to thrive in the eighth century, but for how long the individual churches and the site as a whole continued into the ninth or tenth centuries is obscured by the lack of details in the published excavation reports[98]. Pottery typical of the ninth century is ubiquitous at the site, but not later types such as glazed ware.

The church of St Stephen at Umm ar-Raṣāṣ is of special interest. The use of Greek, the Byzantine indiction year cycle, and the era of the province of Arabia in the church inscriptions by the Arabic-speaking population of this small remote town, but major pilgrimage site, as late as 756 AD is indicative of the residual prestige of Greek and the degree to which the inhabitants had not yet reconciled themselves to being under permanent Muslim rule. The illiteracy shown in the later repairs of damage to these Greek inscriptions reveal, however, that knowledge of Greek was on the wane by the late eighth century[99], at a time when the Christians in the region in general were shifting to the use of Arabic.

Conclusions

The brief survey of a few archaeological sites shows a remarkable lack of evidence for a Christian presence in Jordan beyond the ninth or possibly early tenth century. The scarcity of historical attestations for Christians in the ninth and tenth centuries beyond the Baptism Site on the Jordan River and such statements as that by al-Yaʿqūbī that there were Christians in some districts in northern Jordan is also striking. The references to Christians in the Crusader period, however, indicate that Christians were still around in the twelfth century, most notably in the Petra/Wādī Mūsā area, but elsewhere as well. So how to account for the lack of evidence for Christians in the period between the ninth century and the Crusades in the twelfth century is a question that remains to be resolved. Archaeological investigation is the main prospect for new insights, but if the evidence for Christians is there, the amount of archaeological excavation in Jordan has already been large enough that one would expect that presence for Christians in the period, for example in al-Yaʿqūbī's northern districts, to have already been found. Were the Christians genuinely already declining by the ninth century to the point that they were becoming historically and archaeologically invisible, or is the observed gap until the Crusaders an artificial one caused by our failure to recognize their presence?

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94 Di Segni, Varia.
95 Weber, Gadara.
96 Ibidem.
97 al-Daire, Basilika 92-96.
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Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Christian Presence in Jordan in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries

The Christians in Jordan continued to thrive after the Muslim Conquests of the 630s and throughout the Umayyad period and beyond into the first decades of the Abbasid period, and they continued to have ties with the Byzantine Empire. But by the early ninth century, the Christians in Jordan had begun to dwindle in number and any further relations with the Byzantine Empire are scarcely attested. This article examines the state of the remnant Christians in the area of modern-day Jordan during the years of the Abbasid period between the death of the Abbasid caliph Harūn ar-Rašīid in 809 and the takeover of the region by the Fatimid caliphs in Egypt in 970 and focuses on the extent to which there is historical or archaeological evidence for a continued Christian presence in those two centuries. The article also seeks to establish whether Christian pilgrimage continued in the area in the ninth and tenth centuries and addresses the question of what a Christian pilgrim would have still found in Jordan at that time.

Die christliche Präsenz in Jordanien im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert

Die Situation der Christen in Jordanien in der Zeit nach den muslimischen Eroberungen der 630er Jahre sowie während der gesamten Umayyadenzeit und darüber hinaus bis in die ersten Jahrzehnte der Herrschaft der Abbasiden kann weiterhin als gut bezeichnet werden, und auch die Verbindungen zum Byzantinischen Reich bestanden fort. Vom frühen 9. Jahrhundert an nahm die Zahl der Christen in Jordanien jedoch ab und weitere Beziehungen zum Byzantinischen Reich sind kaum belegt. Dieser Beitrag untersucht den Status der verbliebenen Christen im Gebiet des heutigen Jordaniens während der Abbasidenzeit zwischen dem Tod des Kalifen Harūn ar-Rašīid im Jahr 809 und der Übernahme der Region durch die fatimidischen Kalifen in Ägypten im Jahr 970. Der Fokus liegt dabei darauf zu ermitteln, in welchem Ausmaß historische oder archäologische Belege für eine anhaltende christliche Präsenz in diesen zwei Jahrhunderten vorliegen. Darüber hinaus wird untersucht, ob die christliche Pilgerfahrt im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert in der Region fortgesetzt wurde, wobei es um die Frage geht, was ein christlicher Pilger zu dieser Zeit in Jordanien noch hätte vorfinden können.

Diplomacy and Mediation

Nicolas Drocourt

Arabic-speaking Ambassadors in the Byzantine Empire (from the Ninth to Eleventh Centuries)*

In the framework of the conference held in Mainz, Arabic-speaking ambassadors deserve special attention. This paper will focus on the first three centuries of the period under consideration (i. e. between the ninth and eleventh centuries). Official emissaries were already present within the Byzantine Empire during the previous centuries, since the very beginning of Islam. The period of the *rāšidūn* caliphs and then the entire Umayyad period soon demonstrated that military contacts were only one side of a much more complex reality of relations between the Arab Near East and Byzantium. Peaceful relations also prevailed. Arabic-speaking ambassadors – as well as Byzantine emissaries sent to Damascus and then to Baghdad – were at the heart of these relations. Various studies by Marius Canard or, more recently, those by Andreas Kaplony and Alexander Beihammer, among others, have focused on these first decades and centuries of official and diplomatic relations[1]. They have demonstrated notably that many Arab ambassadors stayed in the Byzantine Empire – even if the ebb and flow of their movements did not follow a regular pattern, depending on geopolitical circumstances[2].

The case of Arabic-speaking ambassadors sent to Byzantium during the subsequent centuries, until the beginning of the Crusades, can be analyzed. As such, the subject raises many questions. First of all, who are the ambassadors under consideration? What is their social and political profile? What are their conditions of travel and stay within the Empire? But we also have to deal with the political and cultural consequences of their stay in the Byzantine Empire – an aspect which will be considered in the third part of this paper. As a whole, the place and influence of these ambassadors compared to that of other individuals (monks, merchants or artists) between Byzantium and the Arab Near East can also be considered within the context of this overview.

Part of an Elite? Social Profile and Reasons for the Choice of Arab Ambassadors

Thanks to the written sources, scholars usually posit that ambassadors formed part of an elite during the Middle Ages – and this is not only true for Arab ambassadors sent to the Byzantine Empire[3]. But this seems particularly true for these emissaries, and, more generally, for the ones who moved from the Muslim to the Christian world and vice versa[4].

Indeed, they have to be considered as part of a social as well as a military and political elite, even if this assertion cannot be checked for each case of diplomatic contact known to us. A few examples tend to prove this fact. First of all, the notable Abū ʿUmayr ʿAdī b. Ahmad b. ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-Aḍanī is impressive in that sense. He represents a case which requires careful thought. In the first part of the tenth century, ʿAbd al-Bāqī held official administrative functions on the Abbasid Syrian frontier with Byzantium. He was an Arab from the Tamīm tribe originating from the Cilician city of Adana[5]. He is known to us notably because of his personal relations with one of the greatest Arab geographers of this century: al-Masʿūdī. The latter presents him as a commander of the Syrian borderlands (*šayḫ aṯ-ṯuġūr aš-šāmīya*)[6], while al-Ḫaṭīb al-Baġdādi calls him a *raʾīs* of the same *ṯuġūr*[7]. He appears to have played a central role in the diplomatic contacts between Byzantium and the Abbasid Caliphate. Indeed, if he reached Constantinople in May 946 to meet Constantine VII in the

* I am very grateful to John Tolan and Jean-Marcel Périllon for reading and commenting upon earlier versions of this article. In the following study, the phrase »Arab ambassadors« will indicate Arabic-speaking ambassadors, be they Muslims or Christians.

1 See Canard, Proche-Orient; Kaplony, Gesandtschaften; Beihammer, Nachrichten; Rochow, Byzanz und das Kalifat.

2 Kennedy, Diplomacy 134-137.

3 For the relations between Byzantium and the Western world, see notably McCormick, Ambassadors 45-72, and Nerlich, Gesandtschaften 107-121.

4 Drocourt, Diplomatic Relations 59-61. I will focus here on the Arab ambassadors coming from the Arab Near East, including Egypt, and whose name and identity are known, but a few of them remain *anonymi*: for them see PmbZ #30171, #30248, #30252 and #30370. For Aġlabid envoys, to whom I will pay less attention, see, for instance: PmbZ #22680 and #22681.

5 On this notable and his relations with Byzantium see now: PmbZ #20086, with all the bibliographical references; see also Drocourt, Diplomatie sur le Bosphore, Index *sub verbo* »ʿAbd al-Bâqî«.

6 Masʿūdī, Prairies d'or 2 §739 (277).

7 Vasiliev/Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 78 (*raʾīs* is translated as »notable« [in French] by M. Canard in this passage).

name of the caliph[8], he was already an official mediator in 924, when he escorted a Byzantine embassy to Baghdad[9]. Furthermore, at the beginning of the summer of 917 his name is also mentioned in Arabic sources for the role he played in the reception of another Byzantine embassy in order to prepare an exchange of prisoners[10]. Known through Arabic and Greek sources, ʿAbd al-Bāqī has not surprisingly attracted the attention of historians of Arab-Byzantine relations[11]. We should also note that, for the beginning of the tenth century, Greek chroniclers mention the arrival of a man known as *Abelbakēs* in Constantinople for diplomatic reasons. Some scholars suggest he might be our ʿAbd al-Bāqī, and, therefore, this diplomatic mission could have been the first of numerous official contacts for the *raʾīs* of the borderlands[12]. However, these views are not shared by other historians[13].

The long »career« of Abū ʿUmar ʿAdī b. ʿAbd al-Bāqī should not conceal another Arab ambassador known thanks to the famous historian aṭ-Ṭabarī. The name of this envoy clearly indicates a family link with the one just presented. Aṭ-Ṭabarī indeed mentions an official emissary whose name was Yaḥyā ibn ʿAbd al-Bāqī. In 896 the latter also took part in a diplomatic mission between Baghdad and Constantinople. Sent by the Ṭūlūnid *amīr* Ibn Ḫumārawayh, he also prepared a major exchange of prisoners[14]. The precise nature of the family links between the two Ibn ʿAbd al-Bāqī remains unknown[15]. Nevertheless, these two ambassadors remind us that different members of the same family can lead official delegations to Byzantium to defend the diplomatic interests of the Abbasid Caliphate[16].

What is significant for our purpose is the fact that the Arabic term *šayḫ* can be associated with other official emissaries – thus confirming their political and social importance. Two cases prove this during the eleventh century, firstly with the *šayḫ* ʿAbd al-Ġānī ibn Saʿīd. He was sent to Constantinople during the year 404 H. (13.7.1013/1.7.1014) by the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim. The famous Arabic and Egyptian historian al-Maqrīzī specifies that he was Sunni[17]. His aim was certainly to renew the official peace treaty between the Byzantines and the Fatimids – a treaty already signed at the end of the year 1000 or beginning of the following year[18]. At the end of the year 1060, the new Mirdāsid *amīr* of Aleppo also sent a *šayḫ* to Constantinople, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Hafāğī, asking the *basileus* for military aid against another Mirdāsid faction[19].

But other eminent Arab persons with local roles should be evoked as diplomatic agents. In May or June 1062, while military tensions were high with the Byzantines, the *amīr* Timāl b. Ṣāliḥ decided to send from Aleppo one of the notables of this city, Šāfiʿ b. ʿAğāl b. as-Sūfī. Representing an *amīr* and city in a strong position, he succeeded in his diplomatic mission[20]. But if the choice of notables can be a guarantee of success, it does not necessarily equate to a strong Arab position. Exactly one century before, at the end of 962, the same inhabitants of Aleppo sent some of the most distinguished men to negotiate the surrender of their city with Emperor Nikephoros Phokas, who was besieging it[21]. Historians can find other examples of such surrenders negotiated by eminent members of Syrian cities at the time of the Byzantine conquest in the 970s[22].

This role of members of the elite of cities and the administration is thus entirely confirmed by the ranks, functions or dignities occupied by a few Arab ambassadors whose names and functions have been recorded in our sources. Some *qāḍīs*, for example, can be found among these temporary diplomats. The flight of Bardas Skleros to Baghdad gave rise to numerous exchanges of embassies and ambassadors between Constantinople and the Abbasid capital. Among them, the coming of Abū Bākr al-Bāqillānī to Byzantium in 980/981, in the name

8 Kōnstantinos Porphyrogennētos, De ceremoniis 2,570,11-15 (presenting him as coming from Tarsus and as the caliph's representative); Masʿūdī, Avertissement 407; see also Maqrīzī in Campagnolo-Pothitou, Echanges 19f.; Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 653. He was received with other envoys (PmbZ #30370) also coming from Tarsus; they were not sent by *amīr* Sayf ad-Dawla nor received on Monday, 31 May 946 (as suggested by Angelidi, Receptions 484, maybe after Featherstone, Display 85 for the mention of Sayf ad-Dawla) because this day was a Sunday: Kresten, Kaiserpalast 15 (n. 42) and 22-25.

9 Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 605 with all the references.

10 Maqrīzī in Campagnolo-Pothitou, Echanges 18; Masʿūdī, Avertissement 406; Vasiliev/Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 66-69, 78, 169-170; Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 578 and 578a.

11 See among others Canard, Héraclée 363, n. 1, and more recently: Beihammer, Strategies 388f. For his relations with al-Masʿūdī: Drocourt, Political Information 96 and 106 with subsequent bibliography.

12 See recently: PmbZ #20086 (probably in 906/907) with all the Greek references; the author of this notice remarks that the term of *gerōn* qualifying *Abelbakēs* in some of these Greek sources could be a transposition of the Arabic *šayḫ*, which is associated with ʿAbd al-Bāqī as we have seen; Canard, Héraclée 363, n. 1 (under the date of 907); Drocourt, Diplomatic Relations 60f. n. 141.

13 Beihammer, Strategies 388f., does not mention him and, thus, does not establish any link with other diplomatic missions; see also Kresten, Kaiserpalast, 22-25, n. 74 and 29f.

14 Ṭabarī, Return of the Caliphate 33; Vasiliev/Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 12. See PmbZ #28458; Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 525d and 534.

15 See Ṭabarī, Return of the Caliphate 33, n. 178; Campagnolo-Pothitou, Echanges 50.

16 As such, the parallel with Western Latin practices is tempting: at the same moment, the family of Liudprand of Cremona (his father and stepfather) also took part in diplomatic contacts between Provence, North Italy and Constantinople: see Nerlich, Gesandtschaften 108-111, 294f., 297 and 301.

17 See the references to al-Maqrīzī and other Arabic sources in Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 798f, and PmbZ #20011; see also Felix, Byzanz und Islam 59; Bianquis, Damas 307. ʿAbd al-Ġānī ibn Saʿīd is one of these Arab ambassadors in the Byzantine Empire only attested by Arabic authors.

18 Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, nos 789e, 792b, 798f and 800c; Krönung, al Hākim 154, n. 59.

19 References to Kamāl ad-Dīn in Bianquis, Damas 572; Honigmann, Ostgrenze 117.

20 Bianquis, Damas 575; see also Honigmann, Ostgrenze 117.

21 See the references to Arabic sources in Canard, H'amdanides 813, and 812, n. 211.

22 As in 975 with the negotiation and surrender of Ṣaydā, see: Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle 31 (§19) (translation Dostourian: »the Sidonites (…) sent the elders of their town«); Bar Hebraeus 175 (but without any precision concerning the envoys): Ibn al-Qalānisī describes the coming of a certain Abū l-Fatḥ ibn aš-Šayḫ, notable of Sidon in Walker, Tzimiskes 321; Bianquis, Damas 98; Honigmann, Ostgrenze 100.

of the Būyid ʿAḍud ad-Dawla, has to be mentioned[23]. He was, at that time, a *qāḍī*, but also a famous jurist and theologian as Ibn Ḫallikān describes him in his *Biographical Dictionary*[24]. The same author also mentions another *qāḍī* who acted as an envoy of the Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir. Indeed, a man known as al-Qudāʿī led a mission to the Bosphorus in the mid-eleventh century. As a member of an intellectual elite, he wrote books which served as sources for subsequent Egyptian historians – such as al-Maqrīzī, who confirms his diplomatic role[25]. If we trust Kamāl ad-Dīn, he led a second embassy in the name of the Fatimids to the emperor Romanos IV in 1068[26].

Even a vizier can act as an ambassador. Abū-l Qāsim al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī al-Maġribī, vizier and envoy of Sayf ad-Dawla, negotiated an exchange of prisoners with the Byzantines in 966[27]. In the mid-eleventh century, the vizier, poet and ambassador Abū Naṣr al-Manazī (d. 437/1045) frequently traveled to Constantinople, where he purchased a great number of books[28].

Finally, one should not forget the cases of diplomatic contacts with the court of Constantinople in which the *amīrs*, mainly understood here as autonomous princes governing an emirate, come to the Empire themselves to meet the emperor and to negotiate with him. These cases are numerous. The circumstances explaining such a choice are different from one case to the next. An *amīr* can negotiate and conclude an exchange of prisoners. The presence in Constantinople of the one called *Delemikēs* by the *De ceremoniis*, at the end of the summer of 946, provides a good example of this[29]. The coming of an *amīr* can be a mark of allegiance – such as the case of Abū Ḥafṣ, *amīr* of Melitene at the end of the year 931[30]. It is all the more obvious since the contact occurs while the emperor himself is on a military campaign which appears to be successful: the famous chronicler Yaḥya al-Anṭākī depicts it as taking place during the military presence in Syria in 995, for example[31]. In September 1032, an important diplomatic negotiation took place in Constantinople concerning notably the oriental frontier of Byzantium and, thus, the fate of various emirates which were concerned with that frontier[32]. Among the representatives who were present, it is not surprising to find one of these *amīrs* himself, Ḥassān ibn al Mufarriǧ al-Ǧarrāh, *amīr* of Tripoli[33]. Less than thirty years later, in 1056/1057 (H. 448), the Seljuk sultan Tuġril Beg sent rich gifts to the Byzantine emperor through two eminent emissaries: the *amīr* Quṭb ad-Dawla and a man known as al-Ḥasanī presented as a *šarīf*, an Arabic term which means that al-Ḥasanī was considered a descendant of the Prophet[34].

This last example definitely convinces us that Arab ambassadors were above all members of the political and social elite of the Arabs. The presence of *amīrs* reminds us of the importance attached to official contacts with Byzantium, as well as the need to be represented before the emperor in the best way possible, which means with the most suitable men.

Beyond this first overview of the social profile of our ambassadors, a few other explanations should be given. Why were these men chosen and not others who may have had the same profile? The choice of an ambassador remains based on a feeling of confidence. This confidence concerns, of course, the sovereign who sends an envoy and the latter, but also, to a lesser degree, the trust between the envoy and the sovereign who receives him (here the *basileus*). An ambassador should be reliable for the sovereign that he represents abroad[35]. As such, it is not surprising that caliphs or *amīrs* sent the closest person of their entourage and political circle. Abū Ishāq Ibn Šahrām, for his second stay in the Byzantine Empire in the name of the Abbasid caliph and Būyid *amīr* ʿAḍud ad-Dawla, is thus presented as »one of the trustworthy men« of the latter by Yaḥya al-Anṭākī[36]. Their choice can be directed to their own relatives. The presence of one of the sons of *amīrs*, for example, is frequently observed in our sources, and it is confirmed by Arabic as well as Greek sources. It seems, however, that this practice was more fre-

23 Arabic references to Ibn al-Athīr's Kāmil in Donohue, Buwayhid 77 (see also in Canard, Deux documents 56, n. 3) and to Abū Šūǧaʿ in Beihammer, Sturz 36-39, 37 n. 47 (and for the date, see also PmbZ # 22689 and Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 766b). Another Arabic source can be useful, as quoted by Mansouri, Musulmans 390, n. 42.

24 As quoted by the latter Ibn Ḫallikān 2,616 f.; on his activities as a jurist and *qāḍī*: Lambton, State 69-82. On the context: Donohue, Buwayhid 77.

25 Maqrīzī 276; Ibn Ḫallikān 2,617; Guest, List of Writers 117 and 124.

26 References to Kamāl ad-Dīn (given by Hamdani, Relations 177 f.); Felix, Byzanz und Islam 120 and n. 222.

27 This envoy, who would stay in Constantinople as a hostage, is known as a »*wazīr*« in only one Arabic text (Ibn al-Azraq); modern historians can present him as a »*vizir du H'amdanide*« (Sayf ad-Dawla) as does Canard, H'amdanides, 824 f., while others consider him a secretary, notably A. Beihammer, in Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, 707b, 707d (presents him as a »*Sekretär*« thanks to Kamāl ad-Dīn who mentions him as »*kātib*« which means secretary); on this point see PmbZ # 20071. I thank Bettina Krönung for commentaries and help rendered for these passages. On his function and role as an ambassador, see also: Campagnolo-Pothitou, Echanges 31, 46 f.

28 As recalled by El Cheikh, Byzantium 110 and her references.

29 Kōnstantinos Porphyrogennētos, De ceremoniis 2,15,593 f. He was probably ʿAlī b. Ǧaʿfar ad-Daylamī, *amīr* of Amida, and was sent by Sayf ad-Dawla: Kresten, Kaiserpalast 30 f. and n. 92; PmbZ # 21448; Vasiliev, Dynastie macédonienne 315 f.; Angelidi, Receptions 471. On his functions as *apokrisarios*, see the analyses proposed by Zuckerman, Olga 648, n. 2 and 671. The exchange of prisoners took place during the month of October 946: Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 653b.

30 The *amīr* came with the military commander of Melitene; they were welcomed by John Kourkouas, and then they came to Constantinople and met the emperor: the Greek chroniclers describing it are mentioned by Vest, Melitene 2,821 f.; Vasiliev, Dynastie macédonienne 266 f. See also, in the year 1000, the case of the Marwānid *amīr* Mumahhid ad-Dawla Saʿīd: Yaḥya, Histoire 2,252; Felix, Byzanz und Islam 134; Ripper, Marwāniden 34 f.

31 Yaḥya, Histoire 2,234 (the *amīr* of Aleppo is accompanied by his chamberlain); ibidem 235 (governor of Tripoli); Bianquis, Damas 205 f.

32 See now Beihammer, Muslim Rulers 167 f.

33 Yaḥya, Histoire 3,163; Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 383; Bianquis, Damas 497; Felix, Byzanz und Islam 43 and 100 f.

34 Book of Gifts 112 (§91). A probable mention of this last ambassador by Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 454 (see the parallel established by Cahen, Diplomatie 13). Felix, Byzanz und Islam 171 and n. 114; Grabar, Shared Culture 121 f. (with the only date of 1057).

35 On this purpose, see the Siyāsat-Nāma of Nizām al-Mulk, ch. 22: Nizām al-Mulk, Siyāsat-Nāma 133 (French translation); Nizām al-Mulk, Book of Government 101 (English translation).

36 Yaḥya, Histoire 2,193. Logically, these conceptions of confidence in the heart of the choice of ambassadors are also true in the Byzantine and Western Christian spheres: McCormick, Ambassadors. On the embassy led by Ibn Šahrām: Donohue, Buwayhid 77 f.; PmbZ # 22703, and above all Beihammer, Sturz.

quent, if not exclusive, during the eleventh century. To my knowledge we don't find caliphs sending their own sons. But it frequently appears during the first half of the eleventh century with other sovereigns. Mirdāsid's *amīr* from Aleppo or *amīr* Ḥassān b. al-Mufarriğ sent their sons to Constantinople to request Byzantine titles and stipends. This seems to be a significant change in the way Arab and Muslim sovereigns conceived their diplomatic representation to the emperor. It is also certainly a consequence of close ties between Constantinople and these new Muslim frontier lords, the latter sometimes taking the role of representatives and dignitaries of the Byzantine Empire – as recently summarized by Alexander Beihammer[37]. It seems clear that this practice also corresponds to a period when the Byzantine Empire still had a strong influence on its eastern neighbours.

Among these trustworthy persons around the Abbasid caliphs, one should observe that the eunuchs are less present than other persons in this diplomatic role. As is well known, they played an important role in the first political circle of different caliphs, as D. Ayalon has demonstrated[38]. Nevertheless, they were rarely chosen as ambassadors to the *basileus*. Thanks to the Syriac author Bar Hebraeus one can be found, in the mid-ninth century, received by Empress Theodora to prepare an exchange of prisoners[39]. It remains true that eunuchs regularly appear in negotiations that take place in the borderlands, notably to prepare and carry out the well-known exchanges of prisoners between Byzantium and the Arabs[40].

The choice of an ambassador is also the choice of a person who will be able to discuss and negotiate specific points. Since these diplomatic discussions concern the borderlands, it is not surprising to find residents of these areas chosen as official envoys, especially when they are part of the local political and military elite. Their names are indicative of their origins, and thus of their choice. Abū ʿUmayr ʿAdī b. Ahmad b. ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-Aḏanī, already presented, is a significant case[41]. We can add to him another envoy, acting for the Fatimid caliph on the eve of the battle of Manzikert. According to an Arabic text, his name was Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm b. ʿAlī al-Kafartābī[42]. Here again, this *nisba* – an adjective indicating a person's place of origin used at the end of the name – indicates a man originating from Northern Syria (Kafartāb) who is at the heart of Byzantine-Muslim negotiations[43]. Another question seems important: the capacity of these men to ratify treaties or peace conventions. It is not only a question of trust between the sovereign involved in these negotiations and his ambassador. It is also a question of knowledge of the law. This is an aspect that can explain the presence of *qāḍīs* or judges at the head of Arab embassies. Reading the account given by Abū Šuğaʿ about Ibn Šahrām's embassy in 372 AH helps us to understand how long and hard these negotiations were, and how they could stumble over the written and final resolution – even if the re-writing by Abū Šuğaʿ is not to be ignored[44]. Ambassadors have to be aware of these legal aspects before negotiating and even concluding any treaty or truce[45].

Of course, linguistic skills should not be forgotten. If translators and interpreters existed at the imperial court of Constantinople, and if scholars hypothesize that there was an Arabic department in the Byzantine imperial chancery[46], the knowledge of the Greek language was certainly another criterion in the choice of Arab and Muslim sovereigns. Here again, not surprisingly, we find Arab emissaries originating from the borderlands where bilingualism was a reality. As such, the case of ʿAbd al-Bāqī in the first part of the tenth century is really symptomatic of this tendency: coming from the borderlands, being a high status officer, acting several times as ambassador and intermediary between Constantinople and Baghdad, and speaking Greek fluently if we trust Arabic testimonies. In 917, he acted in Baghdad as the official interpreter of the Byzantine emissaries coming to the Abbasid capital[47], a function that he held one more time seven years later[48]. In the second part of the same century, the famous Arab geographer al-Muqaddasī explained that in different *ribāṭāt* of the south Syrian coast numerous persons speaking Greek could also be sent to Byzantium as members of an embassy[49].

Last but not least, another criterion concerning the choice of Arab ambassadors is the fact that some of them are also Christian[50]. One has to note that it seems that most of these Arab and Christian ambassadors were above all Melkites. Three examples are significant. At the conclusion of the tenth century, a man known as Malkūṭā as-Suryānī offers a first ex-

37 Beihammer, Muslim Rulers, and more precisely at 165-167 and 172, with all the references to Greek and Arabic sources. But we should observe that this choice is also true, at the same moment with the *amīr* of Sicily who, in 1035, sent his son to Constantinople: see Felix, Byzanz und Islam 204 f. and the references to the sources. A request of this sort is not always met with success: Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 388; Beihammer, Muslim Rulers 177.

38 Ayalon, Eunuchs.

39 Bar Hebraeus 142.

40 Ayalon, Eunuchs 114-121; Campagnolo-Pothitou, Echanges.

41 See here references on notes 5 and 8 (Masʿūdī, Avertissement 407). ʿAbd al-Bāqī appears as governor of the city of Adana in 901: PmbZ # 20086, 57.

42 Book of Gifts 196 f. (§263).

43 Ibn Māmak, coming from Antioch (*rasūl Anṭākiya*) in 982, may also be mentioned here: PmbZ # 22700; Canard, H'amdanides 847 f. His coming takes place during the negotiations between Constantinople and Baghdad concerning the flight of Bardas Skleros.

44 See Beihammer, Sturz.

45 We should here make another comparison with the choice of ambassadors in the Western Christian world during the same period: the number of chancellors, notaries and specialists of written and juridical culture increases at the same moment: Drocourt, Place de l'écrit 37 f.

46 See Beihammer, Strategies 387 f., n. 54 and the references to previous studies.

47 Maqrīzī in Campagnolo-Pothitou, Echanges 18; Masʿūdī, Avertissement 406; see the Arabic authors translated into French in Vasiliev/Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 66-69 (Ibn Miskawayh), 78 (al-Ḫaṭīb al-Baġdādī), 169 f. (Sibṭ ibn al-Ğawzī); Book of Gifts 148-150 (§161). This reception has been largely analyzed by historians: Kennedy, Diplomacy 140.

48 Vasiliev/Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 69 (Ibn Miskawayh); Beihammer, Strategies 389; Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 605.

49 Muqaddasī, Best Divisions 148. The *ribāṭ* (pl. *ribāṭāt*) was a fortification which housed military volunteers to defend Islam, see Picard/Borrut, Râbata 44.

50 I will not develop this theme here; see the contribution of Bettina Krönung in this volume.

ample. He was twice sent to Emperor Basil II [51]. He was also a merchant, the only one I could find among the ambassadors, whose activities were certainly concerned with the fate of Arab-Byzantines borderlands. But the two most significant cases were the two patriarchs of Jerusalem, Orestes[52] and then Nikephoros[53], who acted as envoys of the Fatimid caliphs in the first part of the next century. Beyond their great respectability – an important aspect for their reception in Byzantium – one should not forget that the former also had personal and familial links with the Fatimid caliph, being an uncle of the latter[54].

Conditions of Travel and Stay within the Empire

The presence of Arab ambassadors within the Byzantine Empire raises other questions. It concerns all the data in the texts connected with their conditions of travel and stay in Byzantium. Numerous studies have been devoted to these questions for merchants and other Arab travelers, but less attention has been paid to the ambassadors[55].

This is quite surprising because we can find various data on these points in different texts (Arabic or Greek, normative or narrative ones). The data concerning the conditions of travel in the Byzantine territories are the first point. Like every member of official delegations, Arab ambassadors have to be escorted by Byzantine officials from the borderlands to the capital and on the way back. It was a double question of security: security for them and their retinue, but also security for the Empire itself since ambassadors could act as spies[56]. A quick glance at the *De ceremoniis* allows us to underline that this official escort was a reality which was orally recalled by the *logothetēs tou dromou* in the Great Palace of Constantinople. Indeed, chapter 47 of the second book of the *De cerimoniis* presents the various questions and answers that were orally exchanged between the *logothetē*s and three »kinds« of official visitors in Constantinople: the papal envoys, the Bulgarian ones and the ambassadors coming from Arab Muslim partners of Byzantium. It is worth noting that only the last of these were asked any questions connected with conditions of travel and the quality of the official escort. According to this chapter, the *logothetēs* has to inquire about the ambassador's health but, above all, about the reception by the *stratēgoi* of the themes crossed by the embassy. Was this reception proper? Furthermore, the escort, led by what the text calls a *basilikos*, is also questioned. A third question appears: »Did any annoyance or trouble occur on the road?« [57].

One has to remark that, if these questions are not confirmed as such in other testimonies, two Arabic texts confirm the nature and quality of this official escort in the oriental parts of the Empire. The first one concerns the case of the coming of the *amīr* of Tripoli (al-Ḥassān b. al-Muffariǧ al-Ǧarrāh) to meet Romanos III in 1032. The rank of this Arab guest was such that he was escorted by the *katepanō* of Antioch, Niketas of Mistheia, until they arrived in Constantinople[58]. Another example is given by Ibn Šahrām and the detailed account of his embassy in Constantinople in 982. If we trust the account of Abū Šuǧaʿ, the Būyid envoy asserted that he proceeded to the capital and entered it »after [he] had been met and most courteously escorted by court officials« [59].

Of course, the quality of this official escort is logically emphasized in Greek texts – as, for the first example, in that of John Skylitzes. A Greek and Byzantine author would not detail, or even mention, an official escort that went wrong. Secondly, one should not forget the geopolitical context behind each exchange of embassies. It is not surprising to find a decent, if not cordial, reception of an Arab ambassador while the overall relations between the sovereign who sends the latter and the court of Constantinople are at their best. Conversely, things can go wrong on the road and Arab emissaries can be the first victims. In 977, for example, a delegation of *Saracens* carrying the annual tribute from Aleppo to Constantinople had to interrupt its travel in Phrygia. If we trust John Skylitzes, this delegation then became the new stake in the struggle between Basil II and the rebels following Bardas Skleros. The amount of gold the emissaries were ready to offer in Constantinople, thanks to the famous treaty concluded in 970 with the Emirate of Aleppo, reached another political sense in that context, and the official emissaries were certainly disrupted in their task during the battle that followed[60].

51 See all the references to Arabic sources in: PmbZ #24852; Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, nos 781a and 781e; Beihammer, Strategies 389, suggests that he »probably spoke Greek fluently«; Beihammer, al-Ḥākim 182.

52 PmbZ #26197 (Orestes) with the Arabic sources Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 789e; Beihammer, al-Ḥākim 190; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 143, n. 14 and 145.

53 PmbZ #25674 (Nikephoros [I.] (von Jerusalem); see also, on the circumstances of his mission: Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 816c; Beihammer, al-Ḥākim 188, n. 70, and 190f.; Shepard, Holy Land 530-536.

54 According to Ibn al-Qalānisī it appears that another Christian acted as the only envoy in the mission led by Orestes; his name was Ibn Abī l-ʿAlāʾ Fahd b. Ibrāhīm. Yaḥya al-Anṭākī, who seems to be more trustworthy, does not mention it at all, but names Orestes: Dölger/Müller/Beihammer, Regesten, no. 789e. Ibn Abī l-ʿAlāʾ Fahd b. Ibrāhīm was a Christian secretary (but not a Melkite) of the eunuch Barǧawān. There is no reference to this envoy in the recent PmbZ, although historians had already noted his presence for this diplomatic contact: Bianquis, Damas 250; Felix, Byzanz und Islam 49, n. 15; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 143, n. 14.

55 Berger, Arab Travellers; Reinert, Muslim Presence; more information concerning the ambassadors in Anderson, Islamic Spaces; see also now Drocourt, Diplomatie sur le Bosphore 374f., 585-671.

56 Koutrakou, Spies.

57 Kōnstantinos Porphyrogennētos, De ceremoniis 2,47, 683 (l. 11-14), 684 (l.20)-685 (l.1-3), and 685 (l. 18f.). In the first case, the *stratēgos* of Cappadocia is mentioned for the envoys coming from »Syria« and sent by the *amermoumnēs* (i.e. caliph).

58 Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 383; Beihammer, Muslim Rulers 172f. (with references to Kekaumenos' *Stratēgikon* depicting the *amīr*'s stay in Constantinople); Bianquis, Damas 497; Felix, Byzanz und Islam 100.

59 Amedroz, Embassy 921, but it seems that this escort, led by »court officials«, concerns instead the one he received *in* the capital of the Empire. This escort was also appointed »to watch« and control him: Durak, Performance 159.

60 The army of Basil II was finally victorious, and the emissaries reached Constantinople after the battle near the fortress of Oxylthos: Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 321; Belke/Mersich, Phrygien und Pisidien 353 (with the date we follow); Canard, H'amdanides 682 and 849; Honigmann, Ostgrenze 103.

Another point can be mentioned in relation to the stay of Arab ambassadors in the Byzantine Empire. It concerns their housing as well as their freedom of movement within the capital of the Empire. We have to recognize that we do not have much information on this aspect of diplomatic relations between Byzantium and the Arabs – but this is also true for other ambassadors coming from other parts of the medieval world. However, some data leak out from Arabic sources. Naṣr ibn al-Azhar, the Abbasid envoy in 860, notes that after the first audience with the emperor, he was lodged in a place near the Great Palace[61]. In his case, it is clearly to maintain close control over him since the Byzantine authorities isolated him for four months before resuming diplomatic negotiations. One should recall here that another Arab ambassador, although he was coming from the Western part of Muslim territories (i. e. the Umayyad Emirate of Cordoba), Yaḥya al-Ġazāl, mentioned the place where he and his retinue were housed twenty years earlier. He called it the *akadamīya min marmar*, which means »an academy of white marble«[62]. This detail leads us to mention the apparent or real luxury, and maybe comfort, of these places of residence for Arab ambassadors. In 946, thanks to the Greek and normative source *De ceremoniis*, we learn that the Muslim ambassadors who came to the capital to prepare an exchange of prisoners were housed in a place called the *chrysiōn*[63]. If this sole mention remains vague, notably compared with the abundant details given in the same book by Peter the Patrician describing the stay of a Persian embassy in the sixth century, the Greek term employed refers one more time to luxury and, logically, comfort[64].

One last example of an Arab ambassador housed in Constantinople has to be underlined. It concerns Ishāq ibn Šahrām and his stay in 982, already mentioned. Through the details presented by Abū Šuǧaʿ, we learn that he was »honourably lodged in the palace of Nikephoros Kanikleios (Nikfūr al-Kānilī)« – who was the Byzantine envoy who went to Baghdad and came back with the Būyid ambassador[65]. This detail in this account sounds very important for our purpose. It clearly establishes the fact that a high degree of confidence appeared at that time between the two parties here in negotiation, the court of Constantinople and Baghdad. Unless the Arab ambassador or the Arab writer Abū Šuǧaʿ made a mistake, it is the only case I have found where an Arab ambassador was lodged in a private place in the Byzantine Empire[66].

Our sources remain scarce on other aspects of the stay of Arab ambassadors in the Byzantine capital – even if they could stay there for months[67]. Of course, if these Arab ambassadors were Muslim they could have access to the so-called mosque of Constantinople, to which recent studies have drawn our attention[68]. This place plays not only a religious role in the capital, but also a political one for Muslim prisoners, merchants or ambassadors. It was in the mosque that the famous *qāḍī* al-Qudāʿī, a Fatimid envoy in the mid-eleventh century, was a direct witness to the change of the political allegiance associated with the Friday sermon or *ḫuṭba*. Indeed while he was in the capital, illustrating the peaceful relations that had existed between Cairo and Byzantium at that time, he witnessed the arrival of emissaries sent by the Seljuk sultan Tuġril Beg. Their request concerned the Friday prayer (*ḫuṭba*): it should be preached in the name of the Abbasid caliph rather than in that of the Fatimid one – a claim the Byzantines agreed to[69]. If Arab ambassadors were Melkite or Orthodox Christians, they could certainly have access to numerous Christian churches, sanctuaries or monasteries of the capital, especially if they were patriarchs of Jerusalem such as Orestes and Nikephoros at the beginning of the eleventh century.

But the display of Christian churches, or relics, was not only reserved for Christian or pagan partners: in 906/907 the sacred objects of the church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople were shown to Arab and Muslim envoys. If by this means the Byzantine emperor tried to demonstrate his religion's superiority, it was also a choice made in the presence of an ambassador coming from Melitene and who was also the father of the famous Samonas. Nevertheless, the Greek and Christian chroniclers considered such a display to be exaggerated[70]. This aspect leads us to the symbolic part of the official reception of Arab ambassadors at the Byzantine court. Much has been written on this topic. I will just recall here the fact that the Byzantine court ritual of *proskynēsis* could have been presented in the sources as a problem for Arab emissaries. Whether they are exaggerated or not, partially or totally fic-

61 Ṭabarī, Incipient Decline 156.

62 I quote the translation adopted by Lévi-Provençal, Echange 12, but one should note that the translation proposed by M. A. Makkī and F. Corriente is quite different: Ibn Ḥayyān, Crónica 237.

63 Kōnstantinos Porphyrogennētos, De ceremoniis 2,15, 583 and 586, l. 12. On the *chrysiōn* see Bauer, Geschenke 160, n. 115 and the references.

64 In May 946, the Arab ambassadors were also associated with another form of luxury, at the end of the dinner they had with the emperors in the *triklinos* of Justinian (Kōnstantinos Porphyrogennētos, De ceremoniis 2,15, 585 f.). There they were served »a wild-vine decoction, rose-water, *galaion* and other fragrances«, and then »they washed and dried themselves with handtowels of high quality«, and they »were abundantly filled with those fragrant and sweetly smelling perfumes and ointments« (I quote here the translation of Angelidi, Receptions 484 f., correcting the one of Featherstone, Display 97). As remarked by C. Angelidi, other envoys in the same long chapter were not offered a comparable treat of fragrances, and we must suggest with her that, in this way, this official meeting was certainly adapted to these Arab guests. Indeed, perfumes and luxury products were narrowly associated with Eastern neighbors of the Byzantines, be they Arab or Muslims: Koutrakou, Eastern Luxury Nexus, and especially 329 for perfumes.

65 Amedroz, Embassy 921; Beihammer, Sturz 30.

66 The *Chronicon Salernitanum* informs us of a Salernitan bishop who gave accommodation to a Muslim emissary in his personal residence, but had to go to Rome in expiation of his crime: Drocourt, Diplomatic Relations 57 f.

67 As the case of Naṣr ibn al-Azhar shows (see above n. 61).

68 Anderson, Islamic Spaces; Woods, Maslama.

69 See Felix, Byzanz und Islam 119-121; Anderson, Islamic Spaces 101 f.; Thomson, Relations 55 f. and 59; Donohue, Buwayhid 78; Drocourt, Political Information 103, n. 60.

70 Theophanēs Continuatus, Chronographia 374 f.; Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 189; PmbZ # 26973A; Vest, Melitene 2,766. On the contrary, in 1161, when Manuel I Komnenos received the Seljuk sultan Kilij Arslan II in Constantinople, access to Hagia Sophia was strictly forbidden to the Muslim sovereign: Iōannēs Kinnamos, Epitome Rerum 206.

titious or not, some Arabic texts depict the way these envoys tried to free themselves from this *proskynēsis* or other court ritual, and thus try to demonstrate their superiority before the *basileus*. The cases of Yaḥya al-Ġazāl and of al-Bāqillānī have to be mentioned, and have already been analyzed by previous studies[71]. Trying to avoid and spurn formal etiquette could also have been a choice of Arab ambassadors sent by Turkish rulers. Skylitzēs describes how arrogant was the one he presents as a *serifos* or *šarīf*. Faced with this attitude, Emperor Constantine IX decided to dismiss the ambassador without negotiating[72].

This information leads us to the question of the immunity of our ambassadors. Like others, Arab envoys in the Empire enjoyed a diplomatic status that theoretically protected them against any mistreatment. This is guaranteed by the *ius gentium,* which is a common law that can be found in various normative texts, be they Greek, Latin or Arabic. Of course, voluntary isolation could appear as a political choice by Byzantine authorities, as we have already pointed out. In 860, Naṣr ibn al-Azhar remained isolated for four months[73]. Around forty years later, another Arab ambassador coming from Baghdad was subjected to the same treatment. At-Tanūḫī explains that he was sent to the capital of the Byzantine Empire to investigate the situation of Muslim prisoners of war. Rumors had reached Baghdad that they were mistreated. When he arrived, he was allowed to visit a prison and see them, but only after having been isolated for many days. And if we trust his testimony, the prisoners he saw were in good health, wearing new clothes. But the ambassador was not taken in, explaining that if the Byzantine authorities had refused to receive him officially for several days, it was precisely to have enough time to change the appearance of Muslim prisoners[74].

When political and military tension arose, the Arab ambassadors – as well as the Byzantine ones in Arab territories – could suffer other forms of ill-treatment. In the context of war and military campaigns, if the principles of the *ius gentium* were recalled by the Byzantines[75], the reality was sometimes different. The choice of isolation appears more frequently than during periods of peace, and this isolation clearly reaches another level that we have to call imprisonment. In 992, for instance, the *katepanō* of Antioch received an envoy of Manǧūtakīn, a Turkish *amīr* acting in the name of the Fatimid caliph. This diplomatic contact took place while Manǧūtakīn was leading military operations against the Byzantines in the region. The first reaction of the *katepanō* was to send the official envoy to jail. Nevertheless, the *basileus* was very upset by this reaction of his *katepanō*: if we trust Yaḥya al-Anṭāki, the emperor asked his *katepanō* to send the envoy to him – while he was campaigning on the Bulgarian front – and when the envoy reached him, Basil II decided to free him[76]. Another significant case concerns the famous military campaign led by Romanos III in 1030 against the emirate of Aleppo. Again thanks to information delivered by Yaḥya al-Anṭāki, we learn that Muqallad b. Mirdās, Aleppo's ambassador to the emperor, was also imprisoned by the latter and remained in jail during the entire campaign, until the defeat of the Byzantines. But what is significant is the fact that the Byzantine envoy sent to the Mirdāsids suffered the same fate[77].

Finally, except for these specific cases – specific because they are associated with a military context – one has to note that these envoys did not suffer in physical terms. I only found one case which refutes this observation. It concerns an envoy sent by the inhabitants of the city of Tarsos while Emperor Nikephoros Phokas was besieging it in 965. Proposing peace, the envoy was certainly surprised by the emperor's reaction: he burnt the letter on the head of the envoy with a gesture which also »singed his beard and [the emperor] drove him away«[78]. This is an attitude that was beyond all expectations and in contradiction with the principles of the so-called *ius gentium*. It can be explained by a form of triumphalism by the Emperor who at that time won numerous military victories in northern Syria[79].

71 References in Drocourt, Relations 63 f., n. 153 for the question of the *proskynēsis*. Clothes are also an aspect appearing in these contexts: in 860 the entry of Naṣr ibn al-Azhar in the Great Palace was already a kind of affront to this etiquette; the way aṭ-Ṭabarī describes it demonstrates that the ambassador employed it in a good way for his first encounter with Emperor Michael III: on this case see Durak, Performance 162; for the case of al-Bāqillānī: Beihammer, Kommunikation 177 f.

72 Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 454. A parallel has to be drawn with another *šarīf* mentioned as an ambassador in an Arabic text (see above on note 34). One has to note that even if the sovereign or sultan was Turkish, some of his ambassadors sent to Byzantium were Arabs. In AH 444 (3 May 1052 / 22 April 1053), for instance, Tuġril Beg sent to Constantinople someone whose name was Abū ʿAlī b. Kathīr: Felix, Byzanz und Islam 118 f.; Idris, Glanes 304.

73 Ṭabarī, Incipient Decline 156.

74 Tanūḫī in Vasiliev / Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 288 f.; see Dölger / Müller / Beihammer, Regesten, no. 595b (proposing July 922, but not excluding a previous date, 913/914); PmbZ # 31070. An anonymous envoy of the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem was also sent with the one coming from Baghdad, but was not isolated by the emperor: PmbZ # 31072.

75 See notably Leōn VI, Taktika, ch. XVII, § 5, 394 and ch. XX, § 33, 548. In 1071, some material guarantees were given to the envoys who came from Alp Arlsan on the eve of the battle of Manzikert as attested by Greek sources (notably Michael Attaleiates): to be read now, in comparison with many other texts in non-Greek languages, in the recent monograph of Hillenbrand, Manzikert.

76 Yaḥya, Histoire 2,230 f.; Dölger / Müller / Beihammer, Regesten, no. 781c; PmbZ # 31964 (on the anonymous envoy); on Manjūtakīn: PmbZ # 24858.

77 Yaḥya, Histoire 3,127-129 (who presents, in fact, the cases of two different ambassadors from Aleppo who were sent to jail – and the first of them with the gifts he tried to offer to the emperor – but the latter logically refusing it; he would only accept it at the end of the conflict: ibidem 141, and Dölger / Müller / Beihammer, Regesten, no, 834a). Historians have experienced some confusion about these two embassies: see Bianquis, Damas 472 f. and the observations made by Felix, Byzanz und Islam 85, n. 128. For the reference to the Byzantine envoy imprisoned: Yaḥya, Histoire 3,127-129 and 141; Dölger / Müller / Beihammer, Regesten, no. 832b. On the topic of diplomatic reception during military campaigns of the *basileis*: N. Drocourt, L'activité diplomatique (in press).

78 I quote here the terms of Bar Hebraeus 170; for the reference to Arabic sources, see: Dölger / Müller / Beihammer, Regesten, no. 706b; PmbZ # 31474 (*Anonymus*).

79 This triumphalism and its consequences in the range of diplomatic contacts are also obvious for other foreign ambassadors received at the court of Nikephoros Phokas: Drocourt, Ambassadeur maltraité 97 f. Another case must be underlined, even if it doesn't concern an Arab ambassador sent to Byzantium but who crossed the Empire as an envoy between the Zīrid and Abbasid courts. His name was Abū Ġālib aš-Šīrāzī and in AH 443 [15 May 1051 - 2 May 1052], he was captured by the Byzantines while he was trying to conclude an alliance against the Fatimids of Cairo. He was thus sent by the Byzantines to this city

Cultural and Intellectual Impact of the Presence of Arab Ambassadors in Byzantium

A final aspect of the Arab diplomatic presence in the Empire has to be considered: its cultural consequences. This theme has already been largely studied by numerous scholars, notably Nike Koutrakou for the period under consideration[80]. As such, this part of the study will be shorter than previous ones. Intellectual, artistic or, in a broad sense, what is called cultural relations can be surprising in the context of political relations between Byzantium and its Arab and Muslim partners. However, historians have demonstrated that we should not only assume military or political opposition between the Byzantines and these partners. The relations in question had a cultural dimension and were a reality that reminds us how ambivalent these multifaceted relations were.

Indeed, as part of an intellectual elite, Arab ambassadors did not come to the Empire for political or military reasons alone. In various cases, the sources evoke the intellectual dimension of their presence – and even focus on this aspect only, deliberately forgetting the diplomatic and major reasons for their presence. This assumption seems obvious in the case of relations between Cordoba and Constantinople in the mid-tenth century. If we trust Arabic testimonies, they only implied cultural ties between the two courts, but, in fact, these contacts also prepared a military attack against a common threat: the Fatimids of Ifrīqiya[81]. The relations of Byzantium with the Arab Near East offer the same perspectives. As such, the case of the first embassy led by Abū Isḥāq ibn Šahrām is significant. This diplomatic mission was carried out in the name of the Ḥamdānid's *amīr* Sayf ad-Daula. Cultural aspects were certainly not the first reasons explaining the presence of the Arab ambassador in Constantinople, but they prevail in the famous Ibn an-Nadīm's *Fihrist*. Ibn an-Nadīm gives a lot of interesting details on that mission and on the cultural role that Ibn Šahrām played. He describes him asking the emperor of the Byzantines to open »a temple of ancient construction« where, in ancient times, »the Greeks (…) worshipped heavenly bodies and idols« – a temple which was closed in the mid-tenth century and could only be reached after a three-day journey from Constantinople. The emperor agreed to open it and the ambassador was allowed to visit it. Thanks to his report Ibn Šahrām asserted that he had »never seen anything equaling its vastness and beauty«; but he also mentioned that he saw numerous »ancient books« and that some of which, according to him, »were worn« or »in normal conditions«, while others were »eaten by insects«[82]. The temple was closed after the envoy's visit, and, as Juan Signes Codoñer remarked, Ibn Šahrām went back without any of these manuscripts[83].

This example of cultural contact through diplomatic means is interesting for various reasons. First, and although the »cultural exchange« was partially aborted, the case shows us that this kind of cultural display was possible. Secondly, the part played by the Arab ambassador appears very active, requesting orally or by written correspondence for the emperor to open this old temple. Thirdly, we should of course be very cautious about this testimony: it was also written to prove the idea – much more than the reality – of an ambassador who triumphs over the Byzantine emperor. Furthermore, this passage of Ibn an-Nadīm's *Fihrist* illustrates one of the aspects of Byzantine-Arab relations demonstrated by Dimitri Gutas. Indeed, it tends to demonstrate that the Byzantines could not be aware of their Greek cultural heritage since they were Christians – and the text of the Arabic author clearly states the temple »had been locked since the time that the Byzantines had become Christians.« On the contrary, Arabs and Muslims were the ones who could appreciate this cultural heritage, due to their adherence to Islam, and therefore defended a philhellenic and anti-Byzantine attitude[84]. As such, diplomatic means and the cultural dimension of this contact were a way to demonstrate the superiority of Arabs and Muslims over the Byzantines.

Material culture was not absent from cultural exchanges through the ebb and flow of embassies. The place and role of gifts must be pointed out. This aspect has also extensively been studied by Byzantinists recently, so it will not be developed here[85]. But it remains important to remind ourselves that Arab ambassadors – as well as Byzantines ones – occupied a central place in the concrete transfer of gifts. The famous *Book of Gifts and Rarities* (*Kitāb al-Hadāyā wa-t-Tuḥaf*) demonstrates this at the end of the period under examination[86]. However, one has to recognize that in most cases we do not have much information about the evolution of these objects, their real cultural impact or consequences within the Empire. Nevertheless, we must underline that the objects which circulated by these diplomatic means (luxurious clothing, books, ivory etc., or the »curious and new« objects offered by Naṣr b. al-Azhar among others in 860) demonstrate how close the Byzantine and Arab elites were. Of course, diplomatic gifts could have a political impact: the choice of a gift is never innocuous. Exotic animals such

where he was publicly humiliated, before going back to Constantinople. There, the *basileus* received another Arab envoy from Baghdad asking for the release of Abū Ġālib aš-Šīrāzī: this story was known to al-Maqrīzī: Felix, Byzanz und Islam 117-119; Lev, Fatimids 273; Idris, Glanes 303 f. (with a French translation of al-Maqrīzī).

80 Koutrakou, Highlights; for the ninth century: Magdalino, Road; Sypiánski, Cultural Rivalry; Signes Codoñer, Theophilos 421-448; see also, in broader perspective: Drocourt, Diplomatie sur le Bosphore 707-724.

81 Koutrakou, Highlights 99 f. (with the references to the works of Juan Signes Codoñer).

82 Ibn an-Nadīm, Kitāb al-Fihrist 585 f. This text is also translated by Vasiliev/Canard, Byzance et les Arabes 295 f.; on this contact see also Canard, Deux documents 56 f., n. 4; PmbZ # 22703.

83 Signes Codoñer, Diplomacia del Libro 172.

84 Gutas, Greek Thought; see also El Cheikh, Byzantium 102-106.

85 See Cutler, Significant Gifts, with references to his previous studies; Beihammer, Kommunikation 183-188; Drocourt, Diplomatic Relations 66 f.

86 Book of Gifts.

as the giraffe and elephant sent from the Fatimid caliph of Egypt in 1054 could be exhibited by the emperor to the inhabitants of Constantinople[87]. A few years before, in 1032, to demonstrate how much the *basileus* could trust him, the *amīr* of Aleppo sent him no less than a precious Christian relic: a lock of hair of John the Baptist. This gift complemented the annual tribute paid to Constantinople by the Mirdāsids. By this gesture, the *amīr* »emphasized his high esteem for the capacity of the *basileus* – his overlord – as head of Christianity«[88].

This can lead us to a last aspect: the intellectual skills of Arab ambassadors. As noted above, some of them were chosen thanks to their ability to communicate in Greek with the Byzantine authorities. This fact is important but it should not be downplayed that all the ambassadors, whether they could speak Greek or not, should theoretically be able to lead discussions which were certainly complex. This is due, first of all, to the fact that diplomatic negotiations about exchanges of prisoners or the new delimitation of borderlands were complex, as demonstrated, for example, by the report Abū Šuğaʿ made of Ibn aš-Šarhām's embassy in 982[89]. Secondly, one has to recall that theological discussions were certainly frequent with the emperor and his entourage, when the Arab ambassadors were Muslims. The diplomatic presence of Abū Bākr al-Bāqillānī gives clear testimony on that point. During his stay in Constantinople he held a theological discussion in the presence of the emperor, the patriarch and other Greek theologians who were presented as »priests«. This discussion also dealt with astronomical topics[90]. Historians have already underlined that such debates during diplomatic encounters could involve history and geography[91].

Clothes are also a means of expressing cultural differences and Arab ambassadors were aware of it. Again the cases of Naṣr ibn al-Azhar in 860 and Abū Bākr al-Bāqillānī more than one century later underscore this[92]. Of course, the way Arab ambassadors, and others, wore their clothes in a diplomatic context, added to the way subsequent authors describe it, had symbolic meanings[93]. Whatever it shows of the diplomatic confrontation between the Arab Near East and Byzantium, it first underlines the fact that ambassadors had to be well-acquainted with each other's culture. Furthermore, it clearly demonstrates that every diplomatic contact necessarily had a cultural component. It also shows that embassies, to quote Nike Koutrakou, »created their own cultural interest, by inciting the other party's interest in the envoy's thought-world and vice-versa«[94].

Conclusion

Is it necessary then, after these developments, to stress again the importance and role played by Arab ambassadors in the Byzantine Empire? Between the ninth and eleventh centuries, there were many of them, acting as political or diplomatic actors as well as cultural brokers. As part of an elite, be they Christians or Muslims, their presence within the Empire implies many things. First of all, they were usually carefully welcomed by Byzantine authorities, and normative texts such as the *De ceremoniis* appear to be confirmed by narrative ones. Their conditions of stay were also favorable in Constantinople, judging from the scarce information we can rely on, even if their potential role as spies led the Byzantine authorities to pay close attention to them. Being part of a social or political elite and members of the first circle of the sovereign's family they represented, they reached a high degree of trust with that sovereign. That element was essential to conduct diplomatic negotiations and, furthermore, to conclude any treaty with the Byzantines. A dimension of confidence between Arab ambassadors and the Byzantines was also an advantage, and the repeated choice of some eminent envoys (ʿAbd al-Bāqī, Ibn aš-Šarhām or the *qāḍī* al-Qudāʿī) tends to prove it. Last, but not least, the intellectual profile of these official emissaries certainly fostered cultural exchanges between Byzantium and the Arab Near East.

87 As such, these gifts constituted a form of propaganda for these inhabitants, who were »avid spectacle-lovers« and who constituted an appreciative audience for exotic parades as analyzed by Koutrakou, Eastern Luxury Nexus 337f. (with the references to Greek sources).

88 Beihammer, Muslim Rulers 167 and the references to the Arabic sources; Felix, Byzanz und Islam 100f.; for other cases between Byzantium and its Muslim neighbors: Beihammer, Kommunikation 183f., and especially for relics from Edessa: Beihammer, Muslim Rulers 174 and references.

89 Amedroz, Embassy; Beihammer, Sturz.

90 Qāḍī ʿĪyāḍ, Tartīb al-madārik 63-67; I owe this reference to M. T. Mansouri. Al-Bāqillānī, is also known for his works on Christian theology: see Thomas, Al-Bāqillānī 446-450.

91 Koutrakou, Highlights 97 (with the bibliographical reference to Jonathan Shepard). The passing on of political information through Arab ambassadors concerns this topic: Drocourt, Political Information.

92 See the testimony of Ṭabarī for the first of two (Ṭabarī, Incipient Decline 156); for the second one: Mansouri, Tissus 548 and his references.

93 See, notably, Beihammer, Kommunikation.

94 Koutrakou, Highlights 97.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Arabic-speaking Ambassadors in the Byzantine Empire (from the Ninth to Eleventh Centuries)

Arab-speaking ambassadors were numerous in the Byzantine Empire between the 9th and 11th centuries. Generally, members of the ruling elite, they could be *raʾīs* of the *ṯuġūr*, such as the famous ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-Aḍanī, known from Arabic and Greek sources. Significantly, the terms *šaiḫ* and *amīr* can be associated with other official emissaries. The choice of an ambassador by Muslim sovereigns was based on a feeling of confidence. This explains why these sovereigns often sent members of their close entourage and political circle, but linguistic skills were also important. Moreover, the presence of such envoys within the Empire raises many other questions, such as the ways in which they were received. The advantageous arrangements for their official voyages and reception (suggested by Greek normative texts such as the *De cerimoniis*) are confirmed by narrative texts, notably those in Arabic. As far as we can know it from the sources, they were cordially welcomed in Constantinople and hosted by the *basileis*. Nevertheless, political and military contexts could have an influence on their stay in the Empire. A last aspect that their presence implies deals with its intellectual and cultural impact. Indeed, Arab-speaking ambassadors were important cultural brokers between courts, thanks to their intellectual profile as well as the official gifts they bore

Arabischsprachige Botschafter im Byzantinischen Reich (vom 9. bis ins 11. Jahrhundert)

Es gab zwischen dem 9. und 11. Jahrhundert zahlreiche arabischsprachige Botschafter im byzantinischen Reich. Im Allgemeinen Mitglieder der herrschenden Elite, konnten sie *raʾīs* des *ṯuġūr* sein, wie der aus arabischen und griechischen Quellen bekannte berühmte ʿAbd al-Bāqī al-Aḍanī. Bezeichnenderweise können die Begriffe *šaiḫ* und *amīr* mit anderen offiziellen Abgesandten in Verbindung gebracht werden. Die Auswahl eines Botschafters durch muslimische Herrscher beruhte auf dem ihm entgegengebrachten Vertrauen. Dies erklärt, warum diese Herrscher oft Mitglieder ihres engeren Gefolges und ihrer politischen Kreise entsandten. Aber auch Sprachkenntnisse waren wichtig. Darüber hinaus wirft die Anwesenheit dieser Gesandten innerhalb des Reiches viele andere Fragen auf, wie etwa die Frage nach der Art und Weise, wie sie empfangen wurden. Für ihre offiziellen Missionen und ihren Empfang förderliche Regeln, die in griechischen normativen Texten wie *De cerimoniis* festgehalten wurden, werden durch narrative Texte, insbesondere durch arabische, bestätigt. Soweit wir aus den Quellen erfahren, wurden die Gesandten in Konstantinopel herzlich empfangen und von den Kaisern beherbergt. Gleichwohl konnten politische und militärische Umstände ihren Aufenthalt im Reich beeinflussen. Ein letzter Aspekt betrifft die intellektuellen und kulturellen Auswirkungen ihrer Anwesenheit. Arabischsprachige Botschafter waren dank ihres intellektuellen Profils und ihrer offiziellen Geschenke wichtige Kulturvermittler zwischen den Höfen.

Bettina Krönung

The Employment of Christian Mediators by Muslim Rulers in Arab-Byzantine Diplomatic Relations in the Tenth and Early Eleventh Centuries*

When the Hamdanids ruling in Aleppo were threatened by the Fatimid army commander Manǧūtakīn between 992 and 996, they sent – as we know from various Arab historians – the Melkite trader and cloth merchant Malkūṭa as-Suryānī[1] with gifts and an urgent request for military support to the Byzantine emperor Basil II (976-1025). The latter responded to the request for help, first by mobilising his *doux* Michael Bourtzes stationed in Antioch and then, after the latter's military failures, appearing in person at the theatre of war in Syria[2].

Fortunately, the sources have recorded the example of the Melkite merchant Malkūṭa, who functioned as the emissary of an Islamic potentate, as a perfect example for the topic discussed in this volume. Malkūṭa appears as the prototype of what we like to understand as a typical intermediary between cultures: the member of an indigenous border society that was in every respect heterogeneous, such as northern Syria in the late tenth century undoubtedly was, having been fought over for decades by the Byzantines and various Muslim powers. An experienced traveller – on account of his activity as a merchant – who through his intercultural soft skills, among which was also a multilingual know-how, represents the perfect mediator and intermediary between cultures. The religious affiliation is, as the example clearly shows us, among the secondary identity features of this prototype.

It is a shame that the spectacular circumstances of the case of the merchant Malkūṭa represent an exception, at least for the period discussed here, namely the core phase of the Macedonian dynasty (867-1025). Thus in Malkūṭa's case we are dealing with the only example recorded in the sources of a Christian emissary in the service of a Muslim potentate who held no official ecclesiastical office and can thus be described as a »man of the people«. All the other six examples of Christian intermediaries, with whom the present paper deals, belonged by contrast to the high clergy and were patriarchs or bishops. In the service of Muslim rulers, they either travelled to Constantinople themselves as emissaries or they functioned as intermediaries on a diplomatic mission.

In focusing on these persons we need to be aware that they hardly convey an accurate picture of the extent to which Christians played a role in relations. For we learn hardly any details about most of the intermediary persons recorded in the sources, who acted on behalf of Muslim rulers, and even their religious affiliation is not explicitly mentioned. In numerous examples, we can actually assume that they were Muslims on account of the names given and a further identification of the person is sometimes possible. However, in many other examples we are dealing with *anonymoi* about whom we know no more than that they were envoys[3]. In addition, there are all the legations about whose existence we know nothing, because they have not found their way into the sources. Also, the fact that the legates were high-ranking clerics in the case of six of the seven examples dealt with should not lead us to jump to rash conclusions regarding quantities. For even if there is no doubt about the religious affiliation in the case of these spectacular examples, in the case of numerous less important mediators further details about the person go by the wayside as a rule.

However, this paper concentrates on the few examples which we have at our disposal and looks into the question

* The present study arose within the context of the project „Eine christlich-muslimische Prosographie", which was supported by the Gerda Henkel Foundation. Here I would like to thank the Henkel Foundation for its financial assistance.

1 In the eleventh-century chronicle by the Abbasid vizier Abū Šuǧāʿ, Ḏayl 217,18-218,6; 220,9-13, he is designated as Malkūṭa as-Suryānī. The term »Suryānī« refers to the use of the Syriac language – at least as a liturgical language – by the Syrian Christians. Being an ambassador to the Byzantine emperor, we can at the same time assume that he was a Melkite who knew Greek (for the use of the Syriac language by the Melkites, see Kennedy, Melkite Church 338; Pahlitzsch, Griechisch 40f. I would like to thank Johannes Pahlitzsch and Dorothea Weltecke for advice concerning this issue). The eleventh/twelfth-century historian Ibn al-Qalānisī, History 41,14; 43,4-10, calls him Malkūnā as-Sayrāfī. In the thirteenth-century Aleppian history of Ibn al-ʿAdīm, Zubda 198,14-199,1, where he occurs as Malkūnā an-Naṣrānī (»Malkūnā the Christian«), he is mentioned relating the flight of the Hamdanid Abū l-Hayǧāʾ ibn Saʿd ad-Dawla to Constantinople in the year 1008. Malkūnā, who is specified here as a trader (*tāǧir*) and cloth merchant (*bazzāz*), is said to have helped Abū l-Hayǧāʾ to escape from Aleppo, then ruled by Manṣūr ibn Luʾlu. For Malkūṭa, see PmbZ II #24852 (with further references), as well as Beihammer, Strategies 389f.

2 For further details and references relating to this conflict, see n. 43.

3 Apart from multitudinous entries about envoys easily accessible by diverse search functions in the online version of the PmbZ II (www.degruyter.com/view/db/pmbz 05.12.2018), for a recent detailed overview of sources, themes and scholarly debates relating to diplomatic relations between the Muslim Arabs and Byzantium in the period referred to in this paper, see Drocourt, Diplomatic Relations. See also Beihammer, Strategies, who places special emphasis on the prosopographical details of Byzantine envoys to the Muslims in the time under discussion.

of what reasons moved the potentates of the great Muslim dynasties of the tenth century to employ Christian intermediaries in their diplomatic contacts with Byzantium. Are they, as was already hinted with reference to the merchant Malkūṭa, more of an accidental, practical nature, a not-further-reflected upon procedure in a multicultural society, in which one quite simply made use of those persons for certain purposes who could best fulfil them on account of certain capabilities? Or is the deployment of Christian intermediaries to be assessed rather as a deliberately calculated step of a ruler's strategy against the great power of Byzantium? Or do the sources suggest, for instance, precisely the opposite, namely the picture of a well-intended expression of religious tolerance in the sense of a declaration of friendship towards the Byzantines? And from this stems the final question: if the different Muslim rulers were guided by a common – presumably »typically Islamic«– motivation for action or not.

Christian Mediators on Behalf of the Abbasids in the Early Tenth Century

The first example is to be found in at-Tanūḫī (949-994) and Hilāl aṣ-Ṣābiʾ (969-1056) and concerns Abbasid Baghdad of the early tenth century. Here *wazīr* ʿAlī b. ʿĪsā learns through an envoy from the governor of the border areas that the Muslim prisoners of war in Constantinople were in a desperate position. Until then, prisoners of war in the land of the *rhōmaioi* had always been treated benevolently and courteously. Only since two young men had ascended the throne in Constantinople recently had prisoners of war become the object of mistreatment, which consisted of food and clothing being withheld from them, their being tortured and it being demanded of them that they convert to Christianity. The *wazīr,* who was extremely saddened by this report, received the advice from a close friend to let the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem mediate in this matter. Their authority over the Byzantine emperor was so great, he said, that they could even pronounce anathema upon him and revoke it again. The *rhōmaioi* were namely of the opinion that disobedience towards these two patriarchs was tantamount to heresy, and that even the coronation of an emperor required their approval. But at the same time, they resided in Abbasid territory and were under the caliph's protection. The *wazīr* should induce the governors of both cities (thus Antioch and Jerusalem) to summon the patriarchs and inform them of the happenings in Constantinople. If they should not see to it that the situation of the prisoners of war changed, they should be made responsible for the crimes. ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā did as he was advised, and already about two months later the envoy of the emir of the border area appeared once again before the *wazīr* and reported that he had travelled to Constantinople with an emissary of the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem. They had presented a letter from the patriarchs to the Byzantine rulers in which it had been pointed out to the emperors that their treatment of the prisoners of war was not in accordance with Christian belief, and that for this reason the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem would impose anathema upon them, if they did not change their behaviour. The emperors are said to have rejected these reproaches and to have allowed the envoys a visit to the prisoners in the *praitōrion*, the imperial prison[4].

The time of this legation initiated by ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā and despatched by the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem to Constantinople is dated by scholars as being either in the year 913 or in the year 922. For several reasons, I endorse the first dating, according to which the mission falls in the time shortly after the beginning of the first period of office of *wazīr* ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā in the summer of 913. Thus, the two aforementioned Byzantine emperors appear to be the approximately thirty-year-old Alexander and his just eight-year-old co-emperor Constantine VII, who had come to power after the death of Leo VI in May 912[5].

But at this point it is primarily the two patriarchs who interest us, who did not make their way as envoys themselves, but nevertheless did take on a key mediating function in the diplomatic contact between the Abbasid Caliphate and Constantinople. In one case it is Leontios I, who was Melkite

4 Tanūḫī, Nišwār al-muḥāḍara 30,11-32,16 (French. trans.: Vasiliev, Arabes II 2,286-290, and Nasrallah, Église 67); Ḥilāl aṣ-Ṣābiʾ, Kitāb al-wuzarāʾ 328,5-330,9. See also Ibn al-Ǧawzī, al-Muntaẓam 14,58,18-14,61,4.

5 The main reasons in favor of 913, quoted by Jenkins, Alexander 391-393, are the mention of ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā as *wazīr* (for he held this office from summer 913-917 and 926-929); the mention of two young emperors, what is probably a reference to Constantine VII and Alexander, who came to power on 12 May 912 (they are explicitly mentioned as *ḥadaṯān*, meaning »young man«; for the explanation why the thirty-year-old Alexander could be called a youth, see ibidem 391), after the death of Leo VI, who, in fact, is known for having been well-disposed towards Saracen prisoners (for the sources see ibidem 392); the suggested bad character of Alexander, who seems to have been most likely capable of the recorded treatment of Muslim prisoners. One weak point of dating the embassy to 913, namely the fact that Alexander died at the beginning of June 913, while the beginning of the vizierate of ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā was not before August 913, can be explained by a diplomatic delay. The two emperors whom at-Tanūḫī mentions were seen by the envoys during their mission in Constantinople must therefore be Constantine VII and his mother Zoe Karbonopsina. The main argument of Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 595b to date the embassy in 922 is a letter of Nicholas Mystikos (Nikolaos Mystikos, Letters 102,43-51) stating among other things that a number of Muslim prisoners of war will be sent from Constantinople to Baghdad as well as some writings of Muslim prisoners, who remain in Constantinople in order to refute the accusations against the Byzantines. This letter was interpreted since Jenkins, Alexander 390, as an answer to the embassy in question. While Jenkins suggested that Nicholas wrote it in the period when he was the head of the regency council since the early death of Alexander, therefore from June 913 to February 914, Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 595b states that the letter is dated in a marginal note of a manuscript to July of the tenth indiction (which is only compatible with the second patriarchate of Nicholas Mystikos [15 May 912-15 May 925] and therefore dates the epistle to July 922). In any case, it seems possible to me that the confusion is either a fault in the dating of the manuscript tradition or a lack of an immediate connection between the letter of Nicholas Mystikos and the embassy, thus an identical dating is not compulsory. In addition to Jenkins' arguments, the account of the embassy seems to me to fit best in the history of events of the year 913, as I will show in the following. For more explanations concerning the chronological disagreements in the sources relating to this issue, see Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 595b. For ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā and the periods of his vizierate, see PmbZ II #20254, and above all Bowen, Life 99-287 and Sourdel, Vizirat 519-551.

patriarch of Jerusalem from 912 to 929. The other, Elias I, was patriarch of Antioch from 906/907 to 934[6].

Evidently both patriarchs were in a dependent relationship to the Abbasid Caliphate at the time in question, that was so marked that they had to bow to the will of the highest Muslim ruler in diplomatic matters. The threat that they would be made responsible for the crimes that were committed against Muslim prisoners of war if they did not give their support for an improvement in the situation in Constantinople, makes one thing above all clear: The patriarchs' action for the Abbasids' benefit is not to be understood as the fulfilment of a request, but rather as compliance with an order by the caliph or his highest official, *wazīr* ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā.

But how did a situation come about in which the Melkite Church was evidently under obligation towards the Abbasid rulers to such an extent that it saw itself forced to let itself be exploited for Abbasid political action against the great power of Byzantium? In order to look into this question, it is well worth following individual source references giving evidence of a particularly close involvement between the Abbasid court and Melkite functionaries at the time concerned.

Patriarch Elias I of Antioch, who has already been mentioned, worked as a secretary (*kātib*) in the Abbasid administration before taking up office in the year 294 AH (Oct. 906 - Oct. 907)[7]. It is highly probable that he himself came from among the Melkite population of Baghdad. We know this for certain about his successor, Theodosios II, who held the office of patriarch of Antioch from 936 to 943[8]. According to Eutychios, he was also an official (*kātib*) at the court of the Abbasid caliphs under the name of Istifān (Stephanos) from the year 296 AH (30.9.908-19.9.909)[9], and in turn we know from Hilāl aṣ-Ṣābiʾ that he (here specified as Isṭifan ibn Yaʿqūb) was head of the *dīwān* of the state treasury as *kātib bayt māl al-ḫāṣṣa wa-ḫalīfa*[10]. In this function he was a close confidant of Ibn al-Furāt, the predecessor and opponent of *wazīr* ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā already mentioned, who first held office in the years 908 to 912[11]. Thus Ibn al-Furāt, who was infamous for his corruption and venality, is said to have given the later patriarch a monetary gift of 100 000 dirhams from the public purse[12]. The bribery policy that Ibn al-Furāt pursued precisely among Baghdad's Melkite Christians[13] should have safeguarded not least of all his particular closeness to the power structure of the caliph's house. For Šaǧab, the influential mother of al-Muqtadir, was a Byzantine prisoner of war, whom Caliph al-Muʿtaḍid (892-902) had bought from a lady in Baghdad called Umm al-Qāsim bint Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdallāh[14]. Like many other female slaves already before and after her, through the birth of a son to the caliph and after the death of her lord in 902, she also rose to the status of an *umm walad*[15]. As a result, she was not only liberated from her existence as a slave, but also gained the power to exercise considerable influence over the affairs of state for her son, who was just thirteen years of age when he acceded to power in 908[16]. It is known, not only about her, but also her brother, who was called Ġarīb (the foreigner), and his sons, that they protected Ibn al-Furāt for long stretches and acted in his favour[17]. And although Ibn al-Furāt also fell out of favour with the caliph and his relatives in 912, and was deposed owing to an intrigue by his successor al-Ḫāqānī, who held office for just one year (23 July 912 - 16 August 913)[18], he regained their confidence again already soon after and was appointed *wazīr* once more in 917[19].

There are thus several indications that the presence of Melkite influence in the direct proximity of the caliph, above all in Ibn al-Furāt's first period of office (thus between 908 and 912), led to a more comprehensive strengthening of the Melkites in Baghdad. A passage in the Church Histories of the East Syrian Marī ibn Sulaymān (twelfth century) and Bar Hebraeus (thirteenth century) also supports this. They report that the Melkites of Baghdad, probably shortly before ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā was appointed *wazīr* for the first time (thus in Au-

6 For Elias I as well as for Leontios I, patriarch of Jerusalem (912-929), see Sourdel, Vizirat II 547; Vasiliev, Arabes II 1 217 f.; Todt, Antiocheia 182 f.; PmbZ II # 21648, 24708.

7 Eutychios, Naẓm 74,19 f.; 85,11 f.

8 For Theodosios II, see Vasiliev, Arabes II 1 281; Nasrallah, Église 81; Fiey, Chrétiens 141; Todt, Antiocheia 183; PmbZ II # 27908.

9 Eutychios, Naẓm 87,5-7.

10 Ḥilāl aṣ-Ṣābiʾ 140,6.

11 For Ibn al-Furāt see Bowen, Life 99-107; Sourdel, Vizirat 387-394, 495-518; PmbZ II # 20062.

12 Ḥilāl aṣ-Ṣābiʾ 140,6. See also Sourdel, Vizirat 509.

13 After an unsuccessful revolt in December 908 against al-Muqtadir, the intended successor of Caliph al-Muktafī (d. August 908), Ibn al-Furāt was appointed vizier of al-Muqtadir. The revolt was supported by numerous Christian officials and is probably the reason for Ibn al-Furāt's vain attempt to apply the measures of al-Mutawakkil against the Christians (including the prohibition of practising professions other than physician and money changer) at the beginning of his vizierate. In any case, Christians again gained influence under Ibn al-Furat, and we know that among his confidants were numerous Christians, whom he invited daily to his house; for source references, see Bowen, Life 101 f.: Sourdel, Vizirat 370-375, 390 f., and 513; Fiey, Chrétiens 127 f.

14 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīḫ ar-rusūl wa-l-mulūk 2148,9-11 (Engl. trans.: Ṭabarī, History 38,25), mentions that »On Ramaḍān 22, 282 (November 14, 895), Nāʿim, a slave girl of Umm al-Qāsim bint Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdallāh, gave birth to a son of al-Muʿtaḍid whom he named Jaʿfar. Al-Muʿtaḍid called this slave girl Shaghab«; further source references in Bowen, Life 99 f.; 102, and Mansouri, Femmes 174 with n. 17. For Šaǧab and her influence on Abbasid politics, see Canard, Relations 44 f.; Fiey, Chrétiens 127; Zetterstéen, al-Muḳtadir 541 f.; Wheatley, Places 262; Cheikh, Qahramâna 41-55; Bray, Men 135, 143; Cheikh, Gender 152-156; Kennedy, Court 192-197.

15 The birth of a son of a caliph produced many changes for a slave girl apparent at first in the alteration of her name, as in the case of umm al-Muqtadir from the slave-name Nāʿim to the new name of Šaǧab (see n. 14). Moreover, it brought a change to the legal as well of course to the social status of the concubines. While Muslim men were not allowed to marry slave women from the *ḏimmīs* and could take them only as concubines, the only possibility for concubines to attain freedom from slavery was to give birth to a son of their master and to become therefore an *umm walad*; see Kallfelz, Untertanen 91; Cortese/Calderini, Women 47 f.; Mansouri, Femmes 169-186; Bray, Men 133-135. There is a pronounced preference of the Abbasid caliphs for concubines, especially for Byzantine slaves (Mansouri, Femmes 173, counts from the beginning of the Abbasid Caliphate to al-Mutīʿ [946-974], out of 24 caliphs, 22 were sons of an *umm walad*: see also Canard, Relations 45). This probably has a bearing on the opinion common in Arabic society that children of foreign women are stronger then children from a relative, see Nasrallah, Église 69 (with source references).

16 Ṭabarī, Taʾrīḫ ar-rusūl wa-l-mulūk 2280,18-2281,3 (Engl. trans.: Ṭabarī, History 38,187).

17 For the significance and influence of Ġarīb and other Christian relatives of Šaǧab, see Sourdel, Vizirat 388, 392, 404; Canard, Relations 44; Cheikh, Gender 156; Bray, Men 135.

18 See Bowen, Life 106-115; Sourdel, Vizirat 394-399.

19 See Bowen, Life 153 f.; Sourdel, Vizirat 406-414.

gust 913)[20], demanded a metropolitan of their own from the patriarch of Antioch[21], as the Greeks in Baghdad had greatly increased in number, above all among the secretaries and doctors[22]. The patriarch of Antioch, Elias I, whom we have already seen and who hailed from Baghdad, sent a certain John (Yānī) to the Abbasid capital in order to take up his see in the Melkite church there. According to Mārī, the patriarch himself came to Baghdad in order to consecrate the bishop. Only the Church of the East *katholikos* Abraham III (905-936) was not in agreement with this innovation. For his church had possessed the privilege since al-Mutawakkil (852) that all the Christian churches in the Abbasid Caliphate were united under an East Syrian head appointed by the caliph[23]. The East Syrians thus interrupted the consecration ceremony by force and prevented the Melkite patriarch from consecrating John as bishop. ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā, who had in the meantime (in August 913) taken up his office as *wazīr*, imposed a fine on Elias I and had him sign a decree in which he accepted that he was not allowed to consecrate a Melkite leader in Baghdad[24].

It is striking that here, too, just as in the case of both patriarchs' aforementioned mission to Constantinople, that it was *wazīr* ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā who showed the Melkites, and in particular Elias I of Antioch, the limits of their influence. Evidently it was a matter of importance for him to check the growing influence of the Melkites which had been observed since the accession to power of al-Muqtadir, or rather of his mother, Šaġab, in 908 and during the first period of office of Ibn al-Furāt (908-912). At the same time, ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā was evidently primarily concerned with not allowing the balance of power between the different Christian churches in Baghdad to begin to totter in favour of a possible Byzantine-Melkite alliance. The foreign political situation and thus also the deteriorating financial plight of the Abbasid Caliphate was worsening at the beginning of the tenth century, not only owing to the threat by the Carmathians, but above all through the increasing inroads by Byzantine forces into Abbasid territory[25]. The accusation by the Church of the East *katholikos* Abraham III, recorded in Bar Hebraeus, that the Melkites were the enemies of the Muslims and prayed for the victory of the emperor in Constantinople, whereas they, the Nestorians, recognised only the ruler of the Muslims[26], would here have served as a welcome pretext for ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā's course of action against the Melkites in 913. His taking sides with Abraham can also be explained better by the motives of political power than with any sincere sympathy for the East Syrians. Despite his impeding a Melkite leader in Baghdad, ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā is said to have responded to Abraham's accusation against the Melkites: »You Christians are all alike in your hatred, with which you pursue us; you like us only on the surface«[27].

The aforementioned events represent just a small section of Abbasid Melkite policy of the tenth century. Nevertheless, they do make clear the complexity of Melkite identity which was made up in a number of respects at the same time of Byzantine and Abbasid elements. The Abbasid rulers, in our examples with *wazīr* ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā, were able to exploit both elements in favour of their own power policy interests, and to the disadvantage of their great foreign policy adversary, Byzantium. If it was a matter of inflaming the mood against this opponent, which precisely at the beginning of the tenth century was becoming an increasing foreign policy danger for the Abbasids (who were showing signs of weakness in every respect), then it was an easy matter to steer the aggression of the Muslim population against the Melkites, who now stood as representatives of all that which made up the concept of the enemy, Byzantium[28]. If it was a matter of achieving diplomatic successes in Constantinople, the highest representatives of the Melkite church, the patriarchs of Antioch and Jerusalem, precisely on account of their double identity, represented ideal mediators: Byzantine rulers had to take them seriously as the highest representatives of their co-religionists in Muslim territory and be responsive to them. At the same time, they allowed the Abbasid potentates to demonstrate, not only to the Melkite church and its leaders, but also to the Byzantine emperors, their power and sovereignty over the regions in which the Melkite church was to be found.

Christian Mediators on Behalf of the Fatimids in the Late Tenth and Early Eleventh Centuries

Let us now shift the focus away from Baghdad to Fatimid Egypt around the turn of the millennium. Here, in the chronicle of the contemporary Melkite writer Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī[29], we come across two further examples of Christian clerics who acted as mediators in the name of a Muslim ruler. One of them is Orestes, Melkite patriarch of Jerusalem[30]. In the year 1000, he was sent to Constantinople by the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākim[31], or his guardian Barǧawān[32], in order to head the

20 Bar Hebraeus dates the incident to the year 300 A. H. (18.8.912-6.8.913), see Fiey, Rūm 388 with n. 126.
21 Marī ibn Sulaymān, Aḫbār 92f.; .see the French translations in Nasrallah, Église 58f. and Fiey, Rūm 387f. See also Cheikh, Byzantium 99.
22 The latter detail is given only by Bar Hebraeus, see Nasrallah, Église 65 with n. 35; Fiey, Rūm 387. For the growing Melkite population in Baghdad of the tenth century see also Kennedy, Melkite Church 337.
23 For this privilege see Nasrallah, Église 58f. with n. 4.
24 See Nasrallah, Église 59, and Fiey, Rūm 389.
25 For the factors playing a role for the crisis of the Abbasid Caliphate at the beginning of the tenth c. see Kennedy, Court 295.
26 See Fiey, Rūm 388; Cheikh, Byzantium 99.
27 See Fiey, Rūm 388; idem, Chrétiens 129.
28 See also Kennedy, Melkite Church 338f.
29 On Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī, see Forsyth, Yahya 1-28, 297-358; PmbZ II, Prolegomena 247-249; Swanson, Yaḥyā 657-661.
30 For Orestes see below n. 48, 49.
31 For al-Ḥākim see van Ess, Erwartungen 21-23, 26-33; Halm, Kalifen 167-304; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 139-158; PmbZ II #22544 (with further references).
32 For the eunuch Barǧawān, who reigned in place of the underage caliph al-Ḥākim over the Fatimid Caliphate from October 996 to April 1000, see Lewis, Barǧjawān 1073f.; Halm, Kalifen 173-180; PmbZ II #20810 (with further references).

negotiations for a ten-year Byzantine-Fatimid peace treaty[33]. The second one is Nikephoros[34], also patriarch of Jerusalem, who was sent to Constantinople in the year 1022 by al-Ḥākim's sister, the regent Sitt al-Mulk[35]. His task was, among other things, to inform the emperor about the reconstruction of the churches destroyed by al-Ḥākim in the Egyptian and Syrian provinces, in particular the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and about the return of the foundations confiscated under al-Ḥākim[36]. In return, the patriarch called on the emperor to resume trade between Byzantium and the Fatimid provinces, which had previously come to a standstill, and to enter into peace negotiations[37]. Thus here too, as in the previous example, we are dealing with Melkite patriarchs who became active in diplomatic relations in favour of Muslim rulers.

In order to look into the question as to what extent the motives of the Fatimid rulers to make use of Melkite patriarchs for diplomatic negotiations with Constantinople coincide with those of the Abbasid *wazīr* ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā, it is worth having a brief look into the prevailing political and social conditions of Fatimid Egypt in the tenth century:

Just as in Abbasid Iraq, in Fatimid Egypt of the tenth century there was a long tradition of Christians and Muslims living together, although admittedly this did not always pass off free of conflicts here either. From the beginning of Muslim rule over Egypt from the mid-seventh century, the Coptic Church – as also the Melkite Patriarchate of Alexandria – had had a great influence over society and a centuries-old institutionally safeguarded *raison d'être*. Consequently, here too the Christian part of the population was also of great importance for filling numerous posts in the Muslim rulers' administration and royal household[38]. The fact that this did not change with the Fatimid conquest of Egypt in 969 may be surprising at first glance. For the acceptance and integration of parts of the population belonging to other religions did not in any way really fit in with the conventional state ideology of the Shiite Fatimids. Rather, this ideology consisted of an aggressive expansionist policy at its core coupled with the conversion by missionary work of all subordinated regions[39]. These objectives were pursued under the first Fatimid caliph, ʿAbdallāh al-Mahdī, who seized power in North Africa in 910[40], as well as under his successors, also residing in North Africa, and which had led to the expansion of the Fatimid area of rule to Byzantine Sicily and southern Italy, and finally to the conquest of Iḫšīdid Egypt in 969[41]. Al-ʿAzīz (975-996)[42], the first Fatimid caliph residing in Egypt from the outset, continued the aggressive military offensives, above all against Byzantine Syria[43], but evidently quickly understood that holding onto the traditional Fatimid missionary ideology would have been incompatible with the maintenance of his power in Egypt. So he adapted the Fatimid administrative apparatus to the conditions on the ground by appointing members of the educated upper class of the indigenous population – who here included above all Christians and Jews, but also Sunni Muslims – to high offices[44]. As though he wanted to make the approach to heterogeneous Egyptian society easier for himself, he entered into a relationship with a Melkite concubine by the name of Maria, who bore him a son, the future Caliph al-Ḥākim[45]. As the sources report, the *umm walad* Maria gained great influence over the Fatimid caliphal house, which led to a strengthening of the Melkite Church compared with the Coptic Church, which had otherwise been more influential in Egypt since the Arab conquest of the country. This strengthening was accompanied by the

33 Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 23,3) [252f.] 460f.; Abū Šuǧāʿ, Ḏayl 230,6-8; Ibn al-Qalānisī, History 54,18-55,1. For further details concerning this embassy, see Vismara, Bisanzio 22; Canard, Sources 290 with n. 13; Felix, Byzanz 48f.; Lev, Fatimids 204f.; Halm, Kalifen 178; Dölger/Müller, Regesten nos 788, 789e, 792b; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 143f. with n. 14; PmbZ II #26197 with n. 5.

34 For Nikephoros, see below n. 50-52.

35 Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 47,4) [100-103] 468-471; ʿAẓīmī, Taʾrīḫ Ḥalab 326,5f. For Sitt al-Mulk, see Lev, Sitt al-Mulk 319-328; Cortese, Women 116-127; PmbZ II #27127 (with further references).

36 For al-Ḥākim's anti-Christian procedures, his demolition and confiscation of churches and foundations, lasting from 1008 to 1020, see van Ess, Erwartungen 9-26; Halm, Kalifen 217-228; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 141, 155; PmbZ II #22544 with n. 3-8.

37 While Yaḥyā reports on the failure of Nikephoros' long-lasting negotiations because of the death of Sitt al-Mulk during his stay in Constantinople (probably on 5 February 1023, for the chronology see PmbZ II #27127 P), ʿAẓīmī suggests the conclusion of a peace agreement for ten years. For further details concerning this embassy, see Halm, Kalifen 311; Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 816c; Beihammer, Byzanz 190; Pahlitzsch, Melkites 488f. Concerning the chronological problems relating to this embassy and the interpretation of ʿAẓīmī's passage, which has not been noticed in the secondary literature, see PmbZ II #25674 P.

38 For the significance and development of the (Coptic and Melkite) Christian element in Egyptian society since the Arab conquest in the seventh c., see Müller, Grundzüge 160-169; Skerslet, Greeks 81-97, 140-153, 193-230; Eddé/Micheau/Picard, Communautés 34f.; Wilfong, Communities 175-193; Halm, Kalifen 132-139, 217f.; Swanson, Coptic Papacy 4-11, 28-31. I am grateful to Johannes Pahlitzsch for most of these references.

39 Concerning the Fatimid ruling ideology, which was closely connected with the goals of an all-embracing expansion and proselytization, see Madelung, Ismāʿiliyya 198f.; 203f.; Skerslet, Greeks 225f.; Brett, Rise 176-218; Halm, Mahdi 200-215; Lev, Fatimids 191f.; Lienhard, Marianos 114f.; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 145f.

40 For the beginning of the Fatimid Caliphate under al-Mahdi in Ifriqīya see Brett, Rise 135-175; Walker, Exploring 17-31; Halm, Mahdi 61-244; PmbZ II #24814.

41 For the Fatimid expansion until the conquest of Egypt by al-Muʿizz and his general Ǧawhar, see Canard, Fāṭimids 857f.; Lev, Navy 228; Brett, Rise 219-316; Walker, Exploring 29-39, 50f., 53f.; Halm, Mahdi 219-316; Lienhard, Marianos 113-115; PmbZ II #24814, 24863, 25444, 26784.

42 For al-ʿAzīz and his reign see Canard, ʿAzīz 823-825; Skerslet, Greeks 226-229; Halm, Kalifen 119-166; PmbZ #20711.

43 The Byzantine-Fatimid conflict under al-ʿAzīz from 992 to 996 in northern Syira was fought primarily by the Fatimid military leader Manǧūtakīn on one side and the Hamdanid Abū l-Faḍāʾil Saʿīd ad-Dawla ruling over Aleppo and his Byzantine allies Michael Bourtzes (992/94), Basil II (995) and Damianos Dalassenos (996) on the other side. For this conflict, which was not decisively won by either side and led finally to the peace treaty negotiated by Orestes in the year 1000, see Honigmann, Ostgrenze 105f.; Canard, Hamdanides 696-705, 855-858; Bianquis, Damas 195-227; Felix, Byzanz 46f.; Dölger/Müller, Regesten nos 781a, 781c-f, 782, 785d; Walker, Exploring 51; Halm, Kalifen 161-163; Beihammer, Byzanz 176, 182-184; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 144; PmbZ II #24858, 26962, 25253, 20838, 21379 (with source references).

44 Concerning the multireligious society in Fatimid Egypt as well as the significance of Christians and Jews in the Fatimid court and administration in Cairo, see van Ess, Erwartungen 31, Walker, Exploring 46f.; Halm, Kalifen 129-146, 214-223, 235-242; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 151-154.

45 The name of al-Ḥākim's mother is only known from Radulphus Glaber 3,25 (p. 157). For the mother of al-Ḥākim, see also Vasiliev, Arabes II 1 367 with n. 2; Forsyth, Chronicle 245; Skerslet, Greeks 228f.; Felix, Byzanz 48 n. 12; Halm, Kalifen 219; Krönung, al-Ḥākim 142 with n. 8; PmbZ II #24929.

rapid rise of two brothers of Maria to the highest offices of the Melkite Church[46]. One of these brothers was Arsenios, who acceded to the patriarchal see of Alexandria in 1000 under his nephew al-Ḥākim, but moved his official residence to Cairo[47]. The second brother, Orestes, probably acted already as an ambassador in the time of al-ʿAzīz[48], who consecrated him patriarch of Jerusalem in 986[49]. In 1000, under the rule of Maria's son al-Ḥākim, he headed the aforementioned mission to the Byzantine emperor in Constantinople. Also in the case of the Melkite patriarch Nikephoros, who was sent to Constantinople in 1022, we can assume a special closeness to the Fatimid caliphal house, which was possibly based on a relationship with al-Ḥākim. According to Yaḥyā, he was also a descendant of Byzantine slaves and had served as a cabinet-maker in the Fatimid caliphal palace. When he requested al-Ḥākim to appoint him patriarch, this wish was fulfilled for him on 10 July 1020[50]. And even a few months later, when Nikephoros appeared in person before the caliph and complained about anti-Christian violations inside the walls of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, his request was answered; in Ǧumādā II 411 AH[51] al-Ḥākim issued an edict, in which he assured Nikephoros not only the protection of the Christians within the Fatimid Caliphate, but also the conservation of all churches in Jerusalem and its vicinity and the restitution of Christian foundations[52].

It is easy to recognise that the relational ties and special closeness between Fatimid rulers and the Melkites were decisive for the deployment of the patriarchs Orestes and Nikephoros in Fatimid-Byzantine diplomacy. The fact that here, unlike in the Abbasid example, the patriarchs themselves travelled as envoys to Constantinople does not seem to have been an accident. Rather, the Fatimid rulers must have been aware of the symbolic effect which the personal appearance of the highest church leader of their Oriental fellow-Christians would be bound to have on the Byzantine rulers (the emperor and patriarch). In both cases – in the year 1000 and in the year 1022 – it was a matter of a symbolism of reconciliation which was intended to convince the Byzantine emperor to enter into peace negotiations with the Fatimids. In 1000, when al-Ḥākim's anti-Christian course of action was still not foreseeable, it was a matter of bringing the protracted armed conflicts between the Fatimids and Byzantium in Syria to an end. In 1022 it was then a matter of again improving relations with Byzantium, which had been impaired by al-Ḥākim's destruction and persecutions. ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā, on the other hand, at the time in 913 when he supported better treatment of Muslim prisoners of war by the Byzantines, was hardly interested in peace negotiations with Byzantium. According to at-Tanūḫī, he only therefore did not disclose his real plan to the caliph – to assemble an army and attack Constantinople – because it was already clear to him from the outset that the latter would not get involved in this[53]. Instead, ʿAlī ibn ʿĪsā found in the plan to force the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Antioch to make an intervention in the conflict with the Byzantines a welcome threatening gesture to demonstrate power and superiority to the foreign political adversary of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Christian Mediators on Behalf of the Umayyads of Andalusia in the Middle of the Tenth Century

The last two examples, recorded in Maqqarī's history of Muslim Spain, are situated in Umayyad Andalusia and are to be put chronologically roughly between the aforementioned Abbasid and Fatimid embassies, thus in the middle of the tenth century. Here we are not dealing with Melkite patriarchs, but with two Mozarabic bishops who were sent to Constantinople by Caliph ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III (912-961)[54]. One of them, Hišām ibn Huḏayl, is described as a *katholikos* (*ǧaṭulīq*) in Maqqarī[55], by which the head of the Christian churches in Andalusia is probably meant[56]. As Maqqarī reports, in the mid-tenth century Hišām ibn Huḏayl was sent with two Byzantine envoys previously received in Cordoba to Constantinople, from where he returned again with another Byzantine embassy after two years[57]. It is not improbable that Hišām's mission is connected with a report conveyed in

46 The Coptic History of the Patriarchs 113, 15 (trans. 170 f.) mentions that the patriarchs Arsenios and Orestes owed their offices to the influence of their sister, the mother of al-Ḥākim, while Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī and the Copt al-Makīn emphasise the proximity of the two brothers to the caliph al-ʿAzīz because the latter's daughter was their niece (Sitt al-Mulk), Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 23,3) [207] 415; Makīn, Kitāb al-maǧmūʿ 247,7-25.

47 Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 23,3) [254] 462. For Arsenios, see Krönung, al-Ḥākim 143; PmbZ II # 20621.

48 Ibn al-Ḫāṭib, Kitāb aʿmāl 478,22-479,6 mentions that a monk who was a brother of the Melkite concubine of the caliph al-ʿAzīz was sent by the latter to Sicily. His task was to claim from the Kalbid emir Ǧaʿfar ibn Muḥammad (983-985) the capitulation of several cities (Taormina, Rametta, Binqas) and the release of all the old prisoners. But instead of agreeing to the claim, Ǧaʿfar ibn Muḥammad mistreated the ambassador, with the result that he continued his journey after five months to Constantinople, from where he informed the caliph in a letter about Ǧaʿfar's disobedience. Burgarella, Chiese 205, identifies this ambassador with Orestes. See also Falkenhausen, Straußeneier 594-598; PmbZ II # 26197 with n. 2.

49 Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 23,3) [207] 415. For Orestes, see PmbZ II # 26197 (with further references).

50 Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 47,4) [64 f.] 432 f. For Nikephoros, see PmbZ # 25674 (with further references).

51 22 September-20 October 1020.

52 Yaḥyā al-Anṭakī (PO 47,4) [68-71] 436-439. See as well Krönung, al-Ḥākim 155 with n. 62, and PmbZ II # 25674, # 22544; Pahlitzsch, Melkites 487.

53 Tanūḫī, Nišwār al-muḥāḍara 30,15 f.

54 For ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III and his reign, see Dozy, Histoire 117-175; Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 1-164; Hoenerbach, Geschichte 107-127; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 29-104; PmbZ II # 20018.

55 Maqqarī, Nafḥ aṭ-ṭīb 235,2. The seventeenth-c. North African writer al-Maqqarī quotes this passage from Ibn Ḫaldūn (14th c.).

56 According to Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 214 with n. 105, this *katholikos* could at the same time be the bishop of Cordoba with the Christian name of John, who in c. 953 received the envoy of Otto I, John of Gorze, in Cordoba (Life of John of Gorze 122-126, p. 148,12-152,18); for the meeting of John, the bishop, and John of Gorze, see El-Hajji, Diplomatic relations 217; Chrystis, Christians 110. For this meeting, see also below n. 82-83.

57 Maqqarī, Nafḥ aṭ-ṭīb 235,2-4. In the secondary literature Hišām's travel to Constantinople is connected with passages of the *Antapodosis* of Liudprand of Cremona (Liudprand of Cremona, Antapodosis 6,4 (p. 146,55-56); 6,5 (147,

Ibn Uṣaybiʿa's biography of physicians according to which the Byzantine emperor had sent Caliph ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III a manuscript of the Greek *Dioskourides* and a copy of the Latin historical work by Orosius[58]. Because there was no suitable translator for the Greek *Dioskourides* in Cordoba, the caliph sent a return mission to Constantinople in order to ask the Byzantine emperor to send a translator and language teacher with a command of Greek and Latin to Andalusia. The Byzantine emperor met the caliph's request and sent a monk by the name of Nicholas[59] to Cordoba, who worked from then on for several years as a translator in a group of Christian, Muslim and Jewish scholars. Among them is also mentioned one of the most influential persons at the court of the Caliph ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III, the Jewish physician Ḥasdāy ibn Šaprūṭ, who was not only a director of the caliphal fiscal administration, but is also known for having been integrated in a wide network of educated ambassadors from all over the Mediterranean world of the time[60].

The second example from Maqqarī is the famous bishop Rabīʿ ibn Zayd, who is commonly identified with Recemundus, bishop of Elvira, as well as with the author of the astrological Calendar of Cordoba, which was composed for al-Ḥakam II in about 961[61]. In the 950s Recemundus held a high post at the caliph's court (*inter palatina officia*), and he acted as an emissary of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III to Otto I, after John of Gorze had arrived in Cordoba in about 953 and was staying there for several months in a prison without being able to deliver the letter of his emperor to the caliph[62]. Recemundus, previously a layman, earned in return for his mission to Otto I in 956[63] the title of a bishop[64]. Moreover, Rabīʿ ibn Zayd is known to have travelled to Byzantium following his mission to Frankfurt shortly after the year 956, when he already was a bishop[65]. For Maqqarī reports in connection with the construction of ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān III's new residence Madīnat az-Zahrāʾ in around the middle of the tenth century of a journey by Rabīʿ ibn Zayd to the Holy Land and Constantinople[66]. A certain Aḥmad al-Yunānī is said to have returned with the bishop (who had come from Jerusalem) from Constantinople back to Cordoba. From this journey they had brought the caliph, among other things, one hundred and forty marble pillars as a gift from the Byzantine emperor. The exact routes and the reason for the journeys of Aḥmad and the bishop do not emerge from the report, although we can assume that Rabīʿ ibn Zayd was sent by Abd ar-Raḥmān III to the capital of Byzantium to bring back cultural assets from there[67].

Whatever the case may be, the missions mentioned demonstrate in an exemplary manner that in Andalusian Spain of the tenth century we are dealing with a society in

62-66) on the Byzantine ambassador Solomon (PmbZ II #26971) returning from Andalusia to Constantinople, as well as about Spanish ambassadors in Constantinople. This leads to a dating of Hišām's return travel to 948 (Kresten, Staatsempfänge 31-38 with n. 101) or to 949 (Zuckerman, Livre des ceremonies 658f., and following the latter Drocourt, Al-Andalus 70f.; 63 with n. 23). Due to lack of evidence, a decision for one of the dates is not possible; see Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 216, 221f., 242. For the detailed arguments on behalf of both datings see Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 657, and in summary PmbZ II #20018 with n. 4 and P. See also n. 58.

58 Ibn Uṣaybiʿa, Kitāb ʿuyūn 2,47,25f. (French trans. in Vasiliev, Arabes II 2 186f.; Engl. trans. in Christys, Christians 135; German trans. in Rosenthal, Fortleben 266f.) gives here a report of Ibn Ǧulǧul, the personal physician of the caliph Hišām (976-1009). Because of the lack of sufficient source evidence and because of chronological ambiguities it cannot be decided definitively if this embassy is to be identified with a couple of (here not discussed) reports about a Byzantine mission (or missions?) to Andalusia in Arabic sources, as was *communis opinio* in the scholarly debate for a long time (in this sense Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 151; Rosenthal, Fortleben 266; Vasiliev, Arabes II 1 324-328; Kresten, Chrysographie 161; Zuckerman, Livre des ceremonies 658f.; Beihammer, Auslandsbriefe 16; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 72f., and lastly Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 657) or if it concerns a separate embassy (as stated by Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 177-245, who identifies the mission mentioned by Ibn Uṣaybiʿa with the Byzantine embassy accompanied by Hišām returning from Constantinople after two years). For the complex scholarly debate see Krönung, Schreiben 99 with n. 14 and PmbZ #20018. For the embassy mentioned by Ibn Uṣaybiʿa see also Stern, Letter 40f.; Signes Codoñer, Diplomatica del libro 181-183. Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 218-220. For Orosius see also below n. 58.

59 See PmbZ II #25962 (with references).

60 Ḥasdāy ibn Šaprūṭ is known for having corresponded with the Byzantine emperor because of the difficult situation of the Jews in Byzantium, dispatching Isaac bar Nathan for negotiations to Byzantium and to the Jewish khan of the Khazars. For details and source references for the correspondence as well as for the embassy of Isaac bar Nathan, see Krönung, Schreiben 97 with n. 9. For Ḥasdāy's employment as an envoy to the king of León and to Barcelona in 940 and 955, see Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 71, 102. The idea of a diplomatic network including Byzantium, the Christian Occident and Umayyad Andalusia, to which belonged, apart from Ḥasdāy ibn Šaprūṭ, the aforementioned bishops Hišām ibn Huḏayl and Rabīʿ ibn Zayd (see below) as well as Liudprand of Cremona and Isaac bar Nathan, is presented by Drocourt, Al-Andalus 57-79. For Ḥasdāy ibn Šaprūṭ see also Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 69, 71; III 230f.; Vasiliev, Arabes II 1, p. 328f.; 331; Signes Codoñer, Diplomatica del libro 182f.; idem, Bizancio y al-Andalus 224-229; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 102f.; 117f.; PmbZ II #22564.

61 For the calendar of Cordoba and Rabīʿ ibn Zayd, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 162; Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 222. 239f.; El-Hajji, Diplomatic relations 219; Dufourcq, Coexistence 218; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 102; Drocourt, Al-Andalus 58. Christys, Christians 116-134, accurately explains the reasons for the common identification of Recemundus, Rabīʿ ibn Zayd and the author of the calendar of Cordoba and remarks on the possibility of two or more different persons.

62 The Latin name and numerous details about his office as well as about his travel to Otto I are known from the Life of John of Gorze 128-130, p. 154,21-156,40, as well as from Liduprand of Cremona, who met him at the court of Otto I and dedicated to him his *Antapodosis* (Liudprand, Antapodosis 1,1 (p. 5); for all references concerning Recemundus in the *Antapodosis* see Christys, Christians 113-116; Drocourt, Al-Andalus 61 with n. 13). The date of John of Gorze's arrival in Cordoba is derived from a short passage by Ibn Iḏārī, Bayān 2,218 about an embassy of King Otto to the Umayyads in Spain in the year 342 AH (18.5.953-6.5.954). Recemundus' mission to Otto I has to be dated to the years 955/956, since he started his journey in June and returned from his embassy one year later, also in June (The Life of John of Gorze 130, p. 157,15-34 gives the months, while the year 956 for the return of Recemundus to Cordoba is clear from the remark in the Life of John of Gorze 131, p. 156,46, that John stayed for three years in prison until he was freed immediately after Recemundus' return from Frankfurt). On Recemundus' course of travel to Frankfurt, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 162; El-Hajji, Diplomatic relations 218-225; Christys, Christians 10f.; 108-113; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 71f.

63 For the chronology, see n. 62.

64 John of Gorze 129, p. 156,13-15.

65 Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 243 states that most probably this journey took place between 956 and 959 (thus still in the reign of Constantine VII). Even more likely are the years 958/959: 958 was the year of death of Gapio, the last documented bishop of Elvira, before Rabīʿ ibn Zayd took office (see Christys, Christians 111), while according to Signes Codoñer, loc. cit., as well as to the following remarks it is probable that the mission took place still in the reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos.

66 Maqqarī, Nafḥ aṭ-ṭīb 373,20-374,2 (French trans. in Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 149 with n. 1; Engl. trans. in Christys, Christians 129).

67 For this embassy, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 148f.; Vasiliev, Arabes II 1 331 with n. 5; Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 231f.; 243; Drocourt, Al-Andalus 58, 62f.; PmbZ II #26810, 20183. For the possible political reasons for this journey, see n. 80.

which the acculturation of a large part of the indigenous Christians to Muslim Arab society was far advanced[68]. The fact that Christians (and Jews) represented an integral component of an Arabized elite under Muslim rule, despite retaining their faith, is shown not only by external details, such as the double names in the case of the clerics mentioned[69]. It is also demonstrated by the fact that Christian and Jewish scholars held high offices, as we likewise have seen in the case of the above-mentioned bishops Hišām ibn Huḏayl and Rabīʿ ibn Zayd as well as in the case of the Jewish physician Ḥasdāy ibn Šaprūṭ[70]. In addition, the examples of Recemundus' collaboration in the composition of the Calendar of Cordoba as well as of the group of translators around the *Dioskourides* show that the Christian-Jewish elite was of central importance for the flourishing of culture and science that characterised Andalusia of the tenth century. This heyday was marked by a climate of intellectual openness, inspired by an all-encompassing interest in the sciences, in particular the natural sciences, philosophy and history. Indeed, it was not merely the Muslim Arab tradition that stood at the centre of interest, but everything in scientific literature somehow available at that time in the caliphate and elsewhere, including in particular the legacy of antiquity. A similar openness can be observed regarding the adaptation of foreign art and architecture, especially from Byzantium[71]. Of course, for the passing on of all these cultural assets Byzantium played a decisive role and an artistic and scientific elite made up of the members of the *ḏimmīs* as well as of Muslim scholars from all over the world was required to make it accessible[72].

The primary driving force for this cultural opening would have been Abd ar-Raḥmān's son, al-Ḥakam II[73], who was known for his passion for collecting books and, not least of all, for his particular curiosity about Christian history, still in the time of his father's reign[74]. We can only speculate if the latter's interest represents al-Ḥakam's desire of tracing back his own roots, for his mother, Marian, was a Christian slave[75] who rose to be an *umm walad*, just like the mothers of al-Muqtadir and al-Ḥākim[76]. In any case, al-Ḥakam's intellectual curiosity was all-encompassing, and when he took over the office of caliph in 961 at the age of 46, he possessed so many manuscripts that his library, which is said to have contained 400 000 volumes, was regarded as one of the largest and most important of his epoch[77]. Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī (eleventh century) reports about him »that he had the most important valuable books of ancient and contemporary science brought from Baghdad, Egypt and other places«[78]. How very much the caliph's son was interested, in particular in philosophical questions, is also made clear by the fragment of a letter from Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, which must have reached al-Ḥakam even before he came to power in 961[79]. From this emerges a passion for the works of philosophers common to the addressee and the recipient of the letter, with which a correspondence about philosophical questions preceding the writing must also have been concerned. It seems reasonable to conclude that Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos was fulfilling his promise formulated in the letter to send all the books requested by the addressee to Spain and that the emperor's letter arrived in Cordoba as an accompanying document for the consignment of books. This letter shows in all clarity that al-Ḥakam did not see the Byzantines merely as the suppliers of books and, at best, as the bringers of the technical know-how for the acquisition of foreign-language texts. Rather, a friendship even linked him with the Byzantine emperor which was based on an intellectual exchange on philosophical questions. It is highly possible that this shared interest – apart from the joint political mo-

68 For the process of Arabization of the indigenous Christians, sometimes conforming to an Islamisation, sometimes not, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 214-226; Christys, Christians 12, 14-27; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 12-18; the latter two authors rightly emphasise the problem of over simplistic generalisations derived from examples stemming from a single source that are applied to a whole society or epoch without considering the diversity of such an acculturation process.

69 Mozarab clerics of this time usually had an Arabic name besides their Latin one, such as Hišām ibn Huḏayl/Johannes, and Rabīʿ ibn Zayd/Recemundus; for this phenomenon, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 161; Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 223; El-Hajji, Diplomatic relations 218 with n. 5; Dufourcq, Coexistence 218.

70 For this, with further examples, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 217f.; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 101f.

71 See for this Recemundus' journey n. 70. There are several other examples for the transfer of art pieces, building material and craftsmen from Byzantium to Andalusia, especially in connection with the construction of the Madīnat az-Zahrāʾ and the enlargment of the Mezquita in the reigns of Abd ar-Raḥmān and al-Ḥakam; see Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 148f.; Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 393, 513; Cutler, Constantinople 417-436; Cheikh, Byzantium 59; Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 706a; Signes, Bizancio 235; Christys, 129f.; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 109, 112; PmbZ II #22543, 26810, 31473.

72 For the cultural openness which characterized Umayyad Spain in the tenth century, combined with a liberal attitude towards the *ḏimmīs* (in comparison with the preceding century, which was marked by many revolts and persecutions of Christians) and the immigration of scholars from the whole Muslim world, see Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 181; Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 217-219, 232, 489-509; Dufourcq, Coexistence 216f.

73 For al-Ḥakam II, see Dozy, Califat umaiyade 176-200; Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 165-196; Hoenerbach, Geschichte 128-131; PmbZ II #22543.

74 The summary of Visigothic history might have been added to the Byzantine copy of Orosius on the initiative of the caliph's son, who may have sponsored the Arabic translation of the work (an introduction to the rather complex transmission history of the Arabic translation of Orosius is given in Christys, Christians 135-157; see also above n. 58); Godmar, bishop of Gerona, presented al-Hakam in 940 with a history of the Frankish kings as a gift; see ibidem 141, and Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 117f.

75 For the mother of al-Ḥakam, see Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 81, 90.

76 See above n. 14, 15 and 45.

77 For al-Ḥakam's library, his extraordinary erudition and knowledge in numerous fields of science as well as his promotion of works in many literary genres, see Dozy, Histoire II 183-185; Lévi-Provençal, Califat umaiyade 166; Lévi-Provençal, Califat de Cordoue 493-501 (with numerous source references), 506f.; Levi-Provencal, Civilisation 95-99; Hoenerbach, Geschichte 128 (with source references); Christys, Christians 137; Fierro, 'Abd al-Rahman III 117-125 .

78 Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī, Ṭabaqāt al-umam 66,1f. (French trans. by Blachère 125, and in Levi-Provencal, Civilisation 95).

79 The fragment of the letter is contained in a manuscript of the fifthteenth century, together with the Arabic version of a philosophical work attributed to Apollonios of Tyana. For a recent edition and German translation of the letter as well as the argumentation for the dating of the writing back to the time of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos and al-Ḥakam before 961 (and not in the reign of Romanos II [959-963], Nikephoros II Phokas [963-969] or John Tzimiskes [969-976], as Stern, Letter 40, suggested for the first time; while Signes Codoñer, Bizancio 229, argued for the reign of Romanos II, with Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 742a arguing for the time of John Tzimiskes), see Krönung, Schreiben 93-99.

tives in the struggle against the Abbasid and the Fatimid Caliphates[80] – would have been decisive for a series of legations between Cordoba and Constantinople in the years around from 946 to 959, which also included those of the aforementioned bishops[81]. Constantine's gift of the *Dioskourides* and the historical work by Orosius to Abd ar-Rahman III would therefore have reached Cordoba at the initiative of Prince al-Ḥakam – perhaps together with the letter mentioned – and have been translated there.

Against this background, the dispatch of Christian clerics as emissaries to Byzantium (and also to other Christian rulers, such as Otto I) is to be explained not just by the lack of suitable Muslim dignitaries. Rather, it can be regarded as a consciously selected symbol for the humanistically-inclined spirit of the caliphal house, in particular of the caliph's son al-Ḥakam, which placed scientific interests above religious categories. Such an attitude was not common at all at the time under discussion, as is demonstrated in a passage in the *Life of John of Gorze*, where the Mozarab bishop John[82] has to justify the Christians of Andalusia against John of Gorze for putting themselves at the service of the Muslims[83]. And it is precisely that aspect of Christian Arabic diplomatic relations as a part of the cultural flourishing under al-Ḥakam which is hardly to be compared with the Abbasid translation movement approximately 150 years earlier, as is often read at times[84]. As is well known, many an important scholar of the so-called »Translators' School of Baghdad« was, it is true, Christian – thus, for example, the renowned East Syrian Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq or the Melkite Qusṭā ibn Lūqā[85]. Nevertheless, the rediscovery of ancient literature under the Abbasid caliphs served not least of all as an expression of a specific cultural and religious identity in contrast to the main adversary in foreign affairs, Byzantium, as first suggested by Dimitri Gutas[86]. From the comments of various Abbasid scholars, it emerges that here one attributed the great scientific and philosophical achievements above all to the advanced civilisation of the ancient Greeks. Moreover, the Byzantines were accused of having turned away from the ancient legacy with the assumption of Christianity and, through their disinterest in classical literature, of having declined into cultural inferiority, not only compared with the ancient Greeks, but also compared with the Muslims, who recognised the value of the ancient advanced civilisation[87]. It was thus really part of the ideology of the Abbasid rulers to substantiate their cultural superiority also with their different religious nature and to make a show of this different nature wherever possible. In this light, it seems simply inconceivable that an Abbasid leader would send a Christian, whether a cleric or not, as the representative of his rule to Byzantium.

The interest of the Umayyads under al-Ḥakam, in contrast, was a demonstration of cultural superiority less over the Byzantines then over the Abbasids, their most serious rival in competing for supremacy over the Islamic world. This is shown clearly enough by the statement of Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī: »He [al-Ḥakam] collected at the end of his father's reign and in the following time of his own caliphate an amount of books almost similar to what was collected by the princes of the Abbasids over a quite longer time«[88]. In fact, since the Abbasid climax in connection with the famous translators' school of Baghdad some 150 years earlier, the balance of power had changed. While the Abbasid Caliphate underwent a process of political (and thus cultural) decline, the Byzantines under Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos found themselves at the peak of their scholarly »renaissance«. It was the latter providing the standards of measure for the intellectual prince al-Ḥakam, expressed not least in the display of diplomatic relations with Byzantium.

Conclusion

As has been shown in the course of these observations, there is no one answer for the initial question of what motives impelled the potentates of the great Muslim dynasties of the tenth century to deploy Christian intermediaries in their diplomatic contacts with Byzantium. Just as the Islamicate world

80 The Shiite writers Nuʿmān, Maǧālis 166,3 f., and ʿImād ad-Dīn Idrīs, ʿUyūn al-aḫbār 62,7 f., report for the year 344 AH (27.04.955-14.04.956) of an Andalusian mission to Constantinople in order to assure the Byzantine emperor of an alliance against the Fatimids in southern Italy, but the ensuing common Andalusian-Byzantine maritime offensive, probably under the command of the Byzantine *stratēgos* Marianos Argyros, was unsuccessful; see Lienhard, Marianos 120. According to the dating of Nuʿmān in the year 344 AH, an identification of this Andalusian mission with the journey of Rabīʿ ibn Zayd (see n. 66, 67), as suggested by Drocourt, al-Andalus 58 f. with n. 7, is not possible. For the Umayyad-Byzantine alliance mentioned by Nuʿmān, see also Stern, Embassy 241; Vasiliev, Arabes II 1 371; Eickhoff, Seekrieg 327 f.; Lev, Navy 234 f.; Halm, Mahdi 348 f.; Tibi, Relations 91. 99; Lev, Fatimids 197; Dölger/Müller, Regesten no. 663b; Fierro, ʿAbd al-Rahman III 72. Other possible political motives for the intensive diplomatic relations between Cordoba and Amalfi, Byzantium and Otto I in the middle of the tenth c. is given in Senac, Contribution 51-54.

81 Scholars do not agree about the number and chronology of the Umayyad-Byzantine embassies of this time. While Dölger/Müller, Regesten nos 657, 695, 663b, 706a, 742a counts altogether five Byzantine embassies to Andalusia (three of them under Constantine VII), Signes Codoñer, Bizancio y al-Andalus 177-245 assumes that there were eight Byzantine embassies to Cordoba (five under Constantine VII) and five Andalusian embassies to Constantinople (all of them under Constantine VII) within the years 946 to 972. An overview of all embassies and the related chronological problematic is given in PmbZ II #20018. See also above n. 57 and 58.

82 See above n. 56.

83 Life of John of Gorze 122, p. 148,12-30.

84 Cheikh, Byzantium 110; Signes Codoñer, Diplomatica del libro 183; Beihammer, Strategies 15 f.

85 For these persons and the translation school of Baghdad, see Gutas, Greek Thought 1-10; 14 f. 109, 119, 124, 126, 128 f., 131, 133-136, 138-145, 179, 185; Strohmaier, Homer in Bagdad 222-226; Swanson, Qusṭā 147-153; PmbZ II #22640, 26789 (with further references).

86 Gutas, Greek thought 83-94. See also Cheikh, Byzantium 104.

87 Numerous passages from Abbasid authors stressing the superiority of the ancient Greeks (and the Muslims) over the Byzantines are translated into English in Cheikh, Byzantium 102-110. For the return of the Byzantines to the ancient legacy in the ninth and early tenth century as a consequence of the translation movement in Baghdad, see especially Magdalino, Road 195-213, and Gutas, Greek Thought 175-186.

88 Ṣāʿid al-Andalusī, Ṭabaqāt al-umam 66,2 f. (French trans. Blachère 125 and in Levi-Provencal, Civilisation 95).

was diverse and heterogeneous in the tenth century, so too was there a variety of motivations in the individual Muslim potentates' way of diplomatic dealings with the great power of Byzantium. A uniform line, and thus one to be described as being Muslim, when sending Christian emissaries into diplomatic contacts with Constantinople is not to be found. Rather, the sources leave us with a complex picture of a series of individual rulers – caliphs, viziers and emirs – who made use of Christian members of their society or family, in order to meet a certain power policy or personal objective. This objective could be a demonstrative act of power and differentiation from the foreign policy adversary, as we have seen in the Abbasid example. It could be the achievement of peace negotiations and foreign policy de-escalation, as in the case of the Fatimid legations mentioned. It could be a symbolic act for the demonstration of an open-minded spirit, guided by scientific interest, as in the case of the Umayyad missions. But it could also have a far less calculated, official character than in the case of these examples when two high ecclesiastical dignitaries were used for communication between two rulers. It could have arisen from the necessity of the situation, as in the example of the merchant Malkūṭa, mentioned at the beginning of this paper. Necessity caused the ruler in dire straits to send the person to the emperor who was best suited for the rapid conveyance of a message on account of his intercultural abilities.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Employment of Christian Mediators by Muslim Rulers in Arab-Byzantine Diplomatic Relations in the Tenth and Early Eleventh Centuries

A number of historical sources in Arabic refer to Christian ambassadors and other mediators, who were employed by Muslim rulers in the diplomatic contact with Byzantium in the tenth and early eleventh centuries. This paper deals not only with the question of who these mediators were, but also discusses the factors that led the Abbasid, Fatimid, Umayyad and Hamdanid potentates to draw on Christian intermediaries. What are parallels and differences in the choice of Christian mediators by rulers of the these dynasties? Was there a common motivation in their choice, which could therefore be described as typically Islamic?

Die Beschäftigung christlicher Vermittler durch muslimische Herrscher in den arabisch-byzantinischen diplomatischen Beziehungen im 10. und frühen 11. Jahrhundert

Eine ganze Reihe historischer Quellen in arabischer Sprache bezieht sich auf christliche Botschafter und andere Vermittler, die von muslimischen Herrschern im 10. und frühen 11. Jahrhundert für die diplomatischen Kontakte mit Byzanz bestellt worden waren. Dieser Beitrag befasst sich nicht nur mit der Frage, wer diese Vermittler gewesen waren. Vielmehr diskutiert er auch die Beweggründe, die die Herrscher der Abbasiden, Fatimiden, Umayyaden und Hamdaniden dazu veranlassten, christliche Vermittler heranzuziehen. Wo liegen die Parallelen und Unterschiede in der Wahl christlicher Vermittler durch die Herrscher aus diesen Dynastien? Gab es eine gemeinsame Motivation dafür, die man daher als typisch islamisch bezeichnen könnte?

Alexander Beihammer

Changing Strategies and Ideological Concepts in Byzantine-Arab Relations in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries*

The reign of Emperor Basil II (976-1025 AD) represents both the apex and turning point of the Byzantine expansionist policy in the East[1]. As for the period from the mid-eleventh century onwards, scholarly interest focuses mainly on a set of groundbreaking changes evolving at that time in Byzantium's eastern provinces and the Middle East. Accordingly, matters of Byzantine-Arab relations were largely deemed of secondary importance and taken into consideration only inasmuch as they were directly connected with or affected by these new developments. The nascent Turkish-Muslim principalities in Anatolia and Syria ever since the 1070s and the Crusader States ever since the late 1090s inhibited communication between Byzantium and the Arab-Muslim central lands, with the empire's eastern boundaries shifting from Antioch and the Anti-Taurus mountain range up to the Pontos region as well as to the western and southern fringes of the Anatolian plateau[2]. One gains the impression that Byzantine-Arab contacts after 1050 were nothing more than side effects of the conflicts in Asia Minor and the Crusader States.

The present paper intends to show that this view does not tell the whole story. While it cannot be denied that the priorities of the Byzantine Eastern policy up to 1204 were to a large degree determined by the conflicts with the aforementioned powers, Constantinople by no means lost sight of the Muslim states further to the east, and the Arab political and intellectual elite in these regions continued to have an eye on Byzantium. The Seljuk expansion during the 1070s and 1080s, among many other areas, deeply affected the Arab lands of Syria and Northern Iraq, bringing forth a new ruling and military elite of Turkish origin[3]. The developments in these regions were closely connected with those in the former Byzantine provinces of Anatolia and with the Great Seljuk Sultanate in Iraq and Iran. In what follows, the phenomena in question will be analyzed on the basis of two key moments in the history of Byzantine-Arab relations throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries, namely (a) the change in the 1050s of the empire's political attitudes towards the Fatimid Caliphate of Cairo as a reaction to the growing power of the Seljuk Sultanate and its claims to universal leadership, and (b) the Byzantine attempt to gain possession of Muslim territories in Syria in the context of Emperor John II's campaign in Cilicia and Antioch in the years 1137-1138.

The Byzantine historian John Skylitzes and a number of Arabic chronicles relate that the regency of the underage Caliph al-Mustanṣir, shortly after his father's death on 13 June 1036, ultimately renewed the peace treaty with Constantinople, which, despite a series of diplomatic overtures ever since the death of Caliph al-Ḥākim in early 1021, was long overdue[4]. While the struggle for supremacy over Aleppo lingered on with undiminished intensity ten years later, in 437/1045-1046, the two sides were again interested in securing peaceful relations and thus renewed their agreement[5].

These diplomatic efforts by and large coincided with the first appearance of Turkmen warrior groups in the frontier zone between the Diyār Bakr province and the region around Lake Van, followed in 1048 and 1054 by large-scale incursions of Seljuk troops into the Armenian territories further north along the valleys of the Araxes and the Arsanias rivers[6]. These activities prepared the grounds for the intrusion of Turkmen groups into Syria during the early 1060s and enabled the Seljuk Sultanate to develop a Sunni-based imperial concept, presenting itself as a rival power to the Fatimid Caliphate[7].

* This essay was originally written as a preliminary study to my recent monograph: Byzantium and the Emergence of Muslim Turkish Anatolia, ca. 1040-1130, Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Studies (London and New York 2017). As it eventually turned out that the book would appear in print before this article, I decided to include a slightly different version of the section referring to the period 1049-1055 in chapter 2: Byzantine-Seljuk diplomacy and the first Turkish footholds, 92-132. Yet the present study has a different focus by concentrating on the long-term implications of Byzantine-Muslim relations in Syria and thus can still be read as complementary to the topics discussed in the book.

1 For the most recent discussion of Basil II's governance in the East, see Holmes, Basil 299-394 and Holmes, ›How the East Was Won‹ 41-56. For the political history of Byzantine-Arab relations in the period 1000-1050, the most comprehensive study is still Felix, Byzanz.

2 For the Byzantine network of alliances and communication established in the first half of the eleventh century, see Beihammer, Muslim Rulers 157-177. As for the time after 1050, most studies deal either with the Seljuk Turks of Asia Minor or with the relations between Byzantium and the Crusader States: Cahen, Pre-Ottoman Turkey; Cahen, Formation; Vryonis, Decline; Lilie, Crusader States; Harris, Crusades. There are hardly any detailed works discussing the relations with Fatimid Egypt: Lev, Fatimids 273-281.

3 Sevim, Suriye; El-Azhari, Saljūqs.

4 Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 399; Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,88-89 (*sub anno* 429 = 14 October 1037-2 October 1038); Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ II 187 (*sub anno* 429). Felix, Byzanz 107; Bianquis, Damas 2, 499-500; Halm, Kalifen 349.

5 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,136 (erroneously *sub anno* 439 = 28 June 1047-15 June 1048); Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,194 (the emperor's gifts arrived in Cairo on 8 Ḏū l-Ḥiǧǧa 437 = 16 June 1046). For details, see Felix, Byzanz 114 f. Halm, Kalifen 360 f.

6 Cahen, Pre-Ottoman Turkey 66-70; Turan, Türkiye 13-19.

7 Sevim, Suriye 35-54, 56-62.

During the early 1070s, the promotion of this anti-Fatimid attitude became all the more important in that some of the rebellious Turkmen groups in Syria were ready to collaborate with Cairo to the detriment of their local adversaries who recognized the Abbasid Caliphate, thus consciously undermining Seljuk claims to supremacy in Syria[8]. Byzantium was directly involved in this intra-Muslim antagonism since both sides propagated their concepts of universal ascendancy by emphasizing their influence in Constantinople. The emperor, in turn, sought for a way to play the two opponents off against each other, being forced to maneuver between conflicting demands and frequently resort to contradictory decisions.

The Seljuk Sultanate as a New Political Factor in Byzantine-Muslim Diplomacy

An exchange of embassies in 1049/1050 inaugurated diplomatic relations between Byzantium and the Great Seljuk Sultanate[9]. This step, primarily motivated by the campaign of Ibrāhīm Ināl into the Armenian provinces and the ensuing defeat of the local Byzantine troops, affected the relationship between Constantinople and the Caliphate of Cairo, as had been reaffirmed by the treaty of 1046. The objectives of the negotiations were the conclusion of a peace treaty and the release of prisoners, especially the Georgian prince Liparit, who had been captured at the battle of Kapetrou, fought in September 1048[10]. From an ideological point of view, most noteworthy is the fact that Ṭuġril Beg, already on the occasion of this first official encounter, underlined his leading position within Sunni Islam by choosing a *šarīf*, i. e., a member of the Prophet's family, who perhaps can be identified with a certain Nāġiya ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ḥasanī, as ambassador to the Byzantine capital. Moreover, he laid claim to the mosque of Constantinople[11], which was to be repaired at his own expense and in which the Friday prayer was to be held in his and the Abbasid caliph's name[12]. This was tantamount to a direct affront to Fatimid rights concerning this mosque, which were first conceded in 988 to Caliph al-ʿAzīz[13]. Although Skylitzes' report makes every effort to depict the imperial government as negotiating from a position of strength, it is quite obvious that it was the military pressure of the Seljuk invaders on the eastern provinces which made Constantine IX Monomachos comply with the demands of their treaty partners, thus opting for a restriction of Fatimid influence in favor of a reaffirmation of relations with the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad and its powerful new protectors. The fact that the Kurdish emir Naṣr ad-Dawla ibn Marwān, one of the most important allies of the Empire in the borderland south of the Anti-Taurus mountain range at that time[14], had recently recognized Seljuk suzerainty, clearly indicated that Ṭuġril Beg's presence in the region was something more than a short-term nuisance or a temporary disturbance of the preexisting balance of power[15]. Constantine IX made use of the new state of affairs, asking Naṣr ad-Dawla to mediate negotiations with the Seljuk sultan. While the imperial government was represented at Ṭuġril Beg's court by George Drosos, a secretary (*hypogrammateus*) of Aaron and thus a man well-acquainted with the political situation in the Armenian borderland, the Marwānid dignitary Šayḫ al-Islām Abū ʿAbdallāh ibn Marwān lent additional support to the emperor's cause[16]. The available accounts at first sight convey the impression that the main issue discussed in these contacts was the release of Liparit, but in view of the manifold results it seems that they envisaged more far-reaching goals, aiming at a comprehensive settlement of relations with the Seljuk Sultanate with the mediation of Muslim allies in the borderland. At about the same time, Ṭuġril Beg was granted a number of honorifics by Caliph al-Qāʾim, praising him as a lawful ruler and protector of Islam. This was a further step in the process of the Seljuk lord's gradual transformation from a Turkmen chief and conqueror to a legitimate holder of supreme power within the legal and ideological context of Muslim conceptions of public authority, and thus decisively contributed to the foundation of a clearly-defined relationship between the Seljuk Sultanate and the Abbasid dynasty[17]. Ṭuġril Beg's intra-dynastic position was further consolidated

8 Sevim, Suriye 68-70.

9 Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 454; Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil VI 146, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 73 f. (*sub anno* 441 = 5 June 1049-25 May 1050); Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 206; Felix, Byzanz 170 f.; Dölger/Wirth, Regesten, no. 890d; Ripper, Marwāniden 157-160.

10 Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 454: ἐξῃτεῖτο τὴν ἐλευθερίαν καὶ σπονδὰς εἰρήνης. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,146, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 73: *rāsala malik ar-Rūm Ṭuġril Beg wa-arsala ilayhi hadīyatan aẓīmatan wa-ṭalaba minhu l-muʿāhada* (»the king of the Romans sent a message to Ṭuġril Beg, sending him precious gifts and asking him for a peace treaty«). For the battle of Kapetrou in the vicinity of Theodosioupolis/Erzurum, in which the Bulgarian prince Aaron, at that time governor of Vaspurakan, the commander of Ani and Iberia Katakalon Kekaumenos, and the said Liparit confronted the troops of Ibrāhīm Ināl, see Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 452 f. While Aaron and Katakalon escaped by retreating to Van and Ani respectively, Liparit is said to have been brought to the sultan's residence in Rayy. Ṭuġril Beg's itinerary in 1049/1050 was largely determined by the incipient conflict with his half-brother Ibrāhīm Ināl, who, after refusing to hand over Hamaḏān and other strongholds in the Highlands of western Iran, resisted his brother for a certain period in the fortress of Sarmāğ (in the vicinity of Dīnawar?). At about the same time Ṭuġril Beg was in contact with the Marwānid ruler Naṣr ad-Dawla in the province of Diyār Bakr, requesting the latter's submission: Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,146, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 73; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 206.

11 For the erection of a mosque in Byzantine Constantinople, which Muslim legendary accounts connect with the siege of Constantinople by Maslama b. ʿAbd al-Malik in 717/718, see Woods, Maslama.

12 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,146, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 73 f.: »*wa-ʿammarū masǧid al-Qusṭanṭīnīya wa-aqāmū ṣ-ṣalāt wa-l-ḫuṭba li-Ṭuġril Beg*« (»they repaired the mosque of Constantinople and established the prayer and the Friday sermon in the name of Ṭuġril Beg«). For the identity of the emissary, who is known from another Seljuk embassy to Constantinople sent some years later, see Felix, Byzanz 171, n. 114.

13 Dölger/Müller, Regesten, no. 770: Emperor Basil II conceded this privilege to the Fatimid caliph in exchange for a seven-year peace treaty during the blockade of Constantinople by Bardas Phokas in early 988.

14 Ripper, Marwāniden 153-186.

15 See above, n. 10.

16 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,146, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 73.

17 Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 206: »*malkā nāmūsāyā, bēṯ gāwsā ḏ-mashlānē, Rūkn al-Dīn Sūlṭān Ṭūghrel Bāg*« (»lawful king, house of refuge for the Muslims, pillar of religion, Ṭuġril Beg«). For the Seljuk use of *sulṭān* as the regular title for the holder of supreme rule, see Kramer/Bosworth, Sulṭān 850. For the sultan-caliph relationship, see Lambton, Internal Structure 205-208. For the Seljuk dynasty's relations with Sunni Islam in general, see Peacock, Early Seljūq History 99-127.

by the submission of Ibrāhīm Ināl[18]. Accordingly, Ṭuġril Beg's recognition as the supreme representative of Islam by the Byzantine emperor has to be interpreted as both an important complementary feature in the overall endeavor of the Seljuk sultan to become established as one of the leading authorities in the Muslim World and as another substantial gain in prestige, which enhanced his position vis-à-vis his Muslim, mainly Shiite, adversaries.

In the years after 1050, Ṭuġril Beg once more turned his attention to the Kākūyid dominions in the western Highlands of Iran, ultimately seizing Iṣfahān in May/June 1051 after a siege of one year and transferring his residence from Rayy to this newly-acquired town. In addition, he further built up his bonds with the Abbasid Caliphate through the exchange of embassies and lavish gifts[19]. A letter of Constantine IX addressed to Caliph al-Qāʾim, which according to Bar Hebraeus, our only source, reached Baghdad in the Muslim year 443 (15 May 1051 - 2 May 1052)[20], points to a remarkable revival of diplomatic contacts between Constantinople and the Abbasid court after decades of silence. After Bardas Skleros in late 986/early 987 had come to an agreement with the Būyid *amīr al-umarāʾ* in order to stage his rebellion against Basil II[21], Baghdad became completely overshadowed by the Fatimid court of Cairo and henceforth was considered a place of secondary significance by the decision-makers in the imperial city. The new Sunni prospects and the shifting of the center of gravity in the Muslim World from Egypt to western Iran as a result of Ṭuġril Beg's expansionist activity thus resulted in a reopening of the old lines of communication with the court of Baghdad. Unfortunately, Bar Hebraeus, apart from quoting the forms of address of the letter and giving a short description of its splendid outward appearance, fails to tell us anything about the political purposes of this contact, but it can be assumed that there must have been a causal relationship with the new situation in the Armenian and Upper Mesopotamian borderland and the constellations resulting from the growing influence of the young Seljuk sultanate. The proclamation of the prayer in Constantinople in the name of the Abbasid caliph meant that the latter was explicitly involved in the Byzantine-Seljuk negotiations and was considered an indispensable party to the agreements in his capacity as the uncontested legal and spiritual authority among Sunni Muslims.

A few years later, most probably in the months before Ṭuġril Beg's triumphal entrance into Baghdad in Ramaḍān 447/December 1055, the sultan reaffirmed his claims to formal control over the mosque of Constantinople by sending an embassy to Empress Theodora[22]. Eastern Christian sources mainly emphasize the tribute the empress was forced to pay as a token of submission to the sultan's overwhelming power, thus implicitly criticizing the weakness of the supreme head of Orthodox Christianity[23]. From the viewpoint of the Fatimid Caliphate, the key issue was the antagonism between Sunni and Shiite doctrine. The renowned Egyptian jurist and man of letters Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad ibn Salāma al-Quḍāʿī, who had served as a judge of the Sunni population in Egypt under Caliph al-Ḥākim and thereafter worked as a high-ranking official in the Fatimid chancery[24], had been sent at about the same time as the ambassador of Caliph al-Mustanṣir to Constantinople, and was thus able to follow the negotiations between the Seljuk representative and the imperial government. When with the latter's permission the rival ambassador held the Friday prayer in the name of Caliph al-Qāʾim bi-Amr Allāh, al-Quḍāʿī swiftly informed his lord of this event. The Fatimid caliph reacted by confiscating the property of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and by other repressive measures against the Greek patriarch and the Christians in Syria and Egypt[25]. In this way, Cairo basically suspended all previous concessions regarding the emperor's control over the said church and the patriarchal see of Jerusalem[26], thus exacting vengeance on its Christian subjects for their spiritual leader's breach of allegiance and expressing its rejection of the Abbasid and Seljuk claims. In the context of an intra-Muslim conflict between the Shiite elite of Egypt and the rising Seljuk power representing the Sunni Caliphate, both sides sought to make their influence felt in Constantinople through the pressure they were able to exert, the former by oppressing the Christians living under Fatimid rule and the latter by threatening new invasions and

18 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,146: *wa-dāna ḥīnaʾiḏin an-nās kulluhum lahū wa-ʿaẓuma šaʾnuhū wa-tamakkana mulkuhū wa-ṭabata* (»At that time all people submitted to him, his prestige was great and his rule was strong and firmly consolidated«).

19 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kamil 6,149 f., 160 f., trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 76 f., 82.

20 Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 206 f.

21 Dölger/Müller, Regesten, no. 769a.

22 Dölger/Wirth, Regesten, no. 929; Theodora ruled from the death of Constantine IX Monomachos on 8 January 1055 until her own death on 27 August 1056. A more exact dating is possible on the basis of the Armenian chronicle of Aristakes of Lastivert, Récit des malheurs 88 f., who places this diplomatic contact *sub anno* 504 of the Armenian era (= 8 March 1055 - 7 March 1056). Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 207, dates it a year earlier, i. e., 1365 of the Seleucid era (1053-1054), but immediately afterwards relates Ṭuġril Beg's entrance into Baghdad. On the basis of these data one may assume that the Seljuk embassy arrived at Constantinople in about spring/early summer 1055, while the empress' response was dispatched in the subsequent months.

23 Aristakes, Récit des malheurs 88; Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 207 (who does not refer explicitly to the Seljuk embassy but mentions the tribute sent by the empress to the caliph of Baghdad).

24 Halm, Kalifen 297.

25 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,230: »In this year [447 = 2 April 1055-20 March 1056] al-Mustanṣir sent troops to the Kanīsa Qumāma [Church of the Holy Sepulcher] and confiscated all its possessions. This happened because the *qāḍī* Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Quḍāʿī had been dispatched by the caliph with a message to the ruler of the Romans (*mutamallik ar-Rūm*). While he was in Constantinople, a messenger of Sultan Ṭuġril Beg b. Salğūq arrived, who asked the queen Theodora (*al-malika Tiyūdūrā*) to allow his messenger to perform the prayer in the mosque of Constantinople. She gave him the permission for doing that, and thus he entered the mosque and prayed there and spoke the Friday sermon in the name of Caliph al-Qāʾim b. Amr Allāh al-ʿAbbāsī. Al-Quḍāʿī informed al-Mustanṣir about that, and therefore the latter confiscated everything that was in the Qumāma and took it away. He expelled the patriarch from there to a remote monastery, closed the gates of the churches in Egypt and Syria, demanded the *ǧizya* [poll tax] of four years from the monks and increased the *ǧizya* to be paid by the Christians. This was the beginning of the deterioration of the relations between the Romans and the Egyptians«.

26 Felix, Byzanz 102 with n. 176; Dölger/Wirth, Regesten, no. 843.

demanding sums of tribute. The Muslim place of worship in Constantinople, which, perhaps along with Rome, was considered the most awe-inspiring center of Christianity and the Roman imperial tradition[27], served as a point of reference for ambitions to exercise a patronage transgressing the boundaries of *dār al-Islām*, i. e., the Muslim realm, in favor of coreligionists living in infidel regions. The Byzantine analogue to this idea was the emperor's claim to authority over the patriarchal sees living under Muslim rule. The imperial government's decision to confer the formal suzerainty over the mosque to Cairo's rival power seriously disturbed the preexisting equilibrium of mutual respect for the other side's authority over its coreligionists and institutions in one's own realm. Unavoidably, then, Constantinople became an intrinsic part of the struggle between Shiite and Sunni claims to the Muslim caliphate.

The reasons leading the empress and her advisers to side with Ṭuġril Beg by conceding him preeminence in Constantinople most probably have to be sought in the unprecedented military power the Seljuk commanders and their Turkmen soldiers were able to deploy in the eastern provinces. Although further developments were not yet foreseeable, in 1055 it was already clear that this new enemy, with his newly-acquired strongholds in Transcaucasia, Azerbaijan and western Iran and his alliances with local lords in Upper Mesopotamia, was able to provoke serious harassment in the northern and central section of the eastern borderland[28]. In contrast, the Fatimid Caliphate, while a dangerous rival for control over northern Syria and the Emirate of Aleppo, was hardly able to launch attacks into the interior of Byzantine Asia Minor.

Constantinople Mediating Sunni-Shiite Antagonism

Another incident of Fatimid-Seljuk antagonism occurring in these years shows that the imperial government, despite the concessions made to the Seljuk Sultanate with respect to the mosque of Constantinople, by no means abandoned its obligations towards Cairo and even intervened on its behalf when the existing order was jeopardized by seditious rivals from within the Fatimid Caliphate. The conflict was triggered by al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs (1016-1062), head of the Zīrid dynasty of al-Qayrawān in the province of Ifrīqiya, who from the late 1040s onwards felt strong enough to renounce his allegiance to Cairo, submitting instead to Abbasid suzerainty[29]. At some point before 443 (13 May 1051 - 2 May 1052), al-Muʿizz sent an ambassador to Baghdad, declaring his readiness to proclaim the Friday prayer in the name of the Abbasid caliph (*ad-daʿwa al-ʿAbbāsīya*) and asking for a formal investiture[30]. Both the Abbasid caliph and Ṭuġril Beg must have been highly pleased by the prospect of gaining an ally as strong as the Zīrid emir in the rear of the Fatimid state. In July 1051, Baghdad was rocked by serious riots between the Sunni and the Shiite quarters because of certain inscriptions that had stirred up Sunni sentiments. The caliph and his officials were not able to restore order within the city, and a number of tombs of Shiite imams and Būyid emirs were seriously damaged[31]. Ṭuġril Beg, in the time following the conquest of Iṣfahān in May/June 1051, decisively strengthened his bonds with the Abbasid Caliphate by receiving robes of honor and titles, and a few months after these riots in January 1052 his ambassadors were received with huge amounts of gifts in Baghdad[32]. Hence the sultan came into conflict with the various Shiite or pro-Fatimid factions in Iraq[33]. The Būyid emir al-Malik ar-Raḥīm and his Turkish military commander Arslan al-Basāsīrī in Baghdad still controlled substantial territories in the region. In December 1052, the two potentates seized Baṣra and received the allegiance of Daylamī soldiers from the Iranian province of Ḫūzistān[34]. Likewise, the lord of Ḥilla and central Iraq, Nūr ad-Dawla Mazyad ibn Dubays, was Shiite along with the majority of his subjects and refused to perform the prayer in the caliph's name[35]. Ṭuġril Beg, therefore, was eager to undermine the Shiite opposition by gaining allies from among their ranks. A case in point is al-Malik ar-Raḥīm's brother Abū ʿAlī ibn Abī Kālīǧār, who after the conquest of Baṣra took refuge with Ṭuġril Beg. The latter received him honorably in Iṣfahān, married him to a woman from his family, and gave him important domains as *iqṭāʿ*[36]. The emirs Abū Manṣūr und Hazārasb in al-Ahwāz instead had initially submitted to Ṭuġril Beg, but then arrived at a new agreement with the Būyid lord[37]. These examples clearly demonstrate how unstable the situation in 1051-1052 was and how easily Ṭuġril Beg's newly-acquired predominance in Iraq could collapse.

In response to al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs's query, the Abbasid caliph readily sent a certain Abū Ġālib aš-Šayzarī as an emissary to al-Qayrawān, carrying with him the letter of appointment (*al-ʿahd*), the black banner (*al-liwāʾ al-aswad*) of the Abbasid dynasty, and robes of honor. Abū Ġālib on his trip through Byzantine territory was arrested, and the emperor handed him over to the emissaries of Caliph al-Mustanṣir. In Cairo, a public act of humiliation was stage-managed, in which the ambassador was paraded through the town sitting backwards on a camel and carrying the letter of appointment

27 El Cheikh, Byzantium 139-162.
28 For details, see Peacock, Early Seljūq History 128-163.
29 Felix, Byzanz 117 f.; Talbi, al-Muʿizz b. Bādīs 481, 483; Halm, Kalifen 370 f.
30 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,214. Halm, Kalifen 466, n. 66, dates the whole episode back to 1047/1048, because in 1051/1052 the Zīrid provinces were already affected by the invasions of the Hilāl and Sulaym Arabs. From other sources we know that the rejection of the Fatimid dogma was officially announced in al-Manṣūrīya on 9 March 1049, see Halm, Kalifen 371. It would be difficult, however, to reconcile an earlier date with the details concerning the Seljuk involvement in this episode and thus I prefer to keep the year 443 as indicated in the sources.
31 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,15 f., trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 79-81.
32 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,160 f., trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 82.
33 Turan, Selçuklular Tarihi 126-134.
34 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,165 f., trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 86 f.
35 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,159, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 81.
36 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,166, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 87.
37 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,157, 166, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 87.

around his neck. In Bayna l-Qaṣrayn, the heart of the Fatimid palace city, the Abbasid symbols of authority destined for al-Muʿizz were put in a hole and burned[38]. By destroying these objects and by deriding the Abbasid representative, the Fatimid government expressed its defiance of Sunni claims to suzerainty over provinces under its sway and denounced the lawlessness of the Zīrid-Abbasid coalition.

Baghdad reacted harshly to the Fatimid affront by organizing a propagandistic campaign supported by all the leading jurists and authorities of *fiqh*, who composed treatises condemning the Ismāʿīlīya doctrine[39]. At about the same time, al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs dispatched a certain Abū l-Qāsim ibn ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān as ambassador to Baghdad and Constantinople in order to discuss the issue with both the Abbasid court and the imperial government[40]. The Zīrid ruler most probably tried to take advantage of this diplomatic episode and to gain official recognition as an independent ruler by Constantinople in case the latter was willing to enter into negotiations with his representative. The sources do not tell us more details about the talks in Baghdad, but in all likelihood emissaries of Sultan Ṭuġril Beg were present in the caliphal palace and participated in these discussions, so that a certain Abū ʿAlī ibn Kabīr was dispatched on behalf of the sultan and set off along with Abū l-Qāsim for Constantinople[41]. In his baggage he had a very carefully-formulated letter full of allusions to the political ambitions and ideological claims of the Seljuk sultan thus illustrating the discursive strategies with which Ṭuġril Beg and his advisers – most probably people from the circle that had prepared the anti-Fatimid pamphlets in Baghdad – underpinned his political program of Sunni leadership.

In this situation the Byzantine emperor was primarily interested in displaying his loyalty towards the Fatimid Caliphate. Accordingly, he refused to receive the emissary of al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs[42], thus rejecting any recognition of the latter as an independent potentate and stressing his commitment to the treaty concluded with al-Mustanṣir in 1046. In the discussions with the Seljuk ambassador, Constantine IX pointed to his friendship (*al-mawadda*) with the Fatimid caliph, stating that he would not consent to an action that was to the detriment of his ally[43]. The imperial government, despite its change of policy in 1049/1050 regarding the revival of relations with the Abbasid Caliphate, still abided by the treaty with Cairo and avoided interfering with the internal affairs of the Fatimid Caliphate and its relations with rulers under its control. The mosque of Constantinople was a place of ideological significance within the empire's realm, and the emperor, no doubt, considered it his own business to decide which foreign power should have access to this place. Supporting the aims of a powerful rebel, who sought collaboration with Cairo's most dangerous rival, would have been a flagrant breach of the existing treaty. On the other hand, with the agreements of 1049/1050 a new state of affairs had come into being, and Constantinople could by no means afford to ignore the claims of the Seljuk sultan and the Abbasid Caliphate. Indicative of the emperor's appeasing attitude is his treatment of the Abbasid ambassador, who after his humiliation in Cairo was brought back safely to Constantinople and received the apologies of the emperor for the mistreatment he had to endure[44]. Apparently, the imperial government was fully aware of the grievous insult the Abbasid caliph had endured by the public mockery of his ambassador. The emperor had, at all costs, to avoid giving the impression that he had consented to the conduct of his allies in Cairo since he was interested in maintaining good relations with the Abbasid court and the Seljuk sultan.

As regards the content of Ṭuġril Beg's letter, it is worth having a closer look at the address formula and the summary that has come down to us, in order to see the various ideological allusions and propagandistic devices employed by the Seljuk chancery:

»From the pillar of religion and the aid of the Muslims, the splendor of the religion of God and the sultan of the lands of God, and the helper of the servants of God and the right hand of the caliph, the commander of the faithful, to the lord of the Romans (*min Rukn ad-dīn wa-ġiyāṯ al-muslimīn, bahāʾ dīn allāh wa-sulṭān bilād allāh, wa-muġīṯ ʿibād allāh, Abī Ṭālib, yamīn al-ḫalīfa amīr al-muʾminīn ilā ʿaẓīm ar-Rūm*). And its content after the *basmala* was as follows: Praise to God, whose dominion is mighty and whose demonstration is brilliant, whose position is sublime and whose benevolence is generous. The letter continued in this way until it stated: Many years ago a man of deception (*nāğim ad-ḍalāla*) made his appearance in Egypt. He invites the people to follow him; he is deceived by those of his companionship whom he has deceived; in doctrinal matters, he believes what none of the men of knowledge, be it in the time of the first imams or nowadays, considers lawful and what no reasonable man of the people of Islam and the infidels (*ahl al-islām wa-l-kufr*) considers correct. Thereafter the letter referred to the emissary Abū Ġālib, expressed rebukes concerning this issue, and demanded that he should be sent under guard to al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs[45]«.

Just like the mosque of Constantinople, this was another favorable opportunity to project Ṭuġril Beg's image as defender and supreme political representative of Sunni Islam to

38 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,214.
39 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,223.
40 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,214, 223.
41 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,223.
42 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,214: »When al-Muʿizz b. Bādīs was informed of this [the arrest of the ambassador], he sent a message to Constantine [IX Monomachos], the emperor of the Romans, on this matter, but he did not reply«.
43 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,214: »He exposed the friendship which is between him and al-Mustanṣir and that he would not allow any harm to be done to him«.
44 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,223: »The emissary was sent back to the king of the Romans (*malik ar-Rūm*). He was repentant for what had happened to him and he apologized to him. For he had given him guarantees that he would be brought back safely from Egypt, when he had been asked to hand him over. Subsequently, the king of the Romans sent him back to Baghdad where he arrived in the year 44 [3 May 1052-22 April 1053]«.
45 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,223.

the outside world. A list of six compound honorifics (*alqāb*) defines the Seljuk sultan as the holder of a central position in the *dār al-Islām*, which consisted of three essential components, i. e., the orthodox Sunni faith (*dīn*), the territories under Muslim rule (*bilād Allāh*), and the faithful Muslim subjects (*al-muslimūn, ʿibād Allāh*). On all three levels, Ṭuġril Beg appears as supporter and protector (*rukn, ġiyāṯ, muġīṯ*), as a brightly-shining example (*bahāʾ*), or as sovereign (*sulṭān*), respectively. After the sultan's *kunya* »Abū Ṭālib« signals the end of the list of *laqabs*, the titulature contains a term referring to the sultan-caliph relationship, in which Ṭuġril Beg is presented as the caliph's »right hand«, i. e., the most powerful authority in Islam, second only to the incumbent of the Abbasid throne. The title of sultan, which the Seljuk chief had been using since the first conquest of Nīšāpūr in 1038 on coins and elsewhere in the form *as-sulṭān al-muʿaẓẓam*, i. e., »the great sultan«[46], is here combined with the specification »lands of God« and thus embedded in the context of Muslim universal rule. The honorifics *Rukn ad-Dīn* and *Ġiyāth al-Muslimīn* are first mentioned in the historical accounts either in the context of Ṭuġril Beg's solemn entrance in Baghdad in 1055 or in the course of the preceding diplomatic contacts with the Abbasid court and thus in any case reflect the gradual ideological elevation which the Seljuk chief achieved in return for his gestures of respect and obedience towards the Caliphate[47]. A case in point is the reception of the renowned chief qaḍī al-Māwardī, who in 1043/early 1044 was sent as Caliph al-Qāʾim's envoy to Ṭuġril Beg in order to mediate a peace treaty with the Būyid rulers. In honor of the caliph, the sultan escorted the emissary four leagues and declared his readiness to be the caliph's loyal servant[48]. The message conveyed by the aforementioned titles is also in line with the statement made by a Seljuk envoy at the caliphal court, according to Bar Hebraeus, shortly before the sultan's entry in Baghdad: Ṭuġril Beg expressed his desire to be honored and blessed by serving the Prophet. He would perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, provide for the safety of the pilgrimage routes and go to war against all rebels[49].

The letter to the Byzantine emperor thus clearly draws on aspects of the caliph-sultan relationship, as it was defined in the course of the negotiations between the court of Baghdad and the Seljuk leadership in the years before 1055. A diplomatic affair in which both the Fatimid court of Egypt and the imperial government of Constantinople were immediately involved offered the ideal setting for the promotion of these ideas. Consequently, Fatimid doctrines had to be presented as being in contradiction not only to the teachings of the first imams and contemporary theologians, but also with the opinions of all reasonable men, both Muslims and infidels. Hence, the Byzantine emperor is called to distance himself from his allies in Cairo and to support the Abbasids as the representatives of the true Islamic faith. From the Byzantine point of view, the Sunni-Shiite antagonism for predominance in Iraq and the Seljuk-Fatimid conflict for control over the Zīrid Emirate, in particular, forced Constantinople to position itself in intra-Muslim disputes and to reconsider its one-sided reliance upon the peaceful relations with the Caliphate of Cairo. This resulted in the appearance of a twofold allegiance, in which the Byzantine government, on the one hand, acknowledged the formal supremacy of the Abbasid Caliphate and Sunni Islam by allowing the proclamation of the Friday prayer in its name according to older traditions, and, on the other hand, abided by commitments emanating from the treaties with Cairo regarding the integrity of the Fatimid realm and its protection from rebels and hostile threats.

The Last Byzantine-Fatimid Conflicts in Syria

The further development of the diplomatic network between Constantinople, Cairo, and Baghdad was to a large extent determined by the political situation in Syria and the degree of Fatimid influence on Iraqi affairs. The temporary replacement of the Mirdāsid emir Ṯimāl ibn Ṣāliḥ with direct Fatimid rule over Aleppo between January/February 1057 and September 1060, as well as the collaboration with the Turkish commander Arslan al-Basāsīrī during his activities between early 1056 and January 1060 in Iraq, led to a significant strengthening of the Fatimid position in the entire region. Expectations of an imminent collapse of Seljuk predominance may have arisen[50]. Major riots among the urban inhabitants, Ṭuġril Beg's Turkmens and the Būyid soldiery in December 1055 forced al-Basāsīrī along with a great part of the Baghdadi Turks to flee to Raḥba, from where he communicated with the Fatimid government offering his allegiance. Thereupon al-Basāsīrī concluded an alliance with the Shiite Mazyadids and attacked Qurayš ibn Badrān of Mosul, whom he defeated in a battle outside Sinǧār on 9 January 1057. As a result of this victory, the Friday prayer in Mosul was proclaimed in the name of the Fatimid caliph, while al-Basāsīrī and his companions were invested with robes of honor sent by al-Mustanṣir. At that time Ṭuġril Beg took action against this dangerous threat, leaving Baghdad for a large-scale campaign in the northern Ǧazīra between Takrīt, Ḥarrān, and the Marwānid territories around Ǧazīrat ibn ʿUmar. Several local rulers and a part of al-Basāsīrī's allies returned to Seljuk obedience and Ibrāhīm Ināl took control of Mosul. Yet in early 1058 the latter launched his rebellion, departing for the Highlands

46 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,100, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 38; Özgüdenli, Kuruluş devri 559 f.

47 See, for instance, the passage from the Chronicle of Bar Hebraeus quoted above, n. 16, and Ẓahīr ad-Dīn Nīšāpūrī / Rāšid ad-Dīn, Saljūq-nāma 41.

48 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,124, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Annals 56 f.

49 Bar Hebraeus, Chronography 207.

50 For the situation in Aleppo, see Bianquis, Damas 2,565 f., 569-571; for al-Basāsīrī's role in Iraq in the years 1055-1061, see Turan, Selçuklular Tarihi 132-139; Bosworth, Iranian World 46 f., Halm, Kalifen 385-395; Hanne, Caliph 91-96.

to gain Hamaḏān. Thus, al-Basāsīrī and Qurayš swiftly retook Mosul and in late December 1058 entered Baghdad, abducting the Abbasid caliph and his entourage and proclaiming the Friday prayer in the name of his Fatimid rival. Both the local Shiites and – because of their bad experiences with the Turkmen soldiers – a large part of the Sunni populace sided with the new potentates, while other Iraqi urban centers like Baṣra and Wāsiṭ also submitted to their authority. Ṭuġril Beg, who was preoccupied with the rebellion of Ibrāhīm Ināl, was not able to react immediately. It was only with the support of his nephews Alp Arslan, Yāqūtī, and Qāwurt Beg that he managed to eliminate his seditious half-brother in July 1059, whereupon he invaded Iraq, took possession of Baghdad, and restored the caliph to his position, while al-Basāsīrī was killed in a battle near Kūfa in January 1060[51].

This brief digression on the developments in Iraq should underline the significant gain of prestige the Fatimid Caliphate achieved in these years until the supremacy of the Seljuk Sultanate was ultimately reestablished. It is also noteworthy that this sudden expansion of Fatimid suzerainty into the heartlands of the Abbasid Caliphate was realized merely on the basis of diplomatic contacts with Shiite elements of Iraq, without direct involvement in military affairs. The Fatimid Caliphate served as a counterweight and legitimizing authority for the political ambitions of all those discontented with the prospect of an Abbasid Sunni revival under the aegis of the Seljuk Sultanate. Hence, it becomes understandable why the decision-makers in Cairo in the mid-1050s suddenly altered their behavior towards Byzantium and adopted much more aggressive attitudes in terms of military operations in Syria and put forward pretentious demands at the diplomatic level. Unfortunately, the available accounts are contradictory and quite deficient in historical and chronological details, yet it is still possible to perceive the increasing amount of pressure the Fatimid government was able to exert at that time.

More specifically, the commander Makīn ad-Dawla al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī ibn Mulhim is said to have been dispatched from Cairo to lead a campaign against the Byzantine port of Laodikeia, which he put under siege. A second expedition under the emir as-Saʿīd Layth ad-Dawla resulted in the conquest of the town. A third contingent invaded Byzantine territory, pillaging, killing, and taking captives[52]. Besides Laodikeia, Ibn Mulhim is recorded as having attacked the city of Apameia/Afāmiya, the environs of Antioch, and the fortress of Qasṭūl/Qasṭūn, which surrendered in exchange for a guarantee of safety (*amān*)[53]. The Byzantine military presence in the region was eventually enhanced by a naval force of 80 ships, arriving in Laodikeia and fending off the troops of Ibn Mulhim[54]. On the whole, we are dealing with a serious disturbance of the previously peaceful relations. Furthermore, it becomes evident that the reasons for this clash have to be sought in a diplomatic dispute between the two sides, which erupted during the negotiations that were being held over the course of hostilities. Hence, the military operations were not an end in itself, but aimed at forcing the Byzantine government to make concessions in matters pertaining to bilateral relations at that time.

A difficult problem is the exact dating of these events. An important *terminus ad quem* is given by the years 446 (12 April 1054 - 1 April 1055) and 447 (2 April 1055 - 20 March 1056), in which Egypt was afflicted by famine and plague due to irregularity in the inundation of the Nile[55]. All accounts agree that the first occasion for the estrangement between Cairo and Constantinople was provided when a considerable load of wheat – the sources mention 100 000 *qafīz* or 400 000 *irdabb* respectively –, which in the framework of the customary exchange of embassies had at first agreed to be sent to Cairo in support of the starving population, was eventually withheld after the accession of a new emperor to the imperial throne[56]. As for the actual incumbent upon the throne, the details provided by our accounts are conflicting. According to one version, the »ruler of the Romans in Constantinople« (*mutamallik ar-Rūm bi-Qusṭanṭīnīya*) died and was succeeded by a woman (*imraʾa*), who asked Caliph al-Mustanṣir in a letter whether he would be willing to support her with his troops in case she were attacked by a rebel. When the caliph refused, she became angry and impeded the transport of the cereals[57]. The change of government mentioned in the account could have only referred to Constantine IX Monomachos' succession by Empress Theodora in January 1055. This chronology is in accordance with the aforementioned presence of al-Quḍāʿī as Fatimid ambassador at the court of Theodora in 1055 and fits well with the date of the surrender of Qasṭūl on 8. Rabīʿ I 447 (27 June 1055)[58]. The same report also mentions Mīḫāʾīl, i. e. Michael VI (31 August 1056 - 31 August 1057), as the successor to Theodora[59]. According to the second version, a certain Michael characterized as *ṣāḥib ḥarb*, i. e. »man of war«, *stratiōtikos*, in the days of the vizier Abū Naṣr al-Falāḥī (1045-1048)[60] had participated in an embassy to Cairo, where he was especially enticed by the attractions of the Fatimid court. After his accession to the throne he prepared the shipment of grain as well as gifts for the caliph, but was killed by the Romans, who suspected him of sympathy for Islam, and was replaced by a certain Ibn Saqlārūs[61]. There are certain fictitious elements drawing on recurring motifs in idealized narratives of Byzantine-Muslim relations and the chronology

51 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 6,181, 189 f., 191-193, 198-206, trans. Richards 102, 106, 108-113, 118-127. For bibliography, see the titles in the previous note, esp. Turan, Selçuklular Tarihi 132-141.
52 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227 f.
53 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,228, 230 f.
54 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,229 f.; Maqrīzī, Ḫiṭaṭ 1,335. For further details, see Bianquis, Damas 2,566-568; Halm, Kalifen 382 f.
55 Halm, Kalifen 382.
56 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227; Maqrīzī, Ḫiṭaṭ 1,335.
57 Maqrīzī, Ḫiṭaṭ 2,335.
58 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,230 f.
59 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,231.
60 Bianquis, Damas 2,548 f.
61 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227.

is out of place, but the violent overthrow of Michael VI and the seizure of the throne by Isaac Komnenos (1 September 1057 - 22 November 1059) are still discernable. Although most chronological indications support a dating of the whole episode to the spring/early summer of 1055, it seems to the present author that the year 1057 fits better with the historical circumstances. The decline of Byzantine military power in the civil war preceding Isaac's rise to power, in conjunction with the general increase of Fatimid influence in Iraq, created very favorable conditions for a military intervention in Syria. The mastermind of the entire enterprise, according to one version, was the Fatimid vizier and supreme *qāḍī* al-Yāzūrī, a Palestinian from ar-Ramla, who owed his rise to power to the caliph's mother, and dominated the political scene in these years until his execution in March 1058 under the pretext of treacherous contacts with the Seljuk sultan[62].

The available reports speak of Theodora's anger or Ibn Saqlārūs' maliciousness and cruelty as reasons for the imperial government's change of mind, but if the identification with Isaac I is correct, the civil war of 1057, during which parts of the eastern provinces were devastated and the military units of Asia Minor suffered serious losses of manpower[63], provides a good explanation as to why the shipment of grain never reached Egypt. It was at the same time that Turkmen warrior groups, who had come in the wake of Ṭuġril Beg's 1054 campaign in Armenia, stayed for a longer period in the eastern territories without being expelled by local units[64]. The administrative and military structures in the region, no doubt, had suffered serious damage and in 1057 the overall situation may simply have been too chaotic to allow the shipment of such a load.

As regards negotiations on the diplomatic level, the Fatimid accounts provide a number of details regarding the lines of argument put forward by the two sides to support their viewpoints and political aims. The issues in question concerned both ideological and practical aspects. The Fatimid government very much insisted on the delivery of the gifts[65], which formed an indispensable part of the diplomatic protocol and were of major significance for the public projection of the mutual relationship between the two powers[66]. Matters of political importance were the release of Muslim prisoners detained in Byzantine territory and the restoration of former Muslim strongholds that were under imperial control[67]. Constantinople was willing to comply with the first demand, but requested the release of Byzantine prisoners and the restoration of Byzantine fortresses in return for the other two[68]. The Greek prisoners, so went the Fatimid counter-arguments, were widely dispersed in various Muslim countries, where the caliph had no authority. Furthermore, the Muslim inhabitants had acquired gardens and real estate in former Byzantine towns and thus had to receive compensations in case these possessions were restored to their original owners[69]. The Fatimid government obviously felt itself in a position of strength, being able to dictate its conditions for an armistice. Practical problems of political authority and geographical distance within the Muslim orbit and the property rights of Muslim landowners were regarded important enough to reject an agreement with the Byzantine side. Evidently, the Fatimid Caliphate was mainly interested in a demonstration of superiority. This attitude can be explained as a reaction to the preceding humiliations, such as the affairs of al-Muʿizz ibn Bādīs and the mosque of Constantinople, and as an expression of the new self-awareness resulting from the alliances with al-Basāsīrī and other powerful Syrian and Iraqi potentates. Accordingly, Cairo sought to degrade the Byzantine court in matters of diplomatic etiquette, requesting that the gifts the caliph would give in return for the imperial presents should have only half the value of the latter instead of the customary two-thirds[70]. The strengthening of the Fatimid position in the Muslim World in the years after 1055 had to be visualized in the symbolic language of Byzantine-Fatimid gift exchange with the imperial government of Constantinople being forced to accept a sort of devaluation in its relationship with the court of Cairo.

Byzantium's Last Attack on Syria

For some time the Fatimids had exerted a strong influence in Aleppo, Upper Mesopotamia, and Iraq and projected its superiority vis-à-vis Byzantium, but Ṭuġril Beg's victory in Iraq quickly reversed the situation. The Mirdāsids returned to Aleppo, and in the early 1060s the Turkmen incursion into Syria began. This brought about a deep involvement of Turkish warlords in the local rivalries of Fatimid and Syrian potentates and led to the establishment of new principalities in Palestine, central Syria, and parts of the coastland by the Turkmen commander Atsiz ibn Uwaq and Sultan Malikšāh's

62 Maqrīzī Ittiʿāẓ 2,227; Bianquis, Damas 2,550 f.; Halm, Kalifen 356-359, 390 f.

63 Cheynet, Pouvoir 68-70, 339-344.

64 Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 484: Τοῦρκος γάρ τις τὴν κλῆσιν Σαμούχ, τὸ γένος οὐκ ἐπίσημος, πρὸς δὲ τὰ πολεμικὰ γενναῖος καὶ ἐνεργός […] αὐτὸς τῷ τόπῳ παρέμεινε μετὰ τρισχιλίων ἀνδρῶν, καὶ περιπλανώμενος ἐν ταῖς πεδιάσι καὶ τοῖς ὑπτίοις τόποις τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρμενίας.

65 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227: »They replied that what made this [i. e., the attack on Laodikeia] necessary was his breach of the peace treaty (*al-hudna*), which had been agreed with his predecessor, and the detention of the gift and the [other] gift, which was not from his own belongings«.

66 For the significance of gift exchange in Byzantine diplomacy, see, for instance, Cutler, Gifts 247 f.; Schreiner, Geschenke.

67 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227: »The condition was imposed upon him to release all prisoners in the land of the Romans (*bilād ar-Rūm*)«. Ibidem 2,228: »The condition was imposed upon him to hand over the Muslim fortresses which had come in the possession of the Romans«.

68 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227 f.

69 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227 f.

70 Maqrīzī, Ittiʿāẓ 2,227: »It was customary practice that when presents from the Romans arrived at the caliphal court, their value was estimated and presents of a value equal to two-thirds of the former were sent to them, so that Islam had a profit of one-third in comparison to them. Therefore, the condition was imposed that the value of the presents which were sent to them in return for the value of their presents would be half«.

brother Tāğ ad-Dawla Tutuš during the 1070s[71]. There were attempts of minor lords to collaborate with the Fatimid Caliphate, but there were also attacks on Egyptian soil, and Fatimid rule in Syria gradually collapsed[72]. The Byzantines still tried to maintain their influence over the Emirate of Aleppo, interfering in the intra-dynastic struggles of the Mirdāsids, and in 1068, in the course of his first eastern campaign, Emperor Romanos IV conquered the fortress of Manbiǧ[73]. Sultan Alp Arslan's 1070/1071 campaign in Upper Mesopotamia and northern Syria forced most Muslim local rulers in the region to recognize Seljuk suzerainty[74] and thus decisively contributed to the decay of the Byzantine network of alliances and political influence in the borderland. The battle of Manzikert, in comparison, was certainly a heavy blow to Byzantium's reputation of invincibility and triggered civil strife within the Byzantine aristocracy, but did not have particularly disastrous repercussions for the empire's military power and defense system[75]. Besides the downfall of the central government in Asia Minor and its replacement by mostly unstable and short-lived lordships of Christian rebels, Turkish warlords and seditious members of the Seljuk dynasty, it was mainly Sultan Malikšāh's 1086 campaign that put an end to the Byzantine presence in Syria, incorporating the urban centers of the former frontier zone, such as Antioch, Aleppo, and Edessa, into a centralized Seljuk regime drawing on loyal *ġulām* commanders from the sultan's entourage, such as Yaġī Siyān, Aqsunqur, and Būzān, and members of local Arab and Kurdish clans who had submitted to Seljuk authority[76]. The Seljuk civil strife of the years 1093-1095, in which Tāğ ad-Dawla Tutuš contested with Malikšāh's son Barkyāruq for the sultan's title, cut the bonds between the Syrian potentates and the sultanate and caused a new disintegration of the region with Tutuš's sons Riḍwān and Duqāq ruling in Aleppo and Damascus respectively and a number of newcomers in other territories of Syria and the northern Ğazīra. It was also in this period that a number of Turkmen rulers made their first appearance in some regions of eastern Anatolia, such as the basin of the Halys River (Kızıl Irmak), Erzurum, Tephrike/Divriği, Aḫlāt at Lake Van, and the province of Diyār Bakr[77], while Qiliğ Arslan managed to succeed his father Sulaymān ibn Qutlumuš in Nicaea and thus implemented the idea of dynastic continuity among the Seljuk Turks in western Asia Minor[78]. One can hardly speak of systematic conquests of Byzantine territories between the early 1070s and the 1090s. What actually happened was a gradual decay of the mechanisms of central rule as a result of the intrusion of Turkmen warrior groups, and their replacement by regional forms of government in the context of a thoroughly mixed Byzantine-Turkish social fabric. Contacts of the imperial court with the Muslim central lands were largely reduced to diplomatic exchanges with the court of Sultan Malikšāh, who between 1086 and his death in late 1092 made repeated attempts to put the Turkmens operating in Asia Minor under his control. A treaty of friendship with Emperor Alexios I including proposals for a marriage between the two dynasties was one way to achieve this goal[79]. At that time Byzantium's eastern policy was limited to attempts to recover territories in Asia Minor, without being able to exert any tangible influence in the old borderland. The situation suddenly changed with the arrival of the armies of the First Crusade in 1096/1097, which managed to cross Asia Minor and seize Antioch and Edessa, thereby decisively accelerating the Byzantine re-conquests in Asia Minor. This resulted in a major Christian penetration in the regions from Cilicia and the Mediterranean coast to the Euphrates River[80]. Furthermore, the Byzantine-Norman contest for the control of Antioch brought imperial troops back to the coastal towns of northern Syria, while the nearby island of Cyprus became a hub of major importance for control over and communication with the entire southern shoreline of Asia Minor. It is no coincidence that at this time the imperial government resumed its contacts with the Fatimid court of Cairo in order to mediate the release of imprisoned Frankish Crusader lords[81]. In constant conflict with the Normans of Antioch, the Byzantines for some time maintained control of fortresses, such as Laodikeia, Balaneia/Banyās, and Maraqlīya, and had some temporary successes in Cilicia, but the main focus of Constantinople's eastern policy quickly came to be the establishment of a protectorate over the Kingdom of Jerusalem[82]. Henceforth, Byzantine diplomacy with Muslim powers beyond Asia Minor was largely determined by this objective and was, in one way or another, a side effect of its political ambitions in Palestine and Antioch.

These attitudes survived the death of Alexios I in 1118 and persisted throughout the reign of his son and successor John II Komnenos. His large-scale campaign of 1137/1138 to Cilicia, Antioch, Aleppo, and other Muslim towns in northern Syria in many respects was a singular event[83]. After the

71 For details, see Sevim, Suriye 35-43, 49-56, 63-74, 78-84 (Atsiz b. Uwaq arrived in about 1069/1070 in Palestine and seized Damascus in June/July 1076; in 1079 he was replaced by Tutuš).
72 Sevim, Suriye 51-54, 74-78 (Atsiz's Egyptian campaign in early 1076).
73 Sevim, Suriye 43-46; Felix, Byzanz 122 f.
74 Sevim, Suriye 54-62.
75 Cheynet, Mantzikert 410-438.
76 Sevim, Suriye 127-136.
77 Turan, Doğu Anadolu.
78 Turan, Türkiye 83-98.
79 Kafesoğlu, Melikşah 101-112; Dölger/Wirth, Regesten, no. 1164.
80 Asbridge, First Crusade 107-250.
81 Dölger/Wirth, Regesten, no. 1216 (1102), 1218[e] (ca. 1104).
82 Lilie, Crusader States 70-72.
83 For details about the events of this campaign, see Chalandon, Comnène 127-154; Lilie, Crusader States 117-134; Angold, Empire 187 f.: After quick and successful operations in Cilicia ending in the surrender of the main strongholds in the region, the imperial army stood before the walls of Antioch in August 1137. Putting the town under siege, Emperor John II forced Raymond of Poitiers, the husband of Bohemond II's daughter, to enter into negotiations. The agreement reached by the two sides provided for the handing over of Antioch in exchange for the Muslim cities of Aleppo, Šayzar, Ḥimṣ, and Ḥamāh, which were to be conquered in a joint campaign during the following spring. In April-May 1138, the Byzantine-Frankish forces took Bizāʿa and besieged Šayzar, but were not able to make further inroads and thus retreated to Antioch. The emperor made his solemn entrance, but after turmoil instigated by Raymond was forced to leave the town and returned to Constantinople.

termination of hostilities with the Normans in 1108, it was the first attempt of the imperial government to restore direct control over the coastland south of the Taurus Mountains and the region of Antioch, and prepared the grounds for Manuel I's policy of tutelage, marriages and military coalitions which dominated relations with the Crusader States in the 1150s and 1160s[84].

Even more remarkable from a military point of view is the fact that John II's expedition marked the last personal involvement of a Byzantine emperor in conflicts with Arab potentates in northern Syria. From the death of Basil II in 1025, no more than two campaigns, namely those of Romanos III and Romanos IV in 1030 and 1068 respectively, took place in this region[85]. After John II, nothing of this sort was ever to happen again, for when his son Manuel came to Antioch in 1158-1159, he arrived at a peace agreement with the ruler of Aleppo, Nūr ad-Dīn Maḥmūd ibn Zankī[86], while the naval expedition of 1169 against Egypt organized together with King Amalric of Jerusalem ended in a debacle, in which the emperor did not participate in person[87]. Hence, the Byzantine campaign of April/May 1138 was the last imperial enterprise aiming at an actual conquest of Muslim-Arab territories and, in a sense, can be regarded as the last echo of Byzantine claims to suzerainty over the Emirate of Aleppo, which were based on the protectorate first established in late 969 and determined Byzantine attitudes in the region at least until the late 1060s, as has been shown above[88].

After the demise of the Seljuk princes Duqāq of Damascus and Riḍwān of Aleppo in June 1104 and August 1113 respectively, their descendants proved too weak to maintain a stable dynastic succession. Hence, the leadership in Damascus passed to Duqāq's *atabeg* (i.e., »educator of princes«) and stepfather Ṭuġtakīn, who established a local dynasty of his own lineage, whereas in Aleppo, after a brief interplay of Riḍwān's son and a local dignitary, power was seized by the ruler of Mārdīn and Naṣībīn, Īlġāzī ibn Artuq, who remained firmly established in the town from 1118 until his death in 1122[89]. In 1127/1128 ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī, the youngest son of the Seljuk governor Aqunsur of Aleppo (1087-1094) and holder of various posts in Iraq under Sultan Maḥmūd (1118-1131), was appointed *atabeg* of the sultan's son and acquired the governorship over the most important urban centres in the Ǧazīra and northern Syria, Mosul and Aleppo. Despite his personal involvement in the Seljuk power struggle in Iraq after the sultan's death in the early 1130s, ʿImād ad-Dīn managed to consolidate his position as an autonomous emir, constantly expanding his influence in central Syria. In the months preceding the arrival of the Byzantine troops, he exerted increasing pressure on the Būrid lord Šihāb ad-Dīn Maḥmūd of Damascus, threatening Ḥimṣ and the Biqāʿ region and negotiating a marriage with the emir's mother, Zumurrud Ḫātūn[90].

Due to its manifold political and ideological ramifications, the Byzantine campaign is covered by a very broad range of primary sources written in Greek, Arabic, Latin, Syriac and Armenian[91]. The most immediate echo of these events is expressed in the speeches composed by the court rhetoricians Michael Italikos (d. before 1157) and Nikephoros Basilakes (flourished in the first half of the twelfth century) in praise of Emperor John II's Syrian campaign in the months after his return to Constantinople[92]. In contrast to the texts composed in the second half of the eleventh century, where a sort of defensive attitude evoking the achievements of a glorious past prevailed[93], the 1130s seem to be marked by a increased self-confidence resulting from a number of successful military operations of the imperial army, fending off hostile attacks in the Balkans and in Asia Minor and re-stabilizing the frontier zones in both regions, especially after the treaty of Devol with the Normans in 1108 and during the two decades of John II's reign[94]. Michael Italikos, in two letters to John Axouch, the chief commander of the Byzantine army, is full of praise for the addressee's military abilities, portraying him as being even greater than the Macedonian emperors and the legendary generals of the Phokas family. Another recurring motif is the idea of the imperial troops fighting again in the border zones of ancient Rome at the Danube and Tigris Rivers[95]. A second letter to Theodore Prodromos, in which the author

84 Lilie, Crusader States 175-211.
85 Felix, Byzanz 82-89, 122-123.
86 Lilie, Crusader States 176-183.
87 Lilie, Crusader States 198-202.
88 Dölger / Müller, Regesten, no. 728a.
89 El Azhari, Saljūqs 178f.; Bosworth, Riḍwān b. Tutush 519; Süssheim, Il-Ghāzī.
90 Elisséeff, Nūr ad-Dīn 2,332-367, esp. 343-348, 352-356, 359-362. Heidemann, Zangī 451f. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,7, trans. Ibn al-Aṯīr, Chronicle 325f. (on 30 December 1135, Ḥimṣ was handed over to Šihāb ad-Dīn Maḥmūd by its rulers because of the constant harassment by ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī. While the former lords were compensated with the town of Tadmur, Šihāb ad-Dīn concluded a peace treaty with ʿImād ad-Dīn), ibidem 15f., trans. Richards 335 (Zankī's troops besieged Ḥimṣ between Šaʿbān 531 [24 April-22 May 1137] and 20 Šawwāl [11 July], negotiations with the governor on behalf of Šihāb ad-Dīn, Muʿīn ad-Dīn Unur, yielded no results); Ibn al-ʿAdīm, Zubda 453f. (new peace treaty with Damascus, ʿImād ad-Dīn married Ḫātūn, the daughter of Ǧanāḥ ad-Dawla Ḥusayn and brought her to Aleppo).
91 For Greek and Arabic sources, see the discussion below. Other important sources: William of Tyre, Chronicon 14, 24, 662f. (submission of Cilicia and advance to Antioch), 14, 30, 670f. (siege of Antioch, treaty between John II and Raymond), 15, 1f. (invasion of Muslim territories, siege of Šayzar, retreat), 15, 3-5, 676-681 (entrance of the emperor in Antioch, turmoil in the town forces the emperor to leave, departure for Constantinople). Matthew of Edessa, Chronicle: Continuation of Gregory the Priest 241f.; Bar Hebraeus, Chronicle 264.; Ibn al-Qalānisī, Ḏayl 257.
92 Michaël Italikos, Lettres et discours 239-270, no. 43: Λόγος βασιλικὸς εἰς τὸν αὐτοκράτορα Ἰωάννην τὸν Κομνηνὸν καὶ πορφυρογέννητον ἐπὶ τοῖς κατὰ Συρίαν ἀγῶσιν αὐτοῦ (dated by the editor to the second half of 1138). Nikēphoros Basilakēs, Gli Encomî 87-132.
93 See, for example, Iōannēs Skylitzēs, Synopsis historiarum 446f.: πρὸς δὲ Ῥωμαίους ὅπλα κινῆσαι ἀπεδειλία, δεδιὼς καὶ φρίττων ἐκ μόνης τῆς φήμης τὰ τῶν προηγησαμένων τριῶν βασιλέων ἀνδραγαθήματα, Νικηφόρου, Ἰωάννου καὶ Βασιλείου, καὶ ὑποπτεύων τὴν αὐτὴν ἀρετὴν ἔτι καὶ δύναμιν προσεῖναι Ῥωμαίους.
94 The most detailed modern narrative reconstruction of the events is still Chalandon, Comnène 2,35-91 (campaigns in Asia Minor, against the Pechenegs, clashes with Hungary and the Serbs). For a much briefer survey, see Angold, Empire 181-190.
95 Michaël Italikos, Lettres et discours 222-224 (no. 37): Πρὸς τὸν μεγάλον δομέστικον, 228-230 (no. 39): Τῷ μεγάλῳ δομεστίκῳ (both pieces dated to 1137 or 1138 by the editor), esp. 223f.: ὀκνῶ γὰρ εἰπεῖν Βασιλείους τινὰς βασιλεῖς καὶ τὸ ἐν μάχαις περιβόητον Φωκᾶ γένος καὶ ὅσοι μετ' ἐκείνους γεγόνασι, 229: καὶ νῦν μὲν τὸν Ἴστρον διαβαίνετε … νῦν δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν Τίγρητα ποταμὸν ἐλαύνετε καὶ τοῦ δόρατος ὑμῶν τὴν ὀξύτητα Πάρθοις καὶ Μήδοις διαδείκνυσθε. See also Nikēphoros Basilakēs, Gli encomî 112, ll. 658-660 (πολλοῦ γὲ τοῦ χρόνου […] οὐκ οἶδεν Εὐφράτης Αὐσόνιον ἄνακτα, οὐ Ῥωμαϊκὴν ἵππον ἐδέξατο).

at the recipient's demand exposed geographical knowledge about the East[96], shows that the information derived from the ancient tradition about the deserts, towns, and provinces of Syria and Palestine was still present and at times reactivated in the worldview of Byzantine intellectuals. What is new in the Byzantine texts of this period is the fact that the nations traditionally associated with these regions, such as the Persians and the Arabs, now came to be intermingled with newly arrived Christian groups, such as the »barbarians of Roupenios«, i. e., the Armenians, or the »Syrian Celts«, i. e., the Franks of the Crusader States[97]. Given that only the first part of the expedition in Cilicia and Antioch delivered tangible results in terms of territorial gains and political advantages, the rhetoricians avoid drawing clear distinctions between the empire's adversaries, despite the fact that they widely differed with respect to their religion and cultural affinity to Byzantium. From their perspective, all enemies opposing the Byzantine army were more or less of the same nature. Religion did not play an important role either in explaining the emperor's incentives or in outlining his foes' behavior. The predominant idea providing an adequate explanatory model for the campaign is its historical contextualization with the struggles of Alexander the Great and Ancient Rome with the Arsacids, the tribes of Cilicia, the Phoenicians, the Medians, and the Persians[98]. Alexander's victory at Issus, for instance, prefigures John's successful arrival in the port of Alexandretta, where »he warded off the whole of Asia«[99]. John achieved his victory at the same place where the Persians for the first time tasted subjugation[100].

The two historians of John II's reign, John Kinnamos and Niketas Choniates, just like the court rhetoricians, promote the image of an exemplary ruler and military commander restlessly fighting at the head of his armies[101]. In contrast to Italikos and Basilakes, however, they give more detailed descriptions of the individual movements and military actions of the Byzantine troops. Striking is the lack of substantial information concerning the enemy and the political situation in the regions the Byzantine troops came to invade. There are only very few references to the political leaders in Syria, and the Muslims are usually referred to as »barbarians« and »enemies« (βάρβαροι, πολέμιοι) with their specific characteristics, such as »furious passion«, »wantonness«, and »arrogance«, or as collective ethnic entity like »the offspring of Agar« (τῶν ἐκ τῆς Ἄγαρ) and »Saracens« (Σαρακηνοί)[102]. This oversimplified and elusive image certainly has to do with the lack of communication with the rulers in Aleppo and other regions of Syria, which for many decades had been out of the reach of imperial policy. Apart from this, the Byzantines also lacked a clear ideological concept covering these operations. In contrast to the wars in Asia Minor, which are described as attempts to restore imperial authority in provinces which had always formed an intrinsic part of the Empire[103], the claims to the Muslim territories of Syria are much weaker and rooted, if at all, in a very remote historical past[104]. Religious connotations of an emperor fighting under divine protection and certain elements of Crusader ideology, which appear quite frequently with respect to the Anatolian campaigns, are less tangible here. Nikephoros Basilakes was the only author to create an explicit link between the emperor's physical presence in Syria and the idea of an ultimate mission leading to Jerusalem, thus invoking patterns of thought reminding us of a sort of a Crusader mentality[105]. What is actually highlighted by both the rhetoricians and the historians is the acquisition of sacred objects, above all a precious marble cross preserved in Šayzar, which was ascribed to the time of Constantine the Great and thus served as a symbol of victory concealing the failure of military operations[106].

The most detailed Muslim reports are transmitted in the Chronicle of Aleppo by Kamāl ad-Din ibn al-ʿAdīm and the *al-Kāmil fī l-tārīḫ* by Ibn al-Aṯīr[107]. Both texts are very accurate with respect to the military operations and written in support of the political program of ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī. He clearly

96 Michaēl Italikos, Lettres et discours 99-101 (no. 6): Θεοδώρῳ τῷ Προδρόμῳ (not datable, the extensive references to the geography of Asia Minor and Syria most probably have to be seen in connection with John II's campaigns of 1137/1138 or 1141/1143).

97 Michaēl Italikos, Lettres et discours 252, ll. 15f. (Κίλικας ἐθάμβεις, Κέλτους ἐφόβεις), 255, l. 10 (δοῦλοι Ῥουπενίου βάρβαροι), 259, ll. 12f. (τούτους τοὺς Κελτοὺς λέγω Σύρους), 267, l. 4 (Ἄραβας καὶ Κελτοὺς καὶ Ἀρμενίους καὶ Κίλικας). Nikēphoros Basilakēs, Gli encomî 91, ll. 52f. (μετὰ Κελτῶν καταβέβληται, μετὰ Περσῶν τεταπείνωται, μετὰ Κιλίκων δεδούλωται).

98 Michaēl Italikos, Lettres et discours 254, l. 1 (Γένος μὲν ἰσχυρότατον Ἀρσακίδαι), 257, l. 12 (Ἔνθα γὰρ δὴ πάλαι Δαρεῖον Ἀλέξανδρος ἐτροπώσατο), 259, ll. 6f. (Ἀλλ' ὦ βάρβαροι Πέρσαι καὶ Μῆδοι), 264, l. 1 (καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον ἐνταῦθα μιμῇ), 266, ll. 21f. (ἐθριάμβευσεν ἐπ' Ἀρμενίων νίκαις ποτὲ καὶ Πομπήϊος, ἀλλὰ Λούκουλλος ἐνίκα καὶ Πομπήιος ἐν ἑτέρων ἀγῶσιν ἐπόμπευε). Nikēphoros Basilakēs, Gli encomî 110, ll. 616f. (Σὺ μὲν Ἰσαύρους ἐστρόβεις, καὶ Παμφυλίαν ἐστρόβεις, καὶ Κίλικας συνεστρόβεις), 110, l. 621 (Ἀλέξανδρον μὲν οὖν Δαρεῖος ἐθάρρησε καὶ τὴν μάχην ἐτόλμησε).

99 Michaēl Italikos, Lettres et discours 257, ll. 12f. (Ἔνθα γὰρ δὴ πάλαι Δαρεῖον Ἀλέξανδρος ἐτροπώσατο καὶ τῷ τόπῳ δέδωκε τοὔνομα, ἐνταῦθα σὺ τὴν Ἀσίαν ὅλην ἀπέωσας).

100 Michaēl Italikos, Lettres et discours 257, ll. 17f. (ἐκεῖσε τρόπαια στήσας οὗ πρῶτον Πέρσαι δουλείας ἐγεύσαντο).

101 Iōannēs Kinnamos, Epitome 16-21; Nikētas Chōniatēs, Historia 21-31.

102 Iōannēs Kinnamos, Epitome 20, ll. 14f. (Σαρακηνοῖς εἰς χεῖρας ἦλθε). Nikētas Chōniatēs, Historia 27, ll. 8f. (παρ' Ἀγαρηνῶν κατεχομέναις Συροφοινίσσαις πόλεσι), 27, l. 14 (πρὸς πάθος μανικὸν καὶ φορὰν παράλογον τῶν βαρβάρων), 28, l. 21 (τῶν ἐκ τῆς Ἄγαρ καθεῖλε τὸ φρόνημα), 31, l. 11 (τύφῳ ἐμπλήκτῳ βαρβαρικῷ). In one passage (31, l. 9), Niketas mentions the troops τοῦ Ζακῆ and two renowned prisoners of war, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Ἀτάπακα καὶ ὁ τοῦ Σαμοὺχ Ἀμηρᾶ (31, l. 15).

103 Beihammer, Orthodoxy 15f., 33-36.

104 For the ideological substrate of these ideas, see the articles of H. Ahrweiler, J. Koder, and E. Chrysos in Chrysos, Oecumene 13-45, 59-78. Very indicative of the ideological nature is for instance Nikēphoros Basilakēs, Gli encomî 91, ll. 73f. (καὶ φθάνει μὲν ἀπὸ περάτων ἕως περάτων τῆς οἰκουμένης, φοβεῖ δὲ ὅλα ἔθνη μυρίανδρα).

105 Nikēphoros Basilakes, Gli encomî 99, ll. 285-291. For details, see Beihammer, Orthodoxy 26f.

106 Michaēl Italikos, Lettres et discours 264f. (Τὸ τοῦ σταυροῦ τρόπαιον κατὰ πᾶσαν ὑπεροχὴν ὑπερέβαλεν …). Nikēphoros Basilakēs, Gli encomî 115f., ll. 747-772. Iōannēs Kinnamos, Epitome 20 (… προσάγεται δὲ καὶ σταυρός, ἐξαίσιόν τι χρῆμα καὶ βασιλεῦσι δῶρον ἀντάξιον). Nikētas Chōniatēs, Historia 30f. (τόν τε ἐκ λίθου ἀκτινώδους σταυρόν).

107 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,17, 19-22, trans. Richards, Chronicle 337, 339-342 (sub anno 531 [29 September 1136 - 18 September 1138] and 532 [19 September 1137 - 7 September 1138]): »Account of the expedition of the king of the Romans from his land to Syria (*aš-Šām*)«, »Account of the arrival of the king of the Romans in Syria (*aš-Šām*), of his seizure of Buzāʿa and of what he did to the Muslims«. Ibn al-ʿAdīm, Zubda 454-459.

appears as the holder of supreme authority in Syria, who is officially recognized by both the Abbasid Caliph al-Muqtafī (1136-1160) and the Seljuk Sultan Masʿūd, gradually extending his sway towards Damascus and its environs, and successfully warding off the attacks of the Franks and the Byzantines.

An important aspect stressed by both authors is the element of surprise, which the Byzantine troops took advantage of in their sudden and unexpected campaign in Arab territories. The events in Cilicia and Antioch are said to have caused fear in the people in Aleppo, so that they began to repair the city walls. But in September 1137 the emperor entered into negotiations, dispatching an emissary to ʿImād ad-Dīn and pretending that the Byzantine campaign was directed against the Armenian lord Leo. In response, the Zankid ruler sent one of his own dignitaries along with gifts, most probably in order to continue the talks and reach an agreement[108]. All of a sudden (*baġtatan*), the imperial army crossed the border of the Emirate of Aleppo and on Easter Sunday, 4 April 1138, laid siege to the fortress of Buzāʿā[109].

The most crucial moment of this campaign was the siege of Šayzar, ruled at that time by Abū l-ʿAsākir Sulṭān (1098-1154), the head of the Munqiḏ clan, which since 1081 had held sway over this small, semi-independent principality between the Ǧabal Anṣarīya and the Orontes River[110]. As for the successful defense of the town, Ibn al-ʿAdīm refers to a strong relief force of Turkmen warriors under the command of the Artuqid ruler Qarā Arslan, son of Dāwūd, the lord of Khartpert and Ḥiṣn Kayfā[111], as the main reason for the emperor's withdrawal[112], while Ibn al-Aṯīr primarily stresses the decisive role of ʿImād ad-Dīn[113]. Though it is not possible to assess the historical accuracy with certainty, it seems that the latter version is a pro-Zengid account propagated in order to underscore ʿImād ad-Dīn's claims to political leadership in Syria. The main focus lies on the diplomatic skills of the *atabeg*, who is said to have initiated an exchange of letters with the Byzantine emperor and the Frankish rulers, thus trying to play them off against each other[114]. John II is called by his Frankish allies to reach a decision on fighting a pitched battle, something that the emperor allegedly rejected because of his fear of the *atabeg*'s numerically superior military forces[115]. Further messages were intended to raise suspicions between the emperor and the Frankish commanders by pointing out the Franks' lack of reliability, on the one hand, and the Byzantines' plans to gain control of all Crusader territories, on the other[116]. This detail is indirectly supported by William of Tyre, who also refers to a serious dispute between the emperor and his Frankish allies[117]. Given that the idea of bringing the Crusader principalities under imperial control actually was at that time one of the primary objectives of Komnenian foreign policy, the existence of letters written by ʿImād ad-Dīn with the intention of stirring up the conflict is highly probable.

Another aspect underlined by Ibn al-Aṯīr was ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī's attempt to confront the Byzantine threat with the aid of a broader transregional coalition of military forces. Outside Syria, the most important political power was the Abbasid Caliphate and Sultan Masʿūd. Hence, the *atabeg* sent the *qāḍī* Kamāl ad-Dīn Abū l-Faḍl aš-Šahrazūrī on an official mission to Baghdad, the details and results of which are partly transmitted in the sources in the emissary's own words[118]. The initial refusal of the sultan caused aš-Šahrazūrī and his companions to stage-manage a public show of despair triggering a popular riot in the Friday mosque. Masʿūd, fearing a further escalation of violence, was forced to comply with the emissary's request and dispatched troops to Syria:

»Thus he put one of his companions to go to the Palace Mosque (*Ǧāmiʿ al-Qaṣr*) on Friday accompanied by some people from the mob. He ordered him to create turmoil when the *ḫaṭīb* mounted the minbar and to shout along with the others: ›Woe for Islam, woe for the religion of Muḥammad‹, and to tear his clothes and to cast his turban from his head and to go to the palace of the sultan (*dār as-sulṭān*) while the people would shout for help together with him. And he

108 Ibn al-ʿAdīm, Zubda 454f.: »In this year the king of the Romans Kālyānī [= Kalogiannis, i.e., Emperor John II] arrived along with his troops from Constantinople. When he came to Antioch, the Franks resisted him – thanks to the benevolence of God, may he be exalted – and he stayed there until his ships arrived with the baggage, the provisions, and the money. Thereafter he attacked Lāwun b. Dūbāl, the lord of the frontier region (*ṣāḥib aṯ-ṯuġūr*), and achieved a great victory against him. The inhabitants of Aleppo became afraid of him and started to fortify the town and to dig trenches. But he [the emperor] returned to the land of Lāwun and conquered it all ... While returning from Antioch towards Baġrās on 22 Ḏū l-ḥiǧǧa of the year [5]31 [10 September 1137] he dispatched his emissary to Zankī … and the emissary came to Zankī, while he was traveling to al-Qibla. He sent him [the emissary] back to the king of the Romans along with gifts, namely leopards, falcons, and hawks, with the aid of the chamberlain (*al-ḥāǧib*) Ḥasan. Thereafter, he returned to him [Zankī] accompanied by an emissary from him [the emperor]. He informed him that he was attacking the land of Lāwun. Thus he [Zankī] set off for Ḥamāh«.

109 Ibn al-ʿAdīm, Zubda 456 (21 Raǧab 532).

110 Mouton, Shayzar 410.

111 Taeschner, Artuḳids 664.

112 Ibn al-ʿAdīm, Zubda 459: »They were informed that Qarā Arslaan b. Dāwūd b. Sukmān b. Artuq had crossed the Euphrates along with huge forces, which were more the 50,000 Turkmen and other warriors«.

113 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,19f., trans. Richards 340: »It was one of the best-fortified fortresses. They [the Byzantines] attacked it only because it did not belong to Zankī, for he had no great interest in guarding it … hence, they put it under siege, setting up eighteen trebuchets against it. The lord of the place sent a message to Zankī asking him for help«.

114 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,20, trans. Richards, Chronicle 340f.

115 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,20, trans. Richards, Chronicle 341: »[The emperor is addressing his Frankish allies:] Do you believe that he has not more troops than those that you see? He only wants you to attack him so that an uncountable number of reinforcements of Muslims will come to him«.

116 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,20, trans. Richards, Chronicle 341: »Zankī also sent messages to the king of the Romans, making him believe that the Franks of Syria (*Faranǧ aš-Šām*) were afraid of him. If he moved from his position, they would abandon him. He sent messages to the Franks of Syria, terrifying them of the king of the Romans and saying to them: If he seizes a single fortress in Syria, he will seize all your land«.

117 William of Tyre, Chronicon 15.1, 675.

118 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,20f., trans. Richards, Chronicle 341: »When the Franks were besieging Buzāʿa, Zankī sent the judge Kamāl ad-Dīn Abū l-Faḍl Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh b. al-Qāsim aš-Šahrazūrī to Sultan Masʿūd to ask him for help and to request troops. Thus the latter went to Baghdad and reported the situation to the sultan and explained to him the result of negligence and that between him and the Romans would be nothing if they took possession of Aleppo and descended along the Euphrates towards Baghdad«.

put another man to do the same in the mosque of the sultan. When the *ḫaṭīb* mounted the minbar, this man stood up, beat his head, threw off his turban and tore his clothes, while the others were shouting with him. The people began to cry and interrupted the prayer, cursed the sultan and left the mosque following the sheikh to the sultan's palace. There they found the people in the mosque of the sultan doing the same. The people surrounded the sultan's palace shouting for help and crying[119]«.

This is one of the earliest examples for the mobilization of military forces fuelled by the idea of a common enemy threatening Islam. It has to be seen in conjunction with the revival of the Muslim jihad ideology against the Franks which can first be detected in honorifics used in the funerary inscription of the Artuqid ruler Balak (m. 1124), in the Syrian monumental inscriptions of ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī, and eventually in historical accounts referring to the conquest of Edessa in 1144 as well as the siege of Damascus by the Second Crusade in 1148[120]. The 1137/1138 campaign coincided with the formative stage of this ideological re-orientation among the Turkish-Muslim elite in Syria, and it therefore comes as no surprise that the Byzantine emperor and his army were included among the Christian enemies of Islam. As has been shown above, the Byzantine imperial propaganda concerning this campaign also contained notions of Crusader ideology, referring to Jerusalem as the emperor's ultimate goal. It therefore becomes clear that at the time of this expedition the Byzantines and the Muslims of Syria underwent a parallel process of ideological infiltration emanating from the Crusader States, which, on the one hand, resulted in a partial adoption of conceptual features and, on the other, led to the crystallization of a counter-crusade attitude.

Another interesting aspect is the symbolic language used by the collaborators of aš-Šahrazūrī. Verbal and non-verbal gestures of despair expressing distress and fear in combination with symbolic acts of discontent directed against Sultan Maḥmūd served as a powerful means of influencing public opinion and create an appropriate atmosphere for the promotion of political demands. Despite the fact that for more than three decades the Muslim rulers in Syria were confronted with the threats emanating from the Frankish principalities in Palestine, Antioch, and Edessa, the authorities in the Muslim central lands seem to have been widely indifferent to the state of affairs in Syria. Muslim unity against Christians could not be taken for granted and had to be gradually implemented through the collaboration of the military and religious elites. The latter at times mobilized mobs of the urban populace in order to promote their demands and to bring pressure to bear on the supreme holders of sovereignty. In this way, ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī is propagated as the most powerful protector of Islam coordinating the resistance to the Byzantine invasion, which is conceived of as a part of a broader Christian-Muslim confrontation. Yet the accounts of both Ibn al-Aṯīr and Ibn ad-ʿAdīm still do not explicitly refer to specific elements of jihad ideology, nor do they make use of the usual binary juxtaposition of Muslims and infidels, as can be found, for example, in the accounts on the large-scale Seljuk attacks under the sultan's personal command against Byzantine territory and in the Muslim sources on the battle of Manzikert[121]. There was a clear tendency to frame the conflicts of the Great Seljuk sultans against the Byzantines and other Christian neighbors along the lines of jihad principles, thus projecting the image of exemplary rulers and champions of Islam. The new generation of local potentates, who replaced the Seljuk lineage of Tāǧ ad-Dawla Tutuš and the group of commanders established by Malikšāh and Barkyāruq in the main centers of Syria and Upper Mesopotamia, gradually embedded these ideas in their own discourses of self-representation while increasingly engaging in conflicts with the Crusader States. The fact that a campaign under the command of the Byzantine emperor was propagated at the caliphal court of Baghdad as a major threat to Islam requiring the unification of all available forces was an important step in this direction.

To sum up, the relations between Byzantium and the Muslim central lands between 1050 and 1138, although frequently overshadowed by the struggle for Asia Minor and the conflicts with the Crusader States, were still full of exciting changes and innovations reflecting the complex realities of the constellations emerging during that time in the Muslim World. Certainly, Byzantium no longer was a major player in the region, nor a protagonist of large-scale conquests, but Muslim elites still regarded it as the embodiment of Christian imperial rule and as a point of reference for Muslim universal ambitions. Hence, when the conflicts between the Fatimid Caliphate and the rising Seljuk Sultanate began to escalate, the emperor and the mosque of Constantinople became directly involved in the Sunni-Shiite antagonism. Simultaneously, the Abbasid court of Baghdad for some time regained its former significance as a destination of Byzantine embassies, constituting a second supportive authority for negotiations with the court of the Great Seljuk sultan. The predominance of the Seljuk Empire, the emergence of new Muslim principalities in Syria and Asia Minor, and the revival of Byzantine expansionist tendencies towards the east determined developments in the first half of the twelfth century. The last Byzantine campaign against Aleppo in early 1138 offered ample opportunities for the propagation of new concepts on both sides. While the emperor could once more be celebrated as a victorious military leader advancing with his troops as far as the banks of the Euphrates River, the *atabeg* ʿImād ad-Dīn Zankī was presented as the uncontested champion of Islam unifying all Muslims and fending off the common foe.

119 Ibn al-Aṯīr, Kāmil 7,20f., trans. Richards, Chronicle 341.
120 Hillenbrand, Crusades 108-117.
121 Hillenbrand, Turkish Myth, esp. 111-143.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Changing Strategies and Ideological Concepts in Byzantine-Arab Relations in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries

This essay concerns the effects which the rise and expansion of the Seljuk Empire had upon the diplomatic relations of the Byzantine Empire with the Islamic world. The first portion is primarily concerned with the situation in the 1050s, in which Byzantium reacted to the Seljuk incursions in the border region in Armenia and the Upper Euphrates by shifting its diplomatic emphasis from Fatimid Cairo to Abbasid Baghdad. Yet in the process it did not entirely heed Seljuk claims to supremacy and still sought to preserve a balance between the Fatimids and the Seljuks. The second portion examines the ideological aspects of the last Byzantine campaign in Syria, which Emperor John II undertook in the early part of 1138 and above all aimed at an expansion of Byzantine ascendancy over the Crusader states.

Sich verändernde Strategien und ideologische Konzepte in den byzantinisch-arabischen Beziehungen im 11. und 12. Jahrhundert

Dieser Beitrag behandelt die Auswirkungen, welche die Entstehung und Expansion des seldschukischen Reiches auf die diplomatischen Beziehungen des byzantinischen Reichs mit der islamischen Welt hatten. Der erste Teil widmet sich vornehmlich der Situation in den 1050er Jahren, in der Byzanz auf die seldschukischen Einfälle in die Grenzgebiete in Armenien und dem Oberen Euphrat mit einer Verlagerung seines diplomatischen Schwerpunkts vom fatimidischen Kairo ins abbasidische Bagdad reagierte, dabei jedoch den seldschukischen Vorherrschaftsansprüchen nicht gänzlich Folge leistete und weiterhin ein Gleichgewicht zwischen den Fatimiden und den Seldschuken zu wahren versuchte. Der zweite Teil untersucht ideologische Aspekte des letzten byzantinischen Syrienfeldzugs, den Kaiser Johannes II. im Frühjahr 1138 von Antiocheia aus unternahm und vor allem auf einen Ausbau der byzantinischen Vormachtstellung in den Kreuzfahrerstaaten abzielte.

Melkite Artists as Intermediaries

Mat Immerzeel

Painters, Patrons, and Patriarchs Byzantine Artists in the Latin and Islamic Middle East of the Thirteenth Century

Despite turbulent events in the thirteenth century, the Christian communities of the Middle East enjoyed a great cultural revival, which is notably marked by an impressive number of works of church art that have survived to this day. Itinerant Byzantine artists contributed substantially to the embellishment of their churches. To illustrate the range of their activities, a fascinating passage in the chronicle of Maphrian Bar Hebraeus, who as the second in rank after the patriarch of the Syrian Orthodox Church was in charge of the dioceses in Mesopotamia and Iran, furnishes extensive information on the wanderings of two artists, who travelled from Constantinople to Tabriz to decorate a church on behalf of Maria, the illegitimate daughter of Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos and wife of the Buddhist Mongol ruler Abaqa Khan. In Tabriz in 1282, the Maphrian became acquainted with the painters and used the opportunity to ask one of them to decorate the brand new church of the Monastery of St John Bar Naggare – near Bartelli in the vicinity of Mosul – on his way back home[1]. The murals no longer exist, but are said to have represented the chariot of Ezekiel surrounded by cherubim in the dome, that is, Christ Enthroned, prophets, four evangelists on the soffits of the arches and the Virgin flanked by Church fathers behind the altar[2].

Whereas this account perfectly accords with other textual sources on the life of Maria, the »Queen of the Mongols«, the historical circumstances of other thirteenth-century Byzantine murals and icons in the Middle East are less evident and therefore require further investigation. In an effort to fill these gaps in our knowledge, this study aims to reconstitute the contextual background of such artworks found in present-day Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. The analysis will first focus on the finds within the former Kingdom of Jerusalem (1091-1291), the County of Tripoli (1099-1289), and neighbouring Muslim Syria, before moving on to Cairo.

Byzantine or Byzantine-trained Artists?

Considering the complexity of medieval Christian art in the Eastern Mediterranean in the period under discussion, the definition of »Byzantine artists« used in this study requires some explanation. The most comprehensive interpretation of this term applies to painters, who followed stylistic models proper to Byzantine art. In this matter, the content of representations is an unreliable guideline, as typically Byzantine scenes could also be reproduced by other artists on the basis of shared iconographic traditions or available models. However, it should be emphasized that Byzantine artists did not by definition originate from territories under control of the Byzantine state. Given the rapid decline of the Empire in this era, they may also have been born and educated in relinquished regions where the deeply-rooted Byzantine cultural *koinē* continued. Well-known examples of such lost territories with a predominantly Byzantine Orthodox, Graecophone population and a persistent artistic tradition are Frankish Cyprus and Seljuk Cappadocia. As a matter of fact, the painters responsible for the artwork to be discussed may well have originated from any Byzantine cultural stronghold other than Constantinople. Accepting that it is not always possible to determine their exact origins, one has to be content with the observation that their *œuvre* gives proof of training in the best Byzantine artistic traditions, this in distinction from the stylistically and technically less complex works attributed to local masters[3]. In consequence, the application of »Byzantine artists« should first of all be understood as a synonym for »Byzantine-trained artists«.

In addition, it should be noted that the Byzantine Orthodox Church possessed one steady rock in the Middle East: the Monastery of St Catherine. Sizeable though the monastery's reputed collection of medieval icons may be, it displays

* This research was funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) and Leiden University. I would like to express my gratitude to Bas Snelders for his valuable suggestions and to Anneke de Laaf for her corrections to the English in this article.

1 Bar Hebraeus, Chronicum ecclesiasticum 3,462-466.
2 Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 27; Snelders, Christian-Muslim Interaction 250-253.
3 Waliszewski et al., Kaftun 306-313.



Fig. 1 Lebanon and Syria. – (Drawing M. Immerzeel).

too much diversity to seriously consider the existence of a long-lasting, consistent Sinaitic art production. In all probability, St Catherine's role was confined to hosting Byzantine craftsmen and collecting, or receiving, icons from other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean[4]. This is to say that the complex collection of Mount Sinai is not the principal objective of this research. Quite the opposite, in fact: by highlighting works of art in a well-defined context in other parts of the Eastern Mediterranean, it hopes to add a new dimension to the study of the variegated Sinaitic materials.

Lebanon and Western Syria

In 1211/1212 the German canon Wilbrand of Oldenburg travelled through the Holy Land as the envoy of the emperor Otto IV. Once in Beirut, the northernmost city of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, he had the opportunity to observe the newly-built palace of John of Ibelin, »the Old Lord of Beirut«, at that time the kingdom's regent. Overwhelmed by its sumptuous decoration, he left an appreciative description of the many works of art, in particular the paintings on the ceilings, mosaics on the floor and a marble fountain in the courtyard, and was no less surprised by the variegated team of craftsmen in charge of the embellishment of the complex: »Syrians, Muslims and Greeks boast of their virtuosity in this art and compete with each other in producing such delightful work«[5]. Clearly, the artistic competition between indigenous Christians, Muslims, and Greek-speaking artisans from abroad fascinated him.

The involvement of Byzantine painters in the decoration of churches within Frankish territory was not a new phenomenon. Outstanding instances of twelfth-century Byzantine murals in the Kingdom of Jerusalem are those in the Hospi-

4 Panayotidi, Icons and Frescoes.

5 Wilbrand de Oldenborg, Peregrinatio 167: *In quibus omnibus Suriani, Sarraceni et Greci in magistralibus suis artibus quadam delectabili operis altercatione gloriantur*. Folda, Crusader Art 136f.



Fig. 2 Life of St Marina; Cave Church of St Marina, Qalamun. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

taller Church of St Jeremiah in Abu Gosh[6] and in a Melkite church at Ascalon, which was decorated between 1153 and 1187[7]. Taking the fall of Latin strongholds such as Jerusalem and Ascalon in that year as a turning point, our main interests concern the aftermath of this – in Crusaders' eyes – dramatic turn of events. The building of the Ibelin Palace concluded the reconstruction of Beirut in the wake of turbulent events that redrew the map of the Eastern Mediterranean[8]. First, the conquest of Cairo in 1169 by Turkish and Kurdish troops brought an end to Fatimid hegemony and paved the way for Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn, the founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. In 1187, the new sultan saw his efforts to push back Latin influence crowned with the capture of Jerusalem and coastal cities such as Beirut, leaving freshly-arrived Crusader reinforcements no other choice but to divert to Cyprus and lay claim to the island in 1191. Encouraged by this questionable victory, the Franks made up lost ground in the coastal strip of the Holy Land and present-day Lebanon in 1197 and finally took Constantinople in 1204. In that year, the Ayyubids and Latins agreed upon a truce which more or less ended the hostilities in the Middle East and ushered in well over half-a-century of relative peace and cultural flourishing in the region[9].

It must have been around 1200 that Byzantine artists arrived in the Tripoli area. The stylistic affinities of the murals they left behind with Cypriot wall paintings – in particular those in the Enkleistra of St Neophytos (1183) near Paphos and the Church of the Panagia tou Arakou at Lagoudera (1192) – allow us to specify that these painters must have originated from Cyprus. The trace of one of these itinerant masters can be picked up in two sanctuaries between Tripoli and Batrūn. Although poorly preserved, the second layer of paintings in a cavity near the village of Qalamūn, situated at a short distance from the main road from Tripoli to the South and the Cistercian Abbey of Belmont (Balamand), constitutes a telling instance of high-quality Byzantine brushwork from the final decades of the twelfth century or slightly later (**figs 1-2**)[10]. Tradition has it that the cave was the birthplace of St Marina the Monk. Initially decorated in the twelfth century with the Annunciation, the Deesis, St Demetrios on horseback and, remarkably, St Marina of Antioch, all

6 Kühnel, Wall Painting 177-182.
7 Peers, Ascalon.
8 Pringle, Kingdom 111.
9 Runciman, A History 3-131.
10 Cruikshank Dodd, Lebanon 292-296 pls LXXX-LXV, 16.1-14; Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 82-86 fig. 10, pl. 49.



Fig. 3 Dormition, detail; Church of St Sabas, Eddé al-Batrūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

with Greek inscriptions, the Byzantine master covered St Demetrios with scenes from the life of St Marina the Monk. By doing so, he contributed to the »Latinizing« of the site, which follows from the application of explicatory Latin inscriptions to all representations. Where these additions give proof of the Frankish identity of his patrons, striking painterly analogies with a fragmented Dormition scene in the Maronite Church of St Sabas (Mār Sābā) in Eddé al-Batrūn, a village situated near Batrūn, suggest that the artist also took assignments from indigenous Christians (**fig. 3**)[11]. Built in the second half of the twelfth century, the interior of this Romanesque church was embellished on several occasions (see below). The surviving elements of the Dormition, which in line with Maronite customs is provided with Syriac inscriptions, clearly show that the delicately-rendered persons fit neatly into the late Komnenian stylistic tradition of that time.

That Byzantine-trained artists also extended their activities on behalf of the Maronites to remote areas, follows from the murals in Dayr Ṣalīb, or the Monastery of the Cross, a ruined monastic site in the Qadisha Valley[12]. Despite the fragmentary state of the paintings, which, once again, are inscribed in Syriac, one recognizes late Komnenian brushwork of high quality. Among the represented saints in the central apse are the Prophet Daniel, John Chrysostom, John the Evangelist, Bartholomew, Paul and probably Stephen. The paintings in the southern nave include the Annunciation, a Maria *Platitera*, or *Blachernitissa*, and St Salomone. One painter ventured as far as the Qalamūn, a Muslim-ruled territory across Mount Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley with a predominantly Christian population. Here, he decorated the Chapel of the Prophet Elijah (Mār Elias) near Maʿarrat Ṣaydnāyā, a monastic cave complex at a short distance from the reputed Melkite Monastery of Our Lady of Ṣaydnāyā[13]. Now very deteriorated, one can still recognize saints such as Demetrios, George and Nicholas, the Virgin Enthroned with Child (**fig. 4**) and the Virgin and concelebrating prelates carrying scrolls and converging on the centre of the apse[14]. In this case, too, the evident stylistic and iconographic links with Cypriot art point to an insular origin for this master.

As far as the decoration of Melkite churches on Lebanese soil is concerned, the first layer of paintings in the Church of St Phokas (Mār Fawqa) in Amyūn to the southeast of Tripoli substantiates further suspicions of tight affiliations between the Syrian mainland and Latin Cyprus[15]. The scenes include

11 Cruikshank Dodd, Lebanon 281f. pls LVI-LVIII, 15.3-9; Hélou, Saint Saba; Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 110.
12 Cruikshank Dodd, Lebanon 250-261 pls XXXVIII-XLV, 12.1-17; Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 118f. pls 100-102.
13 Immerzeel, Saydnaya; idem, Identity Puzzles 49-56 pls 14-17.
14 Immerzeel, Prophet Elijah; idem, Identity Puzzles 49-56 figs 4-5, pls 14-17.
15 Cruikshank Dodd, Lebanon 159-163 pls I-X, 1.4-1.26; Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 89.



Fig. 4 Virgin with Child; Cave Chapel of Mar Elias, Maʿarrat Ṣaydnāyā. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 5 St Philip with the donor Philip; Church of St Phokas, Amyūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

the Anastasis in the apse with the Twelve Apostles in the lower zone, St Simeon Stylites and St Philip in the company of a supplicant and paintings on the piers of the Virgin, Christ and several saints. Conspicuous in the matter of possible Cypriot connections is the *ex voto* image of St Philip, which on account of its style recalls the paintings of the Enkleistra of St Neophytos and Lagoudera (**fig. 5**). He is accompanied by a homonymous donor, who, judging from his bareheaded and beardless appearance, must have been a Frank who apparently wished to be eternalized while supplicating his patron saint. Significantly, the precise formulation of the text (Π[ ]ΤΥ Δ[ΟΥΛ]ΟΥ ΘΩ / ΦΗΛΗΠΟΥ; »The servant of God, Philip«) was introduced in Cyprus in the late twelfth century. Moreover, the supplicant's attire parallels the vestments worn by both Greek and Latin donors in later Cypriot murals, such as the bearded Cypriot John Moutoullas in the Church of the Panagia at Moutoullas (1280) and a beardless donor in the Church of the Transfiguration in Sotera near Famagusta[16]. As to the identity of the supplicant in Amyūn, Erica Cruikshank Dodd suggests that he is none other than Philip of Ibelin (ca. 1180-1227/1228), the steward of Cyprus and brother of John, the »Old Lord of Beirut«[17]. Her hypothesis merits serious consideration. As the sons of Balian of Ibelin and the Byzantine princess Maria Komnene, the brothers were influential protagonists in the Latin states in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. The fact that Philip played a major role in defending the interests of the Byzantine Orthodox Church in Cyprus in the face of Latin pressure, which should probably be regarded in relation to his own half-Greek descent[18], makes him a likely candidate to be represented in the Church of St Phokas.

Recent finds clarify that Byzantine-trained artists continued to work on behalf of various clients in the mountainous area to the east of Batrūn at least until the launch of large-scale Mamluk attacks on the Latin states from the 1260s, which would ultimately end with the fall of Tripoli in 1289 and of Acre in 1291. Crucial in this matter is the art of the Greek Orthodox Monastery of Our Lady at Kaftūn, to the

16 Snelders/Immerzeel, From Cyprus 83; Mouriki, Moutoullas 181 f. fig. 10; Stylianou/Stylianou, Painted Churches 323-325 fig. 192; Sotera: Weyl Carr, Perspectives 90 fig. 4.

17 Cruikshank Dodd, Christian Arab Painters 259; Snelders/Immerzeel, From Cyprus 87.

18 Rudt de Collenberg, Les Ibelin 203; Runciman, A History 179 f.



Fig. 6 Communion of the Apostles, Church of Sts Sergios and Bakchos, Kaftūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 7 Deesis-Vision, Church of Sts Sergios and Bakchos, Kaftūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

southeast of Tripoli, which is comprised of murals in the nearby Church of Saints Sergios and Bakchos and a large bifacial icon in the monastery's chapel[19]. It seems that the embellishment of the church was entrusted to two artists. The first master worked in a Byzantine style and decorated the upper levels of the nave, showing amongst others the Communion of the Apostles, with Syriac inscriptions (**fig. 6**). Because of their somewhat diverging style, the second series of murals, which includes the Deesis-Vision in the apse (**fig. 7**), the Annunciation on the triumphal arch and monastic and military saints on the piers, all with Greek and/or Syriac inscriptions, can be attributed to the second artist. Remarkably, this master's painterly approach displays affiliations with both the oeuvre of local artists in the area from around the middle of the thirteenth century and contemporary Cypriot art[20]. At the same time, his hand is also recognized in the icon of Kaftūn, showing the upper body of the Virgin *Hodēgētria* on its front, and the Baptism of Christ, with Greek, Syriac and Arabic inscriptions, on its back (**figs 8-9**). The murals appear to be crucial in the confirmation of earlier suspicions of common craftsmanship for this piece and some of the icons in the Monastery of Saint Catherine. The most prominent specimen of this series is a large double-sided icon with the Virgin *Hodēgētria* (obverse) and St Sergios carrying a red-crossed white banner and St Bakchos on horseback (reverse). Earlier studies label this specimen as an outstanding example of Crusader art[21], however, the detailed formal similarities with Kaftūn's second series of wall paintings and icon indicate that it was painted by the second master. Although it cannot be ruled out entirely that he was active in different locations in the Middle East, one cannot escape the impression that this piece originates from Kaftūn, if only because of the emphatic presence of the patron saints of the church near the Monastery of the Virgin.

The recent discovery of murals in the Chapel of Sayyida Ḫarāyib (»Our Lady of the Ruins«) in Kfar Ḥildā, situated about 7 km to the east of the Monastery of the Virgin, testifies to further activities of the »School of Kaftūn« in the area[22]. As in the Church of Sts Sergios and Bakchos, the conch of the apse displays the Deesis-Vision, which on stylistic grounds can be attributed to the second master, but is much better preserved than its counterpart in Kaftūn (**fig. 10**). The nave's fragmented decoration consists of a tonsured St Dometios on the north wall and a partly preserved Nativity scene opposite him, and judging from the stylistic aspects recalls the Baptism on the icon of Kaftūn (**fig. 11**). My preliminary observations support the presumption that members of

19 For the art of Kaftūn, see Hélou, Icône bilatérale; eadem, École syro-libanaise; eadem, Les fresques; Immerzeel, Icon Painting; idem, Identity Puzzles 94-99, 125-142; Waliszewski et al., Kaftun.
20 Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 132 f.; Snelders/Immerzeel, From Cyprus.
21 Folda, Crusader Art 338-342 figs 197 f.
22 Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 99, pls 62 f.; Chmielewski / Morzycki-Markowski, Wall Paintings; Hélou, Saydet el-Kharayeb; Nordiguian, Note; Waliszewski et al., Kaftun 311 f. pls. 25 f.



Fig. 8 Icon: Virgin with Child; Monastery of Our Lady, Kaftūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 9 Icon: Baptism; Monastery of Our Lady, Kaftūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 10 Deesis-Vision; Church of Our Lady of the Ruins, Kfar Ḥildā. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 11 Nativity, detail; Church of Our Lady of the Ruins, Kfar Ḥildā. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

this team also took up the decoration of the aforementioned Maronite Church of St Sabas in Eddé al-Batrūn. The style and painterly approach characteristic of the »atelier« return in a fragmentary Crucifixion (**fig. 12**) and St Mamas riding a lion. Significant for the close ties between Maronites, Franks and Byzantine-trained artists is the clean-shaven appearance of the donor near St Mamas, which identifies him as a Frank[23]. While the Romanesque architecture of the church already raises suspicions of a certain Frankish interest in this building, it should also be noted that it is situated a few kilometres from the Crusader stronghold of Smār Ǧbayl (Smar Jbeil), which remains as yet unexplored.

A lead for the dating of the frescoes in St Sabas, and by extension possibly also for the oeuvre of the »School of Kaftūn« as a whole, is the reference of the Maronite patriarch Isṭifānūs ad-Duwayḥī (1670-1704) to a now vanished Syriac inscription from 1573 AG in this church, corresponding to 1261/1262 AD[24]. While excluding the possibility that the inscription was related to the cogently earlier Dormition scene in St Sabas, it perfectly corroborates the estimated age of the murals of Kaftūn, Kfar Ḥildā and related icons: all would have been painted in the second or third quarter of the thirteenth century.

Egypt

While periodic discoveries in Lebanon and Syria may continue to astonish scholars, there are no less fascinating works of art available for further research in Egypt, in particular in Cairo. This study does not pretend to provide full documentation of the dozens of late Byzantine and post-Byzantine icons in various Egyptian churches, monasteries and museums. Devoid of any appealing context or mutual coherence, these pieces can only speak for themselves: in fact, they could have arrived at any given moment in the places where they are presently kept[25]. Because of these limitations, the focus will be on the activities of thirteenth-century Byzantine-trained painters in the very heart of the Coptic Church, namely the papal churches of Old Cairo, or Miṣr: the Church of al-Muʿallaqa and that of St Merkourios, better known as Dāyr Abū Sayfayn, to the north of Old Cairo. Both churches would alternately house Coptic patriarchs depending on their personal preferences, from about 1100 until the transfer of the See to the Ḥārat Zuwayla quarter within the walls of Fatimid al-Qāhira in the early fourteenth century. The Egyptian context differs from Lebanon and Syria in the unique opportunity to accurately reconstruct the contextual background on the basis of historical sources.



Fig. 12 Crucifixion; Church of St Sabas, Eddé al-Batrūn. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

The Church of al-Muʿallaqa

Erected on the remains of the Roman fortress of Babylon, the Church of the Virgin, better known as al-Muʿallaqa (»the Hanging Church«), was the stage for official events – including patriarchal elections, consecrations and burials, synods and the preparation of the holy chrism – from 1047. To accommodate the popes, a cell was furnished on the upper floor of the »Little Chapel« (an annex built over the south gate of the antique fortification; **fig. 13**) during the primacy of Patriarch Michael IV (1092-1102)[26].

When entering the Little Chapel, the visitor's gaze is immediately caught by the monumental wall paintings and a sanctuary screen with two small, rectangular icons (**figs 13-14**). The embellishment is concentrated in the two chapels at the eastern side: the sanctuary presently dedicated to the Ethiopian saint Takla Haymanot (left) and the Baptismal Chapel (right). Starting with the first, two gilded icons representing

23 Snelders/Immerzeel, From Cyprus.

24 Cruikshank Dodd, Lebanon 17; Hélou, Saint Saba 400; Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 109 f. In any case, ad-Duwayḥī discusses the inscription in the context of events that took place in 1264.

25 Other thirteenth-century icons in Egypt represent the Virgin Enthroned (Church of St Barbara, Old Cairo; Skalova, Icon Painting 176-179 no. 8); St Sergius and Bakchos (obverse), St George (?; reverse; Coptic Museum, but originating from Dayr as-Suryān), the Crucifixion (Dayr as-Suryān; Immerzeel, Identity Puzzles 32 f. pl. 5). See also Skalova, Icon Painting 96-119.

26 Coquin, Vieux-Caire 69-73; van Loon, Old Cairo 80.

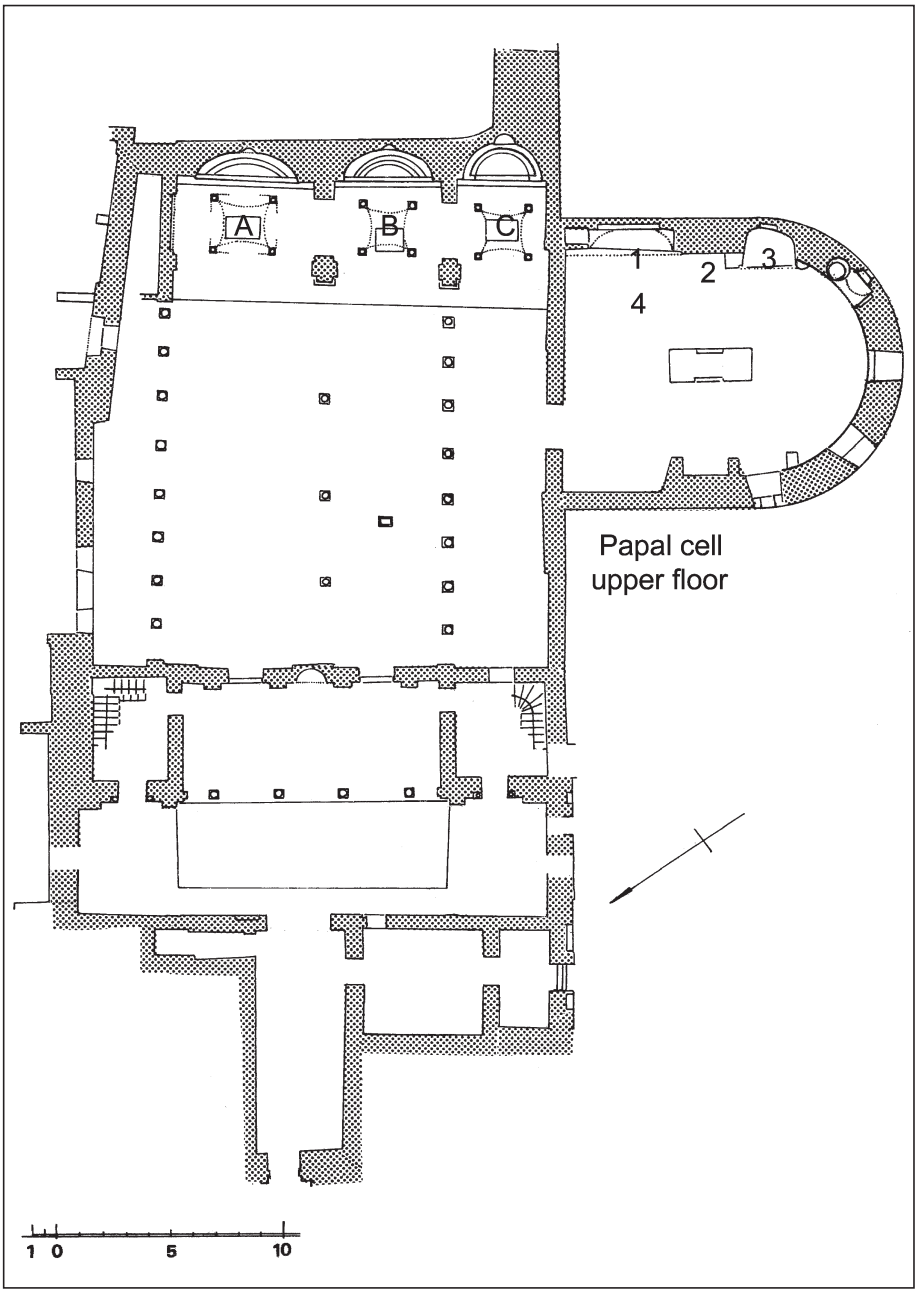

Fig. 13 Church of al-Muʿallaqa. – (After Alcock/Gabra, Cairo fig. 10).

the Annunciation and Nativity are placed in the entablature of the fourteenth-century sanctuary screen and are fully Byzantine in style[27]. No less fascinating is the huge fragmentary representation of the standing Virgin *Blachernitissa* between two archangels in the chapel's straight-backed niche (**figs 14-15**)[28]. A wooden beam with a monumental Coptic inscription separates this scene from the Twenty-Four Elders of the Apocalypse in the lower zone. In twelve medallions on the niche's wooden frame the busts of saints, perhaps the apostles, are featured. The best-preserved mural is located on the wall between the chapels and shows the Nativity (**fig. 13, no. 2**). Inside the apse of the Baptismal Chapel, one recognizes the remains of a row of prelates, probably patriarchs, and in the lower zone an archangel and the Presentation in the Temple[29]. Whereas the stylistic features of the Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple and the portraits on the wooden frame typify these paintings as exponents of Coptic painting from the second half of the twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth century, the Blachernitissa mural exudes an entirely different artistic atmosphere. Not only does this scene have no parallels in the Coptic artistic tradition, its Byzantine craftsmanship comes to the full in the voluminous and dynamic appearance of the Virgin and the dark-winged archangels at her side. Their garments are highlighted with

27 Hunt, Iconic and Aniconic 62-68 figs 1-11; Jeudy, Masterpieces 129 f.
28 Hunt, Artistic Interchange 64 f. figs 15a-b.29 Van Loon, Old Cairo, pl. on 93.
29 Van Loon, Old Cairo, pl. on 93.

Fig. 14 Little Chapel; Church of al-Muʿallaqa, Old Cairo. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).





Fig. 15 Virgin *Blachernitissa*; Church of al-Muʿallaqa, Old Cairo. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 16 Canopy: Christ *Pantokratōr*; Church of al-Muʿallaqa, Old Cairo. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).



Fig. 17 Canopy: Archangel; Church of al-Muʿallaqa, Old Cairo. – (Photo A. Jeudy).

great delicacy. Unfortunately, only part of the Virgin's face remains and those of the angels are lost entirely.

The commitment of Byzantine artists to the refurbishing of al-Muʿallaqa is further substantiated by the richly embellished and gilded canopies in each of the three altar rooms of the main church, which are hidden from view behind the sanctuary screens and remain to be documented in full (**figs 16-17**)[30]. Despite minor mutual iconographic differences, the interior of the domes shows the bust of Christ in a mandorla with the Four Creatures, carried by four archangels. In particular, the dynamism and highlighting of the archangels parallels the rendering of those flanking the Virgin *Blachernitissa*. Owing to their bright colours and classicising stylistic tendencies, the figures of Christ and the archangels resemble the murals in the Chapel of St James in St Catherine's and the monastery's refectory from the third quarter of the thirteenth century[31] and contemporary Sinaitic icons[32]. Further afield, the same classicising formal language also comes to expression in the murals of the Church of Hagia Sophia in Trebizond (Trabzon) from about 1255-1260[33]. Since the canopy paintings and the Virgin *Blachernitissa* stylistically branch to these works, a provisional dating to around the third quarter of the thirteenth century is acceptable.

30 Gabra et al., Churches of Egypt, pls on 112 f.; Jeudy, Icônes et ciboria 82-86 pls 17-20; van Loon, Old Cairo, pls on 89.
31 Panayotidi, Icons and Frescoes 93-97; Parpulov, Mural and Icon Painting 344 f. fig. 978, pl. XIX.
32 Folda, Crusader Art 324-331.
33 Caillet/Joubert, Trebizonde.



Fig. 18 Icon: The Twenty-Four Elders; Church of St Merkourios. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

The Church of St Merkourios

Designated for patriarchal use in the 1070s, the Church of St Merkourios entered Coptic history as the alternative papal accommodation and the stage of consecrations and burials of Church leaders[34]. Probably from the late eleventh century onwards, the upper floor of the church served as the papal compound.

St Merkourios preserves a particularly interesting collection of common icons and huge specimens meant to be placed on top of sanctuary screens from the second half of the thirteenth century. Like the aforementioned works of art in al-Muʿallaqa, these pieces can be attributed to artists trained in Byzantine ateliers but contracted by Coptic patrons. In the following, I will briefly describe these pieces and some related icons in other locations and subsequently dedicate a few lines to the group as a whole.

1. Icon: St Philip converting the Eunuch of the Candace of Abyssinia[35]

The evangelist stands to the right and turns to the dark-complexioned eunuch, who is seated on a chariot between two ditto servants to the left. The eunuch holds an opened book inscribed in Arabic (Isaiah 53:7: »He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter«).



Fig. 19 Screen icon: St Simon; Church of St Merkourios. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

34 Coquin, Vieux-Caire 21-23.
35 85 × 78 × 1 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 194 f. no. 14.



Fig. 20 Screen icon: Nativity and Entry into Jerusalem; Church of St Merkourios. – (Photo H. Hondelink).

2. Icon: The Twenty-Four Elders (fig. 18)[36]

The Twenty-Four Elders of the Apocalypse are arranged standing in two rows while holding an incense box and swinging a censer (inscription: Ο ΗΕΡΟΙΣΗ ΚΔ). Owing to their style and orientation, the Elders recall the identical representation in the zone below the Virgin *Blachernitissa* in al-Muʿallaqa (**fig. 14**).

3. Icon: St Merkourios[37]

This huge *Vita* icon is composed of a central representation of St Merkourios framed with scenes from his life. The central image was entirely repainted in the early eighteenth century.

36 73 × 106 × 1 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 190 f. no. 12.

37 140 × 104 × 2 cm; van Loon, Old Cairo pl. on 185; Skalova, Icon Painting 188 f. no. 11.



Fig. 21 Screen icon: Patriarchs; Church of St Merkourios. – (Photo H. Hondelink).

4. Screen icon: Apostles (fig. 19)[38]

This specimen constitutes the lower part of a larger screen icon, which quite possibly represented the Twelve Apostles. Depicted are the busts of the Apostles Thomas, Bartholomew, Simon, Andrew, James, Philip and a figure whose name is now lost.

5. Screen icon: Festal cycle (fig. 20)[39]

Displayed are ten festal scenes provided with Greek inscriptions, the Arabic translation of which is written on the frame: the Annunciation, the Nativity, Christ Pantokrator, the Presentation in the Temple, the Baptism (top), the Transfiguration, the Entry into Jerusalem, the Ascension, Pentecost and the Dormition of the Virgin (bottom).

6. Screen icon: mounted martyr saints[40]

Being originally much larger, the screen icon was sawn into sections at some point and reassembled at random with the omission of the apparently damaged parts. Its present assemblage shows six equestrian saints who are placed within a protruding arcade, from the left to the right: Sts Philotheos, Victor, Menas, Theodore Stratelates killing the Dragon, George rescuing the Youth and Isaac of Tiphre. The busts in the spandrels depict Christ, two angels and the kings David and Solomon, with Arabic Bible quotations on their scrolls. In reconstruction, the section with the juxtaposed Sts George and Theodore, with Christ in the spandrel between them, took the centre of the composition. In view of the emphatic position of these two warrior saints, this piece would have been placed on a sanctuary screen in the Church of St George in the patriarchal compound on the upper floor.

7. Screen icon: the Virgin between prelates and monks (fig. 21)[41]

Regarding craftsmanship, similarly-shaped protruding arcades (43 cm in height) and spandrel figures holding scrolls inscribed in Arabic connect this screen icon to the previous one. Represented are the Virgin Enthroned between two archangels, flanked to the left by three groups of three prelates and an equal number of monastic saints to the right. Most of the saints' names are retrieved from the original Greek inscriptions near their heads. Modern Arabic inscriptions on the frame do not entirely fill the gaps as their reliability leaves much to be desired [mentioned between brackets]. Starting with the prelates, those in the left-most niche are Ignatios of Antioch, [Nicholas] and [John the Merciful]. The second niche contains the patriarchs Cyril, Athanasios and Peter the Last Martyr, and the third Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzos and John Chrysostom. Directly to the right of the central Virgin between two archangels we find the monastic saints Paul,

38 35.3-35.8 × 181 × 1 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 192 f. no. 13.
39 73 × 190 × 3.2 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 198 f. no. 16.
40 43 × 165 × 2.5 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 184-186 no. 10.
41 43 × 252 × 2.5 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 180-183 no. 9.

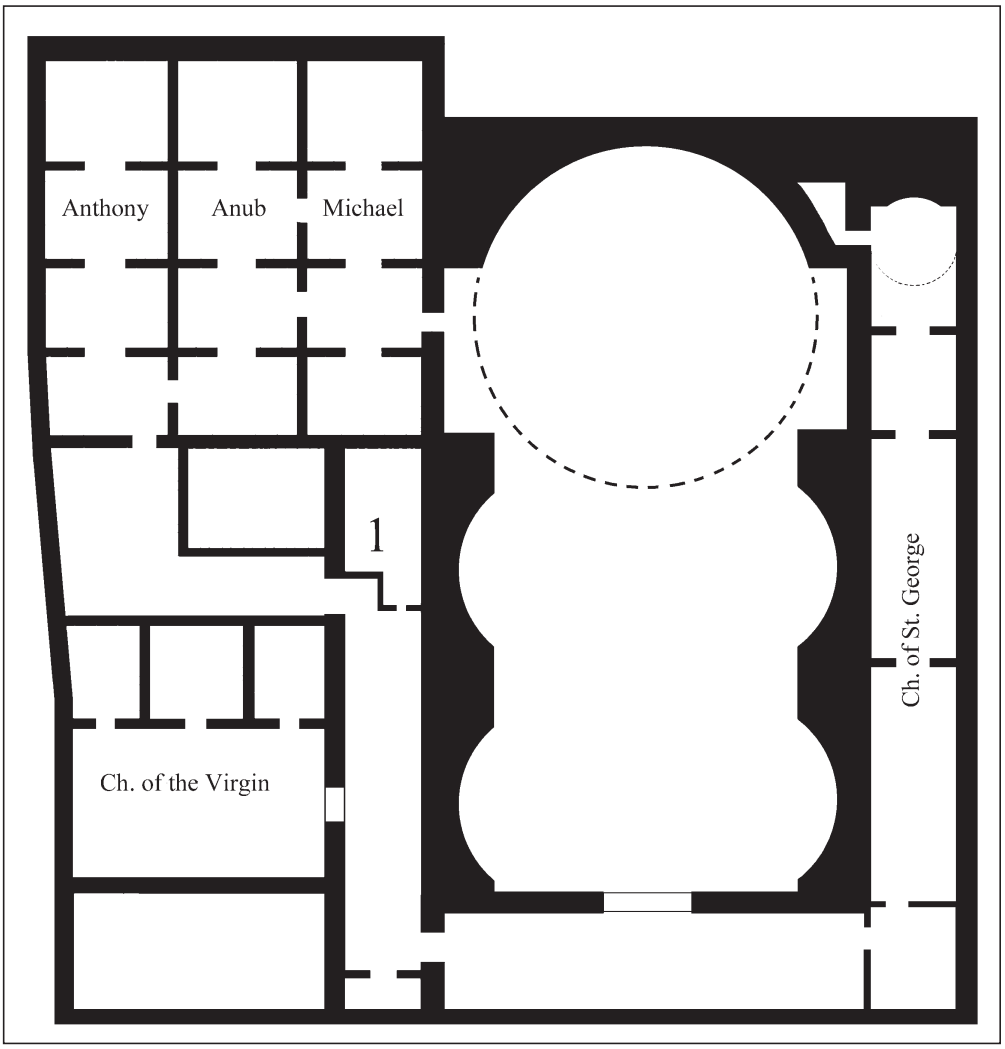

Fig. 22 Upper level of the Church of St Merkourios. – (After Butler, Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt 1 fig. 7).

Antony and Pachomios, followed by the three saints Makarios and finally [Shenute], [Arsenios] and [Ephraim]. The spandrels are filled with Old Testament figures (Gideon, Ezekiel, King David and King Solomon) and four angels. Given the central position of the Virgin, this piece may have originated from the church dedicated to her on the upper floor of St Merkourios (**fig. 22**; see below).

8. Icons from Great Deesis sets in the Wādī an-Naṭrūn[42]

Five icons that originally formed part of a Great Deesis set are presently kept in the monasteries of the Wādī an-Naṭrūn, between Cairo and Alexandria. The preserved panels represent Sts Mark, Matthew and Paul, and the Archangel Gabriel (in the Monastery of St Makarios) and St John the Evangelist (in the Monastery of St Bishoy; **fig. 23**). Zuzana Skalova believes them to originate from the Church of St Merkourios, where they would have been incorporated within the entablature of the central sanctuary screen and been replaced in 1751/1752 with a new Great Deesis set of eleven icons of the same dimensions. Given their size and close stylistic affinities with some of the icons in St Merkourios, one can only agree with her suggestion[43]. In addition, the artist(s) responsible for this set produced at least one more Great Deesis of different dimensions, of which a poorly preserved icon of St John the Baptist in the Monastery of the Syrians (Dayr as-Suryān) is the only survivor. The corresponding piece of the supplicating Virgin was also kept in this monastery, but perished in a fire[44].

9. Screen icon: Festal cycle; Church of the Holy Virgin, Ḥārat Zuwayla[45]

Depicted are the Annunciation, Nativity, Baptism of Christ, Entry into Jerusalem, Anastasis, Ascension and Pentecost. All scenes are placed within a shallow protruding arcade, the spandrels of which are filled with medallions containing the busts of King David and the Prophets Zechariah, Zephaniah, Zechariah (as a young man) and Joel. In contrast to their

42 89 × 55 × 4 cm; Skalova, Icon Painting 108-112, ills 37a-e; eadem, Indigo.

43 Skalova, Great Deesis; eadem, Icon Painting 108 f. ill. 34.

44 Skalova, Icon Painting 174 f. nos 6 (Virgin) and 7 (St John).

45 55 × 305 × 2 cm; Skalova, Traced by Incense; eadem, Icon Painting 200-207 no. 17. See also Gabra et al., Churches of Egypt pl. on 136 f.

names and the titles of the scenes, which are all inscribed in Greek, the inscriptions on the scrolls held by these figures are in Arabic and comprise Old Testament quotations alluding to the New Testament events below. Bearing in mind that the patriarchate was transferred to Ḥārat Zuwayla in the early fourteenth century (see below), the icon may have been brought on this occasion from St Merkourios or al-Muʿallaqa.

Indications for the Byzantine craftsmanship of these icons follow from the brushwork, style, several iconographic features and the application of Greek inscriptions. Believed to be painted on a support of local sycamore wood, these works of art must have been made on Egyptian soil rather than imported[46]. Additional evidence for a production on behalf of a Coptic clientele is the application of Arabic inscriptions and unambiguous Coptic themes. Since the Eunuch of the Candace was believed to be an Ethiopian (Acts 8:27), the icon displaying his conversion evidently alludes to the leading position of the Coptic Patriarchate in Ethiopia and perhaps also to the Church of St Merkourios as the burial place of metropolitans who served in this country (no. 1)[47]. In the Coptic tradition, the theme of the Twenty-Four Elders was related to the liturgy and the visionary appearance of Christ and, as a consequence, it is featured in altar rooms (no. 2)[48]. Furthermore, the two large screen icons (nos 6 and 7) include genuine Egyptian saints, such as Philotheos, Victor, Menas and Isaac of Tiphre, the Alexandrine patriarchs Athanasios, Cyril and Peter, and the monastic saints Paul, Anthony and Pachomios. In all innocence, the painter of these pieces betrayed his Byzantine background through two crucial »mistakes« in the icon showing the Virgin, prelates and monks. Some of the prelates are dressed with a *polystaurion*, i. e. a *phelonion* covered with crosses, the wearing of which was a prerogative of Byzantine Orthodox patriarchs to distinguish them from common bishops[49]. In contrast, this garment was never part of the wardrobe of Coptic prelates and accordingly, it does not occur in Coptic iconography. Furthermore, »John the Merciful« is the odd man in the company of Alexandrine bishops. Identified as the seventh-century pro-Chalcedonian patriarch John V of Alexandria, who originated from Cyprus and enjoyed wide veneration as John the Almsgiver, he was never recognized by the Miaphysite Coptic Church.

Limiting the analysis to the individual pieces, stylistic coherences and differences allow for the subdivision of these icons into three main groups. The first group includes the two icons in the Little Chapel in al-Muʿallaqa, the icon with the Twenty-Four Elders (no. 2), the screen icon with the apostles (no. 4), the festal icons in St Merkourios and Ḥārat Zuwayla (nos 5, 9), the Greater Deesis pieces in the Wādī an-Naṭrūn (no. 8), and perhaps the icon of the Conversion of the Eunuch of the Candace (no. 1). All display a refined artistic quality pointing to a high level of craftsmanship. The second group



Fig. 23 Icon: St John the Evangelist; Deir Anba Bishoy. – (Photo M. Immerzeel).

consists of the corresponding screen icons representing the Virgin between prelates and monastic saints, and warrior saints (nos 6, 7). Although the elaborate drapery and some other details testify to professional Byzantine craftsmanship, the present state of the pieces leaves much to be desired because of improper retouching in the past. For the sake of completeness, it should be mentioned that the Church of St Merkourios also owns a large tripartite iconostasis beam of similar composition and height, which was, however, entirely repainted in the eighteenth century. Finally, the surviving vita scenes on the icon of St Merkourios stand out for the Palaiologan dynamism of the figures (no. 3). As a whole, these icons represent the gradual absorption of early Palaiologan standards and should therefore date from the second half of the thirteenth century, or the early fourteenth century at the latest[50].

46 Skalova, Icon Painting 110f.
47 Skalova, Icon Painting 195.
48 Meinardus, Twenty-Four Elders.
49 Woodfin, The Embodied Icon 21-28.
50 Immerzeel, The Narrow Way.

Patriarchs and *Archōns*

To provide a better understanding of all these paintings' relevancy in the specific context of patriarchal churches, the gradual changes in the position of Coptic papacy from the late tenth to the early fourteenth century merit further consideration. From the beginning, the Patriarchal See was officially established in Alexandria. Following the ecclesiastical divisions based on Christological differences, which came to a climax during the Council of Chalcedon in 451 and led to the subsequent foundation of a non-Chalcedonian church hierarchy, the Miaphysite patriarchs were more and more inclined to reside in the Monastery of St Makarios (Dayr Abū Maqār) in the Wādī an-Naṭrūn. Moreover, they were elected from monastic circles.

The importance of Old Cairo increased after the foundation of the new capital Fusṭāṭ, at a stone's throw from the fortified city, following the Arab conquest of Egypt in the 640s. The Fatimid conquest and the foundation of al-Qāhira as the next capital in 961 posed a major challenge to the attitude of the Church towards civil power. The first turning point in the early days of Fatimid rule was the election of Patriarch Abraham (975-978), who, in contrast to his precursors, was not a monk but a merchant of Syrian descent from Fusṭāṭ[51]. This remarkable shift was not a coincidence, as the new rulers undertook to actively involve non-Muslim laymen in the extension of the centralized bureaucratic system. The subsequent rise of a wealthy elite of Christian administrators and tradesmen (*archōn*s or *šayḫs*) resulted in their emphatic interference in Church affairs. As for Abraham, probably in reaction to the request of the caliph to settle in Fusṭāṭ/Old Cairo in order to be available for consultation as the leader of the country's most important religious community at any time, he instigated the renovation of the long neglected Church of al-Muʿallaqa and that of St Merkourios. His early death prevented him from effecting the transfer of the residence to Old Cairo, but it was partially realized by his successors. From the primacy of Christodoulos (1047-1077), al-Muʿallaqa would enjoy the privilege of serving as the church of papal consecration. In the 1070s he granted al-Muʿallaqa and the Church of St Merkourios the status of a patriarchal church, thus paving the way for the definitive installation of the See in Old Cairo after 1084 under Cyril II (1078-1092)[52]. Soon a start was made with the construction of patriarchal quarters on the upper floors of both churches. Apparently, some archōns took the accommodation of the supreme spiritual leader as a personal commitment. A key senior officer in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries was Abū l-Faḍl Ibn al-Usquf, whose position as the private secretary of Vizier al-Afḍal Šāhanšāh (1094-1121) lent him almost unlimited powers. At his expense a church dedicated to St George was erected in the papal compound at St Merkourios. In the course of the twelfth century, the patriarchs and *archōn*s jointly extended the upper floor with other sanctuaries, one of which was assigned as the pope's private cell and dedicated to the Archangel Michael (**fig. 22**)[53].

As the »urbanization« of patriarchal authority coincided with the increasing importance of Cairene laity, the Coptic community as a whole greatly benefited from their contacts at the highest levels and the resulting financial means to restore and refurbish urban churches[54]. The *archōn*s' tight grip on the Coptic Church comes particularly to the fore in the events from the second half of the twelfth century. By that time, the election of patriarchs from their ranks had become the rule rather than the exception. After the defeat of the Fatimids in 1169, Ṣalāḥ ad-Dīn initially expelled Christian notables from their offices, but soon allowed them to resume their duties. His decision heralded a Coptic »Golden Age« that would last until the end of the thirteenth century. Encouraged by the beneficiary power change, the *archōn*s initiated large-scale projects to restore and decorate the many churches that had been damaged in the turmoil of war or neglected over a longer period[55]. The repair of the complex of St Merkourios, which had been damaged by arson in 1168, was one of their major projects. A main benefactor in this matter was Šayḫ Ibn Abū l-Faḍāʾil Ibn Farrūǧ. In 1174/1175 he took charge of the building of a fenced wall around the complex and probably also of the renovation of the Church of St George and its decoration with wall paintings, which survive today[56]. An inscription under the image of an archangel (Michael?) near the papal cell states that it was painted in 1174/1175 on his orders (1 on **fig. 13**)[57]. Although next to nothing is known about contemporary adaptations to papal requirements in al-Muʿallaqa, the Coptic-style paintings in the Little Church are believed to date from the second half of the twelfth century or slightly later. Particularly conspicuous is their position opposite the patriarchal cell on the upper floor of this annex. From this spot the Church leader had an excellent view of the decorated walls and niches, an aspect that may have been decisive in the later extension of the iconographic programme with the Virgin Blachernitissa (**figs 14-15**).

The power of the notables reached its peak in the thirteenth century. In concert with several bishops, the powerful Awlād al-ʿAssāl family supplied excellent scholars who shouldered the task of urgently needed church reforms[58]. By contrast, the papacy had gradually been reduced to an extension of lay factions. After the death of John VI in 1216, the See would remain unoccupied for various reasons until the consecration of the highly controversial Cyril III in 1235. When he died in 1243, the *archōn*s once again were not in

51 For Abraham, see Swanson, Coptic Papacy 48-52.
52 For these patriarchs, see Swanson, Coptic Papacy 59-67.
53 Abū l-Makārim, Churches and Monasteries of Egypt 119-124 fols 36b-38b; Immerzeel, Churches of Cairo 35-40; idem, The Narrow Way.
54 Immerzeel, Churches of Cairo; idem, The Narrow Way; Jeudy, Élite civile.
55 History of the Patriarchs 165f.
56 Van Loon, Gate of Heaven 17-30.
57 Van Loon, Gate of Heaven 29 pls 30f.
58 Coptic Encyclopedia 1,309b-311b.



Fig. 24 St Mark; ms Bibl. 196 fols 111ᵛ-112ʳ; Library of the Coptic Patriarchate. – (After Atalla, Illustrations, pl. on 28).

a hurry to elect a successor[59]. Undoubtedly, the absence of the only authority who was entitled to appoint new bishops suited the intellectual elite; this situation gave them free rein to go ahead with their reform projects and eventually to elect patriarchs among the close-knit »old boys'« network of the Church of al-Muʿallaqa, which by that time functioned as the »Coptic Vatican«.

Strikingly, the debates on the succession of Cyril immediately reached a deadlock through fierce rivalry between the *archōn*s of al-Qāhira and Miṣr. Bad feelings were temporarily smoothed over after the election of Athanasios III (1250-1261), but rose again after his death. What followed was an awkward affair, with an additional embarrassing role played by the Mamluk vizier Bahāʾ ad-Dīn, who wanted to cash in on the scramble around the See. Elected by lot, the first candidate, Gabriel, who was a priest of al-Muʿallaqa and cooperated with the reformers as a scribe, was set aside in 1262 in favour of his rival, another priest of this church who would be consecrated Patriarch John VII. As John was not able to pay the expected bribes, the vizier simply deposed John six years later and reinstalled Gabriel. Since he, too, failed to raise enough funds, he was forced to abdicate in 1271, after which John resumed his primacy until 1293[60].

In that year, an unfortunate incident with an *archōn* evoked growing dissatisfaction among the Muslim population with the excessive influence and exuberant appearance of the Christian functionaries. The anger of these, so to speak, frustrated taxpayers, who wanted their money back, came to blows in the plundering of the Church of al-Muʿallaqa and of the houses of public servants[61]. But the worst was yet to come. After these incidents, the initially impervious attitude of the Mamluks towards the indispensable Christian administrators of financial matters and tax collectors, who, after all, anchored their own prosperity, changed, which resulted in the implementation of discriminatory dress regulations on all ḏimmīs and pressure to convert to Islam. In 1301, the continuing anti-Christian riots induced the Mamluk rulers to close al-Muʿallaqa, St Merkourios and other churches. Although persistent foreign pressure resulted in the reopening of one sanctuary after the other, the unrest compelled

59 Swanson, Coptic Papacy 83-95.
60 Swanson, Coptic Papacy 97-100; see also Immerzeel, The Narrow Way.
61 Little, Coptic Conversion; Ward, Ibn al-Rifʿa.

John VIII (1300-1320) to relocate to the Church of the Virgin in the Ḥārat Zuwayla quarter, which was securely located within the walls of al-Qāhira. Decisive for the downfall in the Coptic Church was the confiscation of Church properties in 1354[62]. Many *archōn*s embraced their fate: the best option to secure their positions was to continue under the wings of Islam. In the longer term, this expropriation and mass conversion deprived the Coptic community of its intellectual flexibility and financial means to renovate and furnish church buildings. By extension, Church leadership would again be a concern of clerical leaders instead of the laity.

It goes without saying that these developments sketched above provide excellent opportunities to interpret the value of the Byzantine-style works of art in al-Muʿallaqa and St Merkourios. While pointing out again that their stylistic characteristics allow for their dating to roughly the second half of the thirteenth century, the paradox of an inflated papacy at the time cannot be ignored. Frankly speaking, nothing happened in Greater Cairo without the efforts or assent of the omnipotent *archōn*s. In line with the longstanding practice of their self-imposed responsibility for the maintenance and embellishment of urban and papal churches, it is reasonable to assume that they also contracted the artists who provided al-Muʿallaqa and St Merkourios with proper works of art. Probably painted in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, the ambitious canopies and the *Blachernitissa* mural in al-Muʿallaqa date from the period when the prestige of the papacy was at its lowest point. One is inclined to believe that these works of art were meant to constitute the splendid façade of official events in the very centre of a vital Christian community, in the sense that they embodied the self-assurance of its well-to-do lay leaders, rather than the anything but untouchable position of the official spiritual leader.

The question remains as to why the *archōn*s did not entrust the task of furnishing the patriarchal churches to Coptic painters. Did they perhaps hold qualified Byzantine artists in high esteem? A potentially interesting answer is found in an illustrated Arabic Gospel book from 1291 in the library of the Coptic Patriarchate, which was produced on behalf of Šayḫ al-Amǧad Ibn aš-Šayḫ at-Taqah as a present to his son[63] Al-Amǧad involved two artists in this project: a local illustrator, who was responsible for the ornamentation of the text pages, and a Byzantine master for the figurative representations. In line with the Coptic fashion of those days, the overwhelming marginal illustrations and a full-page cross composed of geometric, vegetal and arabesque elements display inspiration from contemporary Mamluk art. However, in terms of craftsmanship, the ornamentation sharply contrasts with the gilded full-page illustrations that precede the Gospels of St Mark, Luke and John and represent these evangelists while writing their gospels (**fig. 24**). Provided with their names in Greek, these delicate portraits are exemplary exponents of Palaiologan art of the late thirteenth century.

The patron's motivations for this intentional division of labour should be sought first and foremost in the apparent prestige of Byzantine artists in lay Coptic circles. Likewise, the furnishing of the papal churches with splendid artworks should also be considered an indication of the fashionable taste of the leading notables. Keeping in mind the complaints of the Muslim population about the Christian functionaries' conceited attitude and appearance, and the plundering of their houses and al-Muʿallaqa in 1293, it was perhaps this desire for luxury that would ultimately usher in their downfall.

The Egyptian Melkites

Some seven centuries after the Council of Chalcedon (451), the adherents of the Chalcedonian doctrines persisted in Alexandria and the Nile Delta, as well as in Greater Cairo and to a lesser degree in the Nile Valley[64] Regarding extant witnesses of the medieval Melkite artistic tradition, next to nothing remains. However, the Museum of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Alexandria owns a number of thirteenth-century icons originating from the Melkite Church of St George in Old Cairo, which based on their craftsmanship seem connected to the icons in Coptic possession[65] At this point our research reaches its limits, as this crucial collection remains to be studied and published in full.

Apparently, the Melkite system of sponsorship and influence of the aristocracy in Fatimid service functioned in the same way as that of the Copts, with a key role played by the al-Layṭ family[66] The main Melkite monastic settlement was Dayr al-Quṣayr near Tura to the south of Old Cairo. Here, Šayḫ Abū l-Barakāt Yūḥannā Ibn Abī Layṭ had the Church of St Sabas restored under the supervision of his brother, the scribe Abū l-Faḍāʾil. Its interior was embellished with »excellent pictures, of extremely skilful and admirable execution«, including representations of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste[67] Abū l-Barakāt was the supervisor of the *diwān at-taḥqīq*, founded by Vizier al-Afḍal Šāhanšāh in 1107/1108 to regulate his fiscal reforms and the redistribution of land. In this capacity, he was one of the most powerful men in the country, but he eventually fell from grace and was beheaded in 1134[68]. Another relative, or perhaps even brother, was the doctor Anbāʾ Sabas Ibn al-Layṭ, who sometime between 1101 and 1121 travelled to Constantinople, ostensibly to heal the emperor from an illness. There he spent 10000 Egyptian

62 Little, Coptic Conversion 568f.
63 Bibl. no. 196; Atalla, Illustrations 27-31; Leroy, Manuscrits coptes 178-180 pls 5,1; 96f.,1.
64 Immerzeel, Churches of Cairo 40f.; idem, The Narrow Way.
65 Skalova, Icon Painting 119.
66 Pahlitzsch, Melkites 496-502.
67 Abū l-Makārim, Churches and Monasteries of Egypt 150f. fols 50b-51a. Dayr al-Quṣayr was renowned for the memory of the ninth-century apse mosaics representing the Virgin holding the Child between two angels and the twelve apostles in the Church of the Apostles, which were destroyed in 1010 (Abū l-Makārim, Churches and Monasteries of Egypt xii, 148-150 fol. 50b).
68 Immerzeel, Churches of Cairo, with further references.

dinars on the purchase of precious liturgical accoutrements and a gilded icon of the Virgin with Child for an unspecified church in Alexandria. Sabas' visit to the Byzantine capital did not pass unnoticed: »The king bestowed a great honour upon Sabas, so that he rode a horse at day time in Constantinople and had a lighted taper in his hand«[69]. On account of this stunning homage, which was a prerogative reserved for patriarchs, Krijnie Ciggaar has revealed the doctor's true identity: he was the Melkite patriarch Sabas of Alexandria, who participated in a synod held in Constantinople in 1117[70]. It was probably the icon he brought from the Byzantine capital that Western travellers, such as the Flemish nobleman Joos van Ghistele, noticed in the Melkite Church of St Sabas at Alexandria during his visit in 1480[71].

Conclusion

In summation, the emphatic activities of Byzantine-trained artists in the Middle East from the turn of the twelfth century display some interesting patterns. On the condition that favourable working circumstances, defined by periods of peace and attractive socio-economic conditions, allowed them to travel and practice their craft, they turned up in Latin- and Muslim-ruled territories to take assignments from a variety of clients. More precisely, they excelled at establishing profitable contacts with civil and ecclesiastical representatives of virtually all major Christian communities in the Middle East, that is, Copts, Latins, Maronites, Melkites and Syrian Orthodox. In this respect, the matter of patronage turns out to be a revealing key factor, which upon closer examination should merit more attention than the search for the origins of the artists. This study lays bare particularly the interaction between these protagonists, but simultaneously raises questions that cannot easily be answered within its limitations. To illustrate this with an example, one of the painters from Constantinople who travelled to Tabriz to embellish the church of Princess Maria in 1282 succeeded in obtaining an additional painting commission from Maphrian Bar Hebraeus on his return journey. Some artists may likewise have travelled by order or on invitation and prolonged their stay to respond to the protracted local demand. Others may have taken the haphazard decision to try their luck in potentially interesting areas, perhaps as a reaction to the collapse of the »home market« caused by dramatic changes in political leadership. It cannot be ruled out that they spent the rest of their lives abroad in the knowledge that this secured their livelihood. To put our definition of »Byzantine artists« in perspective, these immigrants may also have educated a new generation of indigenous pupils, who probably never set foot on Byzantine soil.

Leaving these challenging matters to future researchers, there is one more tantalizing question to be answered: did itinerant artists benefit from their status as Byzantine painters in one way or the other? With indispensable prudence, a positive answer can be given in the case of the embellishment of the patriarchal churches in Cairo, but it remains to be seen whether this provisional conclusion is also applicable to the Byzantine works of art in Latin and Muslim Syria. In the end, this topic cannot be detached from the position of Byzantine artists as an attractive alternative to less-skilled local painters or as pioneers, whose activities fostered the genesis of local schools.

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69 Abū l-Makārim, History of the Churches and Monasteries, 239 fols 99a-b.
70 Ciggaar, An Egyptian Doctor.
71 Joos van Ghistele, Voyage en Égypte 179.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Byzantine Artists in the Latin and Islamic Middle East of the Thirteenth Century

In the thirteenth century, the Latin and indigenous Christian communities of the Middle East enjoyed a prospering artistic revival. If two contemporary textual sources attest to the employment of Byzantine craftsmen or painters in Frankish Beirut and the Muslim-ruled Mosul area, respectively, the presence of Byzantine-style works of art – mainly wall paintings and icons – in present-day Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt suggest that their input in the artistic production was considerable. Contextual circumstances point out that artists trained in the Byzantine painterly traditions have been contracted by Latin and Eastern Christian patrons (Copts, Maronites, Melkites, and Syrian Orthodox).

Byzantinische Künstler im lateinischen und islamischen Nahen Osten des 13. Jahrhunderts

Im 13. Jahrhundert erlebten die lateinischen und die indigenen christlichen Gemeinschaften des Nahen Ostens einen florierenden künstlerische Aufschwung. Auch wenn lediglich zwei zeitgenössische Textquellen die Beschäftigung byzantinischer Handwerker oder Maler im fränkischen Beirut bzw. im von Muslimen beherrschten Gebiet von Mosul bezeugen, so weist die Präsenz von Kunstwerken im byzantinischen Stil – hauptsächlich Wandmalereien und Ikonen – im heutigen Libanon, Syrien und Ägypten dich darauf hin, dass ihr Beitrag zur künstlerischen Produktion insgesamt beträchtlich war. Kontextspezifische Begleitumstände zeigen, dass Künstler, die in der byzantinischen Maltradition ausgebildet waren, von lateinischen und ostchristlichen Kunden (Kopten, Maroniten, Melkiten und Syrisch-Orthodoxen) unter Vertrag genommen wurden.

Lucy-Anne Hunt

The Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII (1261-1282) and Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Genoese Cultural Agency in a Globalised World: Art at Sinai, Behdaidat, of the *pallio* of San Lorenzo in Genoa, and in Mamluk Egypt

This paper brings an art historical perspective to bear on the issue of cultural brokerage between the Byzantine emperor, the Latin Crusader States and the Muslim world during the later thirteenth century[1]. Attention is focused on the early years of the reign of the emperor Michael VIII (1261-1282), and specifically the time of the re-establishment of Constantinople as the capital of the Byzantine Empire in 1261 and its immediate aftermath. Michael VIII is known to have associated himself personally with stimulating artistic activity which reinforced the resurgence of Constantinople as the capital. But where did the artists come from, and where and how did they operate?

A vibrant visual culture, attributable to the monk/ecclesiastic-merchant-artist paradigm, can be perceived in Latin Syria at exactly the same moment, in the early 1260s. The question to be addressed here, then, arguably might be further refinded: can any linkages and networks be identified between Constantinople and Latin Syria in artistic practice, and if so who were the facilitating agents? This paper argues that Constantinople under Michael VIII was indeed culturally, politically and commercially related at this time to Latin Syria, as well as Italy, Mamluk Egypt, and the Mongol world. Ecclesiastical networks, especially those generated by the patriarch of Antioch, contributed to facilitate major artistic projects which demonstrate this. Case studies in icon painting, wall-painting, and textile manufacture are considered here which specifically propose the role of Patriarch Euthymios, Greek Orthodox patriarch of Antioch between 1260-c.1263, as a key cultural agent who facilitated these connections.

Discussion here focuses first on Michael VIII's tactics to re-establish himself as Byzantine emperor. Second, attention is turned to Latin Syria, drawing out the implications and consequences of the appointment of Euthymios as Greek Orthodox patriarch of Antioch, already in post at the time of Michael VIII's retaking of Constantinople. Third, the case is made for associating three artistic projects with the reign of Euthymios as patriarch of Antioch in his coordinating role between Constantinople and the Levant. These are: selected thirteenth-century icons at St Catherine's monastery, Mt Sinai; the Syrian-style wall-painting programme at the church of Mar Tadros (St Theodore) at Behdaidat (Baḥdaydāt) in northern Lebanon; and the *peplos*/*pallium* (*pallio* in Italian), a ceremonial outer robe now in the Museo di Sant'Agostino in Genoa, which was given by Michael VIII to the Genoese Commune for display in the cathedral of St Laurence in Genoa.

The attribution of these works of art to Greek Orthodox/Melkite artists working in conjunction with Latins is associated here with Michael's policies to consolidate his position in Constantinople and his strategising via intermediaries and proxies. It is argued that the *peplos*/*pallium* was produced as a manifestation of Michael's strategy to revive and stimulate the traditional role of the Byzantine emperor as protector of the sites of the Holy Land and the Middle Eastern Christians who maintained them, especially the Melkites. Through the materials used it also demonstrates how Melkites provided access to trading networks with the Mongol and Mamluk worlds. The production of this *peplos*/*pallium* by Melkite artists, with inscriptions added by Latins, can be associated with his plan to mollify the Papacy and neutralise Michael's enemies through negotiations over Church union between the Byzantine and Latin Churches.

Viewing these three artistic projects within this politically-charged international, indeed global, environment adds a new dimension to art historical debates around »Crusader« and »Palaiologan« Byzantine art in the thirteenth century by proposing a major contribution by Greek Orthodox/Melkite

1 I am grateful to Professor Johannes Pahlitzsch for the invitation to speak at the conference »Monks, Merchants and Artists in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Relations of Byzantium to the Arab Near East (9th to 15th c.)«, University of Mainz 17-19 October 2012. Aspects of this research were subsequently presented in papers given at the Byzantium in Transition 2nd Workshop, University of Cyprus/Paros Municipality (25 May 2013), and the conference »Sharing the Holy Land: Perceptions of Shared Sacred Space in the Medieval and Early Modern Eastern Mediterranean« (Warburg Institute, London University, 12 June 2015). A communication »Melkite art in the 13th century: Constantinople, Crusader Syria and Byzantium's Global reach« was delivered at the Birmingham Byzantine Symposium Global Byzantium in March 2017, while this chapter was at final proof stage.

artists not only in Latin Syria but also in Byzantine Constantinople itself, the West, as well as Mamluk Egypt and the Mongol world.

Historical Context: Constantinople: Michael VIII's Personal Identification with the Imagery of Greek Orthodoxy

The emperor Michael VIII ceremonially entered Constantinople in procession on foot, following an icon of the Hodegetria, on the Feast of the Dormition of the Virgin on 15 August 1261, thereby ending Latin rule of the city (1204-1261)[2]. The emperor subsequently identified himself with particular works of art which aimed to secure and enhance his status as the Byzantine emperor of Constantinople and the Greek Orthodox *oikoumenē*. This had far-reaching associations. The icon of the Hodegetria, to which victory was attributed, provided a focal point, with its emblematic Orthodox iconography[3]. In Constantinople the monastery of the Hodegon was the *metochion* (dependant monastery) of the Antiochene Patriarchate: since the end of Byzantine rule in 1084 the Greek Orthodox patriarch of Antioch invariably resided here[4]. This association is highly relevant to the present argument of the linkage between Constantinople and Latin Syria which is a main concern of this paper. In the case of Latin Syria Euthymios, the Greek Orthodox/Melkite patriarch of Antioch, whose second period of office spanned 1260-1263 (?), emerges as a key organising and influential intermediary. This raises the issue of the extent of the artistic engagement of Levantine Christians with Michael's strategy to secure his position as Byzantine emperor in Constantinople.

Foremost amongst the works of art associated with Michael VIII in Constantinople after 1261 is the *Deēsis* panel in mosaic in the south gallery of the Church of St Sophia (**fig. 1**). The mosaic has been assumed to date from the time of the reconsecration of the church of St Sophia in the autumn of 1261. Robin Cormack suggested that the space at the bottom of the panel may have included a small figure, presumably Michael himself[5]. If so – and it is plausible – this would suggest Michael's personal identification with the revival of Byzantine art and liturgy as practised prior to the Latin occupation of the city. It would not be without precedent. An unidentified monastic or lay figure prostrate before Christ was depicted in the *Deēsis* image in the early twelfth-century Psalter Menologion in Harvard University Library, which Jeffrey Anderson and Stefano Parenti associated with »the ancient cathedral rite … still surviving at Hagia Sophia, but already in the late eleventh century … influenced by hagiopolite practices indicated by Stoudite monasticism«[6]. It is surely consciousness of this tradition that Michael is raising in depicting himself before Christ in the mosaic. He is associating himself directly and personally with the *Deēsis* as the major scene of the restoration of Greek Orthodoxy and liturgical practice tied to the Holy Land through the Stoudite link. He is also thereby reiterating the ninth-century *Deēsis* mosaic panel at St Sophia over the southwest vestibule which bears the same connotation[7].

In her discussion of Michael's restoration of Constantinople, Alice-Mary Talbot considered that the time between Michael's entry into the city on 15 August 1261 and the reconsecration of the church during the Autumn (date unknown) would have been inadequate to produce the mosaic[8]. Following this argument and redating the mosaic to shortly after mid-1262, the time of the correspondence of Michael VIII with the Pope, puts back the date of the mosaic for a year and widens the scope for discussing it in the context of Michael's policy of church union, pursued with the aim of consolidating his position politically.

The end point of Michael's procession into Constantinople was the monastery of the Stoudion, dedicated to St John the Baptist, where he deposited the Hodegetria icon after which he went to St Sophia. The monastery of St John Stoudios had been damaged by the Latin Crusaders in 1204[9]. Perhaps the memory of the Middle Byzantine anti-Iconoclast imagery in the apse at the monastery church, and the ambition to restore it, could have been present in Michael's mind. The image, originating in the Cappadocian monastic environment of Asia Minor, represented the Orthodox, anti-iconoclastic perspective, as Warren Woodfin has noted[10]. The impact of the Holy Land monastery of Mar Saba and of Basilian Palestinian liturgical practice is relevant to the discussion here, with the reforms of Theodore of Stoudion in the ninth century. The *Deēsis* image itself was taken up in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in the Psalter of Queen Melisende, dated between 1131-43, demonstrating the fusion of Greek Orthodox/Melkite and Latin theology, art and politics in Jerusalem[11]. The *Deēsis* can, then, be seen as the emblem of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite community and the revival of Greek Orthodox liturgy in the capital in 1261. Standing as the potent image of Orthodoxy in Byzantium itself, its depiction in the Holy Land and the Latin East came to play a part in the ecumenical

2 Macrides, Constantine 13 f. with n. 2; Talbot, Restoration 243; Shepard, Constantinople 73; Akropolities, History 383 f.
3 Angelidi/Papamastorakis, Hodegetria.
4 Todt, Christen 56.
5 Cormack, Mosaics 145 f. with pl. 7.
6 Anderson/Parenti, Office 351 f.
7 For this panel see Cormack, Mosaics 138, 145 with fig. 2.
8 Talbot, Restoration 252 n. 63.
9 Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon 150. It was later reconstructed in 1293 by a brother of Andronikos II.
10 Woodfin, Majestas. For just two examples of the *Deēsis* image in late tenth to early eleventh-century Cappadocia see Jolivet-Lévy, Églises 149 f. with pl. 94 (Church no. 3, Ak kilisse, Ürgüp) and 141. with pl. 89 (the paraclesion of Kiliçlar kilisse).
11 Thomas, Stoudios 86-88. For the Melisende Psalter (London, B.L. MS Egerton 1139) fol. 12v see British Library, Melisende Psalter with colour reproduction. This is considered in this context in Hunt, Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Latin Artistic Interaction.



Fig. 1 Istanbul, Hagia Sophia. South Gallery. Mosaic. Deēsis panel, Ensemble. – (Photo E. Ritter. Courtesy of Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, D.C).

dealings with the Latins in the twelfth to thirteenth centuries. This raises the issue of the relationship of the Byzantine emperor himself to the Holy Land, arguably exploited by Michael. After all, in 1261 the Byzantine return to Constantinople was hailed as the return to New Jerusalem[12]. A direct Antiochene association can be mentioned. The Russian pilgrim Anthony of Novgorod, recorded seeing a thumb relic of St John the Baptist at the Stoudion monastery in c. 1200 which had been removed from the right arm relic in the palace chapel of the Virgin of the Pharos. This relic had originally been taken from Antioch, a point to be returned to below. Michael would have been aware of the potency of this thumb relic in the church of St John in the monastery of the Stoudion[13].

Michael envisaged himself as the new Constantine and reinforced this image through art, ecumenism, and a return to Komnenoi values. He followed in Constantine's footsteps in adopting the church of the Holy Apostles as a *locus* for public art. He erected a bronze sculpture of himself kneeling before a huge statue of his namesake, the archangel Michael, on a column outside the main door of the Church of the Holy Apostles. The church of St Sophia was also central to him. The historic mosaic image of Constantine presenting the city to the Virgin, located in the vestibule, opposite Justinian offering the church itself, was Michael's key reference point in St Sophia in this respect[14]. He was also portrayed as the »New Constantine« on a *peplos,* the ceremonial robe commissioned by the patriarch Germanos III in 1265-1266 and displayed in St Sophia[15]. Equating the emperor Michael VIII with Constantine was one strand of imperial propaganda at this time[16]. Finally, the image of the emperor in the wake of the reconquest of Constantinople in 1261 has also been viewed as a return to Komnenoi aristocratic values of family and ethnicity with the city of Constantinople itself in an emblematic role[17].

Euthymios I, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch (1260-c.1263), as an Agent between Constantinople and Greater Syria

It was through diplomacy between the Byzantine court at Nicaea and that of the great khan Mongke that Euthymios had been reinstalled as patriarch in 1260[18]. This Byzantine entente with the Mongols had begun in the 1220s and was to continue through to the fourteenth century[19]. Following

12 Angelov, Ideology 99.
13 Kalavrezou, Hands 69 with n. 68.
14 Talbot, Restoration 260 with n. 122.
15 Talbot, Restoration with n. 61, 260 with n. 123.
16 Angelov, Ideology 87, 89 f. The emperor Andronikos II later also identified himself with Constantine.
17 Angelov, Ideology 114.
18 Hamilton, Church 325; Harris, Byzantium 197.
19 The Byzantine entente which began during the time of John III Doukas Vatatzes (1222-1254) and his successor Theodore II Laskaris (1254-1258) lasted into the fourteenth century: Langdon, Byzantino-Mongolica.

Hetoum I of Cilician Armenia's submission to the Khan in 1254, Hetoum and his son-in-law Bohemond VI, prince of Antioch, allied themselves to Mongke's brother Hülegü in his campaign against the Muslims in Syria[20]. This benefited Bohemond in the short term, as was evident in Bohemond's successful campaign with Hülegü's Christian general Kitbogha, a member of the Church of the East. The much-coveted region of the River Orontes and the Damascus area – both regions in which significantly the red dye plant of madder was produced – were recaptured, and the three allies entered Damascus in triumph in 1260[21]. The celebrations were short-lived. On 3 September 1260 the Mongols were defeated at ʿAyn Ǧalūt with dire consequences for Christians, especially the Eastern Christian community, living in the city. But 1263 is also the date when Bohemond was thought to have ousted Euthymios from the Antiochene patriarchate[22]. Although the tide was turning in 1263, this highlights the particular years of Euthymios' patriarchate, 1260-c.1263, and his role. This, I suggest, included coordinating the activities of artists.

Euthymios' earlier career has bearing on the crucial period of 1260-c.1263. He had held the position of bishop of Tripoli before his elevation as the Greek Orthodox/Melkite patriarch of Antioch[23]. The post of the bishop of Tripoli in the early twelfth century has been described as that of an agent of the Byzantine emperor, with the Melkite community in general looking to the Byzantine emperor as their protector[24]. Whether or not Euthymios I was himself dependant on the emperor's favour in the ongoing tenure of his post is unknown[25]. However, it is likely that the protector-client/agent relationship continued during the reign of Michael VIII, embracing both trading interests and extending to support for the Melkites in their struggle alongside their Latin feudal overlords and Genoese business partners against Muslim military incursions during the early 1260s. Support by Michael of these activities, through Euthymios, as former bishop of Tripoli and the incumbent patriarch of Antioch from 1260, could well have been indirect. If so it would have enhanced Michael's prestige and position as a principal among Christian rulers and may even have given him a bargaining chip with the pope. Such diplomatic and political manoeuvring is not unprecedented in Michael's operations elsewhere. He maintained involvement in several conflicts early in his reign, eschewing direct military action in favour of engagement through third parties, especially local, indigenous militias[26].

Patriarch Euthymios at Antioch would, therefore, have been in close touch with Constantinople. I would also argue that this extended to economic involvement in trading. He was one of those, alongside the lord of Tyre, the Mongol khan, the king of Cilician Armenia and the prince of Antioch, investing in indigenous merchants from Damascus, Acre and Lajazzo/Ayas, who were sailing in a ship with a valuable cargo when they were attacked by a Genoese ship outside Corycos off the coast of Asia Minor in 1263. Massive compensation was paid in 1268 by the Commune in Genoa[27]. This was no doubt as the Genoese did not want to jeopardise trading agreements and, arguably, negotiations over Church union. Perhaps Euthymios' negotiations with the Genoese in the interests of the emperor Michael and the commissioning of such an important work of art as the embroidered *peplos/pallium* of San Lorenzo in Genoa caused resentment on the part of Bohemond VI, count of Tripoli, and contributed to Bohemond's expulsion of Euthymios from Antioch. Bohemond must have felt completely outmanoeuvred: after all he – Bohemond – was the ally of the Venetians. Bohemond's sufferance of Euthymios was effectively condoning the downfall of the Latin Empire of Constantinople and the mercantile hegemony of the Genoese[28]. I will argue below that Euthymios would surely have advised on local circumstances, the appropriateness of the imagery, as well as the practical matters of passing on the workmanship of the *peplos/pallium* to the textile workers who would have been from the community represented at the painted programme at Behdaidat. It is likely that the patriarch himself financed the embroidery with trading activity.

There is further political evidence that supports the suggestion that Euthymios would have been in close contact with Constantinople and directly with the emperor himself. Euthymios supported Michael in the face of opposition. He was censured by Arsenios, patriarch of Constantinople until 1264, and a critic of Michael VIII[29]. Euthymios was also trusted by Michael as a diplomat: he was one of two Greek Orthodox ecclesiastics who, after his ejection from Antioch, was sent from Constantinople in 1265 to the Mongol khan accompanying Michael's illegitimate daughter Maria Palaiologina to marry Hülegü[30]. The other, leading the delegation, was the monk Theodosios of Villehardouin, later Euthymios' successor as patriarch of Antioch (1278-1283)[31]. In the event, Maria married Hülegu's son Abaqa[32]. Amongst the presents she took with her to the Mongol court was a tent chapel of

20 Hamilton, Church 234.
21 For the association of madder with Damascus and the Orontes valley see Heyd, Commerce 1,179. On madder more widely see Chenciner, Madder.
22 Hamilton, Church 325.
23 Jabre-Mouawad, Témoin 140.
24 Jabre-Mouawad, Témoin 140 with n. 19f.
25 Todt, Patriarchen 168.
26 Wilksman, Conflict 89, 90f. for discussion of Michael's tactical involvement elsewhere, including with the Slavs, and in the southeast Peloponnese.
27 Riley-Smith, Nobility 798 with n. 105f.
28 By c. 1263 Bohemond would have wanted instead to concentrate on having his own excommunication by the Latin Church lifted, as argued by Hamilton, Church 325.
29 Hamilton, Church 325 n. 6.
30 PLP, no. 6267.
31 PLP, no. 7181.
32 Hamilton, Church 326. Teteriatnikov, Monastery esp. 193-200 for Maria, Mary of the Mongols, who not only patronised the church of St Mary of the Mongols in Constantinople, but was depicted as the nun Melania praying to the *Deēsis* group in the mosaic in the *narthex* of the church of the Monastery of the Chora (Kariye Djami) of c. 1315. Preiser-Kapeller, Tabriz 270f., with references, returning to the issue of bishops as intermediaries in Byzantine-Mongol diplomatic activity, ibidem 273 n. 57.

silk »embroidered in gold and with the figures of saints«[33]. Perhaps this was commissioned from the same Greek Orthodox/Melkite craftspeople in which case it can be envisaged as being similar to the Genoa embroidery in appearance. It is also quite possible that the »Church of the Greeks« built by her during her time at the Ilkhan court, until 1282, was decorated in the style of Behdaidat. This would fit with the Byzantine policy of encouraging local styles to be used. The painters stayed on to be employed by the Maphorian Bar Hebraeus to decorate a monastery in 1285. As will be seen at Behdaidat, this recognisably Syrian style would have been particularly suitable for the multicultural environment of the silk roads. Furthermore, features of Eastern Christian art found their way into Ilkhanid art through such interactions[34]. It is telling that Maria was eventually, as the nun Melania, depicted in mosaic in Constantinople praying to the *Deēsis* in the church of the monastery of the Chora (Kariye Camii)[35].

Major ecclesiastical, economic and artistic drivers intersected in Syria where they were in place prior to Michael's entry into Constantinople in 1261. Michael's alliance with the Genoese, already established by the Treaty of Nymphaion earlier in 1261, facilitated the direction of Byzantine economic policy in the later thirteenth century. Genoese interests in Latin Syria, Cilician Armenia and the Black Sea trade to both the Mongol and Mamluk empires further developed in the second half of the thirteenth century. In taking up the traditional imperial Byzantine role of protector of the Christians of the Holy Land, Michael worked through Greek Orthodox/Melkite ecclesiastical connections. The patriarch of Antioch, alongside those of Alexandria and Jerusalem, also provided an invaluable channel with the Mamluk world[36]. The Byzantine emperor routinely after 1261 used the establishment of bishoprics in outlying areas to establish Byzantine »suzerain« authority[37]. The same can be said for his relations with the Mongol world, with bishops appointed by the patriarch of Antioch to Central Asian sees, whether active or titular, during the Late Antique and medieval periods[38]. The material surveyed here offers a new perspective on the visual imagery attached to the role of patriarchs and other ecclesiastics, and merchants. Furthermore, the participation of individuals and the communities they represented can be identified, especially through portraiture, which can be shown to extend beyond the purely personal into the political domain. I argue, however, that this was not a passive one-way relationship with the Melkites merely as pawns. Drawing on the imperial ideal suited the purposes of the Melkites in Syria, reinforcing their own international agenda to maintain Holy Land shrines and trading activity. It also facilitated their role as mercantile intermediaries along traditional Byzantine trading routes.



Fig. 2 Istanbul, Hagia Sophia. South Gallery. Mosaic. Deēsis panel (detail), John Prodromos. – (Photo E. Ritter. Courtesy of Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, D.C.).

Connecting Constantinople Artistically with the Levant, Latin Syria and Egypt

Recent scholarship has played down the likelihood of direct artistic contact between the Latin East and Constantinople around the time of the restoration of Constantinople to Byzantine rule in 1261. In attributing the panel painting of the Virgin and Child Hodegetria, depicted with angels (known as the Kahn Madonna) in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., to Constantinople, Jaroslav Folda points to the comparison of the Virgin with that in the St Sophia *Deēsis*, differentiating the painting style from that found in Crusader icons of the Virgin and Child Hodegetria attributed to Acre or from Sinai[39]. He concludes of the painter of the Kahn Madonna, that it »seems likely that this artist was from Italian origin, a Crusader artist who does not appear to have travelled to the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem and who was possibly

33 Preiser-Kapeller, Tabriz 271 with n. 51.
34 The Annunciation in the illustrated manuscript in Edinburgh of al-Biruni's Chronology of Ancient Nations, dated 1307-1308, shows the Virgin spinning, for example Soucek, Chronology 147 f. with fig. 22.
35 Teteriatnikov, Melania; Zervou Tognazzi, Interpretazione 411 with fig. 9. See above, n. 32.
36 Pahlitzsch, Mediators 36.
37 Shepard, Commonwealth 22.
38 Parry, Melkites.
39 Folda, Chrysography 121.



Fig. 3 Monastery of St Catherine at Mount Sinai. Icon, Deēsis. – (Photo Reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai).

working for an Italian Crusader patron in Constantinople«[40]. Detaching the work of the Italian artist from its accrued Crusader art historical moorings in this case is one approach. But another is more persuasive. The St Sophia *Deēsis* mosaic has also been set alongside a Crusader-era iconostasis beam from the Monastery of St Catherine's on Mount Sinai with saints, including military saints, centred on the *trimorphon*, in liturgical consideration of the *Deēsis*[41]. Enquiry can also be extended beyond Acre to Tyre and Tripoli and Egypt to take account of more fluid cross-Mediterranean, Latin-Greek collaborations in the artistic as well as the mercantile sphere. Looking to the figure of St John in the St Sophia *Deēsis* mosaic (**fig. 3**)**,** further comparison with icon painting from the Monastery of St Catherine on Mount Sinai does seem feasible. The face of St John in the mosaic has wracked lines on the left cheek in the manner of an ascetic, a feature similar to that found in icon painting with Venetian connections at Sinai. An example is that of the Descent into Hell on one side of a bilateral icon[42]. This feature is also visible in the etched ovals of St John on an icon of the *Deēsis* at Sinai (**fig. 3**)[43]. Tripoli can be introduced into the equation because of the strength of the Venetian community here, with its trading interests and the favourable treatment the community received from its ruler Bohemond VI, as well as the connection between its cathedral of St Mark and that of Venice. But the style should be associated with the city itself rather than with any single Italian community exclusively. The main Italian association in Constantinople in the early 1260s was, of course, with Michael's allies the Genoese and not with his enemies the Venetians. The multicultural character of Tyre, Tripoli and Antioch also cuts across this divide between »Venetian« and »Genoese« and offers a point of departure for considering artistic, commercial, theological and political links with Constantinople. Shared interests also provided the basis for interaction with the Mongol and Mamluk worlds.

The Monastery of St Catherine's, Mt Sinai: Portraits on a Nativity / Adoration Scene on an Iconostasis Beam and the Situation in 1260

The iconostasis beam with the Annunciation/Nativity (**fig. 4**) at St Catherine's Monastery, Mount Sinai, is probably dateable to 1260, which is the year Euthymios was reinstated as patriarch of Antioch. It is arguably a product of the Greek Orthodox Church in a coordinating role between the Byzantine Empire, Cilician Armenia, Latin Syria and the Mongols. The image gives a portrait of the three allies in 1260 approaching the Virgin and Child at Bethlehem. This introduces the role of Eastern Christians as agents and artists and the significance of the Holy Land shrines, specifically Bethlehem, as the kneeling older magus has been identified as Hetoum I, king of Cilician Armenia. He is shown here with his son-in-law Bohemond VI, prince of Antioch and count of Tripoli, in the centre looking to a Mongol figure behind him who has been associated with Kitbogha, a member of the Church of the East, who was believed to have been descended from the Magi, behind him[44]. It therefore probably dates to before the death of Kitbogha at the battle of ʿAyn Ǧalūt later the same year. It has been

40 Folda, Chrysography 121. Corrie, Kahn and Mellon Madonnas 294 points to the closeness of the chrysography between the *Deēsis* mosaic at St Sophia and the Kahn Madonna. She attributes the Kahn panel to the same workshop as the Mellon Madonna and considers both panels as Byzantine not Italian. She judges (299-300) the artists to have been »trained at Constantinople or Thessaloniki, and that these two panels were never in Italy«.

41 Zervou Tognazzi, Interpretazione 407 with figs 5 and 6. This beam is attributed to a »Franco-Byzantine Crusader« style by Folda, Art 436-438 with figs 256-261. For discussion of some of the issues of icon painting in this period see Corrie, Sinai, Acre, Tripoli. Corrie (421-423) endorses the view that icons at Sinai were made in Syria and Lebanon and summarises debate about the icon at Kaftoun.

42 Weitzmann, Painting 65 referred to the »unusually haggard« appearance of Adam and Eve on the icon of the Anastasis, which he compared with that of St Andrew on a panel in the Museo Correre in Venice: Weitzmann, Painting 64 with fig. 26 compared with fig. 25.

43 Parpulov, Painting 347 with fig. 108 attributes this icon to c. 1230-1250.

44 Weitzmann, Painting 336-368 with figs 22-24.

suggested that this beam was painted for a former Byzantine church in Damascus, which was recaptured and turned over to Latin use when the allied army took Damascus[45]. Viewed in the wider perspective of the monk-merchant-artist dynamic, however, it is more likely that it was painted by a Greek Orthodox/Melkite artist at the monastery of St Catherine at Sinai[46]. The monastery itself had its own interests in Damascus, with jurisdiction over a church of St George in the city[47]. The presence of western or »Crusader« features in the icon is far from incompatible with Greek Orthodox/Melkite craftsmanship: it should not be forgotten that the monastery enjoyed the protection of the Papacy and was granted the status of a bishopric[48]. Furthermore, Pope Clement IV had asked Hetoum to intervene to assist the Hospitallers in their defence against Baybars' attacks[49]. The Mongol figure might be interpreted not only as a portrait of Kitbogha, and representative of Mongol overlordship over Hetoum, but also as a symbol of the wider belief in the Mongol rulers as the descendants of the Magi and worthy allies in the defence of the holy shrines, here the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem.

These same allies had much to gain financially from collaboration. According to a document of 1268, indigenous merchants (»Mosserins«) of Ayas/Lajazzo, Tyre and the Mongol Empire, together with others from Acre and Damascus, were part of a trading consortium operating along the coast to Ayas/Lajazzo in 1263[50]. Amongst the jurisdictions covered, that of the patriarch of Antioch is listed separately from that of the prince of Antioch, indicating that Greek Orthodox/Melkite business interests were independent of the state. The individuals involved are documented as receiving compensation from the Genoese for the seizure of a ship outside Corycos, near the trading centre of Ayas/Lajazzo on the Cilician Armenian coast. Tyre became the centre of Genoese activity in Syria after their ejection from Acre in 1258 following their defeat by the Venetians and Pisans during the so-called War of Mar Saba (1256-1258). Several members of the consortium were from Acre. This means that indigenous merchants, as intermediaries, were able to continue to trade in both Tyre and Acre, despite animosity and rivalry between the Venetians and the Genoese themselves. One of those from Acre was Saliba, a Syrian Melkite who is known to have been a *confrater* of the Hospitallers, who made his will in Acre in 1264[51]. Trade controlled by Eastern Christians, especially Melkites, with their historic Byzantine mercantile connections, provided an intermediate, »neutral« space despite continuing conflict and warfare.



Fig. 4 Monastery of St Catherine at Mount Sinai. *Iconostasis* Beam. Detail, Nativity/Adoration. – (Photo reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai).

The Church of Mar Tadros, Behdaidat: Melkite Agency in Action and the Indirect Intervention of Michael VIII

The hand of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite Church at the time of Euthymios, the patriarch of Antioch, is arguably again in evidence in the recently-conserved programme of the Church of Mar Tadros at Behdaidat near Gibelet (modern Jubayl) on the Lebanese coast north of Beirut (**figs 5-6**)[52]. I have argued that this programme be attributed to the Greek Orthodox/Melkite Confraternity of St George (Lydda) and Bethlehem, with imperial intervention and in collaboration with the Latins[53]. The Syrian style of its wallpainting has been well-recognised by scholars[54]. I suggest that the church can be interpreted as a military chapel decorated and used by the Melkite Confraternity of St George and Bethlehem in the early 1260s and

45 Based on the account of the so-called »Templar of Tyre«: Folda, Realities 323-329 with fig. 10.
46 Hunt, Jerusalem 341 f. for this suggestion.
47 Claverie, Honorius 229.
48 Claverie, Honorius 226 f.
49 Hamilton, Armenian Church 82 with n. 103.
50 de Mas Latrie, Histoire 74-77; Riley-Smith, Nobility 79 with n. 106. For comment on the »Mosserins«, see Irwin, Trade 74 f.; Jacoby, Acre 103 (written at a time when scholarship erroneously associated these merchants particularly with the »Nestorians«).
51 Hospitaller Cartulary. Cf. Riley-Smith, Nobility 79 f.
52 The Conservation project was led by Isabelle Doumet Skaf and Giorgio Capriotti under the aegis of ICCROM-ATHAR: see Doumet-Slaf/Capriotti/Hunt, Mural Paintings. I am grateful to Isabelle Doumet-Skaf for the invitation to join this project and for permission to reproduce photographs of the wallpaintings at Behdaidat here.
53 Hunt, Behdaidat for this argument. For this Confraternity see Richard, Confrérie 451 f.
54 For comment on the Syrian style of the programme at Behdaidat see Cruikshank Dodd, Painting 343; Nordiguian/Voisin, Châteaux 212; Immerzeel,





Fig. 5 **a** Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. View to East. – **b** Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. Apse painting, Deēsis Vision. – (Photo Courtesy I. Doumet Skaf).

specifically in late 1262 - early 1263, in tandem with Michael's ecumenical policy and in response to the threat to Christians posed by Sultan Baybars' attack on the Holy Land shrines of Bethlehem and Nazareth preceding that on Antioch in 1263[55]. The painted programme (**fig. 5a**) can be demonstrated to have been dedicated to self-sacrifice in imitation of Christ, prayer and salvation. The figure shown supplicating the military saint George (**figs 10-11**) can be viewed as a *confrater* representative of a textile–producing community trading and defending itself militarily under the aegis of the Hospitallers and working with politically powerful Genoese traders in the Genoese enclave of Gibelet. As such, he functions as an agent,

Puzzles 320 (index); Ter Haar Romeny et al., Formation 32; (with the wider proposed dating of 1243/1261-1262); Hélou, Patrimoine 183, 185. For the preliminary report on the art history of the programme since its conservation, with the bibliography from 2004-2009, see Hunt, Wallpainting. For further discussion of the wallpainting programme in the final report of the conservation project see Hunt, Behdaidat. A fragmentary inscription referring to the patriarch of Antioch in the wallpainting programme at the Church of Sts Sergius and Bacchus at Kaftoun in Northern Lebanon is also relevant here: see Waliszewski et al., Kaftun 317.

55 For Baybars' action see Richard, Crusades 416.

expressing a dual Melkite-Latin identity through his clothes and gestures. This is expressed in the form of the taking of the oath of loyalty and fealty to St George himself as a *turcopole* soldier, in the knowledge of sacrifice and in view of the Last Judgement imagery of Christ in Majesty and the intercession of the Virgin and St John[56]. By taking the oath as a *confrater*, the supplicant seals his dual Melkite-Latin identity, hence personalising the emperor's policy of church union.

The painted programme points to the accommodation of Melkite and Latin worship. The apocalyptic image of Christ in Majesty, in its traditional form, is the focus of the apse, combined with the *Deēsis* (**fig. 5**)[57]. The Gospel book held by Christ is open at the text of the Gospel of John 8:12 in Syriac, but with the first word in Greek[58]. This indicates the continuing ancient Antiochene use liturgies of St Basil and St John Chrysostom, although celebrated in Syriac and Greek[59]. At the same time Latin worship is accommodated with the depiction of alternating Greek and Latin blessings by the apostles depicted in the apse[60]. The emphasis is on healing the rifts in the universal church caused by the outcomes of the Council of Chalcedon of 451. The specifically Greek Orthodox monastic origins of the apse image in Asia Minor – as well as its presence at the Stoudion monastery church documented in the tenth century, as mentioned above – would have resonated with Syrian Melkite Christians with family connections and trading links with that area. The link with Constantinople was surely cemented with reference to major relics from the Antioch area with historic associations with the Melkite community in Syria. The relics, which had subsequently been housed in Constantinople, bestowed blessings and protection to the emperor himself.

The *Deēsis* shows the Virgin and St John the Baptist interceding with Christ on behalf of those worshipping and oath-taking in the church. St John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, was a central figure for the Greek Orthodox/Melkites, for the Hospitallers as the patron saint of the Order of the Knights of St John, and also for the Genoese. He extends his bare arms which are painted with hairs. This is to demonstrate his embodiment of the monastic ideals of Elijah, who was the archetypal monastic figure in both east and west[61]. Elijah is usually depicted in Byzantine art with a fur mantle and here that appearance is transferred to John himself and internalised by him. The imagery is rooted in the Holy Land. Elijah was believed to have ascended in his fiery chariot from Mount Hermon near the site of Christ's Baptism in the Jordan valley at which the Melkite monastery of St John Prodromos was sited[62]. This monastery had been restored by Manuel Komnenos in the later twelfth century[63]. The relics of the hand and left arm of St John were kept at this monastery and had been translated sometime after 1187 from Sebaste, where he had been martyred[64]. The right hand, with which St John had baptised Christ, had been taken from Antioch to Constantinople by the emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos in 956 and kept in the Great Palace at Constantinople where it played an important role in imperial court ceremonial, as Ioli Kalavrezou has shown[65].

In Constantinople itself, in the tenth century the presence of the relic of the hand of St John the Baptist, brought to the city from Antioch by Constantine VII in 956, has been interpreted as validating the legitimacy of the emperor in Constantinople at that time through divine intercession[66]. The emphasis on the depiction of the hand with bare arms of St John the Baptist in the wall-painting at Behdaidat (**fig. 5b**) arguably references the relic itself. This can be seen as transferring back the protection afforded by the relic through its prior location in Antioch and through the person of the emperor.

St Stephen the protomartyr of Jerusalem is shown in the Behdaidat wall-painting programme, standing on the south side at the base of the triumphal arch facing the nave (**fig. 5a**), opposite Daniel, on the north, who is an image of salvation. But St Stephen also has an imperial connection with Constantinople through the translation of his relics. These were brought to Constantinople, to the Church of St Stephen in the imperial palace, at the instigation of Pulcheria, sister of Theodosius II, in the early fifth century[67]. Ioli Kalavrezou speculated that the emperor can be associated with St Stephen in certain instances of Byzantine art, identifying the role of deacon with the intermediary position occupied by the emperor between the lay and ecclesiastical ranks[68]. This observation can be applied here at Behdaidat. The figure of St Stephen is both richly-dressed and is censing as in his liturgical role. His association with Jerusalem serves to highlight Michael's binary role as New Constantine and Protector of the Christians and Holy Places of the Holy Land.

The pilgrim Anthony of Novgorod recorded seeing the right arm of St John the Baptist in the palace chapel of the Virgin of the Pharos in 1200 with other relics[69]. As already mentioned, he also saw the thumb from this hand in the church of St John in the monastery of the Stoudion[70]. The depiction of John's bare arms and hands at Behdaidat draws

56 Hunt, Behdaidat for this argument.
57 Hélou, Déisis-Vison for this iconography.
58 I am grateful to Professor Rifaat Ebied of Sydney University for his comments on the text.
59 See Pahlitzsch/Baraz, Communities 211 for prevailing assumption of the imposition of these liturgies. For the liturgical position in Jerusalem see Galadza, Byzantinization. Continuity in Antiochene art and liturgy can now be emphasised: see Hunt, Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Latin Interaction. The Greek Orthodox/Melkite community took the Behdaidat church over from the West Syrian Miaphysite community: it is known that a priest from the latter denomination had previously been appointed to the church from Tripoli in 1256: see Hunt, Wallpainting 74.
60 Cruikshank Dodd, Painting 341 f.
61 Jotischky, Solitude 159.
62 Pringle, Churches 2,241.
63 Pringle, Churches 2,240-244.
64 Pringle, Churches 2,241 f.
65 Kalavrezou, Hands.
66 Kalavrezou, Hands 76-78.
67 Kalavrezou, Hands 57, 59.
68 Kalavrezou, Hands 66.
69 Kalavrezou, Hands 78 f. For the relics at the Pharos Church see Magdalino, Reliques.
70 Kalavrezou, Hands 69 with n. 68. See above, n. 13.

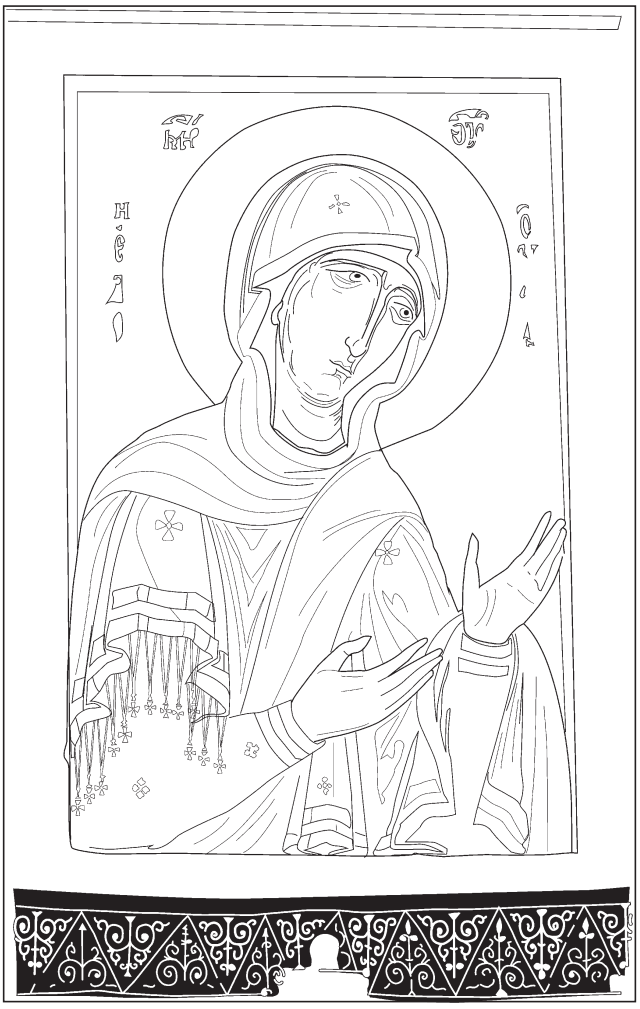

Fig. 6 Paphos, Monastery of St Neophytos. Templon icon of the Virgin. – (Drawing after Papageorgiou, Icons fig. 19).

on the connection with Constantinople to »remotely« reclaim the relic and accentuates its Antiochene origin. This thumb – or perhaps a small section of a finger – had been removed when the relic was still in Antioch where, according to one miracle, it had been used to kill a dragon by choking and so enable the rescue of a young girl by her father[71]. Various narratives exist concerning the right arm after 1204. One is that it was taken from Constantinople in 1261 by Baldwin, emperor of Latin Constantinople and acquired by Eudes de Circons, lord of Charistos and then given to the Monastery of Cîteaux in 1264[72]. Another was that it was taken to the Peribleptos Monastery of the Virgin[73]. Thereafter it was kept at the monastery of St John the Baptist at Pera in Constantinople until the end of Byzantine rule[74]. A reliquary of the fourteenth/early fifteenth century in the Topkapi Sarayi Museum is also thought to hold the relic[75]. What is important at Behdaidat in the early 1260s is the evocation of the power of the relic, once in Greek Orthodox hands in Antioch and now shared with the Latins, to protect and give victory to the joint Syrian Melkite-Latin military defence of the loyalty against attack by the forces of Sultan Baybars.

The presence of the relics in pre-1204 Constantinople had contributed an ecumenical dimension to the holiness of the city itself[76]. At Behdaidat the evocation of the relics of the Holy Land and of Antiochene origin provides an ecumenical basis for prayer and a legitimacy for the Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Latin, especially Genoese and Hospitaller parties, united here. In the case of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite Christians, Antioch as the place of origin of the relics underlines the legitimacy of their patriarch and their cause to protect the Holy Places and in turn to be protected. For the Genoese, relics of St John had first been acquired by the Genoese founder of the seigneurie of Gibelet after the First Crusade and taken to San Lorenzo in Genoa[77]. For the Hospitallers, it was an endorsement by their patron saint of their leadership in the defence of the Latin kingdom[78].

The economic basis of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite community was arguably the production of textiles, which appear throughout the programme. Several of these are elevated to the status of textile relics, especially the cloths striped in red and black on which Christ in the apse (**fig. 5b**) and the Virgin of the Annunciation (**figs 7a-b**) are seated. The same can be said for the cloth around the neck of the young man from Mytilene riding pillion, being rescued by St George (**fig. 10**), which takes the form of the cloth used to wipe the eucharistic chalice. These were probably of cotton or linen, a major industry in the areas of Antioch and Tripoli at the time. Cotton fabric is featured in the narrative images on an iconostasis beam at Sinai depicting the miracles of St Eustratios with a *Deēsis* image, which Nancy Ševčenko has provisionally attributed to Antioch[79] Given the present discussion and the centrality of Tyre and Tripoli to the textile industry, the County of Tripoli can also be proposed as a place of manufacture of an icon such as this, and the production of the type of the textiles it depicts. The beam could well have been placed above an iconostasis screen in a church such as Behdaidat. Striped cloth appears in thirteenth-century wallpaintings elsewhere in present-day Lebanon[80]. At Behdaidat the Virgin holds a red thread (**fig. 7b**), representing that with which the temple veil is woven, accessing the rich Greek Orthodox iconography of the Annunciation and veiling[81]. Maria Evangelatou has referred to the miracle which took place every Friday at the Blachernae in Constantinople when the veil in front of the

71 Sinkević, Hand 128 with n. 12.
72 Kalavrezou, Hands 68 with n. 62.
73 Sinkević, Hand 130.
74 Majeska, Travelers 341.
75 Kalavrezou, Hands 69f.; Qantara, Relic.
76 Majeska, Pilgrims 95, 101.
77 Epstein, Genoa 29; Gorse, Family 315.
78 The right arm subsequently became their most valued possession of the Knights of Rhodes: Sinkević, Hand 131f.
79 Ševčenko, Beam 281f., in which the dress streaked in pink and blue to the right of scene 4 – described 270 with colour plate 9 – is considered to be ikat.
80 An example is that depicted in the southern apse of the chapel at the east end of the Church of Mar Girgius at Rashkida: Dodd, Painting 273 with pl. 14.4.
81 See Evangelatou, Thread.



Fig. 7a-b Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. Triumphal Arch. Annunciation. – (Photos I. Doumet-Skaf).

icon of the Virgin and Child lifted itself revealing the holy image[82]. This veil represents Christ's material being, the form in flesh which he derived from the Virgin and with which he was clothed at the Incarnation[83]. Here at Behdaidat the patterning at the base of the apse is identical to such a veil depicted below an early thirteenth-century icon of the praying Virgin Eleousa from St Neophytos near Paphos on Cyprus (**fig. 6** drawing)[84]. This icon is closely related to others with wavy lines on the back depicting fabric which is surely the hallmark of the manufacture by Greek Orthodox/Melkites in the cloth industry, including the Confraternity.

Similar artistic and commercial activities can be shown to extend to Mamluk Egypt with comparable work identifiable in Miaphysite Coptic churches. A related work in Old Cairo is the icon of the Virgin and Child in the Church of St Barbara (**fig. 8a**), which depicts striped cloth on the throne both behind the Virgin and decorating that on which she is seated[85]. The column painting of the Virgin with the Child before the main sanctuary in the Church of St Mercurius in Old Cairo similarly shows the Virgin holding thread in her hands (**fig. 8b**)[86]. This demonstrates that Genoese commercial activity also involved Miaphysite communities, operating along trading routes, including that through the port of Alexandria.

This depiction of textiles can be seen alongside that of other materials characteristic of the trading activity of the Confraternity, including gems and pearls and the material means to produce colours, including the madder of red and alum with which to set the colours. I argue that the young man being rescued from Mytilene represents the island of Mytilene (Lesbos) itself, needing protection from Turkish attack. The island had been in Latin hands (those of Baldwin of Flanders) after 1204 but was reconquered by the Byzantine emperor of Nicaea John III Vatatzes after 1224[87]. It therefore demonstrates the recovery of the traditional Byzantine resources needed for the successful textile trade in the County of Tripoli. Arguably this does not just offer up these materials

82 Evangelatou, Thread 264.
83 Evangelatou, Thread 264 with references.
84 Papageorgiou, Icons fig. 19; Mouriki, Hodegetria 413 f. with fig. 3.
85 Skalova/Gabra, Icons 176-179 with plates.
86 For both the Virgin and Child icon with striped cloth in the Church of Sitt Barbara and the column painting of the Virgin holding the thread in the Church of St Mercurius see Hunt, Interchange 52-54 with references and, respectively, figs 5 and 4. I pursue the Egyptian connections further in a larger forthcoming study.
87 Gregory, Lesbos. See Hunt, Behdaidat for this argument.



Fig. 8 **a** Old Cairo, Church of Sitt Barbara. Icon of the Virgin and Child. – **b** Virgin and Child. Column painting before the sanctuary, Church of St Mercurius, Old Cairo. – (Photos L.-A. Hunt).

but also gives their exploitation a spiritual value, thereby bestowing legitimacy on the commercial activities of the community. Greek Orthodox/Melkite agency gives these arguments form and life. This underlines the position of the community as a textile-producing one with trading links to the Arab world, especially through Tyre, and to the Mongol east, and to the West and Byzantium itself.

The Virgin receives the word of God from the dove in the Behdaidat Annunciation (**figs 7a-b**) in exactly the same way as she does in the scene on the beam at Sinai with the Nativity discussed above[88]. This and other evidence of the close relationship between the painting here and icons at Sinai suggests that there was an iconostasis screen at Behdaidat with such a beam above. Furthermore, the close comparison between the Annunciation at Behdaidat (**figs 7a-b**) with a pair of painted doors of the Annunciation at Sinai (**fig. 9**) points to the likely former presence of similar doors here at Behdaidat[89]. This focuses attention on the Virgin as door, further cementing the link with imperial Byzantine ceremonial as at St Sophia in Constantinople. This was symbolised by the imagery of the lunette mosaic, mentioned above, over the vestibule portal doorway of the second half of the tenth century showing Constantine with the city, and Justinian the church before the Virgin and Child as intercessor[90].

88 Reproduced in Folda, Art 318 with fig. 164.
89 Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 179 no. 22 with colour plate (S. E. J. Gerstel).
90 Dagron, Emperor 99 with pl. 2.



Fig. 9 Monastery of St Catherine at Mount Sinai. Sanctuary Doors with the Annunciation. – (Photo reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai).



Fig. 10 Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. South wall. St George with the young servant boy from Mytilene, and supplicant. – (Photo I. Doumet-Skaf).

The salvational theme sets the tone for the painting on the upper part of the triumphal arch and cascades down the registers of painting, to the military saints on the nave walls. The image of the Sacrifice of Isaac on the north side has the last-minute rescue of Isaac, prefiguring the sacrifice of Christ. The ram on the barrel vault to the left of the scene (just visible at the top left of **fig. 5**) stands, for the Latin worshipper, for the Lamb of God and Christ's sacrifice as an inspiration for martyrdom. Christ is shown as a bust portrait in a jewelled roundel at the top of the triumphal arch. The whole is directed from God at the apex through the hands of God extended on either side from the former window. These hands of God from heaven indicated by eight-pointed white stars above. The word of God is handed down in written form to Moses. In the apse below are the apostles, alternating Greek and Latin blessing gestures, reflecting the dual Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Latin worship in the church.

The military saints are both defenders and each has the function of a *diasoritēs*, a term meaning safe-keeping and derived from a monastery in Asia Minor[91]. It can be argued that St George (**figs 10; 12a**) represents the interests of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite community working in collaboration with the Latins, while St Theodore (**fig. 13**) represents the County of Tripoli. St George's shield is decorated with a prominent chequerboard design, which reappears in more fragmented form on his saddle guards as well as on St Theodore's surviving front guard. The same design is shown on the central panel of the painted triptych at Sinai often referred to as the »Acre Triptych«, where it depicts a floor-covering, likely a textile one, covering the low platform on which the enthroned Virgin and Child are seated, extending forward in perspective. On this triptych the chequerboard design has been regarded as a western feature[92]. However, its origins can be regarded as Byzantine, used as a military symbol, as it appears as a heraldic design on Byzantine flags from the tenth century[93]. This might well have implications for a possible reattribution of the triptych itself to the County of Tripoli. Furthermore, the Behdaidat St George figure displays another imperial symbol, that of a single-headed eagle looking to its right on a red ground worn on the saint's left legging, next to his horse's red and white chevron girth (**fig. 12a**). This is inherited from the Roman military past[94]. Viewing the eagle symbol as an indication of the intervention of Michael VIII as imperial protector refers back to its appearance on the dalmatic of St Stephen visible on a column at the Church of the Nativity in the late 1160s at the time of the intervention of Manuel Komnenos. This had arguably been painted at the time of his father and predecessor the emperor John II Komnenos before the latter's death in April 1143 and had retained its imperial associations and relevance (**fig. 12b**)[95].

91 For the *diasoritēs* term see Grotowski, George 57 with n. 1; Puech, Aristocracy 70 with Map 80.
92 Folda, Chrysography 13, with colour plate 2, who notes its use in Tuscany by Guido da Siena.
93 Babuin, Standards 41.
94 Babuin, Standards 41.
95 Bagatti, Betlemme 99 with fig. 22; Kühnel, Painting 64-69 fig. 3, no 11, pls XX-XXI. For this dating see Hunt, Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Latin Interaction.



Fig. 11 Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. North wall. Detail, St George's supplicant. – (Photo L.-A. Hunt).

The observations here about the community in this area being a textile-producing one opens up the question of whether this community was also responsible for the surviving *peplos/pallium*, the ceremonial outer robe now in the Museo di Sant'Agostino in Genoa, which was given by Michael VIII to the Genoese Commune for display in the cathedral of St Laurence. The logical conclusion is that this embroidered *peplos/pallium* was indeed made by this same community of textile workers in the County of Tripoli, coordinated through the agency of Euthymios, patriarch of Antioch. This is supported by the strong imperial elements in the embroidery.

A comparable scenario, I suggest, can be seen in the south conch of the *narthex* of the Church of the Phorbiotissa at Asinou on Cyprus. Here praying laypeople are shown supplicating the Virgin of Mercy wearing dual-coloured garments[96]. These reflect the dual-coloured clothing of the St George supplicant at Behdaidat (**fig. 11**) who, as mentioned, I argue is a *confrater* between the Greek and Latin Churches and a member of the Confraternity of St George (Lydda) and Bethlehem. In the same *narthex* at Asinou the painting of St George, currently dated to the late twelfth century, has been termed a »Diasorites in all but name«[97]. However, I would date this painting to the thirteenth century, alongside Behdaidat, and argue the artists to be members of the same Confraternity. Artistically there are several parallels to link the two. Just one is the hexagonal design of the Asinou St George's halo which appears in the lower part of the apse at Behdaidat (here **fig. 4**). His shield depicts eight-pointed stars with the cross and star and crescent motif. This betokens a link with Latin Tripoli that is also the case at Behdaidat.

The military saint Theodore at Behdaidat (**fig. 13**) can be identified with Latin Tripoli through the presence of red eight-pointed stars which are also shown in the sky on either side of the saint's head[98]. Eight-pointed stars appear in the star denier coinage of the County of Tripoli of the mid-thirteenth century. The motif is thought to have been derived from the cross and crescent design which appeared on the coinage of Raymond V (1148-1194), count of Toulouse, when he held the County of Tripoli. It was subsequently adopted into the County of Tripoli, probably during the reign of Bohemond IV[99]. This symbolism had been used to build up the aura of Count Raymond III of Toulouse (1197-1249), especially his identity as a model of *paratge,* or peerage, and moral virtue. The Occitanian system of values were constructed around allegories of heraldry and epic poetry of the victory in the First Crusade and the gain of Antioch[100]. Furthermore, its origins have been attributed to Eastern Christology[101]. One can go further in suggesting that the stellar iconography has a Bethlehemite aspect to it. The binary sun/moon juxtaposition that is a part of it also occurs at Behdaidat, associated with Christ at the top of the triumphal arch (**fig. 4**), with eight-pointed stars, this time in white, expressive of light. Christ is thereby authorizing St Theodore. The linkage of the sun and moon imagery to the Count's coinage is also about power and economics. Tripoli's fortunes had risen, with its port providing coastal access. Conversely, those of once-great Antioch, now cut off by Muslim-held territory from the County of Tripoli to the south

96 Kalopissi-Verti, Murals 127 f. with fig. 5.10.
97 Nicolaïdès, Murals 101 with fig. 4.1 and detail opposite 93 in colour.
98 Hunt, Wallpainting fig. 59.
99 Schlumberger, Numismatique 104 for this suggestion; Bedoukian, Coinage 121 with n. 37 and figs. For this coinage in the County of Toulouse, see Macé, Raymond VII 151.
100 Macé, Raymond VII 137 refers to a »hierarchy of values« around princely propaganda.
101 Macé, Raymond VII 151.

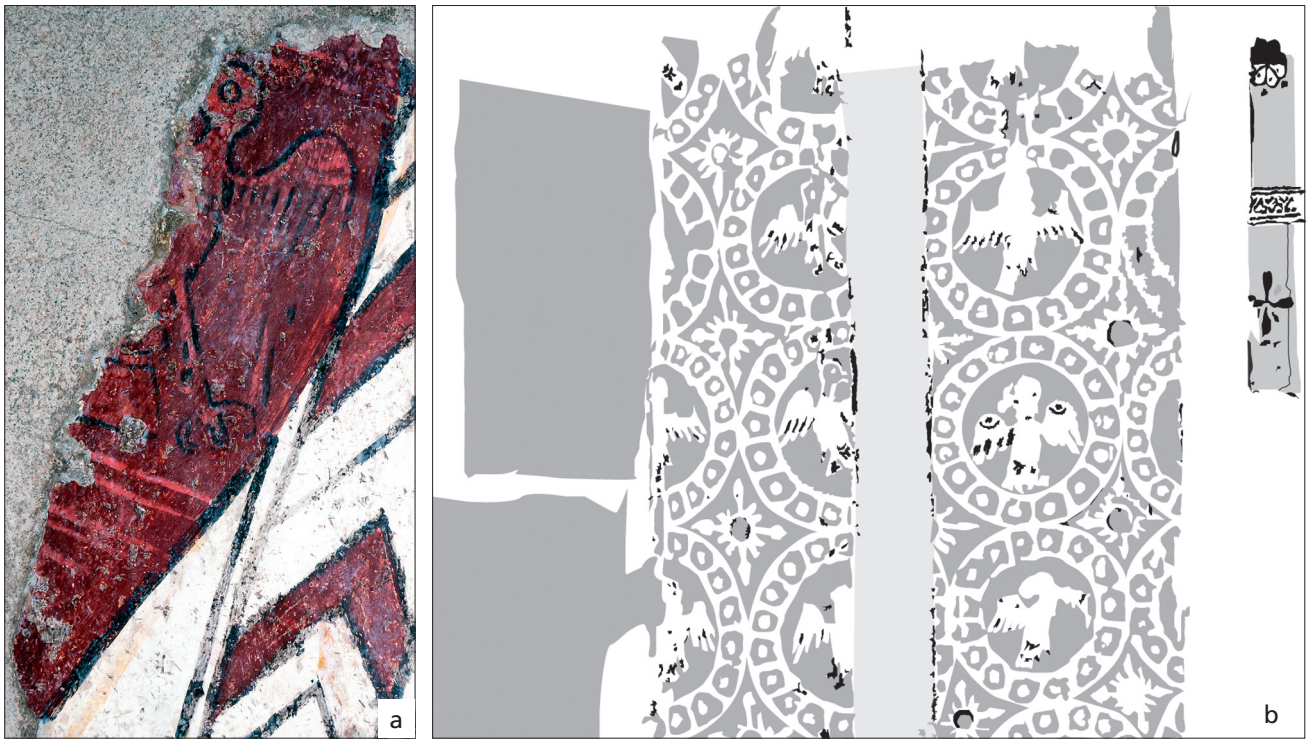

Fig. 12 **a** Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. South wall. St George. Detail of legging, eagle. – **b** Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity. Column painting of St Stephen. Detail of dalmatic, eagle design. – (a Photo L.-A. Hunt, b Drawing after Kühnel, Painting pl. 21 fig. 34).

of it, had declined[102]. In taking on the role of Christian protector, Tripoli has taken on the attributes of Constantinople including its spiritual authority through the presence of relics depicted at Behdaidat and the willingness to defend Antioch and its patriarchate. Baldwin II, the last Latin emperor of Constantinople (1228-1261), identified with such a Greek-Latin fusion when he depicted himself as the equestrian emperor Constantine on his seal, inscribed in Greek, as Cécile Morrison has recently emphasised[103].

The Military Saints' Supplicants

The portraits of the supplicants indicate their intermediary position between the Latins and the Byzantine emperor. They point to a date after late 1262, when Michael VIII had suggested union to the Pope and before Euthymios left office, believed to be during 1263. The scene represents an oath taking[104]. The St Theodore supplicant (**figs 13-14**) wears the dark garment of a procurator/administrator and merchant, with a vertical red stipe which identifies him as a member of the Confraternity. He prays with his hands extended in the western manner and is therefore a Latin-rite Christian. His prayer mirrors that of an icon at Sinai showing the kneeling figure of George Parisis praying (the Greek inscription uses the word *Deēsis*) before St George Diasorites with St Theodore Stratelates[105]. This supplicant is arguably in command on behalf of the Genoese. As the leader of the local commander he could well have been indigenous-born[106]. He fixes his gaze on the St George supplicant opposite (**figs 10-11**), who raises his hands in prayer in the *orans* eastern manner. This supplicant is on the point of making his oath of allegiance to the saint, and to the Hospitaller Order to become a warrior *confrater*. The latter's role is as a sergeant to the saint. His *mi-parti* blue- and red-coloured garment shows that he had dual affiliation, as a Melkite and as a Latin feudatory, and as the latter he enjoyed feudal protection. The frontispiece in a Cilician Armenian manuscript of the *Assizes* of Antioch, dated to 1331, shows a *confrater* appealing over the head of his overlord to the king, in this case Levon IV [107]. This is relevant to Behdaidat. The *confrater* system bypasses Bohemond VI. It offers, then, an alternative feudal structure at a time of weakness or conflict with the feudal lord of the Principality. Count Guy of Gibelet had fought alongside the Genoese against the Venetians and Pisans, against the orders of Bohemond VI, his feudal overlord, during the War of Mar Saba at Acre (1256-1258). The *confrater* system used here benefited, then, the Genoese, the Hospitallers and the Communes, in which the

102 Bedoukian, Coinage 122.
103 Morrison, Identities 162 with fig. 8.14.
104 This, and the art history of the painted programme as a whole, is described and discussed in greater detail in Hunt, Behdaidat.
105 Cat. New York 2004, 376 no. 231 (J. Folda).
106 Riley-Smith, Nobility 52-56, 90f.
107 MS Venice, Mekhitarist Library 107; Der Nersessian, Painting 159f. with fig. 648; Cat. Venice 2011-2012 no. 26 (A. Sirian).



Fig. 13 Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. North wall. St Theodore with supplicant. – (Photo L.-A. Hunt).



Fig. 14 Behdaidat, Church of St Theodore. North wall. St Theodore. Detail, supplicant. – (Photo L.-A. Hunt).

Confraternities had a place, against the increasingly weak central state. In the present context, it gave a structure within which a Melkite could retain his identity at the same time as fighting under the aegis of the Hospitaller Order in the interests of his community and Greek Orthodox/Melkite shrines. The authority of the Hospitallers is marked with patriarchal crosses painted near the entrance to the church. St George accepts the allegiance of his supplicant, touching him with the lance. This can be associated with the relic of the lance of Antioch[108]. The protection of Antioch was bound up with the sacred past of the Melkite community as well as its politics.

The point holds good concerning the dress worn by administrators and merchants. While it is true that the St Theodore supplicant at Behdaidat is operating within the Genoese-held seigneurie of Gibelet, his headgear identifies him more generally as an Italian official, especially one involved in trade. It could well indicate business interests in both Tyre and Tripoli. Tripoli was also the location of the court of Bohemond, prince of Antioch, ally of the Venetians. The War of Mar Saba had polarised the Genoese and the Venetian communities, and resulted in the ejection of the Venetians from Tyre (1256) and then the Genoese from Acre (1258). Tyre became the local centre of Genoese operations, especially for trade with Damascus and the Islamic world. Tripoli would also have been important, given its position on the major coastal trading route between the coastal cities and Ayas/Lajazzo in Lesser Armenia. This coastal route also performed an important role linking Antioch itself with its dependencies, cut off by the Islamic-held territory in between. While the lord of Gibelet was in conflict with his liege-lord Bohemond, a figure such as the St Theodore supplicant at Behdaidat could have acted as a go-between for business and legal concerns[109].

One aspect of the Behdaidat programme paintings that remains to be discussed is its relationship to Palaiologan art. This can be addressed through the St Theodore supplicant portrait (**figs 13-14**). The hat worn by the St Theodore

108 For the lance, see Morris, Visions.

109 Richard, Comtes.

supplicant is his badge of office and an indicator of the merchant's wealth and status. It has a lining of white cloth which widens into a kind of flap just above the ear. This is shared with prominent individuals in the mosaic of the Prayers for the Discovery of the Body of St Mark in the south transept of San Marco in Venice (**figs 15-16**)[110]. These men represent the governing élite, distinguished from the clerical group at the base of the scene and the general populace on the left. As with the Behdaidat supplicant they turn at a two-thirds angle towards the viewer. The way that the left praying figure of the two extends his hands in prayer is also particularly comparable with the Behdaidat supplicant. On historical grounds Otto Demus dated this (and the other Apparition scene), between 1253, when Doge Raniero Zen came to power, and 1266[111]. The Venetians were trading in Tyre, where such white cloth was produced, until they were ejected in 1256, and the recycling of mosaic cubes from Tyre in Venice is documented. It was this Doge who ratified an agreement in 1255 whereby the church of St Mark's in Tyre was declared independent of the bishop and subject only to Venice itself[112]. This growth in Venetian power was what prompted Philip de Montfort, the Latin lord of Tyre, to expel the Venetians in the first place. Ejected merchants and artists could have returned to Venice. There are stylistic features in common with the Behdaidat image too, including the linear approach and »realistic« character to the scene as well as the strong use of colour.



Fig. 15 Basilica di San Marco. Interior, mosaics. South Transept, West wall. Gallery level, lower register. Prayers for the discovery of the body**.** Detail: head and hands of the praying »councillor« in a blue cloak. – (Photo E. Ritter. Courtesy of Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, D.C).



Fig. 16 Basilica di San Marco. Interior. Mosaics. South Transept, West wall. Gallery level, lower register. Discovery of St Mark's relics: Prayers for the discovery of the body, detail, northern half. – (Photo E. Ritter. Courtesy of Image Collections and Fieldwork Archives, Dumbarton Oaks, Trustees for Harvard University, Washington, D.C.).

110 Demus, Mosaics 2,27-44 with colour pls 7, 33; Demus/Kessler, Decoration 110.
111 Demus/Kessler, Decoration 110. For the presence of mosaic cubes from Tyre and elsewhere in the Levant, see Demus, Mosaics 1,29.
112 Pringle, Churches 4,164.



Fig. 17 Basilica di San Marco. West door lunette. Christ Pantocrator (Deēsis scene) flanked by the Virgin and St Mark. – (Photo Universal Images Group).

Otto Demus identified the scene of the Prayers for the Discovery of the Body of St Mark as »early Palaeologan art«[113]. As such it is contemporary with Behdaidat. Indeed, the Behdaidat parallel can be considered as filling the gap identified by Demus, who judged that »…we do not have in San Marco a single work that could be regarded as a forerunner of the style of this mosaic«[114]. Behdaidat, then supplies the missing link, and the County of Tyre and Tripoli, may well be this source for artists to San Marco in Venice. Demus attributed the *Deēsis* at San Marco (**fig. 17**) to the same workmanship as the scene of the Prayers for the Discovery of the Body of St Mark. It shows Christ with a stripe down the side of his garment, depicted as the member of a Confraternity. This mosaic work could well be attributed, then, to displaced Venetians following the upheavals of the War of Mar Saba and the ejection of the Venetians from Tyre between 1256 and 1277. Tyre in particular was a centre of glass manufacture[115]. Beirut, Acre and Antioch can be added to the list[116].

But should the style of this »early Palaiologan art« be considered exclusively Venetian? Here we need to look more closely at the interlocking mercantile activity along the Syrian coast. Doge Raniero Zen was himself in possession of a *sandal* silk from Tripoli which was documented amongst his effects when he died in 1268[117]. Much of the trade in Tripoli was in the hands of Italian merchants, with the Genoese and Pisans outnumbering the Venetians. Trade was undertaken directly both with Europe and also locally between Tripoli and Antioch, with the luxury goods of cloth and spices being particularly important[118]. These goods would be produced, or handled, by indigenous communities. Given the cultural mix in Tripoli and Tyre this »early Palaiologan« style should, then, instead be identified with Latins as merchants and administrators in Latin Syria sponsoring Greek Orthodox/Melkite artists alongside Latin ones. The »Venetian« element in the face of St John in the *Deēsis* mosaic in St Sophia in Constantinople referred to earlier (**figs 1-2**) could just as well reflect Genoese-Greek Orthodox/Melkite artistic activity. Style presently attributed to Venice could just as easily, then, be applicable to Genoa, with implications for the *Deēsis* panel in St Sophia. The style, then, should be detached from mutually-exclusive »Venetian« or »Genoese« interests.

113 Demus/Kessler, Decoration 284 f. with n. 143.
114 Demus/Kessler, Decoration 113. For general discussion on questions raised by the mosaics of San Marco, see James, Mosaic.
115 Boas, Archaeology 151; Jacoby, Function 164.
116 Jacoby, Function 164.
117 Jacoby, Materia 43 f. with n. 143.
118 Vorderstrasse, Tripoli esp. 100.

The Mid-Thirteenth-Century Embroidered Pallio (*peplos*/*pallium*) of the Museo di Sant'Agostino in Genoa

The *peplos*/*pallium* of San Lorenzo has received considerable attention from scholars, concentrating on the Byzantine and Italian sources, the structure and the narrative, epigraphy, and historical aspects[119]. Exploring my proposal that the embroidery was made by Greek Orthodox/Melkite artists from the County of Tripoli, the intention here is to propose some further observations on the relationship between the Greek Orthodox/Melkites of this area and the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII. This links Michael's policy in Constantinople and his ambition to be seen as a second Constantine with his role as the protector of Greek Orthodox/Melkite Christians in the Latin Crusader states in Syria. Michael follows Manuel Komnenos as the new Constantine. Michael was shown depicted as the new Constantine in a *peplos* that the patriarch Germanos had made to honour him and which was hung in St Sophia in Constantinople[120]. An official portrait of the emperor was apparently included on one of two *peploi* that were sent to Genoa at the time of the Treaty of Nymphaion in 1261; this cloth was requested as »a firm defence against our foes«[121]. Michael himself used the title of Constantine in his correspondence[122].

Mention of Michael's artistic patronage positioning himself as the heir to the Komenene dynasty is a useful way of introducing discussion of the Genoa *peplos*/*pallium* as it points up the issue of Byzantine trading concerns. Michael restored Komnene monuments in recently-reconquered territories and supported monasteries and their abbots in the process of consolidation, as Sophia Kalopissi-Verti has shown[123]. He celebrated his victory over the Angevins at the Battle of Berat in 1280-1281 in wall-paintings at the Blachernae palace in Constantinople which must have been viewed as pendant pieces to the images of Manuel Komnenos' celebration of his military victories there in the later twelfth century[124].

He also revived Komnene policies. The Treaty of Nymphaion acknowledged the trading rights that Manuel Komnenos agreed in 1155[125]. Here, out of the need for allies and the protection afforded by the Genoese navy, the Byzantine emperor acknowledged Italian maritime might. By the mid-thirteenth century the authority of the Crusader monarchy was curtailed and its power dissipated. Crusader leaders were making their own, independent agreements with Baybars[126]. Michael VIII took advantage of the power vacuum to assert himself politically in the seigneurie of Gibelet, through the suzerain system, not only to protect the Greek Orthodox/Melkite community but also to safeguard Byzantine trading interests. He was also trying to forestall the ambitions of Charles of Anjou, who went on to buy the crown of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1277, probably at the instigation of the pope, who thought at the time that this gave the Kingdom the best chance of survival.

The embroidery depicts scenes focusing on the life and martyrdom of St Laurence, with two other martyrs, Sixtus and the gaoler Tiburtius Callinicus. They are arranged in two rows of ten scenes each. The overall theme of the narrative was that of the fight of Christian martyrs[127]. In approaching the embroidery from the standpoint of artistic and cultural agency, a major role is argued here for Greek Orthodox/Melkites both as manufacturers of the embroidery and as those who delivered Michael's strategy on the ground. This is to take a different approach from the current scholarship on the embroidery, which has done so much to open up discussion of this object. Cecily Hilsdale has supported the view of several other scholars in suggesting that the piece was made in Nicaea at the time that Michael was planning to retake Constantinople and given to the Genoese as part of the Treaty of Nymphaion, at which trade concessions were also granted to the Genoese to seal their alliance[128]. Ida Toth has also supported the long-held view that it was directly associated with the signing of the treaty and was produced in Nicaea[129]. She supports the view that Manuel/Maximos Holobolos, monk and teacher of rhetoric (*rhētōr*) in the Patriarchal School in Constantinople had »possible direct involvement« in its preparation[130]. Ioli Kalavrezou argued that it was made in Constantinople, having been masterminded by Holobolos, and handed to the Genoese as they left Nymphaion[131]. She believes that this precious gold-embroidered silk textile was a one-off special gift from Michael to the Genoese commune, observing that it is a much more valuable textile than those mentioned in the treaty[132].

Penelope Johnstone had earlier suggested that the embroidery was made in Constantinople either in 1262 or 1267, when Michael approached the pope about church unity[133]. Developing the ecumenical line of argument, I would like to suggest that, in common with the paintings at Behdaidat,

119 See, selectively, Johnstone, »Pallio«; Falcone, »Pallio«; Calderoni Masetti, Considerazioni; Paribeni, Pallio; Hilsdale, Image with bibliography 152 f. n. 5 and colour plates; Hilsdale, Diplomacy 31-87; Kalavrezou, Peplos; Toth, Fabric, who considers the work (92) as »a unique object« and (107) as an »idiosyncracy«.

120 Macrides, New Constantine 22 f.

121 Macrides, New Constantine 35; Shepard, Constantinople 64 with n. 15.

122 Macrides, Constantine 24.

123 Kalopissi-Verti, Aspects 44.

124 Setton, Papacy 137; Kalopissi-Verti, Aspects 41.

125 Lopez, Silk 40.

126 Holt, Diplomacy 13-15.

127 As pointed out by Kalavrezou, *Peplos* 241.

128 Hilsdale, Image 194; 193 with n. 146 for mention of the commercial privileges. For one earlier view that the *pallio* was made at Nicaea see Schreiner, Denkmäler 257.

129 Toth, Fabric 92 with n. 9, discusses silk production in Nicaea earlier in the century (ibidem 99).

130 Toth, Fabric 102.

131 Kalavrezou, *Peplos* 224; 240 for the argument that the embroidery was produced under the supervision of Holobos.

132 Kalavrezou, *Peplos* 218.

133 Johnstone, »Pallio« 101. Maxwell, Constantinople 178 cites this opinion in the context of Michael's willingness to discuss theological matters with westerners, something else he shares in common with Manuel Komnenos.

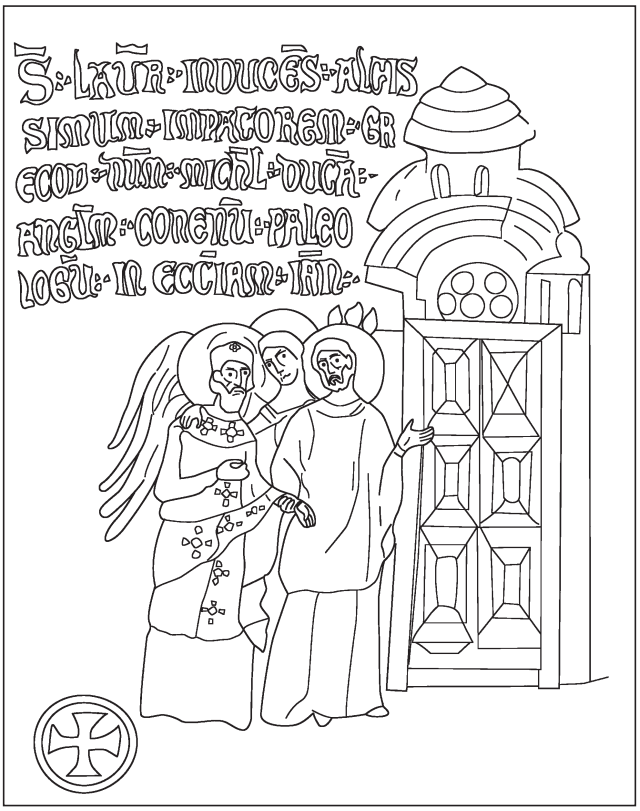

Fig. 18 Genoa, Museo di Sant'Agostino. Byzantine emperor with archangel and St Laurence. – (Drawing after Hilsdale, Image fig. 4).

the second half of 1262, the beginning of the negotiations towards the union of the Churches, is the correct date when the embroidery was made. I will make the case here that it was produced in the County of Tripoli, with the workmanship arranged with those with Syrian contacts, especially Euthymios, patriarch of Antioch, working with Theodosios Villehardouin, then a monk in Constantinople. Both, themselves Greek Orthodox, would have had western and Frankish contacts, especially among the Genoese, which would account for the presence of the Latin texts accompanying the narrative scenes. In carefully considering the Latin inscriptions of the *peplos*/*pallium* Ida Toth points to their close dependence on the Greek text of the *synaxarion* for the narrative of the life of St Laurence[134].

Let us look at two scenes in the *peplos*/*pallium,* both from the point of view of the Church union agenda and the role of Greek Orthodox/Melkite agents delivering the strategy on the ground. A prominent scene is that at the centre of the upper register, which shows Michael being led »into the church of Genoa«, according to the Latin inscription by St Laurence himself, accompanied and protected by his namesake the archangel Michael, who is shown behind, enveloping the emperor with his wing (Drawing, **fig. 18**)[135]. Michael is shown wearing a minimal crown and bowing in humility. The Latin inscription gives Michael's title as *Imperator Grecorum*, the emperor of the Greeks, rather than the usual imperial title of »emperor of the Romans«[136]. Hilsdale has suggested that the triad of figures demonstrates a »diplomatic pact«, whose depiction derives from Byzantine iconography of a marriage union[137]. This is seen to be endorsed by Holobolos' encomium referring to the love between the Genoese and the Byzantines[138]. This seems perfectly reasonable, but does interpretation need to be limited to a single »ceremonial conclusion of the particular treaty« (that of Nymphaion)[139]? The imagery should instead, I argue, be read in conjunction with his correspondence with the pope of 1262. The humility he displays could indeed be read as his conciliatory initiative towards the Latin Church. This chimes with Michael's second diplomatic approach to Urban IV in the summer of 1262, which is known from the summary and record of the Pope's second reply of 18 July 1263, following an interim one also in the summer of 1262[140]. Michael's letter laid out a proposal for union based on universal Christian charity[141]. Based on Christian love between Latins and Greek, the letter hinted that in the event of such a union Michael would support the pope against the Hohenstaufen Manfred of Sicily. The pope took the bait. He addressed Michael as illustrious emperor of the Greeks, *Imperator Graecorum illustris*, thereby expressing willingness to recognise Michael's claim to Constantinople, if union were to take place, provided that the rest of the former imperial territories remained in Latin hands. The pope thereby recognised the Byzantine emperor's control over the eastern empire while denying his claim to be universal emperor, the ideal originally pursued by Manuel Komnenos the century before, in the 1160s. This recognition was crucially important to Michael in the face of the threat of Charles of Anjou, who aimed to regain Constantinople for the Latins. However, at the same time Michael was using this terminology to his advantage to intervene in northern Syria on behalf of Syrian Melkites in the seigneurie of Gibelet, under effective Genoese control, thereby asserting his universal imperial stature by another route.

Michael's gift of the embroidery to the Genoese commune is arguably a way of putting the local Christians in the care of the Genoese, while retaining overall Byzantine suzerainty. The Genoese thereby became part of Michael's Holy Land agenda. The move asserted the seigneurie of Gibelet as a subject state of Byzantium. The Genoese seem to have acknowledged this status: they requested a portrait of Michael, recognising its power in offering »a firm defence against our foes«. The price paid was trading rights. The archangel Michael's halo in the embroidery scene (**fig. 18**) on the viewer's left side is not

134 Toth, Fabric 101 with n. 66-67 and 109 Appendix 1.
135 Macrides, New Constantine 35; Hilsdale, Image 167 with fig. 4 in colour; Hilsdale, Diplomacy 63-75 with fig. 1.3; Kalvrezou, Peplos 229f. with fig. 4; Hilsdale, Image 181 with n. 113 gives the inscription, taking account of its abbreviations, giving its translation as »Saint Lawrence [*sic*] leads the Most High Emperor of the Greeks Lord Michael Doukas Angelos Komnenos Palaiologos into the church of Genoa«; Toth, Fabric 92.
136 Kalopissi-Verti, Aspects 50.
137 Hilsdale, Diplomacy 73.
138 Hilsdale, Image 187.
139 Hilsdale, Diplomacy 49.
140 Geanakoplos, Emperor 146 with n. 31. This is eulogistic: Holobolos was, of course, an anti-unionist.
141 Geanakoplos, Emperor 146f.

clearly delineated, suggesting a blurring, or sharing of sanctity between the archangel and the emperor. As the winged emperor Michael, therefore, takes on the protective attributes of Michael the archangel. Indeed Holobolos reported in his encomium (of 1265) that the Genoese ambassador addressed Michael thus: »You are an angel, an Angel of Light, a Benevolent Angel«[142]. The archangel's presence in the embroidery, with St Laurence, provided legitimacy for Michael VIII's rulership[143]. Michael VIII attributed the recovery of Constantinople to God, through the intermediary of St Michael. This chimes with the *typikon* of the Monastery of Kellibara which declared that »Your right hand raised me on high, and established me as lord of all«[144]. The emperor Michael is adapting this winged emperor imagery from the coinage of Isaac II Angelos (1185-1195, 1203-1204) and that of the successors of the Angelos dynasty in the states of Thessalonike and Epiros, as Cécile Morrisson has shown[145]. He is thereby not only proclaiming angelic approval and protection for himself but asserting his rights to succeed as Byzantine emperor in Constantinople over the Byzantine states with pretensions to regain the city after its loss to the Latins in 1204.

The embroidery image arguably works by using proxies, or deputies. Everyone represented steps up a level. Depicting the emperor as the ruler of the Greeks means Michael VIII stands as the representative of that community, that of the Greek Orthodox/Melkites. He steps up to protect them, deputising for »becoming« St Michael. The community in turn steps up to stand in for to »become« him. The Genoese step up to deputise for »becoming« St Laurence. On the face of it, and according to the Latin inscription, the emperor, protected by St Michael, is being led into the Cathedral of St Laurence at Genoa by St Laurence. However, beneath the surface the Greek Orthodox/Melkite community is being entrusted to the care of the Genoese, with Michael VIII as overall protector/suzerain. This interpretation is consistent with the observation that when the Byzantines agreed to a foreign state or church acquiring precious textiles these were effectively »on loan«. As Robert Sabatino Lopez has written: »the Basileus did not intend to recognise them as equals. They merely consented to share temporarily with them some of the power and prestige which were vested in the Byzantine state and church, and which, to a smaller extent, were a common patrimony of the whole Byzantine nation«[146].

The materials of the *peplos*/*pallium* too work by proxy, including the silver and gold thread which would have been imported by the Genoese from Europe[147]. These metallic threads are worked into the cloth dyed with what is assumed to be the murex porphyry, destined for exclusively imperial use[148]. Murex originated in Tyre and so represents the value and preciousness in all senses of this region[149]. But it is not only imposing an imperial stamp. This is spreading, as it were, the »gold dust« of the embroidery over those participating in the agreement. Conservation work is currently underway on the *pallio*[150]. Should the results of this work, when available, happen to show that it is coloured with madder instead, this root dye would itself be »standing in« for the imperial purple dye. With the interaction of precious materials, in the hands of the expert Greek Orthodox/Melkite craftspeople, the textile reunites and fuses the two to form a union. And this fusion/union, I would suggest, was wrought by advisors close to Michael in Constantinople who saw the benefits of East-West Church union.

The Latin inscriptions address the different, Latin, audience in parallel with the Greek Orthodox/Melkite one which is addressed visually through the narrative structuring of the scenes: Kalavrezou noted that a »rather sophisticated hybridity is in play that respects both traditions« in this regard[151]. On one level this is the case. But it is not necessarily the case that the embroidery was simply handed over for the inscriptions to be added unilaterally[152]. The Syrian Melkites working on the embroidery spoke Latin, since they lived under Latin rule, and could well have been working alongside the Latin, probably Genoese, embroiderers, in Tripoli, who worked the inscriptions as part of the project under the control of the patriarch of Antioch. The presence of the inscriptions in Latin shows that the Genoese are signing up to their part in Michael's agenda. The assumption has been that in the Latin reading of the text of the emperor Michael entering into the Church of St Laurence (**fig. 18**) it is the church of St Laurence in Genoa that is referred to and for the Greek Orthodox viewers the Church of St Sophia in Constantinople[153]. But the proposal of Syrian manufacture introduces a different dynamic, that of Constantinople/Holy Land, and County of Tripoli/Genoa, with the Church of St Laurence in Tripoli instead as the focus.

In terms of Constantinople the most appropriate reference point would be the Church of the Holy Apostles as being the burial place of martyrs. For Michael himself this would have had direct personal resonance, as he hoped to be buried there[154]. It will be recalled that he had erected a column before the main door of the Church of the Holy Apostles with

142 Hilsdale, Image 188 with n. 130.
143 As pointed out by many scholars including Kalopissi-Verti, Aspects 50 with n. 61.
144 Morrisson, Authority 77 with n. 44. Hebrews 1:13 makes reference to an angel sitting on the right hand of God. The power bestowed on Michael VIII by St. Michael here can be viewed in similar terms to that accorded to Justinian in the sixth century as universal emperor by the archangel: see Wright, Justinian and an Archangel.
145 Morrisson, Identities 161 with n. 32. In turn, Andronikos II referred to himself in the image of St Andronikos at the church at the Chora Monastery, which appears with the military saints George and Demetrios: Nelson, Allies.
146 Lopez, Silk 1 f.
147 Jacoby, Thread 103-105 gives instances of the import of gold and silver thread to the Levantine coast and Egypt by the Genoese in the thirteenth century, pointing out that its production was linked to silk manufacture in western centres, including Lucca and Marseilles.
148 Kalavrezou, *Peplos* 240.
149 Haubrichs, Pourple.
150 Taddei, Pallio.
151 Kalavrezou, *Peplos* 232.
152 Kallavrezou, *Peplos* 241 attributes the addition of the Latin to a westerner.
153 Hilsdale, Diplomacy 66 f.
154 Talbot, Restoration 255.



Fig. 19 Bethlehem, Church of the Nativity. North transept, east wall. Mosaic, Incredulity of Thomas. – (Photo L.-A. Hunt).

a large statue of the archangel Michael and himself praying before it[155]. But a local Syrian association is present too, with memories of the image of Constantine's golden domed cathedral at Antioch in the mosaic of the Council of Antioch at Bethlehem of shortly before 1169[156]. Furthermore, the golden door of the *peplos/pallium* image is reminiscent of the golden door in the Incredulity of Thomas mosaic at the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem (**fig. 19**), the holy shrine to the protection of which the Confraternity was dedicated. This, then, is a call to protect the holy shrines, the patriarchate of Antioch and its dependencies, especially Tyre and Tripoli, and to be willing to die for them. Michael's claim to be the new Constantine dovetails with the justification traced back to the early Christian Antiochene church, its dependencies and the empire of Constantine. The message that the Eastern Christian embroiderers are absorbing as they work on the *peplos/pallium* is to put their faith in the Genoese and the policy of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite union with the Latins, thereby saving Antioch, with its Greek Orthodox/Melkite Church leader the patriarch. They create the piece in their own local style, giving them ownership. They even interpret the building as in the local style. This is the architecture of the Syrian coastal towns, especially Tripoli. Tripoli cathedral had internal gilded doors[157]. Another church in Tripoli, that of St James, had Gothic-style rose windows, and one can be see above the door of the church in the *peplos/pallium* scene (**fig. 18**). Rose windows in the church of St James accompanied a sculpture of the western Lamb of God, with the inscription »Ecce Agnus Dei«[158]. This can be linked to the theme of Christ's sacrifice and its example to martyrdom at the apex of the apse at Behdaidat and the funerary association of the dome in the *peplos/pallium* scene. It is clear, then, that elements of the Genoese former churches of St Laurence in Tyre, or more likely Tripoli, were incorporated. This would explain why the image lacks the distinctive striped architectural appearance of the exterior of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo in Genoa itself. The emperor Michael is envisaged as being present entering the church of St Laurence at Tripoli itself through his portrait in the *peplos/pallium*, which was destined for its namesake, the cathedral in Genoa.

There is therefore a blending, a duality, of eastern and western in the *peplos/pallium* expressive of the policy of union. We should think not in terms of the juxtaposition of Latin and Greek viewpoints, but a complementarity. The *peplos/pallium* is peppered with crosses in roundels; the portrait of Michael has one at the bottom. This represents Christ and the True Cross. Such roundels, which are common throughout the embroidery, also appear liberally in the wallpainting in the Coptic monastery church of St Antony's on the Red Sea, which was being decorated at this time, also arguably with Greek Orthodox/Melkite artistic involvement. They probably have an apotropaic, protective function[159]. They too refer to

155 Talbot, Restoration 258-260; Morrisson, Authority 77 with n. 43.
156 See colour photo in Bacci, Cave pl. 44.
157 Mouawad, Témoin 144.
158 The church of St James: Mouawad, Témoin 142, n. 31. The dome over the church represented in the *peplos/pallium* offering a funerary association can be paralleled in the centrally-planned octagonal structure attached to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (consecrated 1106) in the castle at Tripoli (Mont Pèlerin) suggested by Denys Pringle to have been a funerary crypt for the founder and his family: Pringle, Tripoli, with conclusion 175 f.
159 For the apotropaic function of the cross in early Christianity see Llewelyn, Documents 166 f. For an example of the crosses at St Antony's monastery see the image of the Three Hebrews: Bolman, Visions 121 f. with figs 7.31-34.

the Holy Land agenda and again demonstrate the activity of the Greek Orthodox/Melkite community in Mamluk Egypt[160].

The *peplos/pallium* Scene of Sixtus the Archbishop Instructing Laurence to Sell the Church Vessels

The scenes to the viewer's right of the emperor on the *peplos/pallium* elucidate the role of the indigenous Syrian Greek Orthodox/Melkites as agents. These scenes also identify them as the manufacturers of the embroidery, who completed their work before the addition of the Latin inscriptions[161]. The first shows Sixtus the archbishop, instructing St Laurence to sell the church vessels and give the proceeds of the sale to the poor, with the next scene showing St Lawrence complying[162]. In the second scene merchants are depicted. These are the intermediaries who exchange the vessels – the material property of the community – for money which is then distributed to the poor and the needy. This is a crucial scene from the point of view of the church hierarchy and the relationship between deacon and the pope and bishop. This would have resonance for contemporary relationships and the processes of agency and deputisation.

Archbishop Sixtus, as explained in the *Passio* on the martyrdom of St Laurence by St Ambrose, entrusted the responsibility of the church for three days when he was in prison prior to his martyrdom, into to the hands of the first deacon, Laurence[163]. This is highly relevant to the situation in Antioch: when the patriarch was absent in Constantinople, or elsewhere, the proto-deacon took on responsibility. The burden on his shoulders is enshrined in his role, and the obedience which is due to his superior. His duty could involve the extreme of martyrdom, as it does in Laurence's case, indicated by the three flames rising from St Laurence's head in the portrait scene (**fig. 18**). The deacon's main service is to the eucharist and to the exercise of charity, and as such he acts in the image of Christ, taking on the attributes of Christ. Symbolising Christ, serving the church and the Bishop, together with liturgical responsibilities are all major activities of the deacon[164]. The selling of the church vessels here is surely a metaphor for the sacrifice of the riches of the Melkite community both in terms of manpower and materials that will be necessary in combating the Muslim armies of Sultan Baybars. This covers, then, their own commitment to defend their patriarchate in alliance and also the materials and skills involved in textile production and trading activities. It is by becoming *confratres*, like the supplicant at Behdaidat, that the Melkite community as individuals commit to this policy and the action that will inevitably follow.

The materials are those of the local community, which handles precious silks, pearls, and gems, as depicted at Behdaidat. The *peplos/pallium* is assumed to have been dyed with Tyrian murex purple dye, the imperial purple so prized by the Byzantines[165]. David Jacoby has pointed out that the murex shellfish were not fished after 1204 off the coast of Syria, with imitation dyes, including madder, being used in its place, although the purple dye was still available from Thebes and Egypt[166]. Further technical information about the *peplos/pallium* itself will clarify this point, as if the colour is not murex it could well be madder, as suggested earlier[167]. Whatever the actual technical composition, the dye-colour of the *peplos/pallium* would have been believed to have been murex and as such constituted imperial authentication. It would also have represented Tyre and Tripoli themselves, with their ecclesiastical, political and trading significance.

The draftsmanship of the embroidery has been related to that of that of thirteenth-century illustrated Byzantine manuscripts. In particular scholars have pointed to its connection with the illustrated Greek manuscripts Mt Athos Vatopedi 602 and Mt Athos Iveron 5[168]. These manuscripts are both attributed to Palaiologan family patronage in the later thirteenth century[169]. They – or others like them – could have been consulted in Constantinople by Euthymios and others planning the *peplos/pallium*. A likely contact in gaining access to them in Constantinople could well have been the Greek Orthodox monk Theodosios of Villehardoun (later patriarch of Antioch between 1278-1283), who was himself at Nymphaion in 1261 accompanying the then-ailing patriarch of Constantinople Nikephoros II, as administrator and personal medical assistant[170]. Frankish by birth, from the Villehardouin princely family of Frankish Achaia, he had been a monk in north Syria in one of the Black Mountain monasteries, and probably also in Sinai and Jerusalem, before 1261. It is known that he then served as a monk in the monasteries of the Pantokrator and Hodegon in Constantinople until 1265, when he led the delegation, which included Euthymios, which accompanied Maria Palaiologina to the Mongol court[171]. He was, then, in an ideal position to liaise between the libraries of Constantinople, where these and other manuscripts would have been kept, and Euthymios, as patriarch of Antioch. Indeed it was Theodosios' Frankish background and implicit support for Church union which would have facilitated his appointment as patriarch of Antioch in succession to Euthymios. Theodosios then wrote a tract, in

160 For the Greek Orthodox/Melkite presence in Mamluk Egypt see Pahlitzsch, Networks. For its artistic presence in Mamluk Old Cairo see Hunt, Icon.
161 See above, n. 152.
162 Hilsdale, Image 168 with figs 5-6 in colour for these scenes; Kalavrezou, *Peplos* 229f. with fig. 7 for the scene to the right.
163 Moraglia, Laurence.
164 Barnett, Deaconate 124f.
165 Kalavrezou, Value 354-369 with fig. 17.2.
166 Jacoby, Silk 210-212.
167 Falcone, »Pallio« 347 n. 28 summarises investigations undertaken on the cloth before 1996, noting that is thought to be samite and that »il colore dobrevve derivare da una tinctura porpora«.
168 Falcone, »Pallio« 340; Paribeni, Pallio 238; Hilsdale, Image 167 n. 102.
169 Maxwell, Constantinople 171f. for MS Vatopedi 602, and 151 and 163. for MS Iveron 5.
170 PLP 418.
171 See above, n. 30 and 31.

conjunction with the patriarch of Alexandria, in support of Church union[172]. Thus, arguably the Syrian Melkite makers of the *peplos/pallium* would have had access to Constantinopolitan manuscripts via Euthymios and Theodosios. Perhaps copies were made and retained in the monasteries near Antioch. The actual production of the embroidery was, then, I suggest, undertaken in the County of Tripoli, probably in Tripoli itself.

The likelihood that Michael VIII himself made manuscripts available in the course of the preparation of the embroidery would not be without parallel. Kathleen Maxwell attributes the luxurious bilingual Greek-Latin Gospel book Paris, Bibl. Nat. gr. 54, to Michael's pro-unionist activities, associating it with the same Byzantine manuscripts, especially MS Mt Athos Iveron 5. This scholar, in dating the Paris Gospel book to the period between 1265-1282, expresses the view that it »may be the only surviving artistic evidence of Michael VIII's efforts to reunite the Greek and Latin Churches«[173]. However, a glance at the St Luke portrait, one of the evangelist portraits inserted into this Paris Gospel book, with its juxtaposition of Byzantine-style Evangelist and Eastern Christian mosaic-style decorative border, reveals some of the characteristics of manuscripts attributed to monasteries in the Antioch region[174]. This is also suggestive of the connections between Constantinople and Syria discussed in this paper in the context of Michael's engagement with Church union. While Maxwell considered MS. Paris gr. 54 to be the only survival, if my argument is correct, then the painted programme at Behdaidat and the Genoa *peplos/pallium* can also be attributed to the time of negotiation over Church union during Michael's reign. Furthermore, as Maxwell has also noted, Michael »appears to have a history of using manuscripts in diplomacy«: it was in 1269 that he signed the manuscript now in Paris, Bibl. Nat. Coislin 200, given as a gift to Louis IX, included his epithet of »new Constantine«[175].

172 Hamilton, Church 327 with n. 5.

173 Maxwell, Constantinople 215, pointing out that it was unfinished at Michael's death.

174 Maxwell, Constantinople index 303 with colour plate XIX. Saminsky, Assimilation 230 refers to the »stylistic variety« of manuscripts from Antioch.

175 Maxwell, Constantinople 196 n. 126 refers to the scholarly debate on this manuscript.

Conclusion

This paper considers the role of the emperor Michael VIII as protector of the Christians and shrines of the Holy Land at the time of his re-establishment of Constantinople as the Byzantine capital in 1261 and his relationship with the Greek Orthodox Melkites on the one hand and the Genoese on the other. Special note is made of the Michael's personal imagery and his policy of union of the churches. It is argued here that his policy in the Levant, dependent on ecclesiastical networks especially that centred on the patriarch of Antioch, yielded important results in the artistic sphere.

The role of Euthymios, patriarch of Antioch (1260-c.1263), as an intermediary is given particular attention here. The application of the monk/ecclesiastic-merchant-artist paradigm to painted icons at Sinai, wall-paintings at the Church of Mar Tadros in Behdaidat in northern Lebanon is, with the manufacture of the embroidered *peplos/pallium* of San Lorenzo in Genoa, triangulated between Constantinople, Latin Syria and Mamluk Egypt in the early 1260s. What is revealed is a mechanism of interconnecting relationships through which imperial policy was engaged, from the upper echelons of diplomatic activity through the Greek Orthodox/Melkite ecclesiastical authorities to the lower clergy, merchants and soldiery. In the County of Tripoli the activity of the Confraternity of St George (of Lydda) and Bethlehem (the Church of the Nativity) arguably demonstrates how artistic partnerships involving individual agents were facilitated. This is viewed here as representative of a much wider network. The *confrater* system can, in addition, be shown to have been a particularly effective solution to the need for Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Latin collaboration. Mutual diplomatic and trading initiatives, as well as Crusading activity, drew in the Muslim and also the Mongol worlds.

Finally, the Greek Orthodox/Melkite art of Latin Syria can be seen to have contributed both to the development of thirteenth-century art in Palaiologan Constantinople and related art in Italy. Artistic endeavour reflected the community's priorities, which were the maintenance and protection of the Holy Land shrines, alongside mercantile activity. This conclusion has wide application and implications, including impacting on our understanding of the relationship between Byzantine, especially »Palaiologan«, and »Crusader« art.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Byzantine Emperor Michael VIII (1261-1282) and Greek Orthodox/Melkite-Genoese Cultural Agency in a Globalised World: Art at Sinai, Behdaidat, of the *pallio* of San Lorenzo in Genoa, and in Mamluk Egypt

The role of artistic and cultural agency within the strategy of the Byzantine emperor Michael VIII to consolidate Constantinople as his restored capital, following the demise of the Latin Empire of Constantinople in 1261, is examined. Case studies of icons at Sinai, the wall-painting programme of the Church of St. Theodore in Behdaidat and of the embroidered *peplos*/*pallium* of San Lorenzo in Genoa propose artistic, ecclesiastical, diplomatic and mercantile links between the Greek Orthodox/Melkite communities under Latin and Mamluk and Mongol rule and Constantinople. Artistic activity functioned within networks operating between ecclesiastics and theologians in Constantinople and Greek Orthodox/Melkite patriarchs and bishops in the Near East. Arguably of particular significance is Michael VIII's relationship with Patriarch Euthymios of Antioch (1260-1263?) and Euthymios' role in stimulating Syrian Melkite artistic activity. The productivity of Syrian Melkites can be traced not only in icons at Sinai but also in wall-painting in the County of Tripoli, studied here in the painted programme at the Church of St. Theodore at Behdaidat, and in textile manufacture (the *peplos*/*pallium*). This exposes the participation and prosperity of the Syrian Melkite community in trading activity with their Byzantine and Genoese partners across geopolitical boundaries of the Mamluk and Mongol worlds and with the West. Michael VIII's activities through agents and proxies facilitated his diplomatic activity between incompatible allies. Thus, simultaneously with his involvement in the Near East, he negotiated with the Papacy for Church union. Michael's Melkite clients in the County of Tripoli arguably affiliated as *confratres* with the Hospitallers in the defence of Latin Syria, discussed through the painted programme at Behdaidat. Allusions to relics play an important role here emphasizing links between Constantinople and Antioch. Finally, this study questions the art historical categorisations of »Crusader« and »Palaiologan« art history, with wide implications.

Der byzantinische Kaiser Michael VIII. (1261-1282) und griechisch-orthodoxes/melkitisch-genuesisches kulturelles Schaffen in einer globalisierten Welt: Über die Kunst auf dem Sinai, in Behdaidat, im mamelukischen Ägypten und über das *pallio* in San Lorenzo in Genua

Die Rolle künstlerischen und kulturellen Schaffens in der Strategie des byzantinischen Kaisers Michael VIII., nach dem Untergang des Lateinischen Kaiserreiches im Jahr 1261 Konstantinopel als seine wiederhergestellte Hauptstadt zu konsolidieren, steht im Zentrum dieser Untersuchung. Fallstudien zu Ikonen auf dem Sinai, zum Programm der Wandmalereien der Kirche St. Theodor in Behdaidat und der gestickte *Peplos* bzw. das *Pallium* von San Lorenzo in Genua legen künstlerische, kirchliche, diplomatische und merkantile Verbindungen zwischen den unter lateinischer, mamlukischer sowie mongolischer Herrschaft stehenden griechisch-orthodoxen bzw. melkitischen Gemeinden und Konstantinopel nahe. Künstlerisches Schaffen geschah innerhalb von Netzwerken, die zwischen Geistlichen und Theologen in Konstantinopel sowie den griechisch-orthodoxen bzw. melkitischen Patriarchen und Bischöfen im Nahen Osten bestanden. Von besonderer Bedeutung waren wohl die Beziehung zwischen Kaiser Michael VIII. und Patriarch Euthymios von Antiochia (1260-1263?) und die Rolle des Euthymios bei der Förderung der melkitischen künstlerischen Tätigkeit. Die Beteiligung syrischer Melkiten kann nicht nur bei den Ikonen auf dem Sinai festgestellt werden, sondern auch bei der Wandmalerei der Grafschaft Tripolis, die hier anhand des gemalten Programms in der Kirche St. Theodor in Behdaidat untersucht wird, und in der Textilherstellung (*peplos*/*pallium*). Dies demonstriert die Beteiligung und den Wohlstand der syrisch-melkitischen Gemeinschaft am Handel mit ihren byzantinischen und genuesischen Partnern über die geopolitischen Grenzen der mamlukischen und mongolischen Welt und mit dem Westen. Diese von Michael VIII. durch Agenten und Stellvertreter betriebenen Aktivitäten erleichterten seine diplomatischen Initiativen zwischen ansonsten nicht miteinander in Kontakt stehenden Verbündeten. So konnte er etwa, gleichzeitig mit seinem Engagement im Nahen Osten, mit dem Papst über eine Kirchenunion verhandeln. Michaels melkitische Klienten in der Grafschaft Tripolis waren wohl als *confratres* der Johanniter an der Verteidigung des lateinischen Syriens beteiligt, wie eine Diskussion des gemalten Programms in Behdaidat zeigt. Anspielungen auf Reliquien spielen hier eine wichtige Rolle und betonen die Verbindungen zwischen Konstantinopel und Antiochia. Schließlich hinterfragt diese Studie mit weitreichenden Folgen die kunsthistorischen Kategorisierungen »Kreuzfahrer-« und »Palaiologen-Kunst«.

Mutual Artistic Interactions

Elizabeth Dospěl Williams

Dressing the Part: Jewelry as Fashion in the Medieval Middle East

The writings of al-Waššāʾ (d. 936), author of the tenth-century CE/third-century AH Abbasid-period *Kitāb al-Muwaššā* (»The Brocaded Book«), provide some of the liveliest descriptions of medieval dress practices in the elegant rooms and streets of medieval Baghdad. Chapters are filled with descriptions of clothing, perfumes, and accessories so vivid one can easily imagine the sight, smell, and sound of the upper-crust denizens of that city. For example, in a chapter dedicated to the dress of women:

»Their well-known way of dressing themselves in jewelry arranged as necklaces consists of wearing chokers with fermented cloves, long necklaces of camphor and ambergris, chains of interlaced pearls, necklaces from which hang notched boxes with amulets, others decorated with twisted ribbons of gold, or of silk woven into the form of a chain […] These women wear double rings, rings with hollow settings where they place red rubies, green emeralds, aquamarine, and beryl. They criticize wearing rings filled with glass pieces, carnelian, silver rings, iron rings, rings in unpolished metal and, equally, rings of turquoise, garnet, and small pearls, because all of those are better worn by men and slaves and are not at all appropriate to women of refinement[1]«.

Al-Waššāʾ's text is of particular interest, because it contains detailed information about the behavior, manners, and dress of the elegant, with emphasis on their dress, and how it conveyed cues about gender and social identities. Al-Waššāʾ's writings not only demonstrate the existence of a concept of »elegant dress« among non-ruling elites in the medieval Middle East, but they also offer evidence of jewelry as a part of fashionable dress, just as much as the cut of a robe, the shape of a shoe, or the wearing of belts, scarves, and other accessories.

Yet where al-Waššāʾ's text makes the close relationship between jewelry and clothing apparent, modern scholarship on Byzantine and medieval Islamic dress practices tends to relegate adornments and apparel to separate disciplinary realms. Dress scholarship exclusively considers clothing, with most scholars in these fields trained in the study of textiles; scholarship on jewelry, whose practitioners focus on metalwork, rarely references work done on dress. The example of Anna Radene, a local elite woman from Kastoria, Greece who lived in the twelfth century, powerfully demonstrates this observation. Studies discussing Anna's jewelry focus on her visage to best display the figure's crescent-shaped earrings[2]. However, when one turns to the full-figure painting, it is apparent that these earrings are just one element of Anna's presentation as a fashionably dressed woman, as she dons elaborate, colorful gowns made of patterned textiles and a turban-like headpiece (**fig. 1**).

Despite this partitioned approach, however, the methodologies and vocabularies developed in dress research are certainly relevant to those studying Byzantine and early Islamic jewelry. This paper will attempt to integrate these separate domains by proceeding from theoretical approaches advocated in medieval dress studies to case studies where jewelry and clothing are integrated to mutual benefit. The paper will focus on tenth through thirteenth century eastern Mediterranean and North African contexts, a period for which a significant amount of archaeologically documented jewelry make it possible to test out the theoretical arguments developed in studies on clothing. Thus the paper will consider how jewelry figured in concepts and practices of fashionable dress, particularly dress that moved between regions and cultures. While at first one expects that the multifarious and multi-confessional communities of the Byzantine and early Islamic eastern Mediterranean dressed distinctively according to regional, ethnic, or communal identities, this paper will show how material and textual evidence significantly complicate this picture.

Jewelry and Dress, Jewelry as Dress

Research on Byzantine and early Islamic dress presents a theoretically exciting area of scholarship in the study of pre-modern dress. Jennifer Ball's work on the practices of non-ruling elites in the Middle Byzantine period is particularly compelling for complicating our understanding of medieval dress, particularly when it comes to concepts of fashionable clothing[3]. Her work contrasts the protocol-driven, largely genderless dress worn by the ruling classes, with non-ruling elites' clothing, worn as part of a constantly changing aesthetic for

1 al- Waššāʾ, Kitāb al-Muwaššā 173 f. (French trans: al- Waššāʾ, Livre du Brocart 127-129).

2 Albani, Elegance.

3 Ball, Byzantine Dress.

dressing well. This point comes through most strongly in her chapter on dress styles among »borderland elites« in Armenia, Cappadocia, and the Balkans. Ball argues that dress practices there reflected complex tastes that were at once local while also incorporating dress practices from neighboring regions[4]. For example, a large corpus of medieval donor portraits from churches in Kastoria, Greece, such as that of Anna Radene noted above, show the fashionable styles of both men and women in the region, which Ball argues derived from a number of sartorial traditions, including Byzantine, Islamic, and European[5]. Ball argues that these sorts of clothing styles were driven by a desire to dress fashionably; while dress practices did distinguish along gender lines, they transcended any »ethnic« or »national« connotations[6]. She furthermore notes that tastes in dress did not simply radiate out from the Constantinople, but rather reflect a more complex exchange between center and periphery, a phenomenon she attributes to the movement of people and goods from these frontier regions into and out of the capital.

Yedida Stillman describes similar interregional processes occurring at roughly the same time in the Arabic-speaking lands of the eastern Mediterranean and the neighboring Near East[7]. Her work paints a picture of a similarly complex, multi-directional relationship in the dress practices shared between urban centers and surrounding regions. Stillman outlines the evolution of a »pan-Islamic« mode (»the Islamic vestimentary system«) in the Abbasid period that incorporated a range of regional styles. She argues that tastes in clothes were driven not by the upper-most levels of the court in Baghdad, but by the multicultural secretarial class and the wealthy cosmopolitan »bourgeoisie«, of the kind described by al-Waššāʾ. This group's ethnic and religious backgrounds varied greatly, and their ranks included Christians, Muslims and Jews; Arabs, Persians, Slavs and others[8]. In addition, Stillman's work on Fatimid Egypt explores dress practices among upper-class, non-ruling elites, specifically Jews, again in the same medieval period[9]. Using evidence from the Cairo Geniza, a hoard of documents from medieval Fustat's Jewish communities (itself not one, unified group), Stillman convincingly argues that Muslim and Jewish Egyptian upper-class, non-ruling women shared many of the same tastes in textiles and fashionable clothing, despite official proclamations forbidding similar dress among groups of different religious persuasion.

Ball's and Stillman's textile and clothing focused studies are important in demonstrating that dress of the non-ruling elites in the Byzantine and Islamic spheres did not always reflect entrenched political, ethnic, or religious identities, but rather could relay wearers' preferences in dressing luxuriously and well. In evoking this line of argumentation, both Ball and Stillman react against theoretical biases in fashion studies more generally, where the concept of a premodern fashion system is controversial[10]. Although there is little consensus on when »fashionable dress« began, most scholars working on modern and contemporary periods argue that it only emerged in the later Middle Ages (as per example, work on Renaissance dress), with particular developments occurring in the later eighteenth-century and afterwards. This is because fashion, in these theoretical frames, is closely related to developments following the rise of industrialization and capitalistic (western) economies. In this view, fashion's underlying rationale is determined by constantly shifting consumer desires, which result in chameleon-like and rapidly changing practices of dress. According to fashion theorists focused on modern practices, there is simply no such thing as premodern fashion. Instead, these theorists tend to view earlier dress as determined by specific regional or cultural identities; premodern styles of clothing were typically described as »costume«, pointing to biases about an unchanging, customary nature of dress before the late medieval period[11].

However, Ball's and Stillman's studies push back against these arguments with evidence to suggest that fashion was indeed a characteristic feature of medieval dress practice, especially among non-ruling elites. Their studies demonstrate that dress practices changed over time and were linked to consumption of goods traded long distances and their locally-made imitations, all key to any definition of fashion in modern and postmodern contexts[12]. Furthermore, Ball's and Stillman's studies show that trends in clothing not only flowed out from capital cities to regional centers (along the lines of the way we might understand New York, Paris, or London to be major fashion centers), but rather in any number of directions, in a constant feedback loop between regions. This is apparent in al-Waššāʾ's accounts of clothing, where he describes elegant women wearing head veils from Nishapur, shoes from Runān (China), furry shoes from Cambay, boots from Edessa, and other such fineries from far-flung locales, all recombined among Baghdad's elites[13].

The multi-directional trends outlined by Ball and Stillman are arguably invaluable to specialists in jewelry from the same periods. One particularly vexing problem for jewelry specialists has been to make sense of stylistic and technical similarities of adornments around the premodern Mediterranean, particularly in the Byzantine and early Islamic periods. Scholars have focused on the role of court centers like Constantinople as »trend setters« as a way to explain why so many pieces of jewelry share similar shapes, details, and methods of manufacture[14]. This line of reasoning thus

4 Ball, Byzantine Dress 58
5 Pelekanides/Chatzedakes, Kastoria.
6 Ball, Byzantine Dress 61.
7 Stillman, Arab Dress.
8 Stillman, Arab Dress 28-61.
9 Stillman, Medieval Female Attire.
10 Craik, Fashion.
11 Welters/Lillethun, History of Dress and Fashion; Ball, Byzantine Dress 1-4.
12 Maynard, Dress; Crane/Bovone, Approaches to Material Culture.
13 al-Waššāʾ, al-Kitāb al-Muwaššāʾ: male dress in chapters, XXIII-XXVI; female dress in chapters XXVII and XXVIII.
14 Petrina, Jewellery from Late Antique Egypt.

argues for a center-periphery flow of styles and technological developments from capital cities onwards to provincial outposts. However, Ball's and Stillman's work describing the multidirectional spread of clothing styles might nuance the center-periphery model current in jewelry studies. Their work opens up the possibility of multiple »trend-setting« centers, or possibly the movement of jewelry styles in and out of major capital cities where sophisticated artisans honed their craft. For this reason, archaeological jewelry provides critical evidence that can bolster theoretical arguments about the complex transregional (and intercultural) paths between Byzantium and Islamic spheres described in scholarship on dress practices, which until now has only relied on textual and visual evidence to support its claims.

Jewelry and Intercultural Fashions: Case Studies

The following case studies attempt to extend the work done on medieval dress to jewelry, with two goals in mind. The first study on inscribed jewelry attempts to integrate jewelry and dress, with the aim of demonstrating in concrete terms the existence of a premodern fashion system. The second endeavors to show how material evidence drawn from a hoard discovered in North Africa manifests the interregional processes described in Ball's and Stillman's work. Both of my cases focus on women's jewelry: first, because there is good evidence that the pieces worn here were owned and worn by women; and secondly, to foreground their roles in the development and spread of these interregional fashions.

A group of enamel crescent-shaped earrings found in Crete are important because they make it possible to trace the adoption and translation of dress between regions, while also presenting strong evidence for the existence of a premodern fashion system[15]. The earrings are part of a supposed hoard that included various pieces of jewelry dated through accompanying coins to the mid-tenth century, a period coinciding with the island's Arab rule, which ended in 961[16]. The earrings include one singleton and two pairs of gold earrings enameled in yellow, blue, green and red and feature, on one side, Arabic inscriptions, and on the other scrolling vines, dogs, or birds. They appear to be of two distinct kinds. One type includes kufic inscriptions filled with enamel. One pair of this type reads »Blessings from God« (*baraka min Allāh*) and »for its owner Zainab« (*li-ṣāḥibihi* [sic] *Zainab*) (**fig. 2**)[17]. Another earring of this type, of a different pair because it does not include the gold granulated triangles at its edges,



Fig. 1 Depiction of Anna Radene, H. Anagyroi, Kastoria. – (Photo J. Ball, reproduced through the permission of the Ephorate of Kastoria).

reads »for its owner Aisha« (*li-ṣāḥibihi* [sic] ʿĀiʾša) (**fig. 3**)[18]. Another type features its inscription in gold wire inlaid directly into the enamel (**fig. 4**). This includes one earring with a highly fragmentary inscription, possibly reading *baraka min Allāh*[19].

These earrings can be compared to archaeological evidence, art market finds, and textual sources, which when combined, suggest that taste for inscribed jewelry was popular in several regions around the Mediterranean more or less simultaneously in the tenth through twelfth centuries, a sudden and Mediterranean-wide vogue which can only be explained as reflecting changing fashionable taste. For example, an excavated enamel disc, dated to the tenth to twelfth century and found in Fustat, Egypt was possibly a brooch or sewn on a garment; it includes an inscription in floriated kufic reading »God is the Best Protector« (*Allāhu ḫayrun ḥāfiẓān*, a quotation possibly from the Qur'an, Sura 12:64) framed above and below by scrolling vegetal motifs in red[20]. Another comparable example, a crescent-shaped enamel placed in the eleventh to twelfth century and purchased on the nineteenth-century art market, features a similar color scheme, inscription, and scroll motifs[21]. It reads »Victory is from Allah« in a fluent script, and was possibly part of a pin. Still another

15 Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinischer Schmuck 131-133.
16 Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinischer Schmuck 41-46; Miles, Byzantium and the Arabs.
17 Athens, Archaeological Museum Στ483, Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinischer Schmuck, cat no. 66a, b.
18 Athens, Archaeological Museum Στ484, Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinischer Schmuck no. 67.
19 Athens, Archaeological Museum Στ485 and Στ486, Bosselmann-Ruickie, Byzantinischer Schmuck nos 65a and 65b.
20 Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, Inv. no. 4337; Bahgat, Fouilles pl. 30; O'Kane, Islamic 56.
21 L. A. Mayer Museum of Islamic Art, Jerusalem, Inv. J31; Hasson, Jewellery no. 115.



Fig. 2 Earring. – (Photo National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Photographic Archives, Στ483 © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/Archaeological Receipts Fund).



Fig. 3 Single earring. – (Photo National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Photographic Archives, Στ484 © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/Archaeological Receipts Fund).



Fig. 4 Earring with inscription. – National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Photographic Archives, Στ485 © Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports/Archaeological Receipts Fund.



Fig. 5 Earring fragment. – (Photo Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, D.C., BZ.1953.12.66 © Dumbarton Oaks, Byzantine Collection, Washington, D.C.).

earring pair attributed stylistically to twelfth-century Spain includes an inscription about God's oneness (*tawḥīd*) from Sura 112: 1-2 (»God is One, the Eternal God«) rendered in a particularly fine script[22]. Other possible parallels include a fragment, possibly from an earring, inscribed with the name »Helen« in Greek, now in the Dumbarton Oaks collections, of uncertain date (**fig. 5**)[23].

The objects and their contexts provide information about how such jewelry was worn and by whom, which contribute directly to our understanding of trends in the period's dress practices. First, the inclusion of women's names on the earrings suggests that pieces were made specifically with women in mind. Secondly, the range in the pieces' quality and their technique, from very fine scripts to more awkwardly rendered kufic, suggests that they were produced in several workshops and were worn by a broad social spectrum. Perhaps most importantly, however, evidence suggests that inscribed jewelry such as these were worn by people of different sectarian and regional identities, and not strictly by Arabic-speaking Muslims. Indeed, some pieces of jewelry do nod to doctrinal distinctions appropriate only to wear by Muslims, such as the explicit proclamation of *tawḥīd* on the earrings from Spain, part of a phrase evoked in arguments against the Christian trinity[24]. Other pieces of jewelry, however, are more ambiguous: the earrings from Crete, for example, may have arrived on the island as a diplomatic gift from Constantinople, and as such were intended for an Arabic-speaking wearer, but made in a Byzantine workshop[25]. Taken together, the evidence suggests that such pieces of jewelry did not always indicate the wearer's religious persuasion, but rather that there were widespread tastes for inscribed jewelry that transcended »customary« dress practices determined by ethnic or religious identifications.

Jewelry was not the only item of fashionable apparel inscribed with words. In the same text cited at the beginning of this chapter, for example, al-Waššāʾ provides ample information about inscribed clothing, dedicating several chapters to describing clothing bearing extended poetic verses[26]. Al-Waššāʾ records sayings on blouses, the edges of coats, and sleeves, which he notes included elegant verses, most often concerning unfulfilled desire or despair over a beloved's absence. In a chapter dedicated to inscriptions on shirts, coats, and sleeves, al-Waššāʾ recounts the dress of a beautiful woman who wore an inscribed belt and an embroidered coat with verses about being banished from one's loved one; in the same chapter, he describes the appearance of a well-dressed slave girl wearing a silk dress with an embroidered sleeve and inscribed gold belt, again, with love poems[27]. The popularity of such garments is attested in the archaeological record, where the innumerable surviving examples of *ṭirāz* in Arabic – and at times even in Coptic – underline the popularity of inscribed apparel from the eighth century onwards (**fig. 6**)[28]. Thus the material evidence drawn from textiles and jewelry manifests textual sources describing a medieval vogue for wearing words of all kinds, a trend which developed with particular force in the Abbasid period and seems to have been come into fashion in a number of regions around the Mediterranean. That these styles developed with particular force in jewelry from the tenth through twelfth century points to a particular taste for inscribed adornments at a particular moment in time. As such, jewelry strengthens Ball's and Stillman's case for a pre-modern fashion system, for the pieces demonstrate how fashionable dress changed according to wearers' tastes and aesthetic sensibilities.

The second case study focuses on a hoard of jewelry known as the »Tarabia Hoard«, said to have been discovered in 1930 in Le Kef, Tunisia. The hoard has been dated to the eleventh century through accompanying Fatimid coins ranging in date from 394 AH/1003-1004 CE to 436 AH/1044-1045 CE, a period when the area was under the control of

22 Kuwait, National Museum, al-Sabah Collection, LNS 30Jab, Jenkins-Medina, Islamic Art 91.
23 Washington, D.C., Dumbarton Oaks, BZ.1953.12.66, Ross, Byzantine no. 93.
24 Thomas, Tat̲ ḥ līt̲h .
25 Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinischer Schmuck 41-46.
26 al-Waššāʾ, al-Kitāb al-Muwaššāʾ, Chapter XLI: »Poverty is better than humiliation«); (Chapter XLII: »He who regards his beloved too often will sigh endlessly«).
27 al-Waššāʾ, al-Kitāb al-Muwaššāʾ, Chapter XXXIV: Inscriptions along the bottom of shirts, the edges and embroidered selvages of coats and sleeves«.
28 Fluck, Inscribed Textiles; Fluck/Helmecke, Textile Messages.



Fig. 6 Part of a garment with *ṭirāz* inscription dating to the reign of al-Musta'li (r. 1094-1101). – (Photo The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 32.96 www.metmuseum.org).

the Zirids[29]. Its finds included two bracelets, a pair and one unmatched earrings, a number of beads, and six triangular plaques, all in gold (**figs 7-8**). The hoard's content relates to other examples documented both in archaeological contexts and described in textual sources from several locations around the Mediterranean, presenting a microcosm of fashions borrowed from other regions and reassembled in medieval North Africa, notably in its earrings and hoops.

The group, for example, includes a pair of polylobed earrings, made of layered sheets of gold. A close parallel to the Tarabia earrings is a piece in the L. A. Mayer Museum of Islamic Art in Jerusalem, itself attributed to eleventh-century Egypt[30]. While technically different, the lobed shape of the Tarabia earrings evoke a type known as »basket earrings« for their resemblance to baskets. Bosselmann-Ruickbie has shown that the preponderance of examples come from sites in Fatimid-controlled regions, particularly in Egyptian and Syrian contexts[31]. Several exceptional examples, for example, were found in an archaeological hoard in Tiberias[32]. A »basket earring« was also found in a grave in a church at Amorium, pointing to the popularity of this style into Anatolia[33].

The geographical range of basket earrings and the innumerable technical variations of the type present an intriguing case study for the transregional spread of jewelry types. One might indeed view these variations as the result of countless local workshops producing »basket earrings« for clients in a number of regions simultaneously[34]. The widespread popularity of the type in geographically connected, yet disparate, regions suggests high demand, presumably driven by some common notion of fashion in these areas. The flattened, polylobed earrings from Tarabia are particularly intriguing in that they evoke the »basket earring« type, without exactly replicating it. They appear instead as an emulation of the style popular along the eastern Mediterranean, crafted in a North African idiom by local craftsmen. These observations of course point back to Ball's model for describing the spread of clothing styles from one region to the next, where the »origins« of a clothing type come to be obscured in the innumerable emulations and recombinations of dress styles in new regional contexts.

29 von Gladiss, Goldhort; Marçais/Poinssot, Objets kairounais 469-474 pls 68 and 69; Cat. Tunis 1997, 111.
30 Hasson, Early Islamic Jewellery no. 101.
31 Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinisch, Islamisch.
32 Lester, Hoard; Bosselmann-Ruickbie, Byzantinisch, Islamisch 83-96.
33 Lightfoot, Amorium fig. 7.10.
34 Shamai, A Goldsmith's Workshop; Khamis, Shops; Petrina, Goldschmiedewerkstatt.

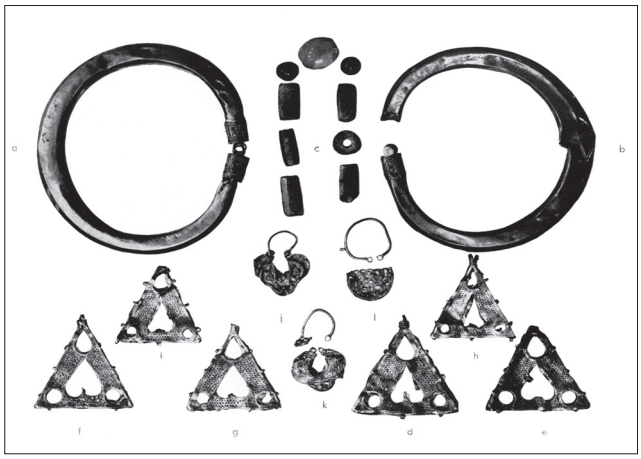

Fig. 7 Tarabia Hoard. – (After Marçais, Objets kairouanais pl. 68).

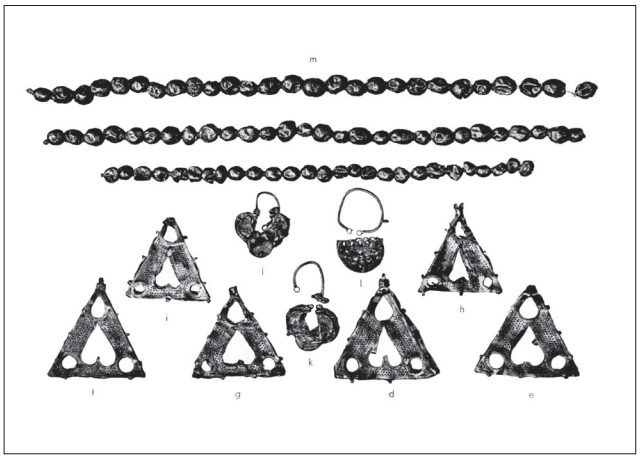

Fig. 8 Tarabia Hoard. – (After Marçais, Objets kairouanais pl. 69).

The hoard's gold hoops are informative in what they demonstrate about the interregional connectivity of eleventh-century North Africa as well. The hoops relate to bracelets, armlets, and anklets popular in regions from North Africa through the eastern Mediterranean coast, comparing most closely to a cluster of contemporary archaeological finds from Jerusalem, Ramla, and Caesarea that included large, hollow gold and silver bracelets, armlets, and anklets (**fig. 9**). Similar examples purchased for European and American collections in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century have also been attributed to Syria, presumably because they had been purchased there, suggesting that they were found in that region and sold on the local art market[35].

Large hooped bracelets and anklets are indeed described in accounts of jewelry from the Geniza trousseau lists that Stillman drew from to describe interregional dress practices in the Arab world. The lists – drawn up for Arabic- and Hebrew-speaking Jews in Fatimid Cairo – include words for jewelry that suggest that Egyptian women appreciated and distinguished several regional types, which they recombined in their own fashionable ensembles. Terms for bracelets hint at interregional processes in their very vocabulary. Words used for these kinds of jewelry include *siwār* (a general Arabic term for bracelets); *dastaynaq* (possibly from a Persian word for hand, *dast*); *dumluǧ* (claimed by Goitein to be related to an Ethiopian term, undefined); and *ḥadīd*/*ḥadīda* (an Arabic term generally meaning iron, though used in Geniza documents in conjunction with silver or nielloed bracelets, likely to have held sleeves)[36]. This parallels descriptions of garments in the same documents, which similarly incorporate words linked to other regional traditions. For example, the term *rūmīya* appears in the Geniza lists to describe a woman's garment, a term associated with Byzantium; other words suggest associations with dress customs current in the Persianate sphere[37]. Clothes and jewelry were indeed appreciated



Fig. 9 Bracelet hoard from Ramla. – (Photo Elie Posner, Collection the Israel Antiquities Authority, IAA 2008-640-648 © The Israel Museum).

not only from the inherent material value of the textiles or precious metals used to make them, but also from their associations with other locales, which might be either the source of the objects, but more likely represent some vestigial idea about the regional associations of different types. Interest-

35 Hasson, Early Islamic Jewellery nos 67-93.
36 Goitein, Daily Life 219-222 and appendix D.
37 Goitein, Daily Life 190 f.

ingly, the styles of dress recombined in Egypt clearly made their way back out to other regions as well. al-Muqaddasī's descriptions of North African dress practices in his tenth-century CE/fourth century AH. *The Best Divisions of Knowledge of the Regions* (*Aḥsān at-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm*), for example, emphasize that this »Egyptian style« of dress was also considered fashionable into the Maghrib[38].

In this sense, the jewelry of the Tarabia hoard provides invaluable archaeological testimony to the process of recombination described by Ball and Stillman, who rely on textual and visual depictions to trace the movement of dress styles from one region to the next. The various elements of the jewelry hoard from Le Kef show that medieval dress practices did not straightforwardly reflect the fashions popular in one single center then subsequently copied in the provinces, but rather that the styles of dress varied from one region to the next as groups recombined elements of dress according to changing tastes.

This last observation naturally prompts questions about the mechanisms through which such styles spread across regions. Fashions could certainly have been transmitted through the mobility of trade objects, or they might also have spread thanks to the movements of people, who carried jewelry and clothing with them through family and trade networks in the eastern Mediterranean. Koray Durak's work on the eastern Mediterranean networks of merchants is particularly interesting in this regard, for he has shown that people, goods, and trade orders moved along networked, medium-distance entrepôts situated throughout the eastern Mediterranean and beyond, from Islamic lands deep into Byzantine territories. His work allows us to imagine the »medium distance« vectors through which interregional fashions travelled, in which trade moved along shorter distances between regions[39]. Individuals might also have played an important role in transferring fashions, as well, as in the case of the ninth-century courtier Ziryāb, a courtier from Baghdad whose clothing, manners, and etiquette was emulated in the Umayyad court in al-Andalus[40]. Another possibility for the transfer of jewelry styles between regions could be the movements of itinerant goldsmiths, whose portable, lightweight tools would have made it easy to travel from one region to the next, a phenomenon well-documented in fourteenth-century Italy[41]. Lastly, women themselves were certainly catalysts in forming these interregional fashions, as they brought their best clothing to new homes, copied the clothing and jewelry of visiting relatives, or sent orders for jewelry and clothing along with family members and merchants travelling throughout the networked Mediterranean[42]. Their tastes for clothing and jewelry were far from »customary« or traditional in the way that a specialist in fashion might expect from premodern dress. Instead, these tastes were shaped in a desire to dress the body according to fashions, as they looked at others and were seen by them.

Conclusions

This paper has attempted to apply theoretical models applied in work of medieval dress to re-evaluate jewelry as part of medieval dress practices. The first case study on inscribed jewelry showed how jewelry featured as part of changing fashions, as non-ruling elites dress according to complex and ever-changing notions of fashionable dress. The second case study on Le Kef concretely demonstrated the complexities of inter-regional styles only hinted at in texts. Taken together, these case studies directly challenge fashion theorists' biases against premodern fashion. The cases studies evoked demonstrate that fashionable jewelry and clothing in the medieval Middle East had little do with ethnic and religious identities, nor did it simply emulate the protocol-driven practices of the imperial court. In the final analysis, incorporating jewelry into discussions of dress enriches our understanding of these cross-regional trends, particularly in foregrounding women's roles as tastemakers, consumers, and wearers of fashionable dress.

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38 al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan at-Taqāsīm 213.
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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Dressing the Part: Jewelry as Fashion in the Medieval Middle East

This paper considers textiles and jewelry together to explore trends in dress practices in the eastern Mediterranean from the tenth through thirteenth centuries. By bringing together archaeologically-documented jewelry with textual and visual representations, it is possible to trace developments in dress and follow the movement of styles between regions and cultures. While at first one expects that the multifarious and multi-confessional communities of the Byzantine and early Islamic eastern Mediterranean dressed distinctively according to regional, ethnic, or communal identities, this paper argues that material and textual evidence significantly complicate this picture. Instead, changing practices and adoption of styles across cultures suggest trends in fashionable dress shared between Byzantium and the Islamic Near East.

»Dressing the Part«: Schmuck als Mode im mittelalterlichen Nahen Osten

In diesem Artikel werden Textilien und Schmuck gemeinsam betrachtet, um Trends in der Bekleidungspraxis im östlichen Mittelmeerraum vom 10. bis zum 13. Jahrhundert zu untersuchen. Indem man archäologisch dokumentierten Schmuck mit Text- und Bilddarstellungen zusammen betrachtet, ist es möglich, die Entwicklung der Kleidung und die Stilbewegungen zwischen Regionen und Kulturen zu verfolgen. Während man zunächst erwarten würde, dass sich die vielgestaltigen und multikonfessionellen Gemeinschaften des byzantinischen und frühislamischen östlichen Mittelmeerraumes unterschiedlich nach regionalen, ethnischen oder kommunalen Identitäten kleideten, wird hier argumentiert, dass materielle Zeugnisse und Textquellen dieses Bild erheblich komplexer darstellen. Sich verändernde Praktiken und die Übernahme von Stilen über die Kulturen hinweg erlauben vielmehr die Annahme, dass es in der damaligen Kleidermode Trends gab, die von Byzanz und vom islamischen Nahen Osten geteilt wurden.

Alicia Walker

Pseudo-Arabic as a Christian Sign: Monks, Manuscripts, and the Iconographic Program of Hosios Loukas*

The Monastery of Hosios Loukas near the town of Steiris in the region of Boeotia in central Greece is among the great masterpieces of middle Byzantine (ca. 843-1204) architecture. The complex includes two churches, dating to the tenth and eleventh centuries (**fig. 1**), which together formed an important pilgrimage site for the healing cult associated with the holy monk, Luke (d. 953)[1]. No documents from the early period of the monastery – such as *typika* or inventories – are preserved. For this reason, the *vita* of the saint, which was written shortly after his death in the second-half of the tenth century, assumes unusual importance as a source for the initial history of the site[2]. The physical remains of the medieval buildings also provide key material evidence regarding the character of the foundation. Both the tenth- and eleventh-century churches exhibit sophisticated forms that represent the cutting edge of Byzantine architectural engineering of the time[3]. In addition, the remains of the decorative programs of each building show a degree of lavishness and refinement that equals that of any preserved middle Byzantine monument[4]. The south, eleventh-century church is particularly worthy of note; its fresco and mosaic programs are among the best-preserved anywhere in the former Empire and provide a clear sense of the complex's original glory (**fig. 2**)[5]. Especially for a provincial foundation, Hosios Loukas received generous investment, suggesting the involvement of both regional and more distant actors.

Of particular relevance to the present volume, the complex shows the extensive use of pseudo-Arabic motifs (forms that imitate Arabic letters but are not legible), indicating the monuments' participation in the complex cross-cultural networks linking Byzantium and the medieval Islamic world in the tenth and eleventh centuries[6].Today these exoticizing elements are most prominent in the cloisonné bricks and carved marble string courses embedded in the walls at the east end of the tenth-century north church around the exterior of the apse (**figs 3-6**). Initially, however, pseudo-Arabic motifs were also a significant component of the internal decoration of the north church. Carved marble fragments of the original *templon* (the barrier between the naos and bema area) and *proskynētarion* (the structure supporting the major icons of the church) show that these liturgical furnishings employed pseudo-Arabic as a framing device (**figs 7-8**)[7]. In addition, a fresco located on the exterior wall of the narthex of the north church depicts the Old Testament general Joshua wearing a head cloth and helmet that are inscribed with bands of pseudo-Arabic along their edges (**figs 9-10**)[8]. Individual pseudo-Arabic motifs also appear dispersed throughout the fresco and mosaic decorations of the south church in the form of painted motifs on the column capitals to either side of the apse in the crypt (see **figs 35-36**) and in the mosaics of the upper church, specifically on the baldachin representing the Jewish Temple in the scene of the Presentation in the southwest squinch

* This paper expands upon ideas introduced in Walker, Pseudo-Arabic and summarized in Walker, Islamicizing. This research was initiated through the international working group »Viewing Texts: Word as Image and Ornament in Medieval Inscriptions,« a project of *Beyond Texts*, sponsored by the Arts & Humanities Research Council of Great Britain. I am deeply grateful to the organizers of that group, Antony Eastmond and Liz James, for launching me into this topic. The present essay is part of a larger project in which I am currently engaged, which will ultimately consider the role of pseudo-Arabic in middle Byzantine church programs throughout medieval Greece.

1 Regarding the importance of Hosios Loukas as a healing shrine, see Talbot, Pilgrimage 156, 163, 165, Appendix 3.

2 On this point, see Oikonomides, The First Century. For the *vita*, see Saint Luke of Steiris.

3 For a convenient summary of the major developments in middle Byzantine church architecture and the place of Hosios Loukas within this trajectory, see Vocotopoulos, Church Architecture esp. 162 f.

4 Archaeological investigations carried out at Hosios Loukas in the 1960s clarified the phases of the site, establishing definitively that the north church predates the south *katholikon*. See Stikas, Oikodomikon. Scholarly consensus has not yet been reached regarding the specific chronologies of the churches. I endorse arguments that date the foundation of the north church soon after 961, the construction of the south church to the early eleventh century (ca. 1011), and the completion of the majority of the mosaics and frescoes of the south church to the 1040s. My position is further discussed in Walker, Pseudo-Arabic 101, and draws from the arguments found in Bouras, Ho glyptos 123 f., 134; Chatzidakis, A propos de la date; Chatzidakis, Précisions; Oikonomides, The First Century, esp. 249-251; Mouriki, Stylistic esp. 86. For the most recent discussion of the architecture of the site, see Mylonas, Monē. Proposing that the *katholikon* was an imperial foundation, Schminck has dated its decorative program to an earlier period, positing that the mosaics date chiefly to the reign of Constantine VIII (r. 1025-1028) and the wall paintings of the crypt to the reign of his successor, Romanos III Argyros (r. 1028-1034). See Schminck, Kaiserliche Stiftung. His arguments have yet to be fully reconciled with the conventional chronologies for the construction and decoration of the complex.

5 For general discussion of the mosaics, see Diez, Byzantine. For the frescoes in the crypt see Connor, Art.

6 For a concise historiographic account of the treatment of pseudo-Arabic in Byzantine art history and related fields, see Pedone/Cantone, Ornament.

7 For documentation and reconstruction of the original *templon* and *proskynētarion* as well discussion of other sculptural fragments from Hosios Loukas displaying pseudo-Arabic, see Bouras, Ho glyptos 98-114, 130-132, drawings 3, 5a-b, figs 165-172, 182-185, 187.

8 Stikas, Oikodomikon 174-178.

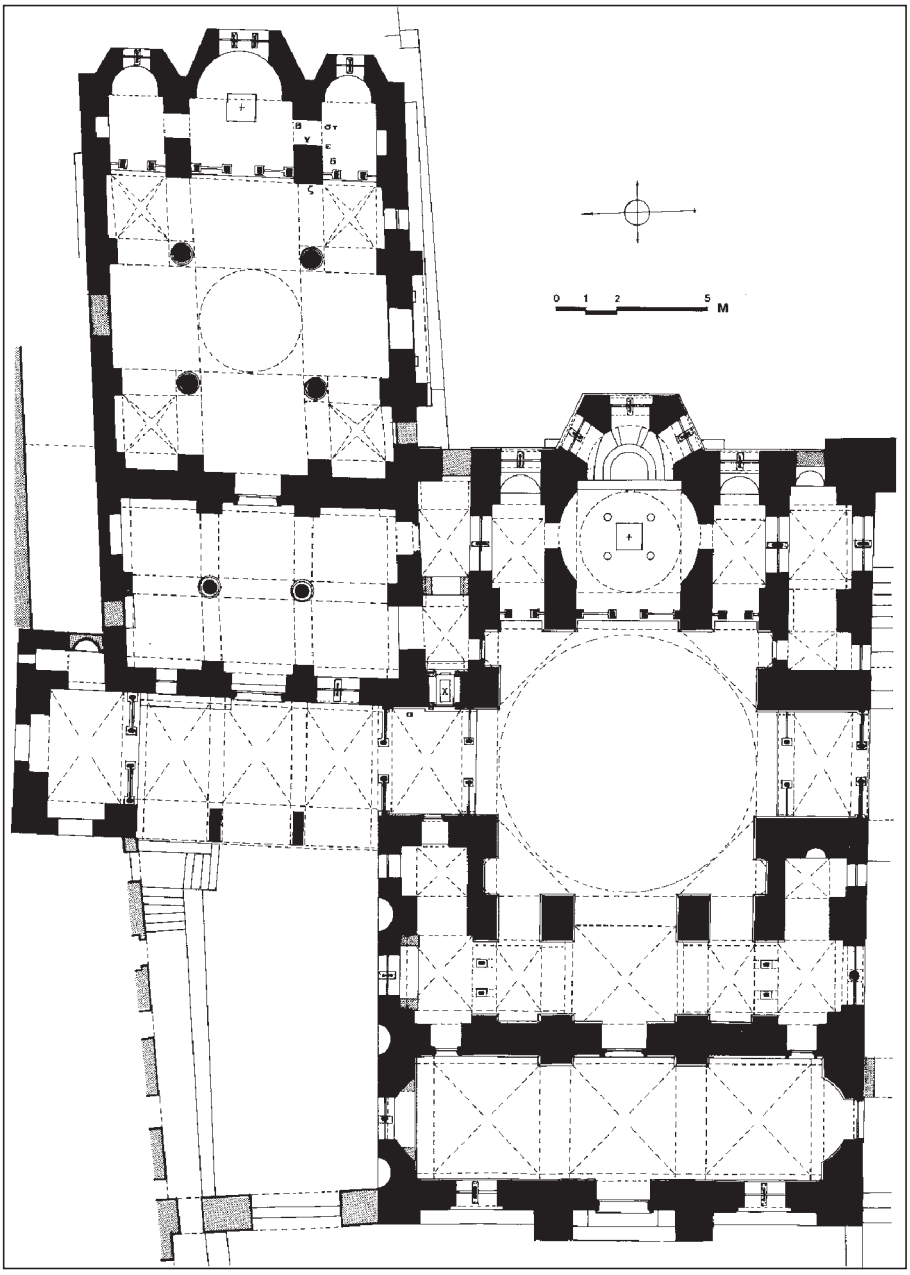

Fig. 1 Plan of Hosios Loukas, tenth to eleventh century. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 14 fig. 3).

(see figs 26-27) and in the armaments of several military saints, whose portraits are located immediately surrounding this narrative depiction (see figs 28-32)[9].

During the middle Byzantine period, Arabic was, of course, associated first and foremost with Islam. It was the language in which the Angel Gabriel communicated God's revelation to the Prophet Muhammad, and the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, was first recorded in Arabic. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, it was also the colloquial and administrative language of the majority of medieval Islamic societies, some of which were among the most prominent enemies of Byzantium, including the Emirate of Crete (ca. 824-961) and the Abbasid Caliphate (750 - ca. 1250). The presence of pseudo-Arabic in the decorative program of Hosios Loukas has vexed modern scholars because its Islamic associations put it at odds with the Byzantine identity and Christian function of the monument[10].

Although these exoticizing motifs have long attracted scholarly attention, a conclusive interpretation of their sig-

9 Additional pseudo-Arabic motifs are painted on the column capitals in the west balcony of the *katholikon* and on the exterior wall of the *katholikon* immediately to the south of the west portal. The date of these decorations is uncertain, however, and they may be modern additions.

10 On this issue and its salience in early scholarship on pseudo-Arabic, see Pedone/Cantone, Ornament 125 f. The modern perception of pseudo-Arabic decoration in Byzantine churches as incongruous with the monuments' religious and cultural identity may derive in part from the tendency to privilege Constantinopolitan sources in the study of Byzantine attitudes towards foreign cultures and languages. Gilbert Dagron posits that the inclination at the capital was to view bi- and multilingual individuals with suspicion as potential spies or heretics. The mastery of other languages was to be expected – if not accepted – only for individuals whose professional circumstances demanded it, for example, merchants, missionaries, scholars, or soldiers posted at the frontier. Dagron, Formes.



Fig. 2 Interior view of the *katholikon*, Hosios Loukas, first half of the eleventh century. – (After Cat. New York 1997, 20).

nificance within the program of the complex has not been established. To date, studies have focused on documenting the typology and morphology of the motifs in the decorative programs of Hosios Loukas and other middle Byzantine buildings and objects[11]. In some instances scholars also identify formal models for Byzantine pseudo-Arabic motifs in medieval Islamic works of art and architecture[12]. The relative legibility of pseudo-Arabic motifs is a recurring question raised by scholars, and it has been proposed that some apparently-pseudo-Arabic elements found in Byzantine monuments can actually be read[13]. When they consider the significance of pseudo-Arabic for Byzantine viewers, scholars typically conclude that these motifs were purely decorative in nature[14]. In some instances, they acknowledge the contemporary vogue for Islamic artistic models, especially at the court of Constantinople, but this emulation is understood to operate exclusively within the realm of ornament, entailing no meaning beyond an appreciation for the aesthetic achievement and impressive luxury of medieval Islamic art[15].

A minority of these studies attempts to identify the specific mechanisms and pathways through which pseudo-Arabic motifs were transmitted to medieval Greece. These explanations differ from one another in terms of the proposed media and agents of transference, but in each instance the meaning of pseudo-Arabic at Hosios Loukas is understood to be shaped by the category of objects or people through which the motifs traveled. That is to say, the mediating objects' functions and social values – or the identities of the agents of this transmission – is argued to have informed the significance that pseudo-Arabic held for Byzantine viewers after the motifs were transferred to the walls, furnishings, frescoes, and mosaics of Hosios Loukas.

In this paper, I explore the diverse explanations for the meaning – or lack of meaning – that scholars have proposed

11 For example, see Schultz/Barnsley, Monastery; Megaw, Chronology 104-109; Miles, Material; Nikonanos, Keramoplastikes.
12 Miles, Byzantium 20-29; Grabar, La décoration 18-21; Spittle, Cufic 138-142.
13 Miles, Material 282 f.; Kanellopoulos/Tome, True Kūfic; Spittle, Cufic 138 f.
14 For example, see Megaw, Chronology 110.
15 For example, see Grabar, La décoration 32; Connor, Mosaics 65.



Fig. 3 Pseudo-Arabic cloisonné bricks, central apse, east façade, Hosios Loukas, ca. 961. – (Photo A. Walker).



Fig. 4 Pseudo-Arabic cloisonné bricks, east façade, Hosios Loukas, ca. 961. – (Photo A. Walker).



Fig. 5 Pseudo-Arabic cloisonné bricks, east end of south wall, Hosios Loukas, ca. 961. – (Photo A. Walker).



Fig. 6 Pseudo-Arabic carved marble string course, east façade, Hosios Loukas, ca. 961. – (Photo A. Walker).

for pseudo-Arabic at Hosios Loukas. I reconcile these divergent possibilities by recognizing pseudo-Arabic as a potently polysemous sign, which had the capacity to express different connotations to different audiences depending on the associations that viewers held for Arabic script, the things on which it traveled, and the people who transmitted these motifs and objects. I further suggest that within the physical environment of Hosios Loukas, this broad range of potential meanings was constrained and focused through the placement of pseudo-Arabic at particular locations in the iconographic schemes of the two churches. As a result, pseudo-Arabic could be read in relation to the physical and visual contexts of the north and south churches' architectural setting and iconographic programs.

I also draw attention to how, throughout the scholarly literature on pseudo-Arabic at Hosios Loukas, one category of actors has been conspicuously underrepresented in accounts of the transmission and reception of these motifs: the monks. Developing observations made by Kurt Weitzmann in the 1950s (but rarely noted in subsequent literature), I explore how the members of the monastic community of Hosios Loukas may have perceived Arabic as a Christian language that was actively cultivated at the revered monasteries of Palestine and Egypt[16]. I suggest that this association would have been informed and sustained by manuscripts and icons that were inscribed with Arabic and that originated from these hallowed sites of pilgrimage and monasticism. From this perspective, monks emerge as uniquely well-positioned to play a role in transmitting pseudo-Arabic and its Christian connotations through their travels to and from the Holy Land and their control over the decorative programs of middle Byzantine religious foundations[17]. Consideration of this and other means for the circulation of Arabic (and pseudo-Arabic) script in medieval Greece sheds light on the multiple pathways, the diverse range of objects, and the variety of actors contributing to the availability of models for pseudo-Arabic elements. In addition, this new interpretation expands the range of meanings that these motifs may have held for the Byzantine patrons and audiences at Hosios Loukas[18].

16 Weitzmann, Islamische 314f. figs 16, 17, 19. Also see Miles, Byzantium 32 esp. 32 n. 175, who notes personal communications in which Weitzmann suggested that bilingual monks from Sinai may have served as mediators of Arabic script to medieval Greece.

17 Regarding the role of monks and manuscripts in medieval cross-cultural artistic exchange, see esp. Hunt, Cultural Transmission.

18 My argument follows the current trend in the study of middle Byzantine church decoration to see each foundation as a unique iconographic program that must be understood in relation to the specific patrons, audiences, and functions of a given building. On this point, see James, Monks.

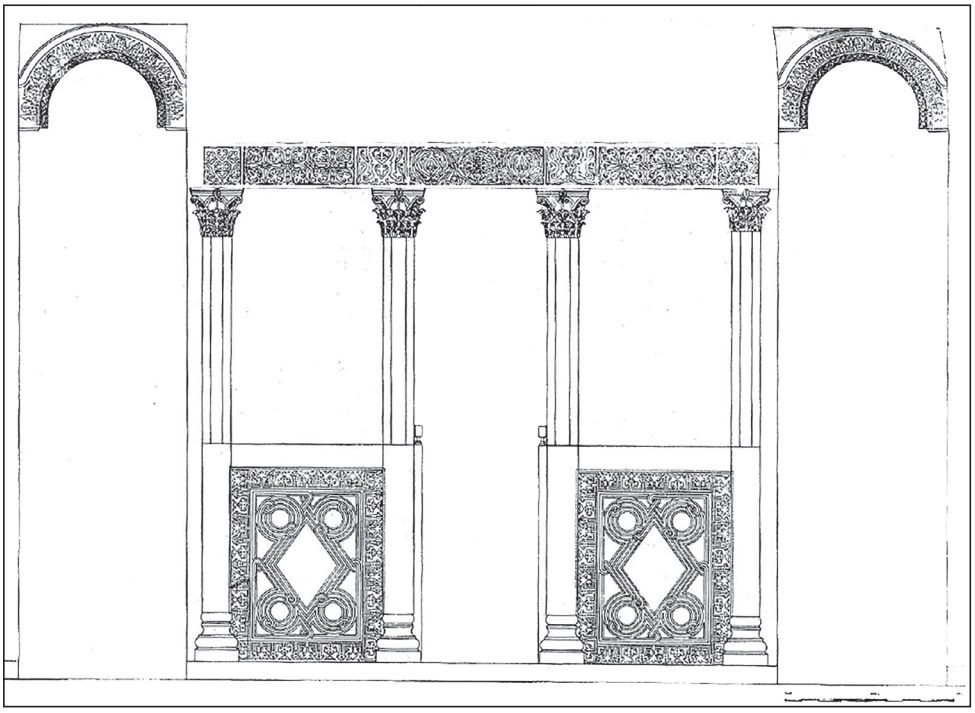

Fig. 7 Reconstruction of the *templon* for the tenth-century north church at Hosios Loukas. – (After L. Bouras, Ho glyptos 101 drawing 3).

The Message in the Medium

As noted above, much of the scholarship on pseudo-Arabic in middle Byzantine art and architecture is concerned with documenting the numerous examples of the phenomenon in objects and monuments as well as establishing formal models for these motifs in medieval Islamic art. In some instances, these studies also venture tentative suggestions regarding the specific media through which these designs traveled and the individuals responsible for such transmissions. For example, it has been hypothesized that tenth-century Arab craftsmen – who are presumed to have settled in Greece following their successful raids in the region or to have been taken captive and indentured following the Byzantine conquests of Islamic territories – served as the mediators of pseudo-Arabic[19]. Implicit in this proposition is an understanding that these skilled workers possessed mental storehouses of architectural models and technical knowledge, which equipped them to transfer Islamic forms, including the use of Arabic (or pseudo-Arabic) inscriptions[20]. This argument fails to consider, however, that Arab craftsmen were not likely given full authority in the design of Christian places of worship, nor does it account for the role of Christian patrons, whose approval of these projects was no doubt required. The argument assumes the absence of cultural connotations for pseudo-Arabic, thereby implying that Byzantine viewers would have seen such motifs as nothing more than decorative embellishments. Yet given that Arab craftsmen probably would have been perceived as enemies of Byzantium, it seems unlikely that Byzantine patrons and audiences would have experienced pseudo-Arabic motifs in neutral terms.



Fig. 8 Fragments of the marble liturgical furnishings from the tenth-century north church at Hosios Loukas. – (Photo A. Walker).

The textile industry of Thebes has also been cited as a possible source for Islamic objects that served as models

19 Miles, Byzantium 19-21, 31; Megaw, Chronology 104; Bouras, Ho glyptos 126; Cutler, Parallel 638-642. For evidence of a Muslim settlement in medieval Athens, see Miles, Byzantium 19f.; Miles, Mosque. For doubts regarding the presence of an Arab-Islamic community in medieval Athens, see Setton, Raids.

20 Miles does acknowledge the presence of these motifs in contemporary Islamic architecture, but does not explicitly draw a connection between these monuments and Arab craftsmen who might have migrated to Greece. See Miles, Byzantium 30f. Grabar states forcefully that the models for pseudo-Arabic motifs in middle Byzantine buildings should be located in medieval Islamic architecture, but he does not fully substantiate this position. See Grabar, La décoration 18-25, esp. 21.



Fig. 9 Joshua, second half of the tenth century, fresco, south side of the exterior western wall of the north church, Hosios Loukas. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 16 fig. 5).



Fig. 10 Detail of **fig. 9** showing pseudo-Arabic adorning the edges of Joshua's head scarf and helmet. – (Detail from Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 16 fig. 5).

for pseudo-Arabic decorations at Hosios Loukas and other monuments in medieval Greece[21]. Thebes was the capital of Hellas, the Byzantine theme (administrative district) in which Hosios Loukas was located. The monastery was situated about 30 miles (45 km) to the northeast of Thebes, and the *vita* of the Saint notes his frequent contact with members of the imperial administration and local aristocracy who were based in this regional capital[22]. If Islamic silks were the medium that inspired pseudo-Arabic decorations at Hosios Loukas, their material and aesthetic value as well as their exotic origins presumably would have fueled the motivation to adapt these foreign decorative motifs to serve as architectural embellishments. The fact that textiles were used in both the Byzantine and Islamic worlds as curtains and hangings supports the possibility that patterns on silks could have been transferred easily to buildings[23]. Silks are frequently cited in Byzantine church inventories and *typika* as well as in the wills of wealthy people who donated them to religious institutions, demonstrating the active use of textiles in the decoration of ecclesiastic spaces and in liturgical rituals[24]. In rare instances, some of these silks are noted as being of Islamic origin and may have been inscribed with Arabic[25]. In the case of Hosios Loukas, luxury textiles – and exoticizing motifs derived from them – would have connoted the wealth and prestige of the Theban textile industry as well as the cosmopolitan cultural and commercial connections that were part and parcel of medieval silk production, distribution, and use[26]. In this respect, pseudo-Arabic motifs might also have recalled the commercial success of regional benefactors, who would have gained their wealth from the manufacture and sale of silks and in turn shared this bounty with the local monastery. This argument is undermined, however, by the fact that the Theban textile industry was not firmly established until the mid-eleventh century and became prominent

21 Miles, Byzantium 29 f.
22 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 45, 58, 59, 63.
23 On the role of textiles in transferring decorative forms to medieval monumental art, see Fulghum, Under Wraps; Golombek, Draped.
24 Muthesius, Courtly esp. 97-101; Muthesius, Precious.
25 Muthesius, Courtly 100; Parani, Intercultural esp. 356 f. A possible reflection of the use of Arabic-inscribed textiles as Byzantine liturgical cloths is found in the apse of the eleventh-century Karabaş Kilise in Cappadocia, which depicts the Communion of the Apostles taking place at an altar covered by a cloth embellished at its edges with pseudo-Arabic. See Jolivet-Lévy, Les Églises 269 pl. 148 fig. 2.
26 As reflected, for example, in the regulations surrounding the production and distribution of domestic and foreign silk at Constantinople recorded in the early tenth-century *Book of the Eparch*, which makes extensive reference to the controls on the sale of silk, both that produced in Byzantium and that imported to the capital by »Syrian« (i. e., Islamic) merchants. See Leon der Weise, Eparchenbuch 94 f. (5.1-5.2). For discussion of the middle Byzantine silk industry and its cross-cultural dimensions, see Jacoby, Silk Economies; Muthesius, Silk.

only in the twelfth century[27]. This *terminus post quem* follows the construction and decoration of the two extant churches at Hosios Loukas, which likely spanned from the mid-tenth to mid-eleventh centuries[28].

Ceramic vessels are also noted as a possible means for the transference of pseudo-Arabic motifs[29]. Examples from Athens and Corinth offer geographically relevant comparanda for Hosios Loukas[30]. Nevertheless, these dishes date to the eleventh century and after, placing them at the latter end of the timeframe for construction at Hosios Loukas. Their chronology makes them ineligible as mediators of the pseudo-Arabic motifs found in the cloisonné brick and marble of the tenth-century phase of the complex.

A more promising explanation for the transmission of pseudo-Arabic to medieval Greece is found in the large amount of booty that was seized in military expeditions against the Arabs of Crete in 961, a victory achieved under the leadership of the Byzantine general Nikephoros Phokas during the reign of Romanos II (r. 959-963)[31]. In his account of the imperial triumph held in Constantinople following this victory, the tenth-century historian Leo the Deacon recounted the marvelous objects paraded in the Hippodrome, including »full sets of armor, helmets, swords, and breastplates, all gilded, and countless spears, shields, and back-bent bows«[32]. Given the prevalence of Arabic inscriptions on medieval Islamic arms, armor, textiles, coins, and luxury objects in diverse media such as ivory, rock crystal, precious metals, and enamel, the spoils claimed from Crete almost certainly included inscribed objects[33].

Carolyn Connor argues that local military contingents from Hellas likely participated in this campaign and would have returned to the region with objects taken in battle from Arab opponents[34]. These same populations of Byzantine soldiers and generals were well-positioned to serve as benefactors of local foundations like the monastery at Hosios Loukas, and it is reasonable to speculate that they paid homage to regional saints in thanks for success on the battlefield. Such recognition would have been especially appropriate in Luke's case because the *vita* of the Saint credits him with foretelling this victory[35]. If spoils seized during the Cretan campaign subsequently facilitated the transference of Arabic script to works of art and architecture in medieval Greece, their association with military triumph could have led to the perception of pseudo-Arabic in the tenth-century church at Hosios Loukas as a sign of Byzantine victory over Arab enemies as well as an affirmation of the universal superiority of Christianity over Islam.

Another line of scholarly argument perceives pseudo-Arabic as a decorative motif that derived not from Islamic sources but rather from Byzantine models in Constantinople[36]. Support for this interpretation is found in painted ceramic architectural tiles displaying pseudo-Arabic from the early tenth-century phase (ca. 907) of the church of Constantine Lips, which attest to the presence of Islamicizing architectural decorations in the capital prior to their documented appearance in Greece[37]. This argument is predicated on the assumption that the sophisticated design and decoration of the churches at Hosios Loukas required some combination of patrons, designers, or builders from the capital, a cosmopolitan environment in which cross-cultural currents ran deep[38]. According to this scenario, medieval luxury objects bearing Arabic or pseudo-Arabic inscriptions offer one means of transference, but architectural patrons, designers, and builders also served as potential conduits[39]. Implicit in this explanation is an important shift in the potential meaning of pseudo-Arabic, which no longer directly involves Islamic political or cultural groups and their material culture. Instead, pseudo-Arabic becomes a symbol of Byzantine urban sophistication and imperial or aristocratic cosmopolitanism.

Although the particular modes of transference and associated meanings for pseudo-Arabic differ in the above examples, each interpretation follows the same principle: the material and/or human agents that transmitted Arabic script to medieval Greece directly shaped the meaning of pseudo-Arabic elements. However, in judging the relevance of different objects and actors as potential mediators, it is necessary to consider them in relation to what we know of the history of a given medium and the possible means of its transmission as well as the availability of different actors both to convey pseudo-Arabic to medieval Greece and to promote its adoption at Hosios Loukas. As argued above, when such considerations are applied, certain media and agents emerge

27 Louvi-Kizin, Thebes; Jacoby, Silk 462-467, 470-488.
28 For the dating of the churches, see n. 4 above.
29 Miles, Byzantium 31f. figs 91 and 93. On the topic of connections between Islamic and Byzantine art via ceramics, see Ballian/Drandaki, Silver esp. 57.
30 Frantz, Agora fig. 19; Morgan, Pottery 31f. fig. 21 pls XIV (fig. e), XVII (figs e-g), XXV, XXVI (figs a-c), XXXII (figs i, k, l), XXXIX (figs A.e , A.f, A.h; B.e, B.g), XL, XLIV (fig. e).
31 This argument is further developed in Walker, Pseudo-Arabic 108f. My interpretation resonates with that of Connor, who also sees Hosios Loukas as a »victory church,« but does not explicitly identify pseudo-Arabic as a symbol of Byzantine military triumph. Furthermore, Connor proposes that the *katholikon* was the monument that commemorated the Byzantine reconquest of Crete, and dates that building to the tenth century. Connor, Victory 305f.; Connor, Art 82f., 122. In contrast, I follow current scholarly consensus on the matter of chronology, placing the south church in the eleventh century and proposing that the tenth-century north church was associated with the victory over the Emirate of Crete. Regarding the chronology of the churches, see n. 4 above.
32 Leo the Deacon, History 81; cited by Connor, Victory 300. Regarding the likelihood that the Arabs of Crete had amassed substantial material wealth in advance of the Byzantine reconquest of the island, see Christides, Crete 116-122.
33 For medieval Islamic arms and armor inscribed with Arabic, see Mohamed, Arts nos 7, 68-70, 87, 90-91, 104, 232.
34 Connor, Victory 298f.
35 Connor, Victory 299-303; Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 60.
36 Grabar, La décoration 33-36; Connor, Mosaics 65.
37 Gerstel/Lauffenburger, Lost Art no. VI.16, 194f. Ceramic vessel fragments with pseudo-Arabic motifs were also recovered during excavations of the Hippodrome in Constantinople. See Rice, Pottery 210 figs 14 and 15.
38 For instance, see Connor, Mosaic 64-67. Regarding the cosmopolitan tastes of the middle Byzantine court, see Grabar, Le success; Walker, Emperor.
39 For discussion of middle Byzantine luxury objects inscribed with pseudo-Arabic, see for example Cutler, Christian; Parani, Intercultural 362f.; Walker, Mingling.

as less viable. In particular, the establishment of the Theban textile industry in the period immediately following the date by which construction and decoration at Hosios Loukas is thought to have been completed casts doubt on the role of Islamic or Islamicizing textiles and their Theban owners/producers as conduits through which pseudo-Arabic reached the region. Also questionable is the argument that posits a prominent role for Arab craftsmen. Even if skilled workers from Islamic lands contributed in some way to the transmission of pseudo-Arabic to Greece, it is unlikely that Muslims would have controlled decisions regarding the design and decoration of Christian churches. Instead, the motivation for including these motifs in Byzantine monuments needs to be located among Byzantine actors. For these reasons, Arab craftsman cannot serve as a primary explanation for the use of pseudo-Arabic at Hosios Loukas.

Yet other media and agents of transmission do find support in the historical evidence of the period. As noted above, soldiers returning to Hellas following the military expeditions against Crete in 961 would have carried with them booty that likely included objects inscribed with Arabic. These men would have been motivated to make contributions to religious foundations in thanks for their success. Indeed, it is known that in the middle Byzantine era, monks throughout the Empire were called upon to support imperial military endeavors with their prayers[40]. The recently established community at Hosios Loukas would have had a vested interest in contributing to Byzantine success against the Arabs of Crete, one of several foreign groups who had harassed the region of Hellas throughout the ninth and tenth centuries, a problem to which the Saint's *vita* alludes repeatedly[41]. Luke's prophecy of the Cretan victory provides yet another reason for Hosios Loukas to be a privileged recipient of votive offerings. For these reasons, it is also worth considering that the reconquest of Crete may have spurred imperial support for Hosios Loukas in recognition of Luke's forecasting of Romanos II's victory over the Arabs[42].

Easily reconciled with this argument is the proposition that pseudo-Arabic was a desirable decorative form because of its association with the cosmopolitan tastes of the Byzantine capital. The sophisticated design and high-quality execution of the structure and the ornamentation of the tenth- and eleventh-century churches at Hosios Loukas support the possibility of involvement from Constantinople itself[43]. Alternately, the regional elite of Hellas were well-positioned to transmit the most current architectural and artistic trends and tastes to this provincial location[44]. As indicated in the Saint's *vita*, the Theban aristocracy and imperial administrators maintained close contacts with the capital[45]. Especially in the eleventh century, during the period when the south church was built and decorated, the growing economic and administrative status of Hellas would have enhanced the ability of local patrons to finance the expansion and improvement of the monastery[46].

Before exploring further the implications that these interpretations of pseudo-Arabic have for our reading of the iconographic program of Hosios Loukas, it is necessary first to discuss an additional group of individuals who were intimately involved in the development of the monastery, but have not been fully integrated into previous analyses of the role of pseudo-Arabic in the decorative program of the churches: the monks.

Monks as Mediators

As already noted, monks are conspicuously absent from most accounts of the transmission of (pseudo-)Arabic to medieval Greece or interpretations of the significance of these motifs in the iconographic program of the churches at Hosios Loukas[47]. This is surprising for several reasons. First, the Saint's *vita* indicates the monastic community's active part in the architectural development of the site, with the earliest foundations of the monastery being established by monks. Construction of a church dedicated to Saint Barbara, which preceded the churches now standing at the site, was initiated by Luke himself with financial support from the governor of Hellas based at Thebes[48]. In addition, the first elaborations to Luke's tomb are said to have been undertaken by a monk, Kosmas, from Paphlagonia (a Byzantine theme located along the southern coast of the Black Sea), who was en route to Italy when he received a divine order to serve the Saint. Arriving at the monastery about six months after Luke's death, Kosmas found the condition of the Saint's shrine to be unsatisfactory. He created a platform to mark the site and a barrier to protect it[49]. The *vita* further recounts that two years after the Luke's death, his followers completed the Church of Saint Barbara, embellishing it as much as they were able. In addition they erected buildings to serve both pilgrims and the monastic community as well as improved upon the Saint's tomb, which was now described as a cruciform *euktērion* (memorial shrine)[50].

40 Connor, Victory 299, 301.
41 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 2, 24, 32, 50, 62.
42 As suggested by Bouras, Ho glyptos 134. Connor posits that general Nikephoros Phokas could have served as the major donor to Hosios Loukas, with a similar motivation of offering thanks for the victory achieved under his leadership. Connor, Victory 301. Elsewhere Connor has acknowledged other possible imperial patrons, including Romanos II (r. 959-963) and Basil II (r. 976-1025). For discussion of these issues, also see Walker, Pseudo-Arabic 101 f, 109.
43 Bouras, Ho glyptos 134; Schminck, Kaiserliche Stiftung esp. 351-354; Connor, Victory 301; Connor, Mosaics 64-67.
44 As suggested by Cantone, Problem 35. Also see Connor, Mosaics 11.
45 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 58-59, 63.
46 Regarding the expansion of wealth and resources in Hellas beginning in the eleventh century, see n. 27, above.
47 The major exception being Weitzmann, as noted by Miles. See n. 16 above.
48 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 59.
49 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 66.
50 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 67.



Fig. 11 Abbot Philotheos offering a model of the *katholikon* to Saint Luke, fresco, northeast area of south church, Hosios Loukas, ca. 1011. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 55 fig. 50).

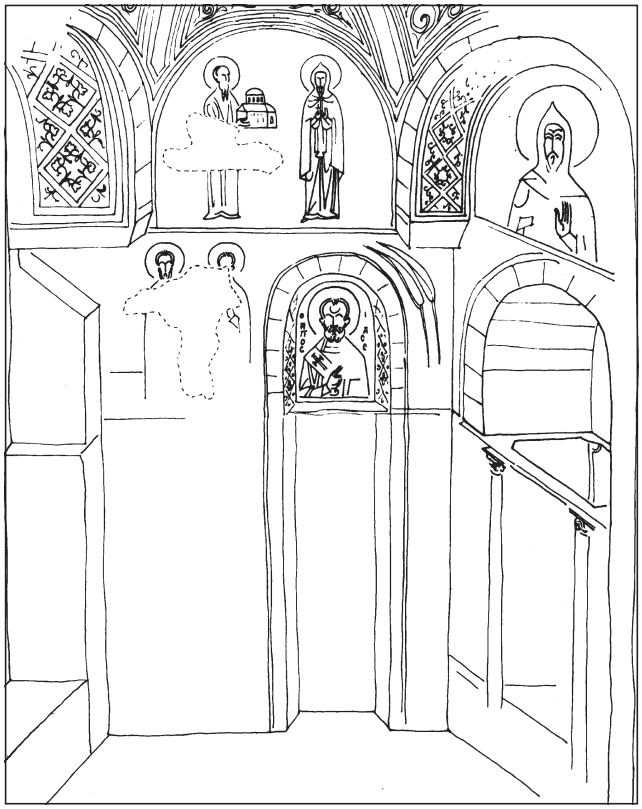

Fig. 12 Line drawing showing fresco of Philotheos offering a model of the *katholikon* to Saint Luke. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 16 fig. 51).

Debate surrounds the identification of the buildings mentioned in the *vita*, but most scholars contend that the churches currently standing at the site are not those described in the Saint's life. Although we lack a thorough textual account of the founding of the present buildings, fragments of evidence from historical sources and from the monuments themselves indicate the continued involvement of the monastic community in the architectural development of the site. A canticle written in honor of the translation of Luke's relics to a new church (most likely in 1011) identifies the founder of this building to be the *hēgoumenos* Philotheos[51]. His role in the construction of the south church is further supported by a fresco near the present tomb of the Saint in the northeast corner of the *katholikon*, which shows Philotheos offering a model of the building to Luke (**figs. 11-12**). Inscriptions and additional portraits in the south church name several abbots of the monastery. A fragment from a funerary inscription honors the monk Theodore/Theodosios, whom Nicholas Oikonomides has identified as another *hēgoumenos* of Hosios Loukas, Theodosios Leobachos, who was active from the 1020s to the late 1040s[52]. Oikonomides also proposes that the mosaics of the *katholikon* could have been carried out under Theodosios' direction[53]. In the southeast vault of the crypt are rendered portraits of four abbots of the monastery, including Philotheos and Theodosios (see **fig. 33**)[54]. These two leaders of the monastery are also depicted in a group portrait of monks next to the entrance to the crypt (**fig. 13**)[55]. Finally an inscription in the *katholikon* credits the abbot Gregory with the addition of marble revetments to the interior of the upper church[56]. Oikonomides raises the possibility that Gregory was also responsible for carrying out the fresco program in the crypt[57].

When considered in total, this evidence points to the agency of the monks of Hosios Loukas in the architectural expansion and elaboration of the monastery in the tenth and eleventh centuries. It is likely that just as Luke turned to affluent local patrons for support of his building initiatives, later leaders of the monastery similarly sought outside assistance for the funding of their construction and decoration projects. But in no instance does any evidence suggest that external benefactors played an active role in shaping the form or embellishment of the churches. The latter observation serves as

51 Chatzidakis, A propos de la date; Chatzidakis, Précisions 87f.; Oikonomides, The First Century 249f.
52 Oikonomides, The First Century 245-249.
53 Oikonomides, The First Century 251.
54 Connor, Art 48-53 fig. 10, although see revisions to Connor's identification of the vault portraits in Oikonomides, The First Century 250f.
55 Oikonomides, The First Century 249.
56 Chatzidakis, A propos de la date 141.
57 Oikonomides, The First Century 251.



Fig. 13 Monks praying to Saint Luke, crypt of the *katholikon*, Hosios Loukas, mid-eleventh century. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 91 fig. 97).

a caveat against the tendency to underestimate the agency of monks in determining the decorative and iconographic programs of the churches at Hosios Loukas, including the use of pseudo-Arabic motifs.

It stands to reason that in developing the churches, the monks would have sought to promote the reputation of their foundation. The question remains on what grounds they would have attempted to stake their claims, and how pseudo-Arabic might have served these ambitions. From the above-cited possibilities, the association of (pseudo-)Arabic inscriptions with spoils of war claimed by Byzantine soldiers is among the most promising explanations for the tenth-century phase of the monastery because of Luke's foretelling of this military success and the renown that fulfillment of his prophecy must have brought to his cult. The resonance of pseudo-Arabic with spoils of war and military triumph as well as the promotion of Hosios Loukas as a victory church would have served the interests and needs of both regional donors to the church (including soldiers recently returned from the battlefield) and resident monks (who would have sought to celebrate their founder's role in this major triumph over Muslim enemies).

Yet in tandem with the connotation of Arabic as a sign of Christian triumph, the monks at Hosios Loukas may have perceived other associations for this exotic script that would have made it meaningful to them in a different way. During the ninth to mid-eleventh centuries, Arabic had grown in stature as a language of Christian theology among Melkite Christians living in the ancient monastic centers of Palestine and Egypt[58]. This tradition of manuscript production consisted of not only translating well-established Christian literature from Greek to Arabic, but also composing original theological works in Arabic[59]. Important centers for this activity included the famed monasteries of Mar Saba, situated about 9 miles (14 km) east

58 For a general introduction to this phenomenon, see Griffith, The Church 187-189; and the essays collected in Griffith, Arabic Christianity. On the ninth- to eleventh-century phase of this process, see Griffith, From Aramaic. On the doctrinal position and other characteristic features of the Melkite church, see Griffith, »Melkites«.

59 Nasrallah, Histoire 2,2 and Nasrallah, Histoire 3,1; Griffith, Monks; Griffith, Byzantium 247-250. Also see Monferrer-Sala, Hellenism.



Fig. 14 Bilingual Greek-Arabic book of the Psalms and Odes, produced at the Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, Egypt, eighth or ninth century, inks on parchment, ca. 21 × 16 cm, Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, cod. 36, fol. 39r. – (After Cat. Washington, D.C. 2006, 193 no. 46).

of Bethlehem, and Saint Catherine's, located in the middle of the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. But other sites were also active in Christian-Arabic intellectual development and manuscript production, including Mar Chariton in the Judean desert southeast of Bethlehem.

While these communities were positioned in remote locales, they were not entirely isolated from the larger medieval world. Monastic and political leaders from around Byzantium maintained sporadic correspondences with the heads of these houses, and the great foundations of the East were among the *loca sancta* visited by pilgrims to the Holy Land. This was particularly true of monks, who sought out the tombs of the great founders of Orthodox Christianity and sometimes expanded their own spiritual training through sojourns and even extended residences in these communities[60]. Indeed, Luke's *vita* tells how the Saint yearned to visit the Holy Land as a young man, imploring a pair of monks whom he encountered to allow him to accompany them on their journey to Jerusalem[61]. Fortunately for Hosios Loukas, Luke's request went unfulfilled, and the monks instead deposited him at a monastery in Athens. But this example recalls an important characteristic of middle Byzantine monasticism: Orthodox monks were not obligated to remain with the community in which they took their vows, and many moved repeatedly and over vast distances during their lives, including to the ancient monasteries of the East[62].

Although very meager textual evidence documents tenth-century pilgrimage to the Holy Land from Byzantine territories, Luke's encounter with traveling monks is recounted in the *vita* as unexceptional, suggesting that such peregrinations were not uncommon at the time. Other pilgrims known to have visited Jerusalem in the tenth century include Dounale-Stephen, who was of Western origin. In the 940s he traveled from Constantinople to Palestine and is said later to have offered a report of his travels to the emperor[63]. As Alice-Mary Talbot observes in her survey of the *vitae* of middle Byzantine saints who made journeys to the Holy Land: »It is surely significant that these texts do not single out these pious journeys as extraordinary events, and thus they suggest that pilgrimage to Palestine was not so unusual in the middle and

60 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 101-103; Kaplan, Les saints 119; Shepherd, Holy Land 524-526.
61 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 9.
62 Charanis, Monk 68.
63 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 98.

late Byzantine centuries«[64]. Also of note, in the 1020s, Holy Land pilgrimage by Western Europeans saw a sharp upswing, and travel circuits formed to facilitate passage by land through the Balkans as well as by sea from southern Italy[65]. In addition to pilgrimage traffic, commercial and diplomatic networks that tied the region of Boeotia to Islamic territories are mentioned in Luke's *vita*[66]. For example, an imperial delegate traveling from Constantinople to Egypt is reported to have been waylaid at Corinth, where Luke assisted him in recouping a substantial purse of imperial funds that had been stolen by a servant[67]. In all these ways, we can appreciate how monks and monasteries maintained fluid networks of east-west (and north-south) communication, which facilitated the circulation of people, objects, and ideas.

Fig. 15 Icon depicting the Prophet Elijah (with detail showing inscriptions in Greek and Arabic), ca. 1050-1100, tempera and gold over textile on panel, 129.2 × 69.2 × 3.5 cm, Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai, Egypt. – (After Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 190f. no. 28).



As has been discussed already, the tenth-century church at Hosios Loukas can be understood as a commemorative monument, which celebrates Byzantine victory over the Arabs of Crete and uses pseudo-Arabic as a sign of triumph. Similarly, the eleventh-century church was constructed and decorated during a period of tense Byzantine-Islamic relations, but ones that transpired in cooler terms. The date for construction of the *katholikon* ca. 1011 places the foundation of this building in the wake of the notorious destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher at the order of the Fatimid caliph, al-Ḥākim (r. 996-1021) in 1009. This vandalism occurred during a period of violent persecution of Christians in the Holy Land, including those residing in monasteries of the region. In response to this aggression, the Byzantine emperor Basil II (r. 976-1025) established an embargo on trade with the Fatimids in 1016, which lasted until 1027. Permission for the Byzantines to rebuild the Holy Sepulcher was granted by al-Ḥākim's son and successor, ʿAlī aẓ-Ẓāhir (r. 1021-1036), to Romanos III Argyros (r. 1028-1034) in the 1030s, but these renovations were not launched until 1042, during the reign of Constantine IX Monomachos (r. 1042-1055)[68]. Although the exact dates for the fresco and mosaic campaigns at the *katholikon* of Hosios Loukas are uncertain, evidence suggests that they were carried out over several decades and were completed in the late 1040s[69]. According to this chronology, the construction and decoration of the *katholikon* was undertaken against the backdrop of Fatimid aggressions in the Holy Land and a protracted Byzantine effort aimed at quelling these violent actions through diplomatic measures and remediating the physical damage inflicted upon Christian *loca sancta*.

From the time of the Islamic conquest of the Christian Holy Land in the seventh century, the prominence of Arabic as a colloquial and administrative language had grown consistently. As such, Arabic was dominant not only in the textual culture of these regions but in the visual culture as well, appearing in inscriptions on buildings, coins, and other »public

64 Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 98.
65 Shepherd, Holy Land 523; Micheau, Les itinéraires 89-91.
66 For broader discussion of these trade connections, see Jacoby, Byzantine Trade esp. 30-47; Shepherd, Holy Land 520-522.
67 Saint Luke of Steiris ch. 44.
68 Jacoby, Bishop Gunther 271-74; Shepherd, Holy Land 519f., 530-535.
69 Regarding the date of the frescoes and mosaics, see n. 4, above.



Fig. 16 Detail of **fig. 15** showing inscription at lower edge of the icon. – (After Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 190f. no. 28).

texts«[70]. Christians who traveled to the East would have seen Arabic in these contexts and associated it with Islamic hegemony. A key example of these circumstances is found in a possibly tenth-century Fatimid inscription in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which recorded the dedication of a Muslim place of prayer in the atrium of this most important *locus sanctus*[71]. Needless to say, the presence of an Islamic-Arabic inscription in the holiest of Christian shrines would have been a powerful reminder of Fatimid dominance in the region. Given the persecution of Christians that transpired under Fatimid rule in the tenth and early eleventh centuries, such public inscriptional assertions of Muslim authority carried with them very real threats to Christian freedom of worship and even personal safety[72].

Still, evidence demonstrates that during the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, the sectarian status of Arabic as the exclusive language of Islam diminished in some respects, as Melkite monastic communities adopted Arabic for their own purposes. This transformation is manifest in the material record through Christian manuscripts that employ Arabic, both in marginal annotations and in the main texts. Particularly striking are a number of bilingual Arabic-Greek manuscripts, including an eighth- or ninth-century text of the Psalms and Odes (Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, cod. 36, fol. 39[r]) (**fig. 14**)[73]. Such books convey in compelling visual terms the coexistence of Arabic and Greek as »written signs« of Melkite Christianity[74].

In addition to manuscripts produced in the scriptoria and kept in the libraries of Holy Land monasteries, icons also displayed Arabic inscriptions. A key example of this category of Eastern monastic material culture is found in two icons now in the treasury of Saint Catherine's at Sinai that date to the second half of the eleventh century and depict Elijah and Moses. The lower edges of the frames are inscribed in Greek and Arabic with prayers of dedication and invocations for the salvation of the donor (**figs 15-18**)[75]. These icons and

Fig. 17 Icon depicting Moses (with detail showing inscriptions in Greek and Arabic), ca. 1050-1100, tempera and gold on panel, 134 × 69.9 × 4.1 cm, Monastery of St Catherine, Sinai, Egypt. – (After Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 192 f. no. 29).





Fig. 18 Detail of **fig. 17** showing inscription at lower edge of the icon. – (After Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 192 f. no. 29).

70 Coined by Irene Bierman, the term »public text« refers to writing employed by a hegemonic cultural-political authority in the built environment to communicate identity and difference. Public texts can serve both to affirm the superior status of the ruling group as well as to demarcate the limits of subservient groups' participation in social, religious, or political power. See Bierman, Public Text; Bierman, Writing Signs 1-27 esp. xi-xii, 1, 4.

71 This inscription was removed in the nineteenth century. See Busse, Die 'Umar-Moschee 75 f., 79 f. I thank Ute Verstegen for bringing this inscription to my attention.

72 Regarding this argument, also see Walker, Pseudo-Arabic 114 f.

73 Cat. Washington, D.C. 2006, 192 f., 272 no. 46. For an illustrated mid-ninth-century Arabic Gospelbook with a portrait of the Evangelist Luke labeled in both Greek and Arabic, see Cat. Washington, D.C. 2006, 166 f., 274 f. no. 35; Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 200-203 no. 32.

74 As defined by Bierman, »written signs« are visual manifestations of language (usually alphabets and script) that appear in public spaces and index group identities through their display of difference, with its implications of social inclusion and exclusion. Bierman, Writing Signs xii.

75 The inscriptions on the icon of Elijah read in Greek: »For Stephen, who fashioned your image, O Tishbite, obtain by your mercy pardon of transgression«; in Arabic: »Forgiveness for Stephen who painted you, O Prophet Elijah, May God forgive him the sins he has committed«. The inscriptions on the icon of Moses reads in Greek: »The person who painted your likeness, named Stephen, requests, O God-Seer, release from his errors«; in Arabic: »O you, who have seen God, grant forgiveness to Stephen who painted your virtues«. Cat. Los Angeles 2006, 190-193 no. 28, 29. Regarding the medieval tradition of Melkite icons, see Garidis, Hoi melchitikes 370-374.

manuscripts illustrate how eleventh-century pilgrims could have encountered Arabic in conjunction with Christian sacred images, thereby encouraging them to perceive these foreign written signs as emblematic of Christian devotional culture at these distant holy places.

Most material traces of the tenth- and eleventh-century phases of Eastern monasteries were lost following the abandonment and subsequent deterioration of the sites in the post-medieval era. The erasure of their physical environments makes it impossible to know if Arabic was employed as a prominent written sign in these spaces. But a few Christian foundations that operated under medieval Islamic hegemony during the medieval period are preserved today and employ Arabic in their decorative programs. For instance, wall paintings dating to 1232/1233 at the Monastery of Saint Anthony near the western coast of the Red Sea show a row of saints framed by an arcade in which the impost blocks are inscribed with pseudo-Arabic bands (**figs 19a-b**)[76]. Although significantly post-dating the mid-eleventh-century fresco program of the crypt at Hosios Loukas, the motifs found in the wall paintings at Saint Anthony's directly recall the pseudo-Arabic embellishments on the column capitals to either side of the apse in the crypt (see **figs 31-32**). Arabic and pseudo-Arabic inscriptions are found throughout the wall paintings of the church of Saint Anthony, embellishing textiles, armaments, and other attributes of Christian holy people[77].

Evidence in the form of manuscripts, icons, and frescoes from medieval monasteries in Palestine and Egypt supports the possibility that monks and other pilgrims traveling to these sites in the middle Byzantine era would have been exposed to Arabic as a pervasive written sign of Eastern Christianity. As a result, Arabic could have come to connote not only the hegemonic and sometimes oppressive power of medieval Muslim political groups like the Fatimids, but also the most revered, authoritative, and enduring ancient Christian monastic communities of Palestine and Egypt. It is reasonable to speculate that these same pious travelers would have acquired sacred objects, such as icons and manuscripts[78], thereby equipping them to serve as conduits for the spread of (pseudo-)Arabic from ancient monastic centers of the East[79].

Dissemination of Arabic as a Christian language, conveyance of actual Christian objects inscribed with Arabic, and transmission of memories of Christian monuments that employed Arabic as a sacred language was not limited to Byzantine monks who went on pilgrimage to the East. Monks resident in these distant communities also traveled throughout the medieval Mediterranean and beyond. An intriguing example of such an individual is the monk Symeon, who in 1026 was sent as a representative of the monastery of Saint Catherine to France in order to collect a promised donation from Richard, Duke of Normandy. Symeon had been born in Syracuse, but eventually moved to the Holy Land, where he first worked as a guide for pilgrims. After realizing his own vocation, he became a monk, eventually joining the monastery at Sinai. According to his *vita*, Symeon knew Latin, Greek, Syrian, »Egyptian« (probably Coptic), and Arabic[80]. As such he embodied the complex, polyglot identity of the Eastern Orthodox monasteries.

Symeon's journey to France met with many obstacles, particularly at its initial stages, during which he was falsely arrested by Muslim authorities in Egypt and then barely escaped a violent raid by pirates[81]. He eventually found refuge in Antioch, where – after meeting another Greek monk, Kosmas – Symeon joined a party of Western pilgrims that included the famous historian and monk Adémar of Chabannes (988-1034). They later developed a friendship during Symeon's residence at Angoulême, which lasted until July of 1027[82]. Adémar and Simeon's connection demonstrates the role that traveling monks – both Western and Eastern – could play in creating networks of information exchange and personal bonds across vast cultural and geographic landscapes. Adémar also exemplifies how monks transmitted foreign artistic traditions. In a miscellany text produced with his own hand, Adémar added a diverse range of sketches and ornamental borders, including a band of (pseudo-)Arabic (Leiden, Voss Latin VLO 15, fols 210^{v}, and 211^{v}) (**fig. 20**)[83]. Returning to Europe with its creator, the manuscript serves as an unusually concrete example of cross-cultural artistic transmission in the medieval era.

The further impact of Arabic literary production in the Melkite monasteries of the Holy Land might be traceable through pseudo-Arabic border and carpet page illuminations in some middle Byzantine Christian manuscripts written in Greek. Conventionally these ornaments have been viewed as part of a larger tenth- to eleventh-century aesthetic predilection for the decorative forms of Islamic art[84]. But Arabic-Christian manuscript production in Syria-Palestine and Egypt raises the possibility that these borders instead represent an acknowledgement of Arabic as a sign of ancient Christian identity and authority. For example, a manuscript containing the Homilies on Genesis by John Chrysostom dates to the second-half of the tenth century and shows pseudo-Arabic decorative bands (Venice, National Library, Marcianus Graecus II, 4 [832], fol. 207^{v}) (**fig. 21**)[85]. A tenth- or early eleventh-century lectionary also shows pseudo-Arabic

76 Bolman, Monastic figs 4.19, 4.22, and 7.6.
77 Bolman, Monastic 109-111, 125.
78 As suggested by Talbot, Byzantine Pilgrimage 107 f.
79 On this point, also see Hunt, Cultural Transmission esp. 8-13.
80 Wolff, How the News 183 f.
81 Wolff, How the News 184.
82 Landes, Relics 157 f., 161-167, 172.
83 Wolff, How the News 154; Spittle, Cufic 143 f.
84 This phenomenon has received surprisingly limited attention and is usually noted only in passing. For a brief but focused discussion of these manuscripts, see Cantone, Problem 33-38. For suggestion that pseudo-Arabic motifs in Byzantine sacred manuscripts are a »symptom« of Arab-Muslim converts to Christianity at the middle Byzantine court, see Pedone/Cantone, Ornament 129.
85 Cantone, Problem 33 f.; Pedone/Cantone, Ornament 129 f.



Fig. 19a Portraits of monks framed by architectural structures inscribed with pseudo-Arabic, fresco, 1232/33, Monastery of Saint Anthony, near western coast of the Red Sea, Egypt. – (After Bolman, Monastic fig. 4.22).



Fig. 19b Detail of **fig. 19**. – (After Bolman, Monastic fig. 7.6).



Fig. 20 Sketchbook of Adémar de Chabannes showing pseudo-Arabic motifs, first half of the eleventh century, Leiden, Voss Latin VLO 15, fol. 210^{v}. – (After Spittle, Cufic pl. XV, fig. B).



Fig. 21 Line drawing of pseudo-Arabic bands from a manuscript of the Homilies on Genesis by John Chrysostom, second-half of the tenth century, Venice, National Library, Marcian. gr. II, 4 [832], fol. 207^{v}. – (After Cantone, Problem 33 fig. 2).



Fig. 22 Line drawing of a pseudo-Arabic band from a lectionary, tenth- or early eleventh-century, Athens, National Library of Greece, 59, fol. 229^{r}. – (After Cantone, Problem 35 fig. 3).



Fig. 23 Pseudo-Arabic band from a manuscript of the Homilies of John Chrysostom, twelfth century, pigment on vellum, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. Gr. 660, fol. 350r. – (After Miles, Byzantium 32 fig. 94).



Fig. 24 Pseudo-Arabic band from a lectionary, early twelfth century, pigment on vellum, Sinai, Monastery of Saint Catherine, Gr. 207, fol. 210r. – (After Cutler, Parallel 642 fig. 2).

borders (Athens, National Library of Greece, 59, fol. 229r) (**fig. 22**)[86]. A decorative band in a twelfth-century copy of the Homilies of John Chrysostom (Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. Gr. 660, fol. 350) prominently displays a pseudo-Arabic motif that is quite proximate to actual Arabic (**fig. 23**)[87]. A final example from an early twelfth-century lectionary (Sinai, Gr. 207, fol. 210r) follows an Arabic model so closely that it has been read as the *šahāda* (the Islamic testament of faith: »There is no God but God and Muhammad is his Prophet«), although the legibility of this »inscription« has also been questioned (**fig. 24**)[88]. If these books were intended to recall Melkite texts that were written in actual Arabic, then their pseudo-Arabic motifs can be understood as respectful acknowledgments of an exotic, but still Christian tradition, which carried connotations of ancient religious authority and continuing monastic tenacity in the Holy Land. By decorating the walls of their monastery with the written signs of Eastern monasticism, the monks of Hosios Loukas might have similarly aspired to share in the tradition of ancient Christianity as well as to garner for their own community and pilgrimage cult some of the aura of the revered *loca sancta* in the East.

Hosios Loukas as a *locus sanctus*

Elsewhere I have argued that the meaning of pseudo-Arabic at Hosios Loukas shifts over time, from a symbol of military victory over Arab adversaries in the tenth century, to a sign of Muslim political and religious hegemony in the Holy Land in the eleventh century[89]. The possible role of monks in the design of the decorative and iconographic program at Hosios Loukas requires revision of this earlier interpretation. While I still propose that pseudo-Arabic can be understood as a mark of alterity, the degree of this cultural difference was not absolute, and the reaction that it spurred from Byzantine patrons and viewers was not entirely antagonistic. The Melkite monasteries of the Holy Land were without question exotic and other, but they were also part of a common history. Indeed, these Eastern monastic communities formed the deep and ancient roots of the Orthodox monastic tradition to which Hosios Loukas itself belonged. The legacy of this heritage was perpetuated, for instance, by the continuing role of the Sabaite order as a model for monastic *typika* in the middle Byzantine era[90]. Although it is impossible to know if regulations at Hosios Loukas were influenced by the Sabaite form, it is reasonable to speculate that the leaders of the community may have been aware of its status and currency in the medieval Orthodox world.

The perception of (pseudo-)Arabic as a written sign of Melkite authority may have circulated in the Byzantine world by the tenth century, but there are no aspects of the placement of pseudo-Arabic in the decorative program of the north church that evoke a distinctly monastic association for these motifs. In contrast, the relation of pseudo-Arabic motifs to the broader iconographic program of the south church can be understood to create to a larger statement about Byzantine attitudes towards contemporary Islamic dominance over the Christian Holy Land. This is particularly evident in the mosaic depicting the Presentation of Christ (Luke 2:22-38), which appears in the southwest squinch of the upper church (see **figs 25-26**). Here a pseudo-Arabic motif marks the baldachin that represents the Jewish Temple. I have argued that this instance of pseudo-Arabic reveals an ambivalent attitude toward this *locus sanctus* in Jerusalem, on the one hand recognizing its subservient position under the political dominion of contemporary Muslims, while on the other hand marking the monument as a site in need of liberation from Islamic control[91]. The icons of holy people positioned in the soffits immediately surrounding this squinch depict soldier saints, and their presence may be read as an additional appeal for military action. Although such figures appear throughout the mosaic program of the *katholikon*, these three portraits of Saints Demetrios (**figs 26a-b**), Prokopios (**figs 27a-b**), and Merkourios (**fig. 28**) are the only ones to have pseudo-Arabic emblazoned on their armaments. This detail suggests that their armaments should be understood as spoils of war and a testament to these holy warriors' efficacy on the battlefield. Pseudo-Arabic functions here as both a rallying cry for intervention in the Holy Land

86 Cantone, Problem 34f.
87 Ebersolt, La miniature 48 plate LIII, 2; Miles, Byzantium 32 fig. 94.
88 Weitzmann/Galavaris, Monastery 118 plate CXXVIII fig. 395; Cutler, Parallel 642 fig. 2.
89 Walker, Pseudo-Arabic.
90 For an overview of the impact of the Sabaite form on middle Byzantine monasticism, see Thomas, Imprint esp. 77f., 82f.
91 Walker, Pseudo-Arabic 114-117.



Fig. 26 The Presentation of Christ, 1040s, mosaic, southwest squinch of the *katholikon*, Hosios Loukas, with a pseudo-Arabic motif decorating the baldachin that represents the Jewish Temple. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 30 fig. 17).

as well as an assurance of Christian superiority over Muslim adversaries, both past and present.

Yet in the crypt of the *katholikon*, a very different relationship with the *loca sancta* of the East and pseudo-Arabic is articulated. The fresco program of the crypt visually evokes the sites of great events from the life of Christ, which are painted at eye-level along the walls. This connection is also evident in the *vita* of the Saint, which lauds his healing cult as the »New Siloam,« thereby comparing it to another location of miraculous cures, the spring of Siloam in Jerusalem (John 9:1-12)[92]. Other features of the lay out and decorative program of the crypt evoke the Holy Land as well. The organization of a complex around the tombs of its founders and subsequent leaders was a common feature of the great monasteries of the East[93]. Similarly, the crypt at Hosios Loukas was likely dedicated to the burials of the most honored members of its monastic community[94]. Their pride of place is conveyed by the four portraits of »Holy Fathers« in the southeast vault, who likely represent prominent *hēgoumenoi* from the early centuries of the monastery: a later Luke (d. ca. 1005); Philotheos (fl. ca. 1011); an otherwise unidentified monk by the name of Athanasios; and Theodosios (fl. 1048) (**fig. 29**)[95]. The placement of scenes of Christ's Deposition and Burial on the walls immediately below this vault might allude to the entombment of the four abbots in this space. In addition, the frescoes on the ceiling of the crypt explicitly parallel these four leaders of Hosios Loukas with monastic forerunners of local and universal Christian history. The northeast vault portrays four homonymous monastic saints: Saint Luke himself; the famous Athanasios of Alexandria (fourth century); Theodosios the *koinobiarchēs* (fourth century), who founded a preeminent monastery in Palestine near the River Jordan; and the otherwise little-known Philotheos the Confessor (probably tenth century), who originated from Asia Minor and was noted for his miracles, especially miraculous healings (a characteristic which may have rec-

92 Saint Luke of Steiris 115, ch. 69, l. 18.
93 Binns, Sacred Space 30; Connor, Art 49.
94 Oikonomides, The First Century 251.
95 Oikonomides, The First Century 248-252.









Fig. 26 Hagios Demetrios (with pseudo-Arabic motif decorating his shield), mosaic, 1040s, Hosios Loukas. – **b** detail of **a** showing pseudo-Arabic motif on the saint's shield. – (Photos A. Walker).

Fig. 27 Hagios Prokopios (with pseudo-Arabic motif decorating his shield), mosaic, 1040s, Hosios Loukas. – **b** detail of **a** showing pseudo-Arabic motif on the saint's shield. – (Photos A. Walker).



Fig. 28 Hagios Merkourios (with pseudo-Arabic motif decorating his greaves), mosaic, 1040s, Hosios Loukas. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 30 fig. 17).



Fig. 29 The Entombment and the Three Women at the Tomb and (above) the portraits of the Holy Fathers (likely former *hēgoumenoi* of the monastery): Athanasios, Philotheos, Luke, and Theodosios, fresco, mid-eleventh century, southeastern groin vault, crypt of the *katholikon*, Hosios Loukas. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 83 fig. 84).

ommended him for comparison with Saint Luke) (**fig. 30**)[96]. The remaining vaults of the crypt ceiling feature eight other hermits and abbots, who represent additional revered monastic foundations of the fourth to ninth centuries in Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Bithynia[97].

With parallelisms to *loca sancta* and ancient monastic foundations in mind, we can appreciate how the two column capitals inscribed with pseudo-Arabic prominently positioned to either side of the apse in the crypt evoke the distant location of holy sites in the East, a region in which Arabic was



Fig. 30 Portraits of Saints Athanasios, Philotheos, Luke, and Theodosios, fresco, mid-eleventh century, northeastern groin vault, crypt of the *katholikon*, Hosios Loukas. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 85 fig. 85).

96 Connor, Art 48-53 fig. 10, with corrections in Oikonomides, The First Century 250 f.

97 Connor, Art 47 f. fig. 10. For discussion of Holy Land parallels in the crypt of Hosios Loukas, also see Walker, Pseudo-Arabic 110-115.



Fig. 31 Painted pseudo-Arabic motifs decorating the column capitals to either side of the apse in the crypt of the *katholikon*, fresco, mid-eleventh century, Hosios Loukas. – (After Chatzidakis, Hosios Loukas 72 fig. 72).



Fig. 32 Detail of fig. 31. – (Photo A. Walker).

the dominant public text (see figs 31-32)[98]. Yet these pseudo-Arabic motifs can be understood to recall not (or not only) Islamic hegemony in this region, but also the Arabophone communities of Eastern monasticism. As such pseudo-Arabic becomes another iconographic sign linking the community of Hosios Loukas with their ancestors in Palestine and Egypt, and stakes a claim for this provincial site in medieval Greece as ranking on par – or at least in conjunction – with the famed centers of Eastern Christian sanctity. As a father of monasticism in Greece, Luke is modeled after the great founders of early Orthodox communities in the Holy Land[99].

Conclusions

Given the paucity of textual evidence relating to the foundation and early development of Hosios Loukas or the intentions behind the decorative programs installed in the tenth- and eleventh-century churches at this site, it is impossible to know for certain the motivations for introducing pseudo-Arabic at Hosios Loukas or to ascertain with absolute confidence the significance these motifs accrued over subsequent periods. Nonetheless, a productive approach to this question is to ask by what means pseudo-Arabic may have been conveyed to Hosios Loukas, and how these media and mediators may have inflected the meanings that these exoticizing motifs held for the individuals involved in designing the monument's decorative and iconographic programs. As I have discussed above, essential agents for the transmission and deployment of pseudo-Arabic heretofore neglected in scholarly discussions of Hosios Loukas are the monks who founded, developed, and promoted the monastery and its healing cult. I do not mean to suggest that monks held exclusive control over the design of these buildings, nor that other groups had no role to

98 My argument here resonates with Thomas Dale's reading of the prominent positioning and repetition of Islamicizing ogee arches in San Marco, Venice, as an evocation of the Eastern origins of its patron, Saint Mark, as well as of the *loca sancta* of the Holy Land. Dale proposes that the patrons of San Marco promoted the church as a pilgrimage destination by cultivating the aesthetic hybridity that characterized the holy sites of the East. Dale, Cultural Hybridity.

99 For the meaning of the monasteries in the Holy Land for Byzantine monasticism in that period, cf. Pahlitzsch, Byzantine Monasticism.

play in conceiving the decorative and iconographic programs of the churches. But surely the monks were authorities in this process, and the experiences and concerns they may have brought to the project are worthy of consideration.

Both the tenth- and eleventh-century phases of the decorative program at Hosios Loukas can be correlated with contemporary anxieties for the liberation of Byzantine territories from Islamic control, and pseudo-Arabic offered a means for articulating those aims. While the use of pseudo-Arabic in the tenth-century north church is best explained as a mark of Byzantine triumph over their Arab Cretan enemies, similar motifs in the eleventh-century decorative program of the *katholikon* are inflected differently through their relationship to the iconographic contexts in which they are situated. Pseudo-Arabic in the crypt and upper church of the *katholikon* indicates a new perception of Arabic as the language of the Holy Land, both of the hegemonic and at times oppressive Muslim powers who dominated that region in the tenth and eleventh centuries as well as of the authoritative, revered communities of monks who had resided in Palestine and Egypt since the earliest centuries of Christianity. As such pseudo-Arabic can be understood to articulate the possibility of Christian endurance under – and eventual triumph over – Islam. Yet this victory is one that will be achieved not by erasing Arabic written signs but instead by co-opting this script to serve Christian aims, thereby subverting Islamic identity and authority.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Pseudo-Arabic as a Christian Sign: Monks, Manuscripts, and the Iconographic Program of Hosios Loukas

The monastery complex of Hosios Loukas in Phokis, Greece, has long fascinated scholars because it incorporates pseudo-Arabic motifs in the decorative program of its tenth- and eleventh-century churches. This paper considers the possible modalities through which these motifs were transmitted to Hosios Loukas, and how different means of transference would have inflected the significance that pseudo-Arabic held for the various groups potentially involved in the construction, decoration, and use of the complex. It is argued that pseudo-Arabic motifs at Hosios Loukas and on other medieval buildings and objects materialized social identities and spiritual authority among monastic communities across the eastern Mediterranean, thereby attesting to an interconnectedness that is only thinly documented in the written record. When contextualized within networks of religious, cultural, and political traffic, pseudo-Arabic »inscriptions« reify social affiliations and distinctions, although not always in a manner consistent with modern assumptions about linguistic identity in the medieval Mediterranean world. In some instances, (pseudo-)Arabic operated as a sign of Islamic political and cultural groups and could be asserted or subverted to articulate shifting power dynamics between Christians and Muslims. Yet in other instances, (pseudo-)Arabic was generated and sustained within exclusively Christian networks and could stand instead for the authority of ancient monastic communities in the Holy Land, a region where Arabic was not only the dominant colloquial language but also a language of Orthodox Christian theological discourse.

Pseudo-Arabisch als ein christliches Zeichen: Mönche, Manuskripte und das ikonographische Programm von Hosios Loukas

Der Klosterkomplex Hosios Loukas in Phokis (Griechenland) hat die Gelehrten schon lange fasziniert, weil er pseudo-arabische Motive in das dekorative Programm seiner Kirchen aus dem 10. und 11. Jahrhundert einbezieht. In diesem Beitrag werden die Umstände betrachtet, die dazu beigetragen haben können, dass diese Motive nach Hosios Loukas übertragen wurden, und wie unterschiedliche Mittel und Wege des Transfers die Bedeutung beeinflusst haben könnten, die das Pseudo-Arabisch für die verschiedenen Gruppen hatte, die möglicherweise am Bau, an der Dekoration und an der Nutzung des Komplexes beteiligt waren. Es wird argumentiert, dass pseudo-arabische Motive in Hosios Loukas und auf anderen mittelalterlichen Gebäuden und Objekten soziale Identitäten und spirituelle Autorität unter den Klostergemeinschaften im östlichen Mittelmeerraum sichtbar gemacht haben, was auf eine Verbindung hinweist, die in den schriftlichen Quellen nur schwach dokumentiert ist. Pseudo-arabische »Inschriften« verdeutlichen soziale Zugehörigkeiten und Unterschiede, wenn sie in Netzwerken religiöser, kultureller und politischer Verkehre kontextualisiert werden, wenn auch nicht immer im Einklang mit modernen Annahmen über die sprachliche Identität in der mittelalterlichen Welt des Mittelmeerraumes. In einigen Fällen fungierte (Pseudo-) Arabisch als Zeichen islamischer politischer und kultureller Gruppen, dessen Bestätigung oder Unterwanderung eine sich verändernde Machtdynamik zwischen Christen und Muslimen zum Ausdruck bringen konnte. In anderen Fällen wurde (Pseudo-)Arabisch in ausschließlich christlichen Netzwerken kreiert und beibehalten und stand so für die Autorität der alten Klostergemeinschaften im Heiligen Land, einer Region, in der Arabisch nicht nur die Umgangssprache, sondern auch eine Sprache des orthodox-christlichen theologischen Diskurses war.

Robert Hillenbrand

The Lure of the Exotic: The Byzantine Heritage in Islamic Book Painting

In the visual arts, the interplay between the Byzantine and the Islamic worlds in the Middle Ages is a vast theme, with many surprising ramifications. For the most part, the Islamic world was the beneficiary, although ideas, themes and motifs travelled a two-way street. A brief discussion of the Byzantine response to Islamic art may, however, help. It is obviously a subject best tackled by Byzantinists, and then in penny packets, at least in the early stages of the enquiry. Certainly the subjects that have most substantially furthered understanding of this interplay have been for the most part doggedly detailed – Flury's analysis of Islamic ornament in a Greek psalter[1], Miles' exemplary account of Kufesque decoration in mid-Byzantine churches[2], Buchthal's examination of Muslim figure types and motifs in Syro-Jacobite book painting[3], and Otto-Dorn's bold interpretation of the major upper figural band on the church of Aght'amar as an evocation of Abbasid court life[4]. Of a rather different nature is an important early article by Oleg Grabar which attempts a broader-brush survey of this topic; its centre of gravity, however, is the Umayyad period[5]. An article by André Grabar devoted to the impact of Islamic art at the Macedonian court does have implications beyond the tenth to eleventh centuries on which it focuses, but is no substitute for a bird's-eye view of the entire subject. Among the wide range of connections that he cites, he focuses especially on the crown of Constantine Monomachos made between 1042 and 1050, and attributes an Islamic origin to the image of female dancers that it bears[6]. Despite a yawning gulf of misunderstanding and distrust in matters of theology that began very soon after the advent of Islam, which persisted[7], this was a period that saw turbans[8] and tiles with Islamic features become fashionable in the Byzantine capital[9], and the construction of a »Persian House« with a *muqarnas* ceiling in the palace of Manuel I in Constantinople[10]. But there has been no book-length study of this complex process. Indeed, a few tantalizing remarks made long ago *en passant* by Gervase Mathew in a booklet on Byzantine painting suggest how much still remains to be discovered about this elusive topic[11]. Happily, a recent major exhibition on Byzantium and Islam has re-focused scholarly attention on the matter, though its scope is firmly anchored in the seventh to ninth century[12], which still leaves the subsequent centuries understudied[13]. The most recent survey of this same theme in the period 843-1261, by Priscilla Soucek, offers several pointers for future research[14].

Literary evidence does little enough to clarify the matter, for the crucial details are often missing. The garden of Arab type laid out by the emperor Theophilos in the Bryas palace around 843 is a case in point[15]. No contemporary or earlier Arab garden survives in the Islamic world, but this Byzantine reference provides evidence that is especially valuable because it is unconscious – that a particular kind of garden was associated with Arab culture at this time, and that it was different enough from Byzantine gardens (and desirable enough) to be worth reproducing in a royal palace at Constantinople. It is mere speculation that the readiness to copy Islamic modes was reinforced by the presence in the

1 Flury, Ornamente, especially 157-170, where the analytical drawings of small individual details form the basis of the argument. Kufesque inscriptions appear at least a century earlier in Byzantine manuscripts, as in a copy of the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. grec 660, f. 350, probably of the 960s (Miles, Byzantium 32 and fig. 94); cf. Grabar, Influences 124-135. Kufesque inscriptions are also common in mid-Byzantine pottery found in Athens and Corinth (Miles, Byzantium 31 f. and figs 91-93).

2 For a detailed examination of a single case, see Grabar, Décoration 15-37; cf. Ettinghausen, Kufesque 28-32 and 43. Ettinghausen identifies the eleventh and twelfth centuries as »a critical period for the Muslim world« for this Byzantine-Islamic interface (ibidem 37).

3 Buchthal, Painting 136-150.

4 Otto-Dorn, Bildgut 1-69. But cf. Jones, Aght'amar 54-65, who ingeniously suggests that this iconography, while indeed copying these images of Abbasid court life, refers to the Armenian king Gagik who built the church, rather than to the Abbasid caliph. The matter remains open.

5 Grabar, Islamic 69-88.

6 Grabar, Succès 32-60. For the Monomachos crown, see ibidem 42-47; repr. in Grabar, Art 1, 275-280 and 3, figs 59a-b. The rest of the article covers silk, other enamels, metalwork, manuscripts and architectural decoration (ibidem 1, 265-275, 280-285 and 2, figs 57 f.; 59c-d; 60-63a). For the dancers, see also Cat. New York 1997, 210-212 no. 145 (H. Maguire). Grabar also dealt with the theme of the interface of East and West in the field of art in Grabar, Éléments 312-319 and figs CLXIV- CLXXVI (= Grabar, Art 2, 663-668 and 3, figs 158d-163b).

7 Meyendorff, Byzantine, comes to the dispiriting conclusion (ibidem 131) that »as we look at the over-all picture of the relations between the two religious worlds, we see that essentially they remained impenetrable by each other«. Cf. the furious anti-Muslim polemic described by Kazhdan/Epstein, Change 186 f.

8 Ibidem 181.

9 Ettinghausen, Byzantine.

10 For a compelling analysis of Mesarites' text on the Moukhroutas palace, see Hunt, Comnenian 41-43. Hunt's article examines at length the links between Byzantine and Islamic palaces, which extended even to the use of lattice screens, apparently of *mašrabīya* type, for example in a bishop's palace at Naupaktos and the palace and church known as the House of Botaneiates in Constantinople (ibidem 56 f.).

11 Mathew, Painting 5; Matthew, Aesthetics 127-129.

12 Cat. New York 2012.

13 But see Hoffman, Pathways. For a briefer survey, see Soucek, Exchange 15 f.

14 Soucek, Byzantium 403-411; see also ibidem 422-424 and 426-428.

15 Keshani, Abbasid; Eyice, Palais. For a more detailed account, see Bier, Bryas; cf. Littlewood, Gardens 19. For the wider context, see Maguire, Court.

capital of actual Islamic artefacts. But it is hard to avoid the conclusion, given the circumstantial evidence of the Islamic treasures that found their way to Venice in the wake of the Latin conquest of Constantinople in 1204[16], to which one should add the Byzantine treasures with Islamic elements[17], that the Byzantine emperors, like other European and Islamic monarchs, kept a *Kunstkammer* of exotic treasures[18]. The scale and range of such treasuries may be judged from the detailed accounts of what was looted during the sack of the Fatimid palace at Cairo in 1068[19].

Then there are those grey areas where it is too simplistic to speak either of the Byzantine impact on Islam or the reverse process. What of that pan-Mediterranean *koinē* of certain luxury arts which made little of distance or religion or politics[20]? Its power can be traced in figured silks with fabulous beasts[21], or the group of ivory oliphants[22], or even the Hedwig glasses[23]. It is no accident that such objects have long eluded the attempts of scholars to pin them down to a specific time and provenance. Sometimes the mixture of ideas and themes is so promiscuous that it is virtually impossible to disentangle their origins, as in the case of the Innsbruck enamelled plate in the name of a twelfth-century Artuqid prince[24]. What of the secular mosaics in the palaces of Roger II and William II in Palermo[25]? The craftsmen may well have been Greek, but could one say the same of some of the motifs that they used? When teams of craftsmen of different origins and even cultures worked together on the same project, as for example on the painted ceiling of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, more might be expected than the mere juxtaposition of different styles[26]. What of the well-nigh simultaneous appearance of sgraffiato wares in Byzantium, Georgia, Anatolia and Iran[27]? Or of other ideas which the Muslims might have inherited directly from the Roman and Early Christian culture which surrounded them, rather than borrowing them from contemporary Byzantine sources? The concept of automata might be one such case[28]; that of the centralized commemorative building might be another[29], and indeed only one of many in the field of architecture.

It will be seen that, with the exception of the last example, the objects just cited are all secular in character, and are thus of secondary importance in Byzantine art. This suggests unmistakably that the Byzantine and the various Islamic courts had a great deal in common, and that interchange in this secular sphere was natural. It was in religious art that each culture set up barriers. Such images were loaded. They triggered Pavlovian reactions in adherents of the opposing faith. Moreover, the fact that certain luxury goods, and perhaps on occasion even those who made them – as at Trebizond[30] and Cordova[31] – travelled freely in both directions across the cultural divide was no substitute for becoming familiar in daily life with the other culture and its ways. Most of the Byzantine frontier with the Islamic world was maritime and thus excluded such contact[32]. And with minor exceptions, of which Digenes Akritas is a famous example[33] and some of the Cappadocian rock frescoes[34] or Armenian book painting[35] are less familiar ones, such regular contacts along the land frontier – which must have occurred, since it is a feature of most pre-modern frontier societies – left little trace in the visual arts. Moreover, the actual mechanics of how ideas travelled are often obscure. Nevertheless, one must reckon with the presence of Muslim craftsmen, even teams of them, working in Byzantine territory[36]. The presence of Kufic, as distinct from Kufesque, inscriptions in Byzantine territory is a pointer in that direction[37].

For all that it is indeed possible industriously to root out the various scraps and orts of Islamic elements in Byzantine art, there is no getting round the fact that their sum total is negligible in quantity and impact alike. Yet after the rise of Islam not a single Byzantine emperor could have failed to realize what a sinister threat the Islamic empire posed to the security of his own much-reduced territories. The Byzantines must have realized, too, that the Islamic world was not just a powerful neighbour but a global empire. Their persistent and well-founded fear was that the long-term aim of the Muslims was to conquer Byzantium and to impose the Islamic faith upon its people. It does not take much imagination to work

16 Shalem, Islam 76-78.
17 Such as the celebrated ruby glass cup with pseudo-Kufic lettering; for a discussion of this inscription, see Cutler, Bowl 238f.
18 Book of Gifts 175-178, 182-184, 187, 190, 194-196, 199, 202 (Umayyad state treasuries in Kūfa and Wāsiṭ); 203 (probably Damascus); 205 *bis* (treasury of al-Wālid b. Yazid); 206 (treasuries of various Abbasid caliphs); 207f. (a very detailed account of the contents of the treasury of Hārūn al-Rašīd); 210, 214f., 219-221, 223f. Cf. 208f. for a similarly detailed account of how the vast fortune of al-Mutawakkil was spent.
19 For a full account, see Kahle, Schätze.
20 Bloom, Arts 42-44, 189-197; Ettinghausen/Grabar/Jenkins-Madina, Islamic 213.
21 Perhaps the best-illustrated survey of this material is von Falke, Silks. For the Byzantine material, see Muthesius, Byzantine.
22 Shalem, Oliphant 67-79.
23 Allen, Hedwig; Carboni/Whitehouse, Glass 160f.
24 Redford, Innsbruck; Steppan, Artuqiden-Schale; Cat. New York 1997 no. 281 (P. Steppan).
25 Meier, Königspaläste; Demus, Mosaics 180-183 and figs 113-119.
26 Johns, Artists.
27 For the Byzantine material, see Rice, Pottery; Sanders, Byzantine; Maguire, Ceramic 255f., 259-271 and figs 181-192. For Georgia, see Maisuradze, Keramika; Beridze et al., Treasures; Xuskivadze, Treasures 228f. For Iran and Anatolia, see Allan, Incised Wares.
28 Ğazarī, Book of Knowledge 8-11 and figs I, III-VIII, X-XXIX and XXXI; Book of Ingenious Devices 19-24 and fig. 78; Contadini/Camber/Northover, Beasts 68f., 72f. For the wider context, see Price, Automata; Duggan, Sculptures; Duggan, Automata, esp. 117-122; Schmidt, Automata.
29 Écochard, Filiation 13-40, 109.
30 Rice, Decorations 102, 119.
31 Stern, Mosaïques.
32 Masʿūdī tells an exciting story about how Muʿāwiya (who ruled from 661 to 680) exacted revenge on a Byzantine noble who had insulted a Muslim. He had him kidnapped and given a taste of his own medicine. The story reveals *en passant* the Byzantine taste for Islamic luxuries of all kinds: cut glass chalices, scents, jewels, splendid clothing, and a Susangird carpet with cushions and pillows (Masʿūdī, Meadows 320-324).
33 Hunt, Comnenian, esp. 43f. and 53-56.
34 Rodley, Monasteries.
35 Durnovo, Armenian; Der Nersessian/Agémian, Painting; Mathews/Wieck, Treasures.
36 Cutler, Exchange 254f.
37 Kanellopoulos/Tohme, Inscription 139.

out the probable reaction to prolonged psychological pressure of this kind. The Byzantines seem to have been almost hysterically determined to keep Islamic culture and religion at bay, while also taking care not to give their bellicose neighbours grounds for aggression.

From this perspective the opaqueness of Byzantium to Islamic art is not difficult to fathom. It is the result of ingrained fear and hostility. Islamic culture would all too readily be suspect as an infection, a harbinger of political and military aggression associated with a deeply alien faith. Such thinking no doubt contributed to the inward-looking nature of mid-Byzantine and later Byzantine art, and to its obsession with the sunlit uplands of the classical past[38]. The potent nostalgia for days that were never to return, when the Mediterranean was first a Roman and then a Byzantine lake, surrounded by Christian territories controlled from Constantinople, kept the Byzantines from coming fully to terms with Islam. They fashioned a political accommodation with their Islamic neighbours but shied away from any contact closer than this. At no period of Byzantine art, and not even in any one medium, were Islamic ideas or motifs allowed to exert a consistent and crucial impact. For that reason the history of the interplay between Islamic and Byzantine art is a history of bits and pieces on the Byzantine side.

The reverse process is a very different story indeed. The Byzantine impact on Islamic art is too frequent, too varied, too disparate in time, space and even medium to encourage generalizations. Even works of art produced at the same time and in the same area may betray very different attitudes to the Byzantine models that are being imitated. One has only to compare the architecture of the Dome of the Rock with that of the bath hall at Ḫirbat al-Mafǧar to realize this: the first is a continuation in spirit and intent of a Byzantine model which itself goes back to Roman times[39], whereas the latter employs a church plan for a building dedicated to the pleasures of the flesh[40]. Similarly, one might compare the Damascus mosaics with the standing caliph coin: the first carefully removes the figures that were the *raison d'être* of the Byzantine model being copied, while the latter retains the figure, merely adding some specifically Arab sartorial colouring[41]. It might therefore be more revealing to trace the varying role of Byzantine elements within a single medium, such as mosaics or coinage, or within a single period. The latter option will be the one adopted in this paper.

The period to be investigated here is the thirteenth century, the area is Syria and Iraq, and the medium is book painting. Although this is by no means unexplored territory, it is nevertheless still somewhat under-researched so far as the Byzantine elements in these Islamic paintings are concerned[42]. In order to control the rich material available, it will be convenient to look in turn at four areas of interchange, using them to discuss how Byzantine modes and motifs are adapted to Islamic purposes, and finally to attempt to explain some of the underlying motives which governed the Islamic uses of Byzantine material. The four areas of interchange treated here (though at varying length) are the book cover; the author portrait; paired angels or genii; and the depiction of the ruler or patron. Discussion of these topics will necessarily entail references to other Byzantine elements *en passant*, such as haloes, the symbolic content of certain gestures and poses, drapery conventions, furniture and so on.

Book Cover

The first topic, then, is the book cover. This pitchforks us at once into the heart of the subject under discussion. It demonstrates very clearly how disinclined the Arabs were to accept Byzantine models at face value. To avoid doing so, they practised a simple sleight of hand, utterly transforming a familiar motif by transposing it into an unfamiliar context. For several centuries Arab books had contented themselves with dark leather covers discreetly tooled with polygonal networks or sunken central medallions and corner-pieces of vegetal or geometric design[43]. Faced with the much more showy and obviously precious book covers of Byzantium, heavy affairs made of elaborately carved ivory or of wood set with jewels and enclosed in a silver or gilt silver sheath, they must have recoiled, for apparently not a single medieval Islamic book cover of this kind is known. Yet certain Byzantine ivory book covers, including ones that were six or seven hundred years old at the time, must have set them thinking. Some of the grander specimens of early Byzantine ivory carving travelled far afield, also to the west, as evidenced by the Carolingian ivory book covers modeled on them[44], and they are of special interest in this context. They improved on the standard diptych form inherited from late antiquity, in which a single, vertically rectangular slab of ivory was carved with a depiction of the consul in majesty, with imperial figures, victories, tyches or Christ and the angels or putti above and scenes of the *sparsio*, the consul's largesse to the populace, below. These narrow slabs were used in matching pairs (**fig. 1**)[45]. But in more ambitious larger-scale ivories the artists, debarred by the nature of the elephant's tusk from working on a single

38 For a typical example see Cat. New York 1997, 230f. no. 153 (A. Cutler, with the key earlier bibliography).
39 Creswell, Architecture 1/1, 101-123; Grabar, Dome of the Rock 98f.
40 Ettinghausen, Byzantium 51-53.
41 Miles, Gold; Bates, Numismatics; Bates, Umayyads 206; Treadwell, Mihrab 10f.; Treadwell, Reforms 369.
42 Note particularly Ettinghausen's brief but extraordinarily illuminating remarks on this topic in the chapter entitled »Byzantine Art in Islamic Garb« in Ettinghausen, Painting 67-80. Here – as so often – he defines and then goes far to solve a problem, all in a few well-chosen words. Since then the principal work in this field has been done by Eva Hoffman. See Hoffman, Emergence, and Hoffman, Author.
43 For typical examples, see Bosch/Carswell/Petherbridge, Bindings; Haldane, Bookbindings figs 1-7, 9f., 13-16.
44 Such as the front cover of the Lorsch Gospels; see Schutz, Carolingians 283.
45 Cameron, Diptychs; Gaborit-Chopin, Ivoires 42-45; Cat. New York 1979 nos 45-51 (J. C. Anderson). The fullest publication remains Delbrueck, Consulardiptychen.



Fig. 1 Consular diptych of Flavius Anastasius Probus, 517. – Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Département des Monnaies, Médailles et Antiques, Inv. 55 n° 296. – (Foto Clio20, Wikimedia Commons CC 3.0).



Fig. 2 Barberini polyptych, Paris, Louvre OA 9063, early sixth century. – (After Durand, Byzantine Art 56).

large slab of ivory, fitted together a succession of three or five smaller slabs to create a polyptych[46]. In a 5-piece polyptych the largest and central section would depict the consul, the emperor or Christ; the smaller vertical rectangles flanking it would carry narrative scenes in one register or two, while the frieze above would contain heavenly beings or symbols, and the predella below would illustrate further but earthly narratives (**fig. 2**). Such polyptychs, like the earlier diptychs, once their original function as up-market visiting cards had lapsed with the abolition of the consular office in 541, were pressed into service by later Byzantine artists as book covers, especially for books of religious content. This was an entirely natural development, given the fact that their interiors, coated with wax, had earlier borne incised messages – so that they had already served as envelopes, and thus in some sense as containers of the written word or book covers.

It is to the credit of the Arab painters of the thirteenth century that they recognized what their Byzantine predecessors had not, namely the potential of this format for painted frontispieces. Accordingly they transferred this schema from the outside to the inside of the book – an impressive example of lateral thinking – and used it for the flyleaf. At one stroke, therefore, they gave this time-honoured format a new lease of life. Among several Islamic examples of this practice the Vienna *Kitāb ad-Diryāq*, conventionally dated to c. 1250, is the most smoothly designed (**fig. 3**). It employs the largest and most central space, now imaginatively transformed from the primitive sixth-century schema (essentially a pair of columns supporting a pediment)[47] into a recognizably Islamic architectural façade[48], for a picture of the ruler with attendants. It fills up the flanking boxes with courtiers in two tiers, each courtier bearing an attribute which refers to his rank, and

46 Cat. New York 1979, 403 fig. 59.

47 In these diptychs severe abstraction is dictated by the limited space available, but even this skeletal formula admirably fulfils the purpose of framing the figure of authority.

48 It takes the form of a screen subdivided into large and small compartments, a popular device in thirteenth to fourteenth-century Islamic painting. See Barrucand, Représentations; Barrucand, Architecture. But this is unmistakably fantasy architecture, for the artist has depicted a pronounced horseshoe arch on the left but not on the right, and similarly the left-hand beginning of a segmental arch which does not continue to the right and therefore remains incomplete. Horseshoe arches of this kind were a Maghribi and Andalusian form unknown in Iraqi architecture at this time. The geometric ornament applied to the screen, however, is authentic enough.



Fig. 3 Frontispiece, *Kitāb ad-Diryāq*, Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. A. F. 10, fol. 1r, c. 1250. – (After Ettinghausen, Painting 91.

reserves the long strips at top and bottom for hunting and processional scenes respectively. Such a frontispiece, though unmistakably derived from a Byzantine polyptych, is in no sense a clone of it. It is not simply a question of substituting an enthroned Muslim ruler for an enthroned Christ, Muslim courtiers for the disciples of Jesus, and so on. Instead, the artist has recast the entire ensemble along Islamic lines. It is unlikely that he invented it all from scratch, since hunting and processional scenes are known in slightly earlier Islamic metalwork and pottery, where they were an established element in the cycle of princely pleasures. Moreover, the direct borrowing of a Byzantine model for an image of crucial importance, such as this – especially when it is seen in the context of a host of other borrowings from Byzantine art in early thirteenth-century Arab book painting – provides cumulative evidence that Arab book painting was still at an early stage of its evolution at this time. It is a repetition, on a much smaller scale, of the remarkable openness to ideas and motifs taken from other cultures that characterizes Umayyad art but which had already palpably diminished under the early Abbasids.

A significantly less successful variation on the polyptych theme is to be found in one of the *Kitāb al-Aġānī* frontispieces in Cairo, datable c. 1217. This depicts a large group of women and a waterwheel (**fig. 4**). It might be argued that, in cramming the central space with seven women and half a water-wheel – the other half reaches down into the predella – the artist has managed to squander the distinctive advantages of the central panel; no single lady stands out from the



Fig. 4 Frontispiece, *Kitāb al-Aġānī*, Cairo, Dār al-Kutub Ms. Adab 579, 1216-1220. – (After Hillenbrand, Frontispiece title page).

others. Yet he has devised an arrestingly new way of linking the central and lower sections. Indeed, his decision to cram still more women into both the upper frieze and the two panels flanking the central block results in a general breaking down of the linear divisions of the page, even though they are technically still there. In yet other frontispieces of the *Aġānī* set, the lines have disappeared altogether, but their ghostly presence may nevertheless be sensed: the quintuple division of space still obtains. Indeed, the artist sedulously avoids any serious overlap of figures from one such space to another. Thus the impact of the Byzantine polyptych – both three-piece and five-piece – extended considerably further than might at first be thought. It triggered the imaginations of Muslim artists rather than dominating them.

One might argue that the new use of the polyptych form was merely a somewhat mechanical adaptation; that once the artist had had his flash of inspiration, the rest followed in relatively straightforward fashion. But the second major theme to be discussed today, the fate of the author portrait in Islamic hands, is quite another matter. Curiously enough, there is not a single example of the direct transfer of the obvious Byzantine prototype, namely the evangelist figure, but there is no reason to doubt that such east Christian images inspired Islamic author portraits. The connection is particularly clear in the Oxford Dioskorides frontispiece of 1239 (**fig. 5**)[49].

49 For an excellent colour plate, see Cat. New York 1997, 402.

It is equally curious that this idea made no permanent appeal to the Muslim imagination, since the author portrait dies out in Arab painting during the course of the 13th century. But in that brief period, it had a very good run for its money[50]. Nor, incidentally, did it travel to the Iranian, Indian or Turkish worlds. Hence, for example, the absence of any isolated portrait of Firdawsī as a frontispiece to illustrated *Shahnama* manuscripts. The nearest approach to this is the popular scene of the four poets in the garden at Ġaznī[51], where narrative trumps portraiture. Such an image is a long way, both in outer appearance and in spirit, from the traditional author portrait. But it was only in the Iranian world that the frontispiece was seriously developed[52].

Perhaps the ancient association between the author portrait and the depiction of the Evangelist at the beginning of a Gospel manuscript – and by the later Byzantine period such images were the commonest version of author portrait in Byzantine book painting – acted as a positive deterrent to developing this aspect of traditional book painting. Here, too, one may conclude from the alacrity with which Islamic painters jettisoned this borrowing that they only adopted it in the period before they came of age. Its presence in early thirteenth-century Islamic manuscripts is therefore a further indication that the Arab tradition of book painting was still in its infancy at this time.

Author Portrait

What form, then, does the author portrait take in these early manuscripts? It will suffice to confine the discussion to images of Dioskorides, apparently an intellectual hero of the time. The variety of types encountered speaks of a tradition in flux, or more likely in the process of formation. Moreover, none of the images is really close to a specific Byzantine source, except possibly the Oxford Dioskorides of 1239, which slightly reworks the standing Byzantine evangelist figure in that he faces left, not right, is in profile rather than three-quarter view and holds a closed rather than open book. In most of these manuscripts, elements of Byzantine origin have been borrowed, but the effect of their modification by Islamic detail, and above all the impact of unexpected innovations, results in an image that is essentially Islamic even though it is executed in a Byzantine manner.

In the double frontispiece to a copy of the Arabic translation of the *De Materia Medica* of Dioskorides in the Topkapı Saray Library in Istanbul (**fig. 6**), that image so penetratingly analysed by Ettinghausen[53], the chair, the physician's robe, the sandals, the faces and hands, and the gold background are all authentically Byzantine. So, in a more general sense,



Fig. 5 Frontispiece, *De Materia Medica*, Oxford, Bodleian Library Ms. Arab. D. 138, fol. 2v, 1240. – (After Cat. New York 1997, 402).

is the notion of a single dominant figure silhouetted against a plain background. On the other hand, the turban, the shouldered segmental arch and the redundant halo are both emphatically Islamic in flavour. But what really removes the image definitively from the Byzantine sphere is the fact that the author is not doing what a classical or Byzantine author would be doing. He is not bent over a desk writing busily; nor does he even have a book or roll in his hand. As for a female personification to inspire him, perish the thought. Instead, the world of learning evoked here is a distinctively Islamic one, and is corporate rather than individual. Is he dictating to the students? Or – more likely – is he beckoning them to come to him so that he can give them an *iğāza* validating the accuracy with which they have transcribed the text which he has dictated to them, and which is presumably contained in the book that each of them holds[54]?

Dioskorides, that same intellectual giant of antiquity, who is presented in quite different incarnations in the two images previously discussed, turns up in the frontispieces of three

50 See Hillenbrand, Author.
51 e. g. Brend, Shahnamah 50-53.
52 See Simpson, Frontispieces, for the early stages of this development.
53 Ettinghausen, Painting 67-70.
54 For further discussion of this image, see Hoffman, Emergence 255, 261-276 (an admirably full account); Hoffman, Author 8f. and 12; Cat. New York 1997, 429-433 no. 288 (L. Komaroff, with further bibliography); and Hillenbrand, Classical 52f.





Fig. 6 Frontispiece, *De Materia Medica*, Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi. Kütüphanesi Ahmet III 2127, fol. 1ᵛ-2ʳ, 1229. – (After Ettinghausen, Painting 68f.).

Fig. 7 Frontispiece, *De Materia Medica*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ayasofya 3704, fol. 1ᵛ, 13th century. – (After Brandenburg, Islamic fig. 33).

other surviving Arab manuscript versions of his great text produced in the thirteenth century, and each time he appears in yet more varied guise. In one case, a manuscript in the Ayasofya library in Istanbul (**fig. 7**), his huge size dwarfs the secondary figures in the painting, and he is not seated on a mere chair, but placed frontally on a throne in *contrapposto* pose, staring us down imperiously and displaying his book within an impressive architectural backdrop and under a canopy. A pair of students flanks him like bodyguards; they are set appreciably lower than he is. The damaged lower section suggests that there was a Nilotic scene below. The resemblance to a late classical consular diptych is striking. Indeed, he is more monarch than author, and is approaching heroisation.

In a somewhat similar image of rather more muted tone in Bologna (**fig. 8**), unfortunately damaged by iconoclasts, the setting is altogether more abstract and acquires an Islamic flavour by virtue of its frame of interlaced octagonal and hexagonal stars. But the Bologna image tells essentially the same story as the Ayasofya library manuscript just discussed, with Dioskorides himself, again identified by the inscription above, again placed centrally in a dominating frontal pose and now seated on a golden throne with an extravagantly



Fig. 8 Frontispiece, *De Materia Medica*, Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria Cod. arab. 2954, fol. 141^{r}, 1244. – (After Brandenburg, Islamic fig. 90).

flounced grey bolster, again in an imposing architectural setting. He is set well above the standing robed figures (Luqman and Aristotle) turning towards him from either side and thus leading the viewer's gaze towards him. He is richly dressed in a vermilion robe hemmed in gold and holds a large book with a decorative gilded binding. A huge halo outlines his head and he is further framed by an arch from whose apex flutter swathes of drapery. Once again, then, the setting is full of pomp and circumstance and presents the author as a figure of majesty – intellectual authority personified. This is not some wandering scholar; clearly it pays to be an academic, in status as well as in cash. He is placed well back, at a respectful distance, with other great intellectuals presented as if they were deferential research assistants on either side ready to do his slightest bidding.



Fig. 9 Frontispiece, *De Materia Medica*, Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi Ayasofya 3703, fol. 2^{r}, 1224. – (Nach Grube, Materialien 171 fig. 1).

The fifth image (**fig. 9**), a frontispiece and so not lightly to be dismissed as a mere genre scene, takes a totally new direction, although it lacks the identifying inscription of the previous two. It appears to demote Dioskorides by showing him looking after his shop, serving a customer and helped by an assistant who stands in the middle of the picture, his lowly status underlined by his very short tunic. The image serves as a reminder of the business aspects of pharmacology. The setting (within an ornamental frame which of course somewhat distances it from reality) is a working pharmacy shown in section, with jars, flagons and alborellos neatly stacked on three shelves. Assorted bottles hang below[55]. Dioskorides himself, if indeed it is he, is shown in profile weighing a substance while his customer looks on. His turban has a fashionably long tail; both he and his customer (but not the assistant) are shown with haloes, and the schematic setting, redolent of so many contemporary *Maqāmāt* images, features the same shouldered arch of Islamic type as the Oxford and Topkapı Saray frontispieces.

Altogether, then, these five images, four of them frontispieces, are notable above all for their variety. They take the frankly tired Byzantine iconography of the author portrait

55 Grube, Materialien 173 states that the two figures shown seated on each side are customers, but this cannot be the case since the one on our right is using a pair of scales. See the reconstructed coloured drawing of this image by A. Süheyl Ünver in Brandenburg, Islamic 115 fig. 43.



Fig. 10 Angels, Ṭāq-i Bustān, late 7th century. – (Pope/Ackerman, Survey fig. 159B).

into totally new and unexpected directions; and they were all produced, it seems, at more or less the same time. It is in sum a striking testament to the sheer vitality and energy of Arab painting at this period.

Paired Angels

And so to the third topic for discussion here. What of the angels found flanking the ruler's head in thirteenth-century Arab frontispieces? At first sight they are thoroughly familiar – they are the lineal descendants of the winged victories in the spandrels of many a Roman triumphal arch, and of their christianised successors flanking the apses of Byzantine churches. A collateral branch to the east must also be taken into account. This produced the implacable granite-jawed matrons of Ṭāq-i Bustān (**fig. 10**), from whom all vestiges of Hellenic grace have been relentlessly eradicated[56]. The accessibility and legendary prestige of that site, however, assured its images a certain popularity from one generation to the next. Closer examination of the paired angels in thirteenth-century Arab painting, however, establishes beyond reasonable doubt that their source was not in monumental art, whether Roman, Byzantine or Sasanian (for there, such victories or angels flank only an empty, if honorific, space), and not even in Byzantine book painting, where their role tends to be narrative, but rather in mid-Byzantine ivories and, even further back, in the consular diptychs – later often re-used as book covers, which gave them a new lease of life – whose influence has already been demonstrated in the compartmentalized layout of the Vienna *Kitāb ad-Diryāq* frontispiece. Only in the ivory panels and diptychs do these winged figures have a direct association with a figure of power. Thus their presence in Islamic painted frontispieces is a relatively direct calque of the late antique model, probably mediated through mid-Byzantine ivories. As is so frequently the case in Umayyad art, then, the model that is chosen for imitation may indeed reflect contemporary art, but through the prism of much older models – unless, indeed, the artist has gone directly to those models even though they are already many centuries old.

This decision to go beyond the obvious option of copying what is readily at hand and to take account of a much more ancient model naturally involved the Islamic painter in rather more radical adjustments than would have been required had he chosen a contemporary Byzantine source. Figural style had of course altered considerably since the sixth century, so that faces, bodies and draperies all had to be re-interpreted from scratch. The end product has little enough in common with Byzantium in the matter of style. Yet it is the compositional and iconographic changes that are really significant, since it is these that transform the early Byzantine model and lend it an Islamic colouring. It will be convenient to deal with each of these changes in turn.

First, the angels in early Byzantine diptychs occupy a well-defined and strictly segregated space at the top of the panel (**fig. 2**). This space was closed off at the bottom by a bar that divided it from the panel below. This physical separation is in accordance with their role as heavenly beings. Probably the background against which they were placed was painted blue in acknowledgement of that fact. Since the predella of many consular diptychs was taken up by servants,

56 Herzfeld, Tor 72-75 and figs XXXIII, XXXVI and XXXVII; Fukai/Horiuchi, Taq-i Bustan I and II.

often occupied in pouring out the consul's money in front of the waiting populace, the layout bespoke a clearly defined hierarchy, with the consul sandwiched, as it were, between higher and lower beings (**fig. 1**). In none of the Arab thirteenth-century frontispieces is this divide maintained with comparable emphasis. The angels remain at the top of the painting, but for the most part they occupy the same space as the other figures, without devices such as ground lines or different colours to set them apart from the rest of the figures. Thus in some sense heaven has come down to earth. The Paris *Maqāmāt* of 1237[57] is the exception that proves the rule; here the angels are set against a red ground while the principal figures below stand out against a blue ground, and strongly profiled arches drive home this sense of separation. In many major frontispieces of the time, however, the norm is for the angels to be integrated into the main body of the painting, not sundered from it; and this is a momentous change.

The significance of this change is explained by another and even more important reworking of the Byzantine model. In many consular diptychs the whole *raison d'être* of the angels was to flank a bust of Christ within a medallion, his face frontal, his hand raised in blessing. His presence above the rest of the panel validated the office and activities of the emperor or enthroned consul below. In the Muslim frontispiece there was, of course, no question of depicting Christ. In order to fill the iconographic vacuum thus created, the Muslim painter quietly dropped the explicit religious element, simply removing the all-important barrier between the angels and the ruler figure and bringing them together so that the angels unmistakably honoured him. Accordingly, just as their relative positions within the composition had shifted, so too did the significance of the image as a whole. It lost the sanctity conferred by the presence of Christ, and interestingly enough the Muslim painters did not try to replace the figure of Christ by the Islamic equivalent, namely a religious inscription. Thus they diminished the intensity of the image to an appreciable degree and made it more obviously secular. The lesser sanctity associated with the angels themselves was now transferred to the ruler. The Islamic ruler in these frontispieces is therefore depicted as a more imposing and numinous figure than the consul ever was. This would of course have been entirely appropriate had he been a caliph, whose office combined secular and religious authority; but it is doubtful whether a single one of the Arab frontispieces of the thirteenth century depicts a caliph. For instance, the patron of the *Kitāb al-Aġānī* frontispieces, in which angels loom large (**fig. 11**), was an atabeg and thus held a theoretically subordinate office; flanking angels were scarcely appropriate for him. At all events, by arrogating the angels to himself the Islamic ruler



Fig. 11 Frontispiece, *Kitāb al-Aġānī*, Istanbul, Millet Kütüphanesi Feyzullah Efendi 1566, fol. 1r, 1216-1220. – (After Ettinghausen, Painting 65).

was helping to create a symbolic icon of power. This formula, in suitably reduced guise, even made its way onto roughly contemporary Islamic coinage in the area, for example the coins of Mawdūd b. Zangī, Sayf ad-Dīn Ġāzī II and Nāṣir ad-Dīn Maḥmūd, where the ruler's bust is flanked by angels[58].

A third diagnostic change concerns what the angels are doing. On Roman triumphal arches[59], on Byzantine diptychs and at Ṭāq-i Bustān (**fig. 10**) the victories or angels present a wreath – military triumph in the Roman and probably also Sasanian context, spiritual victory in a Christian one. In the Arab frontispieces under discussion – with the usual exception of the 1237 *Maqāmāt* – the angels carry a canopy between them which they hold in a parabola over the ruler's head. This is yet another bold conflation of disparate ideas. Angels carrying drapery positioned above the head of the key figure in a composition occur on mid-Byzantine ivories[60], and angels to right and left in the upper register were a standard element in mid-Byzantine art, especially in ivories[61]. Drapery billowing outwards to form an arch over a figure was already a popular device in Roman art – witness its use in floor mosa-

57 For a colour illustration see Hillenbrand, Hariri figs 1a-b.
58 Spengler/Sayles, Turkoman 4, 7-9, 31, 156.
59 Kähler, Triumphbogen. See also Kleiner, Study.
60 Cat. New York 1997, fig. opposite 113 and nos 91, 95, 101, 354.
61 Cat. New York 1997 nos. 30, 37, 40, 72 f., 80, 82, 87, 92, 96 f., 105, 151, 245, 304, 323, 326, 329 and opposite 186. Cf. also the theme of angels in the upper register of a composition holding a medallion enclosing a figure of majesty, placed centrally (Cat. New York 1997 nos 62. 98).
62 For a Roman version of this theme, see Dunbabin, Mosaics 98 fig. 97.

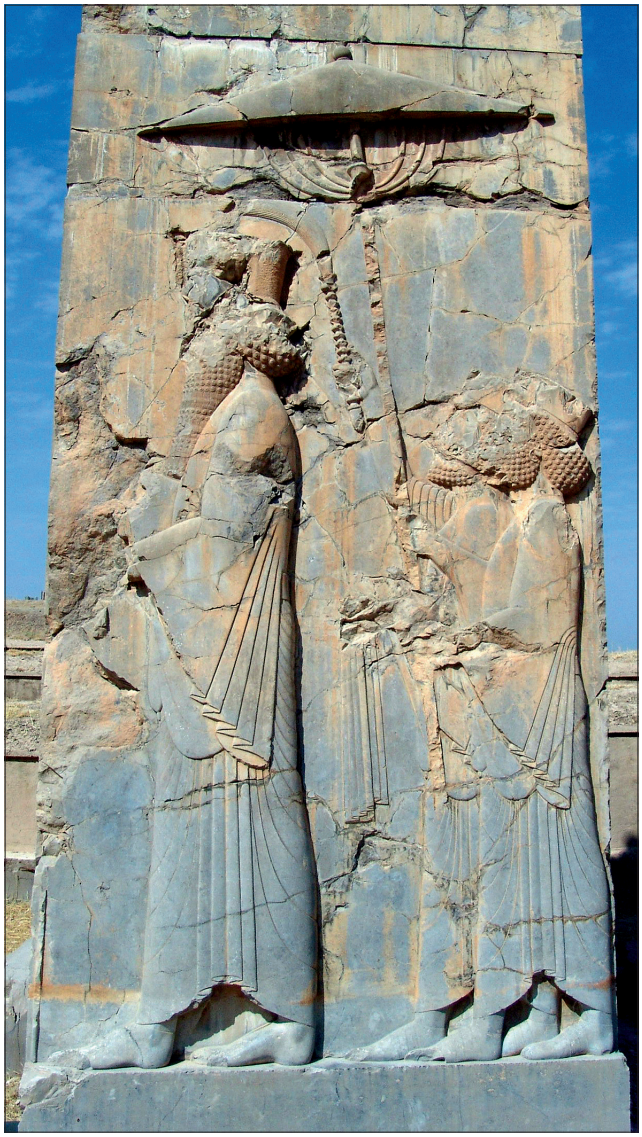

Fig. 12 Ruler with *čatr*, Persepolis, Palace of Xerxes, 5th century BC. – (After Curtis/Tallis, Empire 36 fig. 20).



Fig. 13 *Kitāb ad-Diryāq*, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Ms. arabe 2964, 1199. – (After Grube, World fig. 27).

ics to frame Europa as she reclines on the bull's back[62] – and thence made its way into the Byzantine sphere[63]. Sometimes it had precise iconographic significance – for example, when it frames the personification of Night[64] – but at other times it seems to be no more than a piece of redundant stylized rhetoric, as in the scene of the Virgin Mary's First Seven Steps on a fourteenth-century mosaic in the Kariye Camii in Constantinople[65].

As depicted in these Arab frontispieces, however, this feature irresistibly recalls a halo, accentuating in its outline the actual halo around the ruler's head. Nor is this the only intensification of meaning added by the Arab painter, for the fact that this sumptuously patterned cloth is held by two angels brings to mind the canopy or *čatr* which for millennia had been a royal attribute in the Near East[66]. It signified at one level merely the comfort of shade in a hot climate; but at a deeper level it was one of the prerogatives of kingship and expressed the legitimacy of the ruler thus shaded. Usually it took the form of a parasol held by an attendant, as in Achaemenid Iran (**fig. 12**)[67]; but here its significance is deepened by the fact that angels carry it, and thus by implication confer heavenly, that is divine, legitimacy on the ruler. In the case of the Paris *Kitāb ad-Diryāq* frontispiece of 1199, where they are present in fourfold symmetry (**fig. 13**)[68], one may perhaps recognize a talismanic intent, with protection offered at all four corners and – to make assurance doubly sure – in a double frontispiece of identical design[69]. Could such a figure perhaps be intended to represent a genie – the Arabic *ǧinn* – in such images[70]?

63 Notably on the lid of the tenth-century Veroli casket (Beckwith, Veroli 1-4, 6 fig. 5).
64 This occurs twice in the Paris Psalter, probably produced in the mid-tenth century in Constantinople; for good colour plates, see Grabar, Painting 169 (Crossing of the Red Sea); Rice, Byzantium 23 (the Prayer of Isaiah).
65 Underwood, Kariye 1,68f. and 2, fig. 105.
66 Sims, Garrett 263; L'Orange, Studies 134-138.
67 Curtis/Tallis, Empire 36 fig. 20.
68 Melikian-Chirvani, Matériaux 14, suggests that this image has a Shi'ite and Sufi flavour and that the four figures represent the archangels Mīḥā'īl, Ǧabrā'īl, Isrāfīl and ʿAzrā'īl.
69 Farès, Thériaque figs III-IV.
70 Chabbi, Jinn; Chelhod, Structures 67-92 (on *ǧinns*, demons, and angels); Chabbi, Seigneur 185-232; Fahd, Anges 155-213.

In each of these three significant respects, then – their integration into the whole composition, their use as adjuncts of the ruler and their function as bearers of the royal canopy – these paired angels play a role significantly different from that allotted to them in Byzantine art. In all three respects it could be maintained that the image is enriched. The result is far removed from simple copying.

At the same time, some of the traditional associations of angels in Byzantine art have been lost – for example as warriors, as bodyguards, as bearers of a specific divine message. It might be thought, too, that in these Arab paintings they have become unduly trivialized in size and that their aura of sanctity and other-worldliness – expressed in Byzantine art by colouring their faces differently from those of earthly beings[71] – has diminished. They have become thoroughly Islamised in their faces, their stocky bodies, their clothing (once again the Paris 1237 *Maqāmāt* is an exception); in these respects they follow the convention of moon-faced beauty which dominated the contemporary Iranian world. They are now firmly subordinated to the ruler, essentially just airborne courtiers. The fact that they can fly does not quite succeed in making them other-worldly; they are as much a part of the earthly action as the personifications in classical and Byzantine art, and could indeed in some sense be viewed as their descendants.

One last »angelic« innovation introduced by the Arab painters remains to be noted. The sexlessness that characterized the Byzantine angel struck no answering chord among the Arabs. The angels in thirteenth-century frontispieces are for the most part female (except in the 1237 *Maqāmāt*), and often ostentatiously so, rejoicing in diaphanous pantaloons, painted fingernails and toenails, beauty spots galore, multiple bracelets, necklaces, diadems, pearl-incrusted plaits and even bare arms and décolletés (**fig. 13**)[72]. Such whole-hearted devotion to the arts of feminine adornment emphasizes the worldly luxury of the court rather than the spiritual dimension of monarchy, and clinches the essentially secular nature of these icons of kingship. The atmosphere created by such pictures has little in common with the refined, austere spirituality that pervades so much Byzantine book painting.

It remains to determine how these angels, usually paired though they also occur in threes or fours, vary from one manuscript to the next. They are by no means uniform. Their position can be asymmetrical, as in some of the *Aġānī* frontispieces. The colour of their clothing varies. Sometimes their faces are turned to the ruler in three-quarter view, sometimes they face each other in strict profile, and on yet other occasions they look outwards, their faces turned away from the ruler. Quite different from all of these are the angels in the 1237 *Maqāmāt*. They are by far the smallest figures in each scene, and their clothing is that of slaves or prisoners – bare torso with a short fringed skirt and anklets. This seems to be a solecism, and perhaps the same could be said for their presence flanking not just the ruler portrait but also that of the author. They present no gifts and seem devoid of defining attributes, but instead reproduce a gesture familiar from early Christian art, each with one arm outstretched and the other pointing to the ground as if they were holding a huge roundel. They are all in strict profile.

These numerous differences suggest that no set iconography had been developed for such figures, and indeed, as soon as frontispieces ceased to be merely symbolic icons of power, and began to take on genre or anecdotal detail, they vanished altogether. Probably one of their last appearances is in a detached double frontispiece of awesome scale mounted in one of the Topkapı Saray albums and datable to c. 1300 (**fig. 14a**), where so many courtiers have muscled in on the scene that the angels have been elbowed into a subordinate position on the upper periphery of the picture. Out of sight, out of mind.

Royal Portrait

Finally, what of the fourth theme for discussion, the royal portrait? It was here that the most radical departure from Byzantine models occurred. Only the most basic elements of the Byzantine original were retained: its presence at the beginning of the book, as a mark of ownership, and the concentrated focus on the figure of the ruler. Several types of royal portrait are to be found in the frontispieces of Byzantine books, and apparently not one of them recommended itself to Islamic taste. Examples are the standing frontal ruler, dressed in the full panoply of office, and flanked by saints or angels[73]; the warrior monarch in full armour, similarly attended[74]; full-length double portraits of the ruler and his consort[75], or of the ruler as emperor and monk[76] – with the figures in all four cases depicted frontally and standing, with a gold background and thus no context whatever; or of the emperor(s) and Christ[77]; the dignitary sitting in a chair and

71 Grabar, Painting 179.

72 As in the *Kitāb ad-Diryāq* of 1199. For a conveniently accessible colour plate, see Grube, World fig. 27. For the deeper resonances of this image, see Azarpay/Kilmer, Dragon; Kerner, Art 207-222.

73 e. g. Nikephoros III Botaneiates in the frontispiece to the Sermons of St John Chrysostom, datable between 1078 and 1081 (colour plate in Grabar, Painting 179).

74 Such as Basil II; here the angels, flying above him and facing each other, invest him with spear and crown respectively, while his defeated enemies prostrate themselves in a cowed huddle in the predella (colour plate in Rice, Byzantium 27).

75 Such as the portrait of Constantine Komnenos and Euphrosyne Dukaina Palaiologina of c. 1400 (colour plate in Rice, Byzantium 79) or of Michael VII Doukas and Mary of Alania, c. 1071-81 (Cat. New York 1997, 182 [colour]). Nevertheless, there may be a faint echo of the Byzantine double portrait, with its underlying idea of showing the ruler in two quite distinct capacities, in the many double frontispieces in later Islamic painting that depict the ruler enthroned in majesty on one side and a totally different scene on the other, such as the arrival of an embassy or the ruler hunting.

76 Such as the emperor John VI Kantakouzenos, an image which accompanies the book of his homilies, datable between 1347 and 1354 (Grabar, Painting 184).

77 Cat. London 2008, 118 no. 59 (colour) and 395: Christ blesses John II Komnenos and his son Alexios. The theme recurs on several ivories (Cat. London 2008 nos 68 [Constantine VII] and 70 [Otto II and his consort Theophanou]).



Fig. 14 Frontispiece, Album, Istanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi Kütüphanesi Hazine 2152, fol. 60ᵛ-61ʳ, c. 1300. – (After Ipşiroğlu, Bild figs 23-24).

»caught« just as he turns towards the viewer[78]; and the emperor enthroned presiding over a synod[79].

In toto these portraits provided a rich range of visual references, and it would be easy enough to cite a host of further variants. It seems fair to assume, given the incontrovertible evidence of strongly marked Byzantine elements in many different guises throughout thirteenth-century Arab painting, that the many Byzantine manuscripts seen by the painters who produced the frontispieces of Arab manuscripts did include examples of such portraits and perhaps of still other types that have vanished without a trace. None of them, it seems, corresponded to the Islamic concept of a ruler portrait, and this is a quite remarkable finding. Perhaps the saints, clergy and angels were too quintessentially Christian to be taken seriously as a possible model. And indeed, when studied as a group, these Byzantine royal portraits have a pronounced religious flavour which could not fail to repel Muslim taste. The presence of the emperor's consort, depicted moreover in terms of full visual equality, was scarcely less objectionable. Only in the fourteenth century, and under Mongol influence, was this innovation introduced[80]. Thus the principal legacy of such a picture to a Muslim artist was the basic idea of a royal portrait at the beginning of a book. The spiritual and for that matter the intellectual dimension of his model held little appeal for him.

If none of these models would suit, where was the Islamic painter to look for inspiration? It seems that once again he turned for help to the faithful consular diptychs, now fully launched in their rich afterlife as the book-covers of Christian manuscripts, and then set about enriching that already rich model. The changes that he introduced betray a totally different way of seeing. Gone, of course, are the personifications which so frequently flank the figure of authority; gone too, as noted above, the bust of Christ and the reference to the consul's generosity, and the sense that a particular instant has been captured, namely the moment when the consul opens the games, is also lost. Instead, the artists charged with illustrating these Islamic manuscripts chose one of two solutions: either a formal icon of kingship, divorced from space and time; or the ruler presented in the context of a

78 Such as the portrait of the High Admiral Alexios Apokaukos of c. 1342 (colour plate in Rice, Byzantium 67).

79 Nichol, Reluctant, colour image on cover.

80 Swietochowski/Carboni, Poetry 12 f., 24.





Fig. 15 Frontispiece, *Mu'nis al-ahrār*, Kuwait, Dar al Athar al-Islamiyya LNS 9 MS, fol. 1ᵛ-2ʳ, 1341. – (After Swietochowski/Carboni, Poetry 24f.).

specific activity or, more generally, accompanied by a set of references to his lifestyle.

The first type is well illustrated by a well-known *Aġānī* frontispiece in Istanbul (**fig. 11**)[81], which projects the authentic Byzantine flavour of cold, remote majesty, but does so with unmistakably Islamic detailing. It could be described as a fusion of the consular dipych and a later Byzantine royal frontispiece. The Islamic ruler is seated and his pages crowd around him on both sides, banked in pairs two feet deep. A gold background removes the scene from the everyday world; but since eleven figures are crammed into the available space, there is no room for that gold background to assert an otherworldly atmosphere, as it so often does in Byzantine art. The relative proportions of the figures also exceed Byzantine norms by a substantial margin; the ruler, though seated, towers above his pages. Like them[82], his face – the only bearded one – has a Far Eastern cast, corresponding to the contemporary Persian ideal[83]. An Islamic touch is provided by the *ṭirāz* bands that identify him as Badr ad-Dīn Luʾluʾ[84]. In at least three other respects his attributes attest a strong Turkish or nomadic flavour. First, he holds a bow and arrow, the weapon of choice for the mounted nomad warrior, rather than a sword, and one that for centuries had figured as an emblem variously interpreted as denoting sovereignty, authority, a clan or tribal mark, or even a brand[85]. Second, instead of a crown he wears a *šarbūš* or fur hat, perhaps of sable. It is a form of insignia taken from the world of the Eurasian steppe, and more suitable for the cold winters of that region than for the climate of Iraq[86]. While in Baghdad in 1184, the Spanish traveller Ibn Ǧubayr saw the caliph an-Nāṣir wearing »a gilded cap encircled with black fur of the costly and precious kind…. that of the marten or even better. His purpose in wearing this Turkish dress was the concealment of his state; but the sun cannot be hidden even if veiled«[87]. Third, with icy aplomb he

81 Ettinghausen, Painting 65.

82 One page alone sports not the arched eyebrows meeting over the nose that are such a signal of beauty in contemporary taste, but horizontal eyebrows with affronted right-angled terminations. A similar form is used in a contemporary Christian context to express sorrow; see a fragmentary glazed dish depicting the Deposition, Syria, late thirteenth to early fourteenth century; note the affronted weeping angels in the upper exergue (Cat. London 2008, 350f. no. 306; 457-458 [A. Ballian]). See Melikian-Chirvani, Matériaux 17f. for further commentary on eyebrow conventions.

83 Melikian-Chirvani, Matériaux 17.

84 For the controversy about this, see Farès, Vision 99; Farès, Art 643-654, 657-659; Rice, Aghani 130, 133; Stern, Aghani 503. Subsequent conventional wisdom has decisively emphasized the authenticity of these inscriptions.

85 For its use by the Seljuk sultans, see Kucur, Study 1603 and Shimizu, Bow. It is especially prominent in the coins of Ṭoġrıl I Beg; see Bulliet, Evidence.

86 Cf. Mayer, Costume 27f.

87 Ibn Ǧubayr, Travels 237.



Fig. 16 Frontispiece, *Shahnama*, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art 1956.10 and 1945.169, c. 1444. – (Gray, Persian Painting 102 f.).

perches on a foldaway camping stool (despite appearances, this is surely not a distant relative of the Roman *sella curalis*) rather than sitting comfortably on a throne. Piles of fruit heaped into vases or bowls are set before him[88].

Further details of this frontispiece also seem to derive from Byzantine sources. Chief among these is the way that no other figure is permitted to encroach upon the monarch's space. Thus he spreads himself at the expense of others in a way reminiscent of Justinian at San Vitale in Ravenna[89]. The cordon of empty space is incidentally much more pronounced in other frontispieces of this type; what is interesting here is that it asserts itself even in the context of gross overcrowding. His costume also has Byzantine connections. The red boots, for example, were known in the Islamic world as a royal prerogative in Byzantium (though here one of the pages also has red boots, admittedly less grand than those of the ruler) [90]. As for his robe, it is an imaginative reworking of the celebrated Byzantine chrysography – literally »writing in gold« – a technique perhaps best exemplified in mid-Byzantine enamels, which have the self-same colour scheme of lapis and gold, the celestial colours. There, of course, the gold lines had a practical function in keeping different colours from running into one another during the firing process. Here the outward Vienna *Kitāb ad-Diryāq* frontispiece with its courtiers whose attributes identify them as polo-master, butler, cup-bearer, chamberlain and the like, or by narrative friezes depicting the hunt, musicians, or a procession of ladies. It is hard to imagine any Byzantine dignitary sitting calmly by while kebabs are cooked for him in full public view, with a quartet of gardeners hard at work in the background. The more detail that is crammed into such images – with a corresponding variety of viewpoints and competing centres of attention – the further the Islamic artist is moving from a Byzantine original, in which the ruler is the sole focus of attention. In that respect, it is highly significant that the ruler in the Vienna *Kitāb ad-Diryāq* frontispiece is seated off-centre and is depicted in three-quarter view. Icon has become narrative, and the temperature drops accordingly.

The end product of this process was reached when a single page could not comfortably hold the amount of detail crammed into it, and the composition spilled over into a continuous double frontispiece – rather than two roughly symmetrical single frontispieces so to speak glued together. The detached double frontispiece of c. 1300 in the Topkapı Saray illustrates an intermediate stage in this evolution (**figs 14a-b**)[94]. The ruler is enthroned in godlike remoteness at

88 This motif has Sasanian antecedents: see Overlaet, Splendeur, text and colour fig. on 211.
89 Best seen in close-up; for a colour plate, see Cat. London 2008, 24.
90 Book of Gifts 197.
91 Melikian-Chirvani, Matériaux 17-19. He notes a similar wealth of connections in landscape, composition, calligraphy and vegetal ornament (ibidem 19-21).
92 Ettinghausen, Painting 91.
93 Hayes, Genius 51 (colour plate).
94 For a colour illustration, see Ipşiroğlu, Bild figs 23 f.

the still centre of the turning world, positively besieged by a motley band of characters including a dancer, standard-bearer, dowager, archer, chamberlain, rebec-player, tambouriniste and yet others offering him flowers and food. All compete busily for his attention. Meanwhile, in the wings – actually in the other half of the frontispiece – a procession of exotic animals paces sedately towards him. From such a frontispiece it was only a short step to extended images which depicted court life in obsessive anecdotal detail (**figs 15-16**) and within a much more freely conceived composition, and in which there was psychologically no place for a super-human monarch. At long last the ruler was cut down to size. He had it coming to him.

It would have been interesting and instructive to consider some of the many other ways in which Byzantine art impacted on the arts of the Islamic book. The majority of these ideas were destined to have no significant progeny, like the choice of dyed vellum for sacred texts, as in the case of the celebrated Blue Qur'an, or the adoption of a vocabulary of somewhat histrionic gestures loaded with meaning, as in *The Choicest Maxims of al-Mubaššir*[95], or the use of an overall monochrome gold background. Among the Byzantine themes discussed in detail in this paper, it must be conceded that the polyptych format, the author portrait and the paired angels had only a brief *floruit*, though in each of these cases the painters of Arab manuscripts substantially enriched and diversified the Byzantine models which they had inherited. Only the royal portrait was to have a real future in Islamic painting – and it may be no accident that it was this theme that was most thoroughly transformed in its Islamic context. Other Byzantine motifs were taken over intact but then misapplied, like the halo, which became standard issue for virtually all figures and thus inevitably lost its connotations of sanctity. Presumably this was a deliberate move. Similarly, the carefully coded distinctions in Byzantine iconography between the frontal, three-quarter and profile view were not observed in Arab painting, although all three of these views were freely employed. It cannot be gainsaid that this readiness to adopt the letter but ignore the spirit of certain key Byzantine conventions drained the intensity from the Islamic versions of some Byzantine themes. The tendency to load the picture space with figures had much the same effect. At base, these reworkings of Byzantine ideas reflect the different function of the two sets of images. The Byzantine ones for the most part served religious purposes, and the perennial need to make the images work in this way kept certain conventions firmly in place – the lavish use of severe frontality, empty space and plain gold background, for instance, all of them devices which encouraged viewers to devote their full attention to the contemplation of the image. The secular context of the Islamic image left little room for such devices. In the visual arts, then, the two images were essentially oil and vinegar. When thoroughly mixed together, they proved to be a successful combination; but their innate tendency was to separate.

And so to conclude. With the hindsight of history, the intense Byzantine impact on Islamic art in the thirteenth century, like the same process in the Umayyad period half a millennium earlier, stands revealed as no more than an episode. It is if those who produced the paintings in Arab manuscripts were happy at first to use Byzantine ideas as a crutch, but once they had found their feet they threw that crutch away. Their path led them in a different direction, and it turned out to be a dead end. For as it happens, Arab painting was destined to have only a very brief flowering. The sack of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, while it did not put an absolute end to manuscript painting in Iraq, caused a fundamental displacement westwards. When Mesopotamian painting was transplanted to the Mamluk cities of Syria and Egypt, it withered, eventually petering out in pale reflections of the illustrated scientific manuscripts of the thirteenth century. Byzantium was no more than a ghostly presence in such paintings. It was in Iran, not in the Arab Near East, that the future of Islamic book painting lay – and Iran looked for inspiration not to Byzantium, which by that time was a spent force, but to China.

95 Ettinghausen, Painting 75.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

The Lure of the Exotic: The Byzantine Heritage in Islamic Book Painting

In the visual arts, the medieval interplay between the Byzantine and the Islamic worlds has many surprising ramifications. Islam was the usual beneficiary, although Byzantium drew on Islamic ornament, iconography, and calligraphy for buildings and textiles, crowns and psalters. As for Muslim artists, they drew freely on the classical and Byzantine heritage in the Umayyad period (661-750) and then again in the 13th century. Their unexpected reworkings of the theme of Christian evangelists writing their Gospels is the focus of this article

Die Verlockung des Exotischen: Das byzantinische Erbe in der islamischen Buchmalerei

In der bildenden Kunst hat das mittelalterliche Wechselspiel zwischen der byzantinischen und der islamischen Welt viele überraschende Auswirkungen. Der Islam war gewöhnlich der Nutznießer davon, obwohl Byzanz islamische Ornamentik, Ikonographie und Kalligraphie an Gebäuden und für Textilien, Kronen und Psalter verwendete. Was muslimische Künstler anbelangt, so nutzten sie das klassische und byzantinische Erbe in der Umayyaden-Zeit (661-750) und dann noch einmal im 13. Jahrhundert. Ihre unerwarteten Überarbeitungen des Themas der Evangelisten bei der Verfassung der Evangelien stehen im Mittelpunkt dieses Artikels.

Between Philosophy and Theology

Benjamin de Lee

Niketas Byzantios, Islam, and the Aristotelian Shift in Ninth-century Byzantium

The ninth century was a period of a significant revival for Aristotelian philosophy in both Byzantium and the Islamic world[1]. This revival can be seen across cultural, linguistic and political boundaries. It is also in the ninth century that we see the first production of manuscripts of Aristotle. Inter-faith polemic, between Muslims and Christians, Jews and Christians, and Jews and Muslims, and also intra-faith polemic, played a role in this ninth-century Aristotelian revival. This paper will explore how Niketas Byzantios, a ninth-century Byzantine intellectual known only through his writings, which included anti-heretical and anti-Islamic treatises, not only changed the Byzantine intellectual discourse about Islam but also helped to usher in a new emphasis on Aristotelian method in Byzantine intellectual discourse. This shift emphasized Aristotelian syllogisms rather than traditional patristic and scriptural citations. While the study of Aristotle had never died out in Byzantium, a brief comparison with Niketas' writings and earlier thinkers, like those from the iconoclast controversy and also his near contemporary Patriarch Photios, demonstrate how a new approach in theological polemic was initiated by Niketas. Later Byzantine anti-Islamic writers chose to follow Niketas' definition of Islam as an illogical, other religion, rather than that of John of Damascus, who viewed Islam as a Christian heresy. Ironically, as this paper will also demonstrate, this new approach was inspired by an Islamic thinker, and this exchange gives new insight into the exciting intellectual cross-fertilization of the early medieval eastern Mediterranean.

While I am not the first to argue that we find in the ninth century a new »Byzantine Scholasticism«, there is a dearth of scholarship on Niketas Byzantios and his role in this movement. A critical edition of his anti-Islamic writings was only produced in 2000. Writers that mention him, usually in surveys of medieval views of Islam, dismiss him as someone not to be taken seriously[2]. Yet, compared with similar texts of the day, whether against heretics or with Islamic *kalām*, the text clearly relates an argument that would have struck its contemporaries as something to take seriously, whether the reader was a Christian or a Muslim. The only writer to analyze his anti-Latin treatises has been Tia Kolbaba in her recent study on ninth-century Byzantine anti-Latin treatises[3]. While little is known about Niketas, much is known about the ninth century, including Byzantine intellectuals like Photios[4]. The ninth century was a period of revival for the Byzantine Empire after the iconoclast controversy had been finally ended.

Before undertaking a historical and literary analysis it is important to be clear about certain terms and dates. Aristotelian logic refers to the system of epistemology developed by Aristotle in his *Prior Analytics, Posterior Analytics, Metaphysics 4,* and *Categories*. However, Aristotelianism, by the ninth century of the Common Era, had been expanded by his followers, pseudo-Aristotelian treatises, some neo-Platonic influences and centuries of commentators. Writers of the period make it clear that they are appealing to Aristotelian method by particular vocabulary: ἔκθεσις, ἀπόδειξις, διαλεκτικῇ, and συλλογιστικῇ. Such writings, like those of Niketas Byzantios, which are considered here, are explicitly Aristotelian and are contrasted with other writings, like those of John of Damascus, which are implicitly Aristotelian. Christian theologians for centuries had relied on the basics of logic for argument, but use of Aristotelian terms is quite unusual.

Christian writers in this period, whether writing in Greek, Syriac, or Arabic, could draw on a long tradition of classical philosophy in the service of Christian theology. The synthesis of Aristotelian philosophy into theology, primarily by the use of logic and terminology at the service in explication of the Trinity, had occurred by the end of the fourth century. Philosophers like the pagan Ammonios (late fifth century), and his students Olympiodoros of Alexandria (ca. 500 - ca. 565), who was thought to be a Christian, and the Christian John Philopponos (ca. 490 - ca. 574) had presented Aristotle in a way that was compatible with Christian teaching. In the seventh century, Aristotelian logic still formed the cornerstone of Byzantine education, and by the ninth century, we have evidence of earnest manuscript production that continued unabated until the sixteenth century, so that Aristotle was

1 The classic study of the Byzantine humanistic revival is Lemerle, Humanism. There have been a series of studies of Aristotelian logic and philosophy in Arabic, e.g. Peters, Aristotle. Most significantly from the standpoint of the Islamic tradition is Gutas, Greek Thought. A more comparative approach can be seen in Booth, Aristotelian. Gutas argues, contra Lemerle, that the Arabs in Baghdad had led the ninth-century revival in Aristotelian thought.

2 Cf. Daniel, Islam 15; Daniel dismisses the significance of Niketas in one sentence. Even more recent works like Goddard, History, only consider Niketas briefly and do not at all situate him in intellectual history.

3 Kolbaba, Inventing 120-130.

4 Historians still bemoan the lack of sources, but compared to the seventh and eighth centuries there is a plethora of source material. Cf. Brubaker, Ninth Century.

by far the most widely copied non-Christian ancient Greek author. It is no coincidence that the Aristotelian revival in Byzantium and the translation movement in the caliphate began with a renewed interest in scientific and mathematical texts. Aristotle's logically demanding conception of ἀπόδειξις is based on a mathematical model of knowledge, so renewed interest in mathematics and science neatly intertwined with a renewed interest in logic[5].

A few brief observations about John of Damascus (676-749) and Theodore Abū Qurra (ca. 750-ca. 823), two writers prior to Niketas, illustrate the cross-fertilization and intellectual milieu of the period. John wrote in Greek, but was fluent in Arabic. Theodore wrote in Greek, Arabic, and Syriac and was on the cusp of the translation movement. These two thinkers are prime examples of the Christian use of Greek philosophy at the service of theology, long after the Second Sophistic had ended, and the philosophical school of Athens had been closed by Justinian. While philosophical inquiry continued, Justinian's action certainly emphasized a renewed rigor in the symbolic efforts of the imperial government to cleanse the empire of remaining vestiges of paganism. However, these writers still prioritized revelation. The *Dialogue between a Christian and Muslim*, attributed to John of Damascus, but now widely thought not to be authentic, reflects *kalām* literature in style and demonstrates a high-level of understanding of Islam[6]. It still appeals to revelation. Within the iconoclastic debate, earlier writers like the patriarch Nikephoros of Constantinople, as well as John of Damascus, and Theodore Abū Qurra, who also defended icons from without the Empire, preferred an appeal to authority, whether scriptures, church councils, or patristic citations, even if their arguments still are undergirded with Aristotelian logic[7]. This pattern is continued in their inter-faith polemics with Islam.

Dirk Krausmüller has highlighted how the use of Aristotelian logic could create a divergence in Christian thinkers. In his article, »Killing at God's Command: Niketas Byzantios' Polemic against Islam and the Christian Tradition of Divinely Sanctioned Murder«, Krausmüller has argued convincingly that Niketas' reasoning represents a dramatic shift from John of Damascus and that this shift was largely motivated by Aristotelian logic and categories of absolute good rather than strict scriptural exegesis[8]. Krausmüller focuses only on the specific issue of murder. John of Damascus, like his Muslim counterparts, argued that it was permissible and moral to murder if God commanded it, as is frequently the case in the Hebrew Bible and in the Qur'an. Niketas argued that God would never command murder because it is always wrong. To kill is to end an absolute good, human life, and God would never command the destruction of an absolute good. Examples of divinely-sanctioned murder from the Scriptures, mostly the Hebrew Bible, must have an allegorical or metaphorical interpretation. Thus, on this one issue, Krausmüller demonstrates that Niketas moves Christianity away from Islam by arguing from Aristotelian logic rather than a literal interpretation of Scripture. This one example illustrates the Aristotelian shift of this period, yet almost all of Niketas' arguments follow this pattern. He repeatedly argues a point from logic, only occasionally quoting Christian Scriptures to illustrate his point, that the Christian faith is reasonable. Incidentally, later Byzantine theologians, particularly when discussing the topic of divinely-sanctioned murder, followed Niketas, not John.

Again, John of Damascus, in his *On the Orthodox Faith*, utilizes an Aristotelian Neo-Platonism that is firmly grounded in the patristic tradition, but the emphasis remains upon revelation in the form of Scripture. This synthesis has its roots in the early Christian tradition and reached its height by the fourth century, with the Cappadocians, and later with Leontios of Byzantium (died ca. 543), a sixth-century theologian whose works have been attributed to Theodore Abū Qurra. With Theodore, we begin to see the shift in Arabic Christian disputational literature. On the one hand, Theodore closely follows John of Damascus. On the other hand, he wrote in Arabic, and with the express aim of proving the rationality of Christianity to Muslims. John of Damascus had been writing to his fellow Christians. While John sought to catalog heresies in his *De Haeresibus*, Theodore in his treatise, *On True Religion*, attempts to directly engage Islam and demonstrate the rational superiority of Christianity[9]. For John of Damascus, the truth of Christianity is apparent when held up to the mirror of falsehood. In Theodore, we have a Christian theologian who explicitly says that he is aiming to use the language of logic but he will still prioritize revelation. With Theodore, we might hope to find the missing link between Niketas and *kalām* literature: Theodore was a Christian who directly imitated Islamic *kalām*, argued in an explicitly Aristotelian method, and then whose works were translated into Greek and seem to have had a direct influence upon Niketas, since Theodore's *On True Religion* circulated in a Greek translation. Still, *On True Religion* does not go as far as Niketas' letters; it has numerous quotations from Christian Scriptures. For

5 For further explanation of the importance of mathematics and science, cf. Booth, Aristotelian 2 f.

6 *Kalām* covers a broad range of Islamic literature over a period of time beyond the scope of this study. For the purposes here, it refers to a class of Islamic theological dialectical literature from the first or second century of the hijra. This literature often uses dialectical syllogisms in the course of debate, either intra-Islamic disputations or interfaith disputations with Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians. The most thorough introduction to *kalām* is still Wolfson, Philosophy; for a more recent investigation, cf. Haleem, Early Kalam.

7 The Iconoclastic controversy, however, did encourage the use of Aristotelian texts within Byzantium. For a detailed study of Aristotelian logic in the iconoclastic period, cf. Anagnostopoulos, Object. Cf. also, Lemerle, Humanism 152 f., for the use of Aristotle in the iconoclastic controversy and 167 f. for Aristotelian philosophy in scientific texts. For texts on the defense of icons, cf. Iōannēs Damaskēnos, Three Treatises and Theodore Abū Qurra, Traité du culte des icones. For more on Nikephoros, whose works have yet to appear in critical edition (except for his *Refutatio et eversio*, cf. Nikēphoros: Refutatio et eversio), cf. Parry, Depicting, and Travis, Patriarch Nikephoros.

8 Krausmüller, Killing.

9 Iōannēs Damaskēnos, Schriften; Theodore Abū Qurra, Traité de l'existence.

example, to prove that God is the Trinity, and God begets a Son, Theodore argues that man is made in the image and likeness of God, and man begets. Therefore, God must beget, since, according to Gen 1:27, man is made in God's likeness:

»If there is attributed to Adam or one of us headship over another human being, one from him or like him, we do not consider that degradation, but glory, exaltation, and honor. If this is so, then God – may he be blessed and exalted! – is surely head, not over his creatures, but over one like him. And if he is head over one like him, he, too, has begotten a Son and there has proceeded from him a Spirit, and he and Adam resemble one another with regard to begetting and headship. Thus, among the many things the mind can infer from the likeness of Adam's nature is that God is three persons: one who begets, another who is begotten, and another who proceeds. In this manner, confirmation is given to the words of the speaker, who did not lie in what he spoke when he said, ›And God created humans, and in the image of God he created them‹. [Gen 1:27] This too is among God's attributes[10]«.

In contrast, Niketas argues that God's absolute goodness must be a greater goodness than the goodness we encounter in humans. Man can beget, and this ability is an absolute good. Since man has the potential to beget, God must be a greater good than the good encountered in man. Therefore, God *must* beget, not just have the potential. Theodore's syllogism starts with a premise from Scripture; Niketas attempts to make an axiomatic statement about God by constructing an analogy in what is known about man:

»Since therefore, in us there are both productivity and unproductivity, birth and barrenness, fruitfulness and unfruitfulness, both sprouting and its negation and the better things, those such as birth and production, and also sprouting, and qualities like these, but also the weaker, like unproductivity, barrenness, unfruitfulness, and the negation of sprouting, we imagine and describe God as having the stronger qualities without the corresponding weaknesses in us – just as we clearly said, so we would say something has production, sprouting, fecundity, and those qualities like these. For even if someone might endeavor in these, even if I myself would, that death is better than life and darkness than light, such would be ludicrous. Therefore it is clear that God is productive and begets the Word. For, begetting is more valuable than infertility and unfruitfulness, and all opposition to this axiom is barren. If this is the case, clearly, God has a Son. It is proved thus.

10. We naturally describe God as having these stronger qualities in us: begetting, productivity, and sprouting. So it is that every such quality has its correspondence in the Son: sprouting, fruitfulness, and productivity. Therefore it follows that God, on account of these qualities, is fittingly described by us as having a Son, and it is properly believed by us and taught that the Logos is substantially, impassively, and changelessly begotten by Him. If this is so, even clear for those who are strong but see dimly, that the substantial power and Wisdom of God, through which he is powerful and by which he creates and without which nothing is made, and which the argument shows to be consubstantial with God the Father and alike in every aspect except begetting, and the Son is of God, his Wisdom, and his Word as is rightly confessed and believed by us Christians[11]«.

We have no proof that Niketas read either John of Damascus or Theodore Abū Qurra, although he so closely follows Abū Qurra's *On True Religion* in his apology in his first letter and general refutation of the Qur'an that one assumes that he must have had a Greek translation of the text.

While Niketas was responding directly to an attack from a Muslim intellectual, there is still temptation to follow Paul Lemerle and to see the foundation for the ninth-century Aristotelian shift in Byzantine intellectual life itself, especially iconoclasm. In the second phase of the iconoclastic controversy, Patriarch Nikephoros and Theodore the Studite embraced an »Aristotelian platform« to address the issue of images. This phase of the debate has even been called a »scholastic phase« because of the use of Aristotelian logical terminology, especially that of the *Categories*, a text that was particularly influential upon Niketas Byzantios and his Muslim counterparts[12]. However, for the iconodule defense, Aristotelian philosophy is always just a means to an end, rarely cited as a source – although Niketas never directly quotes Aristotle either. The Aristotelian legacy in Byzantium never died out, nor was it forgotten in the Levant: Syriac Christian theologians in particular played a significant role in transferring it to the Arab world. In the ninth century, before and after Niketas Byzantios, we see a sudden increase in Aristotelian syllogistic reasoning that might be appropriately, if anachronistically

10 Theodore Abū Qurra, Theologus Autodictactus 13, D228. In the beginning of the paragraph, Abū Qurra uses the classic *kalām* form of argument: »Suppose someone denies that Adam and God resemble on another with regard to begetting…We answer…« Michael Cook, in his article, the »Origins of Kalam,« has pointed out that *kalām* literature has many Christian parallels in Greek and Syriac and a few examples illustrate a common pattern, where a series of questions are presented with, »if you say…, we say«, and »if he asks…we shall answer…« a consistent dialectical form for answering the challenges of a interlocutor, whether Muslim or non-Muslim. Cf. Cook, Origins 37.

11 Nikētas Byzantios, Apologia 9,239-10,262: Ἐπεὶ οὖν ἐν ἡμῖν ἔστι γόνιμόν τε καὶ ἄγονον, γέννησίς τε καὶ στείρωσις, καρπός τε καὶ ἀκαρπία, βλάστησίς τε καὶ ἡ ταύτης στέρησις καὶ τὰ μὲν κρείττονα, (19ᵛ) οἷον γέννησίς τε καὶ γόνιμον, βλάστησίς τε καὶ, ὅσα τούτοις ὅμοια, τὰ δὲ χείρονα, οἷον ἄγονον, στείρωσις, ἀκαρπία καὶ ἡ τῆς βλαστήσεως στέρησις, τὸν δὲ Θεὸν διὰ τῶν κρεττόνων καταγράφομεν καὶ καταφάσκομεν ἄνευ ἡμῖν συμβαινόντων συμπτωμάτων, ὥσπερ ἔφαμεν – φανερόν, ὅτι γόνιμον, γέννησιν ἔχοντα, βλαστόν, καρπόν καὶ τὰ τούτοις ὅμοια φήσομεν. Εἰ γὰρ καί τις ἐν τούτοις φιλονεικοίη, φιλονεικήσω κἀγώ, ὅτι ὁ θάνατος τῆς ζωῆς κρείττων καὶ τὸ σκότος τοῦ φωτός, ὅπερ ἐστὶ γελοῖον. Ὥστε φανερόν, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς γόνιμός τέ ἐστιν καὶ γεννητικὸς Λόγου. (20ʳ) Πάσης γὰρ ἀντιλογίας ἀργούσης τιμιώτερον ἡ γέννησις τῆς στειρώσεως καί ἀκαρπίας· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, φανερόν, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς Υἱὸν ἔχει. Ἔστι γὰρ συλλογίσασθαι οὕτως.

10. Τὸν Θεὸν ἐκ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν κρειττόνων γεννήτικόν τε καὶ γόνιμον καὶ βλαστάνοντα προσφυῶς διαγράφομεν· πᾶν δὲ τὸ οὕτως ἔχον πρὸς υἱὸν ἢ βλαστὸν ἢ καρπὸν ἢ γόνον τὴν ἀναφορὰν ἔχει. Συνάγεται ἄρα, ὅτι ὁ Θεὸς πρεπόντως ἐκ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν διαγραφόμενος Υἱόν τε ἔχει καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν καλῶς πιστεύεται καὶ δοξάζεται τὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἐνυποστάτως καὶ ἀπαθῶς καὶ ἀρ(ρ)εύστως γεννηθέντα Λόγον. Εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, φανερὸν καὶ τοῖς (20ᵛ) ἀμυδρῶς συνορᾶν ἰσχύουσιν. ὅτι ἡ ἐνυπόστατος δύναμις τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Σοφία, καθ' ἥν ἐστι δυνατὸς καὶ δι' ἧς ποιεῖ καὶ ἧς χωρὶς οὐδὲν ποιεῖ, ἣν καὶ ὁ λόγος ὁμοούσιον τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ καὶ κατὰ πάντα ὅμοιον ἔδειξεν χωρὶς τῆς γεννήσεως, Υἱός τέ ἐστι Θεοῦ καὶ Σοφία καὶ Λόγος καὶ εἰκότως παρ' ἡμῶν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ὡμολόγηταί τε καὶ πεπίστευται.

12 Alexander, Patriarch Nicephorus 189-191.

labeled, Byzantine scholasticism, so that we see in Niketas' work an emphasis on syllogistic arts rather than the patristic and scriptural legacy presented with the tools of Aristotle. He pushes the envelope more than any other thinker, foreshadowing later thinkers like John Italos whose devotion to classical philosophy will earn the ire of the church hierarchy[13].

Niketas is so self-consciously syllogistic in his response that he felt compelled to state in both letters that he is aiming for logic as his primary method of argumentation, but only because he was prompted to do so by his correspondent, a statement that comes across as disingenuous since Niketas' syllogisms at time seem somewhat labored. He uses an explicitly Aristotelian vocabulary, even in the title of his letters, which were by him. The title of the first letter (Epistle A) is as follows (notable vocabulary is in parenthesis in the original Greek):

»Positive (κατασευαστικὴ)[14] exposition (ἔκθεσις) of Christian dogma with deductive proof (ἀποδείξεως) brought forth on the basis of (προαγομένη)[15] common sense, dialectical (διαλεκτικῆς) method, natural (φυσικῶν)[16] dialectical proofs (ἐπιχειρημάτων)[17], and multiple syllogistic arts (συλλογιστικῆς πολυτεχνίας); and a refutation (ἀντίρρησις)[18] of the letter written by the Hagarenes[19] to the emperor Michael, son of Theophilos, to slander the faith of the Christians[20]«.

Κατασευαστική has a particular technical meaning for constructive or positive in relation to philosophical proofs, (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, p. 377H and *Prior Analytics*, 1403^{a}25). Niketas uses the phrase λόγων κατασκευαστικῶς from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (1043^{a}25) at the close of the opening of his letter. He contrasts his rigorous logic with the Muslim epistler's eloquence. ἔκθεσις is philosophical exposition in Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* (48^{a}25 and 49^{b}6). ἀπόδειξις is the technical term for deductive proof, Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics* (71^{b}17, 81^{a}40). The other Greek words here also all have technical philosophical meanings. The title to the second letter (Epistle B) continues in the same vein: »Refutation (ἀντίρρησις) and rebuttal (ἀνατροπή)[21] of the second letter written by the Hagarenes to the emperor Michael, the son of Theophilos, to slander the faith of the Christians«[22].

Epistle A opens with florid eloquence and a series of metaphors that equate the search for knowledge to trying to see through smoke before shifting the search for truth to military metaphors:

»Therefore as long as those who have been seized by ignorance and insouciance follow closely upon those who have somehow arrived at this point, they will enjoy nothing inferior to this same divine nature than these. After the first has been delayed, they do not refrain from undertaking the second voyage. For they will no longer be able to escape the reproach of doing evil. For if they do not seek the assistance that results from an ascetic life, in order to achieve a certain measure of secure knowledge of God, and if they are not persuaded by those who have achieved it, but depend only on their own deliberations, how will they be able to reach that which can only be achieved in one way, if they pursue another [way][23]«?

It becomes clear that Niketas is trying to outdo his Muslim counterpart, for he exclaims, with an ironic vocative, »since reflection is more than your eloquence, my much-experienced friend«[24]! He then moves on to say that he is forced to argue in deductive proof because the Muslim has dared to attack the Christian faith with logic and as a problem, so he will demonstrate to him its truth with logic. However, in the first paragraph, he insists that:

»The truth is a matter that is hard to catch, and that can be concealed even to those who are exceedingly sharp-sighted, unless in some degree the soul is able to penetrate through the entire thickness of this bodily darkness, the soul will be able to touch upon the paths of some truth, if it is fully persuaded to lay to rest the traces of the corporeal world«[25].

Thus, he leaves open the notion that ultimate truth can only be known by intellect and faith. Niketas insists that logic (as in deductive proofs, ἀπόδειξις), if one is truly open to it, still has the power to lead one to true knowledge of God[26].

13 Cf. Clucas, Trial.

14 For the parenthetical references, I have deliberately left the words in the cases which reflect their grammatical function in the original Greek.

15 Used in reference to advancing philosophical arguments, cf. Liddell/Scott.

16 Has specific sense of »natural philosophy,« Aristotelēs, De partibus animalium 640a2; cf. Liddell and Scott. Cf. supra, n. 5 on the importance of science and mathematics in Aristotelian philosophy and the Aristotelian logic of Islamic and Christian thinkers.

17 The phrase might better be translated, »proofs from nature.« Ἐπιχειρημάτων is a technical term for dialectical proofs, Aristotelēs, Topica 162a16, et al., cf. Liddell/Scott.

18 Has particular reference as refutation or counter-argument in debate or rhetoric; cf. Liddell and Scott.

19 Niketas uses the plural here.

20 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. 1 1-6 (156): "Ἔκθεσις κατασκευαστικὴ μετὰ ἀποδείξεως τοῦ Χριστιανικοῦ δόγματος ἐκ κοινῶν καὶ διαλεκτικῆς μεθόδου καὶ φυσικῶν ἐπιχειρημάτων καὶ συλλογιστικῆς πολυτεχνίας προαγομένη καὶ ἀντίρρησις τῆς σταλείσης ἐπιστολῆς ἐκ τῶν Ἀγαρηνῶν πρὸς Μιχαὴλ βασιλέα υἱὸν Θεοφίλου ἐπὶ διαβολῇ τῆς τῶν Χριστιανῶν πίστεως; With the last phrase »of the faith of the Christians«, Niketas seems deliberately to personalize the attack on Christian dogma.

21 More forceful than mere »refutation«: Aristotelēs, Metaphysics 1013b14.

22 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. II (176): Ἀντίρρησις καὶ ἀνατροπὴ τῆς δευτέρας ἐπιστολῆς τῆς σταλείσης παρὰ τῶν Ἀγαρηνῶν πρός Μιχαὴλ βασιλέα υἱὸν Θεοφίλου ἐπὶ διαβολῇ τῆς τῶν Χριστιανῶν πίστεως.

23 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 1,27-35 (156): Μέχρι μὲν οὖν τοῖς ὧδέ πῃ καταφθάσασιν οἱ ἀγνοίᾳ ἢ ῥᾳθυμίᾳ κεκρατημένοι παρέπονται, οὐδὲν ἧττον τῆς αὐτῆς ἐκείνοις θειότητος ἀπολαύσονται· ὁπηνίκα δὲ μηδὲ τὸν δεύτερον πλοῦν ἀναβληθέντος τοῦ πρώτου μεταδιώκειν ἀνέχονται, οὐκέτι που πάντως τὸ τῆς κακουργίας ἔγκλημα διαδρᾶναι δυνήσονται. Εἰ γὰρ βίου μὲν ἐξησκημένου φροντίδα οὐ τίθενται, ὡς ἂν εἰς τὸ τῆς ἀπλανοῦς θεογνωσίας καταφθάσωσι μέτρον, τοῖς τε κατειληφόσιν οὐ καταπείθονται, μόνοις δὲ τοῖς οἰκείοις ἐπερείδονται λογισμοῖς, πόθεν τοῦ δι'ἄλλης ὁδοῦ λαμβανομένου ἑτέραν ἐπιτρέχοντες καταλήψονται;

24 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 1,36f. (156): ἐπειδὴ φροντὶς μᾶλλον τῇ λογιότητί σου, πολυπειρότατε φίλε.

25 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 1.8-11 (156): Δυσθήρατόν τι χρῆμα ἀλήθεια καὶ τούς γε λίαν ὀξυωποῦντας λαθεῖν δυνάμενον, εἰ μή που ἄρα τέλεον τοῦ σωματικοῦ τοῦδε γνόφου τὸ πάχος διασχοῦσα ψυχὴ μῦσαι ἢ ἀργῆσαι τὰς αἰσθήσει καταπείσασα ἴχνους τινὸς αὐτῆς ἐφικέσθαι δυνήσηται. The τὰς is problematic, but in this translation is taken with ἴχνους, which does not grammatically fit, but seems to be the only solution to getting the sense of the sentence. I wish to think Robert Irons and James Arieti for having a look at this passage and offering helpful insights.

26 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 1,35-45 (156-158).

The apologia is an explication of Christian theology, especially the nature of the Trinity as one οὐσία with three hypostases, with a pointed emphasis towards responding to Islam. Niketas begins to respond directly to the complaints of the Muslim writer: »the calumnies in your writing against our faith«[27], an indication which suggests that Niketas thinks that the Muslim merely does not understand Christian truth. Indeed, it is a suggestion that Niketas likes to make, that Muslims suffer from a lack of will and ability to understand the superiority of Christian truth. He then responds to the »censures« through a series of quotations from the Muslim letter, with a refutation of each.

Before he begins his refutation, through a series of syllogisms in the apologetic section of his letter, Niketas emphasizes the omnipotence of God, and at several points, Niketas will even conclude his syllogism or point with »as even the Hagarenes say«, a clear echo of *kalām* arguments which often begin with a proposition held as axiomatic by both sides in order to force an opponent to accept a premise with which he does not agree. Niketas argues that God is eternal, unbegotten, uncreated, the supreme mover and creator of all, and as one. Of course, all of these points are common ground between Christianity and Islam. However, Niketas will attempt to deduce from these premises that a completely benevolent omnipotent creator must have a Son eternally begotten. Throughout his argument he does not appeal to Scripture.

Niketas quotes the Muslim as having written »Each begetter is prior to its own begotten«, the statement Niketas clearly regards as vitally important, since he repeats it so many times and devotes so much space to it. Niketas says that the statement, »has in one way, some truth to it, but in another way also some falsehood«[28]. His main goal in the letter is to explain and defend the classical Orthodox Christian formulation of the Trinity. His rejection of this statement is immediate:

»For while we confess the consubstantiality and identity of the Father and the Son, and while we agree that the Father is called the begetter, and the Son is called the begotten, you take from earthly relationships the statement, ›Each begetter is prior to its own begotten‹, and falsely apply it to divine nature. This has, on the contrary, validity when applied to begotten and created nature, but for God this does not apply (many, indeed, innumerable statements have validity to us, but in relation to God are entirely inapplicable). This then you understand as true as far as God is concerned, and you conclude thus: if each begetter is prior to its own begotten, the Son, in whom we believe, ought not be coeternal and consubstantial with the Father. But if conversely, the Son is coeternal to the Father and the statement is true: ›Each begetter is prior to its own begotten‹, their relationship of one to the other is forced apart[29]«.

Niketas proceeds from this paragraph to explicate the Trinity. Yet, the problem is evident from the beginning. For Niketas and his fellow Orthodox Christians, it is axiomatic that the Father and the Son are co-eternal, an axiom that only applies to God, an axiom that the Muslim thinker rejects. Time and again, it is clear that the two thinkers start with axiomatic statements that are based on faith, and thus, debate is pointless.

Moving from his faith perspective, in the following paragraphs Niketas expresses amazement that the Muslim thinker would apply such a statement, which is clearly true about creatures, to the creator. Niketas implies that it is foolish or even blasphemy to judge the creator with statements that apply to creatures. For Niketas, to do such is clearly illogical, yet he gives no clear reason why his Muslim counterpart must agree, since the Muslim counterpart is thinking by analogy, a logical method commonly used in Islamic jurisprudence. Ultimately, Niketas will attempt to create a syllogism that would force his Muslim counterpart to accept that the statement, »each begetter is prior to its own begotten«, is illogical when applied to God:

»›Each begetter is prior to its own begotten‹. This [statement] is postulated about God, by someone who speaks in no way the truth. Therefore the designation ›begetter‹ is one that either exists by itself, or in relation to something else. Now it is not a designation that exists by itself, otherwise it would not make reference to the begotten. It is clear that this designation belongs to those that are ›in relation to something else‹! If then the designation ›begetter‹ is ›in relation to something else‹, and if those that are ›in relation to something else‹ are by nature simultaneous, and if those things that are ›by nature simultaneous‹ at the same time exist and do not exist, then the designation, ›begetter‹, – in as much as he is a begetter, to whom this makes reference – will not have either priority or posterity. If then the begetter has no priority or posterity, but you said that ›each begetter is prior to its own begotten‹, then it is clear that the designation ›begetter‹ does not merely refer to being a begetter, but refers to being a begetter in relation to something else, for example Socrates or Peter[30]«.

27 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 2,46 f. (158): τὰς ἐν τῷ σῷ γράμματι διαβολὰς κατὰ τὴς ἡμετέρας πίστεως.

28 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 2,55 f. (158): ἐπί τι μὲν τὸ ἀληθὲς ἔχει ἁπλῶς τιθέμενον, ἐπί τι δὲ τὸ ψεῦδος.

29 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 2,61-73 (158): Ἡμῶν γὰρ ὁμολογούντων ὁμοουσιότητα καὶ ταὐτότητα τοῦ τε Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ τὸν μὲν ὡς γεγεννηκότα Πατέρα καλεῖσθαι, τὸν δὲ ὡς γεγεννημένον Υἱὸν λαβὼν σὺ ἐκ τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἀξίωμα τὸ λέγον, ὅτι »Ἕκαστος γεννήτωρ πρότερός ἐστι τοῦ οἰκείου γεννήματος« καὶ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τῆς θείας φύσεως κακῶς ἐπισυνάψας ὅπερ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ γενητῆς καὶ κτιστῆς φύσεως χώραν ἔχει, ἐπὶ δὲ Θεοῦ οὐκ ἔρρωται (καὶ γὰρ πολλὰ μὲν καί, εἰ χρὴ τἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, ἄπειρα ἐφ' ἡμῶν χώραν ἔχει, ἐπὶ δὲ Θεοῦ παντελῶς ἀλλότριά ἐστι) –· τοῦτο οὖν ὡς ἀληθὲς ἐπὶ Θεοῦ λαβὼν ὧδέ πως συνάγεις· Εἰ ἕκαστος γεννήτωρ πρότερός ἐστι τοῦ οἰκείου γεννήματος, οὐκ ἔσται ὁ παρ' ἡμῶν πιστευόμενος Υἱὸς τῷ Πατρὶ συναίδιός τε καὶ ὁμοούσιος. Εἰ δ' αὖ πάλιν συναίδιος ὁ Υἱὸς τῷ Πατρὶ, ἀληθὲς δὲ τὸ λέγον »Ἕκαστος γεννήτωρ πρότερός ἐστι τοῦ οἰκείου γεννήματος«, καταναγκάζεται ἡ σχέσις ἐξ ἀλλήλων διακεχωρίσθαι.

30 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 4,101-111 (160-162): »Ἕκαστος γεννήτωρ πρότερός ἐστι τοῦ οἰκείου γεννήματος«. Τοῦτο νομοθετοῦντός ἐστιν ἐπὶ Θεοῦ, τὸ ἀληθὲς δὲ οὐδαμῶς λέγοντος. Τὸ τοίνυν γεννήτωρ ὄνομα ἤτοι τῶν καθ' αὐτό ἐστιν ἤ τῶν πρός τι· ἀλλὰ μὴν τῶν καθ' αὐτό οὐκ ἐστιν· οὐ γὰρ ἂν πρὸς γέννημα τὴν

For Niketas, begetter and begotten refer to a relationship, not a temporal reality, but the Muslim asserts that this relationship requires a temporal reality. For Niketas this statement should not apply to God because God is above time. For humans, the relationship of begetter to begotten implies a temporal relationship. For God, there is no such implication.

Although Niketas has given no legitimacy to the Muslim intellectual's analogical reasoning, he himself attacks the statements of the Muslim with a series of analogies. He tries to beat the Muslim at his own game, so to speak, suggesting that the Muslim's pithy statement implies that God has a beginning, so the Muslim must not believe that God is eternal. For the Muslim, the major objection to the Trinity is that it ascribes companions to the one God, so this topic is taken up yet again. For Niketas, this accusation is proof that the Muslim just does not understand the Trinity, which he then begins to explain in a somewhat pedantic series of analogies:

»For a stone is not called a companion to a stone, because the same essence (οὐσία) is common to both. In the same way, a horse is not called a companion to a horse, on the grounds that they have one essence in common. If then ›that which is common‹ is more prevalent, and ›the companion‹ less so, and we declare that the Father holds his reign in common and is indivisible with his Son, you change this by writing: ›if the reign and the power is common with the Son, then the Son will hold the reign of the Father entirely in common with him‹. And you expose yourself to false reasoning, rather than us, because you engage in the false argument of the so-called avoidance of exchange [of the second part with the first][31]«.

For the Muslim, the concern is that by ascribing partners to God, Christians diminish his sovereignty, an accusation that Niketas spends the next few paragraphs refuting, since the Word of God is only greater proof of God's power and sovereignty. After further elaborations, Niketas concludes with a sound rejection of the errors of his Muslim counterpart, a sort of rhetorical flourish to ensure that the Muslim realizes that his letter was not effective.

The Aristotelian method was not just applied to Islam, but also to Latin Christians as well, now defined as heretics in the 9th century. While anti-heretical writers for centuries had been well-versed in Aristotle, no one was so rigorous and purely Aristotelian in his approach as Niketas Byzantios, who applied his syllogistic method to Latin Christianity, just as he had to Islam. His anti-Latin treatise is entitled: »Syllogistic chapters put together from the common notions concerning God and from the demonstrative (ἀποδεικτικῶς) and disjunctive (διαιρετικῶς) method…against those who impiously and atheistically add and say and teach in the holy symbol of the Orthodox faith of the Christians… ›and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son‹ – instead of ›from the Father alone‹«[32]. Niketas includes few quotations from authorities, scriptural or patristic, although there are echoes of John of Damascus, Gregory Nazianzus, and Basil of Caesarea[33]. There are more quotations from Scripture than in his anti-Islamic texts, but we should expect them, since his text is directed at fellow Christians. The anti-Latin treatise was almost certainly written after the anti-Islamic treatise, as he had honed his method against Islam. Christians are true monotheists, a point asserted again against the Latins: the Trinity must have only one source: *archē*. So we see that an exchange with a Muslim influenced arguments against fellow Christians.

This text is completely in the style of his anti-Islamic writings, and contrasts with other anti-Latin texts of the ninth century, particularly those of Niketas' contemporary Photios who also wrote an anti-Latin and anti-Armenian treatise. One assumes Niketas was in the circle of Photios, but there is no clear reference to one another in the works of either. Photios displays the same confidence in reason, at the same time asserting that reason alone cannot lead one to ultimate truths about the divine. Photios never makes such an effort to be as explicitly Aristotelian in the way that Niketas did. Photios has become known to posterity as the urbane and learned humanist, the inveterate foe of the austere, fanatical Ignatius. Indeed, Photios was accused of loving classical learning too much by his opponents[34]. Most of his writing is theological, and even his *Bibliotheca* makes it clear that he prioritized Christian writing. His anti-Latin texts, his epistles and his *Treatise regarding the Mystagogia of the Holy Spirit*, the latter perhaps only partially by him, display the Attic style and literary flourishes he so clearly prized in his *Bibliotheca*. However, his *Quaestiones Amphilochianae* make a foray into Aristotelian method, particularly its application to theological topics. Photios is interested in the means of classification, and so offered a commentary on Aristotle's *Categories* and how it applied to the iconodule defense. At times, Photios seems to want to display his knowledge of ancient philosophy rather than style. The writings of Niketas and the *Quaestiones Amphilochianae* of Photios give us an indication of how logic was studied and used in the ninth and tenth centuries. More work should be done on logical handbooks, to give us a fuller picture of Byzantine education in this period.

ἀναφορὰν εἶχε· δῆλον, ὅτι τῶν πρός τι. Εἰ οὖν τὸ γεννήτωρ τῶν πρός τί ἐστιν, τὰ δὲ πρός τι ἅμα τῇ φύσει, τὰ δὲ ἅμα τῇ φύσει ἅμα τέ εἰσιν καὶ οὐκ εἰσίν, τὸ γεννήτωρ ἄρα, καθ' ὃ γεννήτωρ, πρὸς ὃν τὴν ἀναφορὰν ἔχει, τὸ πρότερον καὶ ὕστερον οὐκ ἔξει. Εἰ οὖν τὸ γεννήτωρ τὸ πρότερον καὶ καὶ ὕστερον οὐκ ἔξει, ἔφης δέ, ὅτι ἕκαστος γεννήτωρ πρότερός ἐστιν τοῦ οἰκείου γεννήματος, φανερόν,ὅτι τὸ γεννήτωρ οὐ, καθ' ὃ γεννήτωρ, ἀλλὰ κατ' ἄλλο τι, καθ' ὃ Σωκράτης ἢ Πέτρος.

31 Nikētas Byzantios, Ep. I 9,229-237 (168): λίθος γὰρ λίθῳ οὐ λέγεται κοινωνός, ἐπεὶ κοινὴ ἀμφοτέρων ἡ οὐσία· ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ἵππος ἵππῳ κοινὴν καὶ μίαν οὐσίαν ἔχοντες οὐ λέγονται κοινωνοί – εἰ οὖν τὸ κοινὸν ἐπὶ πλέον, τὸ δὲ κοινωνὸς ἐπὶ ἔλαττον, ἡμῶν δὲ λεγόντων κοινὴν καὶ ἀμέριστον ἔχειν τὸν Πατέρα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βασιλείαν πρὸς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ Υἱὸν αὐτὸς μεταφέρων γράφεις· »Εἰ κοινὴ βασιλεία καὶ ἐξουσία πρὸς Υἱόν, πάντως καὶ κοινωνὸς ἔσται ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Πατρὸς τῆς αὐτοῦ βασιλείας«, καὶ παραλογίζῃ μᾶλλον σαυτὸν ἢπερ ἡμᾶς ποιῶν τὸν παραλογισμὸν παρὰ τὸ μὴ ἀντιστρέφον καλούμενον.

32 Niketas Byzantios, Kephalaia syllogistika.

33 Kolbaba, Inventing 120-130.

34 Photios' theological writings were also heavily influenced by Aristotelēs: Anton, Photius 158-183.

The generation after Niketas and Photios includes Arethas of Caesarea (860-c. 932), who was in the same circle as Photios and may have personally known Niketas. Arethas is recognized primarily as a scholar who commissioned manuscripts and commented on Plato and other classical literature[35]. However, his »Letter to the Emir of Damascus« is ostensibly a letter defending Christianity and attacking Islam[36]. If Arethas' marginal annotation is to be believed, he wrote in an uncharacteristically simple style of Greek so that his recipient would easily understand it. The letter takes an offensive tone in the extreme, almost going to the point of parodying Muslim beliefs about paradise and their prophet. Clearly, he is following many of the same stereotypes in Niketas' *Refutation*, which unlike the two letters was not intended for a Muslim audience. Arethas indulged in more vitriol than Niketas. One wonders if Arethas, an experienced diplomat, ever sent this letter or intended it as a pamphlet to be circulated among his friends.

Niketas was hugely influential in the twelfth century upon Euthymios Zigabenos (d. after 1118)[37]. Zigabenos relied on Niketas Byzantios for his *Panoplia dogmatica*, chapter twenty-eight, and this work was influential in popularizing Niketas' views. Zigabenos was a close associate of Alexios I Komnenos (1081-1118), and his text devotes more attention to the Bogomils than the Muslims. The preoccupation with the Bogomils in the reign of Alexios confirms the pattern that internal heresies were always of more concern to Byzantine Christian intellectuals than »other« external religions. The antepenultimate Byzantine emperor, Manuel II Palaiologos (1391-1425), continued the tradition of Niketas by emphasizing that Islam was illogical. His treatise is modeled after a Platonic dialogue, a turn away from the strictly syllogistic method of Niketas but with the same arguments against Islam. In the late Byzantine Empire, numerous Latin philosophical works and polemics against Islam were translated into Greek, as religious polemic became more of an intellectual preoccupation of the entire Mediterranean world.

The Byzantines followed Niketas, not John of Damascus, in their intellectual conception of Islam. However, excessive devotion to Aristotle became suspect. By the eleventh century, the Christians of Byzantium would view reliance on pure reason and syllogistic arguments with much the same suspicion as Ibn Ḥanbal and the other Muslim theologians who opposed Muʿtazilite rationalism. John Italos, the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic-intellectual, was accused of heresy and condemned in 1082 in Constantinople. In the fifteenth century at the Council of Ferrara-Florence, Greek theologians complained about the frequent quotations of Aristotle from their Latin counterparts.

In closing, it is worthwhile to reflect once again on a significant point: the emphasis on logic was initiated by a Muslim. Hence, this intellectual movement, the Aristotelian shift, may have been inspired by arguments from Islam, even if the tools were there in Byzantium. The emphasis on logic came from a Muslim attack. It was a Muslim thinker who stimulated a Byzantine thinker, Niketas, to use logic and to attack Islam as illogical because Christianity was attacked as illogical. Letters had been exchanged between caliphs and the Byzantine emperors before, for the sake of treaties and prisoner exchanges, but also for the exchange of religious ideas, as in the case of the letters between Leo III and ʿUmar II in the eighth century, which exclusively addressed religious and theological matters, although logic was not claimed by either[38]. It is a shame that we do not have the full text of the Islamic letters, only selective quotations from Niketas.

Internal propaganda within the caliphate suggests that there was a deliberate effort to portray the Byzantines as not the true heirs of Greek philosophy. Just as the Byzantines felt the need to assert their Roman-ness in the face of Carolingian claims, so they also felt the need to assert in their Greek-ness in the face of Abbasid claims. Muslims had created an image, primarily for internal consumption, that the Byzantines and their religion were illogical. This portrayal of the Byzantines as illogical was not the sudden invention of a single Muslim intellectual. It was the official propaganda of the caliphate, and the intellectual who wrote to Michael III was reflecting a prevalent attitude in ninth-century Baghdad[39]. For example, al-Ǧāḥiẓ (d. 255/868), who according to Gutas, was the »progandist-laureate of al-Maʾmūn and his Muʿtazilī successors« describes the Byzantines as accomplished but believing in an illogical religion. For him Christianity is illogical because of belief in the Trinity and incarnation. This emphasis on logic had been spurred on by the Muslims' own rediscovery of Aristotelian and pseudo-Aristotelian texts of the ninth century. Legends circulated in which the caliph saw Aristotle in a dream, and Aristotle instructed the caliph that the duty to study his philosophy had fallen upon the Arabs. Aristotelian logic had become a cultural and intellectual commodity claimed by both Muslims and Christians.

As regards to the theme of borderlands and exchange: the Greek translation of the Qur'an that Niketas used is still something of a mystery, although a few articles have been written about it[40]. It may have originated in Edessa or a similar place. Niketas' *Refutation*, not intended for a Muslim audience, may have been in fact intended for Muslims in these border areas, in hopes of converting them to Christianity. The Aristotelian shift, however, transcended borders, and should be regarded as eastern Mediterranean movement. The term »shift« is

35 Reynolds/Wilson, Scribes 57 f.
36 Cf. Arethas, ep. 14; cf. also Karlin-Hayter, Letter. Arethas' uncharacteristically simple style and marginal note is remarked upon by Mullett, Writing 179.
37 Euthymios Zigabenos, Panopliae dogmaticae.
38 Jeffery, Ghevond 269-332.
39 Shboul, Byzantines 57-58.
40 Trapp, Koranübersetzung, remains foundational, but Versteegh, Greek Translations is more recent. The most extensive and detailed study is Ulbricht, Coranus Graecus.

useful for three reasons. First, terms like renaissance and have become passé and are considered inaccurate. Dating the »rebirth« is nearly impossible, as well as identifying precisely what was reborn – intellectual life, art, culture in general? The term shift takes us away from the whole notion of rebirth, and it allows us to focus on one topic – Aristotelian logic, which was not reborn because it never died out. Second, we are able to examine and analyze this shift in a particular localities and as part of a broader Mediterranean intellectual movement. There is the translation movement in Baghdad, and Latin scholasticism from the twelfth century is also part of this movement. Third, the notion of shift does not commit us to a definite notion of a permanent change. Niketas, I would argue, is foundational in this shift, and he has a legacy that has yet to be realized largely because he remains an understudied figure. Yet, he remains, as I have pointed out, in comparison with his predecessors and even contemporaries like Photios, a somewhat idiosyncratic figure. Arethas of Caesarea, scarcely a generation later, had more enthusiasm for Plato. Perhaps we will never know the impact of Niketas on Byzantine education. However, it is clear, that in his deliberate and explicit effort to out-syllogize his Islamic correspondent, he epitomizes a shift in the Byzantine approach to Islam. This shift happened on account of an exchange in letters and was aided by a Greek translation of the Qur'an. Therefore, it should be seen in the larger context of what we may one day come to know as Mediterranean scholasticism and not an isolated Byzantine humanism or Arab translation movement.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Niketas Byzantios, Islam, and the Aristotelian Shift in Ninth-century Byzantium

The ninth century was a period of a significant revival for Aristotelian philosophy in both Byzantium and the Islamic world. This revival can be seen across cultural, linguistic, and political boundaries. It is also in the ninth century that we see the first production of surviving manuscripts of Aristotle. Inter-faith polemic, between Muslims and Christians, Jews and Christians, and Jews and Muslims, and also intra-faith polemic, played a role in this ninth century Aristotelian revival. This paper explores how Niketas Byzantios, a ninth-century Byzantine intellectual known only through his writings, which included anti-heretical and anti-Islamic treatises, not only changed the Byzantine intellectual discourse about Islam but also helped to usher in a new emphasis on Aristotelian method in Byzantine thought. This shift emphasized Aristotelian syllogisms rather than traditional patristic and scriptural citations. While the study of Aristotle had never died out in Byzantium, a brief comparison with Niketas' writings and earlier thinkers, like those from the iconoclast controversy and also his near contemporary Patriarch Photios, demonstrate how a new approach in theological polemic was initiated by Niketas. Ironically this new approach was inspired by an Islamic thinker, and this exchange gives new insight into the exciting intellectual cross-fertilization of the early medieval eastern Mediterranean.

Niketas von Byzanz, der Islam und die Aristotelische Veränderung im Byzanz des 9. Jahrhunderts

Das neunte Jahrhundert war eine Zeit bedeutender Erneuerung der aristotelischen Philosophie sowohl in Byzanz als auch in der islamischen Welt. Diese Erneuerung lässt sich über kulturelle, sprachliche und politische Grenzen hinweg beobachten. Aus dem 9. Jahrhundert stammen auch die ersten überlieferten Aristoteleshandschriften. Die interreligiöse Polemik zwischen Muslimen und Christen, Juden und Christen und Juden und Muslimen sowie die intrakonfessionelle Polemik spielte bei dieser aristotelischen Wiederbelebung des neunten Jahrhunderts eine wichtige Rolle. Dieser Artikel untersucht, wie Niketas Byzantios – ein byzantinischer Intellektueller des 9. Jahrhunderts, der nur aus seinen eigenen Schriften bekannt ist, die antihäretische und antiislamische Abhandlungen enthalten – nicht nur den byzantinischen intellektuellen Diskurs über den Islam veränderte, sondern auch dazu beitrug, die aristotelische Methode nachdrücklich und neu in das byzantinische Denken einzuführen. Infolge dessen wurde stärker aristotelische Syllogismen benutzt statt der traditionellen patristischen und biblischen Zitate. Auch wenn die Beschäftigung mit Aristoteles in Byzanz nie ausgestorben war, so zeigt doch ein kurzer Vergleich von Niketas' Schriften mit den älteren Denkern, etwa mit denen aus der Zeit des Bilderstreits oder auch mit seinem Zeitgenossen, dem Patriarchen Photios, wie Niketas einen neuen Ansatz in der theologischen Polemik initiierte. Ironischerweise wurde dieser neue Ansatz von einem islamischen Denker inspiriert, und dieser Austausch gibt neue Einblicke in die spannende intellektuelle gegenseitige Befruchtung im Frühmittelalter im östlichen Mittelmeerraum.

Alexander Treiger

Greek into Arabic in Byzantine Antioch: ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*)

It is well known that in the eighth to tenth centuries hundreds of Greek philosophical, medical, and scientific works were translated from Greek and Syriac into Arabic, mainly by Syriac-speaking Christians, in the Abbasid capital Baghdad[1]. It is, however, virtually unknown that there was yet another, concurrent, and no less ambitious undertaking whereby Christian texts were translated from Greek, Syriac, and Coptic (and later from Latin and European vernaculars) into Arabic, for the use of Middle Eastern Christians – »Melkites«, »Jacobites«, »Nestorians«, and Copts – who were feeling increasingly more at home with Arabic than with their traditional liturgical languages[2].

The history of this translation movement remains to be written. What is clear – for instance, from the first volume of Georg Graf's »Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur«, which catalogues these translations, and from the relevant sections of Joseph Nasrallah's »Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église melchite« – is that it was happening in several localities, at different time periods (though most intensely in the eighth to eleventh centuries), and in different ecclesiastical communities. Even after the eleventh century, translation activity continued, albeit at a slower pace, accelerating again in the seventeenth century. It can be argued that this »ecclesiastical« translation movement has continued without interruption to the present day[3].

In this article, I shall focus on one of the most important – and the least studied – centres of this translation activity: the region of Antioch after the Byzantine re-conquest of the city in 969. I shall briefly discuss the most important Antiochene translators – Antonios, Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā, Gregory, Kyr Chariton, Yānī ibn ad-Duks, Kyr Christopher ibn ad-Dawbalī (or ad-Duwaylī) and especially ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl (all of them Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians or »Melkites«) – and will then focus on ʿAbdallāh ibn Faḍl's still unpublished masterpiece »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*) as an example of a translation produced in that milieu.

Greek into Arabic in Byzantine Antioch

On 28 October 969, the brilliant military campaign of the Byzantine emperor Nikephoros II Phokas (r. 963-969) in northern Syria culminated in the re-conquest of the great city of Antioch-on-the-Orontes. This ancient Greek metropolis had been a prominent centre of Christianity from the first century AD – according to Acts 11:26, it is in Antioch that Christians first received the name »Christians«. Alongside Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, Antioch belonged to the »pentarchy« of the ancient patriarchates. The patriarchate of Antioch's canonical territory stretched as far east as Central Asia. In the tenth century, Antiochian Orthodox catholicosates (dependent local churches governed by a catholicos on behalf of the patriarch of Antioch) were established in Baghdad and Romagyris (near modern Tashkent)[4]. It was only after the devastating Mamluk conquest of 1268 that the patriarchate of Antioch was forced to leave the city, ultimately relocating to Damascus, where it resides until the present day.

The Byzantine re-conquest of Antioch brought about a period of cultural revival for the Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christian community in that region[5]. Re-integrated with Byzantium for the first time since the Muslim conquest of the seventh century, the Arabic-speaking Orthodox of Antioch launched a massive attempt to translate their patristic heritage into Arabic. The translators Antonios, Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, and others – all of them fully bilingual in Greek and Arabic – rendered into Arabic fundamental works of the Greek Church Fathers as well as contemporary Byzantine treatises. These Arabic translations had a profound impact on the subsequent history of Middle Eastern Christianity: they were read, copied, and cited extensively by Arabophone Christians of all denominations. Some of these Arabic translations, together with many original Arabic Christian works, were later translated into Ge'ez, thus influencing Christianity in Ethiopia.

1 Gutas, Greek Thought.
2 For an overview of the Christian communities in the Islamic world, see Griffith, Church 129-140. On the Arab Orthodox (or »Melkites«) see now Noble/Treiger, Orthodox Church.
3 Treiger, Graeco-Arabica.
4 Noble/Treiger, Orthodox Church 26 and 287 n. 113; Parry, Central Asia.
5 Todt, Region; Ciggaar/Metcalf, Antioch; Krivov, Araby. Todt's Habilitation on Antioch in the Byzantine period will soon be published in the series Mainzer Veröffentlichungen zur Byzantinistik. For the significance of Antioch as a centre of cultural transfer see also Burnett, Antioch; for a comprehensive overview of Antioch see Todt/Vest, Syria 1,109-663.

The Antiochene Graeco-Arabic translation movement begins with Antonios, the abbot of the famous monastery of St Symeon the Stylite the Younger on the Wondrous Mountain (*Thaumaston Oros*) southwest of Antioch in the first half of the eleventh century[6]. Before relocating to Antioch and becoming abbot of the monastery of St Symeon, Antonios had been a monk at the great lavra of Mar Saba in Palestine. It is noteworthy that in the eighth to tenth centuries Mar Saba was a cutting-edge translation centre where patristic and hagiographical works were translated between four languages: Greek, Syriac, Arabic, and Georgian[7]. It is likely that Antonios received his initial training as a Graeco-Arabic translator at Mar Saba. The Antiochene Graeco-Arabic translation movement thus carries on efforts of the earlier generations of translators, centred in Palestine. Antonios is best known for his Arabic translations of works of John of Damascus (the *Dialectica*, the »Exposition of the Orthodox Faith«, and six shorter treatises); however, he also translated other works, such as his near-contemporary Paul of Monemvasia's »Beneficial Tales«. None of his translations has yet been published, though some editions and studies are currently in preparation[8].

Another important translator from Antioch is Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā (d. ca. 1030), who held the Byzantine honorific title of *protospatharios* (Ar. *ubrūṭusbaṭār*). He is most famous for his translation of select Orations of Gregory of Nazianzus (Arabic translations of Orations 29, 30, and 43 are specifically ascribed to him, and others may well be by him) as well as Dionysius the Areopagite's »On Good and Evil« (=»Divine Names«, chapter 4, §§18-35). To the extensive list of his translations, offered by Joseph Nasrallah, one can add the Arabic version of Basil the Great's »Homily on Cheesefare Sunday« (=Basil's second homily on Lent, CPG 2846)[9]; John Chrysostom's »Encomium to the Prophet Elijah« (=*In ss. Petrum et Heliam*, CPG 4513; Menologion for July 20th: Sinai ar. 407, fols 156v-168v; Sinai ar. 423, fols 578r-587v); Symeon Metaphrastes' »Encomium to St Luke« (Sinai ar. 482, fols 15r-22v); and Symeon Metaphrastes' »Encomium to St John the Theologian« (Menologion for May 8th: Sinai ar. 405, fols 50v-61v). Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā is also the author of hagiographical works, of which only one – the life of the patriarch of Antioch Christopher (martyred in 967) – has survived[10]. Of Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā's translations, only the Arabic versions of some of Gregory of Nazianzus' »Orations« have been published[11].

Four other translators deserve mention: Gregory, the abbot of the monastery of the Theotokos in Dafnūnā (ancient Daphne) on the Black Mountain near Antioch (second half of the tenth century), Kyr Chariton, abbot of the monastery of the Theotokos Aršāyā, and two previously unknown translators: the deacon of the cathedral of Antioch Yānī ibn ad-Duks (i.e., John, son of the *doux* [of Antioch?]) and the deacon K[ī]r Iḫrisṭufūr (Kyr Christopher) ibn ad-Dawbalī (or ad-Duwaylī). Gregory translated several works from Syriac (rather than Greek) into Arabic: Pseudo-Severian of Gabala's »Homily on the Nativity« (CPG 4290), Pseudo-Isaac the Syrian's Response to Symeon (=Philoxenos of Mabbug's »Letter to Patrikios«[12]), and (it would seem) Maximos the Confessor's »Chapters on Love«[13]. Kyr Chariton translated into Arabic sections from Theodore the Stoudite's »Little Catechesis«. Of the deacon Yānī ibn ad-Duks, only one translation is known: Germanos of Constantinople's Homily on the »Sash of the Theotokos« (CPG 8013; BHG 1086); the Arabic translation is preserved in the Menologion for the month of August (August 31st). Deacon Christopher translated into Arabic an account of the placing of the robe of the Theotokos in Blachernae (the Arabic translation is preserved in the Menologion for July 2nd – Sinai ar. 407 [year 1334], fol. 1r). None of these translations has been published[14].

The most important participant in the Antiochene translation movement of Christian works is unquestionably the eleventh-century Arab Orthodox translator and theologian ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī. It is to his activity as a Graeco-Arabic translator that we shall now turn.

6 Nasrallah, Histoire 273-289. Earlier scholarship has incorrectly dated Antonios to the second half of the tenth century, a view based on a misreading of the colophon of Vat. ar. 436.

7 The Greek, Arabic, and Georgian translations of Isaac the Syrian, produced from the Syriac original in the first half of the ninth century, are among the most striking examples of the multilingual translation activity of the Sabaite monks. See Brock, Syriac into Greek; Pataridze, Isaac. Only the Greek translation has so far been published: Isaak o Syros, Logoi askētikoi. See also Treiger, Syro-Arabic.

8 Over thirty years ago Mgr Michel Abraș (currently the Melkite Catholic titular bishop of Myra) prepared a critical edition of the Arabic translation of John of Damascus' *Dialectica*, but it has remained unpublished. Father Joe Buhagiar-Bianco's critical edition of the Arabic version of the »Exposition of the Orthodox Faith« is forthcoming in the series TESOC (Textes et études sur l'Orient chrétien), published by CEDRAC (Centre de documentation et de recherches arabes chrétiennes) in Beirut. In 2016, Habib Ibrahim completed a PhD dissertation at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, entitled »Jean Damascène arabe: Édition critique des deux traités contre les Nestoriens«. For a preliminary analysis of Antonios' translation method, see Graf, Übersetzungen; Treiger, Graeco-Arabica 209-218; and Ibrahim's dissertation.

9 Graf, Geschichte 2,45-48; Nasrallah, Histoire 289-305; Nasrallah, Auteurs 75-82. The Arabic translation of Basil's »Homily on Cheesefare Sunday« is preserved in Saint Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts A509, fols 19r-24v (explicitly ascribed to Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā) and possibly Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 512, pp 547-563; cf. Fedwick, Bibliotheca 1088 and 1215; Nasrallah, Dossier 29.

10 Lamoreaux, Ibrāhīm; Noble/Treiger, Orthodox Church 26f.

11 Grēgorios Nazianzēnos, Discours 24; Grēgorios Nazianzēnos, Versio I; Grēgorios Nazianzēnos, Versio II; Grēgorios Nazianzēnos, Versio III; Grēgorios Nazianzēnos, Versio IV. See also Tokay, Continuity; cf. her doctoral dissertation »Continuity and Transformation: *Theosis* in the Arabic Translation of Gregory Nazianzen's *Oration on Baptism (Oration 40)*« defended at Cardiff University in 2013.

12 This text is also preserved in Greek, in the Sabaitic Greek translation of Isaac. However, Gregory's translation seems to have been done directly from the original Syriac (specifically, from a Melkite Syriac version where the text was attributed to Isaac rather than to Philoxenos).

13 Damascus, Orthodox Patriarchate 162 (19th c.), no. 1 (entitled المحبة الشريفة في الوصايا الانجيلية).

14 Sergey Kim has prepared a critical edition of the Arabic version of Pseudo-Severian of Gabala's »Homily on the Nativity«, as part of his doctoral dissertation »Sévérien de Gabala dans les littératures arménienne et géorgienne«, defended at the Université Paris IV-Sorbonne in 2014. Joe Glynias has prepared an edition of Yānī ibn ad-Duks' translation of Germanus, forthcoming in a collected volume co-edited by Barbara Roggema and myself.

ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī as a Translator

Unfortunately, we know little about ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's life. From his full name as given in the manuscripts we can deduce that he was a deacon (*šammās*) from Antioch and a grandson of a metropolitan bishop (*muṭrān*), whose name was also ʿAbdallāh. We know also that his Arabic translation of Basil's *Hexaëmeron* and his own theological compilation »Joy of the Believer« (*Bahǧat al-muʾmin*) were completed in 1052, while his philosophical magnum opus »Book of Benefit« (*Kitāb al-manfaʿa*) was written between 1043 and 1052[15]. He was thus active around the year 1050.

Some of ʿAbdallāh's works and translations were commissioned by various church officials and intellectuals: the »Exposition of the Orthodox Faith« (*Šarḥ al-amāna al-mustaqīma*) was commissioned by John, bishop of Manbiǧ (Hierapolis or Mabbug in northern Syria), the translation of the Psalms by a certain Abū Zakarīyā ibn Salāma, the translation of Isaac of Nineveh (made from the Sabaitic Greek version) by Nikephoros (Nīkūfūr) Abū n-Naṣr ibn Buṭrus al-Qubuqlīs (i. e., *koubouklеisios*, or »chamberlain«, of the patriarch of Antioch), and the translation of John Chrysostom's »Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew« by »master Abū l-Faḍl Salāma ibn al-Muʿarrağ, the deacon, *koubouklеisios*, and doctor«[16].

ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl was fully proficient in both Greek and Arabic. The style of his Arabic works is impeccable, and it is known that he studied Arabic grammar with no less of an expert than the famous Arab poet and freethinker Abū l-ʿAlāʾ al-Maʿarrī (d. 1058), to whom he refers as his teacher (*šayḫ*)[17].

Moving now to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's translations, even the list of them is daunting[18].

1. The Psalms[19];
2. Lectionaries from the Gospels, Epistles, and the Prophets;
3. John Chrysostom[20]:
   a. »Commentary on Genesis«;
   b. »Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew«;
   c. »Commentary on the Gospel of John«;
   d. »Homilies on First Corinthians«;
   e. »Commentary on Hebrews«;
   f. »Commentary on Romans«;
   g. Eighty-Seven Homilies (entitled *Mawāʿiẓ šarīfa wa-alfāẓ muḫtaṣara laṭīfa li-fam aḏ-ḏahab*);
   h. »Exhortation to Penitence«;
4. Basil the Great:
   a. »Homilies on the Psalms«;
   b. *Hexaëmeron*;
5. Gregory of Nyssa:
   a. »On the Creation of Man«;
   b. *Liber in Hexaëmeron* (entitled *Fī ḫulqat al-insān wa-šaraf maʿānīhi*);
   c. »Commentary on the Song of Songs«;
6. Maximus the Confessor:
   a. »Disputation with Pyrrhus«;
   b. »Chapters on Love«[21];
   c. *Capita theologica et oeconomica*;
7. Andrew of Crete, »Encomium to St Nicholas«;
8. John of Damascus, *Libellus de recta fide* (entitled *Dustūr fī l-amāna al-mustaqīma*);
9. Isaac the Syrian:
   a. »Thirty-Five Homilies on Ascetic Life« (entitled *Fī l-ḥayāt an-nuskīya*);
   b. *Fī ruʾūs al-maʿrifa* (seems to render the Greek expression *kephalaia gnōstika*);
10. Pseudo-Sophronius, »Book of Proof on Establishing the [Correct] Faith« (*Kitāb al-burhān fī taṯbīt al-īmān*, a treatise in 28 chapters dealing with the first six Ecumenical Councils and various heresies and incorporating Pseudo-Leontius of Byzantium's *De Sectis* [CPG 6823] and Sophronius of Jerusalem's »Synodical Letter«);
11. Pseudo-Caesarius, »Centuries« (embedded in »Joy of the Believer«);

One recently discovered translation, not included under ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's name in any of the previous catalogues is:

12. John of Thessalonica's »Encomium to St Demetrios« (CPG 7925; BHG 547h)[22].

Its introduction indicates that the translation was commissioned by a certain Abū l-Fatḥ ʿĪsā ibn Idrīs (who is otherwise unknown). The translation is interspersed with ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's very intriguing commentary (*tafsīr*), which deals with anti-Pagan polemic.

In addition, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl translated into Arabic:

13. The Byzantine florilegium *Loci Communes*, giving it the title »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*).

15 Treiger, ʿAbdallāh. On ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's translation of Basil's *Hexaëmeron*, see now Alexandre Roberts' doctoral dissertation »Matter Redeemed: Alchemy and Exegesis from Antioch to Constantinople, 11th century«, defended at the University of California, Berkeley in 2015. Roberts' monograph on ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl is forthcoming.

16 Sinai ar. 76, fol. 8r.

17 Noble/Treiger, Theology 375 f.

18 For a list of manuscripts, see Graf, Geschichte 2,53-58; Nasrallah, Histoire 196-220; cf. Daiber, Graeco-Arabica.

19 ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's Arabic translation (more precisely, adaptation of an earlier translation) of the Psalms (made from the Septuagint) became by far the most influential in the Christian Arab world. See Polosin/Serikov/Francuzov, Psalter.

20 Habib Ibrahim kindly informs me that some of the Arabic translations of John Chrysostom are in reality by Antonios and were misascribed to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl in the seventeenth century. His dissertation (see n. 8 above) has sorted this out.

21 It remains to be seen how different this translation is from Gregory's Syro-Arabic translation of the same work (see n. 13 above).

22 Sinai ar. 350, fols 237v-270v; Sinai ar. 352, fols 98r-114r; cf. Graf, Geschichte 1,501. For the Greek original see Philippidis-Braat, Enkomion.

ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*)

In the majority of studies devoted to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl (including Graf's »Geschichte« and Nasrallah's »Histoire«), *Kitāb ar-rawḍa* is treated as though it were his own compilation, culled from a variety of Greek sources. It was only in 1986 that Michel van Esbroeck recognized that this is not the case and correctly identified *Kitāb ar-rawḍa* as an integral Arabic translation of the Byzantine florilegium *Loci Communes*[23]. This florilegium belongs to the genre of the so-called »sacro-profane« florilegia, in that each chapter cites first the sacred authorities (the Bible – including the Septuagint's »deuterocanonical« books – and the Church Fathers) and then sayings of (or attributed to) ancient Greek authors, including Thales, Pythagoras, Solon, Euripides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Demosthenes, Diogenes, Philo, Apollonius, Epicurus, Menander, and many others[24]. ʿAbdallāh ibn Faḍl's translation thus offers its Arab Christian readers some Greek Christian and philosophical material, focusing mostly on ethics, translated into Arabic outside of Baghdad and independently of the Abbasid translation movement.

The »Book of the Garden« begins with an artful introduction, which reads as follows[25].

بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس [26].

اما بعدَ حمدِ الله الجوهر العام ذي الاشخاص الثلثة اب وابن وروح قدس [27] الذي انتشلنا [28]من ورطة [29] الضلالة [30] ورفعنا من وهدة العماية تراؤفا [31] وقادنا الى الهداية تعطّفا بما هو حقيق [32] به وخليق فانه لما كان تبارك وتعالى قد قال في انجيله المقدس «من يعمل ويعلّم، ذاك هو العظيم في ملكوت السما »[33] وكنا فاقدين لهذين الامرين وعارين [34] من هاتين الخلتين راينا ان نتشبث [35] (?) في الحظوة بيسير [36] منهما فشرعنا في استخراج عدة من المعاني التي تصبو [37] الى سماعها انفس اولي النظر وتهش الى التصفح لها همم [38] ذوي الخطر من اللغة اليونانية الى اللغة العربية.

وسمينا هذا الكتاب الجامع لها «كتاب الروضة» لما في ذلك من المناسبة والمشاكلة

وجرينا في نقله مجرى من تقدم من النقلة في استعمال الزيادة والحذف والتقديم والتاخير

راغبين الى الله ذي [39] العزة والكمال والقدرة والجلال في حسن [40] الثواب

والخلاص من اليم العقاب والارشاد الى الصواب بمنه وطوله [41] وجوده، فمن انتفع منه واعظا او رادعا او آمرا او زاجرا [42] او راغبا [43] او راهبا بما يلتقطه من الفاظ الاباء القديسين والفلاسفة الغابرين [44] فلا [45] يخلّنا [46] من الذكر الرضي ان كنا في دار الفناء او [47] الترحم السني ان كنا في ربع [48] البقاء اخذا بالاجمل ورجوعا الى الافضل، فان الله يحب المحسنين وهو حسبنا وعليه معتمدنا.

Translation

»In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

First, let us glorify God, the universal substance with three individuals, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who has delivered us from the plight of misguidance, mercifully raised us up from the abyss of blindness, and generously led us to true guidance – with [words of glory] fitting and appropriate for Him. Now then, He (may He be blessed and exalted!) said in His holy Gospel, »whoever practices and teaches, this one is great in the kingdom of heaven« (cf. Matt 5:19). Since I lack these two things and am deprived of these two qualities, I decided that I should aspire to acquire at least a bit of each[49]. Therefore, I began translating from Greek into Arabic select teachings that the souls of the intellectuals aspire to hear and the minds of the earnest desire to contemplate.

I have called this book, which weaves these [teachings] together, ›The Book of the Garden‹, this being a fitting and appropriate [title]. In this work of translation, I have followed the method of earlier translators, who would add and omit [material] as well as change the order [of exposition]. They asked God, who alone is mighty, perfect, powerful, and exalted, to grant them a good reward, deliver them from painful retribution, and guide them to the truth through His grace, forbearance, and generosity. If [the reader] benefits from [this book] – by finding encouragement or deterrent, command or restriction, desire or fear in the statements of the holy fathers and of the ancient philosophers assembled therein – let him not neglect to mention me with approval, if I am still in this passing world, or to pray most fervently that God have mercy [on my soul], if I have passed on to the abode of eternity. Let him adhere to what is most beautiful and revert to what is best. God loves those who do good works. He alone is sufficient for us, and in Him we trust«.

Abdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's casual remark that he has »followed the method of earlier translators« and, like them, has taken liberty to »add and omit [material] as well as change the order [of exposition]« (*az-ziyāda wa-l-ḥaḍf wa-t-taqdīm wa-t-taʾḫīr*) confirms that he was well aware of earlier Graeco-Arabic

23 Van Esbroeck, Sentences. For a critical edition of the Greek original see Ps.-Maximus Confessor, Loci communes. The version translated by ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl is »MaxI«, datable to between 650 and the tenth century (Ps.-Maximus Confessor, Loci communes xxix).

24 On Philonic quotations, see now Parker/Treiger, Philo's Odyssey 136f.

25 The text is edited on the basis of four manuscripts: S, V [the beginning missing], C, and P. (For the list of the manuscripts and the sigla, see below.) It is ʿAbdallāh ibn Faḍl's habit to compose introductions to his theological works and translations. All these introductions deserve to be edited and studied – in ways analogous to what has been done for Syriac introductions in Riad, Preface.

26 بسم الاب والابن والروح القدس S || add. بسم الله الواحد الاله الحي الازلي P || بسم الله السرمدي وبه نستعين. كتاب الروضة وهو الجامع لما في ذلك من المناسبة والمشاكلة مما عني في تاليفه ونقله واستخراجه من اللغة اليونانية الى اللغة العربية الشماس الاجل الكاتب عبد الله ابن الفضل ابن عبد الله المطران الانطاكي ابي الفتح، نيّح الله ضريحه ورمسه، امين C.

27 القدس S C || قدس P.

28 انتشلنا P || انتاشنا S C.

29 ورطة S C || ورط P.

30 الضلالة CP || الظلالة S.

31 تراوفا CP || تراوقا S.

32 حقيق emendation || خفي S || حفي CP.

33 السما S C || السموات P.

34 وعارين S C || وعاريين P.

35 نتشبث CP || نتسبب S.

36 بيسير CP || تيسير S.

37 تصبو emendation || تصبوا CP || تصب S.

38 همم CP || همة S.

39 ذي V S C || ذو P.

40 في حسن V CP || يرزقنا جزيل S.

41 وطوله V S C || om. P.

42 زاجرا V CP || زاجزا S.

43 راغبا V CP || راعيا S.

44 الغابرين V CP || العابدين S.

45 فلا V S || ولا CP.

46 يخلنا V S || يخلينا CP.

47 او V || و S CP.

48 ربع V S C || دار P.

49 In this sentence and throughout, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl uses the plural (»we«), but means the singular. I translate accordingly.

translations, whether philosophical and scientific, produced in Baghdad, or Christian, produced in Palestine and Antioch, and thought of himself as following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessors.

The table of contents of the »Book of the Garden« mirrors closely that of the Greek *Vorlage*, though ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl frequently abbreviates the titles.

1.	Περὶ βίου ἀρετῆς καὶ κακίας	في الفضيلة وما قيل فيها	On Virtue and What Has Been Said Concerning It
2.	Περὶ φρονήσεως	في العقل والراي	On Intelligence and Opinion
3.	Περὶ ἁγνείας καὶ σωφροσύνης	في العفة	On Chastity
4.	Περὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ ἰσχύος	في النجدة	On Bravery
5.	Περὶ δικαιοσύνης	في العدل	On Justice
6.	Περὶ φίλων καὶ φιλαδελφίας	في الصديق	On Friend[ship]
7.	Περὶ ἐλεημοσύνης	في الرحمة	On Mercy
8.	Περὶ εὐεργεσίας καὶ χάριτος	في الإحسان	On Beneficence
9.	Περὶ ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας	في الرياسة	On Leadership
10.	Περὶ ψεύδους καὶ διαβολῆς	في الهجاء والمحل	On Defamation and Deceit
11.	Περὶ κολακείας	في الملق	On Flattery
12.	Περὶ πλούτου καὶ πενίας καὶ φιλαργυρίας	في الغنى والفقر	On Wealth and Poverty
13.	Περὶ αὐταρκείας	في القناعة	On Self-Sufficiency
14.	Περὶ προσευχῆς	في الصلاة	On Prayer
15.	Περὶ διδαχῆς καὶ λόγων καὶ ὁμιλίας	في التعليم والقول	On Instruction and Speech
16.	Περὶ νουθεσίας	في الوعظ	On Admonition
17.	Περὶ παιδείας καὶ φιλοσοφίας καὶ παίδων ἀνατροφῆς	في الأدب	On Education
18.	Περὶ εὐτυχίας καὶ δυστυχίας	في السعد والنحس	On Good Luck and Bad Luck
19.	Περὶ ὀργῆς καὶ θυμοῦ	في الغضب	On Anger
20.	Περὶ σιωπῆς καὶ ἀπορρήτων	في الصمت	On Silence
21.	Περὶ πολυπραγμοσύνης καὶ ἡσυχίας	في الإكبار والهدو	On Admiration and Tranquility
22.	Περὶ πλεονεξίας	في اقتنا الكثير	On Acquiring Many [Things]
23.	Περὶ τιμῆς γονέων καὶ φιλοτεκνίας	في كرامة الوالدين وحب الاولاد	On Honouring the Parents and Loving the Children
24.	Περὶ φόβου	في الخوف	On Fear
25.	Περὶ τῶν ταχέως μεταβαλλομένων καὶ περὶ μετανοίας	في المتنقلين سرعة في التوبة	On Those Who Move Quickly towards Repentance
26.	Περὶ ἁμαρτίας καὶ ἐξαγορεύσεως	في الخطية والاعتراف	On Sin and Confession
27.	Περὶ ἀκρασίας καὶ γαστριμαργίας	في الشره	On Gluttony
28.	Περὶ λύπης καὶ ἀθυμίας	في الحزن	On Sorrow
29.	Περὶ ὕπνου	في النوم	On Sleep
30.	Περὶ μέθης	في السكر	On Drunkenness
31.	Περὶ παρρησίας καὶ τοῦ ἐλέγχειν	في الدالة والتوبيخ	On Boldness and Reproof
32.	Περὶ φιλοπονίας	في محبة التعب	On Industriousness [lit. Love of Toil]
33.	Περὶ ὅρκου	في اليمين	On Oath
34.	Περὶ κενοδοξίας	في المجد الفارغ	On Empty Praise
35.	Περὶ ἀληθείας καὶ ψεύδους	في الصدق والكذب	On Truthfulness and Lie
36.	Περὶ θανάτου	في الموت	On Death
37.	Περὶ εἰρήνης καὶ πολέμου	في السلم والحرب	On Peace and War
38.	Περὶ ἐλπίδος	في الرجاء	On Hope
39.	Περὶ γυναικῶν	في النساء	On Women
40.	Περὶ ἀντιλογίας καὶ θρασύτητος	في المجاوبة والإقدام والخصومة	On Answering back, Audacity, and Quarrelsomeness
41.	Περὶ γήρως καὶ νεότητος	في الشيب والشباب	On Old Age and Youth
42.	Περὶ ὑπομονῆς καὶ μακροθυμίας	في الصبر وطول الروح	On Patience and Forbearance
43.	Περὶ ἐπαίνου	في المديح	On Praise
44.	Περὶ κάλλους	في الجمال	On Beauty
45.	Περὶ μελλούσης κρίσεως	في الدينونة العتيدة	On the Future Judgement
46.	Περὶ δόξης	في المجد	On Glory
47.	Περὶ γλωσσαλγίας	في الإقدام بالكلام الضار	On Employing Hurtful Speech
48.	Περὶ προνοίας	في السياسة // في الاهتمام See n. 1 to the table	On Providence
49.	Περὶ ταπεινοφροσύνης	في اتضاع العزم	On Humble Disposition
50.	Περὶ ἰατρῶν	في الأطباء	On Physicians
51.	Περὶ πίστεως	في الأمانة	On Faith
52.	Περὶ μνήμης	في الذكر	On Memory
53.	Περὶ ψυχῆς	في النفس	On the Soul
54.	Περὶ φθόνου	في الحسد	On Envy
55.	Περὶ ἑκουσίου καὶ ἀκουσίου	في الاختيار والاضطرار	On Choice and Compulsion
56.	Περὶ τοῦ »Γνῶθι σαυτόν«	في «اعرف ذاتك»	On »Know Thyself«
57.	Περὶ χρηστότητος	في الصلاح	On Goodness
58.	Περὶ νόμου	في الشريعة	On [Religious] Law
59.	Περὶ λογικοῦ καὶ λογισμοῦ	في الفكر	On Thought
60.	Περὶ ἀφροσύνης	في الجهل	On Ignorance
61.	Περὶ ἀσωτίας	في التفريط	On Profligacy
62.	Περὶ συνηθείας καὶ ἔθους	في العادة والخلق	On Custom and Character

63.	Περὶ εὐγενείας καὶ δυσγενείας	في الحسب والإقراف See n. 2 to the table	On Noble and Ignoble Descent
64.	Περὶ γέλωτος	في الضحك	On Laughter
65.	Περὶ ἐνυπνίων	في الحُلم	On Dreaming
66.	Περὶ ἀκακίας καὶ μνησικακίας	في عدم الشر وانتعاصه See n. 3 to the table	On Evillessness and Rancour
67.	Περὶ βίου ἀνωμαλίας	في خُباط العالم	On the Insanity of the World
68.	Περὶ τοῦ ὅτι δεῖ τιμᾶν ἀρετὴν καὶ κολάζειν κακίαν	في أنه ينبغي ان نكرم الفضيلة ونخسس بالرذيلة	On That We Ought to Honour Virtue and Despise Vice
69.	Περὶ τοῦ ὅτι εὔκολος ἡ κακία καὶ δυσάρεστος ἡ ἀρετή	في أن الرذيلة سهلة والفضيلة شاقة الملك	On That Vice Is Easy and Virtue Is Difficult to Attain
70.	Περὶ φιλαυτίας	في حب الذات	On Self-Love
71.	Περὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἀεὶ τὸ πλεῖον ἄριστον	في ان الكثرة ليست دايما جيدة	On That Plenty Is Not Always Good

1 The first translation (في السياسة) appears in the table of contents of *Kitāb ar-rawḍa*; the second (في الاهتمام), in the title of the chapter itself. Both are possible translations of the Greek term πρόνοια (»providence«).

2 This is a rare word. The original meaning of the word *muqrif* (»disgusting«) is, in fact, »born from a slave father«; hence *iqrāf* can be understood as »ignoble descent«, corresponding to the Greek δυσγένεια.

3 All the manuscripts seem to read ابغاضه or انعاصه. It would seem that the correct form is انتعاص (انتعاصه means »rancour« and thus closely mirrors μνησικακία).

Below I offer a critical edition and English translation of one sample chapter from this work: Chapter 56. This chapter is devoted to the Delphic maxim »Know thyself« (Γνῶθι σαυτόν; in Arabic: *iʿrif nafsaka*). As all the other chapters, this chapter too consists of a compilation of sayings. The anonymous Byzantine compiler begins with a quotation from the Gospel, then moves to the »Apostle« (in this case St Paul's epistle to the Romans), then to the Old Testament books of wisdom (Ecclesiastes and Sirach). There follow several quotations from the Church Fathers: Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Clement of Alexandria, and Didymus the Blind. After that, the florilegium shifts to its »profane« part. It includes quotations from the Greek comic poets Philemon (ca. 361-263 BC) and Antiphanes (ca. 408-334 BC), the orator Demosthenes (384-322 BC), the philosophers Thales, Heraclitus, and Chilon of Sparta (sixth century BC), and finally Xenophon.

The importance of these quotations, and of ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's translation of this Byzantine florilegium as a whole, lies in the fact that in eleventh-century Antioch there was an attempt, independent of the Baghdad Graeco-Arabic translation movement, to translate into Arabic some ancient Greek knowledge. Through this means, Arab Christians gained access to otherwise inaccessible Greek material. That this material proved extremely popular is indicated by the amount of the preserved manuscripts of the *Kitāb ar-rawḍa* – twelve manuscripts are known: eight currently in the Middle East, one in the Vatican, and two in Russia. Most importantly for the Arab Christian audience, this ancient Greek material was set in parallel with the Christian Scriptures and the Church Fathers, thus providing a comprehensive and balanced guide to ethical life – in many ways analogous to Arab Muslim *adab* literature[50].

I will conclude with a couple of notes on ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's own commentary interspersed with the text. His first comment is essentially philosophical: he argues that the difficulty of knowing oneself lies in the fact that we are complex entities, composed of two contrary elements, body and soul. In order to truly know oneself, one has to study philosophy, which provides not only knowledge of the self, but also knowledge of God – the key to eternal »happiness« (*saʿāda*). The link between knowledge of the self and knowledge of God is attested in several Christian authors, including Clement of Alexandria[51] and Basil the Great[52]. This theme appears prominently also in Muslim and medieval Jewish sources[53].

ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's second comment is quite intriguing in that it displays knowledge of Arabic grammar and, moreover, of Arabic grammatical terminology (there are, in fact, many such grammatical comments in the *Rawḍa*). In this comment, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl indicates which of the different usages of the Arabic preposition or particle *lām* (vocalized *li-* or *la-*) he intended in the passage just translated; he also cites the eighth-century Arab grammarian al-Ḫalīl ibn Aḥmad (d. ca. 791) to the effect that there are thirty distinct usages of *lām*. It is as though ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl is commenting on his own skillful way of rendering Greek phrases into Arabic and

50 A particularly intriguing parallel is the hitherto unpublished tenth-century Ṣūfī compilation *Rawḍat al-ʿulamāʾ* by az-Zandawaysitī, in 98 chapters with similar subjects to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's *Kitāb ar-rawḍa*. I thank Professor Gerhard Böwering for this reference.

51 Klēmēs Alexandreias, Paedagogus 3.1, 235: Ἦν ἄρα, ὡς ἔοικεν, πάντων μέγιστον μαθημάτων τὸ γνῶναι αὑτόν· ἑαυτὸν γάρ τις ἐὰν γνῷ, Θεὸν εἴσεται, Θεὸν δὲ εἰδὼς ἐξομοιωθήσεται Θεῷ.

52 Basileios Kaisareias, Know Thyself 217B.

53 Altmann, Delphic; Mohamed, Knowledge 8-12.

is boasting of his expertise in Arabic grammar, probably quite uncommon in Arab Christian circles in Byzantine Antioch.

ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's *Kitāb ar-rawḍa* and the other translations produced by him and his colleagues provide a unique perspective on Arab Christian culture in Antioch under Byzantine rule. They are worthy of careful study in the same way that for several generations scholars have now been scrutinizing the Graeco-Arabic philosophical and scientific translations produced in Abbasid Baghdad. One may hope that the coming years will see critical editions of the relevant texts, with appropriate glossaries, similar to the editions of translations from the Abbasid period, as well as first critical studies of the Antiochene translation movement and of its impact on the Arabic-speaking Christian communities in the Middle East. Nothing of the sort exists at present. The social background of the Antiochene Graeco-Arabic translation movement would also need to be explored, so that the study of »Greek Thought, Arabic Culture« in Byzantine Antioch becomes an integral part of both Arabic and Byzantine Studies[54].

Edition and Translation of *Kitāb ar-rawḍa*, Chapter 56

As mentioned above, ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*) is extant in twelve manuscripts. I list them below in the chronological order (indicating, in bold face in brackets, the sigla of those I have consulted):

1 Sinai ar. 66 (year 1266), fols 260^{r}-375^{v} (breaks off in the middle of chapter 69) [**S**];

2 Sinai ar. 456 (13th century), fols 18^{v}-60^{v} (lacks the introduction and is truncated at the very end of chapter 71) [**T**];

3 Vat. ar. 111 (14th century), fols 99^{r}-160^{r} (beginning of the introduction missing) [**V**];

4 Sharfeh ar. 8/10 (year 1600), no. 7;

5 Damascus, Greek Orthodox Patriarchate 269 [old shelfmark 1706] (year 1723), no. 2 (includes chapters 9-53 and 64-71 only);

6 Cairo, Franciscan Center of Christian Oriental Studies 116 (year 1755), fols 3^{r}-83^{v} / pp V-171 [**C**];

7 Moscow, State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) 53 (year 1785), pp 2-165;

8 Zaḥla, Heirs of ʿĪsā Iskandar al-Maʿlūf 1954 [Nasrallah's catalogue 1] (year 1799), pp 240-321;

9 Saint Petersburg, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, B1225 (18th century), fols 1^{v}-79^{r} [**P**];

10 Joun, Dayr al-Muḫalliṣ 173 (18th century) pp. 218-289;

11 Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 545 (year 1851) [**R**];

12 Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 544 (19th century) [**Q**][55].

Two additional manuscripts in private collections are currently inaccessible (and probably lost):

13 Aleppo, Heirs of Greek Catholic priest Dimitri Nasrallah[56];

14 Beirut, Heirs of Buṭrus Effendi Tayyān (mid-18th century; probably copied from the Sharfeh manuscript)[57].

The edition offered below is based on the following seven manuscripts: S (fols 356^{v}-358^{r}); T (fols 52^{v}-53^{r}); V (fols 149^{v}-150^{v}); C (fols 70^{r}-71^{v} / pp 134-137); P (fols 63^{v}-65^{r}); R (fols 72^{r}-73^{v} / pp 141-144); Q (fols 70^{r}-72^{r} / pp 135-139)[58]. Out of these, both S and T omit the entire »profane« section of the chapter (from Didymus' saying onwards).

In the apparatus, I have tried to record even the most minute discrepancies between the manuscripts, so as to better establish the relationship between them, thus facilitating a future critical edition of this important work. In the preparation of the edition of chapter 56, it became obvious that (1) the oldest manuscript S has some idiosyncratic readings and is not as reliable as one would expect; (2) V and T are the most reliable witnesses (and T may have been copied from V[59]); and (3) the four late manuscripts CPRQ, all of them of Syrian provenance, share certain mistakes (e. g., they attribute saying no. 9 to »Climacus« rather than Clement) and go back to a single hyparchetype – possibly an old manuscript once kept in the patriarchal library in Damascus (and presumably destroyed in the riots of 1860). When these four manuscripts agree, I refer to them collectively as Σ[60].

The Greek text (of the recension MaxI, in the manuscript Vorlage used by ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl) is referenced as [Ψ].

54 Cf. Treiger, Graeco-Arabica.

55 According to Cheikho's catalogue, this manuscript »a été transcrit en 1881 sur une copie de la fin du XVIIIe siècle qui se trouve au couvent des Syriens Catholiques à Charfé (Liban)« (Cheikho, Catalogue 234). This information, repeated by both Graf and Nasrallah, is highly questionable. Though the manuscript is clearly a 19th-century one (the copyist and the paper are the same as those of Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 542 and 543, two 19th-century manuscripts of ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's works), the colophon is dated »May 8, 1281 to the Divine Incarnation« (*li-tamān ayyām min šahr īyār sanat alf wa-m(')iyatayn wa-iḥdā wa-ṯamānūn (!) li-t-taǧassud al-ilāhī*), i. e. 1273 AD, if the so-called Melkite era of the Incarnation is used (see Samir, L'ère). The date »1881« is thus the result of Cheikho's correcting 1281 to 1881. It would seem, rather, that the 19th-century copyist simply transcribed a 13th-century colophon from his *Vorlage* (as suggested in Bacha/Cheikho, ʿAbdallāh 945) or that he meant the *hiǧrī* date (May 8, 1281 AH = 1865 AD). The assumption that this manuscript was copied from the Sharfeh one may also be erroneous and have its origin in the confusion between Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 544 and Buṭrus Effendi Tayyān's manuscript (on which see n. 61 below), which indeed has similarities to the Sharfeh one (e.g., both begin with the discussion between Master and Disciple).

56 Sbath, Fihris 49, no. 375.

57 According to Louis Cheikho's handwritten note (preserved in Beirut, Bibliothèque Orientale 544, fol. 0^{v}), this manuscript was kept »at the nobleman Buṭrus' residence« (*fī bayt al-waǧīh Buṭrus*) in Beirut. It opened with questions and discussions between a Master and a Disciple; *Kitāb ar-rawḍa* occupied the very end of the manuscript (pp 468-511); the order of quotations was somewhat different than in the two other Beirut copies and was somewhat less complete. On another manuscript from Buṭrus Effendi Tayyān's private collection see Samir, Évangiles 462 f. and 518.

58 I have also consulted Cheikho's edition of this chapter, based on manuscript Q (Cheikho, Chrestomathia 247-249). However, it contains many faulty readings (as a result of the editor using a late and unreliable manuscript as well as tacitly »correcting« the language) and is therefore untrustworthy.

59 See nn 70, 73, and 74 below.

60 It would seem that in a future critical edition, it would be sufficient to use only three manuscripts: S, V, and one of Σ (ideally, one of the 18th-century manuscripts, C and P, which are much superior to the 19th-century ones); the Sharfeh manuscript and the Damascus one may also provide useful readings.

It is virtually identical to the critical Greek text published by Sibylle Ihm. With only a few exceptions, specifically discussed in the apparatus, readings that agree with the critical Greek text are systematically preferred to those that do not, for the obvious reason that they must reflect the translator's version of the text.

الباب السادس والخمسون: في «اعرف ذاتك»

1 قال الانجيل[61] : لماذا تبصر القذى[62] الذي[63] في عين اخيك والخشبة التي[64] في عينك لا تميز .

2 قال الرسول: من انت الذي تدين الغريب الذي هو عبد الله[65] نهض ام سقط[66]، انه سينهض لان الرب قادر ان ينهضه.

3 [67] سليمن[68]: امشِ في طرق[69] قلبك غير[70] معيب[71] واعرف ذاتك[72] وان الله يقودك[73] الى الحكم على كل هذه .

4 قال سيراخ[74]: تحفظ وتيقظ [75] جدا فانك تمش مع سقطتك.

5 [76] باسيليوس : اذا عرفت ذاتك على الواجب قادك ذلك [77] الى[78] معرفة الله .

6 [79] وقال: ليس شي اصعب من معرفة الانسان نفسه وذاته لان العين ليست فقط تنظر الى ما خارجا ولا تستعمل النظر الى ذاتها لكن وعقلنا يرنو[80] بحدة[81] الى الجُرْم[82] الغريب[83] ويتباطا [84] في تعرف[85] المناقص[86] الخاصية[87] .

7 قال الثاولوغس[88] : اكشف عن حالك كثيرا دون احوال[89] القربا [90] فانت في هذا الرابح[91] واما في ذاك[92] فاولايك[93].

8 قال الذهبي الفم : ذلك الذي يعرف ذاته على التحقيق الذي لا يظن نفسه شيا .

9 [94] اقليمس[95] : ان اردت ان تعرف الله فتقدم[96] بمعرفة[97] ذاتك[98].

10 قال ديديمس : معرفة الانسان انه يجهل دليل على حكمته كما ان علمه بانه قد ظلم دليل على[99] العدل.

11 قال فيليمن[100] : اعرف هذا وهو انك انسان[101] وتبقى دايما.

12 [102] انتفانوس[103]: ايها الفاضل، ان تكن[104] مايتا فليكن عزمك عزم الاموات .

13 [105] ديمستانس[106]: على ما ارى ان المستقبل غير ظاهر لكل الناس والاوقات الصغار تصير اسبابا لامور عظام، ولهذه الحال ينبغي ان تقتصد[107] في حسن الحال وتقدم[108] الرويّة بظهور المستقبل .

14 [109] ثاليس[110]: ما اصعبَ معرفة الانسان ذاته الا ان[111] ذلك سعادة لانه يعيش بحسب الطبيعة.

شرح: انما[112] صعُب على الانسان ان يعرف ذاته لهذا السبب وهو انه مركب من جزوين متضادين[113] في الكيفية وذلك ان احدهما بسيط والاخر مركب وهذا معقول وذلك محسوس[114] وهذا باقٍ لا يزول وذاك فانٍ[115] يحول، ولا سبيل الى تعرف هذين على ما ينبغي الا بدرس[116] جميع العلوم ولا يوصل الى ما[117] لا[118] تراه العيون الا باعظم مشقّة. ومن قرا العلوم فقد تفلسف ومن تفلسف فقد عرف الله عز وجل بعض المعرفة ومن عرف[119] الباري تقدس اسمه حسب الممكن فهو السعيد. والاشيا[120] التي تدل على ان الانسان قد علم[121] حسب الطوق هي[122]

61 الانجيل المقدس S Σ.
62 القذى S V || القذا T CP / RQ.
63 الذي S VT PQ || التي CR.
64 التي S Σ || الذي VT.
65 الله [Ψ] V || الله S T Σ.
66 سقط ام نهض V Σ / نهض (!) سيطام T || نهض ام سقط [Ψ] S. T seems to be copied directly from V, where سقط and ام are written close together, as if in one word, and the ق can be mistaken for a ي. Though S agrees with the Greek text, στήκει ἢ πίπτει, this could be an educated copyist's correction based on the well-known Gospel passage; I am therefore adopting سقط ام نهض as the lectio difficilior.
67 no add. [Ψ] V || add. قال S T Σ.
68 سليمن S VT || سليمان Σ.
69 طرق [Ψ] V S Σ || طرف T (seems to be a misreading of V).
70 غير [Ψ] S Σ || عنو V (*sine punctis*) / عنو T.
71 معيب [Ψ] VT Σ || مغيب S.
72 ذاتك [Ψ] S VT CPQ || ذلك R.
73 يقودك [Ψ] S VT CPR || يقدوك Q.
74 سيراخ S VT CRQ || شيراخ P.
75 وتيقظ S VT CRQ || وتيقض(!) P.
76 no add. [Ψ] V Q || add. قال S T CPR.
77 ذلك S Σ || ذالك VT.
78 الى [Ψ] S T Σ || على V.
79 This entire saying is omitted in T, as well as in Cheikho's edition.
80 يرنو CR || يدنوا P. / يرنوا Q / يربوا V / يربوا S
81 بحدة [Ψ] S V || بجدة Σ.
82 الجرم [Ψ] V || الحزم S / الحرم Σ.
83 Though all the manuscripts read القريب, I am emending it to الغريب, which is ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's standard rendering of ἀλλότριος, as also in saying no. 2 above.
84 ويتباطا [Ψ] S || وتتباطا V CPQ / وتتباطى R.
85 تعرف [Ψ] S V || ذلك وتعرف Σ.
86 المناقص [Ψ] Σ S (*post corr.*) || المناقض S (*ante corr.*) V.
87 الخاصية S V PQ || الخاصة CR.
88 الثاولوغوس S V Σ || الثاولوغس T.
89 احوال VT Σ || حوال(!) S.
90 no add. [Ψ] VT || add. اي في الطبيعة S (*supra lineam*) Σ. This is an old marginal gloss, which goes back to ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's comment in chapter 23 that when the Gospel commands to »love your neighbour as yourself«, the »neighbour« (*qarīb*) is he who is »close in nature« (*al-qarīb fī ṭ-ṭabīʿa*), i. e., the »universal man« (*al-insān al-kullī*), meaning that one is obligated to love every fellow human being.
91 الرابح [Ψ] VT CPR / الرانج Q || المريح or الريح S.
92 ذاك S V || ذلك T Σ.
93 فاولايك S VT || فاوليك Σ.
94 no add. [Ψ] V || add. قال S T Σ.
95 افلمس [Ψ] V (*sine punctis*) / اقليمس T / قليمس S || اقليمقس Σ (in C it seems that اقليمس was written first, then corrected to اقليمقس).
96 فاتقدم VT. || فاتقدم S Σ
97 بمعرفة S Σ. || بعرفان VT
98 Both S and T end the chapter here, omitting all the »profane« authors, as well as the saying by Didymus.
99 على [Ψ] V || علم Σ.
100 فيليمن V CPR || فليمن Q.
101 انسانا Σ || انسان V.
102 no add. [Ψ] V || add. قال Σ.
103 ابيفانوس PR / ابيفانس CQ. || انتفانوس (as in the Greek) V (*sine punctis*), to be read as انفانوس
104 تكن [Ψ] Σ || يكن V.
105 no add. [Ψ] V || add. قال Σ.
106 ديمستانس CR / ديمشتانس Q / دمسداس V (*sine punctis*) || ديمشتانس P.
107 تقتصد V || نقتصد Σ (the Greek is ambiguous).
108 ونقدم CR (the Greek is ambiguous). Notice that P has a mixed version: نقتصد ... وتقدم. || وتقدم V PQ
109 no add. [Ψ] V || add. قال Σ.
110 Reading ثاليس (as in the Greek) / بالليس Σ || بالدس V.
111 P seemingly crosses out the *alif*.
112 انه لما || Σ انما V.
113 جزوين متضادين emendation (seems warranted by the reading of V, and the masculine form of what follows: احدهما بسيط والاخر مركب, etc.) || صورين متضادين V صورتين متضادتين || Σ.
114 وهذا معقول وذلك محسوس V CPR || om. Q.
115 فان V C || فاني PQ || فانه R.
116 بدرس V CPR || يدرس Q.
117 ما Σ || om. V.
118 لا CR || om. V PQ.
119 عرف V CRQ || om. P.
120 وللاشيا V || والاشيا Σ.
121 علم V (*lectio difficilior*) || علم باريه Σ.
122 هي V CRQ || وهي P.

17 قال كسانوفن[131]: ذاك [132] يُظَنُّ عندي انه لا يعلم قوة نفسه الذي يجهل ذاته وهذا فليس بظاهر للناس وهو انهم يجوزون خيرات جمة لمعرفتهم ذواتهم وشرورا عدة لجهلهم اياها.
شرح: اللام التي في[133] «لمعرفتهم»[134] و«لجهلهم» يسميها افاضل النحاة سببيّة[135]، واللامات على ما ذكر الخليل[136] ثلثون[137] لاما .

استعمال الفضايل والابتعاد من الرذايل، والسلم. وله معنى اخر غير هذا وهو ظاهر لا يحتاج الى[123] ابانة .
15 كان ابراقلطس[124] شابا وصار[125] احكم اهل زمانه فانه[126] علم انه ما يعلم شيا .
16 سيل[127] خيلن : ما اصعبُ الامور؟ فقال: ان[128] يعرف الانسان ذاته، وهذا نافع في[129] وعظة [130] الشامخين الذين يجوزون مقدارهم

Chapter 56: On »Know Thyself« (cf. Greek original in Ps.-Maximus Confessor, Loci communes 809-820)

(1) The Gospel said: »And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not distinguish the plank in your own eye?« (Matt. 7:3, Luke 6:41).

(2) The Apostle said: »Who are you to judge a stranger who is a servant of God, whether he stands or falls. Indeed, he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand« (cf. Rom. 14:4).

(3) Solomon: »Walk in the ways of your heart without blame, and know yourself and that God will bring you into judgment for all these« (cf. Eccles. 11:9).

(4) Sirach said: »Take heed to yourself, and be very vigilant, for you walk [in danger of] your ruin« (Sir. 13:16).

(5) Basil: »Once you know yourself, of necessity this will lead you to the knowledge of God«.

(6) He also said: »There is no more arduous thing for a person than to know himself and his essence, for it is not only the eye that looks at what is outside without attending to look at itself, but our intellect too gazes sharply at another's sin to them collectively[138] but is slow to apprise itself of its own defects«.

(7) [Gregory] the Theologian said: »Expose frequently your own state rather than the state of others, for you are the one to benefit from it, while in the opposite case it is the others who will benefit«.

(8) Chrysostom said: »Only one who does not think himself to be of any [worth] truly knows oneself«.

(9) Clement: »If you wish to know God, get to know yourself first«.

(10) Didymus said: »When a person knows that he is ignorant, this is a sign of his wisdom, just as if he knows that he has wronged [someone], this is a sign of his justice«.

(11) Philemon said: »Know this: you are human, and you will remain [human] forever«.

(12) Antiphanes: »O you excellent one, since you are mortal, let your resolution be the resolution of the dead«.

(13) Demosthenes: »In my opinion, the future is hidden from all the people, and small moments can become an occasion for grievous matters. For this reason, we must be moderate in comfort (*ḥusn al-ḥāl*) and think in advance about the appearance of the future«.

(14) Thales: »How difficult it is for a person to know himself! Yet this is [true] happiness, for [only he who knows himself] lives in accord with nature«.

[ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's] Commentary: It is for the following reason that it is difficult for a person to know himself: a person is combined of two qualitatively opposing forms, one of which is simple, and the other composite, one of which is intelligible, and the other sensible, one of which is incorruptible and abides for ever (*bāqin lā yazūl*), while the other is corruptible and passing (*fānin yaḥūl*). There is no other way to properly know these two [components] except through the study of all the sciences. That which eyes do not see cannot be attained except with the greatest difficulty. Whoever has studied the sciences has philosophized (*tafalsafa*). Whoever has philosophized has attained some knowledge of God (*ʿarafa llāha ʿazza wa-ǧalla baʿḍa l-maʿrifa*). Whoever knows the Creator, hallowed be His name, as far as is possible [to man], is the one who has attained happiness (*fa-huwa s-saʿīd*). The following bears witness to his having attained knowledge of the Creator to the degree that is possible [to man]: that he practices the virtues and abstains from the vices. That's all (*wa-s-salām*). There is another meaning to this [passage], but it is obvious enough and is in no need of clarification.

(15) Heraclitus was a young man, yet he became the wisest of all the people of his age because he recognized that he knew nothing.

(16) Chilon was asked: »What is the most difficult thing?« He answered: »To know oneself«. This is useful in instructing the proud, who think too highly (?) of themselves.

123 الى V CPR || om. Q.
124 ابراقلطس V || ابراقلطس Σ.
125 وصار [Ψ] V CRQ || وكان ار(!) P.
126 فانه [Ψ] Σ || بانه V.
127 سيل / سيل [Ψ] Σ (P has both the *hamza* and the two dots underneath) || سلن V.
128 ان [Ψ] V CRQ || انه P.
129 في V CPR || om. Q.
130 وعظة V PQ || عظة CR.
131 كسانوفن V || كسانوفون Σ.
132 ذاك V || ذلك Σ.
133 في V Q || om. CPR.
134 لمعرفتهم Σ || معرفتهم V.
135 سببية CR / سببيه V / سببية P || سبية Q.
136 الخليل CR || الجليل V PQ.
137 ثلثون CPQ / ثلاثون R || ثلثين V.
138 The reading should clearly be *ǧurm*, »sin« (= Greek ἁμάρτημα), rather than *ǧirm*, »body«.

(17) Xenophon said: In my view, if a person does not know himself, he is ignorant of the power of his soul. The following is not apparent to people: that they obtain numerous good things on account of their knowledge of themselves (*li-maʿrifatihim ḏawātihim* < Gr. διὰ μὲν τὸ εἰδέναι ἑαυτούς) and many bad things on account of their ignorance of themselves (*li-ǧahlihim īyāhā* < Gr. διὰ δὲ τὸ ἐψεῦσθαι ἑαυτῶν, »on account of being mistaken about themselves«).

[ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's] Commentary: The letter *lām* in *li-maʿrifatihim* and *li-ǧahlihim* is called by the most excellent grammarians »causal« (*sababīya*). Al-Ḫalīl [ibn Aḥmad] mentioned that there are thirty [different usages of] *lām*[139].

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139 I was unable to locate this statement in al-Ḫalīl's *Kitāb al-ʿayn*. On the Arabic grammatical tradition's interpretation of the functions of lām see Testen, Parallels. Ibn Hišām (d. 1360) in *Muġnī l-Labīb* (Leipzig, MS or. 371, fol. 65^{v}), distinguishes between three major types of *lām*: *ʿāmila li-l-ǧarr*, *ʿāmila li-l-ǧazm*, and *ġayr ʿāmila* (he argues against the Kūfan grammarians' view that there is such a thing as *lām ʿāmila li-n-naṣb*). The first type is then subdivided into twenty-two categories. The second type does not seem to be subdivided (fol. 70^{v}). The third type is subdivided into seven categories (fol. 72^{r}). Altogether, we do seem to have exactly thirty categories. See also az-Zaǧǧāǧī (d. ca. 949), *Kitāb al-lāmāt* and Ibn Fāris (d. 1004), *Kitāb al-lāmāt* – both mentioned and briefly analyzed by Testen.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Greek into Arabic in Byzantine Antioch: ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl's »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*)

This article focuses on one of the most important – and the least studied – centres of Christian Graeco-Arabic translation activity: the region of Antioch after the Byzantine reconquest of the city in 969. It discusses the most important Antiochene translators: Antonios, Ibrāhīm ibn Yūḥannā, Gregory, Kyr Chariton, Yānī ibn ad-Duks, Kyr Christopher ibn ad-Dawbalī (or ad-Duwaylī), and especially ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl (all of them Arabic-speaking Orthodox Christians or »Melkites«). Subsequently, it focuses on ʿAbdallāh ibn Faḍl's still unpublished masterpiece »Book of the Garden« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*) – an Arabic translation of the Byzantine »sacro-profane« florilegium Loci communes (mis-ascribed to Maximus the Confessor) – as an example of a Graeco-Arabic translation produced in that milieu. The article includes a critical edition and an English translation of chapter 56 of the »Book of the Garden«, entitled »On ›Know Thyself‹«.

Aus dem Griechischen ins Arabische im byzantinischen Antiochien: ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍls »Buch des Gartens« (*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*)

Dieser Artikel konzentriert sich auf eines der wichtigsten – und am wenigsten erforschten – Zentren christlicher griechisch-arabischer Übersetzungstätigkeit: die Region von Antiochia nach der byzantinischen Rückeroberung der Stadt im Jahr 969. Es werden zunächst die wichtigsten antiochenischen Übersetzer besprochen: Antonios, Ibrahim ibn Yūḥannā, Gregor, Kyr Chariton, Yāni ibn ad-Duks, Kyr Christopher ibn ad-Dawbalī (oder ad-Duwaylī) und besonders ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl, die alle arabisch sprechende orthodoxe Christen oder »Melkiten« waren. Anschließend wird das noch unveröffentlichte Meisterwerk ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍls »*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*« in den Mittelpunkt der Untersuchung gestellt – eine arabische Übersetzung des byzantinischen »sacro-profanen« Florilegiums Loci communes (das fälschlicherweise Maximos Confessor zugeschrieben wird) – als ein herausragendes Beispiel einer griechisch-arabischen Übersetzung, die in diesem Umfeld entstehen konnte. Der Artikel enthält eine kritische Ausgabe und eine englische Übersetzung des Kapitels 56 des »*Kitāb ar-rawḍa*«, das den Titel »Über das ›Erkenne dich selbst‹« trägt.

Sidney Griffith

Islam and Orthodox Theology in Arabic: The »Melkite« Tradition from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Centuries

At a now uncertain date, probably in the early thirteenth century, the »Melkite« bishop of Sidon, one Paul of Antioch, wrote a brief apology in Arabic to defend the truth and integrity of Orthodox Christianity[1]. A notable feature of the apology is that Paul wrote it in the form of a »Letter to a Muslim Friend«, an unnamed Muslim acquaintance in Sidon. And in the letter Paul quoted numerous passages from the Qurʾān, arguing that a right interpretation of them not only did not impugn Christian faith, as they were often interpreted to do, but could be seen actually to support it. Paul ingeniously put his arguments in the probably fictional guise of a report of his conversations with some learned Byzantines on a recent trip abroad, »into the homelands of the Romans, to Constantinople, the country of Amalfi, some Frankish provinces, and Rome,« as he put it. The learned Byzantines, he said, queried him about those passages from the Qurʾān, which they thought could be read not only to exempt Christians from the call to Islam, and relieve them of the charge of infidelity or unbelief, but which could be positively interpreted even to support Orthodox Christian faith. At the end of the letter, as he completed the report of his conversations, Paul wrote:

»This is what I learned from the people whom I saw and with whom I conversed, along with what they argued in favour of their position. If what they have related is sound, to God be the praise and the benefit, since He will have made quarrelling cease between His servants the Christians and the Muslims; may God guard them all. And if it is not sound, may my honourable brother and estimable friend explain it to me, and may God extend His protection and grant him longevity, so that I might notify them of that and see what they will have to say about it[2]«.

It did not take long after the publication of Paul's apologetic tract for Muslim scholars to explain wherein Paul's presentation of the learned Byzantines' reasoning was in their view in fact unsound. In due course, no less a Muslim figure than Taqī ad-Dīn Ibn Taymīya (1263-1328) wrote a refutation of an expanded edition of Paul's letter[3]. And from that point onward into the Mamlūk era, Muslim anti-Christian rhetoric seems to have hardened, while Christian theology in Arabic by that time had reached the apogee of its development, and Paul of Antioch was standing on its pinnacle. For our purpose here is not to concentrate just on Paul's famous »Letter to a Muslim Friend«. Rather, the purpose is to look back from the vantage point of Paul of Antioch's career as a »Melkite« theologian, writing perhaps at the turn from the twelfth to the thirteenth century, to observe the development of Orthodox theology in Arabic to that point from its beginnings in the eighth century.

Paul of Antioch's contribution to Orthodox theology in Arabic extends well beyond just the famous »Letter to a Muslim Friend«. In fact, he composed important treatises on a number of the principal topics in traditional Arab Christian thought, including works in which from a philosophical perspective he defended Christianity from the charge of polytheism, gave an account of the reasons that have led both Gentiles and Jews to profess Christian faith, described the creedal differences between the several Christian communities living in the Islamic world of his day, and provided for a Muslim inquirer a brief statement on monotheism (*at-tawḥīd*) and its compatibility with the Christian profession of the doctrine of the union (*al-ittiḥād*) of divinity and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ. In addition to these works, which most scholars think are authentically his, a number of other texts are ascribed to him in the manuscript tradition, at least three of which, on philosophical themes, including an important one on free-will, are almost certainly also his in my opinion. And in all of these compositions certain features come to the fore that one might describe as typical of »Melkite« theological writing in Arabic from its beginnings in the eighth century. It is the purpose of this essay to highlight a number of these features in selected earlier texts written by »Melkites«, and to show how in the ensemble they describe the literary profile of the Arab Orthodox Christians living in the Oriental Patriarchates in pre-Ottoman times. But first we must say a word about the meaning of the terms »Melkite« and »Arab Orthodox« Christian.

1 Thomas, Paul of Antioch 78-82.
2 Paul d'Antioche 83.
3 The Letter from the People of Cyprus; Michel, Theologian's Response.
4 Griffith, Muslims and Church Councils; Griffith, Arab Christian.

Muslim writers in the early Islamic period customarily spoke of the several Christian communities living in their midst as the »Melkites«, the »Jacobites«, and the »Nestorians«. These are names that had their origins among the Christians themselves, and they were all normally first used by the confessional adversaries of the communities to which they were applied. The so far earliest use of the epithet »Melkite(s)« (*malakī*, pl. *malakīyūn/īn*) known to me as describing those who accepted the teachings of the Orthodox Church's ecumenical councils appears in a polemical text written in Arabic by the »Jacobite«, Ḥabīb ibn Ḥidma Abū Rāʾiṭa (d. c. 851) against the theological views of his principal adversary, whom he calls the »Melkite«, Theodore Abū Qurra (c. 755 - c. 830). Abū Rāʾiṭa faults Abū Qurra for following the teachings of St Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662) and for accepting the doctrinal decisions of the sixth ecumenical council, Constantinople III (680/681), as well as the earlier Council of Chalcedon (451), councils that adversaries like Abū Rāʾiṭa charged were called by mere »kings« or »emperors« (*mulūk*) and not by the appropriate religious authorities. This charge against the »Melkites« of constructing their creed in accordance with the decisions of councils called by Byzantine emperors was also taken up by Muslim polemicists, and in response Theodore Abū Qurra wrote a treatise in defense of the »Melkite« position already at the turn of the ninth century[4]. So following these leads one might say that the epithet »Melkite« properly so called was originally meant to apply to an Arabic-speaking Christian, living in the World of Islam, who professed the faith of the councils of Byzantine Orthodoxy, i. e., someone who in later parlance could be said to have accepted the Synodikon of Orthodoxy[5]. For this reason one might just as well refer to such a person as an Arab Orthodox Christian, especially since in modern times the name »Melkite« has come to be used more often than not to refer only to those Orthodox Christian communities in the Arabic-speaking world who after 1724 came into communion with the Roman Catholic Church[6]. But Paul of Antioch was very much a »Melkite« in the original sense of the term; he spoke and wrote in Arabic, he lived in the World of Islam, and he professed the faith of the »Synodikon of Orthodoxy«.

Paul of Antioch's Arabic writings, deeply informed as they are with Islamicate thought and expression as well as with Arabic philosophy and Orthodox Christian theology, provide an ideal perspective from which to look back in intellectual history to the ways in which »Melkite« Christians living in Byzantium's Oriental Patriarchates came to respond to the religious and civil hegemony of the Arab Muslims[7]. One glimpse at any one of Paul's texts is all it takes to perceive his ready fluency in the Islamic Arabic idiom of his time and place, not to mention his familiarity with the Qurʾān. One might say that linguistically Paul's theological discourse displays an unmistakable Islamo-Christian character, typical of »Melkite« writing prior to the thirteenth century. For, already by early Umayyad times the heretofore Greek-speaking »Melkite« elites, albeit that they were liturgically bilingual in the Orient, had already adopted the Arabic language for both ecclesiastical and civil purposes. And practically speaking, from early in the ninth century until well into the eleventh century, unlike the »Jacobites« and »Nestorians«, the »Melkites« in the Oriental Patriarchates were effectively cut off by Islamic dominance from easy access to their ecclesiastical and conciliar center of gravity, Byzantium, and the Church of Constantinople in particular. The cosmopolitan monastic communities of Jerusalem, the Judean desert, and the Sinai, where Greek church books were already being translated into the local Christian Palestinian Aramaic, quickly became the intellectual center for a newly Arabic-speaking, Chalcedonian Orthodoxy, a prominence that would by the eleventh century have passed to Antioch when Constantinople once again for a season came to rule there. But by that time the Arab Orthodox Church had already come to be.

In the monastic communities of Jerusalem and environs the Greek-speaking, proto-»Melkites«, scholars such as Patriarch Sophronios of Jerusalem (c. 560-638), Anastasios of Sinai (d. c. 700), and St John of Damascus (c. 655 - c. 750), had already by the middle of the eighth century given definitive expression in their works to the Orthodoxy that would be declared normative in the Synodikon of Orthodoxy. And it was there too that Arab Orthodoxy was born. It began already in the eighth century as a wide-ranging translation movement that produced Arabic versions of portions of the Bible from both Greek and Syriac, particularly the Gospels, the Epistles and the Psalms. In fact, the »Melkites« were the first Christians to translate the Bible into Arabic; they began to do so already in the eighth century[8]. They also made translations of lives of the saints, of works of the Orthodox Fathers and not least translations of important philosophical texts, such as Aristotle's »Prior Analytics« and the Philosopher's masterpiece, »On the Soul« or *De Anima*[9]. It was within the broad horizon of this ecclesiastical translation movement that »Melkite« writers began to compose original theological works in Arabic. The earliest theologian regularly to write in Arabic whose name we know was Theodore Abū Qurra, born in Edessa, monk of Jerusalem, and sometime bishop of Ḥarrān in Syria. His mother tongue seems to have been Syriac, but he was fluent in Greek and he wrote some major works in Arabic, in

5 On the emergence of a distinctively »Melkite« community, see Griffith, Byzantium and the Christians; Griffith, Christological Controversies; Griffith, Church of Jerusalem.

6 See Haddad, Syrian Christians; Haddad, Conversion of Eastern Orthodox Christians. See these matters also discussed, with further bibliographical references, in Griffith, Church in the Shadow 129-140.

7 On this broader topic, see Griffith, Melkites and the Muslims.

8 Griffith, Bible in Arabic.

9 Unfortunately, scholars have paid little attention to the abundant archive of these texts translated into Arabic in early Islamic times, a neglect that obscures the fuller picture of Arab Christian adaptation to life under Islamic hegemony. For a quick overview of this vast translation literature, see Graf, Literatur, especially vol. 1.

large part following in the path of St John of Damascus, but astutely also in response to developments in contemporary Islamic thinking[10]. But while his is the earliest name we know, Abū Qurra was not actually the earliest theologian to write originally in Arabic.

The earliest known »Melkite« theological text that bears within it some indication of the date of its composition is anonymous. It was written in Arabic by a »Melkite« Christian, who included in it an attestation to the date of its composition. The text is preserved in an old parchment manuscript from Sinai (Sinai Arabic MS 154), which also contains an Arabic version of the Acts of the Apostles and the Seven Catholic Epistles. The original editor and translator, Margaret Dunlop Gibson, called this work, »On the Triune Nature of God«[11]. At one point in the text the now unknown author, speaking of the stable endurance of Christianity against all odds, even up to his own day, wrote: »If this religion were not truly from God it would not have stood so unshakably for seven hundred and forty-six years«[12]. If we reckon the beginning of the Christian era from the beginning of the year of the Incarnation, according to the computation system of the Alexandrian world era, which Palestinian scribes were likely to use prior to the tenth century, we arrive at a date not too far removed from 755 CE for the composition of the treatise[13].

The feature that immediately strikes the modern reader of the treatise »On the Triune Nature of God« is one that it shares with the treatises of Paul of Antioch and those of other »Melkite« writers, namely its Qurʾānic and overall Islamicate Arabic idiom. The whole treatise is suffused with echoes of the Qurʾān, and not just in quotations and allusions to verses here and there but even in its diction and style. It will repay us to take a more extended look at this feature of the work.

In the poetical introduction to the treatise, by allusion and choice of words and phrases the author already echoed the diction and style of the Qurʾān[14]. As Mark Swanson has rightly remarked, »The text simply is profoundly Qurʾānic«[15]. One can see it even in English translation, as in this brief passage from the opening prayer:

> »We ask you, O God, by your mercy and your power,
> to put us among those who know your truth,
> follow your will, and avoid your wrath,
> [who] praise your beautiful names, (Q VII:180)
> and speak of your exalted similes. (cf. Q XXX:27)
> You are the compassionate One,
> the merciful, the most compassionate;
> You are seated on the throne, (Q VII:54)
> You are higher than creatures;
> You fill up all things[16]«

Shortly after this prayer, the author makes a statement that may well serve as an expression of his purpose in composing his work. Again, the attentive reader can hear the Qurʾānic overtones clearly. The author says,

»We praise you, O God, and we adore you and we glorify you in your creative Word and your holy, life-giving Spirit, one God, and one Lord, and one Creator. We do not separate God from his Word and his Spirit. God showed his power and his light in the Law and the Prophets, and the Psalms and the Gospel, that God and his Word and his Spirit are one God and one Lord. We will show this, God willing, in those revealed scriptures, to anyone who wants insight, understands things, recognizes the truth, and opens his breast to believe in God and his scriptures[17]«.

One notices straightaway the author's intention to make his case for Christian teaching from the scriptures; he names the Law, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the Gospel, scriptures that are named as they are named in the Qurʾān. Moreover, in emphasizing God, his Word, and his Spirit, the author recalls the Qurʾān's own mention of these three names in the often quoted phrase, »The Messiah, Jesus, Son of Mary, was nothing more than a messenger of God, his word that he imparted to Mary, and a spirit from him«. (IV *an-Nisāʾ* 171) What is more, the author is willing to include explicit citations from the Qurʾān among the scripture passages he quotes in testimony to the credibility of the Christian doctrine. On the one hand, addressing the Arabic-speaking, Christian readers who were his primary audience, the author speaks of what »we find in the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms and the Gospel,« in support of the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. On the other hand, several times he rhetorically addresses Muslims; he speaks of what »you will find ... in the Qurʾān,« and he goes on to cite a passage or a pastiche of quotations from several *sūras*, in support of the doctrines, in behalf of the veracity of which he has been quoting or alluding to scriptural evidence from passages and narratives from the Old or New Testaments[18]. For example, at one point in the argument, in search of testimonies to a certain plurality in the being of the one God, the author turns to the scriptures for citations of passages in which God speaks in the first person plural. Having quoted a number of such passages, he goes on to say:

»You will find it also in the Qurʾān that ›We created man in misery (Q XC:4)‹, and ›We have opened the gates of heaven with water pouring down‹ (Q LIV:11), and have said, ›And now you come unto Us alone, as We created you at first‹. (VI:94) It also says, ›Believe in God, and in his Word; and also in the Holy Spirit‹. (cf. Q IV:171) The Holy Spirit is even the one who brings it down (i. e., the Qurʾān) as ›a mercy and a

10 Lamoreaux, Theodore Abū Qurra 439-448.
11 Gibson, An Arabic Version.
12 See this portion of the text, unaccountably left out by Gibson, published in Samir, Arab Apology.
13 See the discussion of the dating in Swanson, Considerations for the Dating.
14 Samir, Arab Apology 69 f.; Swanson, Beyond Prooftexting 305-308.
15 Swanson, Beyond Prooftexting 308.
16 Adapted from the text and translation in Samir, Arab Apology 67 f.
17 Gibson, An Arabic Version 3 (English), 75 (Arabic). Here the English translation has been adapted from Gibson's version.
18 Gibson, An Arabic Version, 5 f. (English), 77 f. (Arabic). See the passage quoted and discussed in Griffith, Church in the Shadow 55.

guidance from thy Lord‹ (Q XVI:64, 102). But why should I prove it from this (i. e., the Qurʾān) and bring enlightenment, when we find in the Torah, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the Gospel, and you find it in the Qurʾān, that God and his Word and his Spirit are one God and one Lord? You have said that you believe in God and his Word and the Holy Spirit, so do not reproach us, O men, that we believe in God and his Word and his Spirit: we worship God in his Word and his Spirit, one God and one Lord and one Creator. God has made it clear in all of the scriptures that this is the way it is in right guidance and true religion[19]«.

Evidently in this passage the Christian author is addressing himself directly, at least in part, to readers of the Qurʾān as well as to the devotees of the Christian Bible. He speaks of what »we find in the Torah, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the Gospel«, and of what »you find [...] in the Qurʾān«. One also notices in this passage the prominence of the author's references to God, his Word, and his Spirit, and how they provide a continual evocation of *sūrat* IV *an-Nisāʾ* 171. Like almost every Arab Christian apologetic writer after him, the author of »On the Triune Nature of God« takes this verse as Qurʾānic testimony to the reality that the one God is in fact possessed of Word and Spirit and that they are He, the Son of God, and the Holy Spirit, three persons, one God, as the Christians confess.

In a further passage, the author of On the Triune Nature of God takes advantage of another verse in the Qurʾān to explain how it came about that by the action of the Holy Spirit, God's Word, the Son of God, became incarnate and was clothed, even veiled (*iḥtağaba*)[20], in Mary's human nature. »Thus,« he says, »God was veiled (*iḥtağaba*) in a man without sin«[21]. The »veiling« language here once again evokes a particular passage in the Qurʾān: »God speaks with man only by way of revelation, or from behind a veil (*ḥiǧāb*, or he sends a messenger and he reveals by his permission what he wishes.« (XLII *aš-Šūrā* 51) The author of our treatise likens Jesus' humanity to the veil, from behind which the Qurʾān says God might speak to man.

Subsequently a number of later »Melkite« authors similarly allude to or quote from this passage from the Qurʾān in their explanations of the doctrine of the incarnation, extending from the ninth century into the thirteenth century, including Paul of Antioch in his »Letter to a Muslim Friend«[22]. Curiously, one does not find »Jacobite« or so-called »Nestorian« writers in Arabic much interested in this verse, suggesting that reference to it became something of a tradition in »Melkite« apologetics. But all the early Arab Christian writers frequently quoted from and alluded to the Qurʾān, sometimes inexactly, as if from memory, and they regularly echoed its words and phrases in their ordinary discourse[23]. Nevertheless, it seems to have been a »Melkite« specialty to build whole apologetic arguments on selected passages from the Qurʾān, taking advantage of their readers' familiarity with the Islamic scripture and using its words and phrases for the evidentiary potential and probative value they had even among the Arabic-speaking Christians, now fully at home in the World of Islam. But of course »Melkites« were also well aware of the problems they had with the Arabic Qurʾān. Their very familiarity with the Muslim scripture and with Islamic traditions about its collection and inimitability allowed them also to argue forcibly against its claim to be an acceptable divine revelation, albeit that they were ready to quote from it liberally for apologetic purposes. In this connection one thinks the most readily of the sharp but knowledgeable critique of Muslim claims for the Qurʾān in the anonymous Christian apologetic work now called the *al-Hāšimī/al-Kindī* »Correspondence«, a text that arguably just might have had »Melkite« origins[24].

In addition to the thoroughly Arabic, even Qurʾānic cast of the language often found in »Melkite« theological texts, and their writers' readiness to quote passages from the Muslim scripture for apologetic or even polemical purposes, another important strain in »Melkite« writing in Arabic is its participation in the religious and philosophical discourse of the wider, Arabic-speaking, learned community of the early Islamic period, extending all the way to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Indeed Christian intellectuals, and not a few »Melkites« among them, who worked within the purview of Baghdad and environs in the era of the so-called Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Early Abbasid times[25], made major contributions to the formation of this tradition. And Paul of Antioch like the other »Melkite« writers of note was very conscious of writing within this intellectual horizon. While he was certainly aware of the Byzantine heritage of his theological tradition, and could even summon the inspiration of St Gregory of Nazianzus (329/330-389/390) for his writing[26], Paul was very much *au courant* with the currents of Muslim thought in his time. He most often referred to it in reference to those whom he normally called simply »the philosophers« (*al-falāsifa*), or »the practitioners of philosophy« (*al-mutafalsifīn*). And in these contexts Paul often mentioned that he was in his own thinking, at least for apologetic purposes, proceeding according to the strict dictates of reason (*al-ʿaql*), which he often characterized as »the soundest touchstone and measure« of the truth[27]. It was a premise dear to the

19 Translation adapted from Gibson, An Arabic Version 5 f. (English), 77 f. (Arabic).
20 Gibson, An Arabic Version 11 (English), 83 (Arabic).
21 Gibson, An Arabic Version 13 (English), 85 (Arabic).
22 See the passages cited in Swanson, Beyond Prooftexting 298-302. See also Griffith, Answer for the Shaykh, especially 288 and 292. See the Qur'ān passage quoted in the »Letter to a Muslim Friend« in Paul d'Antioche, 72 f. (Arabic), 179 (French).
23 Pietruschka, Koranzitaten in christlichen Apologien. See also the brief study by Swanson, A Frivolous God?
24 For information on this text see Bottini, Apology of al-Kindī.
25 Gutas, Greek Thought.
26 In the preface to his »Abbreviated Rational Treatise«, Paul cited a line from one of St Gregory's acrostic poems. See Paul d'Antioche 2 (Arabic), 124 with n. 4 (French). One should note here that Arabic translations of texts attributed St Gregory of Nazianzus were made by »Melkites« as early as the tenth century, Graf, Literatur 1 330-332. See also Jacques Grand'Henry.
27 Paul d'Antioche 41 (Arabic), 154 (French).

hearts of the Baghdad philosophers of the tenth and eleventh centuries, including the Christians among them. But that was not all; Paul of Antioch was also heir to the uses the earlier Arab Christian apologists had made of certain aspects of the Islamic *kalām* tradition, which was itself a largely apologetic enterprise, intended to clarify and defend the basic reasonableness of Islamic faith. And by Paul's day, albeit that *kalāmic* reasoning was driven in many instances by the principles of theoretical Arabic grammar, it had also by the tenth century become suffused with originally Greek logical and philosophical principles. So Paul could readily envision a Muslim interlocutor appealing to the authority of »our philosophers and our *mutakallimūn*« in his challenge to the veracity of the doctrines defended by Christian apologists[28].

»Melkite« writers from Theodore Abū Qurra to Paul of Antioch typically patterned the topical outline of their apologetic treatises on the model of contemporary Muslim *kalām* texts[29], especially those concerned with the topics of *at-tawḥīd*, the proclamation of the one-ness of God. This structural pattern can still be seen in the sequence of topics in two of Paul of Antioch's works in particular, his so-called »Abbreviated Rational Treatise« and his »Explanation of the Case that Requires the Gentiles, along with the Jews, to Enter the Christian Religion«[30]. Christians of course had their doctrine of the Trinity to defend in this context, and it is in connection with this topic in particular that we find perhaps the most enduring legacy of the grammar-based thinking of the Muslim *mutakallimūn* in Christian theology in Arabic.

From the time of Theodore Abū Qurra onward, the »Melkite«, »Jacobite« and »Nestorian« theologians who wrote in Arabic almost all adopted the apologetic strategy of clarifying the Greek and Syriac vocabulary of their commonly held Nicene, Trinitarian, confessional formula in Arabic terms used by the Muslim *mutakallimūn* in their discussions of the divine attributes. While not all Christian writers adopted this approach[31], it was a popular one among »Melkites« and many employed it. The immediate problem for the Christians was how to explain the significance of the Greek term »hypostasis«, as it was used in the Trinitarian formula, »one God in three hypostases«. Arabic-speaking Christian writers coined the Arabic term *uqnūm* (pl. *aqānīm*), actually a transcription of the Syriac term *qnûmâ* (pl. *qnûmê*), as equivalent in meaning to the Greek term »hypostasis« in the Trinitarian formula. But it was a foreign word in Arabic, and its meaning was not evident. For this reason, Christian apologists writing in Arabic quickly looked for Arabic words or phrases they might use to define this technical term in their theology. Over the years from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, »Melkite« writers and other Christians used a variety of Arabic terms as helps in the effort of translation, but none of them alone proved to be very satisfactory[32]. So most writers, Paul of Antioch included, in their efforts to communicate the significance of their speaking of the three »hypostases« of the one God turned for contextual help to the current conversations among the Muslim *mutakallimūn* about the implications of attributing to God the divine attributes (*ṣifāt Allāh*) to be found in the Qurʾān, »the beautiful names of God« (*al-asmāʾ al-ḥusnā*). These conversations among the Muslims concerned the status in being of the referents of the attributes (*ṣifāt*) applied to God, the subject of whom the attributes were predicated[33]. For example, the attribute »knowing« (*ʿālim*), when predicated of a subject, was taken according to the rules of theoretical Arabic grammar to bespeak an »act of knowing« (*ʿilm*) present in the subject of which it is predicated. So to say that God is »knowing«, for example, is to say that God is in some way possessed of an »act of knowing«. Some Muslim thinkers found this implication of the divine attribute problematic because it seems to compromise the affirmation of God's utter one-ness (*at-tawḥīd*); it suggests that God's »act of knowing« somehow has an existence alongside God and thereby bespeaks a certain divine plurality. Confronting this problem, Muslim *mutakallimūn* explored various ways to deal with it, including the elaboration of a grammar-based, systematic theory of semantics in the matter of the divine attributes, as well as a technical vocabulary designed to express the several moments in the predication of a descriptive attribute of its subject and the semantic implications regarding the subject's state or states of being in view of the predication of the several attributes[34]. Christian apologists found this line of thinking hermeneutically useful as a contextual background for their explanations of the significance of their doctrine of the three hypostases in the one God.

Christian *mutakallimūn*, noting the Muslims' distinction between the divine attributes of essence (*ṣifāt aḏ-ḏāt* or *ṣifāt an-nafs*) and those of action (*ṣifāt al-fiʿl*), argued that the essential divine attributes, seven in the traditional Muslim view, all presupposed for the possibility of their true predication, the previous predication of the divine entity of two essential or substantive attributes in particular. While other Christian writers sometimes used different terms[35], Paul of Antioch, like most »Melkites«, spoke most often in this connection of God as the being (*aš-šayʾ*) of whom the sine qua non attributes »living« (*ḥayy*) and »rational« (*nāṭiq*) must be predicated, bespeaking »life« (*ḥayā*) and »rationality« (*an-nuṭq*) as actively present in the divine being, before one can meaningfully or truthfully predicate the other attributes of

28 Paul d'Antioche 39 (Arabic), 149 (French).
29 Some scholars have seen a debt on the part of the Muslim *mutakallimūn* to the proto-»Melkite«, St John of Damascus, in the matter of structuring the apologetic discourse on the existence and one-ness of the Creator God: Pines, Traits of Christian Theological.
30 Paul d'Antioche 1-33, 34-58 (Arabic); 123-146, 147-168 (French).
31 Griffith, Christian Theology in Islamic Terms.
32 Haddad, La Trinité, especially the chart on 183.
33 Frank, Beings and Their Attributes.
34 Gimaret, Les noms divins en Islam; Gimaret, La doctrine d'al-Ashʿarī.
35 See in this connection the chart in Haddad, La Trinité 232 f.

God. He then explains that in the Christian view, the being of God, His rationality and His life, bespeak the three substantive *aqānīm*, i. e., the three hypostases of the one God, that one might think of in Arabic as three subsistent individualities (*aʿyān*), three particularities (*ḫawāṣṣ*), or even three energies (*quwan*), that the Christian thinks of as the three »substantive attributes« (*ṣifāt ǧawharīya*) or hypostases of the one God. By the time Paul of Antioch was writing his apologetic treatises, the Arabic term »attribute« (*ṣifa*) by itself had come in Trinitarian contexts to stand as a virtual synonym for *uqnūm*, i. e., hypostasis[36].

It is important for the reader of Paul of Antioch's treatises and those of the other »Melkite« writers who used the *kalām*'s attribute language in their apologies for the doctrine of the Trinity to understand that the exercise was meant to clarify the language of the traditional, confessional formula in Arabic. And while it was intended to convince Arabic-speakers of the credibility and rationality of the Christian doctrine, it was not meant to prove outright what Christians took to be the revealed article of faith, nor did the apologists intend completely to map the reasoning behind their creedal language onto the systematic, Islamic understandings of the divine attributes, albeit that in later Christian Arabic discourse, the Arabic term *ṣifa* did for all practical purposes come to be the standard equivalent among Christians for the Greek term »hypostasis«. The purpose was to purchase a measure of understanding in the Arabic-speaking milieu for a traditional Christian technical vocabulary by using language already in vogue in Arabic to address a comparable problem in God-talk.

In a similar vein, in the effort to show that it is not simply contradictory to say that something is both one and three at the same time, Arabic-speaking »Melkites« and other Christians also regularly included in their treatises on the Trinity, even in the most sophisticated of them, some mention of the traditional, patristic analogies with facts in created nature to make the point; a favorite was the example of the sun, its light, and its heat, a staple feature in the Syriac tradition with which most of them were familiar[37]. Needless to say, Muslims were not convinced by either the *kalām* arguments or the patristic analogies and they were voluble in their objections already in early Islamic times[38], not to mention Ibn Taymīya's spirited rebuttal of Paul of Antioch's arguments as the bishop voiced them in his »Letter to a Muslim Friend«[39]. And it is interesting that in modern times, some Arabic-speaking theologians in the Coptic Orthodox Church, where the *kalām* language had also become the standard idiom in Trinitarian theology, have pushed for its abandonment on the grounds that it is neither biblical nor traditional language in their church[40].

While »Melkite« apologetic discourse in the Arabic-speaking, Islamic milieu came to be heavily patterned on the *kalām* model current among the Muslim *mutakallimūn* already in Abbasid times, and their religious idiom in general was from the beginning heavily indebted to the Qurʾān's vocabulary and style as we have seen, there was yet another, perhaps even more pervasive feature in »Melkite« intellectual life that defined the Arab Orthodox Church more effectively than these developments, important as they were. It was two-fold: the composition of historical accounts of the life of the Byzantine Orthodox Church and the place of the Arabic-speaking »Melkites« within it; and the on-going translation movement current from the ninth century until well into Paul of Antioch's time and long afterward.

From the beginning, the »Melkites« were attentive to the history of the Byzantine church councils in which the orthodoxy they professed was solemnly defined, most often in response to the heterodox teachings of the adversaries of the positions espoused by the councils. Theodore Abū Qurra, for example, spoke regularly of the »orthodoxy of the six councils«[41], and he wrote a treatise in Arabic dedicated to defending their doctrinal authority, naming the adversaries and describing their views. An interesting aspect of the treatise is that it appears to have Muslim polemic against the »Melkites« as much in view as the objections of »Jacobites« or »Nestorians«[42]. This history of the development of doctrine, as one might call it, became a standard feature of »Melkite« creeds in Arabic composed at later times and it became an important element in the definition of »Melkite« identity in the Arabic-speaking milieu[43].

The earliest »Melkite« historian properly so called to write in Arabic was Saʿīd ibn Biṭrīq (877-940)[44], who as the »Melkite« patriarch of Alexandria from 933 until his death in 940 was known as Eutychios of Alexandria[45]. Eutychios' »Annals«, as his major work has come to be called because of its annalistic style, seems originally to have borne the title »The String of Pearls«. In the earliest form in which it has come down to us[46], Eutychios recounted Christian and Muslim history in a manner that highlights his apologetic purpose both to situate the »Melkites« historically and to defend the truth

36 See Paul's discussion in Paul d'Antioche 16-21 (Arabic), 136-139 (French); 36-40 (Arabic), 149-154 (French).
37 See in this connection Beck, Ephraems Trinitäts Lehre.
38 Thomas, Doctrine of the Trinity; Swanson, Ibn Taymiyya.
39 See the texts cited in n. 3 above. Even earlier than Ibn Taymīya's refutation of the expanded edition of Paul's »Letter to a Muslim Friend«, another Muslim scholar had refuted the »Letter« point by point, see al-Qarāfī 21-73.
40 Swanson, Hypostase Attributes.
41 In due course the »Melkites« also included the seventh ecumenical council, Nicea II in 787, among the councils of Orthodoxy, but the practice of affirming the »six councils« lasted until modern times. In the »Melkite« collections of canons in Arabic from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, only seven of the twenty-one MSS mention the seventh council, see Darblade, Collection canonique 154 f.
42 Griffith, Muslims and Church Councils.
43 Griffith, Arab Christian.
44 The earlier, proto-»Melkite« historian, Theophilus of Edessa (695-785), wrote in Syriac; Agapios of Manbiǧ referred to him explicitly in his work. See Agapius, Kitāb al-ʿUnvan 8 (1912), 525; see the full reference in n. 48 below. See Theophilus of Edessa.
45 Simonsohn, Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq.
46 Eutychios von Alexandrien, Annalenwerk.

of their doctrine[47]. In later times, after Eutychios' nephew in Antioch, Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd, continued the narrative to the year 1028, the »Annals« were considerably expanded to include much more information than it had in its earliest edition; it had earlier extended from the age of Adam until Islamic times, coming to a close in the year 938[48]. The continuation and updating of the text is a testimony to its continuing importance in reaffirming the »Melkite« ecclesiastical identity in the World of Islam[49].

Eutychios, as important as his work was, was not the only »Melkite« historian in our period. Contemporary with him was his fellow »Melkite«, Agapios, or Maḥbūb ibn Qusṭanṭīn, the bishop of Manbiǧ, i. e., Syriac Mabbūg and Greek Hieropolis, in Syria[50]. Like Eutychios in Egypt, Agapios found it opportune to compose a world history in Arabic. The name of his book is *Kitāb al-ʿUnwān*[51]. Agapios explained that his purpose was to produce in Arabic the sort of book that was called a »Chronicon« in Greek. In the form in which it has reached modern readers, Agapius' history extends only as far as the caliphate of al-Mahdī (776). Both Agapios and Eutychios used *hiǧra* dates after their accounts of the rise of Islam. Their readers are then presumed to be more familiar with events associated with Muslim rule in their homelands than they would have been with the current religious and political history of Byzantium. So by contrast with the detailed account of events in Byzantium before the rise of Islam, and especially the theological movements, disputes, and ecumenical councils, the references to Byzantium and her affairs become more sparse in these chronicles as their accounts of events in the reigns of the caliphs unfolded. Even such a major religious controversy as was stirred up over the issue of iconoclasm in Byzantium received but scant attention from these two »Melkite« chroniclers, who lived under Muslim rule less than a century following the last of the iconoclast emperors[52]. This focus of their attention on affairs within the caliphate testifies to the strong, local sense of »Melkite« identity prior to the thirteenth century in the Oriental Patriarchates vis-à-vis their co-religionists in Constantinople. Paul of Antioch was very much at home in this world, albeit that, unlike some of his ancestors in the community, he was very much in contact with Constantinople; a new era was in the offing, but now the »Melkite« identity was secure.

From its beginnings in the monasteries of Palestine in the ninth century until its culmination in the patriarchate of Antioch in modern times, a vast translation movement was undertaken by »Melkites«, usually from Greek into Arabic. Altogether it included Arabic versions of the Bible, translations of saints' lives, legal texts, liturgical texts, theological treatises, and philosophical tracts, to mention only books of interest to churchmen. The academic study of these materials is in its infancy[53]. But enough work has been done to make it clear that »Melkite« theology and Orthodox church life in the Arabic-speaking milieu was not limited to the apologetic treatises composed originally in Arabic that have received the most scholarly attention in recent years. As was the case with the intellectual and cultural life in contemporary Baghdad in Abbasid times, so too among the »Melkites« and the other Christian communities in the Arab world, the role of translation was a paramount factor in the community-building process. It is important to remember in this connection that other than the Qurʾān, the Arabic-speaking Jews, Christians, and even the Muslims, altogether had nothing much of a literary nature to inherit in Arabic to aid them in building their intellectual and religious culture in that language in early Islamic times. Translation of a necessity played a larger role in the process than was the case in other times and places.

Already in pre-Islamic times, proto-»Melkites« in the Jerusalem milieu had translated the scriptures used in the liturgy from Greek into Christian Palestinian Aramaic, and beginning already in the mid-eighth century these same scriptures, principally the Gospels, were being translated from both Syriac and Greek into Arabic[54]. Similarly, canonical texts necessary for the daily life of the church quickly found their way into Arabic translation by the ninth century[55], as did the lives of the monastic saints of Palestine, composed originally in Greek in the sixth century by Cyril of Scythopolis, the champion of Chalcedonian orthodoxy in the monastic communities of Palestine[56]. The same may be said for theology; already in the ninth century works attributed to St Basil and St Gregory of Nazianzus became available in Arabic translation[57]. So by way of the translation into Arabic of the works of the traditional fathers of Byzantine Orthodoxy, not to mention the work of the proto-»Melkite«, St John of Damascus, even in times when sustained contact with Constantinople was impossible for the Oriental Patriarchates, »Melkite« life and thought in the World of Islam was never limited just to what Arabophone writers were able to compose originally in the language of the caliphate, most of which, like the Arabic works of Paul of Antioch, were primarily concerned with the community's interface with Islam.

As important as it was, translation was nevertheless seldom a straightforward affair. Even in this genre of Christian

47 Griffith, Apologetics.
48 The full text of the expanded edition was published by Cheikho (Eutychios, Historia Universalis). See the discussion in Breydy, Études sur Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq. One must make allowance for the extreme tendentiousness of this work, in spite of which it contains valuable information.
49 In this connection, see now the important study by Simonsohn, The Biblical Narrative.
50 Swanson, Maḥbūb ibn Qusṭanṭīn al-Manbijī.
51 See the Arabic edition Cheikho, Agapius Episcopus; and the Arabic edition with a French translation Agapius, Kitāb al-'Unvan.
52 For more on this matter, see Griffith, Eutychius of Alexndria.
53 See the survey in Graf, Literatur, vol. 1, which takes account of translations made into Arabic by members of all the Christian communities in the Arabic-speaking milieu, but an overwhelming number of them are done by »Melkites« in the area of ecclesiastical literature.
54 Griffith, From Aramaic to Arabic; Griffith, Bible.
55 Pahlitzsch, Procheiros Nomos.
56 Griffith, The Signs and Wonders.
57 Grēgorios Nazianzēnos.

Arabic literature, the ever-present horizon of life in the Islamic world exerted its influence. An interesting example may be seen in the »Life of Theodore of Edessa«[58]. The text was composed originally in Greek, probably in the monastery of Mar Saba sometime in the middle of the ninth century, where it was soon also translated into Arabic and somewhat later into Georgian. Outwardly the story is modeled on the well-known career of Theodore Abū Qurra (c. 755 - c. 830), but in its essence it is a martyrology, featuring accounts of the sufferings of those like Michael the Sabaïte who chose death over conversion to Islam[59]. Most dramatically in this vein, in the setting of Theodore's call to be the »Melkite« bishop in Baghdad, the text includes a recension of the legend of the conversion to Christianity of a Muslim caliph, al-Maʾmūn (813-833)[60], under the tutelage of Theodore of Edessa, and the subsequent martyrdom of the caliph, who was quickly included in the list of the neo-martyrs venerated in the »Melkite« community[61]. A remarkable feature of the story as we find it in the two languages, Greek and Arabic, is that the Greek author (or was it a later Greek redactor?) seems almost to have envisioned readers with a Constantinopolitan frame of mind, while the Arabic redactor clearly envisioned readers living in the Islamic milieu as his audience; he tailored his presentation to their situation, altering, expanding and otherwise shaping the text to their situation. One finds this feature in other translations of Greek texts into Arabic, but here is not the place to pursue the story.

As we look back at the long trajectory of »Melkite« theology from the perspective of the works of Paul of Antioch that have come down to us, we find a certain maturity in the apologetic texts he wrote in Arabic, likely with both Christian and Muslim readers in mind. They are abbreviated texts, as he himself speaks of them; he seems to have thought that the intellectual tradition he represented was sufficiently well-known to his audience that it would be sufficient for him to recall it only schematically. All the features of the customary »Melkite« religious discourse in Arabic are there: the Islamic cast to the language, the familiar structure and idiom of the *ʿilm al-kalām*, along with traces of the Baghdādī Christian philosophical turn in apologetics, and hints of the influence of the Orthodox Church's translated Byzantine heritage. The Arabic-speaking Paul of Antioch seems still to have been looking to the centres of Arabic learning for inspiration, in his day they were still Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo. He lived in coastal Syria in Ayyubid times; even the Crusaders seem to have abandoned the area by his day. But a big change was on the horizon for the »Melkites« and other Christians living in the Oriental Patriarchates.

Under the Mamluks, who came to power after the fall of Baghdad to the Mongols in 1258, along with intermittent persecutions of Christians, especially in Egypt, in the first half of the fourteenth century, and the increasing pressure from the early thirteenth century onward of Muslim, anti-Christian polemic, some of it, as we have seen, in direct response to the work of Paul of Antioch, the stage was set for a change of intellectual *qibla* for the »Melkites«. They seem to have turned their antennae increasingly toward Constantinople and the West, with an upsurge in Antioch of Arabic translations of Greek theological literature and a willingness to accept directives for local reform from the Ecumenical Patriarch. Already in the twelfth century, Theodore Balsamon (d. c. 1195), sometime patriarch of Antioch resident in Constantinople, in his responsa to queries emanating from the Oriental Patriarchates had been encouraging reform on the part of the »Melkites«, with a view to accommodating themselves ever more faithfully to the usages of the patriarchate of Constantinople[62]. But through it all the »Melkites« continued to be the Arab Orthodox Church, a situation that endures to our own day, albeit with many difficulties and hardship deriving from both ecclesiastical and civil tensions. But that is a story for another day.

58 For further information and bibliography see Griffith, Theodora of Edessa.
59 Peeters, S. Michel le sabaïte; Blanchard, Saint Michel; Griffith, Michael, the Martyr and Monk.
60 Swanson, al-Ma'mūn Tradition.
61 Griffith, Christians, Muslims and Neo-Martyrs; Swanson, The Martyrdom of ʿAbd al-Masīḥ.
62 See Pahlitzsch, Greek – Syriac – Arabic 503-505.

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Summary / Zusammenfassung

Islam and Orthodox Theology in Arabic: The »Melkite« Tradition from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Centuries

The »Melkite« or »Arab Orthodox« community of Christians who have been at home in the World of Islam since its origins were among the earliest to adopt the Arabic language for ecclesiastical purposes. Beginning already in the middle of the eighth century and extending as far as the early Ottoman period, »Melkite« scholars not only produced translations of the Bible and much other early Christian literature into Arabic, philosophers and theologians among them also composed original texts in Arabic. The present essay highlights and describes certain features that are typical of »Melkite« theological writing in Arabic from its inception in the now anonymous, eighth century text called by its modern editor, »On the Triune Nature of God«, up to the time of the bishop, Paul of Antioch in the thirteenth century, author of a well-known »Letter to a Muslim Friend« and numerous other works. Special features in »Melkite« theological texts include the use of Qur'ānic and Islamicate Arabic idiom, quotations from the Qur'ān, and the adoption of the topical outline of the contemporary Islamic *kalām* in their apologetic treatises.

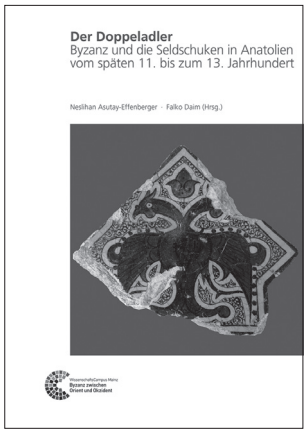
Islam und orthodoxe Theologie auf Arabisch: Die Tradition der »Melkiten« vom 9. bis 13. Jahrhundert

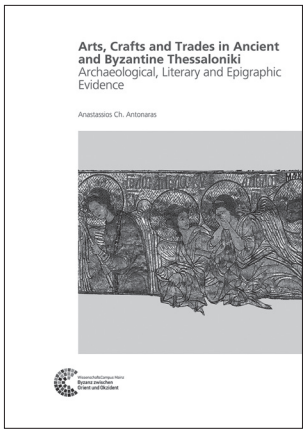
Die »melkitische« oder »arabisch-orthodoxe« Gemeinschaft der Christen, die seit ihren Anfängen in der islamischen Welt zu Hause waren, gehörte zu den ersten, die die arabische Sprache für den kirchlichen Bedarf übernahmen. Von der Mitte des 8. Jahrhunderts an bis in die frühosmanische Zeit hinein übersetzten »melkitische« Gelehrte nicht nur die Bibel und eine Vielzahl anderer frühchristlicher Texte ins Arabische. Darüber hinaus verfassten melkitische Philosophen und Theologen auch arabische Texte. Der vorliegende Aufsatz beleuchtet und beschreibt bestimmte Merkmale, die typisch für das »melkitische« theologische Schreiben in arabischer Sprache sind, von der Entstehung des heute anonymen Textes des 8. Jahrhunderts, der von seinem modernen Herausgeber den Titel »Über die dreieinige Natur Gottes« erhalten hat, bis zur Zeit des Bischof Paulos von Antiochien im dreizehnten Jahrhundert, Autor des bekannten »Briefs an einen muslimischen Freund« und zahlreicher anderer Werke. Zu den besonderen Merkmalen in den »melkitischen« theologischen Texten gehören die Verwendung der eigentümlichen arabischen Sprache des Korans bzw. des Islam, Zitate aus dem Koran und die Übernahme der topischen Darstellung des zeitgenössischen islamischen *kalām* in ihren apologetischen Abhandlungen.

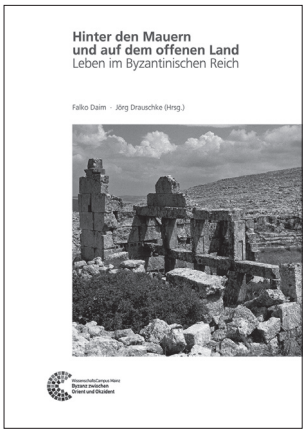
Sigles Used

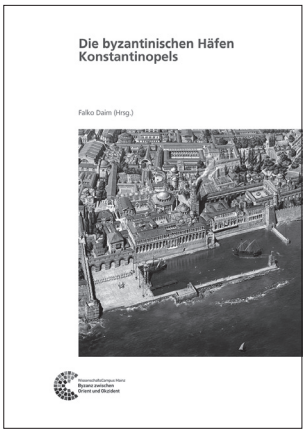
ABSA	The Annual of the British School at Athens
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
AnBoll	Analecta Bollandiana
BAR	British Archaeological Reports
BHG	F. Halkin, Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca (Bruxelles ³1957)
BMGS	Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
BSOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BV	Byzantina Vindobonensia
Byzslav	Byzantinoslavica
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CahArch	Cahiers archéologiques
CCSG	Corpus christianorum, Series Graeca
CCSL	Corpus christianorum, Series Latina
CE	Coptic Encyclopaedia
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum, hrsg. v. M. Geerard / F. Glorie (Turnhout 1974-1987)
CRAI	Comptes rendus des séances de l'année de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSHB	Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae
DeltChrA	Δελτίον τῆς Χριστιανικῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
DOS	Dumbarton Oaks Studies
EI²	Encyclopaedia of Islam. New Edition (Leiden et al. 1954-2004)
GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies
IJMES	International Journal of Middle East Studies
JESHO	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient
JÖB	Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
JRA	Journal of Roman Archaeology
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JSAI	Jerusalem Studies of Arabic and Islam
JSS	Journal of Semitic Studies
MSR	Mamlūk Studies Review
MW	The Muslim World
OC	Oriens Christianus
OCP	Orientalia Christiana Periodica
ODB	The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium
PG	Patrologiae cursus completus, Series graeca, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris 1857-1866)
PL	Patrologiae cursus completus, Series latina, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris 1844-1880)
PLP	Prosopographisches Lexikon der Palaiologenzeit
PmbZ	Prosopographie der mittelbyzantinischen Zeit
PO	Patrologia Orientalis, ed. R. Graffin / F. Nau (Paris 1904-)
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RbK	Reallexikon zur byzantinischen Kunst
RE	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft
REB	Revue des Études byzantines
SBN	Studi bizantini e neoellenici
SI	Studia Islamica
SubsHag	Subsidia Hagiographica
TIB	Tabula Imperii Byzantini
TM	Travaux et mémoires
ZDMG	Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins

Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident









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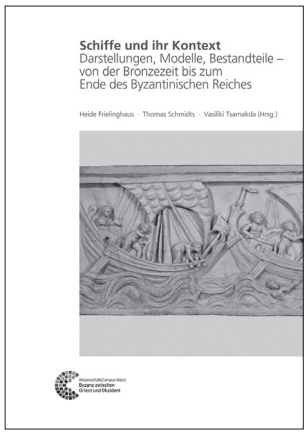

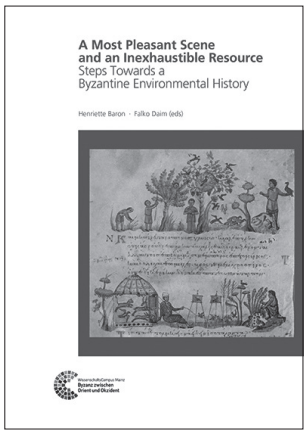

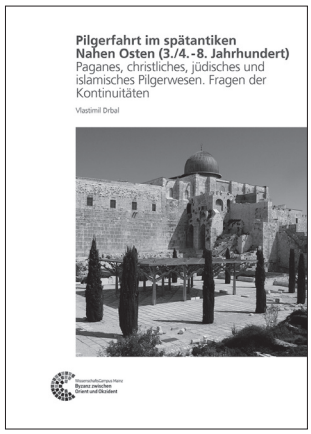



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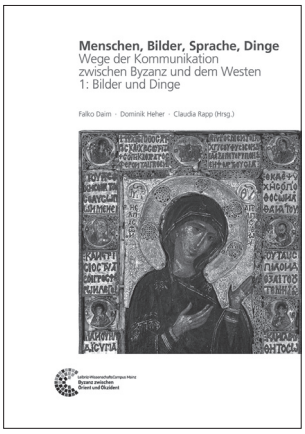

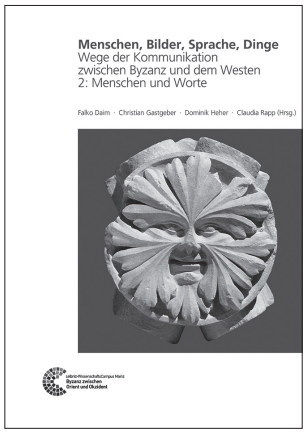

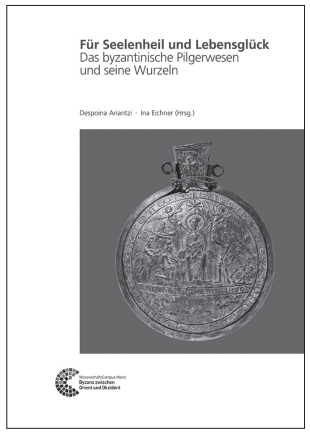

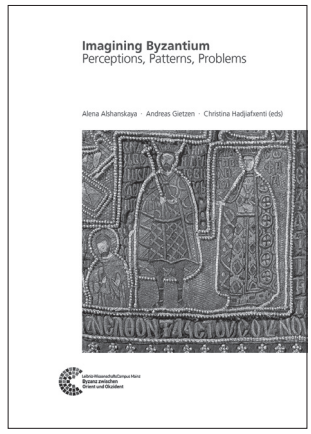

The contributors in the edited volume »Ambassadors, Artists, Theologians. Byzantine Relations with the Near East from the Ninth to the Thirteenth Centuries« examine the complex dynamics which arose between the Byzantine Empire and the Near East. Moving beyond the tradition of *histoire événementielle*, the contributions collected here highlight the passing of artistic practices, ideas and interlocutors between Byzantium and the Islamicate world. In this way, this volume seeks to nuance and contextualize our understanding of the relationship between these two medieval cultural spheres.

Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident:
Veröffentlichungen des Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus Mainz

Die Reihe Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident wird vom Vorstand des gleichnamigen Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus Mainz, einer seit 2011 bestehenden Kooperation des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums und der Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz sowie weiterer Kooperationspartner, herausgegeben.
Die Reihe dient als Publikationsorgan für das Forschungsprogramm des Leibniz-WissenschaftsCampus, das Byzanz, seine Brückenfunktion zwischen Ost und West sowie kulturelle Transfer- und Rezeptionsprozesse von der Antike bis in die Neuzeit in den Blick nimmt. Die Methoden und Untersuchungsgegenstände der verschiedenen Disziplinen, die sich mit Byzanz beschäftigen, werden dabei jenseits traditioneller Fächergrenzen zusammengeführt, um mit einem historisch-kulturwissenschaftlichen Zugang Byzanz und seine materielle und immaterielle Kultur umfassend zu erforschen.