Organising a Literary Corpus in the Middle Ages

INSTRVMENTA PATRISTICA ET MEDIAEVALIA

Research on the Inheritance of Early and Medieval Christianity

96

Organising a Literary Corpus in the Middle Ages

The *Corpus Nazianzenum* and the *Corpus Dionysiacum*

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School and Scholia in the Syriac Miaphysite Tradition

The Syriacisation of Dionysius the Areopagite as a Collective Exegetical Effort*

Emiliano Fiori
(*Venice*)

Di loro non sapevo niente, salvo che commentavano qualcosa, con le loro glosse.
E questa idea di uno scritto che nasce da un altro scritto,
lo rielabora, gli aggiunge qualcosa che prima non c'era,
mi sembrava qualcosa da seguire.[1]

Roberto Calasso, *Memè Scianca*

The present contribution does not intend to tackle the history of the Syriac textual transmission of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*, but to show how, over many centuries (sixth to twelfth), the collective exegetical effort of the Syriac miaphysite Church made it become a proper Syriac corpus. Indeed, the Areopagitic writings were, for most of their history in the Syriac language, characterised by the addition and interaction of scholia and commentaries by Syriac authors and schools: as a matter of fact, no Syriac manuscript of the Dionysian Corpus (except for the earliest one, as we shall see) is devoid of abundant scholia. At the end of this history, Dionysius had become a "Syriac" father, surrounded by a rich tradition of Syriac exegesis. This long process passed not only through two suc-

* Thanks are due to Lucas Van Rompay, who read the article with the usual carefulness and gave valuable insights.

[1] "I knew nothing about them, except that, with their glosses, they commented on something. And this idea of a piece of writing that is born from another piece of writing, reworks it, adds something to it that wasn't there before, this idea seemed to me something to follow" (R. Calasso, *Memè Scianca*, Milano, 2021, p. 47).

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cessive translations of the Corpus itself, but also, and mainly, through the progressive stratification and reciprocal incorporation of Syriac commentaries on Dionysius' writings. If, at the beginning of this itinerary, Syriac readers had to resort to the translation of the Greek scholia of John of Scythopolis, the subsequent layers added by John of Dara, "Theodore bar Zarudi" and Dionysius bar Ṣalībī contributed to deeply absorb the corpus into the canon of Syriac (miaphysite[2]) literature.

It is on these commentaries as the capital agents of the Syriac appropriation of Dionysius that this article will focus, providing an overview of their specificities, the milieux that produced them and their mutual relationships.

1. A Naked Corpus: Sergius of Resh'ayna (and some newly discovered scholia on his version)

The Dionysian Corpus in Syriac translation was born naked. To be sure, it was born as a corpus, if we understand corpus as the compact body of mostly inseparable writings that Dionysius' oeuvre has always been. It was not born a corpus, however, in the sense that it entered the Syriac world without any apparent commentary tradition behind it. Indeed, it was translated very early, before 536, and the only complete witness to this early translation is the seventh-century manuscript Saint Catherine of Sinai, Syriac 52.[3] This manuscript is also particularly renowned for being the earliest witness overall to the Dionysian corpus. This version was due to the physician and miaphysite priest Sergius of Resh'ayna,[4] who died in 536, thus, before whatever commentary activity, in any lan-

[2] On the poor reception of Dionysius in the Church of the East, Fiori, "East Syrian Mystics".

[3] Smith Lewis, *Catalogue Sinai*, p. 41; Kamil, *Catalogue Sinai*, p. 153; a more detailed description in Dionigi Areopagita, *Nomi divini*, ed. et tr. Fiori, I, pp. XIII-XXI. A low-quality digital reproduction from a microfilm is available at https://www.loc.gov/item/00279386632-ms/ (last retrieved 21 April 2023).

[4] The idea that the translation in Sinai Syriac 52 has to be attributed to Sergius originated with Sherwood, "Sergius of Reshaina". Indeed, it must be mentioned that the attribution to Sergius is a deduction, and that the manuscript does not explicitly ascribe it to him.

guage, had begun.[5] And indeed, Sinai Syriac 52 is not accompanied by any explanation or marginalia. The treatises are in the order, unusual for the Greek, *DN – CH – MT – EH – Epp*. They are preceded by Sergius' own *Discourse on Spiritual Life*,[6] which he used as introduction to the Corpus.

This is also the earliest attestation of the corpus in this bare form, and one of the few early extant exemplars overall of a Dionysian Corpus without scholia. This first translation, however, was not born in a void. A trustworthy Syriac source of the middle of the sixth century, the *Chronicle* of Ps.-Zachariah, affirms that the translation of the Dionysian corpus was made by Sergius as a service to the orthodox,[7] which, in this context, means the miaphysite cause. Indeed, with all likelihood the translation was given as a commission to Sergius by his bishop, Peter of Resh'ayna, after the latter attended the confrontation of Chalcedonian and miaphysite clerics in Constantinople in 532.[8] As was usual by that time on the occasion of such debates, the Miaphysites adduced some

[5] Sergius' version is partially edited (*DN*, *MT*, and what remains of the *Epp.*) in Dionigi Areopagita, *Nomi divini*, ed. et tr. Fiori. Studies on this translation are now abundant; its reasons and purport for the interpretation of the Corpus are interpreted differently by myself and István Perczel. See most recently Fiori, "Sergius of Resh'ayna"; Perczel, "Notes". Both articles contain exhaustive bibliographies of previous literature by both Fiori and Perczel on Sergius' version.

[6] First edition, with a second-hand French translation, in Sherwood, "Mîmro". An Italian translation in Fiori, *Sergio di Resh'ayna*.

[7] *Historia ecclesiastica* Zachariae Rhetori, ed. et tr. Brooks, IX, 19, p. 136 (vol. 3, *textus*), p. 93 (vol. 4, *versio*); *The Chronicle of* Pseudo-Zachariah Rhetor, ed. et tr. Greatrex – Phenix – Horn, p. 369. See my analysis of this passage in Fiori, "Intellectuel alexandrin", pp. 61-63.

[8] As is known, the *collatio cum severianis* is described by the Chalcedonian Innocentius of Maronea in his *Epistula ad Thomam presbyterum Thessalonicensem de collatione cum severianis habita* (which was composed in Greek but only survives in a Latin translation) in *ACO*, IV/2, pp. 169-184, and by three miaphysite sources: (1) the Plerophory of the miaphysite bishops as reported in ps. Zachariah (*Hist. eccl.*, ed. and tr. Brooks, IX, 15, 115-123 [vol. 3, textus], 79-84 [vol. 4, versio]; ed. et tr. Greatrex – Phenix – Horn, pp. 345-354); (2) a Syriac report on what the orthodox (miaphysite) bishops said to Justinian (London, BL, Add. 12155, fols 110v-111r, transcribed in Nau, *Documents*, pp. 192-

patristic passages in support of their stance, and, among these, there was one from Dionysius' *DN* I,4.[9] The Areopagite, then, was perceived by the Miaphysites as a source that could help them make their case, and Peter, the bishop of Resh'ayna, probably thought it fit to spread the Corpus also in Syriac. In this sense, the first step of Dionysius' life in Syriac was the result of the collective endeavour of the exiled miaphysite elite who, after Emperor Justin's accession to the throne in 518, was trying to develop the best weapons for their intellectual defence against the Chalcedonians. Sergius' version, although deprived of any marginalia in the manuscript Sinai Syr. 52, was commented upon at least once. In a ninth or, more probably, tenth-century manuscript, Jerusalem, Saint Mark's Monastery 124,[10] eighteen folia (numbered by pages: pp. 13-50) preserve a previously unnoticed sequence of scholia on, so sounds the title, "some difficult words"[11] of the Dionysian Corpus. A look at the language reveals that the version commented

196; and (3) another Syriac report edited by Brock, "Conversations", with text and translation on pp. 91-113.

The presence of Peter of Resh'ayna at the Collatio is attested by Innocentius (*ACO*, IV/2, p. 169.27) and by the Syriac document n. 2, BL Add. 12155, fol. 110v). On the hypothesis that Peter of Resh'ayna may have been the commissioner of the translation, see Fiori, "Sergius of Resh'ayna", pp. 156-157, and Dionigi Areopagita, *Nomi divini*, ed. et tr. Fiori, II, p. XXIV.

[9] The quotation is present in pseudo-Zachariah: see *Hist. eccl.*, ed. and tr. Brooks, IX, 15, pp. 119-120 (vol. 3, textus), p. 82 (vol. 4, versio); ed. et tr. Greatrex – Phenix – Horn, pp. 350-351. A debate on the authenticity of Dionysius' oeuvre famously took place at the *Collatio* and is exclusively attested by Innocentius (*ACO*, IV/2, p. 173.12-18). See Dionigi Areopagita, *Nomi divini*, ed. et tr. Fiori, II, pp. XXII-XXIV, for a detailed analysis of the Dionysian quotation at the Collatio.

[10] Accessible at https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/126835 (last retrieved on 20 April 2023; metadata by Adam McCollum); see also Dolabani, *Catalogue St Mark's Monastery*, pp. 281-282. The manuscript was noticed by I. A. Barsoum, *Scattered Pearls*, pp. 126-127, who attributed the scholia, with no reasons, to Theodore bar Zarudi (on whom see below). Apart from the fact that they comment on two different versions, a quick comparison between the scholia in SMMJ 124 and Theodore bar Zarudi suffices to prove that they have little to nothing in common from the point of view of the content.

[11] SMMJ 124, p. 13: ܟܠܡܐ ܡܚܫܟܬܐ ܟܠܗ ܕܬܟ ܟܠ ܕܥܡ.

upon is indeed Sergius'.[12] Although it is difficult to suggest any dating for these scholia, they can hardly have been composed later than the ninth century, since commentators of Dionysius of that century or later normally used Phokas' version; the scholia, then, may have been composed between the seventh and the eighth century, and they remain an isolated episode: indeed, no other copies are known to exist, nor do they seem to have had any impact on subsequent readers of Dionysius. It is interesting to note that they present a sequence of short lemmas, usually no more than two or three words, from Dionysius' text, immediately followed by the scholion introduced by ܕ̄ (which stands for ܕܡ, "that is/i.e."), which is typical of all exegetical texts in Syriac. On the one hand, they presuppose that the reader can refer to an integral copy of the commented writings; on the other hand, they anticipate or parallel a layout that we are going to find again in the following pages.

2. Phokas' Translation of the Corpus (Seventh Century) and the Syriac Version of John of Scythopolis' Scholia

Only shortly after Sergius' death, in the 30s or at the latest in the early 40s of the sixth century, did John, the erudite Chalcedonian bishop of Scythopolis, start writing his Greek scholia to the Dionysian Corpus. John's scholia, which became inseparable from the Corpus in the Greek tradition, also made their way to Syriac, but only around the end of the seventh or in the early eighth century, when a certain Phokas of Edessa, on whom we do not have any important biographical details,[13] again translated the Dionysian Corpus into Syriac. Phokas kept Sergius' *Discourse on Spiritual Life* as an introduction to the Corpus, but prefaced it with other materials: his own introduction-apology on the necessity of a new translation,[14] a translation of John of Scythopolis' introduc-

[12] Moreover, these scholia comment on the Dionysian treatises in the rare order *DN – CH – MT – EH* (the *Epp.* are not commented on), i.e. the sequence of Sergius' translation.

[13] A certain Cyriacus bar Shamuna, who produced a sort of 'edition' of Phokas' translation in 766/7, affirms that he lived in Serugh (see Hornus, "Corpus dionysien", p. 72): on this Cyriacus, see below in this paragraph.

[14] A first insufficient French translation in Van Esbroeck, "Triple preface"; for a new English translation with a transcription of the Syriac text, see here below, footnote 16.

tion to the Corpus, and a defence of the authenticity of the Corpus by the deacon George of Scythopolis. He added a note at the end of the Corpus, where he states that he carried out his translation and had it copied within the space of a year.[15] The treatises are in the order (much more common in Greek than Sergius' order) *CH – EH – DN – MT – Epp*. Phokas maintains in the illuminating preface to his own translation that he simply revised Sergius' version, although, in fact, a close reading reveals that his is, in most cases, a brand-new rendering.[16] Moreover, he writes that he found in the Greek exemplar at his disposal

> explanations of those words whose comprehension was difficult [...], which were composed by [...] a scholastikos by [his] profession, John by name, from the city of Bishan [Scythopolis, today's Beit Shean]. I took pains [...] to translate those scholia from the Greek language into Syriac. Together with them, however, [I] also [re-translated] those [words] that I found in the earlier translation of Sergius, which are not translated with precision.[17]

These few sentences are indicative of Phokas' approach, which is also the approach of his milieu (the cultivated Syriac miaphysite clergy) at the end of the seventh century and in the following 150 years. Phokas depicts his own work as a search for precision in *wording*, and his decision to translate John's scholia as the result of a didactic concern: since some of Dionysius' *words* are difficult, John will make them more comprehensible for the readers. In both cases, his main interest lies in the correct comprehension of words, not differently from the intention expressed in the title of the anonymous scholia on Sergius of Resh'ayna's version that I dealt with in the previous paragraph. We may define this as the approach of the *grammatikos*; it is the typical scholastic and erudite approach that characterises the early history of the Dionysian corpus in Syriac and marks the starting point of its transformation into a distinctively Syriac corpus. Although we do not know much about Phokas, we can infer that he worked in the late seventh century since

[15] See especially Hornus, "Le corpus dionysien", p. 70 for a first orientation on this material. Phokas' final note is transcribed by Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 495-496.

[16] For a preliminary discussion of Phokas' translation technique and a transcription and translation of Phokas' preface from the two most ancient manuscripts, see Fiori, "Opheleia".

[17] Fiori, "Opheleia", pp. 191-192.

in his preface he mentions Jacob of Edessa, who died in 708, and Athanasius of Balad, whom he qualifies as the (miaphysite) patriarch of Antioch, which Athanasius was from 685 to his death in 687.[18] Indeed, Phokas situates his own work in the context of a new translation trend, of which Jacob and Athanasius are cited as the most prominent representatives among others:

> Athanasius, patriarch of Antioch, and Jacob, bishop of Edessa, with their skill [...] in a certain sense married the two languages, and produced profitable fruits from their joining, together with yet other anonymous people who had come before them – from that time, the art is being refined and clarified, and thanks to their diligence [they] are adopting from the precise rendering of the Greek words that are unusual for the Syrians.[19]

Thus, Phokas programmatically inscribes his revision of Sergius' version into a collective intellectual endeavour aimed at the better comprehension and appropriation of Greek theology and sciences, especially through precision in lexical rendering. Indeed, Phokas' acquaintance with the work of Jacob and Athanasius, as well as his linguistic approach, show that he had to have had some acquaintance with the monastery of Qenneshre. This monastery had been founded in the first half of the sixth century on the river Orontes, not far from Antioch, by an erudite, Greek-speaking miaphysite monk of Aramaic origin, John bar Aphtonia. When the persecutions against miaphysite churchmen started with the accession of Justin to the imperial throne, John bar Aphtonia moved the monastery to the left bank of the Euphrates,[20] where it remained for centuries to follow and progressively became a hub of Hellenistic culture within the Syriac miaphysite Church and, more generally, for the whole Syriac world until at least the tenth century.[21] Between the seventh and ninth century, the high ranks of the Syriac miaphysite

[18] On the dates of both these scholars, see Schrier, "Chronological Problems". Literature on Jacob is very abundant, but an ideal introduction can be found in the collected contributions of ter Haar Romeny (ed.), *Jacob of Edessa*. On Athanasius of Balad, also see Teule, "Athanasius of Balad".

[19] Fiori, "Opheleia", p. 192.

[20] On the location of the monastery, see al-Dabte, "Iktishāf Dayr Qinnisrīn".

[21] On Qenneshre, see e.g. Fiori, "Cultura filosofica", pp. 129-138; Tannous, "Qenneshre"; Villey, "Qennešre"; Tannous, *Making*, pp. 169-176.

Church were constantly formed at Qenneshre.[22] Although it is impossible to reconstruct it with any precision, judging from the production of Qenneshre intellectuals, the monastery's library must have been very rich in Greek philosophical, scientific and theological books.[23] Writers who studied at the monastery produced erudite Hellenizing works in all these disciplines, and intellectuals who were formed there were the authors of translations of philosophical and theological works, among which are the corpora that are the focus of the present volume. Paul of Edessa, the reviser of the first version of Gregory Nazianzen's Orations, may have studied at Qenneshre,[24] as well as the aforementioned Athanasius of Balad.[25] Qenneshre was only the core, or one of the cores, of a general trend towards the right understanding of words and precision in wording, which obviously played a major role for this highly intellectual and scholastic miaphysite elite, and expressed itself especially in an intense scholiastic activity and an increasingly strong literalism in translations.[26] Phokas was evidently part of this movement, which we can define as "collective", insofar as the educated core of a whole Church was involved in it. This is further proved by the fact that, less than a century after his translation, Phokas' work was already slightly revised by a scribe, a certain Cyriacus bar Shamuna of Edessa, probably a monk, who copied the Corpus in 766/7, eliminating Phokas' final note, adding a note of his own hand after Sergius of Resh'ayna's introduction, and restoring Sergius' order of treatises (*DN-CH-MT-EH-Epp.*).[27] This

[22] Fiori, "Cultura filosofica", pp. 130-131.

[23] Villey, "Qennešre", pp. 155-156.

[24] According to a hypothesis put forward by Brock in *Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Nonnos Mythological Scholia*, ed. et tr. Brock, p. 29, n. 7; on p. 30, n. 2, Brock notes that Paul is remembered in a menologium produced, with all likelihood, at Qenneshre.

[25] As we learn from the *Ecclesiastical Chronicle* of Barhebraeus, in Gregorii Barhebræi *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, ed. Abbeloos – Lamy, I, cols 287-288.

[26] The development of Syriac translation techniques was famously outlined by Brock, "Translation Technique" and "Changing Fashions". Without contradicting Brock's general picture, King, *Syriac Versions*, marked a substantial step forward in the research on this topic.

[27] On Cyriacus and his redactional activity, see Hornus, "Corpus dionysien", pp. 71-72, 76; Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", p. 167.

rearrangement was termed an "edition" by Hornus[28] and Wießner.[29] Cyriacus did not touch John's scholia and preserved them. The numerous modern copies made on Cyriacus' original manuscript[30] allow us to read Cyriacus' note, in which he prevents the reader from a possible misunderstanding:

> ܙܕܩ ܕܝܢ ܕܢܬܝܕܥ ܠܟܠ ܐܢܫ ܕܦܓܥ ܒܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܝܘܢܘܣܝܘܣ ܕܡܥܒܕܐ
> ܠܣܪܓܝܣ ܐܪܟܝܐܛܪܘܣ. ܐܠܐ ܠܐ ܗܘ̇ܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܐܝܬܘܗܝ܆ ܐܦ ܦܘܫܩܐ ܕܡܢ ܝܘܢܝܐ
> ܠܣܘܪܝܝܐ. ܐܠܐ ܕܐܢܫ ܕܫܡܗ ܦܘܩܐ ܒܪ ܣܪܓܝ ܐܘܪܗܝܐ. ܕܡܬܬܒ ܗܘܐ
> ܒܣܪܘܓ܆ ܗܢܐ ܕܐܦ ܡܦܩ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܥܠ ܦܘܫܩܐ ܟܬܒܢ ܡܢ ܠܥܠ. ܫܩܠܢ ܕܝܢ
> ܠܗ ܠܡܐܡܪܐ ܗܢܐ ܕܡܥܠܬܐ ܕܗܘ ܣܪܓܝܣ. ܟܕ ܝܕܥܝܢ ܕܝܘܬܪܢܐ ܠܐ ܙܥܘܪ
> ܗܘܝܐ ܠܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܡܫܬܕܠܝܢ ܠܡܣܬܟܠܘ ܒܡܣܬܟܠܢܘܬܗ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܝܘܢܘܣܝܘܣ. ܫܒܩܢ
> ܕܝܢ ܒܒܘܚܪܢܐ ܬܪܝܨܐ ܠܡܦܩܬܐ ܕܥܒܕ ܗܘܐ[31] ܠܗ ܣܪܓܝܣ ܠܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ܆
> ܘܢܩܦܢ ܠܗܕܐ ܕܗܫܐ ܣܝܡܐ܆ ܕܗܘ ܕܦܘܩܐ ܒܪ ܣܪܓܝ ܐܘܪܗܝܐ. ܟܓܒܝܬܐ
> ܡܝܬܪܬܐ. ܒܨܠܘܬܐ ܒܥܝܢ ܡܢܟܘܢ ܩܪ̈ܘܝܐ ܡܒܨܝܢܐ ܕܬܬܪܚܡܘܢ ܠܡܚܝܠܘܬܐ ܠܐܢܫܐ
> ܕܟܬܒ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܐܝܟ ܚܝܠܗ ܡܚܝܠܐ ܐܟܡܐ.[32]

> It is necessary that whoever encounters this book of Saint Dionysius knows that [the introduction, scil. Sergius of Resh'ayna's *Discourse on Spiritual Life*] is made by Sergius the archiater; the translation from Greek into Syriac, however, is not also his own, but of a man whose name is Phokas bar Sargis of Edessa, who lived in Serugh. This is also [the author of] the apology for the translation that we copied above. However, we included this introductory discourse of the same Sergius, because we know that it will be of no little profit to those who strive to understand Saint Dionysius. Nonetheless, we dropped, based on an honest examination, the version that Sergius made of this book, and we stuck to this one that is now set down, of the same Phokas bar Sargis of Edessa, it being the best choice. We beg for your prayer, o inquiring readers, that you may show mercy

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[28] Hornus, "Corpus dionysien", pp. 71-72, 76.

[29] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", p. 167.

[30] This manuscript, originally preserved at Mosul, in the seventies was in possession of the late Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Mor Ignatius Eywas Zakka, who intended to produce an edition of it (Hornus, "Corpus dionysien", p. 72; Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", p. 167). It is unclear where this manuscript is currently preserved.

[31] Sic (masculine instead of feminine).

[32] Text as found in the manuscript Sharfeh, Syriac Catholic Patriarchate, Rahmani 90, pp. 32-33.

> to the one who laboured on this book as (Jesus did to) the thief on the right, amen.

Cyriacus' revision, however, is limited to this small reordering of materials and is, therefore, just a minimal anticipation of the kind of work that characterises the following decades.

After a first overview by Jean-Michel Hornus in 1970,[33] the tradition of Phokas' translation was investigated accurately in Göttingen, firstly, by Gernot Wießner, who published a long study in 1972,[34] which was intended to pave the way to a critical edition of this version. In that article, he not only clarified the situation of the manuscript tradition of Phokas' version, but also paid attention to the scholia that accompany it and the further commentaries produced in the Syriac miaphysite Church. Unfortunately, the edition never appeared, but, in 1977-1978, not long after Wießner's seminal article of 1972, Werner Strothmann published a comparative edition of Sergius' and Phokas' versions of *EH*, chapter 4, with all the scholia and commentaries available to him, by John of Scythopolis as well as by other figures that will be mentioned later on in the present article – John of Dara, Theodore bar Zarudi and Dionysius bar Ṣalībī.[35] With these tools at hand, even without a critical edition, we have a clear map of the Syriac land of Dionysius, and we can investigate it in greater detail. Concerning John of Scythopolis' scholia in Syriac, two important features must be mentioned: the first one is that their rendering by Phokas is crucial to assess the real extension of John's commentary in Greek. The story is known: indeed, John's scholia, being rather occasional and sparse, were soon integrated by those of other commentators, especially Maximus the Confessor, who duplicated his commentaries on certain passages or commented on places that John had not touched upon. Consequently, John's scholia were transmitted with the other scholiastic materials in most manuscripts available to us. All the scholia ended up being published as Maximus' work by the Jesuit Pierre Lanssel in 1615 and reprinted by Migne in the fourth volume of the *Patrologia Graeca*, according to the Venice edition of 1755, which, in its turn, reproduced Balthasar Cordier's re-edition of Lanssel's material provided with Cordier's Latin translation. As early as 1940, Hans Urs von Balthasar understood the crucial role the Syriac could play to filter John's commentary from the other scholia and produced a first sifting. Only recently, however, was von

[33] Hornus, "Corpus dionysien", especially pp. 70-77.

[34] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung".

[35] Strothmann, *Sakrament der Myron-Weihe*.

Balthasar's intuition put to profit by Paul Rorem and John Lamoreaux in their monograph on and translation of John's scholia, by Beate Suchla in her 2012 edition of the scholia to the *DN*, and by Alberto Nigra in an important Italian monograph of 2019 on John's theology.[36] All these scholars used different criteria to decide what scholia must be attributed to John, but I cannot dwell on this question now.

The second feature is the scholia's layout. The bishop of Scythopolis did not write a running commentary but only commented on some passages. This allowed enough space for a marginal annotation: indeed, almost all available first-millennium Syriac manuscripts containing these scholia display them in *tabulae ansatae* or frames all around the body of Dionysius' text (whereas this is less frequently the case for second-millennium manuscripts): examples stretch over eleven centuries, as the examples in the following list will make clear. In some early cases, they are apparently written by different hands than those that wrote the main text. Gernot Wießner accurately studied the techniques used by scribes to link the main body of the text with the scholia, and the importance of affinities in annotation signs and layouts to establish relationships between manuscripts.[37] The following list collects the extant manuscripts known to date where John's scholia accompany Phokas' translation of the Dionysian Corpus.

- London, BL, Add. 12151 (year 804, written by a monk George);[38] John's scholia in the margins.
- London, BL, Add. 12152 (year 837, written by a deacon Addai of Amid);[39] John's scholia in the margins.
- London, BL, Add. 14539 (ninth century);[40] John's scholia in the margins.

[36] Von Balthasar, *Kosmische Liturgie*, pp. 644-672 (i.e. the appendix, called "Das Problem der Dionysius-Scholien", where von Balthasar indicated how Phokas' Syriac version could help discern John's authentic scholia, reproducing his former article of 1940: von Balthasar, "Scholienwerk"; Suchla, *Maximus-Scholien*; *CD*, IV/1; Rorem – Lamoreaux, *John of Scythopoli*; Nigra, *Pensiero*.

[37] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", pp. 169-188.

[38] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 493-497.

[39] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 497-499. On the scribe Addai see below, note 75.

[40] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, p. 499.

- London, BL, Add. 14540 (ninth century);[41] John's scholia in the margins.
- Città del Vaticano, BAV, Sir. 254 (ninth-tenth century); John's scholia alternate in discrete blocks with Dionysius' text in the main body of writing (see below).[42]
- Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syr. 24 (year 1908, Cyriacus edition, copy of Mattai bar Paulos on Cyriacus' exemplar of 766/7);[43] John's scholia in the main body of the text, alternating with Dionysius' integral text, but in thinner script.
- Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syr. 167 (year 1867, Cyriacus edition, written by 'Abd al-Nūr, son of the deacon Behnam);[44] John's scholia in the main body of the text, alternating with Dionysius' integral text.
- Sharfeh, Syriac Catholic Patriarchate, Rahmani 90 (year 1903, Cyriacus edition; copied by 'Abd al-'Azīz, son of the priest George, on an exemplar of Cyriacus which, differently from all other copies, is here dated to 1084 AG, i.e. 772,);[45] John' scholia in the lower margins.
- London, BL, Or. 2306 (year 1548, Cyriacus edition, copy made on Cyriacus' exemplar of 766/7);[46] *non vidi*.
- Manchester, John Rylands Library, 55 (1889, Cyriacus edition, copy of Mattai bar Paulos on Cyriacus' exemplar of 766/7);[47] *non vidi*.
- Harvard, Houghton Library, Syr. 113 (1894, Cyriacus edition, copy of Mattai bar Paulos on Cyriacus' exemplar of 766/7);[48] *non vidi*.
- Pampakuda, Konat Collection, 239 (nineteenth century, Cyriacus edition);[49] John's scholia alternate with Dionysius' texts, both are

[41] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 499-500.

[42] Assemani – Assemani, *Catalogus*, pp. 542-543.

[43] Mingana, *Catalogue*, I, cols 69-72.

[44] Mingana, *Catalogue*, I, cols 374-375.

[45] Binggeli et al., *Catalogue Charfet*, I, pp. 373-376 (entry by Alain Desreumaux).

[46] Margoliouth, *Descriptive List*, p. 6.

[47] Coakley, "John Rylands Library", pp. 180-181.

[48] Goshen-Gottstein, *Harvard College Library*, p. 83.

black, in the main body of the text. They are occasionally also in the margins.

- Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs, 1003 (year 1962, copy of an exemplar of 1570; order of treatises according to Cyriacus' edition, but with no introductory material);[50] John's scholia in the margins.
- Midyat, Bar Sawmo Library, 20 (year 1973, copy of an exemplar of 1570; order of treatises according to Cyriacus' edition, but with no introductory material);[51] John's scholia in red alternated in the main body of the text with Dionysius' text in black.

The translation of John's scholia, and their peculiar layout, is the crucial passage for the transformation of the Dionysian Corpus into a *Syriac* corpus, that is, into a body of writings surrounded and inseparably permeated by a specifically Syriac tradition of reading and understanding of Dionysius' oeuvre. The first step was the appropriation of this allogenous commentary through the act of translation. Among the witnesses to John's scholia, it is worth mentioning the interesting Vatican manuscript mentioned above in the manuscript list, which has not attracted much attention so far.[52] This codex, Vat. Sir. 254,[53] which I mentioned above in the list, transmits on 41 folia *DN* 3-13 in a very interesting form, which recalls the layout of John's scholia in the lower layer of *Parisinus Graecus* 1330 discussed in the present volume by Margherita Matera. Dionysius' text is written here in a script that seems to date to the ninth or

[49] Palmer – Perczel, "New Testimony". Accessible at https://w3id.org.//vhmml/readingRoom/view/539759; metadata by James E. Walters.

[50] Accessible at https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/504141 (last retrieved on 21 April 2023); metadata by James E. Walters. It contains the whole corpus, not only the *DN* as in the metadata.

[51] Accessible at https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/135796 (last retrieved on 13 April 2023); metadata by Edward Mathews Jr.

[52] The manuscript is not mentioned by Nigra, *Pensiero*, nor anywhere in Wießner's works. Only Sherwood and Hornus took it into account in brief mentions (Sherwood, "Sergius of Reshaina", p. 177; Hornus, "Corpus dionysien", pp. 78-79). Nobody, however, has ever stressed the peculiarity of the layout of John's scholia in this ancient witness.

[53] The manuscript is freely accessible at https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.sir.254 (last retrieved on 13 April 2023).

tenth century, whereas John's commentaries are written in a completely different, smaller script of the same epoch. They are written in the main body of the text, but in discrete blocks that alternate with blocks containing Dionysius' text; the overall layout of text and commentary must have necessarily been conceived as a coherent whole, so that both scripts must be dated to the same time.

3. The Ninth Century: Dionysius the Areopagite in the Age of Dionysius of Tell Maḥre

The truly Dionysian age in the Syriac world was the ninth century. It was in this century that the Areopagitic corpus became a canonical text for the Syrians, and Dionysius a Syriac Father of the Church in the fullest sense. This canonization came about through the progressive stratification of copies, commentaries and annotations of numerous scholars who were often connected to each other. They were all Miaphysite clerics, who worked intensively around the corpus, and we can, if not clearly see, at least catch a glimpse of a scholastic group work involving the intellectual elite of the Church, most probably under the impulse of its highest ranks and most especially of the patriarch, *nomen omen*, Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre. Dionysius, who ruled over his Church from 818 until his death in 845, was deeply influential in the Christian life of Syria and Mesopotamia overall.[54] He wrote a crucial *Chronography* that constituted a bedrock of later Syriac miaphysite historiography.[55] Among other things, his patriarchate saw a blooming of works of Hellenizing erudition and most especially of commentaries on the liturgy.[56] In these works, references to Dionysius the Areopagite's interpretation of the sacraments in the *EH* had pride of place; his hierarchical treatises were even specifically commented upon. The centrality of liturgy in the age of patriarch Dionysius and the relevance of the Areopagite in this liturgical movement was certainly an important, if not the main reason for the ninth-century Syriac canonization of Dionysius. Indeed, the most

[54] For a good overview see Wood, *Imam*.

[55] The necessary starting point is Debié, *Écriture de l'histoire*, pp. 569-572.

[56] The latter were motivated, among other things, by a harsh liturgical-political controversy on the formula "We break the heavenly bread" that had been ongoing since the times of Dionysius' predecessor Cyriacus of Tagrit (790-817); see Wood, *The Imam of the Christians*, especially pp. 111-119, and pp. 138-142, 145-146 for the commentaries on liturgy.

prominent miaphysite writer of this age, the understudied but prolific (and somewhat controversial[57]) theological writer John of Dara, wrote a commentary on the Eucharist,[58] and most exemplarily, he may be the author of a long commentary on each of Dionysius' two Hierarchies.[59] It is particularly unfortunate that the attribution of the commentaries on Dionysius cannot be ascertained, since this John was certainly a close acquaintance of patriarch Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre, being the dedicatee of Dionysius' *Chronography*. Indeed, the commentary on the *CH* is also attributed to the later writer Moses bar Kepha (d. 903).[60] A sure

[57] Indeed, we do not know much about him except for the fact that he was the dedicatee of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre's *Chronography* (see *Chronique de* Michel le Syrien, X, 20, ed. by J.-B. Chabot, II, p. 357, and IV, p. 378). Most relevantly, it is not yet possible to establish the exact extent of his genuine oeuvre, since some of the writings attributed to him must be ascribed to a pseudo-John who imitated Moses bar Kepha. On this question, see Schlimme, Hexaemeronkommentar, I, pp. 14-25; Moss – Ruani, "Solving". The sole recent edition of one of the major works attributed to John is: John of Dara, *On the Resurrection of Human Bodies*, ed. et tr. Shemunkasho.

[58] Edition and French translation in *Le De Oblatione de* Jean de Dara, ed. et tr. Sader; English translation: Varghese, *Commentary of John of Dara*.

[59] These commentaries have been recently introduced and translated by Anderson, *Interpretation*, pp. 140-253.

[60] Moses bar Kepha had his floruit after the death of Dionyius of Tell-Maḥre. Unfortunately, no real attempt at a straightforward attribution to either John or Moses has been made, and Anderson does not herself seem to be aware of this double attribution (see especially Anderson, *Interpretation*, p. 20). This is comprehensible if we consider how little we still know, and how little is critically edited, of the work of both authors, especially of John of Dara. However, *contra* Schlimme, *Hexaemeronkommentar*, p. 19, it is tempting to attribute the whole couple of Commentaries on the Dionysian Hierarchies to John of Dara rather than to Moses bar Kepha, precisely because only the *Commentary on the Heavenly Hierarchy* is assigned to both authors, whereas the *Commentary on the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* is exclusively ascribed to John, which makes one tend to think that a complete commentary on Dionysius' Hierarchies was, on the whole, a project of John's. Moreover, in the manuscripts of Moses' works, the *Commentary on the Heavenly Hierarchy* is always put after a certainly genuine writing of Moses, *On the creation of angels*. It is probably the thematic affinity with the latter treatise that attracted the *Commentary* into the orbit of Moses' works. Of course, these are external arguments. Only a really thorough analysis

attribution of the Dionysian commentaries to John would add a substantial piece to the Areopagitic picture of the age of patriarch Dionysius. Should they be ascribed to Moses bar Kepha, which is unlikely, they would however attest, well into the ninth century, the continued relevance of the Areopagitic moment at the beginning of the same century. Given their importance for the inculturation of Dionysius in the Syriac world, John's/Moses' commentaries on Dionysius would require a whole paper, and in fact a doctoral dissertation has recently been devoted to them. I shall return to them below in the section devoted to Theodore Bar Zarudi. Suffice it here to say that these Dionysian commentaries, although highly scholastic in style, as all Syriac writers were at the time, are not composed in the form of scholia, nor are they commentaries in the proper sense, since they do not comment upon Dionysian lemmas, and Dionysius' text is almost never quoted as such. They are rather paraphrastic dissertations,[61] free elaborations on the material offered by the hierarchic treatises, and yet, they certainly represent a major step in Dionysius' journey through the Syriac world.

Another acquaintance of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre was the miaphysite bishop of Baghdad, whose name was Basilius as a cleric but Lazarus bar Sobto as a layman.[62] In a note at the end of the oldest manuscript transmitting Phokas' translation, BL Add. 12151 of 804, Lazarus is said to have bought the codex together with his two brothers. The three men are said here to have been monks in a cloister of Dara. It is unlikely, then – be it remarked in passing – that Lazarus did not have any tie with the probable Dionysian commentator John of Dara. Moreover, Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre himself writes in his *Chronography* that Lazarus caused a lot of trouble in Baghdad, and he was obliged to depose him in 829

of the style of the *Commentary on the Heavenly Hierarchy* and its possible place within the economy of the work of either author will confirm this hypothesis (Schlimme, *Hexaemeronkommentar*, p. 19, offers only impressionistic insights against the attribution to John of Dara: the *Commentary on the Heavenly Hierarchy* must be attributed to Moses "auf Grund bestimmter literarischer und stilistischer Eigentümlichkeiten, wie zB Kompendienstil, Meinungsdiskussion der Väter und Lehrer, scholastisch-dialektische Problembehandlung, und stereotype Diskussionsfloskeln"; nothing that cannot be found in John of Dara's presumably genuine works).

[61] See Anderson, *Interpretation*, p. 17.

[62] See e.g. Barsoum, *Scattered Pearls*, p. 380; Baumstark, *Geschichte*, p. 278; Van Rompay, "Lo'ozar bar Sobtho".

at the request of the local congregation.[63] Unsurprisingly, Lazarus also wrote, among other things, commentaries on liturgy: on baptism,[64] on the Myron,[65] and on the Eucharist in three chapters,[66] the third being devoted to the defence and explanation of the controversial formula "we break the heavenly bread". The evidence of the ancient Dionysian manuscript BL Add. 12151 indicates, once again, that the high ranks of the miaphysite Church under Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre shared the same intellectual interests in liturgy and Hellenizing scholarship, and that the active engagement with the Areopagite was particularly prominent among these interests.

[63] Dionysius' passage in *Chronique de* Michel le Syrien, XII, 14, ed. by J.-B. Chabot, III, pp. 64-70 and IV, pp. 516-520; also see in Gregorii Barhebræi *Chronicon ecclesiasticum*, ed. Abbeloos – Lamy, I, cols 365-371; see also *Chronicle of 1234*, in *Anonymi auctoris* Chronicon, ed. Chabot, II, pp. 263-265.

[64] Preserved in Città del Vaticano, BAV, Sir. 147, of the year 1234: see Assemani – Assemani, *Catalogus*, pp. 273-277, here n. VI at p. 276. The same manuscript also preserves a liturgical commentary on the difference between Chrism and Eucharist by a 'Rabban' Daniel (n. IV at p. 275; also found in London, BL, Add. 21210 of the year 1242, fols 197v-199r, see Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, p. 879; and in Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syr. 112, of the year 1905, fols 202r-203r, see Mingana, *Catalogue*, col. 273), whom I will mention later on in connection with Benjamin of Edessa. This Daniel may well be identical with the Daniel who penned a brief note on the Eucharist (Città del Vaticano, BAV, Borg. Syr. 133; cf. Scher, "Musée Borgia", p. 277).

[65] Preserved in the manuscripts Mardin, Church of the Forty Martyrs, 144 of the twentieth century, pp. 317-368; Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syr. 546, fols 228r-237r of the year 1930, but copied from manuscripts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. For the Mardin manuscript, see Vööbus, "Discoveries", pp. 291-292; for the Mingana manuscript, see Mingana, *Catalogue*, col. 1012.

[66] Currently readable in the manuscript Midyat, Dayro d-Mor Gabriel, 83 of the twentieth century, pp. 10vb-30va. See https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/122891 (last retrieved 15 April 2023). This is a partial, modern copy of the large collection of liturgical materials described by Vööbus, "Discoveries", p. 292, as belonging to the library of the Church of Meryem Ana in Istanbul. Indeed, the existence of a three-chapter commentary on the Eucharist by Lazarus bar Sobto was mentioned by Barsoum, *Scattered Pearls*, p. 380.

Coherent with this observation, the erudite teacher Benjamin of Edessa (d. 843)[67] is also supposed to have written a commentary on the Areopagitic corpus in the early decades of the same century, but it seems that nothing of this alleged work has come down to us, except for four references in the tenth-century Syriac lexicon of Bar Bahlul, which quotes Benjamin's commentary four times as a ܦܘܫܩܐ, an interpretation, of Dionysius.[68] Most of these glosses evidently refer to the introductory materials rather than to the Dionysian writings themselves.

ܒܘܠܝ ܬܪܥܝܬܐ ... ܘܐܝܟ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܕܝܪܝܐ ܡܠܟ ܡܠܟ̈ܐ[69]

ܠܓܘܪܣܐ ܐܝܟ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܝܚܝܕܝܐ ܒܦܘܫܩ ܕܕܝܘܢܘܣܝܘܣ ܗ ܥܠܡ ܣܗܪܐ[70]

ܣܘܦܐ ...ܣܘ̈ܦܐ ܐܝܟ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܕܝܪܝܐ ܦܘ̈ܩܐ ܕܠܒܪ ܕܝܪܐ. ܐܫܬܡܥܬܗ ܒܦܘܫܩܐ ܕܕܝܘܢܘܣܝܘܣ[71]

ܣܘܣܬܘܦܠܘܣ ܒܬ̱ ܕܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܕܝܪܝܐ ܒܦܘܫܩܐ ܕܕܝܘܢܘܣܝܘܣ ܗ ܒܢܫ[72]

> *Bwly* (βουλή): opinion/council [...] and according to the monk Benjamin the highest council.
>
> *Gwrs'*: according to Benjamin the solitary in the commentary on Dionysius it means the new moon.

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[67] See especially BARSOUM, *Scattered Pearls*, pp. 382-383; BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, pp. 276-277; VAN ROMPAY, "Benjamin of Edessa".

[68] The four references are listed in *Lexicon syriacum*, ed. DUVAL, III, p. XV, and again in BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte*, p. 276, n. 8.

Note that Bar Bahlul was not miaphysite but belonged to the Church of the East. This highlights that Dionysius had some diffusion in the East Syriac world. Indeed, despite the scarce knowledge of his writings in ascetic-mystical literature until at least Joseph Ḥazzāyā (see above, n. 2), already John of Dalyatha showed a better acquaintance with the Areopagite, Timothy I was in search of his writings at the end of the eighth century (see especially BROCK, "Two Letters"), and Ishoʿdad of Merw mentioned him in his biblical commentaries with reference to the angelic orders: *Commentaire d'*Išoʿdad *de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament*, I: *Genèse*, ed. VAN DEN EYNDE – VOSTÉ, p. 22 (text), 24 (translation).

[69] *Lexicon syriacum*, ed. DUVAL, I, col. 369.

[70] *Lexicon syriacum*, ed. DUVAL, I, col. 475. In *Thesaurus Syriacus*, I, col. 785, Payne Smith translates ܥܠܡ ܣܗܪܐ as *interitus lunae*.

[71] *Lexicon syriacum*, ed. DUVAL, I, col. 776.

[72] *Lexicon syriacum*, ed. DUVAL, II, col. 1383.

> *Ḥrq’*: in the plural, according to the monk Benjamin, it means the acts of decreeing a sentence; I found it in the commentary on Dionysius.
>
> *Skwtwpwlys* (Σκυθόπολις): in the book of the monk Benjamin, in the commentary on Dionysius, it is Bayshan.

This Benjamin was appointed metropolitan of Edessa by Dionysius of Tell Maḥre,[73] and can, thus, be considered, along with John of Dara and Lazarus-Basil, as a representative of the intellectual elite close to the patriarch. His works are also lost, but we do have, quite significantly, a short letter of his also on the Eucharist and Baptism.[74] If we are to believe the tenth-century Syriac dictionary that alludes to his commentary, Benjamin's notes on Dionysius must have been a series of scholia on difficult words. Moreover, Benjamin is significantly mentioned in a long scribal note of the second earliest manuscript of Phokas' translation, London, BL, Add. 12152, fol. 194r. The achievement of this manuscript is dated to 30 June 1148 AG (837 CE), which means that it was written when Benjamin was alive. Indeed, the scribe, whose name was Addai of Amid[75] (as declared in the colophon, fol. 193v), qualifies Benjamin as "our master of the dogma" and adds that by the time the manuscript was completed, Benjamin was at the monastery of Tell 'Ada near Antioch with his school.

> ܐܫܬܠܡ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܫܢܬ ܐܠܦ ܘܡܐܐ ܘܐܪܒܥܝܢ ܘܬܡܢܝܐ܆ ܐܝܟ ܡܢܝܢܐ ܕܝܘ̈ܢܝܐ. ܒܬܠܬܝܢ ܒܚܙܝܪܢ ܝܪܚܐ܆ ܝܘܡ ܥܪܘܒܬܐ. ܐܬܟܬܒ ܕܝܢ ܗܟܝܠ ... ܒܝ̈ܘܡܝ ܛܘܒܬܢܐ ܦܛܪܝܐܪܟܐ ܕܝܠܢ: ܕܝܘ̈ܢܘ̈ܣܝܘܣ ܕܒܘܪܣܝܐ ܫܠܝܚܝܐ ܕܦܛܪܘܣ܆ ܘܡܪܝ ܝܘ̈ܣܦ ܕܐܠܟܣܢܕܪܝܐ ܟܕ ܟܘܢܫܐ ܕܬܘܬܒܘܬܐ ܟܕ ܗܘܐ ܒܕܝܪܐ ܪܒܬܐ ܕܬܠܥܕܐ: ܕܬܠܟܐ ܗܘ ܒܒܘܪܐ ܕܐܢܛܝܘܟܝܐ: ܥܡ ܕܕܘ ܠܟܠܐ ܡܪܝ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ: ܘܐܣܟܘܠܐ ܕܥܡܗ ܘܡܕܒܘܗܝ.[76]

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[73] *Chronique de* Michel le Syrien, ed. CHABOT, III, p. 455, and IV, p. 755.

[74] The letter is preserved in London, BL, Add. 14538, fols 38v-39v. See WRIGHT, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, p. 1004.

[75] This Addai is also known, approximately thirty years later, as the copyist of London, BL, Add. 12159, copied in 868 and containing the whole collection of Severus of Antioch's Cathedral Homilies (WRIGHT, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 534-546; on Addai pp. 545-546). Whereas he was a monk and a deacon in 837, when he copied Dionysius, he is a priest in 868.

[76] See also WRIGHT, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, p. 498 for the complete transcription of this note.

> This book was finished in the year 1148 according to the numbering of the Greeks [i.e. 837 CE], on the 30th of the month of Ḥaziran [i.e. June], a Saturday. It was then written [...] in the days of our blessed patriarchs, Dionysius of the apostolic see of Peter, and Mor Joseph of Alexandria, when our master of the dogma, Mor Benjamin, and the school that was with him and in his presence, held temporary residence in the great monastery of Tell ʿAda, which was in the region of Antioch.

Note here the explicit definition of Benjamin's group of disciples as a school (ܟܬܒܐ) and the phrase ,ܩܕܡܘܗܝ, "in his presence", which will return more than once later. What is more, Addai declares that the Dionysian codex he had finished copying formed a couple with another manuscript, which contained the works of Gregory of Nazianzus. Thus, Addai the scribe connects himself implicitly as a copyist of the works of Dionysius and Gregory Nazianzen to Benjamin's school, to which he declared he belonged.

From these few data, Benjamin emerges as a man of vast knowledge in patristic, lexicographical and liturgical matters, which he must have transmitted to the pupils who gathered around him. Indeed, he seems to have practiced both the liturgical commentary, so typical of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre's times, and to have had a taste for the minute analysis of patristic texts in the scholastic style of a *grammatikos*. The connection between Dionysius and Gregory in relation to Benjamin, as we shall see, does not occur by chance.

4. An Excursus: Rabban Benjamin and his School on Gregory Nazianzen

The corpora of both authors seem to have been of the utmost importance for Rabban Benjamin's school and the epoch of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre as a couple of twin corpora. Indeed, Benjamin is credited not only with the commentary on Dionysius but also with being the owner of the lost antigraph of a preserved manuscript containing Gregory's Orations, London, BL, Or. 8731 of 834,[77] whose colophon (fol. 87r)

[77] Only a telegraphic description in the *Handlist of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum Acquired since 1899*, p. 2, online at https://archive.org/details/BLHandlist/page/n1/mode/2up (last retrieved on 14 April 2023), where the manuscript is incorrectly dated to 734 CE; but see the accurate analysis and re-dating by DE HALLEUX, "Benjamin d'Édesse".

states that the book

> ܒܥܝܪ ܒܕܝܪ ܡܠܟܐ ܕܐܝܬ ܒܗ ܩܕܡ ܡܪ ܐܘܣܒܘܢܐ ܒܕܝܪ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܡܪ ܫܡܥܘܢ ܣܛܘܠܝܛܐ ܒܙܒܢ ܕܗܘܐ ܡܪ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܪܒܢ ܒܗ ܒܗ ܕܠܥܠ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܘܣܦܪܐ ܘܩܪܝܐ ܒܗ ܒܗ ܕܠܥܠ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܩܕܡ ܡܪ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܪܒܢ ܒܪܡ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܣܦܪܐ ܕܐܬ ܒܗ ܒܗ ܕܠܥܠ ܡܢ ܐܬܪܐ ܘܡܢ ܟܬܒ ܕܝܠܗ.
>
> "was written in the monastery of Bet Malka, i.e. of Mar Eusebona,[78] in the sanctuary of Mar Simeon the Stylite, when Mar Benjamin, Rabban, [was] in the above-mentioned place and the scribe and reader [was][79] in the presence of Rabban Mar Benjamin himself, the book having being written thanks to the care and diligence of the said Rabban, and from his own copy".

Once more, the expression ܩܕܡ, "in his presence", is used in connection with Benjamin as a sort of fixed formula.[80] We will find it again soon.

Most importantly, Benjamin is mentioned as being the inspirer of two sets of anonymous commentaries on Gregory Nazianzen.[81] The first one is found in London, BL, Add. 17197 of the ninth or tenth

[78] It is interesting to note (and certainly worth of further investigation) how Benjamin is found in two monasteries (the great monastery of Tell 'Ada and the monastery of Mar Eusebona) that were also important in the life of Jacob of Edessa, who died and was buried at Tell 'Ada, where he spent the last nine years of his life. It is easy to suppose that Benjamin followed the track of the libraries and the books used by Jacob.

[79] The intended meaning may be: "the scribe was also a reader in the presence of" (thus Van Roey – Moors, "Version récente", pp. 82-83).

[80] It is important to note that the scribe of BL Or. 8731 was one Barḥadbšabbo, who is also said to have "corrected and collated" the manuscript BL Add. 12159 of Severus of Antioch's complete Homilies (fol. 313r, see Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, p. 546), whose scribe, as we saw (see above n. 75), was the Addai of Amid that had copied Dionysius and had some connection with the circle of Benjamin of Edessa. This link between the scribes Addai and Barḥadbšabbo in connection with Benjamin further broadens the picture of this monastic-scholastic milieux, adding to it the effort to produce such a monumental copy of one of Severus of Antioch's major works.

[81] On these two commentaries and on a third one preserved in London, BL, Add. 17147, see the seminal article by de Halleux, "Commentaires syriaques".

century[82] and is said to follow "the tradition of Benjamin" (ܥܠ ܡܫܘܚܬܐ ܕܒܢܝܡܝܢ ...ܐ, fol. 1v), and the other in London, BL, Add. 14725, of the tenth century,[83] which is said to have been written by a group of scholars who were disciples of Benjamin, and corrected by Benjamin's most eminent disciple, Mor Daniel. It is useful to recall that, according to Ignatius Barsoum, this Mor Daniel is the same as the liturgical commentator Rabban Daniel I have mentioned briefly above.[84] No evidence supports this identification, which, however, is quite probable: Daniel the liturgical exegete fits very well into the age of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre and the intellectual elite surrounding him and, thus, into Benjamin of Edessa's milieu.

In fact, the British Library preserves not only two but three different commentaries on Gregory's Orations. The first commentary, on all the Orations, is found in London, BL, Add. 17147,[85] but it has a strongly individual character and does not need to retain us here.[86] The second commentary, which de Halleux called Commentary 2, is the one contained in BL Add. 17197.[87] It is a synthetic explanation of Gregory's

[82] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 440-441.

[83] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 441-443.

[84] See note 64. The identification is given as a self-evident fact by Barsoum, *Scattered Pearls*, pp. 393-394. Barsoum also identifies this figure with still another Daniel, "Daniel the blind of Beth Botin", who compiled the lessons for Passion Week together with his disciple Isaac (preserved in London, BL, Add. 18714: Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, 162; and in the MS Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syr. 105; see Mingana, *Catalogue*, col. 258). This identification is fully arbitrary. It is much more likely that (as already thought by Baumstark, *Geschichte*, p. 283) this Daniel is the same as the Daniel, also called 'Rabban', who wrote a preface to the pseudo-Philoponian treatise *On difference, number, and division* written by the monks and clerics who debated with Probus in 595/596. The preface is preserved in Città del Vaticano, BAV, Sir. 144, fol. 88v (Assemani – Assemani, *Catalogus*, p. 253). Indeed, the Rabban Daniel who authored this preface is very well acquainted with the work of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre.

[85] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 438-440. On this commentary, see also Jonathan Loopstra's chapter in the present volume, especially paragraphs 1 and 4.

[86] De Halleux presented it in de Halleux, "Commentaires syriaques", pp. 105-106 and passim.

[87] See de Halleux, "Commentaires syriaques", pp. 106-107.

Orations 1, 2 and 3. De Halleux calls Commentary 3 the one preserved in BL Add. 14725. It comments at length upon Orations 1, 2, 3, 25, 34 and 21. All three commentaries use Paul of Edessa's translation of 623/624.[88] As far as the layout of these Gregorian commentaries is concerned, de Halleux highlighted that they also share the same style in the presentation of the lemmas, i.e. of the commented on passages of Gregory's text.[89] Just as in the commentary on Sergius of Resh'ayna's translation in the manuscript 124 of Saint Mark's Monastery in Jerusalem, a passage is only evoked by two or three words and does not have a full sense, thus, presupposing that the readers have a complete text in front of them; the lemma is then immediately followed by the characteristic ܕ̈. De Halleux rightly remarked that this presentation style – by strongly shortened lemmas – was not known to him from any other authors of the eighth to ninth centuries, not even in biblical commentators, and that it is instead found in later centuries, for example, in the eleventh-century author Dionysius bar Ṣalībī – as we shall see. In fact, this is another feature that binds the traditions of Gregory and Dionysius in the ninth century, since the only place where this kind of arrangement of lemmas and scholia can be traced in the first millennium is in commentaries on Dionysius the Areopagite.[90]

I am going to focus here on Commentaries 2 and 3 on Gregory, because both add further invaluable pieces to our picture of the process of the canonization and constitution of patristic corpora in Syriac in the ninth century; both commentaries are related to the school of Rabban Benjamin by preliminary notes in the text, which connect them to the same school that also commented on Dionysius; and, thus,

[88] For isolated divergences from Paul and the specific variants of the commentaries, see DE HALLEUX, "Commentaires syriaques", pp. 129-136. On Paul of Edessa, see above, note 24. The three commentaries are also extensively compared in Jonathan LOOPSTRA's chapter in the present volume, at paragraph 4.

[89] DE HALLEUX, "Commentaires syriaques", p. 131.

[90] As I said, it is found in the commentary on Sergius' version of Dionysius. However, other manuscripts containing further anonymous commentaries on the Areopagite, on which I will dwell later on in this paper, share this way of fashioning the lemmas – namely, two codicological units of Città del Vaticano, BAV, Sir. 107 (fols 80r-113v) and of London, BL, Add. 14541 (fols 111r-18v), respectively, which originally belonged to the same manuscript of not later than the tenth century. See below, also for bibliographical references on these codicological units.

they associate precisely the authors at the centre of the present volume, Gregory and Dionysius, in this process of corpora-construction and canonization.

In the first case, the title itself of Commentary 2, on fol. 1v of BL Add. 17197, states that “it was composed by a lover of toil according to the tradition of the venerable Mor Benjamin, the Metropolitan of Edessa” (ܣܝܡ ܡܢ ܐܢܫ ܪܚܡ ܥܡܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܡܪܝ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܡܝܛܪܘܦܘܠܝܛܐ ܕܐܘܪܗܝ).

The note that is placed as a sort of prefatory scholion to Commentary 3 on fol. 103rv of BL Add. 14725 is even more interesting, as it displays a long methodological statement on how the school of Rabban Benjamin worked:

> ܡܫܪܝܢ ܕܢܟܬܘܒ ܣܟ̈ܘܠܝܐ ܕܡ̈ܠܐ ܥܣܩ̈ܬܐ ܕܒܡܐܡܪ̈ܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܬܬܨܦܘ ܡܢ
> ܒܡܟܢܫܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܐܢ̈ܫܐ ܡܬܕܪ̈ܫܢܐ[91] ܕܩܕܡ ܪܒܢ ܒܢܝܡܝܢ ܕܐܝܟ ܚܝܠܗܘܢ ܕܨܦܘ
> ܕܢܛܪܘܢ ܠܡܫܠܡܢܘܬܐ ܕܡܢ ܗܘ. ܒܛܠ ܕܝܢ ܘܬܪܨ[92] ܡܪܝ ܕܢܝܐܝܠ ܬܠܡܝܕܗ ܕܗܘ. ܟܕ
> ܒܕܘܟ ܡܢ. ܐܘܣܦ ܐܡܬܝ ܕܣܢܝܩܐ ܗܘܬ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܬܬܦܫܩ ܛܒ ܓܠܝܐ. ܟܪܝ ܕܝܢ ܒܕܘܟ
> ܐܡܬܝ ܕܡܝܬܪܘܬܐ ܢܦܩܬ ܒܐܝܬ. ܐܡܬܝ ܕܡܫ̈ܚܐ ܐܝܬ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܢ ܪܒܢ ܐܬܡܠܠ
> ܐܝܟ [103v] ܚܬܝܬ̈ܬܐ. ܘܐܠܝܨ̈ܬܐ ܗܢܘ. ܐܝܬ ܓܝܪ ܐܝܟܐ ܕܡܛܠ ܥܣܩܘܬܐ
> ܕܬܘܪܨܐ ܟܠܗ̇ ܟܪܗܣܝܣ ܗܘܬ ܥܠ ܫܘܦܠܐ ܘܡܛܠ ܡܟܐܟܘܬ ܒܛܠܐ
> ܘܕܐܦ ܣܦܪ ܕܛܒܐ ܡܢ ܡܫܘܡܠܗ̇ ܗܘ ܡܢܐ ܕܝܟܝܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܫܘܡܣܡܐ. ܐܝܟ ܕܐܬܡܢܝܗ̇
> ܫܒܩ ܠܗ̇ ܕܡܬܒܪܐ ܕܗܘܝܐ ܥܠ ܬܘܪܨܐ ܠܗܘܢܗ ܕܦܘܪܣܐ ܫܦܝܠܐ ... ܐܝܬ
> ܐܡܬܝ ܕܬܪ̈ܬܝܢ ܕܪ̈ܒܝܢ ܡܠܬܐ ܐܬܦܫܩܬ ܡܛܠ ܕܐܚܪ̈ܢܝܢ ܒܫܡܗܘܢ ܡܢ ܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܡܫ̈ܘܠܐ
> ܐܚܪ̈ܢܐ ܡܠܗ ܘܦܣܩ ܐܢܘܢ ܡܢ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܪܝܢ ܘܡܛܠ ܕܠܐ ܚܕ ܕܐܠܝܢ ܐܢܘܢ ܫܒܩ
> ܐܢܘܢ ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܐܫܬܟܚܘ ❖

> “we begin to write the scholia to the difficult words [note the recurrence of this expression] that [are found] in his Oration(s), the collection of which was taken care of by some pupils who were in the presence of Rabban Benjamin, [men] who, according to their capacity, took care to preserve the tradition descending from him. Mor Daniel, disciple of that man, took trouble to correct [the collected scholia], adding [to them] in some places, when a clearer explanation was needed, but shortening [them] in other places, when it [sc. the explanation] turned out to be superfluous. For sometimes they [sc. the pupils] arranged carelessly things that were said by Rabban in a precise and compelling way. Indeed, somewhere, because of the difficulty of the correction, the whole *chresis* [sc. quo-

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[91] Scripsi; MS: ܡܬܕܪ̈ܢܐ.

[92] Scripsi; MS: ܬܪܨ.

> tation from Rabban Benjamin] being in need of being changed, and because of the abundance of the labour, and because he [sc. Daniel], too, believed that the proper meaning intended by the author escaped him, he left that which was believed to be in need of correction to the intelligence of the diligent reader [...] [Daniel apologized for the fact] that sometimes a word was explained twice, because some of the [pupils] took other interpretations from other authors and put them together with those of Rabban, and because he did not know, based on the way they were found, which these [other interpretations] were."

We can glean substantial information on Benjamin's school from this note: firstly, the commentary is defined as "scholia on difficult words" (ܫܗܩܠܐ ܚܣܝܡ̈ܐ ܕܡ̈ܠܐ), an expression we have already encountered in Phokas' preface to his own translation of Dionysius and in the set of scholia on Sergius' version in SMMJ 124. Commentary 3, thus, once again circumscribes its own genre within the limits of a scholastic (and scholiastic) commentary of the kind we have already encountered. Secondly, we learn that there were collectors of Benjamin's commentaries who were "in his presence" and took care to preserve his tradition. As we saw, the expression "in his presence", ܩܕܡܘܗܝ, has already been used regarding Rabban Benjamin's school in the colophons of the manuscripts BL or. 8731 and Add. 12152, which contain the works of Gregory and Dionysius, respectively. The recurrence of this phrasing suggests that Rabban Benjamin exclusively or mainly delivered his exegesis in oral form, and that his disciples, who were "in his presence", compiled his commentaries *apo phones*, just as, for example, centuries earlier at the Neoplatonic school of Alexandria.[93] The disciples made this compilation "according to their capacity", as the prefatory note states. This capacity is not held in high esteem by the redactor of our note, who, in his turn, probably relies on the critical judgment of the scholar who corrected the scholia collected by these "pupils": the Mor Daniel mentioned already, who, also being a disciple of Benjamin, realised that the collected commentaries were often in need of correction because of excessive brevity, length or carelessness. Thus, the note records at least three stages of scholastic and exegetical work: Rabban Benjamin's

[93] On this practice in the Neoplatonic school of Alexandria see, *pars pro toto*, the classical study of M. Richard, "Ἀπὸ φωνῆς", and Hoffmann, "Neoplatonic Commentators", pp. 615-616.

exegesis, which seems to be oral, the *apo phones* commentary collection of some disciples and the partial correction of the latter by Daniel. Moreover, the disciples collected alternative interpretations from other commentators, apparently without marking their authorship and, thus, confusing Mor Daniel. The much shorter title of Commentary 2 points to a different methodology: it seems to have been made by only one disciple according to the tradition of Rabban Benjamin. In this case, we may suppose that the commentary was the output of a single author and not of a collective effort. However, in his case, too, he based himself on Benjamin's "tradition": this may, once again, mean that the anonymous author may have relied on Benjamin's oral teaching, which he may have received "in his presence", ܩܕܡܘܗܝ, or that he organised the notes *apo phones* of other disciples. That this tradition, ܣܗܕܘܬܐ, may have been oral could also be suggested by the analogy with the East Syriac ܣܗܕܘܬܐ of the school of Nisibis mentioned by Barḥadbshabba 'Arbaya in his *Cause of the Foundation of the Schools* in the sixth century:[94] here, "tradition" was something that went from mouth to ear, as Barḥadbshabba says, and was not immediately recorded in books.[95] De Halleux supposed that the author of this anonymous Commentary 2 should be identified with Daniel himself. This cannot be proved, even though Commentaries 2 and 3 do occasionally overlap, as we shall see. The oral character of Benjamin's teaching seems to be confirmed by the way the same exegetical motifs return in both Commentaries 2 and 3 with strong similarities as to the content but only rarely with literal overlapping. Let us see some examples from Gregory's Oration 2, an apology for having been hesitant in helping his father with the episcopal task at Nazianzus.[96] In paragraph 3, Gregory speaks of the high ranks of the hierarchy as having the same role regarding the Church as the soul regarding the body, or of the *nous* regarding the soul.[97] Here, Commentary 2 paraphrases the text without adding anything relevant

[94] Mar Barḥadbšabba 'Arbaya, *Cause de la fondation des écoles*, ed. Scher, pp. 382-383.

[95] See Van Rompay, "Théodore de Mopsueste".

[96] The Greek passages will be cited according to Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 1-3*, ed. Bernardi. The Syriac text of the Oration is edited in Gregorii Nazianzeni *Versio Syriaca*, V, ed. Haelewyck.

[97] τοὺς δὲ εἶναι ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ὅσοι τῶν πολλῶν εἰσιν ἀνωτέρω κατ' ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν οἰκείωσιν,

to it, whereas Commentary 3 (BL Add. 14725, fol. 125vb) defines the nous as the "flower", ܟܣܝܡ, of the soul. The scholion reads:

ܡܝܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܫܟܚ ܟܣܝܡ ܒܝܢ ܡܫܘ ܕܠܐ ܪܫܐ ܗܘ ܡܢ ܢܦܫ ܐܦ ܟܕ ܡܬܚܙܐ ܠܓܘܫܡܐ ܐܠܐ ܕܗܘ ܪܫܐ ܘܡܪܝܫ ܘܦܝܬܐ ܕ[ܢܦܫ]

> [Gregory] is not affirming that the nous (ܟܣܝܡ) has its own substance as compared to the soul, just as the soul does if compared with the body, but that it [the nous] is the head, the leader, and the flower of the [soul].

When Gregory is speaking later on in the text, at paragraph 35, of the doctrines of the Church on different topics,[98] among which the soul and the intellect are mentioned, Commentary 3 has nothing significant to say, whereas Commentary 2 inserts here the flower simile (BL Add. 17197, fol. 10rv):

ܟܣܝܡ ܐܡܪ ܥ. ܟܣܝܡ [10v] ❊ܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܚܝ ܠܓܘܫܡܐ ܡܚܝܢܐ ܗ. ܡܫܘ ܠܒܐ ❊ܕܦܝܬܐ ܘܡܪܝܫ

> "the soul": i.e. how it vivifies the body; "the intellect": i.e. whether it is the flower of the soul.

Another interesting case is that of paragraph 6 of Gregory's Oration 2, where the Cappadocian apologises for having hesitated to help his father in the episcopate of Nazianzus and having fled from this responsibility, favouring the ascetic life.[99] Here, Commentary 2 uses concepts (or, to put it better, jargon) from Aristotle's *Peri hermeneias*, stating that (BL Add. 17197, fol. 5r):

ܡܫܡ ܒܡܩܠ ܫܡܫܪܟܢ ܒܗ ܠܗ ܡܡܠܠܐ ܕܠ ܠܐ ܡ ܕܟܬ ܒܡܟܬܒܐ ܕܗ ❊ܠܗ ܡܡܠܠܐ ܠܐ ܫܡܫܪܐ ܒܗ

λόγον ψυχῆς πρὸς σῶμα ἢ νοῦ πρὸς ψυχὴν ἐπέχοντας (Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 1-3*, ed. Bernardi, p. 90).

[98] τῶν ἡμετέρων δογμάτων ὅσα περὶ κόσμων ἢ κόσμου πεφιλοσόφηται, περὶ ὕλης, περὶ ψυχῆς, περὶ νοῦ ... (Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 1-3*, ed. Bernardi, p. 134).

[99] Ἔπειτά μέ τις ὑπεισήει ἔρως τοῦ καλοῦ τῆς ἡσυχίας καὶ τῆς ἀναχωρήσεως, ἧς ἐραστὴς γενόμενος ἐξ ἀρχῆς (Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 1-3*, ed. Bernardi, p. 94).

> know that previously (*scil.* in previous paragraphs) he lays down through negation (*apophasis*) the reasons that were not the cause of his going (away from Nazianzus); now he explains through affirmation (*kataphasis*) the reasons why he went.

Nothing similar appears in the scholion of Commentary 3 on the same passage, but if one reads the scholion to a passage that comes just three or four lines later in the same paragraph 6 of Gregory's Oration, the same content is there in a different wording (BL Add. 14725, fol. 127ra):

ܩܕܡܬ ܥܬܐ ܩܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܛܠܬܗ̇ ܥܪܩ ܩܛܦܛܝܩܘܬܐ[100]

> "the first reason why he escaped" [tentative translation, the text seems to be corrupted] is formulated in an affirmative way.

A further example of how Benjamin's teaching is actively reformulated by his disciples but can still be detected in its main lines across the different commentaries is the possibility of tracking down some fixed catchwords in the diverging formulations of scholia on the same passages. Commenting on paragraph 7 of Oration 2, where Gregory speaks of the mystical condition of the ascetic who "becomes a stainless mirror and adds light to light and brightness to darkness",[101] Commentary 2 writes (BL Add. 17197, fol. 5r):

ܒܗ̇ܘ ܝܐ ܕܡܚܙܝܬܐ ܫܦܝܬܐ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܗ̇ܘ ܕܚܐܪ ܒܗ̇. ܗܟܢܐ ܘܗܘ ܡܬܕܟܐ
ܘܡܚܘܬܐ ܒܗ ܕܡܘܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ

> just as a mirror reflects the image of the one who looks [at himself] in it, so he too purifies himself and reflects in himself the likeness of God […];

then, paraphrasing Gregory's phrase "adding light to light", the commentary goes on to say (fol. 5r):

ܡܘܣܦ ܐܢܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܝܕܥܬܐ ܙܥܘܪܬܐ. ܘܒܗܕܐ ܡܫܬܘܫܛ ܐܢܐ ܠܗ̇ܘ ܕܝܬܝܪ
ܠܓܡܝܪܐ.

> I add the light of a little knowledge and with this I proceed towards the more perfect one.

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[100] Probably a corruption of ܥܠܬܐ ܩܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܡܛܠܬܗ̇ ܥܪܩ ܩܛܦܛܝܩܘܬܐ.

[101] *ἔσοπτρον ἀκηλίδωτον Θεοῦ καὶ τῶν θείων καὶ ὂν καὶ ἀεὶ γινόμενον, φωτὶ προσλαμβάνοντα φῶς, καὶ ἀμαυροτέρῳ τρανότερον* (Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 1-3*, ed. BERNARDI, p. 96).

Commentary 3 formulates the same concepts differently, but the catchwords remain the same, and the outlined ascensional process is also the same (BL Add. 14725, fol. 127vb):

> ܒܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܕܘܟܝܐ ܕܕܘܒܪ̈ܐ ܕܝܬܝܪ ܒܗܘܪ…[102] ܡܘܣܦ ܐܢܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ ܘܐܝܕܥܬܐ[103]
> ܒܗܘܪܐܝܬ ܘܟܕ ܠܘܬ ܓܡܝܪܘܬܐ ܕܕܘܒܪ̈ܐ ܡܫܬܘܫܛ ܐܢܐ ܐܝܕܥܬܐ ܕܝܬܝܪ
> ܡܒܠܐ[104]

> to the light of the purification of the ways of life, which is darker [...] I add light and knowledge, (although) darkly [allusion to 1 Cor 13:12, *in a mirror darkly*], and, proceeding towards the perfection of the ways of life, (I also attain) superior knowledge.

Therefore, we are clearly looking here at a fascinating phenomenon of the fluidity of a tradition that, probably because it was not fixed in a canonically written form, could move, be rearranged and reformulated according to need. The last example, in particular, feels like the reading of different notes taken by different students at the same university class. At the same time, some basic ideas of Rabban Benjamin's exegesis must have been clearcut or perhaps even fixed in writing, since some occasional literal overlapping can be detected, although the latter is admittedly rare. This is the case of the commentary of a passage from paragraph 36 of Oration 2, where Gregory is still enumerating the main doctrines of the Church, especially those concerning the passion, death (here called by Gregory "passions and dissolution") and resurrection of Christ.[105] Here, Commentary 2 interprets thus (BL Add. 17197, fol. 10v):

> ܘܚ̈ܫܐ ܗ̄ ܡܛܠ ܡܘܢ ܒܚ̈ܫܘܗܝ ܦܪܩ ܠܢ ܘܠܘ ܒܐܠܗܘܬܗ.❖ ܘܫܪܝܐ ܗ̄ ܕܐܢ ܒܫܪ̈ܪܐ
> ܐܫܬܪܝܬ ܢܦܫܐ ܡܢ ܦܓܪܐ❖ ܕܡܛܠ ܩܝܡܬܗ ܗ̄ ܕܐܢ ܗܘܝܐ ܩܝܡܬܐ. ܘܟܕ ܗܘܝܐ
> ܐܢ ܡܩܝܡܝܢ ܓܒܪ̈ܐ ܘܢܫ̈ܐ ܒܐܣܟܡܘܬܗܘܢ. ܗ̇ܝ ܕܒܫܪ̈ܪܐ ܗܟܢ ܡܩܝܡܝܢ ܐܦ ܚܫܚܬܐ
> ܟܠܗ܁ ܘܟܕ ܡܩܝܡܝܢ ܦܓܪ̈ܐ ܓܠܝ̈ܠܐ ܡܩܝܡܝܢ ܐܘ ܠܐ ܐܝܟ ܕܐܡܪ ܐܪܝܓܢܣ❖

> "and passions": i.e. on why he saved us through his passions and not through his divinity; "dissolution": whether the soul (of Christ) was really released from his body; "those about the resurrection": whether the resurrection occurs, and, when it occurs, whether men

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[102] Scripsi; MS: ܒܗܘܘܕ.

[103] Fortasse ܕܐܝܕܥܬܐ.

[104] Probably something is missing in the Syriac text here.

[105] ὅσα περὶ … παθημάτων, καὶ ἀναλύσεως, ὅσα τε περὶ ἀναστάσεως (Grégoire de Nazianze, *Discours 1-3*, ed. BERNARDI, p. 134).

> and women rise with their form; that they truly rise thus, even though the need [*scil*. for any form] ceases; and when they rise, do they rise as spherical bodies or not, as Origen affirmed?

Commentary 3 has the same words concerning the passion (BL Add. 14725, fol. 144vb-145ra):

ܕܐܬܐ ܗܘ ܕܒܗ ܚܝܠ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܐܦ ܠܐ ܒܐܠܗܘܬܗ ... ܡܚܡܠܢ ܕܒܚܡܘܗܝ

> "and the passions": on why he saved us through his passions and not through his divinity,

with some additions ("whether they were actual, natural and voluntary passions"), but even more interesting is the way the commentary on Jesus' death is worded:

ܐܘ ܠܐ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܝ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܐܝܬܘܗܝ ܐܘ ܠܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܡܚܐ ܠܐ ܐ ܕܐܝܬ
ܕܡܚܐ ܕܝ ܕܡܚܡܠܢ ܐܘ ܡܢ

> "dissolution": whether he died our death, which is a separation of the soul from the body, or whether his was the separation of divinity from humanity.

This immediately brings us back to the more usual case of the same content with different formulation, which is also true for the explanation of Jesus' resurrection in Commentary 3. This reads:

ܒܡܢ ܕܐܡܪ ܕܡܬܩܝܡ ܕܐܝܟ ܠܐ. ܐܢ ܕܐܝܬ ܠܐ. ܐ ܕܡܚܐ ܚܝܠ
ܕܐܝܬ ܥܡ ܕܝܘܬܐ... ܐܝܟ ܠܐ. ܕܡܚܐ ܐܦ ܕܝ ܠܐ ܕܐܝܬ
ܕܡܬܦ ܠܐ ܕܬܝܪ ܐܝܟ ܠܐ. ܕܡܚܐ ܐܦ ܕܝ ܠܐ ܕܐܝܬ
ܕܡܬ ܠܐ.

> "And about resurrection": whether it occurs or not, whether we rise with the figure we have now, and whether the body persists [...] and whether the souls migrate to other bodies and dwell in them after the resurrection".

Curiously enough, there is no explicit mention of Origen here, and yet a reference is made, not to the spherical bodies, but to still another doctrine, metensomatosis, that was traditionally attributed to him by the heresiologists. It is probable that different Origenist doctrines were discussed in class at this point of the commentary on Gregory's *Or.* 2, and different disciples jotted down only some of the doctrines (perhaps those which struck them more) and, consequently, reproduced them in their written commentaries.

5. A Mysterious Figure: 'Theodore Bar Zarudi'

Since we do not have the commentary on Dionysius of such a relevant figure as Benjamin must have been, at least for his contemporaries, it is surprising that one of the most important passages in the history of commentary tradition in the Syriac Dionysian corpus is, to the contrary, the work of an obscure figure. I am speaking of the commentary of a certain Theodore bar Zarudi, which was preserved in copies and, as I believe, adaptations ranging from the ninth-tenth to at least the fifteenth century and was as successful in the Syriac world as were John of Scythopolis' scholia. We have no information at all concerning this Theodore except for the qualification of "spiritual philosopher" that is given to him in the only manuscript that mentions him explicitly by name, London, BL, Add. 22370 of the fourteenth or fifteenth century.[106] This manuscript is not a witness to the complete Dionysian Corpus, as Wright believed: it contains only short lemmas from the corpus, followed in the body of the text by the commentary of 'Theodore' concerning those lemmas, introduced by the usual ܬ. Histories of Syriac literature ignore this Theodore bar Zarudi almost completely. Ignatius Barsoum devoted a short entry to him, assigning him to the ninth century, although without citing any positive evidence of this.[107] Werner Strothmann and especially Gernot Wießner, however, spent some words on him in their works on the Syriac tradition of the Corpus. In his edition of the Syriac versions of *EH* IV, Werner Strothmann provided the only published specimen of Theodore Bar Zarudi's commentary so far.[108] As to Gernot Wießner, in his 1972 study on Phokas' version, he suggested that the name Theodore bar Zarudi does not necessarily correspond to the author of the commentary.[109] Indeed, it is true that the London manuscript is straightforward in its attribution: at the beginning and the end of the corpus, it affirms that the commentaries were "*made* by Rabban Theodore, the spiritual philosopher, who is called bar Zarudi, according

[106] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 500-501.

[107] Barsoum, *Scattered Pearls*, p. 371. Baumstark cites him only regarding the manuscript BL Add. 22370 (Baumstark, *Geschichte*, pp. 271-272), and so does Wright, *Short History*, p. 93.

[108] Strothmann, *Sakrament der Myron-Weihe*, I, pp. 33-55.

[109] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", p. 197.

to the divine grace that was bestowed upon him".[110] However, Wießner observed that BL Add. 22370 is the direct copy of an earlier extant manuscript of the late ninth century, Damascus, Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate, 12/23,[111] and that this manuscript contains the same commentary but without any attribution to this Theodore.[112] This anonymity in the earlier manuscript, Wießner noted, raises significant doubts about the authorship of the commentary. Concerning the dating of this commentary, the obvious *terminus ante quem* is the date of the most ancient manuscript that preserves it, that is, Damascus SOP Syr.12/23. Wießner was able to date it to the end of the ninth century with persuasive arguments,[113] thereby apparently confirming Barsoum's dating of 'Theodore bar Zarudi'. However, one could object that the *only* attribution to the obscure Bar Zarudi is that of BL Add. 22370, and this is a very late witness, whereas the earliest one, Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, does not mention this commentator at all. Given that, in fact, the commentary of BL Add. 22370 is a slightly abridged version of the same commentary in Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, one may suppose that Theodore bar Zarudi is the author of the abridgment, and also of the shortened lemmas, rather than the author of the commentary itself. In conclusion, the question regarding the authorship of this commentary remains open. A substantial hint at the original author, or, at least, at the original milieu, may come from a recent new reading of the endnote of the scribe of Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, which was proposed by Lucas Van Rompay based on a personal reading and on Dolabani's transcription

[110] BL Add. 22370, fol. 27r.

[111] On this important manuscript, see the description in Dolabani, *Catalogue St Mark's Monastery*, pp. 274-280. Dolabani et al., "Catalogue Ḥomṣ", p. 607. Wießner was able to identify it with the former manuscript Jerusalem, St Mark's Monastery, 2, described in Baumstark – Graf – Rücker, "Markuskloster", pp. 124-125.

[112] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", p. 197; he also notes that the commentary in BL Add. 22370 is a slightly abridged version of that in Dam. Syr. 12/23.

[113] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", pp. 191-192. Wießner bases his dating on an accurate reading of the barely legible scribal note on p. 296 of the manuscript. Here, the scribe asserts that the volume was copied during the patriarchate of Theodosius of Edessa, thus, between 887 and 896.

of the note in his catalogue.[114] It is worth reproducing this note here (with some additions), which is of great relevance, especially if related to the language of the scribal notes connected with Rabban Benjamin's school, which I discussed in the previous two paragraphs.

> ܘܐܬܚܦܛ ܘܩܢܐ ܘܟܬܒ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ ܕܝܘܢܘܣܝܘܣ ... ܡܚܝܠܐ ܘܚܛܝܐ
> ܘܣܢܝܩ ܥܠ ܪ̈ܚܡܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܝܥܩܘܒ ܐܟܣܢܝܐ ... ܐܝܟ ܕܠܗܘ ܠܗܓܝܐ ܘܝܘܬܪܢܐ
> ܕܢܦܫܗ ܘܕܐ̈ܚܐ ܕܠܗ ܒܪܘܚ ܘܒܦܓܪ ܐܗܪܘܢ ܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܘܐܝܣܚܩ ܒ̈ܢܝ ܝܘܢܬܢ ...
>
> ܐܬܟܬܒ ܟܬܒܐ ܗܢܐ ܘܐܬܒܚܢ ܘܐܬܬܪܨ ܒܟܠܗ̇ ܚܦܝܛܘܬܐ ܘܫܩܠܛܘܪܚܐ
> ܬܘܪܨܐ ܚܕܬܐ [ܘ]ܚܬܝܬܐ ܕܠܗ ܕܓܘܫܡܐ ܕܟܬܒܐ [ܘܐ]ܣܟܘ̈ܠܝܐ ܐܘܟܝܬ
> ܢܘܗܪܐ ܕܠܗܘܢ ܕܡܐ̈ܡܪܐ ܫܠܡܐܝܬ ܘܟܡܐ ܕܡܨܝܐ ܒ[ܐ]ܣܟܘܠܐ ܕܡܥܠܝܐ
> ܒܡܠܦ̈ܢܐ ܘܪܒܐ [...]ܐ ܘܡܠܦܢܐ ܕܕܘ̈ܓܡܐ ܬܪ̈ܝܨܝ، ܫܘܒܚܐ ܢܟܦܐ ܘܡܝܩܪܐ
> ܪܒܢ ܡܪܝ [ܠܥܙܪ] ܕܒܝܬ ܩܢܕܣܐ ܒܛܘܪܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ [ܕܐܘܪܗܝ ܡܒܪܟܬܐ] ܡܕܝܢܬܐ.
>
> (The one who) [...] took care, acquired, and wrote this book of the saintly Dionysius [...] (is) a weak and sinful person, needing God's mercy, the stranger Jacob [...] for the study and benefit of himself as well as of his spiritual and bodily brothers Aaron, the deacon, and Isaac, sons of Yonatan. [...]
>
> This book was written, examined, and corrected with all care and effort, a new and accurate correction of both the main body of the book and the scholia, that is, elucidations of the treatises, entirely and as far as possible, in the school of one who is pre-eminent among the scholars [...] and teacher of the orthodox dogmas, the modest and venerable Rabban Mor [Lazarus] of Beth Qandasa on the Holy Mountain [of Edessa] the blessed [city].[115]

This note is very similar for its style and language to those we read in the previous paragraphs: once again, we have the explicit mention of a school (ܐܣܟܘܠܐ) in which a teacher guides, inspires and supervises the production of a patristic manuscript with scholia and writes scholia himself. The teacher is once again defined as "teacher of dogma(s)", exactly like Benjamin. This phrase must generically mean, as Van Rompay suggested,[116] "theological studies". The teacher is, in the

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[114] VAN ROMPAY, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", pp. 367-368. DOLABANI, *Catalogue St Mark's Monastery*, pp. 277-278.

[115] The translation is taken from VAN ROMPAY, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", p. 368.

[116] VAN ROMPAY, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", p. 366.

present case, another "Rabban", Lazarus of Beth Qandasa,[117] who was active in the ninth century, possibly slightly later than Benjamin.[118] He is also known as the author of a *Commentary on the Pauline Epistles* preserved in London, BL, Add. 14683 (tenth century),[119] and as the primary author of a commentary on Mark and John preserved in London, BL, Add. 14682 (tenth century),[120] even though the latter is attributed to Ḥārith bar Mor Sīsīn of Sanbāṭ (who also appears to be the scribe of BL Add. 14683).[121] In BL Add. 14683, fols 138v-140v contain a long endnote[122] that explains the genesis of the commentary on Paul and connects the work to the school of Lazarus. The author of the note is a certain George of Beth Naqe, who defines himself as a "trainee before the teacher Rabban Lazarus", ܬܠܡܝܕܐ ܕܡܪܒܢ ܠܐܙܪ ܐܝ ܕܒܝܬ ܢܩܐ. Here we find once again two terms: ܬܠܡܝܕܐ, "trainee, disciple", which occurred in the preface to Commentary 3 on Gregory, and the typical expression ܕܒܝܬ ܢܩܐ, which confirms their nature of technical terms also

[117] Even though his given name is not legible here, the toponym and the presence of another scholion attributed to him in the same manuscript Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23 between *CH* and *EH*, pp. 86-89, make the conjecture certain. See Dolabani, *Catalogue St Mark's Monastery*, p. 276, and Van Rompay, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", p. 368, n. 15. The scholion bears the title "Scholion, that is elucidation, which was made by the modest Mor Lazarus of Beth Qandasa, in which he teaches, according to the intention of the teacher Dionysius, that the order of the Seraphs is the first of the superior Church". It is also found in London, BL, Add. 18295 (year 1603), fol. 149v, as described by Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, p. 1184.

[118] For a dating of Lazarus, see Van Rompay, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", pp. 368-369, n. 16, with reference to Kaufhold, "Bedeutung Jerusalems", pp. 140-142.

[119] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 610-612.

[120] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 608-610.

[121] See Van Rompay, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", especially pp. 365-366 and 369-370 on the two London manuscripts. On Ḥārith, and for the reasons in favour of an attribution of the Commentary on the Gospels to Lazarus of Beth Qandasa as their primary author, see Van Rompay, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", pp. 370-374.

[122] A translation of this note, which has already been transcribed by Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 611-612, in Van Rompay, "Lazarus of Beth Qandasa", pp. 364-365.

after the emergence of Benjamin's school. Another relevant feature of the manuscript Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, which binds it even more closely to this monastic school of Lazarus, is the presence of a scholion on the Seraphs attributed to the same Lazarus.[123] This proves that this style of scholastic communities around a monastic teacher affirmed itself within the Syriac miaphysite Church during the age of Dionysius of Tell-Maḥre. The strong analogies with the school of Rabban Benjamin, the formulation of the scribal note of Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23 and the presence of Lazarus' scholion on the heavenly hierarchy in the manuscript are even more relevant elements for our research. Indeed, they make one think that the situation is similar to that of Commentaries 2 and 3 on Gregory discussed above: rather than to the phantomatic "Theodore bar Zarudi", the scholia of Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23 (and of BL Add. 22370) should probably be attributed to the school of Lazarus of Beth Qandasa and were the product of an elaboration of *apo phones* notes taken "with him and in his presence".

This commentary is so important because it marked the passage from the occasional scholia of John of Scythopolis to a running and, as it were, autochthonous commentary, which became the normal way of commenting upon Dionysius in Syriac.

The length and layout of the commentary changed accordingly: since it is much longer than John's, the commentary was no longer written in the margins, but alternated with Dionysius' words in the main body of the text. The manuscript Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23 is particularly interesting in this regard as it is an early exception: it clearly witnesses a phase where the Syrians had produced their own commentary, but still tried to write it outside of the main body of the text, as was the case for John's scholia. This layout is very crammed, and must have soon proved uncomfortable, so much so that already in the ninth-tenth century we can observe the emergence of adaptations of the 'Lazarus-Theodore' commentary which are accommodated into an easier layout. They are written in the main body of the text, alternating with short lemmas from Dionysius' writings and, thus, not with Dionysius' integral texts.

Besides the two manuscripts Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23 and BL Add. 22370 that transmit it more or less integrally, two witnesses of the ninth or tenth century have preserved parts of the commentaries on the

[123] See here above footnote 122.

Dionysian Corpus that closely resemble the 'Lazarus-Theodore' commentary. These are London, BL, Add. 14541, fols 11-18+25+26+29-38,[124] and, from Città del Vaticano, BAV, Sir. 107, fols 80r-113v.[125] In an article of 1977 (and again in another article of 1978),[126] Wießner demonstrated that Vat. Sir. 107 and the above-mentioned folios of BL Add. 14541 belong together and form a 'London-Vatican Commentary' (= LVC) whereas the rest of Add. 14151, (fols 1-10+19-24+27+28) preserves still another commentary (London Commentary = LC), also copied in the ninth-tenth century, which happens to be close to, but not overlapping with LVC. Both LVC and LC are anonymous, similar to the old manuscript of Damascus, but this may simply be the fruit of chance since we do not have the beginning or the end of either commentary.

Having compared a limited sample of both commentaries with the 'Lazarus-Theodore' commentary and with other scholia and commentaries on Dionysius,[127] Wießner observed that they should be regarded as the earliest point in the autochthonous commentary activity on Dionysius in Syriac; all other known commentaries would have relied on them.[128] From the samples he offers in his 1978 article, one can indeed observe that LVC largely overlaps with 'Lazarus-Theodore', and, at first sight, the latter may look like an abridged adaptation of the former. This is possible, but it is far from obvious: only a highly detailed analysis will be able to confirm such a conclusion. Indeed, the samples displayed by Wießner are not decisive in this regard, since what may seem an abridgment of LVC in the 'Lazarus-Theodore' commentary of Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23 is often just a grammatically denser formulation, which the LVC may have chosen to loosen, thereby making it longer.[129] Thus, the direction of the dependence between 'Lazarus-Theodore' and LVC must also remain an open question. LC, on the contrary, is quite different from 'Lazarus-Theodore' and it will have to be studied separately.

[124] Wright, *Catalogue British Museum*, II, pp. 501-502.

[125] Assemani – Assemani, *Catalogus*, pp. 56-57.

[126] Wiessner, "Beobachtungen"; Wiessner, "Miszelle".

[127] Wiessner, "Miszelle", pp. 278-285.

[128] Wiessner, "Miszelle", p. 276.

[129] See e.g. the difference between the longer ܣ ܟܕ ܗܦܠ ܣ ܗܦ in Vat Sir. 107, fol. 111ra, and the shorter ܣ ܟܠ ܣ in Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, p. 232 (Wiessner, "Miszelle", p. 284).

A significant comparative remark on the anonymous commentaries, however, can already be made: the layout of both, although the copies are only slightly later, if not contemporary to Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, attests the shift from marginal note to the integral Corpus to commentary on short lemmas.

Moreover, Wießner also hinted at the relationship between 'Lazarus-Theodore' and John of Scythopolis' scholia. He remarked that 'Lazarus-Theodore' did not incorporate John's scholia, even though it sometimes overlaps with them, but always without citing them. Wießner suggested that the former wanted to substitute the latter.[130] The layout, however, would seem to stand against this hypothesis: as I said, the few extant manuscripts containing 'Lazarus-Theodore' and its 'relative' LVC, except for Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, do not offer a complete text of the Dionysian writings. They are commentary manuscripts, where the short lemmas barely allude to the complete text. This presupposes that the integral Dionysian writings were read in other manuscripts, and we do not have any manuscript with Phokas' integral translation, on which 'Lazarus-Theodore' commented, that do not also bear John's scholia (except, once again, for Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23). The two commentaries, then, probably survived side by side.

6. Some Brief Notes on Dionysius bar Ṣalībī and a Comparison between the Commentaries

6.1. Dionysius bar Ṣalībī's Commentary: Main Lines

After 'Lazarus-Theodore', whose commentary, judging from the extant manuscripts, must have enjoyed particular diffusion in the ninth and tenth century, we have the commentary on Dionysius by his namesake Dionysius Bar Ṣalībī, or the "lesser" Dionysius as he termed himself in comparison with the Areopagite;[131] composed in the twelfth century, it can be defined as the culminating point of this tradition. Dionysius, the miaphysite metropolitan of Amid, was a polymath and indefatigable exegete of the Bible, the liturgy, the Fathers, and Aristotelian logic.[132] He

[130] Wiessner, "Handschriftenüberlieferung", p. 197. On the reciprocal relationships between the Dionysian commentaries, see the next paragraph.

[131] In Syriac ܨܠܝܒܝ ܡܢ, Mingana Syr. 663, fol. 4rb.

[132] For a general overview: Brock, "Dionysios bar Ṣalibi"; Teule, "Dionysius bar Ṣalibi"; Dionysius Jakob Bar Ṣalibi, *Syrischer Kommentar zum Römerbrief*, ed. et tr. Rabo.

was also a systematic polemist engaged in debate and conversation with other confessions and religions. As he declares explicitly in the preface to it, he conceived his Dionysian commentary as the first of a series of commentaries on the Church Fathers, and, as such, it immediately followed, for chronological reasons, his commentaries on the Bible.[133] Bar Ṣalībī's commentary is so massive (309 folios on two columns in the most ancient copy) and complex that it deserves a separate treatment. Indeed, I will analyse it in greater detail in a dedicated forthcoming contribution, whereas here I shall limit myself to present some very basic elements.

Bar Ṣalībī's Dionysian commentary is preserved in two manuscripts of the same collection: Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, Mingana Syr. 539[134] and 663.[135] The former is a twentieth-century *descriptus* of the latter and is the work of Ignatius Barsoum (year 1929); Mingana Syr. 663 was probably copied in the thirteenth century, but it may be later (its script also fits into the fourteenth or even the fifteenth century). Concerning its literary genre, it should be noted that Bar Ṣalībī's commentary is very similar to 'Lazarus-Theodore', since it is a running commentary on the whole Dionysian corpus and not a group of occasional scholia similar to John of Scythopolis' work. Because of this characteristic, it is written within the body of the text, and is appended to short allusive lemmas, not to Dionysius' integral text. It is preceded by an original preface in three chapters.[136] Werner Strothmann, who also published Bar Ṣalībī's commentary to *EH* 4,[137] defined Bar Ṣalībī's

[133] "After completing the interpretation of the Old and of the New Testament [...] we had established (etwa'adnan) [to move on] to the interpretation of the Teachers and firstly of the great Dionysius who bears our same name" (ܟܕ ܫܠܡܢ ܒܦܫܩܐ ܕܥܬܝܩܐ ܘܚܕܬܐ ... ܘܟܕ ܐܬܝܢ ܠܦܫܩܐ ܕܡܪܝ ܕܝܘܢܣܝܘܣ ܪܒܐ ܕܫܡܗ ܫܡܗ ܕܝܠܢ ܐܦ ܗܘ). Mingana Syr. 663, fol. 3va.

[134] Mingana, *Catalogue*, cols 986-989.

[135] This manuscript is not recorded in the catalogues of Alphonse Mingana, nor is it present in the excellent list of G. Rabo, *Dionysius Jakob Bar Ṣalibi*, p. 437. It was mentioned by Barsoum, *Scattered Pearls*, p. 436, as being in Aleppo. Strothmann, *Sakrament der Myron-Weihe*, used it for his edition of Bar Ṣalībī's commentary on *EH* IV (see vol. I, p. XV). See Heal, "Acquisition History", p. 36, for the provenance and movements of Mingana Syr. 663, which entered the Birmingham collection only after Mingana's death.

[136] Mingana Syr. 663, fols 3va-5rb.

[137] Strothmann, *Sakrament der Myron-Weihe*, I, pp. 71-113.

commentary as “scholia”. However, this is not the definition that Bar Ṣalībī provides of his own work in his preface. In the title of the whole book, he calls his work ܒܟܪܝܘܬܐ ܘܒܦܣܩܘܬܐ ܢܘܗܪܐ,[138] “elucidation in short and in synthesis”, and he defines it more generically in many places as ܦܘܫܩܐ, “interpretation, commentary”. Bar Ṣalībī’s commentary is highly personal, as can be inferred from the fact that he often takes Dionysian passages as a pretext to treat theological topics at length which are at the centre of his polemical or exegetical works, with developments that cannot be found in any other Dionysian commentator. On the other hand, his relationship with the preceding tradition is complex, as he appears to know it very well and use it with creativity in a free interplay of sources. Bar Ṣalībī especially leans towards ‘Lazarus-Theodore’, whom he never mentions but whose layout, content, and wording he often takes up. John of Scythopolis is less present for the obvious reason that his scholia do not cover the whole corpus, but Bar Ṣalībī resorts to him in important cases, such as the argumentation on the authenticity of the Dionysian corpus, which cannot be found in ‘Lazarus-Theodore’.

6.2. A Sample of the Relationship between the Commentaries and Scholia

Before concluding, it is worth providing a concrete example of the relationship between all these exegetic materials through a comparative assessment of their commentaries on the same passages from, respectively, the *CH* and the *EH*.

The commentary of John of Dara on *CH* III,2 “it is not permitted […] to do anything outside of the sacred commandments of one’s own principle of initiation”,[139] has a personal wording but is certainly reminiscent of John of Scythopolis. This is John of Dara’s interpretation (Harvard, Houghton Library, Syr. 122, fol. 4rab):

> ܗܝ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܡܛܟܣܘܬܐ ܕܪܝܫܘܬ ܟܗܢܘܬܐ. ܕܠܐ ܢܥܒܕܘܢ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܠܐ ܦܘ̈ܩܕܢܝܢ
> ܠܗܘܢ܇ ܠܐ ܓܝܪ ܙܕܩ ܠܚܕ ܡܢ ܐܝܠܝܢ ܕܒܕܪܓܐ ܕܟܗܢܘܬܐ ܡܛܟܣܝܢ ܕܢܥܒܕ
> ܘܢܥܒܘܪ ܡܕܡ ܕܠܥܠ ܡܢ ܕܪܓܗ. ܠܐ ܠܡܫܡܫܢܐ ܕܢܟܗܢ ܐܘ ܕܢܩܪܒ. ܘܠܐ ܩܫܝܫܐ
> ܕܢܥܒܕ ܒܕܘܟܬܐ ܐܘ ܕܢܩܕܫ ܡܘܪܘܢ. ܐܠܐ ܟܠܚܕ ܒܛܟܣܐ ܕܐܬܡܢܝ ܒܗ ܢܛܪ.

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[138] Mingana Syr. 663, fol. 3va, title. The sequence of the Syriac words, though awkward, is thus in both Mingana Syr. 539 and 663.

[139] *CD*, II, p. 18: Οὐ γὰρ θεμιτόν ἐστι … ἐνεργῆσαί τι καθόλου παρὰ τὰς τῆς οἰκείας τελεταρχίας ἱερὰς διατάξεις.

> “This is the orderly way of the high priesthood, that it does not presume against those things that are not permitted to them. For it is not right for one of those who are assigned to the rank of the priesthood that he should overstep and that he should do something that is elevated above his degree, nor for a deacon that he should baptize or celebrate the Eucharist, nor for a priest that he should perform an ordination, or that he should consecrate the chrism. But each of them should remain in the order to which he was called (cf. 1 Cor 7:24)”.[140]

Let us now read John of Scythopolis (BL Add. 12151 fol. 15v):

> ܗܠܝܢ ܡܣܒܪ ܐܢܐ ܕܡܫܘ̈ܕܥܢ܆ ܕܠܐ ܙܕܩ ܠܐܢܫ ܡܢ ܗ̇ܢܘܢ ܕܒܕܪ̈ܓܐ ܟܗ̈ܢܝܐ ܐܬܡܢܝܘ܆ ܠܡܥܒܕ ܡܕܡ ܕܪܒ ܡܢ ܛܟܣܐ ܕܝܠܗ. ܐܠܐ ܕܢܥܒܕ ܒܠܚܘܕ ܗ̇ܘ ܡܐ ܕܝܗܝܒ ܠܕܪܓܗ. ܘܢܫܠܡ ܒܝܕ ܡܠܦ܆ ܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܢܣܒܐ ܥܠ ܗܠܝܢ ܕܠܥܠ ܡܢ ܕܪܓܗ. ܕܐܝܟ ܐܝܟܢܐ. ܠܩܫ̈ܝܫܐ ܕܢܠܦܘܢ ܘܢܩܪܒܘܢ ܩܘܪܒܢܐ. ܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܕܐܦ ܟܝܪܘܛܘܢܝܐ ܢܥܒܕܘܢ. ܠܡܫ̈ܡܫܢܐ ܕܢܠܦܘܢ. ܠܐ ܕܝܢ ܐܦ ܕܢܥܡܕܘܢ ... ܘܐܦܠܐ ܕܢܩܪܒܘܢ. ܘܗܟܢܐ ܒܐܝܕܐ ܒܐܝܕܐ܆ ... ܐܝܟܢܐ ܕܬܬܢܛܪ ܫܦܝܪ ܗ̇ܝ ܕܐܡܝܪܐ ܠܦܘܠܘܣ ܐܠܗܝܐ܆ ܕܟܠ ܐܢܫ ܒܕܪܓܐ ܗ̇ܘ ܕܐܬܩܪܝ ܒܗ ܢܟܬܪ.

> I understand this to mean that someone enrolled in the clerical order ought not do anything greater than his own proper rank. Rather, he should only do and hand on through his teaching what is proper to his own rank: most certainly he should not reach beyond his own rank. For example, presbyters teach and present the gift [in the liturgy], but do not ordain; deacons teach but do not baptize [...] or offer [the gifts in the liturgy], and so on [...] in order that what was said by the divine Paul might be rightly preserved: “in whatever state each was called, let him remain” (1 Cor. 7:24).[141]

Interestingly, the commentary of ‘Lazarus-Theodore’ on the same passage overlaps only with the part of John of Dara’s commentary that *does not* overlap with John of Scythopolis. Theoretically, we cannot determine the direction of their reciprocal dependence. One may speculate that it was John of Dara who conflated John of Scythopolis and ‘Lazarus-Theodore’ into one synthetic commentary, especially if we consider that Lazarus of Beth Qandasa was active before John of Dara (but his disciples, who collected his oral teaching, were his contem-

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[140] ANDERSON, *Interpretation*, p. 146.

[141] Translation based on ROREM – LAMOREAUX, *John of Scythopolis*, p. 154.

poraries). Otherwise, it is 'Lazarus-Theodore' who decided to exclude John of Scythopolis because his scholia were already widely known in the Syriac world, and to integrate a selection of John of Dara's commentaries into his own scholia instead, reducing and simplifying them so that they might fit into a running commentary. His annotation reads (Damascus SOP Syr. 12/23, p. 38 col. b):

ܗܘ ܕܐܝܟ ܕܐܝ ܗܝ ܕܐܝ ܟܬܝ ܡܕܡ ܕܠܐ ܡܫܬܘܦ ܥܡ ܟܠ ܕܠܐ ... ܠܗ. ܐܠܐ ܕܟܬܒ ܘܟܢܝܢ ܕܫܘܠܡܐ ܕܟܗܢܘܬܐ ܥܡ ܟܠ ܚܕ ܡܢ ܗܢ ܕܐܝ ܠܗ ܕܫܪܝ ܠܗ ܒܗ ܕܠܐ ܐܦ ܠܐ ܡܟܢ ܗܘ ܕܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܠ ܡܢ ܙܝܘ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ.

that is, he is explaining what the sacred order is, namely, that it does not presume against anything that is not permitted to it [...] but that, according to the commandments and rules of the high priesthood, the initiated lay people, the initiators and the deacons, each of them observes its service, to which it was limited; and it is not possible that he does otherwise, lest he slip from the splendour of divinization.

Dionysius bar Ṣalībī's commentary on the passage is probably inspired by 'Lazarus-Theodore' in his lexical choices, a phenomenon that can be observed fairly frequently in his commentary: "that is, outside of the evangelic commandments and of the apostolic rules, which are the principle and the cause of their initiations, they are not permitted to do anything".[142]

The situation can be summarized in a synoptic table through the help of different types of highlighting.

[142] Mingana Syr. 663, fol. 13vb: ܕܫܠܝܛ ܕܟܬܒ ܥܠ ܟܠ ܚܕ ܡܢ ܗܢ ܕܐܝ ܠܗ ܕܫܪܝ ܠܗ ܒܗ ܕܠܐ ܐܦ ܠܐ ܡܟܢ ܗܘ ܕܐܚܪܢܐ ܕܠܐ ܢܬܠ ܡܢ ܙܝܘ ܕܐܠܗܘܬܐ.

CH III, 2: "It is not permitted to do anything outside of the sacred commandments of one's own principle of initiation"

John of Scythopolis	John of Dara	'Lazarus-Theodore'	Bar Ṣalībī
I understand this to mean that **someone enrolled in the clerical order ought not do anything greater than his own proper rank**. Rather, he should only do and hand on through his teaching what is proper to his own rank: most certainly **he should not reach beyond his own rank**. For example, **presbyters** teach and present the gift [in the liturgy], but **do not ordain**; **deacons** teach but **do not baptize** [...] or offer [the gifts in the liturgy], and so on [...] in order that what was said by the divine Paul might be rightly preserved: **"in whatever state each was called, let him remain"** (1 Cor. 7: 24)	This is the orderly way of the high priesthood, that it does not presume against those things that are not permitted to them. **For it is not right for one of those who is in an ordered rank of the priesthood that he should overstep** and that he should do something in order to fulfil one of his own desires, **nor for a deacon that he should baptize** or celebrate the Eucharist, **nor for a priest that he should perform an ordination**, or that he should consecrate chrism. **But each of them should remain in the order to which he was called** (cf. 1 Cor 7:24)	that is, he is explaining what the sacred order is, namely, that it does not presume against anything that is not permitted to it [...] but that, according to the *commandments* and *rules* of the high priesthood, each of them observes its service, for which it was determined; and it is not possible at all that he does otherwise, lest he slip from the splendour of divinization.	that is, outside of the evangelic *commandments* and of the apostolic *rules*, which are the principle and the cause of their initiations, they are not permitted to do anything at all.

Provisional Conclusions

After – and despite – Wießner's and Strothmann's pioneering studies in the seventies, research on the rich tradition of Syriac Dionysian commentaries remains an unexplored and highly promising territory. Critical editions must still be produced, and, on their basis, comparative analyses must be conducted in order to really understand the historical development of the Syriac tradition of Dionysian exegesis. The present sounding, however, has shown not only how rich the material is, but also and especially how revelatory it can be about scholastic and, more broadly, intellectual practices among Syriac miaphysite cultivated elites. The evolution of Dionysian commentaries, from the (however selective and targeted) transposition of John of Scythopolis' Greek scholia to the beginning of a genuinely Syriac commentary tradition provides insights into Syriac scholarship rather than solely about Dionysius. On the one hand, Phokas' rendering of John's scholia is not an isolated endeavour; it programmatically aims to position itself within the collective scholarly tradition of Qenneshre. On the other hand, the fervent activity surrounding Dionysius from the late eighth to the mid-ninth century (involving figures such as Benjamin of Edessa, John of Dara, Lazarus-Basil, 'Lazarus-Theodore') serves as a representative expression of the broader interests of miaphysite erudite monastic schools, offering a better understanding of them. In fact, it unveils them as schools, since without reading their commentaries on Dionysius and on Gregory Nazianzen (with the relevant paratexts) it would be difficult to perceive all these scholars as part of a scholastic network. Dionysius bar Ṣalībī recapitulates this process in his own Commentary, which is conceived as a substantial component within his broader synthesis of the intellectual heritage of his Church.

As far as the reciprocal literary relationships between the commentaries is concerned, it is too early to draw any conclusions after these soundings; however, the impression is that 'Lazarus-Theodore', John of Dara, and Dionysius Bar Ṣalībī after them, did not want to substitute the Greek John of Scythopolis, but to integrate it with an annotation that 1) was more systematic than John's sparse notes, and 2) included the genuinely Syriac tradition of commentary on Dionysius. The first reason explains why 'Lazarus-Theodore' is no longer conceived as a group of sparse scholia but as a running commentary, and, thus, is frequently

alternated with Dionysius' shortened text within the main body of the text.

The second reason showcases a phenomenon that, in some regards, is parallel to what was happening in the East Syriac tradition in the same centuries, where Theodore of Mopsuestia remained the main authority to explain the biblical text, but his commentaries were programmatically accompanied by the "Syriac tradition", as it was called, i.e. a synthesis of the exegetical voices stemming from the schools of Nisibis and of other centres of learning. This applied in the Syriac miaphysite Church to the texts of some canonical Fathers rather than exclusively to the Bible: to Gregory Nazianzen and to Dionysius in particular. The main actors of this process were, just as in Nisibis, teachers and disciples of schools which conceived of themselves as such, with a precise terminology (especially the term ܟܠܦܐ) to indicate them. Exegesis (but on the Fathers) was, not differently from Nisibis, the main focus in these schools, and the formation of an original Syriac "tradition" of teaching and learning was as important to these miaphysite intellectuals as it was to their East Syriac counterparts. One may even suppose that miaphysite scholars did this in an attempt to emulate the East Syriac schools. Differences between the two scholastic cultures and styles are, of course, as important as these analogies, if not more important. The perception of the analogies, however, is crucial to set up a comparison between East Syriac and miaphysite school – certainly a *desideratum* for future studies.

As far as Dionysius is concerned, this meant that the story of the exegesis on his Corpus in Syriac is also a story '*sub specie Dionysii*' of the intellectual and scholastic development of the Syriac miaphysite Church. It is through the incorporation by 'Lazarus-Theodore' and Dionysius bar Ṣalībī of the collective effort of past generations of scholars (particularly of 'Rabbans' like Lazarus of Beth Qandasa and Benjamin of Edessa) into a ductile stream of commentary tradition, that this scholastic movement of the Syriac miaphysite Church achieved the Syriacisation of Dionysius and delivered the Areopagitic corpus to the Syriac world as a fully Syriac corpus.

ABSTRACT

Despite the crucial importance of Sergius of Resh'ayna's sixth-century translation, the real birth of Dionysius the Areopagite's oeuvre as a canonical corpus in Syriac was marked by the version of Phokas of Edessa at the end of the seventh century. Phokas added to this version the translation of John of Scythopolis' scholia, which had been written in the middle of the sixth century. These scholia were still the work of a Greek author; it was their appearance in Syriac, however, that elicited an intense production of analogous glosses by Syriac authors in the following centuries. This most especially holds true for the first half of the ninth century, when a group of West Syriac scholars gathered around the as yet little known Lazarus of Beth Qandasa (end of the eighth century?) and Benjamin of Edessa (d. after 843) and collectively studied Phokas' Areopagite (along with the Syriac translations of Gregory Nazianzen), composing new scholia on his writings. The same circle of scholars also distinguished itself through the remarkable number of liturgical commentaries they produced, and Dionysius' hierarchical treatises were key in this domain: John of Dara's (d. *c.* 860) commentaries on both Dionysian *Hierarchies* represent a peak of this process. Around the same time, a further, rather elusive commentary appeared, which was attributed to a certain, otherwise unknown, "Theodore bar Zarudi" in the second millennium, but was probably connected to the school of Lazarus of Beth Qandasa. This commentary is, unlike that of John of Scythopolis, a complete cycle of scholia on the whole Dionysian Corpus, written directly in Syriac, and marked the actual beginning of a Syriac tradition of Dionysian exegesis. This collective poring over Dionysius' oeuvre was finally taken over in the twelfth century and arranged in the only commentary on the whole Corpus by another Dionysius, Dionysius bar Salibi. The present paper will briefly outline this history, presenting samples of the scholia, the commentaries and the colophons that accompany the manuscript witnesses of Phokas' translation. At the same time, it will increase our knowledge of the barely known development of a proper scholastic movement within the Syriac miaphysite Church.

RÉSUMÉ

Malgré l'importance cruciale de la traduction de Sergius de Resh'ayna au VI^e^ siècle, la véritable naissance de l'œuvre de Denys l'Aréopagite en tant que corpus canonique en syriaque a été marquée par la version de Phocas d'Édesse à la fin du VII^e^ siècle. Phocas a ajouté à cette version la

traduction des scholies de Jean de Scythopolis, composées au milieu du VI^e^ siècle. Ces scholies étaient encore l'œuvre d'un auteur grec ; c'est cependant leur apparition en syriaque qui a suscité une intense production de gloses analogues par les auteurs syriaques au cours des siècles suivants. C'est particulièrement vrai pour la première moitié du IXe siècle, lorsqu'un groupe d'érudits syriaques occidentaux s'est réuni autour de Lazare de Beth Qandasa (fin du VIII^e^ siècle?), encore peu connu, et de Benjamin d'Édesse (mort après 843) et ont étudié collectivement l'Aréopagite de Phocas (ainsi que les traductions syriaques de Grégoire de Nazianze), composant de nouvelles scholies sur ses écrits. Le même cercle d'érudits s'est également distingué par le nombre remarquable de commentaires liturgiques qu'ils ont produits, et les traités hiérarchiques de Denys se sont avérés essentiels dans ce domaine : les commentaires de Jean de Dara († vers 860) sur les deux *Hiérarchies* dionysiaques représentent un point culminant dans ce processus. À peu près à la même époque, un autre commentaire, plutôt insaisissable, est apparu, qui a été attribué au deuxième millénaire à un certain « Theodore bar Zarudi », autrement inconnu, mais qui était probablement lié à l'école de Lazare de Beth Qandasa. Ce commentaire est, contrairement à celui de Jean de Scythopolis, un cycle complet de scholies sur l'ensemble du *Corpus* dionysiaque, écrit directement en syriaque, et marque le début effectif d'une tradition syriaque d'exégèse dionysiaque. Cette plongée collective dans l'œuvre de Denys fut finalement reprise au XII^e^ siècle et arrangée dans le seul commentaire de tout le *Corpus* par un autre Denys, Denys bar Salibi. Le présent article retrace brièvement cette histoire, en présentant des échantillons des scholies, des commentaires et des colophons qui accompagnent les manuscrits témoins de la traduction de Phocas. En même temps, il augmentera notre connaissance du développement à peine connu d'un mouvement scolastique proprement dit au sein de l'Église syriaque miaphysite.

Bibliography

The reader will find here all abbreviations and bibliographic references used in the chapters: (1) journals and series; (2) dictionaries, references books, online resources; (3) primary sources (editions and translations); (4) secondary literature; (5) library names (manuscript collections).

Editions and translations of primary sources used in the present volume are referred to in abbreviated form in the chapters. Works edited only in *PG* are not mentioned in this bibliography, nor are ancient editions, whose titles are often so similar that they cannot be referred to in abbreviated form without causing confusion. For the same reason books published before 1700 are not abbreviated and therefore not found in this list.

Titles are sometimes shortened, their punctuation is normalised, and the information is simplified, reduced to the Latin abbreviated forms in primary sources: "ed." and "ed. et tr.", and to the English forms "(ed.)" and "(eds.)" in secondary literature. Places of publication are given in their actual linguistic form, notwithstanding the fact that the publication may be in another language, e.g. Latin. The same is true for the names of modern authors. Authors' names are alphabetised under the prefix if they have one, and diacritics are ignored for the purpose of alphabetisation. If a publishing house has more than one seat, only the main place of publication is given.

All webpages mentioned in the list were last accessed on 10 December 2023.

Abbreviations of Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita's and Gregory of Nazianzus' works:

CD = Corpus Dionysiacum
CH = De caelesti hierarchia
DN = De divinis nominibus
EH = De ecclesiastica hierarchia
Ep(p). = Epistula(e)
MT = De mystica theologia
CN = Corpus Nazianzenum
Carm. = Carmina
Ep(p). = Epistula(e)
Or. = Orationes

1. Journals and Series

AC = L'Antiquité Classique

AnBoll = Analecta Bollandiana

ASNSP = Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia

BBGG = Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata

BT = Bibliotheca Teubneriana

Byz = Byzantion

BZ = Byzantinische Zeitschrift

CCSA = Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum

CCSG = Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca

CCSL = Corpus Christianorum Series Latina

CD = Corpus Dionysiacum

CN = Corpus Nazianzenum

CodMan = Codices manuscripti. Zeitschrift für Handschriftenkunde

CSCO = Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium

CSEL = Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum

CUF = Collection des Universités de France

FOC = The Fathers of the Church

GCS = Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte

GNO = Gregorii Nysseni Opera

GRBS = Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies

IPM = Instrumenta Patristica et Mediaevalia

JA = Journal Asiatique

JÖB = Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik

JThS = Journal of Theological Studies

MH = Museum Helveticum

Mus = Le Muséon

NAWG = Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philosophisch-historische Klasse

OCA = Orientalia Christiana Analecta

OCP = Orientalia Christiana Periodica

OLA = Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta

OLP = Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica

OrChr = Oriens Christianus

PG = Patrologia Graeca

PIOL = Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain

PL = Patrologia Latina

PO = Patrologia Orientalis

POr = Parole de l'Orient

PTS = Patristische Texte und Studien

REAug = Revue des Études Augustiniennes / Revue d'Études Augustiniennes et Patristiques

REB = Revue des Études Byzantines

REG = Revue des Études Grecques

RHT = Revue d'Histoire des Textes

ROC = Revue de l'Orient Chrétien

RSPT = Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques

RSBN = Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Neoellenici

SC = Sources Chrétiennes

SE = Sacris Erudiri

SGKA = Studien zur Geschichte und Kultur des Altertums

SMC = Studies in Manuscript Cultures

ST = Studi e Testi

SH = Subsidia Hagiographica

TC = Trends in Classics

TU = Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur

2. Dictionaries, Reference Books, On-line Ressources

BHG = F. Halkin, *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*, 3rd edn, Bruxelles, 1957 (*SH*, 8a); *Novum Auctarium*, Bruxelles, 1984 (*SH*, 65).

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NB: In this list the alphabetic order is not fully respected, because the names of the ancient and medieval authors are given according to the language of the edition or translation.

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5. Abbreviations of library names (manuscript collections)

BAV = Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

BL = British Library

BML = Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana

BnF = Bibliothèque nationale de France

BNM = Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana

BSB = Bayerische Staatsbibliothek

EBE = Εθνική Βιβλιοθήκη της Ελλάδος

GIM = Gosudarstvennyj Istoričeskij Muzej

KHM – Niko Berdzenishvili Kutaisi State Historical Museum

NCM – Korneli Kekelidze Georgian National Centre of Manuscripts (Tbilisi)

ÖNB = Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

SMMJ = St Mark Monastery in Jerusalem