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SA'ĪD IBN BAṬRĪQ, THE THEOLOGIAN:
NEW CONSIDERATIONS ON HIS HISTORICAL WORK,
"THE ANNALS"

BY

Bishara EBEID

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ABSTRACT

After the publication of MS Sinai Arabic 582, M. Breydy, the text's editor, arrived to a new interpretation regarding the existing edition of "The Annals" by Eutychius of Alexandria (Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq), prepared by L. Cheikho. In Breydy's opinion this version of "The Annals" would not be the original work of Ibn Baṭrīq. He suggested that someone else elaborated and completed the original and shorter text in Antioch. Therefore Breydy called it the "Antiochian version" while he labelled the text published by himself the "Alexandrian version" which he regarded as the original of Ibn Baṭrīq's "Annals". This opinion was accepted by other scholars and gave reason to doubt the authenticity of another work attributed to Eutychius called "The book of the demonstration" (*Kitāb al-Burhān*), which was later attributed to Peter of Bayt Ra's.

In this paper we would like to open again the discussion on the original text of "The Annals" and the authenticity of "The book of the demonstration". We will attempt to show that the text edited by Cheikho is indeed the original text by Ibn Baṭrīq. This will be achieved by studying the relations between the three theological insertions found in the historical work and the relation found between these insertions and the theological terminology in the historical work. A new interpretation will also be given with respect to "The book of the demonstration" and its attribution to Ibn Baṭrīq. The paper's aim is also to consider Ibn Baṭrīq not only a historian but also a theologian.

INTRODUCTION

After the publication of MS Sinai Arabic 582, the text's editor M. Breydy came to the conclusion that the edition of "The Annals" of Eutychius of Alexandria (Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq) by L. Cheikho should not be regarded as the original work of Ibn Baṭrīq but as a later version prepared in Antioch. Breydy called it therefore "the Antiochian version" while he labelled the text published by himself and considered to be the original "the Alexandrian version". Breydy's opinion was accepted by other scholars and, as a result, it called into question the authenticity of another work by Ibn Baṭrīq, *Kitāb al-burhān* (The book of the demonstration), which was later attributed to Peter of Bayt Ra's. Breydy's hypothesis also caused that Ibn Baṭrīq was solely seen as a historian. In our doctoral dissertation, written at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome¹, we developed new considerations regarding these matters. We were able to show that Ibn Baṭrīq was in fact one of the more important Melkite theologians of his time.

In the present article, we would like to present our hypothesis about the original text of "The Annals" and the authenticity of *Kitāb al-burhān*. This hypothesis is one of the fruits of the research that we carried out for our doctoral dissertation.

A. EUTYCHIUS OF ALEXANDRIA AND HIS HISTORICAL WORK "THE ANNALS"

We do not have much information on the life of Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq². What we know about him comes mainly from his historical work itself, "The Annals". He was a physician. This profession was so important to him that he always added it to his name as a title-adjective: Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq the physician (*al-mutaṭabbib*). He was born in al-Fuṣṭāṭ Miṣr (inside the actual city of Cairo) in 877 A.D. as he himself declares, saying that he was born in the eighth year of the caliphate of al-Mu'tamid³. He was elected Melkite, i.e. Chalcedonian/Greek Orthodox, patriarch of Alexandria on the 7th of February 933 A.D. when he was 60 years old, as he himself says⁴. At his enthronement he chose the Greek name Εὐτύχιος, which is a translation of the Arabic name Sa'īd. The fact that he mentioned the Greek name he chose at his enthronement is significant because it indicates the relationship of his

1) Cf. EBEID, *La Cristologia*.

2) Cf. GRAF, *GCAL*, vol. II, pp. 32-33.

3) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, p. 69.

4) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, pp. 70, 86, 88.

Church with its Greek origins. During his patriarchate, Egypt was ruled by the independent governors of the Tulunids and the Ikhshidids, which was a particular period for Egypt⁵.

As S. Griffith notes, Ibn Baṭrīq is not famous because he was a Melkite patriarch of Alexandria, but rather because he was a Christian author who wrote in the Arabic language⁶. In fact, he was the first Melkite of Egypt to write in Arabic. His work "The universal history", or as it is better known "The Annals", is a fundamental source of ecclesiastical history, the general history of his time, and of theology.

Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'ah, a Muslim physician of the twelfth or thirteenth century, gives us in his work *'Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā'* (The lives of the physicians) some information on the life and works of Ibn Baṭrīq, on the importance of his works and his thought as a physician and as a Christian author, i.e. theologian. What interests us most, however, is the information on Ibn Baṭrīq's works. In addition to medicine, the Muslim author says, Ibn Baṭrīq knew the sciences of the Christians (*al-naṣārā*) and their confessions and wrote the following works: a book on medicine, a book entitled "The dispute between a Christian and a heretic", the historical work "The order of the pearl"⁷, i.e. "The Annals", and three articles sent to his brother, 'Īsā ibn Baṭrīq, in which he explains the fasting of Christians and their feasts, and provides information on the caliphs, emirs, kings, patriarchs of the Christians, etc.⁸.

Ibn Baṭrīq's historical work belongs to the type of "universal history", which begins from the time of creation and continues until the time of the author himself. This work, however, according to the version that we follow, i.e. the one edited by L. Cheikho⁹, has a particular structure. In addition to the historical information about the ecumenical councils, their doctrines, Trinitarian and Christological disputes – what we may call "the historical exposition of the Christian dogma" – and the description of general historical events, it contains three insertions with polemics and controversies against the non-Melkites, and two other insertions regarding some questions on fast-

5) On the dynasty of the Tulunids see ELLI, *Storia*, pp. 6-65; while on that of the Ikhshidids see, ELLI, *Storia*, pp. 66-67.

6) Cf. GRIFFITH, "Eutychios", pp. IV, 154.

7) On this title and the title known in the tradition of the manuscripts see GRIFFITH, "Eutychios", pp. IV, 154-155.

8) Cf. Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah, *'Uyūn al-Anbā'*, vol. II, pp. 86-87.

9) It is published in two parts: EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I (coll. "CSCO" 50/Ar. 6) and EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II (coll. "CSCO" 51/Ar. 7).

ing and the Paschal feast. (We will explain later why we used the term "insertion" for these particular pages of the historical work).

Our interest in analyzing these polemical insertions and their importance provoked us to open the discussion about their authenticity again, after having learned the argumentation and the opinion of M. Breydy. He argued, in fact, that the original text of the work written by the Melkite patriarch was much shorter and did not include these insertions¹⁰.

B. THE OPINION OF M. BREYDY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

According to Breydy, we have two versions of the same work, a longer, which was edited by Cheikho, and a shorter version, edited by himself. In fact, after studying what he regards as the oldest manuscript of the work of Ibn Baṭrīq, namely MS Sinai Arabic 582, Breydy came to the conclusion that the patriarch had originally composed a work shorter than the one published by Cheikho, which Breydy calls "the Alexandrian version". Immediately after the death of Ibn Baṭrīq, the work would then have been re-edited in Antioch. Accordingly Breydy called this new edition "the Antiochian version"; this is the text published by Cheikho¹¹. Breydy argues that MS 582, which is in the *kūfī* style of handwriting, was written by Ibn Baṭrīq himself¹². Although S. Griffith notes that the *kūfī* script was also used in the monasteries of Palestine and the Sinai during the ninth century¹³, Breydy believes that MS 582 had been written in Egypt (probably in *al-Fuṣṭāṭ*), and was only later on transferred to the Sinai¹⁴.

Breydy's new interpretation regarding "The Annals" had consequences for another work attributed to Ibn Baṭrīq. In the version edited by Cheikho, Ibn Baṭrīq says that he had already written elsewhere on dogmatic questions¹⁵. This claim, in fact, is in agreement with Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah's infor-

10) For the short version see Michael BREYDY, *Das Annalenwerk des Eutychios von Alexandrien. Ausgewählte Geschichten und Legenden kompiliert von Sa'id Ibn Baṭrīq um 935 A.D.*; coll. "CSCO" 471/Ar. 44, Peeters, Louvain, 1985.

11) See the study of BREYDY, *Études sur Sa'id Ibn Baṭrīq*, the introduction and the chapters III, IV, V.

12) Cf. Michael BREYDY, "Mitteilung über die älteste Vorlage der Annales Eutychiei in der identifizierten Hs. Sinai Arab. 580 (582)", in *Oriens Christianus* 59 (1975), pp. 165-168. See also SIMONSOHN, "Sa'id ibn Baṭrīq", p. 227, and GRIFFITH, "Apologetics", pp. 75-76.

13) Cf. GRIFFITH, "Apologetics", pp. 75, 78.

14) See details in BREYDY, *Études sur Sa'id Ibn Baṭrīq*, pp. 29-41.

15) See, for example, EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 176, where Ibn Baṭrīq says that if someone wants to know more about the dogmatic questions, he can read his book called "The

mation mentioned above. For all of these reasons G. Graf attributed *Kitāb al-burhān* (The book of the demonstration) to Ibn Baṭrīq¹⁶, because it is obvious that there is in "The Annals" an insertion which comes from this source¹⁷. However, this insertion, as well as some others, is not found in the shorter version, which according to Breydy represents the original text of the patriarch. For this very reason, Breydy challenges the attribution of *Kitāb al-burhān* to Ibn Baṭrīq¹⁸.

Breydy was not the only one who had such an opinion. R. Haddad, following J. Blau¹⁹, also expressed his doubts about this attribution. Although he noted that the insertion comes from "The book of the demonstration", and although he mentioned the correspondences between the two works, he came to the conclusion that *Kitāb al-burhān* cannot be attributed to Ibn Baṭrīq because of the different title – "The book of the dispute" – given by Ibn Baṭrīq himself to the work at the end of the insertion. Haddad suggested that "The book of the demonstration" derived from the Syro-Palestinian Melkite community²⁰. And in fact, from the linguistic point of view, the text of *Kitāb al-burhān* is full of Syriac terms. However, Haddad's reasoning concerning the different titles is not sufficient to exclude Ibn Baṭrīq as the author, because titles often change from one manuscript to another.

Studying the various manuscripts of *Kitāb al-burhān*, S. Kh. Samir, following the hypothesis of Haddad²¹, and taking into consideration the opinion

book of the dispute between the heretic and the Christian".

16) Cf. EUTYCHIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *The Book of the Demonstration*; part 1 (coll. "CSCO" 192/Ar. 20), part 2 (coll. "CSCO" 209/Ar. 22).

17) See Georg GRAF, "Ein bisher unbekanntes Werk des Patriarchen Eutychios von Alexandria", in *Oriens Christianus* 1 (1911), pp. 227-244; see also GRAF, *GCAL*, vol. II, pp. 35-36.

18) See the fourth chapter of BREYDY, *Études sur Sa'īd Ibn Baṭrīq*, pp. 87-102; where the author discusses the attribution of *Kitāb al-Burhān* to Ibn Baṭrīq, which according to him is not correct.

19) Cf. BLAU, *A Grammar*, p. 23, footnote 8: "Graf has demonstrated ... that this work was not translated, but was composed in Arabic. On the other hand, he has not, in our opinion, established the authorship of Eutychius: passages of Burhan are, to be sure, identical with certain sections of Eutychius's Annals...".

20) Cf. Rachid HADDAD, *La Trinité divine chez les théologiens arabes 750-1050*, coll. "Beauchesne Religions" 15, Beauchesne, Paris, 1985, pp. 63-66.

21) Before Samir Khalil Samir, Joseph Nasrallah also had some doubts concerning the attribution of this work to the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria, cf. Joseph NASRALLAH, *Histoire du mouvement littéraire dans l'Église Melchite du V^e au XX^e siècle. Contribution à l'étude de la littérature arabe chrétienne*, vol. II, t. 2: 750 – X^e s., Peeters, Louvain, 1987, pp. 31-32.

of Breydy, concluded that this work cannot be attributed to Ibn Baṭrīq. Instead, he attributes it, as it appears in some of its manuscripts, to Buṭrus bin Naṣṭās, the Melkite bishop of the city of Bayt Ra's (Capitolias) in Transjordan. According to Samir, the work was written in the second half of the ninth century, which was another reason not to attribute it to the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria²². Recently, M. Swanson argued that the work may have been written as late as the beginning of the tenth century, and he also attributes it to Ibn Naṣṭās²³.

C. THE POLEMICS-ANSWERS OF IBN AL-MUQAFFA' AND ELIAS OF NISIBIS

However, a problem arises from these opinions. On the one hand, the insertion that comes from *Kitāb al-burhān* may not have been written by Ibn Baṭrīq and the same may be said of the other insertions, especially the two controversies, one against the Nestorians and the other against the Jacobites. On the other hand, how can we explain the replies to these controversies made by other Christian authors who refer to the controversies as having been found in "The Annals"? Clearly, they do not refer to the short version, which, as suggested by Breydy, would be the original work of the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria.

In fact, the Coptic bishop Sawīrus Ibn al-Muqaffa' (†987) wrote a defence against the controversy made by the patriarch, about ten years after the death of Ibn Baṭrīq. The Coptic bishop also spoke of blasphemies against the Jacobites made by the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria in his historical work²⁴. Such blasphemies are found in the controversy which exists in the long version edited by Cheikho and not in the shorter one edited by Breydy²⁵.

Just as the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria polemicized in a historical work, Ibn al-Muqaffa' also wrote a historical work containing polemics in which he explained how and why the councils happened and how the Christian dogma was established and developed. The work is known under the ti-

22) Cf. SAMIR, "La Littérature", pp. 483-485.

23) Cf. SWANSON, "Peter of Bayt Ra's", pp. 902-906.

24) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Réfutation*, pp. 128-129: «وصلت رسالتك أيها الاخ المؤمن المغيبوط: مرضاته وتولاك بحفظه تذكر وقوفك على كتاب الفه سعيد ابن بطريق المعروف بابن الفراه وسماه كتاب التاريخ اسعدك الله بطاعته واعانك على مرضاته وتولاك بحفظه تذكر وقوفك على كتاب الفه سعيد ابن بطريق المعروف بابن الفراه وسماه كتاب التاريخ وما على قلبك من الاهتمام بما اورده فيه من الشبهة لليعاقية وما نسب اليهم من الخطا واتهم الذين غيروا الامانة المستقيمة واحدنوا امانة غيرها ... وقولك ان سعيد ابن بطريق كان انساناً ملكياً وانك خايف انه قد تحامل في القول على اليعاقبة حمية المذهب الملكية وبانه لم يقدم برهاناً ولا شهادة على ما نسب الي اليعاقبة لأن غرضه كان في ايضاح التاريخ وسير الملوك والبطاركة ويورد في خلال ذلك ذكر اليعاقبة».

25) See for example EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 196.

the *Al-radd 'alā Sa'id ibn Baṭrīq* (The response to Sa'id ibn Baṭrīq) and formed the first part of *Kitāb al Maḡāmi'* (The book of the [church] councils)²⁶. The second part of this work was called *Tafsīr al-amānah* (The commentary of the Creed)²⁷, because in it the author analyzes the Nicene Creed.

We know that Ibn al-Muqaffa' had initially finished writing the second part, as he himself informs us²⁸, in November 950 A.D.²⁹. However, having lost his work, he wrote it again, trying to include everything that had existed in the lost work, and completed it in September 955 A.D.³⁰. With this information, we can be sure that "The response to Ibn Baṭrīq" was written before 950 A.D., since it is the first part of the work, and also because Ibn al-Muqaffa' himself refers to the first part in the second³¹.

Another Christian author, Elias, the Nestorian metropolitan of Nisibis (975-1049), also wrote a response to the controversy made by the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria. He responds by citing the accusations of Ibn Baṭrīq presented in the version edited by Cheikho. It would not be very logical to say that in less than a hundred years after the death of the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria, the Antiochian version had already been made, as suggested by Breydy, as it is unlikely that it could have circulated to Nisibis so quickly.

In fact, we need only to remember that after the death of Ibn Baṭrīq, Egypt had fallen into troubled times with the arrival of the Fatimids and the beginning of their dynasty and caliphate (969-1171 A.D.). This event moved the country into a period of confusion³², especially for the Christians³³. The difficulty and problems reached their climax when al-Ḥākīm ascended to the throne of the caliphate (996-1021 A.D.). With him began a very difficult time for the Christians. It was a period of persecutions and forced islamization³⁴. In this difficult context where Christians did not have any freedom, it would, in our opinion, have been difficult for works to be circulated.

26) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Réfutation*, p. 127.

27) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Histoire des Conciles* (coll. "Patrologia Orientalia" 29 [6.4]).

28) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Histoire des Conciles*, pp. 590-591.

29) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Histoire des Conciles*, pp. 590-591.

30) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Histoire des Conciles*, pp. 590-591.

31) Cf. SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA', *Histoire des Conciles*, p. 512.

32) Cf. ELLI, *Storia*, vol. 2, pp. 75-78.

33) Cf. Jacques TAGHER, *Aqbāṭ wa-muslimūn. Munḡu al-faṭḥ al-'arabī ilā 'ām 1922*, Cairo, 1951, p. 93.

34) On this caliph and his period, see ELLI, *Storia*, vol. 2, pp. 86-99.

In his work entitled *Kitāb al-burhān 'alā ṣaḥīḥ al-īmān*³⁵ (The book of the demonstration of the correctness of the faith), the Nestorian metropolitan Elias of Nisibis responds to the controversy made by Ibn Baṭrīq against the Nestorians. In fact, he refers to those who disputed against Nestorianism and the Nestorians, mentioning the name of the Coptic bishop Ibn al-Muqaffa', and the name of Ibn Baṭrīq and his doctrine. The Melkite patriarch, according to Elias, was known as *Ibn al-farrās* ('the son of the servant') and was one of the Jacobites or Copts. However, in his response to Ibn Baṭrīq, the Nestorian Metropolitan mentions that Ibn Baṭrīq was, in fact, Melkite and not Jacobite, correcting his first given information regarding him³⁶.

His response to the Melkite patriarch consists of two parts. In the first, he relates the historical facts mentioned in "The Annals" of Ibn Baṭrīq by giving his own presentation of the development of the Christian dogma³⁷. In the second part, he defends his faith by responding to the controversy made by the Melkite patriarch³⁸. He cites phrases that come from the insertion against the Nestorians³⁹, a quotation from the insertion that comes from *Kitāb al-burhān*⁴⁰, and also another phrase that derives from the inserted controversy against the Jacobites⁴¹. It is worth mentioning that Elias of Nis-

35) The work is written in Arabic and has not been published so far. There is, however, a German translation of the whole work done by Louis HORST, *Des Metropolitan Elias von Nisibis Buch vom Beweis der Wahrheit des Glaubens*, E. Barth, Colmar, 1886. The work came down to us in a single manuscript of the thirteenth century, which belongs to the Vatican library under the code MS. Vat. ar. 180, ff. 131^r-220^r (cf. GRAF, *GCAL*, vol. II, pp. 183-184). Due to its importance for our doctoral thesis, we made a partial edition which is found in the appendix to our dissertation, cf. EBEID, *La Cristologia*, pp. 631-728.

36) Cf. MS Vat. ar. 180, f. 144^v: «...اعني اليعقوبية اعني القبط مثل ابن بطريق المعروف بابن الفراه و ابن...» «...وذلك انه نقول للملكيه قد اورد عنكم سعيد بن بطريق: MS Vat. ar. 180, f. 188^v: «...مقفع احد اساقفة القبط...» «... Also according to Ibn al-Muqaffa', Ibn Baṭrīq was known as *Ibn al-farrās* (see footnote 24 above).

37) Cf. MS Vat. ar. 180, ff. 144^r-159^v.

38) Cf. MS Vat. ar. 180, ff. 181^v-190^r.

39) For example, see MS Vat. ar. 180, f. 182^r: «فمن جملة ذلك قوله عنا انا نعتقد ان مريم ولدت المسيح بناسوته فقط.» «وان مريم ولدت المسيح من جهة ناسوته لا من جهة لاهوته.» This quotation comes from the insertion against the Nestorians, cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 159.

40) Cf. MS Vat. ar. 180, f. 184^v: «...واما قولك ان الطبيعة الواحدة تجمع اقانيمًا كثيرة...» This quotation is taken from the insertion which comes from *Kitāb al-burhān*, where the Melkite patriarch says that the nature contains the hypostases; cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 168: «لان الطبيعة جامعة للقوامات.»

41) Cf. MS Vat. ar. 180, ff. 184^v-185^r: «ثم انا وجدناك قد احتججت على اليعقوبية فقلت ان كان المسيح طبيعة واحدة فالطبيعة القديمة اذن هي المحدثه...» «فان كان ذلك كذلك ان اللاهوت استحالت الى الناسوت فطبيعة المسيح انسان لا اله ووجب لزوم العذاب لجوهر اللاهوت ودخول الفساد عليها وهذا من اشنع الخيال. وان

ibis states that these controversies were written in "The Annals" of the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria⁴². In summary we can say that the historical work of Ibn Baṭrīq was known in Nisibis not too long after the author's death⁴³.

D. RESOLVING THE PROBLEM: THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE INSERTIONS

We should start again from the information mentioned by Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah on Ibn Baṭrīq. Although, according to some scholars such as Griffith, the Muslim doctor's information was based on the same version of the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria that was widespread in the Arab world, he also based his information on the work of the continuator of "The Annals", Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī⁴⁴. This aspect is of considerable importance and worth of being analyzed precisely and with attention.

In his work, Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah reports that Ibn Baṭrīq wrote a medical book, "The book on the dispute between a Christian and a heretic", the historical work "The order of the pearl" and three treatises (*maqālāt*) in which he informs his brother on the matters of the fasts and feasts of the Christians, and also provides some information on emperors, caliphs, patriarchs, and so on.

With this information provided of Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah, we face a big question: what exactly he is referring when he mentions "The order of the pearl" and the three *maqālāt* together? Are they two different works or just one?

The information of the Muslim physician, which is dated to the thirteenth century, allows us to understand that the works of the Melkite patriarch were also known to the Muslims. The information on the dogmatic work and on Ibn Baṭrīq's knowledge of the science of the Christian faith and

كان جوهر الناسوت استحال الى جوهر اللاهوت فالمسيح اله لا انسان ووجب انه كان محدثاً فصار قديماً وهذا من اشنع المحال».

42) Cf. MS Vat. ar. 180, f. 182^r: «وايضاً فان ابن بطريق خلط الكلام في تاريخه تخليطاً كثيراً وذلك انه تارة: كذب علينا ونسب الى اعتقادنا محالاً لا نقول به...».

43) The scholars do not give the exact date of this work. They place it before 1046, i.e. before the death of the metropolitan Elias of Nisibis, cf. Juan Pedro MONFERRER SALA, "Elias of Nisibis", in David THOMAS & Alex MALLETT, ed., *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 2 (900-1050), coll. "The history of Christian-Muslim relations" 14, Brill, Leiden & Boston, 2010, pp. 727-741, here p. 737.

44) Cf. GRIFFITH, "Apologetics", pp. 66-67. For the work of Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī, see Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī, *Annales* (coll. "CSCO" 51/Ar. 7), pp. 89-298.

the different confessions helps us to hypothesize that the Melkite author himself, or one of his disciples, inserted the dogmatic work into the historical one. The historical work contains five passages which start with the phrase "and Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq the physician said" (*wa-qāla Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq al-mutaṭabbib*). This is, in our opinion, an indication of an insertion which comes from another work by the same author. Additionally, from the point of view of the literary genre, the parts in which Ibn Baṭrīq argues with heretics follow a "questions and answers" genre⁴⁵, which is different from the genre he uses in his historical narrations.

From the first page of the historical work, we understand that it was composed to be helpful to the brother of the Melkite patriarch, 'Īsā ibn Baṭrīq who, according to Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah, was also a physician⁴⁶. His brother needed this information, perhaps because of his involvement in discussions, historical and theological, with others⁴⁷. For this reason Ibn Baṭrīq wrote this work hoping that it could be of use⁴⁸.

As mentioned, in the version of Cheikho there are five insertions, three dogmatic ones and two others. Of the two non-dogmatic insertions the first deals with questions of the feast of Easter, and is located after the narration on the council of Nicaea I⁴⁹. The second deals with the fasting of Christians, and is located after the narration on the council of Constantinople I⁵⁰.

Taking into consideration these two insertions and the information provided by Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah, it appears likely that in the beginning there was a historical work and some independent articles. All these works, according to the Muslim author, were sent to Ibn Baṭrīq's brother 'Īsā. Therefore we can almost be certain that these two insertions were written by the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria. As for the apologetic and dogmatic insertions, we must again take into consideration that the Muslim author mentions three articles and "The book of the dispute".

45) On the literary genres of Christian Arabic literature see Sidney GRIFFITH, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque. Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam*, Princeton University Press, Princeton & Oxford, 2008, pp. 75-92.

46) Cf. Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah, *Uyūn al-Anbā'*, vol. II, p. 87.

47) Cf. GRIFFITH, "Eutychios", pp. IV, 155.

48) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 3.

49) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 127-128.

50) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 146-149.

1- *The insertions against the Nestorians and the Jacobites*

We will begin by arguing in favour of the authenticity of two of the dogmatic insertions, the controversy against the Nestorians⁵¹ and the one against the Jacobites⁵².

From a terminological point of view, there are particular terms and expressions, which are used in both the historical work and the two insertions. For example, in the insertion against the Nestorian controversy⁵³, we find the terms *qadīm* (eternal) and *ḥadīṭ* (created), which are also found in the historical work. In the insertion of the controversy against the Jacobites, we find the expression *mutasāwī fī al-ṭabī'ah* (equal in the natural), which is an expression often used in the historical work to express consubstantiality⁵⁴. In fact, only Ibn Baṭrīq used *ṭabī'ah* (nature) to translate the Greek ὁμοούσιος, while other authors used the term *ḡawhar* (substance).

In this same controversy we note a similarity between some of its expressions and the ones that occur in his historical work, where Ibn Baṭrīq placed them into the mouth of Flavian, the patriarch of Constantinople⁵⁵. Also notable is the independence of the general structure of both controversies. That allows the conclusion that each insertion is a different work which deals with a different topic. This, as well as the fact that the texts in question are not very long, helps us understand that these two controversies-insertions are identical with two of the three articles mentioned by Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah. In conclusion, we can say that these two articles of the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria were inserted in their proper places within his historical work, either by himself or by one of his circle.

2- *The insertion from Kitāb al-burhān*

What remains to be shown is that the insertion from *Kitāb al-burhān*, also belongs to the same author⁵⁶. First of all, in "The Annals", when Ibn

51) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 159-161.

52) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 196-197.

53) In "The Annals", see for example EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 125, 179-180, while for the controversy against the Nestorians see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 160.

54) In "The Annals" one finds the use of this expression for example in EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 127, 157, 182; while for the controversy against the Jacobites, see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 197.

55) For the words of Flavian see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 179-180, while for the same words in the insertion, see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 196.

56) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, pp. 161-176.

Baṭrīq cites works from other authors, he mentions their name, as in the case of John IV⁵⁷ or Sophronius of Alexandria⁵⁸. The question now is: why should we reject that this insertion could be that of the patriarch of Alexandria, especially when he says it himself?⁵⁹

Taking into consideration the opinion of Griffith on the existence of a specific type of theological Arabic-language school in the Melkite monasteries of Palestine, it is plausible to assume that Ibn Baṭrīq had visited these monasteries and knew of their theology in Arabic⁶⁰. We are not aware of any other way as to how our Melkite author could have learned the theology of his confession⁶¹. We note, in fact, that not only in these insertions, but also in the historical work, there is a relation between our author and the Melkite theology of Palestine, such as the emphasis on the doctrine of the six ecumenical councils, a characteristic feature of the theology of these monasteries during this epoch⁶².

If, as noted by Blau, *Kitāb al-burhān* was copied in the monastery of St. Ticon⁶³, we may argue that during his stay in this area the patriarch of Alex-

57) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, p. 28.

58) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, pp. 64.

59) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 176: «فمن احب ان يعلم ذلك ملخصًا مشروحًا فليقرأ كتابي الذي يدعى كتاب الجدال بين المخالف والنصراني...».

60) In fact, S. Griffith says: "During the lifetime of Eutychios of Alexandria the Judean monasteries of St. Sabas and St. Chariton, together with the monastery at Mt. Sinai, were the active centers for the change-over from Greek and Syriac to Arabic as principal language for daily church life in the Melkite community", GRIFFITH, "Apologetics", p. 69.

61) Taking into consideration that Egypt's Melkite clergy, at the time of Ibn Baṭrīq, could not get their theological formation either in Alexandria or in Cairo (cf. BREYDY, *Études sur Sa'īd Ibn Baṭrīq*, 1-2), we argue that the most probable place for them to receive the necessary intellectual and theological training was the monasteries of Palestine, which were transformed into a kind of theological "school". Alternatively, one might hypothesize that our author learned and got his theological formation by reading manuscripts that reached Egypt. Realizing, however, that in terms of numbers and quality of thinkers and theologians, the Melkite Church of Alexandria did not have the same importance as the Coptic Church, we can hardly accept this hypothesis, i.e., the circulation of a significant number of theological manuscripts. In addition, the author of *Kitāb al-burhān*, as we will show soon, knew very well the *loca sancta*, especially the area of Jerusalem and Judea, providing us with some detailed descriptions of it. So if the author was Ibn Baṭrīq himself, as we maintain, it would be more logical to accept the hypothesis that he got his theological formation at these monasteries.

62) See the article of Sidney GRIFFITH, "Melkites", 'Jacobites' and the Christological Controversies in Arabic in Third/Ninth Century Syria", in David THOMAS, ed., *Syria Christians under Islam. The First Thousand Years*, Brill, Leiden & Boston & Köln, 2001, pp. 9-55, especially pp. 38-39.

63) Cf. BLAU, *A Grammar*, pp. 22-23.

andria learned about the work of Buṭrus bin Naṣṭās, which, as supported by Samir, had been written in the second half of the ninth century⁶⁴, and was copied in the monasteries of Palestine. J. Blau remarks that *Kitāb al-burhān* can hardly be recognized as a work written in what he called “the ancient south-Palestinian Arabic”, attributing the linguistic characteristics of this language as found in *Kitāb al-burhān* rather to the copyist⁶⁵. If our hypothesis is correct that Ibn Baṭrīq visited the monasteries of Palestine, he had access to other works in Arabic as well. He might have read some homilies of the Cappadocians, which were already translated, as it seems, into Arabic, as he mentioned them in “The Annals”⁶⁶, and also some works of Abū Qurrah⁶⁷.

We believe that there is also a relation between the homilies of the Cappadocians, mentioned in the historical work of Ibn Baṭrīq, and *Kitāb al-burhān*. As an example, we see that the author mentions the homily of Gregory the Nazianzen on Christmas. In it Gregory praises the mysterious union in Christ, which he calls a “mixture”⁶⁸. This corresponds to what we find in the first insertion, coming from *Kitāb al-burhān*, where the union in Christ is also called “mixture” (*ḥulṭah*)⁶⁹. In addition, we find that the author of the insertion uses the Christology of the transformation of Gregory of Nyssa⁷⁰.

Still, we have yet to answer the question: why has the one who made the insertion that comes from *Kitāb al-burhān*, attributed this work to Ibn Baṭrīq, giving it the title “The Book of the dispute between the heretic and the Christian”, a work that was known even to the Muslim physician Ibn abī Uṣaybi‘ah?

If the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria did not write the *Kitāb al-burhān*, why did the person who made the insertion attribute it to Ibn Baṭrīq’s “Book

64) Cf. SAMIR, “La Littérature”, pp. 483-485.

65) Cf. BLAU, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic*, pp. 22-23.

66) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 137.

67) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, p. 64. A very important relation between *Kitāb al-Burhān* and John of Damascus’ “De Fide Orthodoxa” is noted by Avril M. Makhlouf. It is known that John of Damascus summarized in his work the patristic tradition up to his time. Cf. MAKHLOUF, “The Trinitarian Doctrine”, pp. 5-9.

68) Cf. *Oratio XXXVIII*, in *PG* 36, col. 325 C: «Ὡ τῆς καινῆς μίξεως! Ὡ τῆς παραδόξου κράσεως».

69) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, p. 161.

70) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, p. 167. For the Christology of transformation of Gregory of Nyssa see Brian DALEY, “‘Heavenly Man’ and ‘Eternal Christ’: Apollinarius and Gregory of Nyssa on the personal identity of the Savior”, in *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 10 (2002), pp. 460-488, here p. 481.

of the dispute"? One might argue that there had been confusion between the two works in the mind of the one who made this insertion, and that for this reason it could not have been our patriarch who was responsible for it. One might also argue that the person who made the insertion did not take it from Ibn Baṭrīq's "Book of the dispute", but rather from *Kitāb al-burhān*, and yet, in the end, referred to the work of the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria.

The fact that there is no reference to the author of *Kitāb al-burhān* seems strange, because, as we said, when Ibn Baṭrīq makes citations, he mentions the authors he uses. Nevertheless, we consider it difficult to accept such arguments, and wish to re-open the question of attribution of *Kitāb al-burhān* to the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria. Blau rejects the attribution to Ibn Baṭrīq and considers the work's syriacism to be due to the intervention of the copyist. However, considering his observation that *Kitāb al-burhān* does not belong to "the ancient south-Palestinian Arabic", it seems far-fetched to attribute this work to a bishop of a city of Transjordan, which is very close to the south of Palestine.

E. CONSTRUCTING A NEW HYPOTHESIS

Taking all of this into consideration, we find other possibilities that help us construct a new hypothesis.

Following the opinion of Graf, *Kitāb al-burhān* was composed originally in Arabic. However, the Arabic in this work, as noted by Blau, is not similar to the Arabic of southern Palestine. Furthermore, we must always remember the hypothesis of Griffith about the theological school in the Melkite monasteries of Palestine. A Melkite such as our author, who was born in al-Fuṣṭāṭ, would not speak the Arabic of southern Palestine. However, being Melkite, we can assume that he stayed in the monasteries of Palestine for reasons of theological studies.

During his stay, he may have been closely acquainted with the work of these monasteries, which was to translate and compose theological works in Arabic. He could have read the works of the fathers such as those of the Cappadocians, which perhaps were already translated into Arabic. He could also have known other works, such as the "Cave of Treasures", a work of Judeo-Christian content, which spread into Syriac-Aramaic communities, and which was translated into Arabic in the monasteries of Palestine⁷¹. This

71) Cf. BATTISTA & BAGATTI, *La Caverna*, pp. 13-29 (on the work in general); pp. 31-

work is used by our author in an interesting way. He follows it and develops some historical events according to its contents⁷². The use of such a work can also explain the Judeo-Christian contents of the insertion (and of *Kitāb al-burhān*), such as the descent of the Word and his ascent⁷³. We must always keep in mind that the historical work has a strong relation with the Judeo-Christian tradition, as well as other works of the Melkite Palestinians, a fact that shows the similarity of the sources between the two works, i.e. "The Annals" and *Kitāb al-burhān*⁷⁴. The author of *Kitāb al-burhān* is also very familiar with the holy places⁷⁵. If we claim that Ibn Baṭrīq resided for a while in Palestine, then he must have known its holy places well.

We propose, therefore, that during his studies in the Melkite monasteries of the Holy Land, Ibn Baṭrīq composed *Kitāb al-burhān*. Perhaps, because he was not a member of the clergy at that time, his name was not given by the copyists, but instead, it was attributed to Athanasius the Great, patriarch of Alexandria, perhaps referring to the true author's homeland. Soon after, however, the name of Athanasius was replaced by the name of Buṭrus bin Naṣṭās, the bishop of Bayt Ra's, and the work was attributed to him⁷⁶. And, since our author did not give a title to his work, the copyists gave it the name by which it became known: *Kitāb al-burhān*, "The book of the demonstration"⁷⁷.

Having returned home, Ibn Baṭrīq worked as a physician, but his inter-

32 (on the Arabic text).

72) Cf. PIRONE, *Eutichio*, p. 8; See also BATTISTA & BAGATTI, *La Caverna*, p. 32; where the editors explain the relation between "The Cave" and the historical work of Ibn Baṭrīq, which they also used as a complementary source for their edition, cf. BATTISTA & BAGATTI, *La Caverna*, p. 82 (Arabic pagination).

73) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 162.

74) Cf. SIMONSOHN, "Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq", pp. 228-229: "In addition to parts of the Bible, Ibn Baṭrīq also made extensive use of Judaeo-Christian apocrypha, such as The Cave of treasures, The lives of the prophets, and The martyrdom and ascension of Isaiah... a number of immediate sources in Arabic hagiographic writings, well disseminated among the Melkites of Palestine and Sinai. These include the Life of Epiphanius of Cyprus and Cyril Schythopolis (d. 558), Lives of St. Euthymius and St. Saba".

75) Cf. SWANSON, "Peter of Bayt Ra's", p. 902: "From the contents of his book, he appears to have been well-grounded in Greek Patristic theology, Old Testament testimonia, and the Christian geography of the Holy Land; and he was not unacquainted with Islamic teaching".

76) About the MSS and the attributions to both names, Athanasius and Butrus, and also about the opinion of Graf, see EUTYCHIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *The Book of the Demonstration*, part 1, p. III.

77) For the different titles in the MSS, see EUTYCHIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *The Book of the Demonstration*, part 1, p. 1.

est in theology remained. He was involved in numerous theological discussions in the school of al-Fuṣṭāṭ⁷⁸ and wrote several works. Because of his knowledge in theology and his participation in discussions with other *mutakallimīn* of his time, he was elected patriarch. At this point we must mention that the period of his patriarchate was very difficult⁷⁹. He had no time to write new works, but likely completed the old ones for proposes of preaching and catechesis⁸⁰.

F. KITĀB AL-BURHĀN AND IBN BAṬRĪQ

If our hypothesis is correct, as a consequence, the insertion taken from "The book of the dispute" must be from Ibn Baṭrīq himself, as he mentions. In this case, we think that Ibn Baṭrīq gave to his work the title "The book of the dispute", while the copyists named it differently *Kitāb al-burhān*. This means, in fact, that we should identify both works as the same one. If so, we now have to explain the linguistic differences between this theological work and the historical one, "The Annals" and its other insertions.

The difference is not only due to the general topic of each work and its literary genre, but it is also chronological as regards the time of composition. It seems that Ibn Baṭrīq wrote "The book of the dispute" at the beginning of

78) Cf. PIRONE, *Eutichio*, p. 7; see also BREYDY, *Études sur Sa'īd Ibn Baṭrīq*, 1-4.

79) During his patriarchate, for example, two Melkite bishops of Egypt, the one of al-Farama and the other of Tinnīs, rebelled against their patriarch. Even at al-Fuṣṭāṭ Christians were divided in two groups, one in favor of the patriarch and the other against him. Meanwhile, after the death of the bishop of Tinnīs, Ibn Baṭrīq ordained Theophilus bishop of that see. Some members of the church of this city opposed the patriarch and the newly appointed bishop. They went to the governor of Egypt, Ibn Ṭuġġ, presenting to him the situation from their point of view. Ibn Ṭuġġ ordered the capture of the patriarch and the bishop and the closing of the cathedral church of the Melkites. He thumped Theophilus and threatened to do the same with the patriarch. Thanks, however, to the mediation of some Christian secretaries of Ibn Ṭuġġ, the threat was canceled under the condition that the patriarch and the bishop would pay five thousand dinars each. In order to raise the money, Theophilus, began to sell the precious things of his church. Knowing this, Ibn Ṭuġġ sent his secretary to extort those who had bought these things. The secretary bought the items, paying half of their price. Seeing this, the Christians of Tinnīs ended their rebellion, although some of them remained hostile to the bishop Theophilus, cf. YAḤYĀ AL-ANṬĀKI, *Annales*, pp. 94-96, see also ELLI, *Storia*, vol. 2, p. 69.

80) B. Pirone, says in his introduction to the Italian translation of "The Annals", that Ibn Baṭrīq began writing the historical work before he became patriarch. He added later information on some events of his time, and the work was left at this point. Therefore Pirone accepted that insertions had been made immediately after the death of the author (cf. PIRONE, *Eutichio*, pp. 5-6,8).

his career as a theologian and author. Being in the monasteries of Palestine, he did not yet know the Arabic language used by Muslim *mutakallimīn* at that time, especially the Mu'tazilites. It was only when he took part in the discussions at the school of *al-Fuṣṭāṭ* and read works of Muslim authors and theologians, which became sources of his historical work⁸¹, that he began to know their language and to understand their thinking. After this, he wrote additional works, one after the other, using their language. We noticed, in fact, the similarity in language between the other two insertions and the historical work.

Just as there are differences, there are also similarities. Both works use common terms as *qir'ās*, *uqnūm*, *tabī'ah*, *ḡawhar*, *hiyūlī* etc. From the point of view of content, the emphasis on the Divine Word as Creator is very important and is found also in both works. In his exposition of the dogma, in particular relating to the Arian question⁸² where the character of the Divine Word, that is, the Creator, played a key role⁸³, we find the same emphasis in the insertion that comes from *Kitāb al-burhān*⁸⁴.

Another example could be the doctrine on the human soul. Even if this doctrine is expressed in different terms we notice a similarity of thought: In *Kitāb al-burhān* Ibn Baṭrīq uses the expression the "intellectual and logical spirit" (*al-rūḥ al-'āqilah al-kilmāniyyah*) referring by it to the divine image of the Trinity in the human being⁸⁵, while in the historical work he uses, dealing with the doctrine of Apollinarius of Laodicea, the expression "intellectual and rational soul" (*al-naḥs al-'āqilah al-nāṭiqah*)⁸⁶. Here, we have the same thought, although the author uses different terms. "Soul" (*naḥs*) and "spirit" (*rūḥ*) have in *Kitāb al-burhān* the same function, and "intellectual" (*'āqilah*) is found in both quotations, i.e. in both works. What remains to be explained is the difference between "logical" (*kilmāniyyah*) and "rational" (*nāṭiqah*). Both terms have the same meaning, as the first one comes from the noun *kalimah* (in Greek λόγος) and the other from the noun *nutq* (in Greek λόγος-λογική). If so, the similarity between the two works is noteworthy.

Ibn Baṭrīq used the term *ḥulṭah* (mixture), which comes from the Chris-

81) Cf. SIMONSOHN, "Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq", pp. 227-228.

82) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 131.

83) For more details see MAKHLouF, "The Trinitarian Doctrine", pp. 15-19.

84) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 161.

85) Cf. EUTYCHII OF ALEXANDRIA, *The Book*, part I, p. 32.

86) Cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 146.

tology of the Cappadocians whose works are mentioned in "The Annals" as noted above, to translate the Greek terms *μίξις* and *κρᾶσις*. The frequent use of the term *qiwām* in *Kitāb al-burhān*, which cannot be found in "The Annals", was introduced for the purpose of controversy. When the author wanted to talk about the place and the way of the union of the two natures in Christ, he used this term, which is used for the composed hypostasis of the Word⁸⁷.

With *qiwām* Ibn Baṭrīq also expressed the doctrine of the *ἐνυπόστατον*⁸⁸ which was formulated by the neo-Chalcedonians, for example by Leontius of Jerusalem, a theologian who lived in the monasteries of Palestine, and which was further developed by John of Damascus, another monk of these monasteries⁸⁹. Although Ibn Baṭrīq did not use this term in his historical work, it can also be found in the controversy-insertion against the Jacobites⁹⁰.

In addition, we note the use of the technical terms *qaḍīm* and *muhḍaṭ* in both works⁹¹. And the terms *ḥultah / ihṭilāṭ* (mixture) and *firqah* (separation) which are present in *Kitāb al-burhān* (and therefore in the insertion)⁹² are also used in "The Annals" to translate the four characters of the definition of the council of Chalcedon⁹³.

G. MS SINAI ARABIC 582 AND IBN BAṬRĪQ

If we consider Ibn Baṭrīq to be the author of *Kitāb al-burhān*, and as-

87) For example see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 162.

88) For this doctrine see Benjamin GLEEDÉ, *The Development of the Term ἐνυπόστατος from Origen to John of Damascus*, coll. "Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae. Texts and Studies of Early Christian Life and Language" 113, Brill, Leiden & Boston, 2012.

89) In fact, many scholars have noted the relation between "De fide orthodoxa" by John of Damascus and *Kitāb al-burhān*. It is possible to say that the work of John of Damascus was a source of *Kitāb al-burhān*. Perhaps the hatred the patriarch of Alexandria felt towards John and his family, which becomes very clear in his historical work (cf. EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, pp. 61-62) was the reason that he did not mention him and his work. For the relation between the two works, see Paolo LA SPISA, "Fonti indirette e nuove fonti manoscritte nell'opera teologica di Sulaymān al-Ġazzī", in Davide RIGHI (ed.), *La Letteratura Arabo-cristiana e le scienze nel periodo Abbaside (750-1250 d.C.)*. Atti del 2° convegno di studi arabo-cristiani Roma 9-10 marzo 2007, coll. "Patrimonio Culturale Arabo Cristiano" 11, S. Zamorano Editore, Torino 2008, pp. 285-315, here pp. 299-315.

90) Cf. see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 196.

91) See for example EUTYCHIUS OF ALEXANDRIA, *The Book*, part 1, p. 38, while for the use of these terms in "The Annals" and in the other insertions see footnote 53 above.

92) See for example EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. I, p. 166.

93) Cf. see EUTYCHII, *Annales*, vol. II, p. 36.

sume that he also wrote the long version of "The Annals", what can we say about his relation with MS Sinai Arabic 582, i.e., the short version of "The Annals", regarded by Breydy as the original work of Ibn Baṭṭīq?

Griffith wondered whether MS Sinai Arabic 582 might have been a source of Ibn Baṭṭīq, but later rejected this hypothesis and agreed with the opinion of Breydy⁹⁴. In our view, however, it seems justified to return to Griffith's original hypothesis, especially when remembering that the manuscript in question was written in the Arabic script used in the monasteries of Palestine and Sinai. It is not unlikely that Ibn Baṭṭīq accessed the manuscript during his stay in these monasteries and also made use of it when writing his historical work. Another possibility, which seems even more plausible, is to consider MS Sinai Arabic 582 as the first version of "The Annals" written by Ibn Baṭṭīq during his stay in Palestine⁹⁵, which he himself later developed and to which he added his other works, i.e. the above discussed insertions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECAPITULATION

If our hypothesis is correct, we may conclude by saying that the three theological insertions were indeed been written by Ibn Baṭṭīq, the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria. Two of them can be identified as the "treatises" (*maqālāt*) attributed to him by Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah, while the third one originates from his "Book of the dispute", which is also considered a "treatise" (*maqālah*) by Ibn abī Uṣaybi'ah.

We have demonstrated that the discussion about the attribution of *Kitāb al-burhān* to Ibn Baṭṭīq should be reopened. After an in-depth study of the work, including its insertions, we do not find difficulty in claiming that *Kitāb al-burhān* should be identified with Ibn Baṭṭīq's "Book of the dispute". Either Ibn Baṭṭīq himself or someone close to him immediately after his death made the insertions, since, as noted by B. Pirone, it seems that al-Mas'ūdī, the well-known Muslim historian who died only two years after Ibn Baṭṭīq, knew "The Annals" in the form as we have it today, i.e. in the

94) In fact he says: "... one may open the theoretical possibility that the contents of Sinai 580 [he intends MS 582] are on the order of a pre-existing list of the sources for the patriarch's Annals, compiled by himself or someone else...", but on the same page he continues by saying: "Breydy's proposal that the text in Sinai 580 [he intends Ms 582] is simply the Alexandrian recension of the Annals seems to be the best working hypothesis", cf. GRIFFITH, "Apologetics", p. 79.

95) In this we concur with the opinion of M. Breydy, see footnotes 12, 13 above.

version edited by Cheikho⁹⁶. In addition, at the beginning of the fourteenth century another Muslim *mutakallim*, Ibn Taymiyya⁹⁷, wrote a polemic against the Christians and responded to their doctrines, both Christological and Trinitarian. In his Christological argumentation, he followed the insertions found in "The Annals" of Ibn Baṭrīq⁹⁸.

The historical work of Agapius of Hierapolis⁹⁹, contemporary to that of Ibn Baṭrīq, also follows the same structure. It contains, in both of its parts, an exhibition of the dogma and presents historical narrations about the councils etc. This fact seems to prove our hypothesis. Both authors, Agapius and Ibn Baṭrīq, give us, more or less, the same descriptions, as they used the same sources¹⁰⁰.

If Ibn Baṭrīq wrote his first version of "The Annals" before he became patriarch, it may have been copied before he revised it by adding additional

96) Cf. PIRONE, *Eutichio*, 5-6.

97) See his response to Christians in IBN TAYMIYYAH, *A Muslim theologian's response to Christianity. Ibn Taymiyya's al-jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. & trans. by Thomas F. MICHEL, Delmar & New York, 1984. On his theological thought see Jon HOOVER, *Ibn Taymiyya's Theodicy of Perpetual Optimism*, coll. "Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies" 73), Brill, Leiden & Boston, 2007.

98) Cf. Mark SWANSON, "Ibn Taymiyya and the kitāb al-Burhān: A Muslim Controversialist Responds to A Ninth-Century Arabic Christian Apology", in Yvonne Yazbeck HADDAD & Wadi' Z. HADDAD, ed., *Christian-Muslim Encounters*, University press of Florida, Florida, 1995, pp. 95-107, here p. 95, see also p. 102, footnotes 6-10. According to Swanson, Ibn Taymiyya responds to the three insertions, one of which originates from *Kitāb al-Burhān*, but in the form in which it is present in "The Annals" of Ibn Baṭrīq. In other words, Ibn Taymiyya did not know *Kitāb al-Burhān*, but related to the insertions which he had found in the historical work of the patriarch of Alexandria. He must therefore know the version of "The Annals" that contained the insertions. See also Gérard TROUPEAU, "Ibn Taymiyya et sa réfutation d'Eutychès", in *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 30 (1978), pp. 209-220.

99) Agapius is a Melkite author and was bishop of the city of Mabbug (Hierapolis in Syria) who died in 942. He was an important historian and wrote a work of universal history that is very similar in its structure to "The Annals" of Ibn Baṭrīq. We do not know which of the two works was written first. Likewise nothing is known on a possible relation between the two historians and their works. It is clear, however, that they wrote in the same way, using the same terminology and probably the same sources. For more details, see the introduction to the Italian translation by Bartolomeo PIRONE, trans., *Agapius di Gerapoli, Storia Universale*, coll. "Studia Orientalia Christiana. Monographiae" 21, Edizioni Terra Santa, Milano, 2013, pp. 5-30.

100) In our opinion, Agapius also used MS Sinai Arabic 582, but further studies would be needed to ascertain this claim. We prepared an analysis of the figure of Constantine the Great in the works of the early Melkite historians, including Agapius, and came to the conclusion that Agapius knew the work of Ibn Baṭrīq, as preserved in MS Sinai Arabic 582, and used it as one of his sources. This analysis will be published in a forthcoming volume of *OCA*.

information¹⁰¹. As a result, the work might have circulated in a version that did not contain the insertions and the mentioning of certain historical events, which were added later. If this was the case, Ibn abī Uṣaybi‘ah could have known Ibn Baṭrīq’s “Annals” and “treatises” as separate works which were fit together later on and formed the work as it became generally known. This later version – containing additions on certain events and the five insertions – is the one that became known to the historian al-Mas‘ūdī. It is also the version to which the Coptic bishop Sāwīrūs ibn al-Muqaffa‘ and the Nestorian metropolitan Elias of Nisibis replied in defense of their belief.

According to these conclusions, Ibn Baṭrīq should be regarded not only as a historian, but also as a theologian. His theology, especially his Christology, as presented in the insertions to “The Annals” and in “The book of the demonstration”, should be considered an important contribution to Melkite theological thinking¹⁰².

101) In fact, according to Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī, the continuator of his work, Ibn Baṭrīq finished writing “The Annals” two years before his death, that is in 938 A.D. (cf. SIMONSOHN, “Sa‘īd ibn Baṭrīq”, p. 225).

102) In our dissertation we tried to analyze his Trinitarian and Christological doctrines (cf. EBEID, *La Cristologia*, pp. 103-140).

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