

Cultures in Contact
Transfer of Knowledge in the Mediterranean Context

Selected Papers

Edited by

Sofía Torallas Tovar & Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala



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Motifs of a South-Melkite Affiliation in the *Annales* of Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq

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In the preface to his treatise, *Kitāb al-majāmiʿ*, the Book of Councils, the 10th-century Coptic theologian Severus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. after 987) is said to be responding to harsh insults against the Jacobites found in the *History* of the Melkite patriarch and historian Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq (d. 940).¹ As noted already by Chébli, the editor and translator of the Coptic text, two of its earliest manuscripts, *Paris Arabicus* 172 and 173, of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, respectively, lack these introductory remarks.² Nevertheless, these texts do contain Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ’ s subsequent remarks, according to which he composed his work in response to ibn Baṭrīq’s accusation that the Jacobites have distorted the Orthodox faith.³ Thus, the narrative goes on, it is hoped that a response to ibn Baṭrīq’s allegations will serve as an aid to those who seek to fortify their belief.⁴ Evidently, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ’ s literary endeavor should be seen as nothing but an anti-Chalcedonian polemical treatise, specifically aimed against

¹ On Severus b. al-Muqaffaʿ, see G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Città del Vaticano, 1944-1953, II, pp. 300-318. The section cited here from his *Kitāb al-majāmiʿ* is taken from, P. Chébli (ed. and trans.), *Kitāb al-majāmiʿ*, in *Patrologia Orientalis III*, ed. R. Graffin and F. Nau, Paris, 1905, pp. 121-242, based on mss. Par. Ar. 172 (1291); 173 (14th century); 212 (1601), as also a collation of Vat. Ar. 155 (14th century). On Saʿīd b. Baṭrīq, also known as Eutychius of Alexandria, see U. Simonsohn, ‘Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq’, in David Thomas et al. (ed.), *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History. Volume 2 (900-1050)*, Leiden, 2010, pp. 224-233. The ensuing discussion is based on Michel Breydy’s edition: M. Breydy, *Das Annalenwerk des Eutychios von Alexandrien. Ausgewählte Geschichten und Legenden kompiliert von Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq um 935 AD*, Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 471-72, Louvain, 1985, based on the edition of the oldest known ms. Sinai Ar. 582 (10th century).

² P. Chébli (ed. and trans.), *Kitāb al-majāmiʿ*, in *Patrologia Orientalis III*, ed. R. Graffin and F. Nau, p. 125, n. 1.

³ P. Chébli (ed. and trans.), *Kitāb al-majāmiʿ*, in *Patrologia Orientalis III*, ed. R. Graffin and F. Nau, pp. 125-6: وذلك مما سألته عنه ممن وقف على كتاب التاريخ تأليف سعيد بن بطريق لما طالعه ووجد فيه السب والشتمية لليعاقبة ... وما نسبه اليهم من الخطا وانهم الذين غيروا الامانة المستقيمة ...

⁴ P. Chébli (ed. and trans.), *Kitāb al-majāmiʿ*, in *Patrologia Orientalis III*, ed. R. Graffin and F. Nau, p. 126.

a contemporary Chalcedonian work with a similar agenda.⁵ In other words, if we take the remarks attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffa' at face value, we arrive at the conclusion that one of the principal objectives of the *Annales* of Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq, if not the primary one, was apologetic.

Ibn Baṭrīq's *Annales*, originally composed in the first half of the 10th century, is currently extant in some thirty manuscripts, transcribed both in the Near East and in the West.⁶ The importance of the work has been ascribed in modern scholarship to its apologetic value.⁷ Accordingly, along with Ibn al-Muqaffa''s treatise, the polemical works of the East Syrian Elias of Nisibis (d. c. 1049), and of the Muslim Ḥanbalī scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), can be seen as additional examples of apologetic responses to the *Annales*.⁸

Here we must digress for a moment and recall Michael Breydy's conclusive findings in the wake of his edition of *Sinaiticus Arabicus 582* - the earliest manuscript of the *Annales* from the monastery of St. Catherine.⁹ As the earliest text, it represents the closest version of the original *Annales*, if not, as suggested by Breydy, the actual autograph of Ibn Baṭrīq himself. Breydy, who compared *Sinaiticus Arabicus 582* with later manuscripts, noted traces of successive manipulations, as well as divergences in language and style in the later texts. Breydy's analysis has yielded what is now a generally accepted distinction between a so-called Alexandrian recension, under which he classified *Sinaiticus Arabicus 582*, and a so-called Antiochian recension, to which later versions of the *Annales* belong and of which the earliest manuscript is dated to around the 13th, if not the 14th, century. Thus, whereas *Sinaiticus Arabicus 582* is believed to have originated in 10th-century Alexandria, those texts of the Antiochian recension are most likely to have been copied from an 11th-century version, first worked on by the Melkite historian Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd al-Anṭākī in Antioch.¹⁰

⁵ See G. Troupeau, 'Un refutation des Melkites par Sévère ibn al-Muqaffa'', in C. Laga, et al. (ed.), *After Chalcedon, studies in theology and church history*, Louvain, 1985, pp. 371-80.

⁶ See M. Breydy, *Études sur Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq et ses sources*, CSCO 450, Louvain, 1983, pp. 42-72.

⁷ This has been the principal argument in S. Griffith, 'Apologetics and historiography in the annals of Eutychius of Alexandria: Christian self-definition in the world of Islam', in R. Ebied and H. Teule (ed.), *Studies on the Christian Arabic heritage*, Louvain, 2004, p. 74.

⁸ Elias of Nisibis, *Buch vom Beweis der Wahrheit des Glaubens*, ann. and trans. L. Horst, Colmar, 1886, pp. x, 22-44, 73-84; T.F. Michel, *A Muslim theologian's response to Christianity. Ibn Taymiyya's al-Jawāb al-ṣaḥīḥ*, Delmar, NY, 1984.

⁹ See M. Breydy, *Études*, pp. 29-41.

¹⁰ L. Cheikho et al. (eds.), *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales*, CSCO 50-51, Paris, 1906-9, based on mss. Paris, BNF - Ar. 288 (14th century) and 291 (15th century according to Cheikho, 17th century according to B. De Slane, *Catalogue des mss. orientaux de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, 1883, I, p. 80, and 18th century according to G. Troupeau, *Catalogue des mss. arabes*, Paris, 1972, I, pp. 258-64).

The Antiochian recension is significantly broader than the Alexandrian one. Quite often, what appear as brief historical insertions in the earlier narrative are expanded in later texts into entire sections. One case in point is the reference to Christological differences in the aftermath of the Council of Chalcedon (451). The importance of this historical episode for the future formation of the Eastern Churches cannot be overstated.¹¹ Yet, whereas the Alexandrian narrative reflects an interest in the historical events (see below), and is almost devoid of any theological rhetoric, that of the Antiochian recension is amplified with an elaborate theological apology. Thus, for example, both narratives speak of Jacob Baradaeus (d. 578), one of the founding fathers of the Miaphysite camp, as a disciple of Severus (d. 538), the patriarch of Antioch (512-518), and as one whose creed, “was that the Messiah was of one nature, made of two natures, and a substance of two substances and one will”.¹² Both narratives also refer to his mission in al-Jazīra and Mesopotamia, leading to the corruption of local belief, whereupon Jacob’s followers were given the collective name Jacobites. At this point, however, the Alexandrian narrative moves on directly to discuss the events in Palestine during the reign of emperor Anastasius (r. 491-518), while that of the Antiochian recension devotes an extensive discussion to refuting Miaphysite claims. In fact, as one probes into the Alexandrian text, one is easily struck by how little reference it makes to questions of Christological substance, as if these served merely to assist the flow of the historiographic narrative.

It is on the basis of this impression that we may surmise the apologetic work to which the 13th-century copy of Severus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ was referring was of Antiochian provenance; and was not, therefore, the earlier version from Alexandria. This was also the conclusion reached by Breydy, who argued that the modern title given to Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ’ s treatise, *Réfutation d’Eutychius*, is artificial for two reasons. First, because the reference to Ibn Baṭrīq is the result of a later insertion in the Coptic polemical composition, and second, because the earliest attestation of the polemical digression attributed to the Melkite patriarch is found only in much later copies of his work.¹³ We can therefore conclude that the *Annales*, in its 10th-century version, had no apologetic agenda, at least not a direct

¹¹ See W.H.C. Frend, *The rise of the Monophysite movement: chapters in the history of the church in the fifth and sixth centuries*, Cambridge, 1972, *passim*; P. Charanis, *Church and state in the later Roman empire: the religious policy of Anastasius the first (491-518)*, Thessalonike, 1974, *passim*; J. Meyendorff, *Imperial unity and Christian divisions*, New York, 1989, *passim*; A. Cameron, *The Mediterranean world in late antiquity: AD 395-600*, London, 1993, pp. 21-25.

¹² M. Breydy, *Annalenwerk*, 471, p. 102 / L. Cheikho, *Eutychii*, 50, p. 195: وكانت مقالته ان المسيح طبيعة واحدة وطبيعتين وجوهرين ومشيئة واحدة

¹³ M. Breydy, *Études*, p. 85; cf. S. Griffith, ‘Apologetics and historiography,’ in R. Ebied and H. Teule (ed.), *Studies on the Christian Arabic heritage*, p. 70.

one. Consequently, we are left to wonder as to the immediate purpose of the historiographic narrative in its original form.

Ibn Baṭrīq's immersion in an Islamic scholarly environment can be discerned through what appears to be his explicit reliance on Muslim historical sources for the depiction of the period following the Muslim conquest.¹⁴ Yet other segments of the work betray a similar impression as well. As an example, Ibn Baṭrīq's presentation of Judeo-Christian apocryphal narratives strikingly resembles that of Muslim authors, particularly narrators of *qīṣaṣ al-anbiyā'* ('tales of the prophets').¹⁵ Like other Muslim Traditionists, Ibn Baṭrīq did not compose a historiographic work in the scientific sense of the term. Instead, rather than offering a flowing historiographic narrative, he often chose to compile traditions of historical value. For the depiction of Evangelic history – from the birth of Christ till the end of Constantine's reign – he includes an abridged version of the legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.¹⁶ He also relates the secular history of the Roman Empire until the time of Emperor Theodosius I (r. 379-395) by including sections from the history of the Sasanian kings, the Legend of Theodosius and Theophilus, and by extracting portions from the *Vita Epiphaniī*.¹⁷ For the section dealing with the aftermath of Chalcedon, Ibn Baṭrīq's immediate source is a hagiographic text, – the *Lives* of St. Euthymius (d. 473) and St. Sabas (d. 532) by Cyril of Scythopolis (d. c. 559) – a text well known to have been disseminated among the Melkites of Palestine and Sinai.¹⁸ It is this section in

¹⁴ See M. Breydy, 'La conquête arabe de l'Égypte. Un fragment du traditionniste 'Uthman ibn Ṣāliḥ (144-219 A.H. = 761-834 A.D.) identifié dans les Annales d'Eutychios d'Alexandrie (877-940 A.D.)', *Parole de l'Orient* 8 (1977-78), pp. 379-396; Idem, 'Aspects méconnus des Annales d'Eutyches d'Alexandrie, et une compilation historique arabo-chrétienne à la façon de traditionnistes musulmans', in W. Voigt (ed.), *XX. Deutscher orientalistentag (Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, suppl. 4)*, Wiesbaden, 1980, pp. 148-145; Idem, *Études*, p. 40; U. Pietruschka, 'Muslimische Überlieferungen in christlichem Gewand. Das Annalenwerk des Eutychius von Alexandria', in W. Beltz and J. Tubach (ed.), *Regionale Systeme koexistieren der Religionsgemeinschaften (Leucorea Kolloquium 2001)*, Halle, 2002, pp. 257-286; U. Simonsohn, 'The biblical narrative in the Annales of Sa'īd ibn Baṭrīq and the question of medieval Byzantine-Orthodox identity', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 22:1 (2011), pp. 37-55.

¹⁵ See especially U. Simonsohn, 'The biblical narrative', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 22:1 (2011), pp. 37-55.

¹⁶ M. Breydy, *Annalenwerk*, 471, pp. 60-2, 86-9 (Ar.)/ 472, pp. 50-2, 71-4 (Ger.).

¹⁷ M. Breydy, *Annalenwerk*, 471, pp. 73-82, 85-6, 89-95 (Ar.)/ 472, 61-71, 74-80 (Ger.).

¹⁸ Originally composed in Greek, Cyril's work is now available in the following editions and translations: E. Schwartz (ed. and trans.), *Kyriillos von Skythopolis*, «Texte und Untersuchungen» XLIX.2, Leipzig, 1939; A.J. Festugière (trans. and ann.), *Les moines d'Orient: Les moines de Palestine*, 3.1-3, Paris, 1962-3; R. M. Price and J. Binns (trans.), *The Lives of the monks of Palestine*, Kalamazoo, MI, 1991; L. Di Segni, *Cyril of Scythopolis: Lives of monks of the Judean desert*, Jerusalem, 2005 (in Hebrew). On the Arabic translations, see G. Graf, GCAL, I,

particular which leaves the reader puzzled with regard to the historiographic objectives of Ibn Baṭrīq's work. It is common knowledge that the doctrinal resolutions of the Council of Chalcedon had instigated a remarkable turmoil throughout the Eastern Roman Empire and outside it. Protests of outrage of anti-Chalcedonian monks in Palestine and Egypt posed a challenge to restore unity to succeeding emperors. The efforts of Marcian (r. 450 – 457) and Leo I (r. 457 – 474) to appease the rival parties through what appears to have been a series of episcopal appointments and ecclesiastical consultations served only as a prologue to Zeno's (r. 474 – 475, 476 – 491) publication of the famous *Henotikon* in 482.¹⁹ The *Henotikon* included, among other things, the approval of the condemnations of Eutyches (d. c. 456) and Nestorius (d. c. 451), initially proclaimed at Chalcedon, along with an omission of any reference to the question of Christ's nature. Zeno, who was initially and briefly usurped by Basiliscus (r. 475 – 476), a supporter of the anti-Chalcedonians, is known to have taken harsh measures against the Miaphysites, a policy which was to be shortly after reversed by Anastasius. While the latter continued to endorse the *Henotikon*, his anti-Chalcedonian inclinations are seen through the recurring visits of Miaphysite theologians to his court.

A detailed discussion of the events following the Council of Chalcedon is beyond the scope of this paper. The intriguing fact, however, is that Ibn Baṭrīq, who, if only through Cyril's composition, had at his disposal ample information related to this period, but displays a rather selective approach in its narration.²⁰ Following a brief mention of the Council of Chalcedon and a reference, almost in passing, to Marcian's reign, Ibn Baṭrīq leads us directly to Jerusalem. There, in his attempts to spread his teaching the excommunicated anti-Chalcedonian patriarch of Alexandria, Dioscorus (d. 454), succeeded in winning the support of the exiled empress Eudocia (d. 460). At the same time, and to the detriment of Dioscorus, St. Euthymius, the founding father of the Judean Chalcedonian monastic communities, was in Jerusalem and managed to persuade Eudocia to reject the Christology promoted by Dioscorus, whereupon she endorsed the Chalcedonian creed. Ibn Baṭrīq then refers, once again very briefly, to the reigns

pp. 407-408. According to Graf, variant versions of the lives of St. Euthymius and St. Sabas are extant in five manuscripts, of which the two earliest ones are a palimpsest, *Codex Rescriptus Tischendorf 2* (8th century) and *Vat. Ar. 71* (885). See also S.H. Griffith, 'Anthony David of Baghdad, scribe and monk of Mar Sabas: Arabic in the monasteries of Palestine', *Church History* 58 (1989), pp. 7-19. Griffith mentions the fact that *Cod. Res. Tischendorf 2* is written on an erased Greek text. See his reference to H.K. Fleischer, 'Über einen griechisch-arabischen Codex rescriptus der Leipziger Universitäts-Bibliothek', in H.K. Fleischer, *Kleinere Schriften*, Leipzig, 1888, III, pp. 378-388.

¹⁹ On the *Henotikon*, see P. Charanis, *Church and state*, pp. 14-35; W.H.C. Frend, *Rise of the Monophysite*, pp. 143-80.

²⁰ M. Breydy, *Annalenwerk*, 471, pp. 95-110 (Ar.) / 472, pp. 81-91 (Ger.).

of emperors Leo and Zeno. It should be noted, however, that our author does refer to two historical incidents of relative, if not utmost, importance: first, the assault of the Miaphysite monks against the Chalcedonian patriarch in Alexandria – Pretorius in 457, and, second, Basiliscus' brief takeover of the imperial throne during the reign of Zeno in 475. Intriguingly, Ibn Baṭrīq makes no reference whatsoever to other important events, most notably the announcement of the *Henotikon*; he rather takes the reader swiftly onto the reign of Anastasius, to whom he devotes a relatively expanded discussion. Throughout his narrative Ibn Baṭrīq provides historical information regarding contemporaneous developments in the neighboring Sasanian empire, information that is most likely drawn from an Arabic version of the *History of the Sasanian Kings*, translated by the Muslim convert 'Abdallāh ibn Muqaffa' (d. 756).²¹ As far as Roman affairs are concerned, the account in the *Annales* is based almost exclusively on an Arabic translation of Cyril's *lives of St. Euthymius and St. Sabas*. The 8th and 9th-century copies of this translation were found in the Judean desert monastery of Mar Sabas: *Codex Rescriptus Tischendorf 2* and *Vaticanus Arabicus 71*.²² The latter is a collection of narratives translated from Greek into Arabic in c. 885 by the scribe and monk Anthony David of Baghdad.²³ Yet not only does this translation often reflect a free hand, there appears to be ample justification for hypothesizing another Arabic copy to which our Melkite patriarch made recourse.²⁴ Be that as it may, references to Cyril's text may cast further light on the nature of Ibn Baṭrīq's work; namely, through an examination of the themes that he chose to extract from Cyril's hagiographic work.

Ibn Baṭrīq's focus on events during the reigns of Anastasius and Justinian (r. 527 – 565) is evident. Under both emperors we find the situation in Palestine dire, whereupon in each instance, St. Sabas, St. Euthymius' disciple and perhaps the most renowned leader of the Judean monastic movement, was sent on a mission to the imperial court.²⁵ Under Anastasius, to whom Ibn Baṭrīq explicitly refers as

²¹ See M. Breydy, *Études*, p. 19.

²² See *supra*, n. 18.

²³ See S.H. Griffith, 'Anthony David of Baghdad', *Church History* 58 (1989), pp. 7-19.

²⁴ For a detailed comparison between the Greek and Arabic, see K. Leeming, *Byzantine hagiographies in Arabic: three translations from a ninth-century manuscript copied at the monastery of Mar Saba in Palestine (Vaticanus Arabicus 71)*, Oxford: PhD dissertation, 1997, pp. 217-249; cf. S.H. Griffith, 'From Aramaic to Arabic: the languages of the monasteries of Palestine in the Byzantine and early Islamic periods', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), p. 28: Griffith argues that the discrepancy between the Greek and the Arabic should be accounted for the intention of the translator to 'have the accounts come alive in Arabic.' M. Breydy, *Études*, p. 17: Breydy explains the divergences from the Greek accounts of St. Euthymius and St. Sabas as a result of Ibn Baṭrīq's recourse to Melkite *Synaxaria*.

²⁵ On St. Sabas' career and significance for the monastic community in Palestine, see J. Patrich, *Sabas, leader of Palestinian monasticism: a comparative study in eastern monasticism*,

a Jacobite, the Jerusalem see was pressed to renounce Chalcedon. The attempts of the Palestinian monks, headed by Sabas, to win the emperor over to their side had yielded temporary success. Sabas, we are told, was well received in the court and was even asked to spend the winter there; yet upon his return to Palestine, Anastasius fell once more for the charms of the Miaphysite party. Consequently, the rebellious Chalcedonian patriarch of Jerusalem, Elias (r. 494 – 516), was removed, and his successor, John (r. 516 – 524), who was about to endorse anti-Chalcedonian demands, but faced pressure from Palestinian monastic leaders, went back on his word to the Roman commander. Backed by the support of the thousands of Chalcedonian monks streaming into the Holy City, Sabas and his companions were able to prevent John from renouncing Chalcedon. Despite John's removal, the imperial court appears to have conceded to the firm stand of the Palestinian monks. After a brief anecdote about Anastasius' dream, foretelling his own death, and its anticipation by the exiled patriarch of Jerusalem, Elias, Ibn Baṭrīq moves to relate the situation in Alexandria and Palestine under Justinian. Ibn Baṭrīq recounts how Justinian sought to remove the Jacobite patriarch of Alexandria from his see and, through the use of great force, brought the city under Chalcedonian control. Nevertheless, Ibn Baṭrīq acknowledges the strong influence of the Miaphysite church in Egypt during the reign of emperors Leo the Younger, Zeno and Anastasius, pointing out to the fact that, "the Jacobite creed had already taken over Alexandria and Egypt".²⁶ The second occasion on which Sabas was sent to the imperial court was subsequent to the Samaritan revolt in Palestine, at which point many churches were damaged and the land fell into despair. Sabas appeared before Justinian and asked that the tax over Palestine be reduced. In response, the emperor not only ordered the remission of taxes, but also initiated a series of construction projects, which included, among others, a hospital in Jerusalem, the church of the Nea, the church of Beit Lahem, and a monastery in the Sinai. Ibn Baṭrīq goes into great detail as he describes the construction of St. Catherine monastery, a report which we might suspect was based on Procopius' (d. c. 565) *Buildings (Peri Ktismaton)*, though a closer examination of the two narratives suggests that Ibn Baṭrīq had a different source at his

fourth to seventh centuries, Washington, 1995. St. Sabas acts are celebrated in the Byzantine Church on December 5 and numerous copies of his *life* are known to have circulated in the Byzantine world in Greek, Arabic, Georgian, Syriac, and old Slavonic. According to Griffith, St. Sabas was in fact 'the champion of Chalcedonian orthodoxy'; see S.H. Griffith, 'From Aramaic to Arabic', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), p. 14; he made two visits to the imperial court in Constantinople, the first in c. 511 and the second in 531 (see below).

²⁶ M. Breydy, *Annalenwerk*, 471, p. 105: مقالة البعقوية كانت قد غلبت على الاسكندرية ومصر

disposal.²⁷ The closing remarks of this section in Ibn Baṭrīq's narrative, those preceding matters pertaining to Roman Persian relations in this period, suggest that our patriarch was not prepared to have the Christological dispute remain unresolved:

“In his days [i.e. Justinian's time] there was Origen, metropolitan of Mabbug (d. 523) who spoke of the transmigration of souls and that there is no resurrection. There was also Ibas, bishop of Roha (Edessa) (d. 457), Theodorus, metropolitan of Masisa (Mopsuestia) (d. 428), and Theodotus, the bishop of Ancyra (d. c. 446). These used to say that the body of our Lord the Messiah was a fantasy... The emperor heard of their doctrine and ordered them to present themselves in Constantinople and meet with Eutychius the patriarch of Constantinople (d. 582). Eutychius said to them, ‘if the body of our Lord the Messiah is a fantasy, as you claimed, then his doing must be a fantasy and his words also so...’ He then said to Origen, bishop of Mabbug, ‘our Lord the Messiah resurrected and taught us that the people resurrect in the day of judgment. He said to us in his blessed Gospel that the time shall come in which all those buried, when they hear the voice of the Son of God, shall live. How then do you say to us that there is no resurrection?’ He thus excommunicated them and condemned them”.²⁸

From a historical perspective this encounter could have never taken place of course, as Philoxenus, to whom Ibn Baṭrīq mistakenly refers to as Origen, died when Eutychius, the bishop of Constantinople was about eleven years old, not to mention the fact that the rest of the church leaders mentioned in this passage had passed away a few decades earlier.

So far I have attempted to emphasize what is notably absent from Ibn Baṭrīq's narrative, namely an extensive theological rhetoric and almost fifty years of eventful developments following the Council of Chalcedon, both on the imperial and Christological fronts. Equally telling as these omissions, however, are features that do characterize the *Annales* as regards its chosen heroes, geographic focus, and sources. The decision of our Byzantine Orthodox writer to rely, almost

²⁷ See P. Mayerson, ‘Procopius or Eutychius on the construction of the monastery at Mount Sinai: which is the more reliable source?’, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 230 (1978), pp. 33-38.

²⁸ M. Breydy, *Annalenwerk*, 471, pp. 109-110: وكان في ايامه اوريجانوس مطران منبج وكان يقول بالتناسخ وان ليس قيامة وكان ايضا ايبا اسقف الرها وتدوس مطران المصيصة وتودروطس اسقف مدينة انقرة. فكانوا هؤلاء يقولون ان المسيح كان فنطاسيا اى خيالا غير حقيقة. فسمع بمقاتتهم الملك فوجه فاشخصهم الى قسطنطينية وجمع بينهم وبين اوطيشيوس بطرك قسطنطينية فقال لهم اوطيشيوس ان كان جسد سيدنا المسيح فنطاسيا كما زعمتم فيجب ان يكون فعله فنطاسيا وقوله كذلك ... وقال لاورجانوس اسقف منبج ان سيدنا المسيح قد قام من الموت وأعلمها ان كذلك يقوم الناس من الموت يوم الدينونة وقال لنا في انجيله المقدس ان ساعة تأتي ساعة حتى ان كل من في القبور اذا سمعوا صوت ابن الله يحيوا فكيف تقول لنا ليس قيامة؟ فاجب عليهم الحرم واللعن.

exclusively, on the lives of the Judean Monks should not surprise us. After all, their 5th-century author, Cyril of Scythopolis, was clearly a Chalcedonian and his work endorses a Chalcedonian historical outlook.²⁹ Despite the hagiographic nature of this text, its historiographic merits have long been acknowledged.³⁰ In fact, Cyril adopted many of the literary methods of his contemporary historians by following a model of writing and dating that strongly demonstrates an historical mindset. At the same time, his conspicuous reliance on Palestinian sources also allowed Ibn Baṭṛīq to confine his discussion to a limited geographic zone, namely Palestine, Sinai, and Alexandria. His only reference to Constantinople is with regard to the cajoling missions of the Palestinian monks to the imperial court. It is worth noting that the monastic leaders at the center of events are men whose biographies trace their origins to urban elites, while their future careers lead them continuously into touch with affairs outside their monastic habitations.³¹ The presentation of holy men as heroes in historiographic works was, of course, not unique to the *Annales*; this feature places Ibn Baṭṛīq in line with other Syrian Orthodox, Coptic, and Byzantine historians.³² Finally, the

²⁹ B. Flusin, *Miracle et histoire dans l'oeuvre de Cyrille de Schytopolis*, Paris, 1983, pp. 73-76; R. M. Price and J. Binns (trans.), *Cyril of Scythopolis*, p. xlv; J. Binns, *Ascetics and ambassadors of Christ: the monasteries of Palestine*, Oxford, 1996, pp. 36-40; S.H. Griffith, 'From Aramaic to Arabic', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), p. 22; Idem, 'Byzantium and the Christians in the world of Islam: Constantinople and the church in the Holy Land in the ninth century', *Medieval Encounters* 3 (1997), p. 244; P.T.R. Gray, 'The Sabaite monasteries and the christological controversies (478-533)', in Joseph Patrich (ed.), *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present: Monastic life, Liturgy, Theology, Literature, Art, Archaeology*, «Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta», Louvain, 2001, p. 237; D. Hombergen, *The second Origenist controversy*, Roma, 2001, pp. 41-51, 88-96; N. Kalogeras, 'The role of the audience in the construction of a narrative: a note on Cyril of Scythopolis', in *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 52 (2002), pp. 149-59 (ed. W. Hörandner); C.B. Horn, *Asceticism and Christological controversy in fifth-century Palestine: the career of Peter the Iberian*, Oxford, 2006, p. 1.

³⁰ B. Flusin, *Miracle et histoire*, pp. 83-86, 209-212; R. M. Price and J. Binns (trans.), *Cyril of Scythopolis*, pp. xxx-xxxvi; J. Binns, *Ascetics and Ambassadors*, pp. 36-71; S.H. Griffith, 'The signs and wonders of orthodoxy: miracles and monks' lives in sixth-century Palestine', in J. Cavadini (ed.), *Miracles in Jewish and Christian antiquity: imaging truth*, Notre Dame, IN, 1999, pp. 141-21; D. Hombergen, *The second Origenist controversy*, pp. 41-51, 88-95; N. Kalogeras, 'The Role of the Audience', *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 52 (2002), p. 15.

³¹ L. Di Segni, 'Monk and society: the case of Palestine', in *The Sabaite heritage*, p. 31.

³² See especially B. Flusin, *Miracle et histoire*, pp. 104, 209-12; M.A. Debié, *Étude de la tradition historiographique de langue syriaque et de ses rapports avec l'historiographie grecque du Ve au IXe siècle*, Paris, PhD. 1999, pp. 164-167; S.H. Griffith, 'The signs and wonders of orthodoxy', in J. Cavadini (ed.), *Miracles in Jewish and Christian antiquity: imaging truth*, pp. 141-145; C.B. Horn, *Asceticism*, pp. 5-7; A. Papaconstantinou, 'Historiography, hagiography, and the making of the Coptic "church of the martyrs" in Early Islamic Egypt', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006), pp. 65-86.

roles of the monasteries of Mar Sabas and St. Catherine are of crucial significance. Both served as important centers for the translation of texts from Syriac and Greek into Arabic; and also, later on, as depositories for these texts.³³ It is here, in the libraries of these monastic centers, that writers such as Ibn Baṭrīq may have gone hunting for their sources. Thus, the combination of a geographical orientation (Jerusalem, Palestine, Sinai, Alexandria), a concentration on Palestinian monastic leadership (St. Euthymius and St Sabas), and, of course, the use of Palestinian and Sinaitic archives, all attest to our patriarch's religious, regional, and political affiliation.³⁴ His is a text which stands in contrast, not only to the narratives of rival groups, but also in distinction to its own later versions. The use of historical events to articulate group affiliations has been long noted in modern scholarship.³⁵ Whether consciously or unconsciously,

³³ S.H. Griffith, 'Stephen of Ramlah and the Christian kerygma in Arabic in ninth century Palestine', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985), p. 36; Idem, 'Anthony David of Baghdad', *Church History* 58 (1989), p. 19; Idem, 'From Aramaic to Arabic', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 51 (1997), p. 51; M. Rubin, 'Arabization versus Islamization in the Palestinian Melkite community during the early Muslim period', in Arieh Kofsky and Guy Stroumsa (ed.), *Sharing the Sacred: Religious contacts and conflicts in the Holy Land*, Jerusalem, 1998, p. 153; S.H. Griffith, 'Apologetics and historiography,' p. 69; idem, 'Answers for the shaykh: a "Melkite" Arabic text from Sinai and the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation in M. Swanson et al. (ed.), "Arab Orthodox" Apologetics', in *The encounter of eastern Christianity with early Islam*, «History of Christian-Muslim Relations» 5, Leiden, 2006, p. 282.

³⁴ S.H. Griffith, 'Apologetics and Historiography', in R. Ebied and H. Teule (ed.), *Studies on the Christian Arabic heritage*, pp. 81, 85. Similar regional affiliations can be attributed to historians such as the Byzantine historians Marcellinus (d. c. 534), see B. Croke (ed.), *The chronicle of Marcellinus: a translation and commentary* (with a reproduction of Mommsen's edition of the text), Sydney, 1995, p. xx; John Malalas (d. 578), see E. Jeffreys, 'Malalas' world view', in E. Jeffreys et al. (ed.), *Studies in John Malalas*, «Byzantina Australiensia» 6, Sydney, 1990, pp. 55-8; M. Whitby, 'Greek historical writing after Procopius: variety and vitality', in A. Cameron and L.I. Conrad (ed.), *The Byzantine and early Islamic Near East: problems in the literary source material*, Princeton, 1992, p. 70; Theophanes (d. 818), see C. Mango, 'The tradition of Byzantine chorography', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12-13 (1988-89), p. 368; note also Mango's remarks (p. 372) on the emergence of a historiographic local perspective in the ninth century.

³⁵ B. Croke and A.M. Emmett, 'Historiography in late antiquity, an overview', in B. Croke and A.M. Emmett (ed.), *History and historians*, Sydney, 1983, pp. 2, 6; A. Cameron (ed.), *History as text: the writing of ancient history*, London, 1989, pp. 4-6; M.J. Wheeldon, ' "True stories", the reception of historiography in antiquity', in A. Cameron (ed.), *History as text*, p. 38; C. Mango, 'The tradition of Byzantine chorography', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 12-13 (1988-89), pp. 368, 372; S. Knapp, 'Collective memory and the actual past', *Representations* 26 (1989), p. 123; A. Cameron, *Christianity and the rhetoric of empire: the development of Christian discourse*, Berkeley, 1991, pp. 48-49, 120-123; Eadem, 'New themes and styles in Greek literature: seventh-eighth centuries', in *The Byzantine and early Islamic Near East*, pp. 87-97; A. Palmer and S. Brock (eds. and trans.), *The seventh century in the West-Syrian chronicles*, Liverpool, 1993, p. xxix; S.A. Crane, 'Writing the individual back into collective memory', *The*

Ibn Baṭrīq's choice of themes, sources, and characters helps us to locate the patriarch within the social mosaic of his time. One is left to speculate, however, about the target audience of such a narrative. Clearly the events following Chalcedon were crucial milestones in the future formation of the Eastern Churches in general, and of the Byzantine-Orthodox Church in particular. Yet Ibn Baṭrīq's partial treatment of these events, verging at times on careless, suggests that he was less interested in the nitty-gritty of Christological debate, and more concerned with its general contours. This observation, I would suggest, goes hand in hand with the invented encounter of ecclesiastical leaders in Constantinople during the time of Justinian. It would be hazardous to determine whether Ibn Baṭrīq had implanted the incident intentionally or was simply ignorant of the historical events he was depicting. Either way, the passage appears to have served a different purpose than merely recounting past events, but rather highlighting the differences between the rival Christological camps and the defeat of the Miaphysite one. One group of readers that may have been in Ibn Baṭrīq's mind are Muslims, particularly those in his immediate vicinity.³⁶ Here a depiction of the past would serve to underscore motifs of local affiliation; namely, through an account of fundamental questions such as Christological differences and events which took place in the southern part of Byzantine-Orthodox settlement within the Islamic world. Such a depiction helps us to understand Ibn Baṭrīq's unique portrayal of biblical events, along with the encounter in Jerusalem between caliph 'Umar I (r. 634-44) and patriarch of Jerusalem Sophronios (r. 634-8), leading to the rescue of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher from Muslim hands, as well as the Islamic conquest as seen through

American Historical Review 102:5 (1997), p. 1373; F.M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic origins*, Princeton, 1998, p. 126; J.J. van Ginkel, 'Making history: Michael the Syrian and his sixth-century sources', in R. Lavenant (ed.), *VII Symposium Syriacum 1996*, «Orientalia Christiana Analecta» 256, Rome, 1998, pp. 351-353; A. Megill, 'History, memory, identity', *History of the human sciences* 11:3 (1998), pp. 37-62; W. Witakowski, 'The *Chronicle* of Eusebius: its type and continuation in Syriac historiography' *Aram* 11-12 (1999-2000), p. 21; F. Donner, 'From believers to Muslims, confessional self-identity in the early Islamic community', *al-Abhath* 50-51 (2002-2003), p. 12; J.J. van Ginkel, 'The end is near! some remarks on the relationship between historiography, eschatology, and apocalyptic literature in the West-Syrian tradition', in W.J. van Bekkum et al. (ed.), *Syriac polemics, studies in honour of Gerrit Jan Reinink*, OLA 170, Louvain, 2007, pp. 206-208; M. Lieu, *Christian identity in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman world*, Oxford, 2004, p. 7; A. Papaconstantinou, 'Historiography', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006), pp. 73, 78, 82, 85; T. Sizgorich, "'Do prophets come with a sword?": conquest, empire, and historical narrative in the early Islamic World', *American Historical Review* 112:4 (2007), pp. 997-998.

³⁶ See S.H. Griffith, *The church in the shadow of the mosque: Christians and Muslims in the world of Islam*, Princeton, 2008, p. 20; Griffiths argues that medieval Christian writers in the Arabic-speaking world would have had two main audiences in mind - their coreligionists and Muslim scholars.

the eyes of Muslim authors.³⁷ Once more we are struck by the differences between the Alexandrian and Antiochian recensions. An open question still remains as to the circumstances which led to the transformation of the 10th century role of the *Annales* to define communal affiliations in the context of inter-faith relations into one which was presented in the course of inter-denominational competition within the Eastern Christian world.

³⁷ H. Busse, 'Omar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb in Jerusalem', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 5 (1984), p. 109; U. Pietruschka, 'Muslimische Überlieferungen', in W. Beltz and J. Tubach (ed.), *Regionale Systeme koexistieren der Religionsgemeinschaften*, pp. 257-86; D. Sahas, 'The face to face encounter between patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem and the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: friends or foes?,' in M. Swanson et al. (ed.), *The encounter of eastern Christianity*, pp. 33-44. With regard to Ibn Batriq's depiction of biblical events, one is struck by his conspicuous concentration on Jerusalem and his reliance on apocryphal legends about the city under the reign of Israelite monarchies; see U. Simonsohn, 'Biblical narrative', *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 22:1 (2011), pp. 37-55.