iv. THE WRITER AND HIS TIME

We observed in the previous chapter that neither of the manuscripts of the treatise has an author's name prefixed, but that George of Mosul and Arbela was mentioned as its author by a later Maronitic hand on the margin of V.

The first author who published some information about our treatise was, as has been said before (p. 65), J. S. Assemani. In his "Bibliotheca Orientalis" and in his "Catalogue" he accepted the above tradition concerning the writer without any criticism. His opinion has been generally received. Dr. Wright has borrowed it from him, so did Prof. Brightman, Dom. Connolly and some time ago J. B. Chabot and Prof. Hanssens. Prof. Duval is silent about this question, since he did not include liturgical writings in his History of Syriac Literature. In his exhaustive handbook of Syriac Literature Prof. Baumstark uttered some doubts. He expressed himself as follows: "Dafür dass er (George) sich in gelehrter Arbeit mit demselben (liturgical study) beschäftigt habe, bieten, da er als Autor nur von einer späten maronitischen Hand bezeichnet wird, Beantwortungen von 'Fragen über den Dienst des Altar' so wie von solchen über Taufe und Osterkommunion keinen sicheren Beleg", referring to V.

Having reproduced the current opinions on the author of our treatise as found in the handbooks we must try to settle this question. The obvious questions are: What is known about this George of Arbela? What are the external witnesses except the doubtful note in the margin? What is the internal testimony of the treatise itself?

i. All the sources on George of Arbela have been brought together and analysed by Prof. Baumstark. He was ordained a bishop of the well-known See of Mosul and Arbela by the Catholicos Emmanuel (938-960). Twice (in 963 and 987) he was a candidate for the highest office of the Nestorian Church, but he never issued victoriously from the intrigues among these choices (we may note

(1) Cf. about this family L. Petit, in: D.A.C.L., t. i, col. 2977-2981. (2) W. Wright, A short History of Syriac Literature, London, 1894, p. 231, n. 3. (3) F. E. Brightman, L.E.W., p. lxix. (4) R. H. Connolly, Expos., II b, p. 2 (though this applies to V ii). (5) J. B. Chabot, Littérature syriaque, Paris, 1934, p. 116; he does not consider the Expos. to be a work of George. (6) J. M. Hanssens i, p. 501. (7) R. Duval, La Littérature Syriaque, Paris, 1907, p. xvi; at least I think this is the reason though he mentions, i. e., p. 393, the Expos. as a work of George. (8) A. Baumstark, L. G., S. 299; Ak. 6: iii should be corrected in vi. (9) A.
that this intriguing was usual under these circumstances. He
died probably in 987. Further, he is mentioned by the Nestorian
writer 'Abdisho' and in several MSS. as an expert in ecclesiastical
law, redactor of the Daily Office of 6th August and compiler of
some prayers and hymns. The quotation from Baumstark puts the
"Questions about Easter-communion and Fasting" among the
"dubia". But there is, to our view, no sufficient reason to do so.
We have been unable to detect any internal grounds against his
authorship. Both manuscripts tell us that follow: "(Some) of the
questions of Mar George Metropolitan of Arbel and Mosul" and this
is part of the text, and not: in one manuscript, and by a later hand
in margine! It follows from this heading that we find here an extract
from a larger collection. - We have already mentioned (p. 44, n. 3),
that the authorship of the extensive and important "Expositio Officii
Ecclesiastici" is no more ascribed to him since its publication
by Dom. Connolly. These are the facts known thus far.

ii. Consulting 'Abdisho' one discovers that this author has
mentioned him in his "Catalogue" among the Canonists (§ 192
Collectores Canonum) . This passing glance does not mean much
as A. does not say a word about George's other, undoubtedly
genuine, writings. J. S. Assemani treated George in his "Appendix
ad Catalogum Ebedjesu Sobensis". This "Appendix" contains more
than one well-known name which 'Abdisho' had skipped over. But
Assemani only gives a detailed analysis of the "Expositio" and does
not speak about our treatise. This did not happen intentionally
for in his "Catalogue" of the Vatican MSS., at a later date, Asse-
mani shows no doubt about the authorship. My investigation

Baumstark, L.G., S. 239. (10) Dr. Wright, Syriac Literature, p. 230-231 wrongly
says that he was also a candidate in 961 (three times altogether); but B.O., ii,
p. 452, to which he refers, does not contain a word about it.

(1) In Ak. 3 of Baumstark it must be added that it also is found in the manu-
script that was examined by G. Dietrich, Bericht u. u. w. (cf. p. 44, n. 4), S. 268
and N. 1. With all probability he is meant in the Letter of Elias of Nisibis (cf.
p. 89, n. 7), in: O.C., 1913, S. 259 as the man who changed prayer during the
consecration of a Katholikos. cf. p. , . (2) Ed. B.O., iii i, p. 279. - About this
'Abdisho' see: A. Baumstark, L.G., S. 323-325. (3) B.O., iii i, p. 518-540;
that on Baptism is not mentioned either; this fact probably induced G. Dietrich,
Die nestorianische Tauffirtag, Giessen, 1909, S. 61, to mix up the Expositio (writ-
ten in questions) and the Questions. But the criticism of Dom. Connolly, Expos.
i, p. 3, is too severe, as the critic himself is liable to a grave mistake ascribing
the Questions to George of Arbel.
has not provided me with any external witness to throw light upon this matter. So we have to consult the writing itself.

iii. In its Introduction something is told about the origin of this work. The information furnished by it is as follows: The person who answers the questions is an “Old man” who may be counted among the teachers of a school since he is confronted with a student. The starting point is that the service of the church is neglected and not administered according to the tradition of the Ancients, because many people have lately become priests who were not sufficiently qualified, and did not possess the indispensable knowledge of the Canons and Formularies in question. Every one is doing what seems good to him and nobody takes care. Ignorance and arrogance are the characteristics of these priests, as another place tells us (cf. Q. 119). The author has been summoned to cope with this evil as he has acquired a sound knowledge of the exact liturgical tradition which he has received from the Ancients. He will surely stop the mockery of the ignorant. Though acknowledging his own unworthiness and stupidity, he is willing to tell what he saw from the Ancients with whom he once performed the service of the altar.

Some points are clear from this, yet in reading this preface we are struck by its very traditional tone. This complaint about the low standard of the present clergy compared with the excellence of the past is one that is found over and over again in Nestorian and other literature: the race of the “laudatores temporis acti” never dies. The modesty of the author is also a typical and indispensable part of such a preface. Arrogance and ignorance are generally imputed to opponents.1 Does the schematical character of this framework invalidate this information? This is one question. But there remain other points to consider.

*Proper names* are generally fit to give a clue. The names Hazza and Nineveh in Q. 116 do not yield more than that our treatise must have been written before A.D. 1200, since Arbela which took the place of Hazza was founded at that time.2 – The Tigris (Q. 78, 79) is specially mentioned among the rivers into which dust and ashes are thrown; in V. it is even the only one. So it is obvious to assume that the writer and his pupil lived near this river. – The books quoted are only the “Canons” (preface, Q. 48) or “Admonitions”

1 For details cf. the Commentary on this place. 2 Cf. the Note ad Q. 116.
(Q. 49) which the author has also in view elsewhere without naming them. These Canons may be identified with those given by John bar Abgare (900-905)\(^1\).– The persons which our text mentions are the Catholici Timothy (i.e. 800, cf. Q. 108) and ‘Abdisho’ (Q. 7). The latter must be the first of this name.\(^2\) He reigned from 963-987, and is known as a contemporary and rival of George of Arabela. A liturgical addition ordered by him is quoted here with approval. We notice that this ‘Abdisho’ was a pupil of the “High Monastery” near Mosul; the importance of this fact will become clear afterwards\(^3\) (p. 148).

This last name gives a terminus a quo though it does not affect the question about which we are concerned here, namely whether George was the writer, since he outlived ‘Abdisho’ (and the text does not say plainly whether ‘Abd. is still alive or not) and was candidate for the Catholicate after ‘Abd.’s death.–The name of Hazza fixes the terminus ad quem on 1200 A.D.

More information enabling us to fix its date between 987 and 1200 A.D. cannot be gathered from this treatise. We must attain our end by a roundabout way. This will have the advantage that it puts us in a position to answer the question which arose at page 68 with regard to the writers of the other treatises.

iv. In Q. 108 the writer happens to speak about reciting the Lord’s Prayer in the Ritual of Baptism. He says: “We have spoken at some length about Baptism and shown that it is necessary that the Lord’s Prayer should be recited in that service . . . three times . . .” and in Q. 109 he is asked to specify them, as it said only twice. Nothing relating to this question is found in the preceding part, as one would expect. We must turn, therefore, to the second tract dealing ex professo with Baptism. In fact we find something of the kind discussed there (M. fol. 35b-36a): On account of the Question why formerly the Baptismal Service began with: “We confess and adore . . .”\(^4\) and now with the Lord’s Prayer,\(^5\) it is said that formerly Baptism was immediately joined to the Evening Service of the

(1) Vide p. 133-133. (2) The Nestorian Church had 3 Patriarchs of that name, viz. i 963-986; ii 1074-1090; iii 1138-1147. At this state of discussion it is impossible to decide who is the right one. But from the facts brought together in the next pages it will be seen that the choice made in the text is the only one possible. (3) All the sources of his life are compiled and analysed in: A. Baumstark, L.G., S. 299; and cf. the note of Dr. Mingana in: W.S. vii, p. 145, n. 1. (4) T., p. 61 (after the preparations). (5) As is done in the present formulary; T., p. 55.
Resurrection; so they began with the said Prayer of: “We confess etc.” as the Lord’s Prayer had been recited already twice. So the opinion prevailed, that this was the proper beginning. But now the Priests have understood, that no sacramental action can be performed without the Lord’s Prayer.¹ This correspondence shows conclusively that our treatise and that on Baptism are at any rate by the same author.

Now we turn to the third tract. This includes M. fol. 46a-65b; the end does not belong to it, but are questions by Isho’yab unh of Arzun.¹ In V. it runs from fol. 56-93 (there is no reason for dividing it into two parts, as is done in V.)—That its author is the same as that of i is proved by M. fol. 53a. He writes there: “I have asked you before about the Gemurta which falls from the paten of the Sacraments on the ground; is it right to return it to the paten; and you answered: No! Now I want to ask you etc.” To this subject the author reverts some pages later (M. fol. 55a). Here we meet with a clear reference to Q. 41 of our book: “Q.: What must be done with the Gemurta that falls from the paten on the altar? S.: They must carry it with care and give it to one of the people, and add another one to it, but it should not be returned to the paten”. This is in fact not a literal quotation, but its contents do agree exactly with the above (cf. ad Q. 41). His references, both here and in Q. 108 (see before), are more paraphrasing than literal.

A further proof is found in M. fol. 58a where a decision a minori ad maius is given from Q. 11 and 59 (cf. the Commentary).

We notice from such references that the treatises V. 1, ii, iii (+ iv) = M. A-C belong together and have the same author.¹ A corroboration is also found in the fact that only the first one has an introduction while ii and iii start immediately with their questions. It may be that the remark in M. fol. 67 (cf. p. 66) has some importance in this connection, the author including the Q. Q. of Isho’yab unh in his work since they deal with the same matters.

Up to this point we have established the following facts: the

¹ The text is not important enough to justify its publication in full; this summary of the argument will suffice. We want readers to observe that two more Lord’s Prayers are said in this Service (cf. ad Q. 109) about which no question existed; making altogether three times. (2) About the disorder of its beginning in M. cf. p. 69 and 120. (3) The question of the different author’s names in M. and V. will be left aside for the present moment. It will be discussed at the end of this section. (4) Coedo Seert contained only the first item. But this seems to have been a MS. drawn from different sources without any idea leading this choice; so its witness cannot count against the other two.
writer was a teacher living in the neighbourhood of the Tigris, between A.D. 987-1200. As to the sequence of publishing his writings this is not identical with that of our MSS. but: i on Baptism; ii on the Eucharist 1st part; iii on Ordination and the Eucharist 2nd part. This result is still somewhat poor, but the unity of authorship we have observed puts us in a position to go further. It is really a fact of fundamental importance since iii offers a number of highly interesting data.

v. The new data furnished by iii are the following:

a. In M. fol. 52b we read: "Q.: I have seen in the town Mosul in a big church in the days etc." This shows that the conversation described in our treatise was not held in this city.

b. In an Answer M. fol. 59a it is said: "It happened in the days of the right reverend Mar George, Metropolitan of Mosul, while I was a deacon etc." From this it appears that the writer's identity with George of Arbelo, suggested by V. in the margin, is excluded. He must be a, probably younger, contemporary of his. The tract seems to have been written after the death of George 987. But as it is not said when he obtained his office, we cannot say anything about his age; nothing can be derived from the fact that he is styled "a venerable old man", for it is not clear what is the exact meaning of this name.

c. With some hesitation we quote the Question of the same page: "The bishop has authority over his diocese (country), cathedral (church) and residence (town). But if to us happens something like this, how must we do?" The Questioner seems to be exempt from the jurisdiction of a bishop; so he was probably a monk. We draw this conclusion with hesitation since we do not know how this point was exactly regulated. 1–1 49 is not sufficiently clear (monasteries-churches of laymen). In this connection we may

(1) The definition of the contents of our tract by Assemani is not right; see ch. v. N.B. In the sequence i and ii are always referring to the tract on the Eucharist, is beginning with M. fol. 51 b 11 = V. fol. 66. (2) I have not found any indication pointing to the origin of Assemani's statement. (3) ] Labouret, Christianisme, 1904, p. 324 says: "Cette soumission absolue à l'épiscopat est un des traits caractéristiques du monachisme oriental". — He knows only of two cases of exemption "pour l'époque qui nous occupe" (ibid., n.); in later ages exemption was the rule, as appears from 'Abdisho', Nomocanon, vii 6: "on the privileges of the monasteries and their exemption from the jurisdiction of the bishops". — DACL, s. v. Exemption monastique, t. v, col. 951-962 deals exclusively with the West. DACM, i, p. 649 s. v. Exemption mentions one case of the 7th century in the East (emperor Mauricius).
point to the formula: “Your Brotherhood” and “Venerable old man” in the Introduction, which are typical for monks circles.

d. The time is definitively fixed by the last and most important quotation. Its interest will justify the literal translation of the full text, long though it be. M. fol. 46b-48b (Syrac text in facsimile at the end of this book).\footnote{1}

*Question:* There was once a dispute between the Catholicos Mar Mari and Mar George, Metropolitan of Mosul, the matter of dispute being how the signing of the Ordination must be signed over the head of the Ordinand (of all ranks) from the Reader up to the Catholicos. Mar Mari said: From his back he must begin with the signing to his forehead, and from his right ear to his left one. But George said: From the forehead of the Ordinand he must begin to his back, and from his right ear to his left one. Which of these two is right? What clear demonstration is brought forward by everyone of those who hold either view? How did you see that the Ancients signed, tell us clearly. Because in the lifetime of the Catholicos Mar Mari the sign was made according to his command; but after that they followed the practice of Mar George. When we asked them: Why have you left your rule and reverted from it? they answered: This rule was a willfulness of his; but the rule of Mar George is the right one.\footnote{2} But this Catholicos of our days, Mar John signs according to the rule of Mar Mari, and he said (in defence of this practice): By this rule I was signed a Bishop and Metropolitan, and I do not deviate from it. But others do not follow it. And you, how did you see the former generations signing? *Answer:* I do not remember to have seen it done by the heads of the church from the day on which I entered into the service of the Church and the School in a way different from that of Mar George. It happened once upon a time in the High Monastery, that Priests and Deacons were consecrated according to the precepts of the Scholars. I saw they were signing according to that of Mar George. Besides that in the time of his trouble with the Catholicos, Mar George asked the old men, older than he himself: How did you see the Metro-

\footnote{1} Cf. e. g. Budge, *B.G.* i, p. xxxiii n. 1, and on many other places; and almost every book dealing with Monasticism, not only in Syriac. \footnote{2} It was superfluous to reproduce fol. 48b, since only one word of that page belongs to this extract. Therefore should be added at the end of fol. 48b. \footnote{3} In the Officebook the rule of Mar George is found, cf. C. F. Badger ii, p. 324 rubric. – Timothy ii, *Liber de Sacramentis*, i 12, mentions this question in dealing with the form of the cross in the ordination, in: *B.O.*, iii 1, p. 573.
politans Israel and Luke: making this sign? The old men answered: We do not remember nor know how they signed. Question: What led Mar Mari to this change? Answer: Because in the time of the Catholicos ‘Abdisho’, that is to say after his death, the Metropolitans and Bishops came together to elect a Catholicos. Mari of Persia was present with them, though it was not habitual that the faithful came together with them, and by royal assistance he was made Patriarch. Having finished his election the Bishops came before him that he might confirm them, and he signed them according to the rule he had ordained. But when Mar George saw the change made by Mar Mari in the signing he said to his fellow Metropolitans: “Behold that Catholicos you made Patriarch over you, does not even know how to sign! When the Patriarch heard this, he became angry but hid it in his heart. After a month he convoked the Fathers and they made a Synod; and the Fathers subscribed that his way of signing was valid; even Mar George did so and confessed but without his will that it was valid”. This paragraph is followed by an exposition of the liturgical reasons of the Fathers (fol. 48b-49a) and the argument of Mar George in support of his opinion, (fol. 49a-b) which have nothing to do with the point discussed here.

This piece is valuable for several reasons. In the first place it contains information about the author. He was in the service of Church and School. Once he lived in the High Monastery (cf. p. 148); at least, the way in which this fact is mentioned, proves that he is there no more. The proper names are all of the end of the 10th century. (Mar George vide supra p. 74–75; the other names will be found in the next paragraph). He wrote in the days of a Catholicos named John. All this information squares with what we have found before.

Next to this we see that Georg of Arbela, as was partly known from other sources, has been much interested in the exact main-

(1) This Israel may be the Patriarch of that name, see below p. 86. In this connection it is worth while to notice that he is styled as redactor of the formulary of Ordination (not in: A. Baumstark, L.G.), cf. Badger, l.t., p. 322: “The ordering of Readers, Sub-deacons, Deacons, and Presbyters, drawn up by Mar Kiprianus Metropolitan of Niabis, by Mar Yeshua-yahu Catholicos and Patriarch, and by the learned Mar Israel!”. About Cyprian of Niabis (± 750) see A. Baumstark, L.G., S. 213 and Ak. 10; Iso’yabb is iii, A. Baumstark, L.G., S. 200 Ak. 5 (about the Israel mentioned in: A. Baumstark, L.G., S. 334 see ad Q. 16).

Luke was probably the predecessor of George on the Sce of Arbela 930–950, cf. B.O., iii 2, p. dccxxi.
tenance of liturgical traditions which came to him by oral transmission. As such he might have been the champion of the strict party as against Mari who was ignorant of the Traditions of the Nestorian Church.

Here it is the right place to discuss the external facts, after the internal evidence viz. the author's names in the MSS. In V. the tract is ascribed to "Yabhalla ha the Great, the Patriarch who was once bishop of Nuhadra" (in the margin)—in M. to "the Patriarch Isho'yab the Great who was bishop of Nuhadraye". These titles have in common the words in italics. Nuhadraye means inhabitants of Nuhadra.¹ (Beit) Nuhadra is a district between the Tigris and Zab north of Alqosh.² But the proper names are not identical. The preliminary question is: who can be meant by these names?

a. The Nestorian Church has had three Patriarchs of the name Yabhalla ha. The first one reigned A.D. 415–420;³ nothing is known about his liturgical activities.⁴ The second was Patriarch 1190–1222; he is praised as a good leader of the Church and it is known that he occupied himself with liturgical poems; he had been bishop of Maiphkerat. According to Assemani and Prof. Brightman⁵ he was the author of these Q Q. (on what authority, I do not know). Prof. Baumstark⁶ does not mention this fact. — The last one of this name is well known for his journal; he reigned 1281–1317. His lifestory, interesting though it may be, cannot be told here.⁷ He had not been bishop of Nuhadra. As far as I know nothing has been found which marks him as a great liturgical teacher. For though G. Dietrich⁸ credits him with a redaction of the Baptismal Rite according to a Berlin MS., he does not give any reason for assigning it to him, and it is safer to follow Prof. Baumstark⁹ who leaves it open ("ungewiss welcher" S. 368).

However this may be, it is of no weight for the present investigation. For a comparison between the established facts of p. 81 and these dates shows that none of the three Yabhalla ha's answers to the requirements.

b. When the Nestorians are speaking of Isho’yabh the Great, especially with regard to liturgical matters, the thoughts turn immediately to the third Patriarch of that name. He was the great reformer of the liturgy and as such he had won his fame. He lived in the middle of the 7th century. So he cannot be taken into account for our treatises nor can, of course, the foregoing Patriarchs of his name. Assemani mentions one bishop of Nuhadra, named Isho’yabh living in the time of the Patriarch Machicha 1091–1108; but he is so obscure that the epitheton “the Great” which is incontestable by the witness of the two MSS. is impossible, and his lifetime does not agree with that of our author.

How can we solve this riddle? I venture to suggest that the real name of our writer written in top of the treatise was: Isho’yabh. Well, we find in the history of the Nestorian Church a man of that name in the time of ‘Abdisho’ and John, who became Patriarch, viz. Isho’yabh iv, the immediate successor of John vii. Whatever we know about his life agrees very well with the data of our treatises. He studied at the School of Mar Mari in Dorkoni, a small village on the borders of the Tigris; he became a priest and after a short time he enjoyed a great reputation owing to his integrity (not usual in his days, see below) and chastity. The text of Mari is worth being quoted in full: “Morum integritate et castimoniae ac doctrinae laude inclaruit. Eum ‘Ebedjesu (‘Abdisho’) episcopum praeposuit sedi Qasr et Nuharwânârum, constituitque doctorem ac procuratorem, mox praecelar eius fama circummaqua divulgata est. Scholam rexit reliquis diebus ‘Ebedjesu, ac tempore Mâr Mâris, Joannis et Joannis. Aufugit autem ab oppressione Ibn Gâhri’. He was ordained a Patriarch in 10217 and reigned till 1026.

(1) Cf. ch. vii, ii c. (2) B.O., ii, p. 455–456. (3) It may be somewhat bold; but I would point for this substitution of J. by Y. (meaning practically the same) to the following parallels (which are, however, not quite sure): A. Baumstark, L.G., S. 304 (thinks that a writing of Isho’yabh b. Malkon is ascribed to Yabhallâlah b. M.) and the MS. of Berlin, mentioned in the text, (all other MSS. ascribe the ritual of Baptism to I. iii; the text of this MS. cannot be called “revised”). (4) Gismondi i, p. 103–104; ii, p. 56. (5) B.O., iii 3, p. cmxxx; this school was named after Mar Mari, the Apostle of Persia who was said to have died there (the Acts of Mari, in: P. Bedjan, Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum, Parisiis-Lipsiae, 1890, i p. 92. (6) Cf. B.O., iii 2, s.v. Kosra: “urbs Episcopalis in Babylonia ad Provinciam Patriarchalem pertinens.” This conflicts with “Nuhadra” in the heading of MSS. (p. 68). I suggest a variation between the Syriac and Arabic names. (7) His choice was considered uncanonical by Elias of Nisibis (because of the reading of a wrong word in the liturgy and simony), in a letter translated by B. Vandenhoof, Ein
Of course, we cannot control how far we are justified in combining the statements of our tracts with those of the Chronicles since they are not identical in all particulars. But at any rate it is a highly probable suggestion explaining various data which otherwise should remain unexplained. He is not called: "the Great", but Ṣaw has also the meaning of "Teacher"; so it is not necessary to stick to the translation of Assemani and Dr. Mingana as the only one possible. Whatever may be the true rendering, both meanings of the epithet may justly be applied to him, according to the testimony of Mari.

In this way a very conspicuous figure would be added to the list of Nestorian authors in which he is missing up to the present time (a matter of little weight owing to the fragmentary state of tradition); and the shadowy name of Isho'yabh iv would get a more pregnant meaning.

vi. The names mentioned in the preceding paragraph may guide us in a research concerning the lifetime of our author and the state of affairs in the Church during that period. Our sources are those parts of the "Liber Turris" of Mari and Amr, which were published by Gismondi and a portion of the "Chronicum Ecclesiasticum" of Bar Hebraeus which is based upon them. As has been observed these Chronicles are of a rather fragmentary character. They relate many anecdotes but do not attempt to draw a truly historical picture. We shall only quote what seems necessary for our subject; but in doing so one is largely handicapped by the nature of these books.

We make our starting point in the beginning of the 10th century. The first year of this century is also the first of the reign of the Patriarch John v bar Abgare (900-905). His choice to the patriarchal See raised the usual contentions. John was chosen under the influence of the Caliph but without bribing, a point which is marked in our sources as a very striking one. He is characterized as: "excelling in knowledge and ascetism". At the very beginning of...


his reign he made a vow and professed his ideals of his duty which he made obligatory for his successors: (a) maintenance of the true doctrine and (b) care for the Church by building churches and finally: "Eas (ecclesias) piis viris commissurum, presbyterum aut diaconum non ordinaturum nisi secundum canones, presbyterum quidem post lectionem novi testamenti, diaconum vero post lectionem psalterii, nec divitem ad ordines promoturum qui minime sit idoneus, nec pauperem reectorum qui sit idoneum". This quotation shows what seemed to be a grave defect of the Church at that time: office and rank varied with the sum of money one was ready to pay, simony being the rule. He restored the old rule requiring knowledge in stead of money (cf. p. 75). On several occasions he gave directions how the service ought to be conducted by answering questions and by promulgating "Canones" that since have formed part of the Officebooks (cf. p. 134). The summary of his Patriarchate was: "Optimo regimine ecclesiam gubernavit".

He was succeeded by Abraham iii (905-937), whose reign seems to have been a flourishing-period for his church: "tot floruerunt sapientes viri insignes ac scientiarum doctores, quot hic diserte memorare longum esset" (we cannot but regret that Mari has restrained his eloquence just here). Not so much characteristic for this time, as important for the history of the liturgy is the fact that an addition was made to the liturgy because some ecclesiastic had turned to the Melchites as he thought he was not sufficiently honoured by the Nestorians; "ipsius causa compositus est uterque canon qui in liturgia recitatum de eo qui in sua fide divus est: 'qui anceps in sua fide haeret... Abeat qui non amat'."

During the office of Emmanuel (938-960) the church had a time of further peaceful development and was not troubled by Mohammedan riots. His knowledge of the future, his skilful interpretation and his eloquence are praised but unfortunately he was very avaricious, a fact which was not profitable for the Church.

(1) Gismondi i, p. 78; ii p. 48 added after the reading of the Psalms: "et quae is adiecta sunt (ex hymnis alisque)". (2) Gismondi i, p. 79. (3) Gismondi i, p. 81. - This is probably an addition to the words at the beginning of the Offertory (L.E.W., p. 267); but it is found nowhere in the MSS. and editions of T: which I consulted. - About Abraham, Gismondi i, p. 79-84; ii, p. 48-49. The latter tells us, 'Ab. wrote a "liber admonitionum"', but we do not hear anything else about the nature of this book; so we do not know if it is liturgical (not in: A. Baumstark, L.G.). (4) Emmanuel: Gismondi i, p. 84-87; ii, p. 49.
Israel whose name we mentioned before, reigned but one year (963).
He owed his elevation to the Chalif whose victory he had foretold.
He had been a teacher in the school of Mar Mari (cf. p. 83) and
was "castimonia ac pietate illustris".† From the fragment given
above it appears that he was held to be an expert in liturgical
tradition.

Now we come to the time immediately preceding our writings. The
name of the succeeding Patriarch viz. ‘Abdisho’ has been mentioned
several times.† He was educated in the High Monastery and Bar
Hebraeus tells us that he was "expert in the ecclesiastical sciences
and trained in logic by Bar Nesicha, a pupil of the holy Moses bar
Cepha of ours".‡ This is a very interesting remark as this Moses
was one of the most famous Fathers of the Jacobites. Moses bar
Cepha died in 903 and wrote many books on exposition of the Bible
and of the liturgical Offices. † ‘Abdisho’ was the author of some
prayers and probably of several sermons. Changes in the liturgical
order and building of churches are also referred to him. About his
character we hear that he was conspicuous for his sanctity and
discipline and gifted with an excellent intellect but rather irascible.
As a matter of fact people could bear him only because of his holy
living, for there was much reason for complaint. Personally he was
in no wise able to administer the church in the right way. † This task
was left for others who were "wicked people". They embezzled
money received for assistance of the poor, and for that reason he
had even to dismiss one of his friends called ‘Abdisho’. On the
other hand he stirred up bad feelings by inflicting excommunication
on several occasions. From all this information we can easily guess
that his time was not a culminating-point in the life of the church.

During the vacancy of the See a certain Elias of Cascar looked after
it. He was designated his successor but died before his inthronizaton.§
The death of this man who is highly praised proved fatal
to the church. The Mari mentioned in the foregoing fragment now
ascended the throne (987-1001).§ He was a man of noble birth

(1) Israel: Giamondi i, p. 87-88. (2) Vide p. 77. (3) Bar Hebraeus, col. 251.
(4) All sources about his life are found in: A. Baumstark, L. G., S. 281-292, and
S. 360 where the important explanation of his on the Eucharist is mentioned
(ed. R. H. Connolly-H. W. Goddington, Two Commentaries on the Jacobite Liturgy,
London, 1913, p. 16-36 [text] = p. 24-90 [tr.]). (5) His reign was taken as an
example by Elias of Nisibis in contrast with his own times (Letter, ed. B. Vanden-
mondi i, p. 92-97; ii p. 55.
and had filled a high office. Afterwards he became a monk and was appointed inspector by ‘Abdisho’. At a later date he became Bishop of Persia and discharged his office very well. His choice was as usual accompanied by various contentions, but he was acknowledged by the Chalif as head of the Christians, and Bar Hebraeus tells us that as a matter of fact he was trusted upon the church by the Chalifs. We saw from the fragment that there were troubles between him and the other priests at his ordination, since he made a liturgical mistake in the signing and we are also told that he read the Gospel but did not expose it; he held Mass but did not preach at the entrance of the altar as had been the use of his predecessors. It should not be forgotten that George of Arbela, one of his leading opponents, had been a candidate himself. That accounts for some jealousy. His personal character is praised for his compassion and modesty. But he missed the qualities of a good governor and moreover he was reputed to be ignorant of the teaching of the Church and of its services and orders (“eius regimen viri potius erat opulent i sane ad gubernandum idonei ob divitias quam regimen patriarchae statuendi praecripta juris studiosi: nec religionis doctrina pollebat”). His financial management was not so bad but in spite of that some instances are told of selling church property,1 and, worst of all, he ordained many unqualified persons “haud excultos nec idoneos qui Deum neque quam verebantur, nec de ecclesiastica disciplina quidquam noverant”. This, for our subject extremely important, testimony throws a glaring light upon the situation of the Church during his reign. We can hardly expect better from a leader that was not instructed himself, and though his reign lasted only fourteen years, the church was saddled with these bad functionaries. Our writer looking back upon this time knows that in his days things have not changed. At this time John was patriarch, probably the one who follows next in the list, viz. the 6th of his name (1001-1011).2 That he is meant in the fragment quoted before (p. 80), seems to follow from the fact that he did not wish to leave the practice of Mari which is easy to understand, if he was his immediate predecessor.

(1) This bad habit is often combatted in the Synodical Canons but it seems to have been an inveterate evil of all ages not specially of his time. (2) Cf. the Introduction of our tract: “... all the priests, our colleagues took recently possession of the churches and were not instructed, and so did not follow the Canons and Orders of the service of the altar”. (3) Gismondi i, p. 97–100; ii, p. 55–56; Bar Hebraeus, col. 261, 272–278, 281–283.

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His former life had not been the best preparation for his high office; he had been rather wicked. Having been ordained Bishop by Mari he became afterwards Metropolitan of Persia, but he was not popular among his correligionists being rather self-conceited and arrogant. He took openly profits from the ordinations and instead of building churches he ruined them; he closed schools and prevented the giving of alms. Moreover he was rather inclined to anathematize his opponents. We can gather from this that things went in the same bad way as under his predecessor.

We assumed before that this John vi was intended as "our patriarch" but one might defend also the view that his successor John vii (1011-1020) is meant.¹ This ecclesiastic had been Bishop of Hirta. He was famous for his intellect and tolerance, though he was not free from avarice. In his time the threats of pogroms of which we hear also in the decades before became a bitter reality. Christianity in those countries was badly smitten by persecution. A vivid description of the dreadful manner in which they were usually executed is found in several places of Mari's Chronicle.² In this time the Christians were forced to wear a distinct dress and we are told that many apostasized from the faith because of the contumely and the stoning to which they were exposed. The consequences were naturally felt in the performance of public worship: "cuius rei causa extitit hominum in sua religione relaxatio ac sacerdotum pessima agendi ratio in altari et ecclesiis ac oratoriiis". In several places churches were destroyed.

Surveying the history of the internal state of affairs in the Nestorian church during the 10th century, we find that its standard was very low, partly by the lax discipline and administration of its highest officers who were often haughty, corrupt and ignorant, partly by the menace of the persecutions and the apostasy or at least the weakening of faith among the masses. *This is exactly the background that suits the features we found on page 76.* These facts answer us the question we have put before, viz. whether the traits of the introduction were not traditional; our conclusion is: they are not. The church at the author’s time was in sore need of restauration in various respects and one of the most urgent measures

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(1) Gismondi i, p. 100-103; ii, p. 56; Bar Hebraeus, col. 283-285. (2) Cf. Gismondi i, p. 69-70, and in his history of Mari and his successors; this has been the same during all ages; the slaughters of the Armenians in our century are still fresh in mind.
was to stop the liturgical disorder, since the liturgy was of such a great importance. This was his aim in writing his treatises.¹

vii. Conclusion: Resuming the facts about the author, they are the following: he was Isho'yabh, who afterwards became the fourth Patriarch of that name, but at the time he was bishop of Nuhadra and a Schoolmaster of very high repute (the name of the School is not mentioned, but was probably in his diocese). He wrote his tracts on liturgical matters in the two first decades of the 11th century about 1010, in order to restore the awful state of affairs in his church which had arisen during the bad government of the last Patriarchs, especially in liturgics. He had been at the High Monastery and deacon in Mosul, in touch with George of Arbela and 'Abdisho', both of whom he followed.

Having thus fixed the name of the author and the time of our writing we may insist on its importance both for our knowledge of the history of that time and for the liturgy in general. In giving a chronological survey in the second part of his “La Littérature Syriaque”, Prof. R. Duval says about the 10th and 11th century: “Ce siècle est aussi terne que le précédent; la décadence littéraire ne subit plus que de rares arrêts. Après de longs intervalles apparaît quelque savant docteur qui s’efforce de ranimer le feu des études près de s’éteindre, mais ses efforts tourneront le plus souvent au profit de la science arabe”.¹ This judgment is very much to the point, though he did allow that the Nestorians kept the first place. Our treatises enable us to fill this gap to a certain extent. They have been written by a prominent teacher and clergyman of the Nestorians, a doctor of the type mentioned by Prof. R. Duval. But even when taking these books into account, it must be allowed that our sources for the history of the Church in Asia in this period are very scarce and

¹ It is interesting to read the picture drawn by Elias of Nisibis in his Letter (ed. Vandenhof, in: O.C., 1913) as it agrees in many respects with the facts mentioned in the text. He wrote in 1021 and described the sad state of the church in that time as compared with that of 'Abdisho' i; the decline was manifested by the manner of worship and the study of the schools—It was the result of despising the Canons of the Church (S. 65—66). Formerly one choose pious and orthodox men to be Patriarch, "jetzt aber fragt man nach dem, der schön ist an Gestalt, einen langen Bart hat, reich ist an Geld, keck, erfahren in (allen) weltlichen Händeln, während man nach der Lehre der Kirche und nach dem was oben geschrieben steht (Canons) nicht fragt" (S. 259).—These sentences were directed against Isho'yabh iv! (2) R. Duval, La Littérature Syriaque, p. 394.
poor. Concerning the internal ecclesiastical life they are almost
deficient. This lamentable fact does not only apply to this age.
We do know very little about the daily life of the Churches. One is
at a loss to say exactly, how the priests performed their services in
the churches of Mesopotamia and Middle Asia. In such a case
those sources that are still at our disposal, obtain a greater impor-
tance. The tracts edited here give us at least some insight into the
life of those churches and into various liturgical practices and diffi-
culties of a place and a time of which too much is unknown.
We should like to know more, but we must make the most of the
little that is left.

From the liturgical point of view our treatises have, of course, some
importance of their own. Besides that we know that about 1000
A.D. some interesting liturgical movements were on foot in other
oriental churches. The question may be posed, if the liturgical
revival in the Nestorian Church, from which these documents
resulted, had any connection with that movement. The answer
must be, I think, in the negative. It appeared from the sources
that the revival was sufficiently justified by the whole state of
affairs in this particular church itself. On the other hand it is not
probable since the Nestorians were not in close touch with the
Jacobites and even less with Western (Byzantine) Christendom.
For several reasons (historical, geographical solution) all great
movements in Christianity passed by the Persian Church.

To estimate more precisely the value of this book it will be necessary
to investigate in what degree the form in which this information
have come down to us should be traditional, and what was the
actual background of the study of liturgical matters within the
Nestorian church. The next chapters are devoted to this end.

(1) A. Baumstark, Festbesier und Kirchenjahr der syrischen Jakobiten, Paderborn, 1910,
S. 43: "Wir werden auch in anderem Zusammenhang der Nähe der Jahrtausend-
wende als einer in der Geschichte der jakobitischen Liturgie nicht weniger
als in derjenigen der syrisch-byzantinischen Kunstverhältnisse wichtigen Epoche
begegnen, die durch ein neues Sichbegegnen orientalischer Elemente des Ostens
und ursprünglich hellenistischer Elemente des Westens ihr eigentümliches Ge-
präge erhält, sei es nun, dass im einzelnen Falle mehr Ostliches nach dem Westen
oder Westliches nach dem Osten zuordringt".