

Copto-Arabic Universal Chronography. Between Antiquity, Judaism, Christianity and Islam

The *K. al-Tawārīkh* of N. al-Khilāfa Abū Shākir Ibn al-Rāhib (655 Heg. / 973 Mart. / 1257 Chr. / 1569 Alex. / 6750 AM)

[Cronografía universal copto-árabe. El *K. al-Tawārīkh* de N. Abū Shākir Ibn al-Rāhib (655 H./973 Mart./1257 C./1569 Alex./6750 AM)]

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Resumen: La obra histórica del erudito y enciclopedista de la edad de oro de la literatura árabe copta, de la cual el Dr. Samuel Moawad (Munster) está preparando una edición, representa en realidad una colección de tres tratados divididos artificialmente en 51 capítulos secuenciales. El núcleo cronológico es precedido por un largo tratado con 47 capítulos sobre cálculos astronómicos y eclesiásticos así como épocas históricas y calendarios de diferentes naciones. La parte histórica propia (ch. 48-50), de los cuales el llamado *Chronicon orientale* representa una deficiente revisión anónima, trata sucesivamente de historia universal, dinastías islámicas y patriarcas coptos. Un sumario histórico, así como dogmático, de los primeros siete/ocho concilios de la Iglesia cristiana (cap. 51) termina la compilación entera. El conocido historiador al-Makīn Ibn al-'Amīd hace un gran uso de la labor de su contemporáneo y, al parecer a través de él, los grandes historiadores musulmanes: Ibn Khaldūn, Maqrīzī o Qalqashandī hacen mención continua de Ibn al-Rāhib. Más tarde en el siglo XVI, el *K. al-Tawārīkh* fue traducido en etiópico y tuvo un gran impacto en la literatura histórica y computacional de los etíopes.

Abstract: The historical work by the polymath and encyclopaedist from the golden age of Coptic Arabic literature, of which Dr. Samuel Moawad (Munster) is preparing an edition, represents in fact a collection of three treatises artificially divided into 51 sequential chapters. The chronological core is preceded by a

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long treatise of 47 chapters on astronomical and ecclesiastical reckoning and the historical eras and calendars of different nations. The historical part itself (ch. 48-50), of which the so-called *Chronicon orientale* is but a reworking, deals successively with universal history, Islamic dynasties and the Coptic Patriarchs. A survey of the first seven/eight Church Councils (ch. 51) ends the entire compilation. The well known historian al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd makes large use of his contemporary's work and, apparently through him, the great Muslim historians Ibn Khaldūn, Maqrīzī and Qalqashandī made constant mention of Ibn al-Rāhib. Later in the sixteenth century the *K. al-Tawārīkh* was translated into Ethiopian and had a significant impact on the historical and computational literature of the Ethiopians.

Palabras clave: Historiografía. Edad Media. Árabe copto. Árabe cristiano. Intercambios culturales.

Key words: Historiography. Middle Ages. Coptic Arabic. Christian Arabic. Cultural Interchanges.



In the Golden Age of Coptic Arabic literature (13th/14th cent.) traditional ecclesiastical history, such as the collective *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, is more open to the country's social and political history, with the result that many of its pages complete the information on Egypt (and sometimes on Syria) provided by other sources. But it is especially world history that takes the lead. We know the two extensive histories of Abū Shākir Ibn al-Rāhib and of al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd, which stand at the confluence of the ancient Byzantine and contemporary Islamic tradition, and harmoniously combine a universal perspective with local, confessional life. These works, which revive the ancient Alexandrian tradition of universal chronography and in some way the Coptic world history of John of Nikiu (7th cent. AD), were to be largely quoted by later Christian as well

as Muslim historians and gained a following in Ethiopia, where they were translated, glossed, and imitated.¹

One should add the case of two anonymous histories partially based on both writings: the so-called *Chronicon Orientale* on which we dwell below and the large patchwork preserved in one MS from the 13th/14th century in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, arabe 300, ff. 62-501, and recently studied in A. SIDARUS, *Alexandre le Grand chez les Coptes (recherches récentes et perspectives nouvelles)*, in: *Orientalia Christiana: Festschrift für Hubert Kaufhold zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. P. BRUNS and H.O. LUTHE, “Eichstätte Beiträge zum Christlichen Orient” 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), pp. 477-495, here pp. 483-484 (see otherwise in ParOr 37-2010, p. 164).

Since the publication by the Maronite scholar Abraham Ecchellensis (*alias* Ibrāhīm al-Ḥaqqillānī, 1605-1664) of the so-called *Chronicon Orientale* (*ChronOr*), Ibn al-Rāhib (**IR**) – erroneously identified as Buṭrus Ibn al-Rāhib – has been universally considered the author of this work.² In fact, as will be clarified below, this text does not correspond with the elaborate work on astronomical reckoning and ecclesiastical computation, calendaristics and historical annals entitled *Kitāb al-Tawārīkh* (**KT**),

¹ A. SIDARUS, *La Renaissance copte arabe du Moyen âge*, in *The Syriac Renaissance*, ed. H. TEULE *et al.*, “Eastern Christian Studies” 9 (Leuven, 2010), pp. 311-340, here pp. 314-315. See otherwise the former version in *Coptica* 1-2002, pp. 143-144. Further: Johannes DEN HEIJER, “Coptic Historiography in the Fātimid, Ayyūbid and Early Mamlūk Periods”, *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996), pp. 67-98, here pp. 83 ss. – I am most grateful to John Flannery, London, for a first English draft and the final revision of this paper.

² Abraham ECHELLENSIS, *Chronicon orientale – nunc primum latinitate donatum...*, “Scriptores Historiae Byzantinae” (Paris, 1651; repr. Paris, 1685; Venice 1729 in “Corpus Hist. Byz.” XVIII/1). See also: Joseph Simonius ASSEMANUS, *Chronicon orientale Petri Rahebi Aegyptii – primum ex arabico latine redditum ab A.E., nunc nova interpretatione donatum*, “Corpus Hist. Byz.” XVIII/2 (Venice 1729). And additionally the last text edition by Louis CHEIKHO quoted under *ChronOr*. For further references on Ibn al-Rāhib in standard works, see SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 27, n. 3.

composed in 1257 and which marked the beginning of the literary career of our Coptic encyclopaedist.

Very soon after it appeared, the true *KT* drew the attention of both theologians and historians. Apart from the anonymous compiler of the *ChronOr* just mentioned, one of the copyists of the semi-official *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* completes one recension of it with three biographies of patriarchs taken from *KT*, as noted in detail below. Furthermore, around 1270 a member of the celebrated Coptic family of Awlād al-‘Assāl, al-Mu‘taman Abū Ishāq, included some extracts from it in his theological summa *Majmū‘ usūl al-dīn*. In the same time, the contemporary chronicler al-Makīn Ibn al-‘Amīd used *KT*, together with the ‘annals’ of other Christian historians, as the basis of universal and ecclesiastical history in his own historical compendium. Later, and most probably through this latter author, the great Muslim historians Ibn Khaldūn, Maqrīzī and Qalqashandī made continual mention of *IR* for the material related to Ancient and Christian history, whether universal or specifically Coptic. Finally, following its translation into Ge‘ez in the mid-sixteenth century by the famous scholar and prelate Ichege Enbaqom, the *KT* made a great impact on Ethiopian literature.³

We may recall that Nushū‘ al-Khilāfa Abū Shākir Ibn (Buṭrus) al-Rāhib (c. 1205/10-1295) was an illustrious representative of the Golden Age of Copto-Arabic literature in the thirteenth/fourteenth century. He belonged to a prominent family of notables, men of the Church who were also senior civil servants in the Ayyubid state. He himself held high office at the Armies Ministry (*Dīwān al-juyūsh*) and was a deacon serving the important al-Mu‘allaqa church in Fustāṭ Miṣr (Old Cairo).⁴

³ We provide below, in the section on the legacy of the work, detailed references on the data and claims given in this preliminary overview.

⁴ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*. See also my brief synthesis s.v. “Ibn al-Rāhib” in *EI* XII-Supp. (1982) and now in *CMR* IV (2012), pp. 466-473 (with some new information). See further the relevant sections in A. SIDARUS, “Coptic Dignitaries Families (*buyūtāt*) in the Ayyubid Period and the Golden Age of Coptic Arabic Literature”, *JCOptS* 15 (2013), pp. 189-208. A supplementary short treatise was recently studied by IDEM, “Note sur

The somewhat late literary output of our polymath was limited to the period 1257-1270, and comprises four works of an encyclopaedic nature, almost entirely unpublished. For Copto-Arabic literary history, if not that of Arabic Christianity in general, IR's work is unique. For one thing, all the writings are precisely dated. For another, two autograph copies of two works have come down to us, showing that one of them has known three different 'editions'.

Composition of the work

The large handbook on chronography and history written by IR is reported in these terms in the 'Catalogue of Christian authors' which forms ch. 7 of the well-known ecclesiastical encyclopaedia of his Egyptian coreligionist Abū al-Barakāt Ibn Kabar (d. 1324)⁵:

"...*wa-jama'a tāriḫ^{an} ta'aba fīhi wa-ḍammanahu kathīr^{an} min arā' al-mu'arrikhīn* (... and he composed a considerably arduous historical work, in which he incorporated a large number of opinions or points of view of historians)."

Apparently, this description applies particularly to chapter 48, the first of the chronological section or part, the striking originality of which is, as we will see, undeniable.

deux épitomés portant sur la Création du monde dans une miscellanée copto-arabe de la Bodléenne (Yuhannā al-Nahwī et Abū Šākir Ibn al-Rāhib", *Zeitschr. f. die Gesch. der Arab.-Islam. Wissenschaften* 19 (2010-2011), pp. 121-134.

⁵ Abū al-Barakāt IBN KABAR, *Miṣbāḥ al-zulma - Books 1-12* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Karūz, 1971), p. 321, § 16. An online English trans. by A. MCCOLLUM at http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/abu_l_barakat_catalogue.htm. An analysis of this notice with further details and references in SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, Dok. 1. As for Ibn Kabar's work as such, see A. SIDARUS, "Encyclopédisme et savoir religieux à l'âge d'or de la littérature copte arabe (XIII^e-XIV^e siècles)", *OCP* 74 (2008), pp. 347-361, here pp. 354-356 + 358.

The *KT* is in reality a collection of two distinct parts plus an appendix, joined together without any formal transition and artificially divided into 51 chapters (*abwāb*) of unequal length and varying internal composition. The threefold division of the historical Part II naturally received the name of ‘chapters’ carrying on the sequential number of the chapters in Part I. We have then the following formal division and content:

- Part I (ch. 1-47) deals with astronomy, historical eras, national calendars, ecclesiastical or liturgical calendars and reckoning. It makes up somewhat less than one third of the book.⁶
- Part II (ch. 48-50) is on Universal, Islamic and Coptic chronologies successively.
- The appendix (ch. 51) offers a historical outline of the first eighth general Councils of the Christian Church (incl. Ephesus II !).

The artificial nature of the assembling of these three treatises and of their division into sequential chapters is underlined by a number of facts. Firstly, the contents of the *introitus* or preliminary note which opens the entire work actually belongs to the universal history (ch. 48-50)⁷:

“We are undertaking, with the help of God and the happy outcome ensured by His benevolence, the transcription of the *Book of the Chronicles*, from the time of Adam until the year 655 of the Hegira, which corresponds to year 6750 of the universal era of the Copts and year 1569 of Alexander, son of Philip the Greek, corresponding to the year 973 of the Martyrs. It contains several chapters (*fuṣūl*).”

Furthermore, this note speaks of a division into *fuṣūl* (‘sections, chapters’), whereas the work is divided into *abwāb* (lit. ‘*portae, partes*’; see Fig. 1)! Anyway, the term *tawārīkh* (pl. of *ta’rīkh/tārīkh*), beside the purely

⁶ This part in particular was studied carefully by NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker*, based on the Ethiopian version.

⁷ See p. 1 of the Berlin MS reproduced in Figure 1a, and further p. 182 before ch. 48, in Figure 1b. But here this foreword comes before a colophon on which we speak later.

chronological approach, corresponds well to this group of topics: historical eras, calendars, national histories or annals. Nonetheless, it must be noted that the Coptic Arabic references to IR's work by contemporary and later authors (see below) always speak of *Tārīkh* in the singular!

Thus, the part which makes up chapters 1-47 (MS Berlin, pp. 7-182)⁸ deals with the eras and calendars of Arabs and Hebrews, Persians and Greeks, Romans and Byzantines, Syrians and Copts, and their astronomical bases. It establishes similarities between them through a series of studies and synchronic tables (ch. 33-37 + 45-46).⁹ The pretext invoked by the author in ch. 1 (actually a prologue) for this scholarly enterprise is the current divergence between Christian Churches in fixing their religious celebrations, an issue that one finds repeatedly in the work.¹⁰

In the context of this more or less systematic endeavour, the writer discusses themes as varied as the following:

- The progressive creation of the different stars, a proper understanding of which serves as the basis for the computation of time (ch. 12-14).¹¹
- Questions relating to the domain of biblical exegesis, such as the Seventy Year-weeks cycle (*sawābī'*) and their relation to the appearance of the anti-Christ (ch. 20),¹² and also to the chronology of the earthly life of Jesus (ch. 21-22).¹³

⁸ On the manuscript transmission, see below. All the references to pages related with KT's text apply to this manuscript.

⁹ As examples, see fig. 2-5. In SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, there are further photographic illustrations taken from the Berlin MS showing other contents or settings of the work.

¹⁰ We should take note of the interest in this topic displayed by some Muslim scholars; C. EHRIG-EGGERT, "Le comput pascal selon quelques sources musulmanes", *ParOr* 16 (1990-1991), pp. 305-310.

¹¹ So *v.g.* the Moon must have been created before the Sun, during the fourth night of Creation!

¹² Linked to Dan. 9 and Apoc. 17-20. It is this chapter that is quoted in IBN AL-'ASSĀL's *Majmū' uṣūl al-dīn* shortly after the appearance of *KT* (see below). The question is similarly discussed in other works of IR: the exegetical compilation *Kitāb al-Shifā'* (pp. 175-178 of the Cairo ed.) and the theological summa *K. al-Burhān*, last chapter or

- Christian festivals, especially with regard to their reckoning in each annual calendar, a cause of dispute between Christians – as we know – and the actual pretext for the compilation of the work (ch. 23-27 + 38-44).
- The *Menologion* of the Coptic Church, presented in the form of a table, which offers a considerable number of original features when compared with, for example, the one published half a century later in Ibn Kabar's encyclopaedia *Miṣbāḥ al-ẓulma*.¹⁴

The Second Part of *KT* (pp. 182-435) offers an overview of the world history until the rise of Islam (pp. 83-282), divided into three chapters or sections (48-50), followed by Islamic and then Coptic ecclesiastical annals (pp. 182-358 / 359-435). It is this same overview that occurs in the *ChronOr* but in a profoundly different form, as explained below. Each chapter is divided into time periods or units of historical information about key personalities: Biblical patriarchs (Fig. 2) and rulers or kings of the people of Israel (Fig. 3); Persian, Greek, and Roman/Byzantine kings or

questio 50. On the topic in general, see M. KALAFIAN, *A Prophecy of Seventy Weeks of the Book of Daniel: A Critical Review of the [...] and the Impact of the Book of Daniel on Christology* (Lanham MD: Univ. of America Press, 1991; 2nd ed. 2000).

¹³ According to the author he was born on a Tuesday and died after exactly 33 years and 91 days, that is he lived a total of 12,144 days (ch. 21, MS pp. 83-84).

¹⁴ Eugène TISSERANT, *Martyrologes et ménologes orientaux : Le Calendrier d'Abou'l-Barakāt*, PO 10.3 (no. 48), (Paris & Freiburg im Breisgau, 1913). See also U. ZANETTI, "Abū l-Barakāt et les lectionnaires de Haute-Égypte", in *Actes du IV^e Congrès Copte*, ed. M. RASSART-DEBERGH and J. RIES, "Publ. de l'Inst. Orientaliste de Louvain" 41 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1992), vol. II, pp. 450-462. *KT*'s table is published from MS Berlin, pp. 170-180, in SIDARUS, *Iban ar-Rāhib*, Tafel 7. Compare also with François NAU, *Martyrologes et ménologes orientaux : Les Ménologes des évangélistes coptes-arabes*, PO 10.2 (no. 47), (Paris & Freiburg im Breisgau, 1913) and with al-Qalqashandī's calendar : R.G. COQUIN, "Le calendrier copte des fêtes de saints chez al-Qalqashandī", *ParOr* 6-7 (1975-1976), pp. 387-411 (it is the only case among Muslim records where a real *menologion* like the ones edited by NAU is used).

emperors; Moslem caliphs or sultans (Fig. 4); and finally Coptic patriarchs (Fig. 5).¹⁵

What we are dealing with is a kind of ‘annals’, giving an account not of the course of the ‘years’ of a country or dynasty, but of the succession of protagonists of the political or religious history of the *Ākumene* as understood by the Mediterranean and Egyptian peoples of the period. First comes the history of the world from the creation of Adam up to the reign of the Romano-Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (610-641), who witnessed the Arab conquest: 166 periods. Then, the annals of the Islamic Empire, with particular attention to the rulers of Egypt, from Muhammad up until the seizure of power by the Mamlūk sultan al-Malik al-Manṣūr Nūr al-Dīn ‘Alī (r. 1257-1259): 84 periods in total. Finally, a history of the Patriarchs of Alexandria according to the Coptic tradition, from Saint Mark up until Athanasius III Ibn Kalīl (the 76th Patriarch). While the cessation of synchronic tables (p. 423), giving only the date of consecration of Athanasius (r. 1250-1260), leaves the entry on him incomplete, the manuscript copies use to complete it and continue the listing up until the time in which each copy saw the light of day, as we will see below.

The short Third Part (ch. 51, pp. 437-451) gives a historical and dogmatic account of the first general Councils of the Christian Church as follows: the first three ‘holy Councils’: Nicaea, Constantinople and Ephesus. Then, Ephesus II and Chalcedon, both with the ordinal number “fourth” (!) and with the latter filling half of the fifteen pages range of the whole account. Finally, the three last “Councils after the Schism (*al-farq*)”, gathering the Roman-Byzantine (*Rūm*) bishops in Constantinople the final one (787, *recte* Nicaea II) focusing the issue of Iconoclasm. This overview seems to have been particularly appreciated, since it was often copied separately as we shall see below in examining the transmission of the text.

¹⁵ See fig. 5. The data of this chapter in *KT* appear in the comparative table on the chronology of the Patriarchs published by Kāmil Ṣālīḥ NAKHLA, *Kitāb tāriḫ wa-jadāwil baṭārikat al-Iskandariyya al-qibt*, “Tārīḫ al-Umma al-Qibṭiyya” 4 (Cairo, 1943), pp. 60 ff. (from the JPF manuscript identified below).

The writer's main concern throughout the work appears to be the precise reckoning of historical time or the 'age of the world', as shown by the complex comparative or synchronic tables by means of which he sets forth historical data (Fig. 2-5). It is this that distinguishes IR from other historians, whether Copts, Christians in general, or even Muslims.¹⁶ These tables are occasionally interrupted in order to introduce developments relating to events or episodes judged significant by the author, sometimes extracted from the sources consulted by him for his enterprise of compilation.

Text transmission

The *KT* is preserved in at least six manuscripts, two in Europe, and the others in Egypt. The rather late European copies have served for a preliminary edition with German translation by Dr. Samuel Moawad (Munster).¹⁷

The first is Berlin, Nationalbibliothek, Ms. or. fol. 434: 232 folios, with original modern Arabic pagination (*sic*); Cairo, 1850 (1266 A.M.).¹⁸ It is this copy which served as the basis for the first draft of Moawad's transcription of the text, and it is to its pages that we refer in the present paper.

According to the colophon (p. 451) the copy was produced by Ayyūb Mubārak, a Christian originating from Nazareth (*Ayyūb Mubārak Nāṣirī*

¹⁶ Nonetheless, setting aside the synchronic tables, this chronological perspective (*tawārīkh*) against a mere "story" (*khabar*) distinguishes the approach of the universalist man that was Abū al-Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī (973 – ca. 1050); Franz ROSENTHAL, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1968), p. 437, n. 1.

¹⁷ I am very grateful to my colleague for making this preliminary work available to me.

¹⁸ MS ar. 5782 of W. AHLWARDT's catalogue of the former Royal Library at Berlin, vol. 5 (Berlin, 1893), pp. 221-223 (now available online). The original Arabic pagination begins with the first written page on fol. 3v and ends with the last written page on 226v (= p. 451).

Masīhī), at the expense of Leader Theophilus (*Līdar Tāwufīlyūs*), a priest of the Anglican community (*qissīs al-inkilīz*) and director/ administrator of its schools (*mudabbir katātībihā*) in Cairo. It was produced from a volume (*katabahu bi-yadihi... ; qūbila ḥarf^m bi-ḥarf bi-kull tadqīq ‘alā kitāb...*) preserved at the Coptic patriarchate (*qad wujida fī baṭrak-khānat al-aqbāt*) in the cathedral church of St. Mark (*al-Murquṣiyya*) in Cairo.¹⁹

As the additional list of patriarchs after the time of the author, in chapter 50, ends with Mark VIII (1797-1809), whose entry (no. 108) also mentions only the consecration three days after his death of his successor Peter VII (1809-1852), we may assume that the prototype dates to a few years after this double event. Nonetheless, it is usual for these lists to be continued through a series of datings, sometimes by different people.²⁰ An indication in this respect is provided precisely here in the final part of the entry on Mark: it associates the mention of Peter with the qualification ‘vile’ (*al-ḥaqīr*), which can only be an addition by this patriarch as interested party. This indicates that we are dealing with an exemplar in existence at the patriarchate at the period in question and until at least 1850, when it was copied by Ayyūb Mubārak. We will see below if we can provide a date for the original copying of this manuscript.

The second MS is London, British Library, or. 1337: 296 folios,²¹ of which many were restored, besides two *quinio*-quires added towards the end; Cairo, 1789 (for the original copy; about 1800 for the additions!).²² It

¹⁹ The ancient Coptic Orthodox cathedral at Izbikiyya seat of the patriarchate.

²⁰ This kind of successive additions is also found in the Ethiopian manuscripts which transmit *KT*, as well as, for example, in *ChronOr* (cf. p. 143) or the further medieval analogous sources gathered in the comparative patriarchal table by NAKHLA, *Jadāwil*, pp. 60 ss.. And also now the case of the recension of the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* falsely attributed to YŪSĀB OF FUWWA as stated by S. MOAWAD, “Zur Originalität der Yūsāb von Fūwah zugeschriebenen Patriarchengeschichte”, in *Muséon* 119 (2006), pp. 255-270, here pp. 256-257.

²¹ The European foliation skipped one folio between 277 and 278, that is no. 278 according to the original cursive Coptic foliation.

²² MS Supp. ar. 34 in Charles RIEU’s supplement to the catalogue of the Arabic MSS held formerly in the British Museum (London, 1894), pp. 24a-25a.

was acquired in Egypt along with other Coptic specimens (cf. MSS 1-38 of the catalogue in question) by Sir Charles Augustus Murray, English Consul-General in Cairo between 1844 and 1853.

This is the manuscript indicated in GCAL II, 436 (§ 131.3), without the author recognising its true identity: he believed *KT* to be lost (p. 434)!²³ However, Cheikho had explicitly pointed out its existence more than once.²⁴ This MS was collated for the preliminary edition noted above.

Apart from later additions by other hands on which we cannot dwell here, the MS has a twofold colophon on the last folio. The first gives the date 12 October 1788 (4 Bābah 1505 A.M.) for the copying by the priest Jirjis from the Church of St. Mercurius (*Abū Sayfayn*) at Old Cairo. The second is the same as that appearing before Chapter 48 in the Berlin MS (p. 182), referring to a model exemplar at the Patriarchate dated to 1594. However, this codex cannot represent the immediate prototype of both manuscripts, as there is evidence for an intermediate common copy. In fact, if we consider that, up until entry no. 106 concerning Mark VII (r. 1745-1769), the details in both MSS are identical and the London copy indicates there a codicological solution of continuity –with the listing going further, besides other additions– we must posit a common archetype dating from shortly after 1769, which we will designate as *CP-B. Whereas the London MS, copied as it was in 1789, had access to other sources of information in order to continue the list of the Patriarchs, the Berlin MS copied it straight after Patriarch Peter had added the entries no. 107-108 to the listing, noting his own consecration in 1809.

From the common colophon mentioned above we learn further that the (remote) prototype is a MS also preserved in the same library of the Coptic patriarchate in Cairo, dated to 10 Amshīr 1310 A.M. / 13 Jumāda I 1002 A.H. (14 February 1594 A.D.). The copyist is Hibat-Allāh ibn Ghabriyāl,

²³ Curiously enough, in the precedent page it is referred to as a simple copy of the *ChronOr*!

²⁴ See note 36 below. The same MS is also referred in CHAÏNE's paper on the *ChronOr*, on which see below n. 33.

referred to as (*al-mad'ū*) Ghubayr ibn Abī al-Faraj ibn Ghabriyāl etc., from Manfalout (Middle Egypt).²⁵ For the purpose of setting out the stemma of the manuscript witnesses (see below) we designate it as *A.

If the reference catalogues are to be believed, there is now no such codex in the Patriarchal Library. However, this codicological information appears to correspond to that given by Nakhla in connection with the copy of *KT* he used chiefly to establish the comparative table of ancient sources containing patriarchal lists.²⁶ It was then to be found in Cairo in the possession of the Coptic scholar Hegumenos Jirjis Fīlūthā'us 'Awaḍ (d. 1904), who was very close to Patriarch Cyril V (r. 1874-1927) and had free access to the Patriarchal Library. It was composed of 259 folios, of which 239 were originals; two bunches, of ten leaves each, had been added later: the first, with pages in different hands, contained the continuation of entries on the patriarchs after Athanasius Ibn Kalīl (the one who closes the original work!) up until Demetrius II (no. 111, 1862-1870); the second contains Chapter 51 on the History of the Church Councils.²⁷

Furthermore, according to Nakhla, the analysis of the list that forms the first addition reveals some lacunae. The first is in connection with the four patriarchs after Gabriel VIII (no. 97) whose entry merely gives the date of consecration: 1587. Thus, there is a break here and this agrees with the

²⁵ Additional information on the copyist and his family in SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 46, n. 47 + p. 141, n. 9. See now also the edition of an apologetic poem of the brother Yūḥannā by R. EBIED, "An Unpublished Short Arabic Poem of a Medieval Muslim-Christian Polemic", *ParOr* 30 (2005), pp. 323-330.

²⁶ NAKHLA, *Jadāwil*, pp. 52a-53b. IDEM, *Kīrillus al-Thālith Ibn Laqlaq (1235-1243)*, "Silsilat Tārīkh al-Baṭārika" 1 (Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Dayr al-Suryān, 1951; repr. 2001), p. 5. Samuel Moawad has informed me about a third reference: *Tārīkh al-qiddīs Mār Murqus al-Bashīr* (Cairo, 1949; repr. 1989), p. 140.

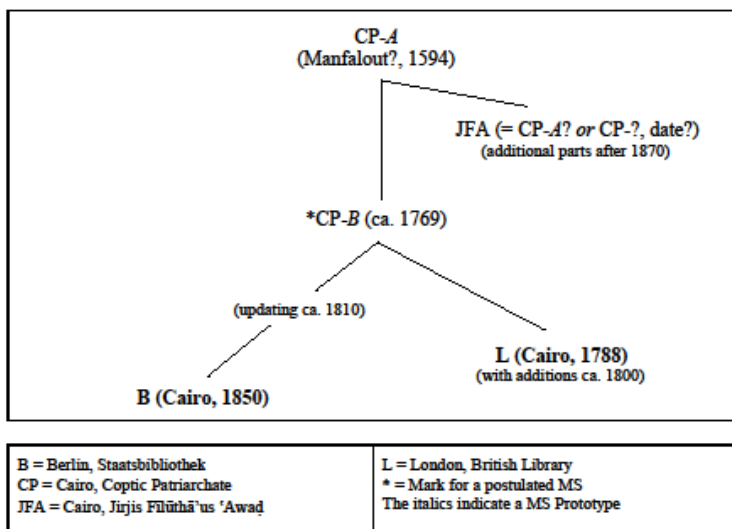
²⁷ Regarding this latter addition, the codicological description given by NAKHLA is insufficiently precise. He does not inform us whether the paper and layout are in fact different to the main codex, and whether or not the copyist is the same. Instead of being a true addition we may imagine that the first bunch of additional leaves formed a *quinto*-quire which has been inserted into a pre-existing homogeneous set of 249 leaves.

general date of the aforementioned prototype (the end of the reign of the patriarch in question being around 1603).

In any case, these successive additions to Chapter 50 differ from those in the two MSS now preserved in Europe. The copy from this private library in Cairo, of which nothing is known today, may thus constitute a third copy of a first prototype (*Urvorlage*) dating from 1594 and once in existence in the archives of the Coptic Orthodox patriarchate in Cairo. Designated as *CP-A, this copy of the *KT* is the oldest that can be traced back with consistency.²⁸

We sum up the results of our observations regarding this set of MSS once held in Cairo as in the following table.

Table 1: Stemma of the Cairo MSS Family



²⁸ The prototype which served for the Ethiopian translation appears even older, but its value for the Arabic text transmission is not on the same level; it can serve only as an indirect witness.

Three further textual witnesses are to be found in Egypt. Two are available in Wādī al-Naṭrūn, Dayr al-Barāmūs, *Tārīkh* 26 (16th cent.?) and in Beni Suweif (Middle Egypt), Monastery of the Virgin Mary, without shelf mark (before 1781).²⁹ The third is referred to in the local handwritten inventory of the monastery of St Anthony in the Arabian Desert under shelf mark *Tārīkh* 227 (1611) but has remained difficult to access.

Furthermore, in Cairo itself a MS apparently dated to 1342 (!) was found in the private library of Hīgumenos Armāniyūs Ḥabashī in the 1930s, according to Sbath, who describes it as of great value.³⁰ Here too, we have no knowledge of the whereabouts of this ancient library. However, since Sbath links it to another MS that transmits the *ChronOr*, it is not possible to confirm the matter in regards to *KT* as such.

Details on this point may be found in the full account of secondary witnesses of *KT*, as well as about other elements of the MSS of this reworking, whose text may serve in elucidating occasional *difficiliores* of the text transmission of *KT*.³¹ The same applies to separate transmission of ch. 51 on the Church Councils or the Epact tables attributed to IR in the manuscript collection of the Patriarchal Library in Cairo, today with a very limited access. It may be that they are similar to that at Beni Suweif, which transmits Part I only.

The authenticity of attribution to Ibn al-Rāhib

Only the Ethiopian tradition explicitly indicates the author of *KT*.³² In a methodologically problematic study on the *ChronOr* M. Chaîne questioned

²⁹ Information kindly transmitted by S. Moawad, who was able to study them and will collate them for his text edition. The second MS contains Part I only under the title *K. al-Karma* (for *Karmat al-biryūdus* < Gr. *períodos*), a title one finds elsewhere for booklets on reckoning or almanac, beside the title *K. al-Abuqfī/Ibaqfī*.

³⁰ Paul SBATH, *Al-Fihris : Catalogue de Manuscrits arabes. Supplément* (Le Caire, 1940), p. 78.

³¹ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 48-49.

³² SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, Doc. 4.

this attribution, going so far as to claim that the Ethiopic text is “an artificial compilation falsely attributed to IR”.³³ We do not have space here to present and discuss all his arguments, since in no fashion does the *ChronOr* belong to IR, and Chaîne had not studied our London manuscript, which he claimed to know through Rieu’s *Catalogue*.³⁴ We shall return to the actual relationship between both writings in the next section.

Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that this awkward academic exercise has led G. Graf in a direction which prevented him from recognising the original work by IR in this London MS, which he describes in some detail, and caused him to affirm in his prestigious reference work that it was lost.³⁵ Actually, both authors have ignored the often repeated affirmation of the most recent editor of the *ChronOr*, L. Cheikho, stating that the latter in fact represents only part of a more extensive work to be found in the two MSS of London and Berlin described above!³⁶

The fact remains however that these copies do not name explicitly the author. Nor do the others still held in Egypt. Are there internal indications which confirm the attribution contained in the Ethiopian tradition?

The reply is in the affirmative for several reasons, beginning with the brief prologue to chapter 48 on world history where it is said that the first column of the comparative tables includes dates calculated by the author on an astronomical basis (what he had worked out and defended in Part I...).

³³ M. CHAÎNE, “Le Chronicon Orientale de Butros ibn al-Rahib et l’Histoire de Girgis el-Makin”, *ROC* 28 (1931-1932), pp. 390-405.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 392-393. On the core of his arguments and deductions, see SIDARUS *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 41, n. 40.

³⁵ GCAL II, pp. 433-436. Here too, the new arguments advanced to support the double thesis of CHAÎNE are inappropriate for the same reasons. On this, see SIDARUS *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 41, n. 41.

³⁶ First in his edition of *ChronOr*, pp. vi-vii. Then successively in: “Tawārīkh an-naṣrāniyya fī al-‘arabiyya: Lamḥa tārikhiyya”, *Al-Mashriq* 12 (1909), pp. 481-506, here pp. 490-491, § 27; *Kitāb al-makḥūṭāt al-‘arabiyya / li-katabat al-naṣrāniyya* (Beirut, 1924), p. 7, § 21; *Catalogue raisonné des manuscrits orientaux de la Bibliothèque Orientale de l’Université S. Joseph* (Beirut, 1929; repr. 2000), p. 6. More details about these references in SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 42, n. 42.

And it is precisely the name of IR who figures in these columns and, on the first occurrence, with the addition: “the author or compiler of the book in question” (MS Berlin, p. 182; see Fig. 2).

That said, as described in detail in the next section, the quotations of IR’s *Tārīkh* (*sic*) by the contemporary al-Mu’taman Ibn al-‘Assāl and the compiler (or one copyist) of one of the recensions of the well known *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, datable to the mid-13th century, clearly serve to support this assertion. In the same way, the short statement made by Ibn Kabar about IR’s *Tārīkh*, as seen above, matches well with the genuine work as opposed to the *ChronOr*.

Finally, there is an exact correspondence between the overall nature of our text and that of other writings by the polymath IR: a tendency to encyclopaedism, linked to a somewhat narrow standpoint, apologetic if not polemical; compilation from works of every genre, with constant reference to texts and passages in support of his opinions or, on the contrary, to be refuted.

The legacy of Ibn al-Rāhib’s work

Two years after the composition of *KT*, the historical sections or Part II, as just noted, were reworked into an abridged form known in Europe as the *Chronicon Orientale*. In his essay referred to above, M. Chaîne denounced a number of lacunae in this text, and rejected any possible attribution to IR. However, since he was unaware of the original work, he was unable to correctly gauge the relationship which does in fact exist between the two texts. Subject to a more detailed comparison we can outline this relationship as follows:

1. In the first section on world history, the synoptic columns with the list of authorities (Fig. 2) are dropped. Only the chronological data set out

by IR and, when pertinent, those of the version or compilation of Abū al-Fakhr al-Mutanaṣṣir are given.³⁷

2. The sporadic developments given outside the tables appear to be substantially amended. Certain elements disappear, while others become more extensive. In particular, the regular identification of sources is disregarded.
3. In the two other chapters (49-50), on Muslim rulers and Coptic patriarchs, the synchronic tables are drastically simplified.
4. With regards to the comparative observations of Chaîne which clearly show that al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd owes nothing to the *ChronOr* for his Islamic chronology, but rather the contrary, we have to state first of all that this latter dependence is impossible, as this text predates Ibn al-ʿAmīd's work. On the other hand, we have been able to verify that this part of the reworking could heavily depend on *KT* itself. For example, IR does not dwell on the physical description or character of the historical protagonists. So, the anonymous author must have used, at least partially, a different Islamic source than both authors.
5. An external witness for the dependence of *ChronOr* towards *KT* is the fact that the most important copy of the former ends with the short account on the Councils which constitute ch. 51 of the later.³⁸

When Ecchellensis believed he had discovered in the *ChronOr* the historical work of IR so often mentioned by al-Makīn Ibn al-ʿAmīd, he clearly based this on a comparison of the two texts known to him. Now, we have been able to personally verify that it is, rather, the original text of IR

³⁷ We will deal with this personality and the possible writing (the Samaritan Pentateuch!) quoted in our next paper on the manifold sources of *KT*. For now see: CE, p. 19; GCAL II, p. 435 (§ 131.2).

³⁸ It is the text preserved in MS Vatican, Bibl. Apost. Vaticana, ar. 166 (Alexandria, 1307), which was copied in MS Beirut, Bibl. or. 9. Detail references in Sidarus, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 48-49.

that his contemporary knew and extensively quoted.³⁹ Additionally, and failing a more systematic comparison of the texts, when Ibn al-ʿAmīd specifically refers to IR, he often associates him with the Melkite historians Ibn Baṭrīq and Maḥbūb al-Manbijī to an extent which suggests that he did not consult them directly.⁴⁰ And this fact is even more evident when he mentions the pair Epiphanius/John Chrysostomus.⁴¹

We observe something similar with Muslim historians of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries: Ibn Khaldūn, Maqrīzī and Qalqashandī. For the history of Biblical events and the ancient world, or for Christian and Coptic history, they most frequently have recourse to the work of Ibn al-ʿAmīd. However, we see them, in their turn, associating him with Ibn al-Rāhib, sometimes adding the two Melkite authors to whom we have referred. Contrary to what has been affirmed by a number of scholars, including myself, it is not certain that these authors had consulted *KT* directly.⁴²

³⁹ Detailed reference, with others by the same author or by J.S. Assemani, is to be found in SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 44, n. 45. For the still unpublished part of al-Makīn Jirjis IBN AL-ʿAMĪD’s *Annals* or *Majmūʿ mubārak*, that on world history, we have had recourse to MS München, Bayerische Nationalbibliothek, ar. 376 (1646), carried out by the same copyist of the Oxford MS partially edited by Thomas ERPENIUS (Leiden, 1625)! On this history see among others: DEN HEIJER, *Coptic Historiography*, *op. cit.* n. 2, pp. 88-95. Last updated notice by S. MOAWAD in CMR V (2013), pp. 561-566. Add now: M. DIEZ, “Les antiquités gréco-romaines entre al-Makīn ibn al-ʿAmīd et Ibn Ḥaldūn: Notes pour une histoire de la tradition”, *Studia Graeco-Arabica* (Pisa), 3 (2013), pp. 121-140 (in fact the first 15 pages present the historical work as such!).

⁴⁰ The comparative quotations of Maḥbūb al-Manbijī in Ibn al-ʿAmīd’s chronicle gathered by CHEIKHO at the end of his edition of the former (pp. 387-409) should now be studied together with IR’s text for a correct and final appreciation.

⁴¹ On all these sources in *KT*, see below.

⁴² It would be excessive to detail here the references which support this claim based on a broad consultation. In general, see the references given by DEN HEIJER, *Mawḥūb* (quoted in the next note), p. 1, n. 2; Idem, “Coptic Historiography”, *passim*. Add the studies of DIEZ, “Antiquités gréco-romaines” and André FERRÉ, “Le chapitre du *Kitāb al-Ibar* d’Ibn Khaldūn sur les débuts du christianisme”, in *Receuil d’articles offert à Maurice Borrmans par ses collègues et amis*, “Studi arabo-islamici del PISAI” 8 (Rome, 1996), pp. 55-69 and “Ibn al-ʿAmīd al-Makīn, chrétien d’Égypte, source importante d’Ibn

But long before these later writers, and apart from Ibn al-‘Amīd, we have seen how the anonymous *ChronOr*, compiled two years after the publication of *KT*, is indebted to it. Quite in the same time one of the copyists of the *History of the Patriarchs* completed one recension of it with *KT*'s brief *Vitae* of the three patriarchs no. 73-75 (1166-1243): Marqus III b. Zur‘a, Yuḥannā VI b. Abī Ghālib and Kīrillus III b. Laqlaq.⁴³ Finally, al-Mu‘taman Abū Ishāq b. al-‘Assāl made long quotations in his theological summa from chapter 20 of *KT* about the Seventy Year-weeks cycle (*sawābī‘*) and the prophecies of Daniel, including citations from the prophet Ezra and Joseph Ben Gorion.⁴⁴ But there is also another explicit citation related to Eutyches' heresy and his condemnation at the Council of Ephesus II.⁴⁵

The Ethiopian version

We finally come to the Ethiopian version of the work of “Abushakər Wāldä Mānākos” (Abū Shākīr b. al-Rāhib). Within the limits of this presentation, we can offer only a brief summary of our research into the literary history

Khaldūn”, in *En Hommage au Père Jacques Jomier O.P.*, ed. Marie-Thérèse URVOY, “Patrimoine” (Paris, 2002), pp. 61-71.

⁴³ Johannes DEN HEIJER, *Mawḥūb ibn Maṣṣūr Ibn Mufarrīḡ et l' historiographie copto-arabe : Étude sur la composition de l' Histoire des Patriarches d' Alexandrie*, “CSCO” 513 (Subs. 83), (Leuven, 1989), pp. 77-78. The quoted texts correspond in fact to no. 73-75 of ch. 50 of *KT*. The *HPA* constitutes as such an important source for this specific chapter of *KT*.

⁴⁴ *Majmū‘ uṣūl al-dīn*, XXI, 29-44. On the work as such and its ed./trans. see SIDARUS, *Encyclopédisme*, pp. 349-351 + p. 358; WADĪ Awad [Abullif] in *CMR IV* (2012), pp. 530-537. On the topic, see above *ad n.* 12.

⁴⁵ *Majmū‘*, IX, 60. The formulation of the heresy does not correspond precisely to the one repeated twice in *KT*: ch. 50 on the Patriarchs, entry no. 25 about Dioscorus, and ch. 51 about the Council of Ephesus II (MS Berlin, pp. 440-441).

of the text, now complemented by that of Neugebauer focusing astronomical issues.⁴⁶

Ibn al-Rāhib's entire work was translated into the Ge'ez language between 1524 and 1540 by Ichege Enbaqom (ca. 1470-1565), a famous translator and scribe of Muslim (and Jewish from his mother's side it seems) Yemeni origin with the name of Ḥabaqūq Abū al-Faḥ. ⁴⁷ The Arabic original appears to date from the beginning of the 14th century, since the main part (i.e. leaving aside later additions...) of the patriarchal annals ends with the 82nd patriarch, Benjamin II (1327-1329). According to the index, the Ethiopian *KT* has eight additional chapters (a kind of appendices) which show a close connection to the work of IR. However, a number of them are absent from the text, as are three chapters of the original sequence: ch. 47, 49 and 51 (= ch. 53 in the Ethiopic text!), on the Coptic liturgical calendar, the whole Islamic history (!) and the Church Councils respectively. Most curiously, IR's history of the Councils, missing here (ch. 51/53), almost invariably appears in manuscripts transmitting the chronicle of Ibn al-'Amīd!⁴⁸

The History of IR was popular among the Ethiopians, as demonstrated by the dozen copies in which it is transmitted,⁴⁹ in addition to independent extracts and various avatars. For example, certain lives of Church Fathers are attributed to him, while it was actually the information contained in *KT*,

⁴⁶ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 50-61 (ch. 2, § D-E). NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker*. In *EncAeth*, s.v. "Abushakər", vol. I (2003), pp. 56b-57b, S. UHLIG gives a brief overview based on both studies.

⁴⁷ *EncAeth* II (2005), pp. 280a-282a (E. VAN DONZEL).

⁴⁸ CHAÎNE, "Chronicon orientale", p. 394. This fact was overlooked by the authors quoted in the former notes. On the Ethiopian Ibn al-'Amīd, see *EncAeth* II, pp. 812b-814a, s.v. "Giyorgis Wäldä 'Amīd" (U. PIETRUSCHKA).

⁴⁹ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 51-52; NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker*, pp. 170-172. The consultation of more recent catalogues or of local manuscript collections may, doubtless, reveal a larger number of copies. This is the case with a witness from 1911/12 referred to by W.F. MACOMBER, *A Catalogue of Ethiopian Manuscripts Microfilmed for the Ethiopian Manuscript Library, Addis Ababa, and for the Monastic Manuscript Microfilm Library, Colledgeville*, vol. I (Colledgeville MN, 1975), p. 202.

together with the Ethiopian versions of John of Nikiu and/or of Ibn al-ʿAmīd, which contributed to their composition. The most widespread is that of Cyril of Alexandria, which serves as an introduction to the well-known patristic *florilegium* known as *Qerällos*.⁵⁰

But of more importance is the influence exercised by the chronographical section or Part I of *KT* on Ethiopian practices of computation: a series of tables or treatises of the kind known as *Ḥassabä Abushakər*, or simply *Abushakər*, came into being. Neugebauer, who came to be interested in our work as a consequence of these more or less confused and popular treatises, has shown that they have little connection to the more scholarly and consistent treatise of IR.⁵¹

We conclude with a note on a text on Alexander the Great contained in several manuscripts and published by Budge under the name of Wäldä Manäkos.⁵² The internal criticism of this piece and its comparison with the fairly brief account on the same personage in *KT* firmly prove that it has no connection to IR at all.⁵³ It is, in fact, a slightly different version of the account by Ibn al-ʿAmīd, published just before in the same collection of texts.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, p. 56; *EncAeth* IV (2010), pp. 287a-290a (A. BAUSI).

⁵¹ NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker*, pp. 9-10 + p. 173. Previous works of the author are listed in the bibliography there, as well as in the entry under “Chronography” in *EncAeth* I, pp. 733a-737a (S. UHLIG). Details on the transmission of the texts and their literary history are gathered in SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 56-58.

⁵² Ernest A. Wallis BUDGE (ed./tr.), *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great, being a series of Ethiopic texts...* (London/Cambridge, 1896), vol. I, pp. 227-236 (ed.) + II, pp. 387-401 (trans.).

⁵³ Berlin MS, pp. 239-240 (ch. 48, no. 92 corrected), where IR shows interest in Alexander mainly for the era that bears his name, that is, the Seleucid era.

⁵⁴ Details in SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 58-61. See now the new clarification of the issue in IDEM, “Alexandre le Grand chez les Coptes (recherches récentes et perspectives nouvelles)”, in *Orientalia Christiana: Festschrift für Hubert Kaufhold zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. P. BRUNS and H.O. LUTHE, “Eichstätte Beiträge zum Christlichen Orient” 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2013), pp. 477-495, here p. 483.

The Sources of KT

The sources used by IR have been analysed by Dillmann and Neugebauer successively on the basis of the Ethiopic version of *KT*.⁵⁵ These surveys contain a number of errors and misunderstandings, sometimes due to the nature of the Ethiopic text. Additionally, references relating to a number of sources are in need of radical updating. Though publishing his remarkable work in 1988, Neugebauer was unaware of the existence of the Arabic original and of our own monograph study of 1975,⁵⁶ where a first critical analysis of the sources was undertaken.⁵⁷ Den Heijer largely follows the data of this latter work,⁵⁸ and in the introduction to his publication in preparation S. Moawad (see above) does the same, while adding some further information and detailing the references to each source.⁵⁹

I recently revisited the material and updated and enriched it for a specific paper presented to an international Congress held in Cordoba,⁶⁰ the final version of which is almost ready for publication, hopefully in the next issue of this journal.

⁵⁵ August DILLMANN, *Verzeichniss der abessinischen Handschriften*, “Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin” 3 (Berlin, 1878), p. 44 (now available online); NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker*, pp. 162-169. Dillmann’s data are reproduced in H. Weld BLUNDELL, *The Royal Chronicle of Abyssinia 1769-1840* (Cambridge, 1922), p. 494, n. 3.

⁵⁶ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*. A note at the end of ch. 1 of NEUGEBAUER’s study (p. 22), entitled “Added Proofs”, acknowledges this lacuna.

⁵⁷ SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, pp. 33-40.

⁵⁸ DEN HEIJER, *Coptic Historiography*, pp. 85-87 (§ 5.3).

⁵⁹ I must acknowledge my indebtedness to the data gathered by Neugebauer and Moawad, with particular gratitude to the later for having made available to me his draft version as a digital file. This enabled me to systematically verify the references set out by Neugebauer and to go, in great detail, well beyond those I had already gathered and discussed in 1975.

⁶⁰ Third International Congress on Eastern Christianity “Knowledge Transfer in the Mediterranean World” (Cordoba, Dec. 2010). It was not possible to publish my paper in the proceedings.

To sum up, especially as regards the writings with historical or genealogical content, apart from the Bible our author mentions explicitly, some thirty different texts, some of them quite unknown. For primaeval history IR uses, alongside the Graeco-Coptic translation of the Septuagint, an Arabic text of the Samaritan Pentateuch transmitted by Abū al-Fakhr al-Mutanaṣṣir, of Jewish origin. Then we have the apocryphal Ezra and the renowned Medieval *Josippon*. One finds of course many Patristic and Canonical writings, generally spurious (Hippolytus, Basil the Great, John Chrysostomus, Epiphanius...),⁶¹ and then astronomical and historical treatises from Late Antiquity (Ptolemaios' *Almagest*) or from the Classical Islamic period (al-Khwārizmī, Ibn Yūnus, Ṭabarī and others). Finally, many Mediaeval Christian Arab writers from the various confessions appear as important sources, with an emphasis on the Melkite historians of the tenth/eleventh century: Maḥbūb ibn Qusṭanṭīn (*alias* Agapius Bishop of Mabbug), Sa'īd Ibn Baṭrīq (*alias* Eutychius Patriarch of Alexandria) and Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī,⁶² as well as the traditional Coptic *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*.

We should draw attention to the fact that similar erudition is to be found in other works of our encyclopaedist of the golden age of Coptic Arabic literature, as we have emphasised in other publications.⁶³

⁶¹ One of them recently unveiled by A. BINGGELI and A. SIDARUS, "Vestiges d'une version arabe du *Discours sur l'invention de la Croix* d'Alexandre de Chypre (VI^e s.)", *Muséon*, 125 (2012), pp. 241-249.

⁶² See A. SIDARUS and S. MOAWAD, "Un comput melkite attribuable à Yaḥyā b. Sa'īd al-Anṭākī (XI^e siècle) : Extraits conservés dans le *K. al-Tawārīḥ* d'Abū Šākir b. al-Rāhib", *Muséon*, 123 (2010), pp. 455-477.

⁶³ Apart from SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib*, *passim*, see the new presentation of ch. 2 in IDEM, "L'œuvre philologique copte d'Abū Šākir Ibn al-Rāhib", in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage (in Honour of Father prof Dr Samir Khalil Samir at the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday)*, ed. R. EBIED and H. TEULE, "Eastern Christian Studies" 5 (Leuven/Paris: Peeters, 2004), pp. 1-23, and IDEM, "Les sources d'une somme théologique copto-arabe du XIII^e siècle (*K. al-Burhān* d'Abū Šākir Ibn al-Rāhib)", *Miscellanea Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae* 17 (2010), pp. 127-163.

Sigla and abbreviations:

ChronOr = [Pseudo-]Petrus IBN RAHIB, *Chronicon orientale*, ed./trans. Louis CHEIKHO, 2 vols., “CSCO” 45-46 (Scr. Ar. 1-2), (Beirut, 1903; repr. Leuven, 1960-1962; digitized copy available at: https://ia600501.us.archive.org/31/items/chroniconorienta01butr/chronicon_orienta01butr.pdf (the quoted url-s in this paper have been accessed by mid-January 2014).

CE = *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A.S. ATIYA, 8 vols., New York/Toronto: Macmillan, 1991 (we do not indicate the volumes as the pagination is continuous and the work is now available online: <http://ccdl.libraries.claremont.edu/col/cce>).

CMR = *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, ed. David THOMAS *et al.*, 5 vols., “History of Christian-Muslim Relations” 11 ss. (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009 ss.; other vols. in preparation).

EncAeth = *Encyclopaedia aethiopica*, ed. Stefan UHLIG *et al.*, 5 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003-2014).

GCAL = Georg GRAF, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols. “Studi e Testi” 118, 133, 146, 147, 178 (City of Vatican: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944-1953; the often quoted volume in these pages is the second, from 1947).

JCoptS = *Journal of Coptic Studies*.

NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker* = Otto NEUGEBAUER, *Abu Shaker's “Chronography”*: *A treatise of the 13th Century on Chronological, Calendrical and Astronomical Matters, written by a Christian Arab, preserved in Ethiopic*, Österreich. Akad. der Wiss./Philos.-Histor. Klasse, Sitzungsberichte, 498 (Wien, 1988).

SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib* = Adel Y. SIDARUS, *Ibn ar-Rāhib's Leben und Werk: Ein koptisch-arabischer Enzyklopädist des 7./13. Jahrhunderts*, “Islamkundliche Untersuchungen” 36 (Freiburg i.Br.: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1975; digitized copy at: <http://menadoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/iud/content/pageview/847474>).

بسم الابواب والقلوب واليد
 البابلون

بعد ما نزلت بين النصارى عن الخلف في ايام الكبار وفي هذا البلاد
 الجيد، والقائمة القديمة، وان عبد البلاد جعل فيه الخلف عن القط
 المصونين ومن سائر الجيوش في اربع سنين دفعة واحدة، واثبات السب
 في ذلك اختلاف الابرار والارواح في كسبهم، فكذلك السنة الثانية، التي هي
 النصارى كارهة ولا تتفقون من ارضها، وفي فصل الربيع، وفصل الصيف، وفصل
 الخريف، وفصل الشتاء، وان كان لهم كبر في الرضا الذي همك من سنة على عارثه
 وعاقبة من تفرقه في خمسة، ولما كان كبر السقط تقدم على كبرهم في الشعر
 عديم وقدم العبد عند غيرهم، فجعل الخلف بينهم لذلك، وفي السنة
 القائمة القديمة فوجدت الخلف في بين القطب والقطب ومن غيرهم من
 خاتم في خمس زعمين سنة دفعة واحدة، انكر في سنة اول ذكر لدر
 منها في خمسة، وذلك الخلف يقع من كان يقبل الشمس من بين وبين البحر
 تسعة وعشرون يوما اليك، فان المصونين القطب من واقتم بكسرها يوم
 واحد، لاهم بجمالون التسعة والعشرون يوما في تلك السنة ثلثين يوما، فيكون
 عبد اليهود عندهم في العاشرون ويوم وروي السبت، فيعدون القياس
 القديمة مهيبة وهو من احد حاشي برنود، فانا من خاتم في السنة
 والعشرون يوما على اربعة، فيكون عبد اليهود عندهم في الخلف من
 يورود وهو من واحد، فيعيد القديسة في احد الاخر وهو من عشر

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برود، فيكون بين النصارى عندهم يوم القائمة، ويخرج عن الامم في اربع
 ريسين بها وقد فوض جعلها، وهالك سببا الخلف كان ذلك في سنة شمسية،
 وثلاثة عشر الشهر الاظهار، والعام سنة الف وخمسة وتسع واثنين، وهي
 اخرها من بين الخلف، فلما ريت ذلك الخلف ووقفت عليه طاعت ولا
 سم يستند في اوقات حجته الماجرت به عادته، ولم يكن ابرج ان يقول
 على ان من دون ربح وهان بئته، ان كان كل يوم يدان الخريف
 والصغير سببا، فكل لموي والصعب وقصدت الله تعالى في كل حقيقة
 الامر والى، فانم زوجته بالله من كلف ذلك وسبته، وسلك في وضعه
 ان شاء الله تعالى، انما اعيد البلاد فان سببا الخلف في سببا الكسب احد
 القويون، وذلك يتبين من جهة التواريخ، فليتم كرها الا فنقول ان معنى
 الزمان في هذا عبارة عن المدة الوقت، وذلك الخلف الوقت الذي هو الزمان
 يتقسم من حيث انما انما اقسام وهو سنة وظهر يوم وساعة،
 ووقته، فالدقيقة هي عبارة عن الاخر له، والساعة هي من اربعة وعشرون
 جزء من الزمان المبالغ اليها ارجعها، فانما زانية وهي اربعة وعشرون
 اللذان انما افرغ في ساعة من اربعة، التي هي عبارة عن اربعة واحد، فساد
 وهي الترتيب افرغ رها في اربعة الاربعة، وبالعكس، وذلك من جهة اختلاف
 جميعا، وما يامل طولنا على اربعة وقصود، وبالعكس، وذلك من جهة اختلاف
 الزمان في اربعة الفصول الاربعة، التي هي اربعة الايام والليالي، والتقليد
 العربي والشمسي، باليوم عبارة عن اربعة ايام وفصل من وقته، وليس ابرج
 عند الامم على جهة، اعلم ان جعلنا ما اناها خاصة، والاثبات جعلنا
 السنة الجامعة لليل والنهار وفتحنا في ابتداء، فلما ابرج واليول والنهار
 وكثير من الامم، وما تحقق من التوجه فابتدأ عندهم من غروب الشمس والشمس
 غروبها في اربعة، وبتا اصحاب الاربعة كالأصل انما ملكه، فابتدأ عندهم
 من اربعة ايام اربعة ايام، حيث تكون الشمس في

Fig. 1 MS Berlin or. fol. 434, pp. 183-184: Beginning of ch. 48 on the World History

١٨٤		جدول		١٨٥	
تاريخ الهمس	تاريخ الكتاب	تاريخ الهمس	تاريخ الكتاب	تاريخ الهمس	تاريخ الكتاب
٤٤٠	٦	٤٤٠	٦	٤٤٠	٦
٧٠٠	٦	٧٠٠	٦	٧٠٠	٦
٩٤٠	٦	٩٤٠	٦	٩٤٠	٦
٤٠٥	٦	٤٠٥	٦	٤٠٥	٦
٧٠٧	٦	٧٠٧	٦	٧٠٧	٦
٩١٤	٦	٩١٤	٦	٩١٤	٦
١٩٠	٦	١٩٠	٦	١٩٠	٦
٧١٥	٦	٧١٥	٦	٧١٥	٦
٩٠٥	٦	٩٠٥	٦	٩٠٥	٦
١١٠	٦	١١٠	٦	١١٠	٦
٧٤٤	٦	٧٤٤	٦	٧٤٤	٦
٩١٠	٦	٩١٠	٦	٩١٠	٦
١٦٥	٦	١٦٥	٦	١٦٥	٦
٧٤٠	٦	٧٤٠	٦	٧٤٠	٦
٨٩٥	٦	٨٩٥	٦	٨٩٥	٦

Fig. 2 - MS Berlin or. fol. 434, p. 283-284: Beginning of ch. 50 on the Alexandrian Patriarchs

<p>٢٨٤ اسم المطبق واستمر من يوم</p>	<p>٢٨٤ الرسول هو أبو القاسم محمد بن عبد الله بن عبد المطلب شيبه، وقيل أبو بن عبد مناف، وكان موثقاً ببطحاكة في الليلة السابعة من صباح يوم الاثنين، الذي غرقت فيه خلت من شهر ربيع الأول عام الفيل، وقيل يوم الاثنين الثالث خلون من شهر ربيع الأول، وهو اليوم القاسم والعشرون من نيسان، سنة اثنين وثلاثين وثلاثمائة للألكسندر</p>	<p>٢٨٤ تاريخ الفجر كان أبو القاسم، الرابع من السنة التي هاجر فيها الرسول من مكة إلى المدينة، وكان دخولها إليها يوم الاثنين الخامس من شهر ربيع الأول، والتاريخ مأخوذ من أرا السنة، وهو اليوم من محرم، وهو القاسم عشرين يوم، سنة ثلث، وثلاثين وتسعين للألكسندر، وقيل، بل ما كان يوم الاثنين، التاسع عشر من شهر ربيع انتقل، وكان مائة وعشرون وثلاثين سنة، وقيل ثمان وستين، وكان مائة مقاسم بالمدينة عشرون وستين</p>	<p>٢٨٤ خلافة بكر الصديق كان سنة في الجاهلية عبد الكعبة، ثم سنة الرسول عبد الله وهو ابن أبي طالب بن عثمان بن عامر ربيع له يوم الاثنين الذي توفي فيه الرسول وتوفي رسول الله في السنة الثامنة والثلاثين من الهجرة ليالي ثمان من جمادى الآخرة، سنة ثلث عشر وعشرون وستين، وكانت خلافة ستين وثلاثة أشهر وتسعة أيام وعشرون ليلة والثلاثين ثلث وعشرون جمادى الآخرة.</p>	
	<p>٢٨٤ مدة خلافة عمر</p>	<p>٢٨٤ الستين</p>	<p>عشرون سنين واحد وسبعين يوماً</p>	<p>ستين ومائة يوم</p>
	<p>٢٨٤ مدة خلافة عثمان</p>	<p>٢٨٤ الثمانين</p>	<p>عشرون سنين واحد وسبعين يوماً</p>	<p>اثنا عشر سنة ومائة واحد وسبعين يوماً</p>
<p>٢٨٤ مدة خلافة علي بن أبي طالب</p>	<p>٢٨٤ اونها</p>	<p>واحد وستين يوماً ٤٦٧</p>	<p>اوهما ٨٠٦</p>	
<p>٢٨٤ مدة خلافة علي بن أبي طالب</p>	<p>٢٨٤ اونها</p>	<p>واحد وستين يوماً ٤٦٧</p>	<p>اوهما ٤٤٤</p>	
<p>٢٨٤ مدة خلافة علي بن أبي طالب</p>	<p>٢٨٤ اونها</p>	<p>واحد وستين يوماً ٤٦٧</p>	<p>اوهما ٤٤٤</p>	
<p>٢٨٤ مدة خلافة علي بن أبي طالب</p>	<p>٢٨٤ اونها</p>	<p>واحد وستين يوماً ٤٦٧</p>	<p>اوهما ٤٤٤</p>	

Fig. 4 - MS Berlin or. fol. 434, p. 283-284: Beginning of ch. 49 on the Muslim Caliphs and Sultans

٤٦١	العلاء	من ذنب يومنا الايجيل قام منذ بشر في الكندة الى يوم شهادة بها في صبيحة يوم الأحد بعد القيام وهو يوم الاثنين الرابع والعشرين من هلال نيسان العوازيين السابع من قنطورا لرمي سنة ثمان وستين بالجسد قبل الثلثين من بزوك وذلك سبع وستين	الابق الطوراك لانت القديس من قس الايجيل حليو من اياول واقلم الثاني وعشرون سنة زنج في الثاني والعشرون من جوز في السنة الثانية من ملك دولاياوس ملك الروم وكان الكافا وهو الذي اصبح حله قس الايجيل وانتمت كنه وجهه مدفون خارج جهه مار جرجس	مبيو الطوراك في السوراهم اخذوا اسما اسماء ميليا واقلم بطوركا على كوي قس واقلم اتي سنة زنج في اول ثوت في خامس عشر سنة من ملك دولاياوس	كوي في الطوراك في السوراهم قالوا قلم اقول اقام عشرون وتبع في احد عشر من بزوك في سبع وستين ارباباوس الملك	واقلم كوي من سنة ثمان وستين
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خاو كوي	عشرة سنين	اثني عشرة سنة	ثمان عشرة سنة	سبع سنين	سنة
ومايتي وثمانين يوما	ومايتي وستة وثمانين يوما	ومايتي وستة عشر	ومايتي وستة عشر	سبع وستين سنة	سنة
مائة واثنى عشر سنة	مائة وتسع سنين	تسع وتسعين سنة	ست وثمانين سنة	سبع وستين سنة	سنة
ومايتي واحد وثمانين يوما	ومايتي واحد وثمانين يوما	ومايتي واحد	ومايتي واحد	ومايتي واحد	ومايتي واحد
١٠٩٦	٢٩٤٢	٤٧٧٠	٦٧٨٩	٢٠٠٧	١
واخوها يوم اربعها	واخوها يوم سبست	واخوها يوم اثنتين	واخوها يوم واحد	واخوها يوم اثنتين	واخوها يوم واحد
٤١١٨٩	٤٠٠٩٣	٢٦١٦١	٢١٤٩١	٢٩٧٠٢	١
٥٦١٢	٥٦٠٩	٥٥٩٩	٥٥٨٦	٥٥٦٧	٥٥٦٧
اندر ايانوس قيصر	تاودلس قيصر	دوما تانوس قيصر	اسيانوس قيصر	اتوت قيصر	اندر ايانوس قيصر
تسع عشر سنة	سنة واحد	خمس عشرة سنة	تسع سنين ونصف	ثلثا شهر	سنة
مائة وتسعة عشر سنة ونصف	مائة وسنة ونصف	تسع وتسعين سنة ونصف	ثمانين سنة ونصف	سنة	سنة

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