

ORIENTALIA LOVANIENSIA
ANALECTA
————— 187 —————

BIBEL, BYZANZ UND CHRISTLICHER ORIENT

Festschrift für Stephen Gerö
zum 65. Geburtstag

herausgegeben von
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UITGEVERIJ PEETERS en DEPARTEMENT OOSTERSE STUDIES
LEUVEN – PARIS – WALPOLE, MA
2011

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INDIA “FAR BEYOND EGYPT”:
BARLAAM AND IOASAPH AND NUBIA IN THE 6TH CENTURY

Basil LOURIÉ

INTRODUCTION

The saint prince Ioasaph was the holy patron of many members of the royal families who abdicated from their thrones and became monastics throughout the Byzantine Commonwealth. His *historia animae utilis* that we often call “The Romance of Barlaam and Ioasaph” was extremely popular in both Christian East and West, from Ethiopia to Scandinavia.¹ In the same time, this Christian work accumulated a rich literary stuff of Indian and even specific Buddhist origin adapted through an Iranian intermediary milieu, probably mostly Manichean. The Christian romance focuses therefore, on one hand, on the internal links that existed within the whole Christian world, and, on the other hand, the external cultural relations between the Christian civilisation and its neighbours. This is why I hope that the following contribution could be fitting to be a part of the interests of such renowned scholar of Byzantium and Orient as Stephen Gerö, to whom it is dedicated.²

The studies of the romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph were produced by so many scholars looking from such different corners, that normally nobody is aware of the whole corpus of the relevant data. Unfortunately, I am not an exception here. I do know that there is, at least, one Arabic Christian recension of the romance³ that is certainly relevant to my top-

¹ On the Ethiopic version see below. As to the Old Norse version, with its history, see especially: Magnus RINDAL, *Barlaams ok Josaphats saga* (Oslo, 1981) (*Norrøne tekster*. Nr. 4).

² I am very grateful to my colleagues for their continuous help, especially to Pavel Lurje, Dan Shapira, and to Kirill Khrustalev and Nune Barseghian. I am especially indebted to my late teacher, M. van Esbroeck, s.j., (1934–2003) with whom we started to discuss these matters more than ten years ago. My special thanks to the head, Mrs Tamara Zharova, and the staff of the International Loan of the Russian National Library (St Petersburg). I also thank Alexander Shelkovnikov for improving my English.

³ *BHO* 143, cf.: G. GRAF, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Bd. I (Vatikan, 1944) (*Studi e testi*, 118) 546–548. Cf. also: R. E. SMINÉ, *The Miniatures of a Christian Arabic Barlaam and Joasaph: Balamand 147*, in: *Parole de l'Orient* 18 (1993) [S. Kh. SAMIR, éd. *Actes du IV^e Congrès International d'Études arabes chrétiennes*. (Cambridge, septembre 1992). T. I] 171–229.

ics but is still unedited, not to say, unstudied. So, my conclusions below are to be reconsidered when somebody will publish this version. Probably, after this, someone else will produce a study of mutual relations of all the Christian Arabic versions known to us either directly or indirectly (that is, through the two Georgian recensions and the unique Ethiopian one, all of them being either depending on or translated from Arabic).

1. What evidences and in what extent are independent?

It is generally accepted now that the earliest surviving recensions of the romance are two Georgian ones⁴ that adapted some previous Arabic texts. The most eminent scholars of the two Georgian recensions, Korneli Kekelidze and Ilia Abuladze, considered them as going back to a lost Christian Arabic *Vorlage*.⁵ Those who think that the romance was originally composed in Georgian, consider these Arabic sources as non-Christian.⁶ Those who insist that the romance was composed in Greek need not take position on this question (regardless to the possible Arabic sources of the Georgian recensions, they must consider them as ultimately going back to the Greek original(s)). The possibility that the

⁴ Parallel critical edition of both: ილია აბულაძე, *ბალავარიანის ქართული რედაქციები* (თბილისი, 1957) (*ძველი ქართული ენის ძეგლები*. 10) [Ilia ABULADZE, *Georgian recensions of Balavariani* (Tbilisi, 1957) (*Monuments of Old Georgian language*. 10)]. Thereafter referred to by the page and line numbers only.

⁵ The summary of the relevant data in Ilia Abuladze preface to the Russian translation of both Georgian recensions (which is a bit more detailed than his Georgian introduction to the critical edition of 1957): И. В. АБУЛАДЗЕ, *Происхождение и история «Балавариани» и его место в сокровищнице мировой литературы* [*The origin and the history of the “Balavariani” and its place in the treasury of the world literature*], in: *Балавариани. Мудрость Балавара*. Предисловие и редакция И. В. АБУЛАДЗЕ (Tbilisi, 1962) (*Памятники древнегрузинской литературы*), p. IX-XXXI.

⁶ David Lang was pressing for this view which became, of course, the most known among the Western scholars: D. LANG, *Introduction*, in: G. R. WOODWARD, H. MATTINGLY, [St. John Damascene] *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (Cambridge, MA—London, 1983) (*The Loeb Classical Library*, 34), p. IX-XXXV, esp. p. XX-XXVI [the volume was first published in 1914, Lang's Introduction was first added to the reprint of 1967]. Cf. the major article of the same author: D. M. LANG, *The Life of the Blessed Iodasaph: A New Oriental Christian Version of the Barlaam and Ioasaph Romance* (Jerusalem, Greek Patriarchal Library: *Georgian MS 140*), *BSOAS* 20 (1957) 389-407. See also: Э. ХИНТИБИДЗЕ, *Грузинско-византийские литературные взаимоотношения* [E. Khintibidze, *The Georgian-Byzantine literary mutual relations*] (Tbilisi, 1989) 223-224 *et passim*, with the complete bibliography of the previous works of the Georgian scholars; see, in addition, by the same author: E. KHINTIBIDZE, *New Materials on the Origin of “Barlaam and Ioasaph”*, in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 63 (1997) 491-501. I have no access to the English translation: E. KHINTIBIDZE, *Georgian-Byzantine literary contacts* (Amsterdam, 1996). Non-Christian Arabic predecessors of our romance are studied in: D. GIMARET, *Le livre de Bilawhar et Būdāsf, selon la version arabe ismaélienne* (Génève—Paris, 1971).

romance was initially composed in Arabic has never been discussed seriously after Abuladze,⁷ while it is not to be *a priori* excluded, as it was emphasised (apparently with no knowledge of Kekelidze's and Abuladze's works) by Sidney Griffith.⁸ Thus, M. van Esbroeck put forward such a hypothesis again in a seminal article important in many other respects.⁹

1.1. The long Greek recension and two Georgian ones

Almost the whole activity of the *Barlaam and Ioasaph* scholars was focused on three texts: the most known long Greek recension and two Georgian recensions, one long (survived in the unique manuscript) and one short (known in eight manuscripts).

The provenance of the long Greek recension¹⁰ is still an object of a hot discussion. Together with the majority of scholars, I accept its

⁷ Cf., however, the short notice by B. HAMMERDINGER, *Saint Jean Damascène, Barlaam et Ioasaph: l'intermédiaire arabe*, in: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 64 (1971) 35-36, who was speculating starting from F. Dölger's attribution of the romance to a bilingual person, John Damascene. Cf.: B. FLUSIN, *De l'arabe au grec, puis au géorgien: une Vie de saint Jean Damascène*, in: *Traduction et traducteurs au Moyen Âge. Actes du colloque international du CNRS organisé à Paris, Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, les 26-28 mai 1986 / Éd. par G. COUTAMINE (Paris, 1989) (Documents, études, répertoires publiés par l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes)* 51-61. Cf. M. VAN ESBROECK, *Incidence des versions arabes pour la reconstruction des textes perdus*, in: *ibid.*, p. 133-143.

⁸ S. H. GRIFFITH, *Greek into Arabic: Life and Letters in the Monasteries of Palestine in the Ninth Century*, in: *Byzantion* 56 (1986) [reprinted in: IDEM, *Arabic Christianity in the Monasteries of 9th-Century Palestine* (London, 1992) (*Variorum Collected Studies Series CS 380*)] 117-138, esp. 131-133.

⁹ M. VAN ESBROECK, *La Sagesse de Balavar à travers la tradition géorgienne*, in: R. LEBRUN, éd. *Sagesses de l'Orient ancien et chrétien. La voie de vie et la conduite spirituelle chez les peuples et dans les littératures de l'Orient Chrétien. Conférences I. R. O. C. 1991-1992 (Paris, 1993) (Sciences théologiques & religieuses, 2)* 219-242 [thereafter: VAN ESBROECK 1993].

¹⁰ Since 2006 available in the critical edition: *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*. Hrsg. vom Byzantinischen Institut der Abtei Scheyern. VI/2. Robert VOLK, *Historia animae utilis de Barlaam et Ioasaph (spuria). Text und zehn Appendices* (Berlin/N. Y., 2006) (*Patristische Texte und Studien*, 60) [thereafter referred to by the page and line numbers only]. The edition was prepared with the first-hand knowledge of the Latin and Slavonic versions. The Band VI/1 containing a comprehensive introduction to the history of the text is to appear in 2007. Two short Greek *Lives* are of no interest to us because of their almost complete dependency on the known long Greek version. A Synaxary *Vita BHG 224b* published by Volk as Appendix II (p. 416-422) is, in fact, not a part of any Synaxary, but a part of a late service to Barlaam and Ioasaph preserved in two manuscripts (14th and 16th cent.) outside the yearly corpus of the liturgical *menaia* and with no date of memory provided. An Epitome *BHG 224c* (Appendix III in the edition of Volk, p. 423-432) preserved in a manuscript of the 16th century (containing as well the whole text of the Greek romance) under the title Λόγος διδασκαλικός is a result of abbreviation of the known long Greek recension for the needs of the collections of differ-

posteriority, in some way, to a Georgian *Vorlage*. We are still waiting for Robert Volk's monograph-length explanation of his views on the mutual relationship of different recensions,¹¹ but, even now, we are not calling in question that his approach to the long Georgian recension as a predecessor of the Greek long recension is quite justified.¹² Volk managed to arrange in the most logical way almost all the known data concerning the long Greek recension and its attribution to Euthymius the Iberian.

Volk's main point is that the long Greek version is a work of Euthymius the Iberian, then about 30 years old, who worked on some Georgian text that is close, more or less, to the long Georgian version. Shortly after this, the text produced by Euthymius was used by Symeon Metaphrastes.¹³

M. van Esbroeck considered the long Georgian version as an abridgment of an even longer lost Georgian text whose translation is the known long Greek text translated from Georgian by Euthymius the Iberian.¹⁴

ent *narrationes animae utiles*. The only feature of this recension somewhat interesting to us is the placement of the whole story in "the land of Persians", not in "India". Nevertheless, Persia is also mentioned in the long Greek recension of the romance. Both BHG 224b and 224c will be not taken into account in the further study, and so, will never be meant when I use the term "Greek short recension".

¹¹ So far, one can consult his long summarising article: R. VOLK, *Medizinisches im Barlaam-Roman. Ein Streifzug durch den hochsprachlichen griechischen Text, seine Vorläufer, Parallelen und Nachdichtungen*, in: *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 99 (2006) 145-193 [thereafter: VOLK 2006].

¹² Therefore, Volk's critical edition of the long Greek recension provides the parallels from the long Georgian one.

¹³ Cf. the conclusion of his main article: „Es hat somit den Anschein, daß der griechische Barlaam-Roman in den Zeitraum nach der Entstehung der Chrysostomos-Eklogen des Theodoros Daphnopates und vor dem Tod des Symeon Metaphrastes gehört — also etwa zwischen die Jahre 950 und 987 —, und daß dadurch Euthymius der Iberer (* 955), dessen schriftstellerische Aktivität ab 975 belegt ist, definitiv der wahrscheinlichste Anwärter auf die Autorschaft wird bzw. bleibt. Erstaunlich wäre dabei höchstens, daß der *Barlaam* somit kein Alterswerk ist, sondern von einem eventuell nicht einmal 30jährigen geschrieben wurde, der sich dann selbst eher mit der Rolle des Ioasaph als mit der des weisen Eremiten Barlaam identifiziert haben mochte.“ (VOLK 2006, p. 193). On the usage of the romance by Symeon Metaphrastes (vital to establish the *terminus ante quem*) see: R. VOLK, *Symeon Metaphrastes — ein Benutzer des Barlaam-Romans*, in: *Rivista di studi bizantini e neoellenici*, n. s., 33 (1996) 67-180. The last attempt to deny the authorship of Euthymius is probably that of Willem J. AERTS, *Einige Überlegungen zur Sprache und Zeit der Abfassung des griechischen Romans "Barlaam und Ioasaph"*, in: O. ENGELS, P. SCHREINER, hrsg. *Die Begegnung des Westens mit dem Osten*. Kongressakten des IV. Symposions des Mediävistenverbandes in Köln 1991 aus Anlaß des 1000. Todesjahres der Kaiserin Theophano (Sigmaringen, 1993) 357-364.

¹⁴ VAN ESBROECK 1993, p. 240-241.

Euthymius worked on a Georgian *Vorlage*, whose origins are not so clear, except the fact that the Georgian text was using some other text(s) in Arabic.

The mutual relationship of the two known Georgian versions is still unclear. Anyway, there is no demonstration that they are dependent on one another.¹⁵

1.2. The short Greek recension

The short Greek recension of the legend on Barlaam and Ioasaph was recently found by Inmaculada Pérez Martín who reported his finding as a curiosity ("el ejemplo más curioso de estas alteraciones"; Pérez Martín's conviction that he found an "alteration" of the long Greek recension is formulated without any proof, as if it is evident).¹⁶ Robert Volk, who shares Pérez Martín's conviction that this text is "eine etwas kuriose... Bearbeitung",¹⁷ provided its *editio princeps* as the Appendix IV to his critical edition (p. 433-439: *Narratio de Barlaam et Ioasaphat filii Regis Pythagorae*). It is indexed in neither *BHG* nor *CPG*.

The relevant part of the manuscript is dated 1441 and is a work of a Western scribe with a poor knowledge of Greek. Many errors occur. The form of the name Ἰωσαφάτ instead of Ἰωάσαφ betrays, probably, a Latin original. However, even if the short Greek version is translated from Latin, it is, nevertheless, Greek.

Barlaam of this recension is not an anchorite but a monk in Sinai, and Ioasaph also becomes a monk in Sinai. The title of the text Λόγος ἐκ τοῦ ὁσίου πατρὸς ἡμῶν Βαρλαάμ, ὃς εἰσηλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ βασιλέως τοῦ Πυθαγόρα καὶ ἔλαβεν τὸν υἱόν του τὸν Ἰωσαφάτ εἰς ἄσκησιν ἐν τῷ ὄρει τῷ Σινῶ (p. 436.1-3) means that the whole legend is put in Barlaam's mouth. This feature may be very old and even going back to the archetypal earliest Christian recension, because it has an exact parallel in the title of the short Georgian version, "Wisdom of Balahvar".

¹⁵ Despite the view shared by Kekelidze, Abuladze and Lang that the short recension is an abridgment of the Georgian archetype of the long recension (cf. АБУЛАДЗЕ, *Происхождение и история «Балавариани»*..., p. XIX-XXVI). This view was first challenged by M. TARCHNISVILI, *Les deux recensions du "Barlaam" géorgien*, in: *Le Muséon* 71 (1958) 65-86, who insisted on the mutual independency of the two Georgian recensions. The same conclusion see now in a recent van Esbroeck's study where the author says about the short Georgian version: "Ce dernier texte, moins christianisé, a très bien pu procéder d'un texte arabe différent de celui de la version géorgienne longue" (VAN ESBRÖECK 1993, p. 241).

¹⁶ Inmaculada PÉREZ MARTÍN, *Apuntes sobre la historia del texto bizantino de la Historia edificante de Barlaam y Josafat*, in: *Erytheia* 17 (1996) 159-177, esp. 175.

The fact of alteration of an earlier Greek recension is obvious only for the unique detail of the present text: displacement of the alleged author and the principal characters to Sinai. All other versions place the “desert” of the romance somewhere in “India”, and the author of the earliest written recension to Palestine.

Despite the lack of any information on the author, it is difficult not to see a Sinaitic origin of this version. As to the possible Latin intermediary translation, it would be rather natural given the continuous Latin presence in Sinai and, then, the process of moving of the Byzantine hagiographic legends to the West in the epoch of crusaders. Some Byzantine legends are available to us only through these Latin versions.¹⁷

Unfortunately, this recension, known in the unique manuscript, contains a huge lacuna before the end (no less than one folio is lost). Therefore, a detailed comparison with other recensions is impossible. The preserved part (about three pages of Volk’s edition) is enough, however, to become sure that we are in presence of a recension of our romance, not of any other legend.

An especially marked peculiarity of this recension is the name of the king, father of Ioasaph, Pythagoras. Probably, this is a symbolic name of the heathen wisdom fighting with the true wisdom of the Christianity, an allusion to the Pythagoreans. In fact, the most of the preserved part of the short Greek version is a discussion with the king, who is himself (unlike all other recensions of the romance) the main representative of the heathen wisdom. The choice of the name for him is clearly justified by the contents. In the Ethiopian version we will see another proof that the name of the king in our legend is not an invariant.

The existence of a pre-Sinaitic, that is, Palestinian *Vorlage* of the short Greek recension is out of doubt (because of the Palestinian origin of all other known recensions), but it is also clear that it is not the long Greek recension. It seems that there was an old Greek recension, even shorter than the short Georgian one, which became the *Vorlage* of the known Sinaitic short Greek recension.

The peculiarities of the Sinaitic recension (other than moving the characters to Sinai) are easily explainable admitting that they belong to

¹⁷ VOLK 2006, p. 148.

¹⁸ Ср. В. М. ЛУРЬЕ, *Александр Великий — «последний римский царь»*. К истории эсхатологических концепций в эпоху Ираклия [B. LOURIÉ, *Alexander the Great, the Last Roman Emperor. Toward the history of the eschatological concepts in the epoch of Heraclius*], in: *Византинороссика / Byzantinorossica* 2 (2003) 121-149.

an earlier stage of development of the text, even earlier than the long Greek and both Georgian recensions. The opposite view, that the short Greek recension is derived from the long Greek one, needs to be demonstrated by finding out the milieu where such changes would make sense. Moreover, the straightforward opposition between the Christian wisdom of Barlaam and the heathen wisdom of "Pythagoras" has the clearest parallel in the short Georgian recension and was becoming shadowed in the later recensions.

Dealing with the hagiographical legends, we have to keep in mind that our texts are those which were defined by Hippolyte Delehaye as "des textes perpétuellement rajeunis".¹⁹ This *rajeunissement* is an uneven process, and so, it is easy possible that some older details are preserved in more recent recensions (in the same manner as some older recensions can be preserved in more recent manuscripts).²⁰

Running a bit ahead, we should add that the short Greek recension is an important (while not decisive) argument for Greek as the language of the archetypal recension of our romance.

1.3. Christian Arabic/Ethiopic recension(s)

The Ethiopian version seems to be closer to the long Greek recension than to the two Georgian ones (while, of course, without explicit dyophysite Christology and quotes from John Damascene). It is not ancient itself, being a work of a great Ethiopian scholar and translator of Yemeni origin, Enbaqom, in 1553.²¹ But its Arabic original (produced, according to the colophon of one Ethiopian manuscript, by some Bar-Şaumā ibn Abū l-Faraj), that seems to be lost, is certainly worthy of attention. It was adapted from Greek, but not in the way of a mere translation and shortening of the long Greek recension. It contains some important details unknown in other versions.

Among these details, the most remarkable is the name of the king, father of Ioasaph: Wädagos in the initial part of the romance (*e. g.*, vol. I, p. 4 / vol. II, p. 5), while then, in the rest of the romance, he is called by

¹⁹ H. DELEHAYE, *Les passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires*. Deuxième édition, revue et corrigée (Bruxelles, 1966) (*Subsidia hagiographica*, 13 B) 260-270.

²⁰ An interesting detail that may be ancient: after the birth of Ioasaph, his mother Philippa saw a prophetic dream where an eagle with golden wings grasped her child (p. 439.91-92). Compare the early Christian symbolism of Phoenix (depicted as eagle or peacock or pigeon, often with a cross above his head) as a symbol of resurrection or of Christ himself, very important for the Nubian Christian art (see below about the Nubian roots of our romance). Cf.: Adriana BELLUCCIO, *Le Phénix dans la Nubie chrétienne*, in: *Nubia. Internationales Jahrbuch für Aethiopische, Meroitische und Nubische Studien* 1-2 (1987-1988) 475-497.

the usual derivatives of “Abenner”. “Wādagos” is a Greek adaptation (by adding the ending *-os*) of the Iranian name Wadag/Ödag, known in the Zoroastrian mythology (where it is the name of a feminine demon). This name goes *en pendant* with another Iranian name of our romance belonging to a nobleman of the king, Zardan (Greek and Ethiopic) or Zandan (Georgian short) or Zadan (Georgian long), whose Iranian origin is obvious (even if the genuine form is obscure). The peculiar name of the king in the Ethiopian version is sufficient proof that its Arabic original goes back (at least, partially) to a Greek *Vorlage* otherwise unknown which preserved some old literary stuff of non-Christian origin.²²

We will use the Ethiopic version as an evidence independent from the available Greek recension. Oddly enough, since Zotenberg 120 years ago,²³ nobody has taken the Ethiopic version into account when dealing with Georgian and Greek texts.

1.4. Other versions

As to the other medieval versions, such as Slavonic, Armenian, and two Latin, they are translated directly from the long Greek recension.²⁴

²¹ On this version, see now, first of all, a comprehensive article by Stefan WENINGER, *Bārālam wāyāwasāf*, in: S. UHLIG, ed. *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*. Vol. I (Wiesbaden, 2003) 472-473. Edition and English translation: E. A. Wallis BUDGE, *Baralām and Yēwāsēf, being the Ethiopic version of a Christianized recension of the Buddhist legend of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva. The Ethiopic Text edited for the first time with an English Translation and Introduction, etc.* 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1923) [reprint: New York—Amsterdam, 1976]; thereafter referred to by the page numbers only (vol. I corresponds to the Ethiopic text, vol. II to the English translation).

²² The value of this observation is not to be exaggerated. The Ethiopic version is going along with the long Greek one where the latter (in its ch. 12) is, most probably, declined from the original sense preserved in the long Georgian one. As Simon Qaukhchishvili observed, the Greek phrase (where the “illusion and deception of the wickedness of the world” is meant) “To-day it tickleth their gullet with pleasant dainties; to-morrow it maketh them nought but a gobbet for their enemies (ἐχθροῖς)” (p. 126.200-202, with a reference to the parallel in the “Balavariani”) seems to be a misreading of the Georgian abbreviated word with the meaning “worms” (მატლთა read as მტერთა). Cf. ХИНТИБИДЗЕ, *Грузинско-византийские литературные взаимоотношения...* p. 251; VAN ESBROECK 1993, p. 238. In the Ethiopic version, we have the reading of the Greek one: “to-day it inclineth favourably to their desires, and causeth to enjoy food, and to-morrow it will put them as food to their enemy” (vol. I, p. 70 / vol. II, p. 81). I correct Budge’s translation that is here not exact, having “will arrange” (omitting the pronominal suffix) instead of “will put them”.

²³ H. ZOTENBERG, *Notice sur le texte et sur les versions orientales du livre de Barlaam et Joasaph*, in: *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale* 28.1 (1887) 1-166.

²⁴ Probably, the earliest Latin version, *BHL* 979b, translated in 1048, needs a more detailed study (J. MARTÍNEZ GÁZQUEZ, *Hystoria Barlae et Iosaphat (Bibl. Nacional de Nápoles VIII.B.10). Estudio y edición* (Madrid 1997) (Col. Nueva Roma, 5). VOLK 2006,

Then, as usually, vernacular European versions were translated from Latin, and the mediaeval Romanian version was translated from Slavonic.²⁵ All these versions are of secondary value, and so, will be not dealt with here.

It is not to be *a priori* excluded that some of these versions preserve an ancient stuff going back to the recensions previous to the long Greek one. However, such features are not seen at first glance, and so, to avoid the discussion of the secondary versions would be a reasonable approximation for now.

I am deliberately not mentioning the so-called non-Christian "recensions" here. From the hagiographical point of view, they are not "recensions" at all, not being pieces of the Christian hagiography. We have not to forget that we are interested in our romance as a work of hagiography and not as a work of literary fiction.

1.5. List of independent recensions for the further study

The problem of the priority of Greek, Georgian or Arabic for our Christian romance is not resolved, but, fortunately, irrelevant to our main purpose. In the 7th century Palestine, which is the most likely *Sitz im Leben* of the archetypal recension of our romance,²⁶ all these languages were theoretically acceptable for the hagiographic composition.

p. 146, points out, in this version, a mention of the cult of Osiris in addition to the known Greek text. This may be a simple coincidence, but the cult of Osiris would be especially at place in Nubia...

²⁵ CPG 8120. See the bibliographical information on most of these versions in the corresponding entries in: CPG III (1979), *CPG Supplementum I* (1998), CPG IIIA (2003). To add for the Slavonic version: И. Н. ЛЕБЕДЕВА, *Словуказатель к тексту «Повести о Варлааме и Иоасафе»*, памятника древнерусской переводной литературы XI-XII вв. [I. N. LEBEDEVA, *A Word Index to the text of the "Story on Barlaam and Ioasaph"*, a monument of the Old Russian literature of translation of the 11th-12th cent.] (Leningrad, 1988). Romanian version (critical edition by Dan Horia MAZILU, *Varlaam și Ioasaf : Istoria unei cărți* (București, 1981)) is not mentioned in CPG at all.

²⁶ Cf. especially VAN ESBROECK 1993, p. 239 *et passim*, who revisited here some intuitions from the pioneering work of Zotenberg. As to the date of the archetypal recension, I would like to add some parallels with the 7th century Christian monastic literature insisting on the monasticism as if it is the only normal Christian style of life. The most known literary work of this tendency is, of course, *The Ladder* of John Climacus (7th cent.), but the most important to us is, very probably, John of Karpathos, *Capita hortatoria ad monachos in India* (CPG 7855; cf. its continuation, CPG 7856, *Capita theologica et gnostica*, so-called second centuria), known in both Greek original and unpublished Arabic version. The author lived somewhere in Palestine or Sinai in an imprecise period somewhere in the 5th or 6th centuries or a bit later. However, it is most likely that his correspondents from "India" were inhabitants of Nubia and Ethiopia. In fact, we do know about the Christian monasticism in these lands in this epoch, but we know nothing about anything like this in Asian India. The insistence of John of Karpathos

So, our most important evidence for the lost earliest recension of the romance are two Georgian and two Greek recensions and, sometimes, also the Ethiopic one (unfortunately, we have no direct access to the unpublished Christian Arabic version). All of them are going to the common ultimate source in different ways, and so, all of them may contain some elements belonging to the archetypal recension of our romance. It is generally irrelevant to our purpose to know in what language (Greek, Georgian or Arabic) the archetypal recension was written, while we will probably add some observations favourable to the hypothesis that it was Greek (we will return to this question in a short note below, §3.2.3).

It is hagiography that will be in the focus of the present study. Its main question is: what *hagiographical*, that is, cultic meaning has had the romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph in its original form.

2. Hagiographic frame and literary stuffing

Barlaam and Ioasaph is a *roman hagiographique*. This term coined by Hippolyte Delehaye²⁷ points out that this is a work of both literary fiction and hagiographic (cultic) importance and, as such, has to be approached from both sides.

As a literary fiction, the romance of Barlaam and Ioasaph has a plot, more or less invariable in different recensions and having much in common with the Life of Buddha (this similarity was first noticed no later than in 1446 by an anonymous Venetian librarian working on the book

on the preeminence of the monastic way of Christian life is remarkable and comparable to that of our romance. It is interesting to study whether the monastic milieu of “India” dealt with in our romance can be identified with the addressees of John of Karpachos. It is not to exclude that the anonymous *Ἱστορία τῆς γεννήσεως καὶ ἀνατροφῆς τοῦ Μοάμεθ* (published in a late recension on the unique ms of the 17th cent.) has an archetype of the 7th century. Cf.: A. DELATTE, *Anecdota Atheniensia*. T. I. *Textes grecs inédits relatifs à l’histoire des religions* (Liège—Paris, 1927) (*Bibliothèque de la Faculté de philosophie et lettres de l’Université de Liège*, 36) 333–357. One of the archaic features here is the definition of the linguistic competence of the unlucky missionary to the Arabians, monk Gerasimos: πολλὰ σοφὸς εἰς ῥωμανικά [= Greek], ἰνδικά [= sc., Arabic, while ἀραπικήν γλῶσσαν is explicitly mentioned below, p. 344.20–21] τε καὶ συριακά (p. 340.6–7). Such a constellation of languages fits perfectly the situation in the Arabian Peninsula and its neighbourhood in the 7th century, when Syriac was still the second *lingua franca* in the Christian Orient. The Arabians rejected Christianity, according to this text, because they were unable to accept that the virginity is the best way of life (p. 340–341). Thus, they acted in an exactly opposite way to the behaviour of the “Indians” of our romance.

²⁷ DELEHAYE, *Les passions des martyrs et les genres littéraires*, p. 227–230.

of Marco Polo²⁸). Moreover, the romance contains many parables and citations from other literary works partially varying from one recension to another and, of course, known from other literary sources. A great amount of such parables are also ultimately of Indian origin while are known in the Muslim (Arabic,²⁹ Persian and Turkic³⁰) and Manichean (Old Turkic³¹ and Middle Persian³²) literary works as well.

The Manichean tradition as a channel connecting India to Muslim and Christian worlds has been supposed by Henning.³³ Such a channel would be especially helpful, as David Lang noticed, for some ascetic ideas that our romance has in common with the Buddhist literature³⁴. However, it seems to be too narrow for the bulk of parables. Let us recall that the 7th century was the time when Indian folktales overloaded the Middle East, in the form of collections such as *Kalilah and Dimnah* going back to the Indian *Pañcatantra* translated from Sanskrit into Middle Persian (Pahlavi) by the vizier of Khosrau I, Bozorgmehr in about 570 and having common pieces with our romance.

As a hagiographic document, our romance has quite different parameters that merit to be studied on their own. Indeed, the romance has been approached many times by various eminent students of hagiography, in-

²⁸ See now the most detailed account on this finding in VOLK 2006, p. 158-160.

²⁹ Cf. GIMARET, *Le livre de Bilawhar et Būdāsf...*

³⁰ On these, see ultimately: Jalil NOZARI, *Belavhar va Buzasf: Introducing a recently-published Persian version by a Turkish writer from Tabriz*. Paper presented at the "Second International Congress on Turkic Civilization", Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University, October 4-6, 2004, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (unpublished paper distributed on the congress). I am grateful to my colleague Pavel Lurje for providing me this paper.

³¹ A. VON LE COQ, *Ein christliches und ein manichäisches Manuscriptfragment in türkischer Sprache aus Turfan (Chinesisch-Turkistan)*, in: *Sitzungsberichte d. kōnigl. Preuss. Akad. Wiss. Phil.-hist. Kl.* 33 (1909) 1202-1218, Taf. XIV-XV, esp. 1205, 1208-1211; W. RADLOFF, *Alttürkische Studien VI*, in: *Bulletin de l'Académie impériale des sciences de Saint-Pétersbourg*, 6^e série, 6 (1912) 747-778, esp. 751-753; S. VON OLDENBURG, *Nachtrag zu W. Radloff, Alttürkische Studien VI: Zu Barlaam und Joasaph*, in: *ibid.*, p. 779-782.

³² W. B. HENNING, *Die älteste persische Gedichthandschrift: eine neue Version von Barlaam und Joasaph*, in: H. FRANKE, hrsg. *Akten des Vierundzwanzigsten Internationalen Orientalisten-Kongresses. München 28. August bis 4. September 1957* (Wiesbaden, 1959) 305-307.

³³ HENNING, *Die älteste persische Gedichthandschrift...*, esp. p. 306, where he proposes a Sogdian Manichaean intermediary between the Indian (Sanskrit) Buddhist prototype and the later versions in Middle Persian and, then, Arabic. Henning was working on this in a close connection with David Lang. Cf. also: LANG, *The Life of the Blessed Iodasaph...*

³⁴ LANG, Introduction, p. XV-XVIII. Of course, I am not agreed with Lang in his treatment of the monastic rigor of our romance as influenced by the Manichaeism. If so, there is hardly anything "non-Manichaean" in the patristic ascetical and monastic teaching...

cluding no less than Paul Peeters³⁵ and Michel van Esbroeck, the Bollandists. Nevertheless, they left to us something to be continued.

First of all, the very notion of the hagiographic romance as a kind of hagiographical document has been rethought since Delehaye. Then, numerous and very important archaeological data shed new light on the Christian history of one of the regions called “India” in the ancient sources, namely, Nubia. The latter fact calls to retake a study of the geographical information from our romance.

Now, we start from the notion of the hagiographic romance.

Delehaye defined this genre as a kind of the *Passions épiques* where the cultic component is displaced by that of the entertainment and moralisation. This is, according to Delehaye and, after him, Peeters, a “wild field” where the hagiography is completely lost in the literature of fiction.³⁶ Nevertheless, it was Peeters who was the first to study the hagiographical romances as hagiographical documents of historical value, while still doing so without any theoretical ground.³⁷ Such a theoretical ground was underpinned by Michel van Esbroeck, although he himself, as it occurs sometimes, did not apply his own method to the story of Barlaam and Ioasaph.

As demonstrated van Esbroeck, the hagiographical romances are extremely helpful as the hagiographic explication of the cults related to the establishment of the Christianity (or some specific forms of Christianity, *e. g.*, those of the Council of Chalcedon or the *Henotikon* of Zeno) in a given region, country or empire.³⁸ This is certainly the major hagiographical theme of the *Barlaam and Ioasaph* — conversion of some kingdom called “India”. This fact alone is enough to take all the geographical data provided by our romance very seriously.

³⁵ Especially in: P. PEETERS, *La première traduction latine de «Barlaam et Joasaph» et son original grec*, in: *Analecta Bollandiana* 49 (1931) 276-312.

³⁶ Cf. notice by P. PEETERS on the memory of Barlaam under November 27 in: H. DELEHAYE *et al.* *Martyrologium Romanum ad formam editionis typicae scholiis historicis instructum* (Bruxellis, 1940) (*Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Decembris*) 551-552, esp. p. 551: *Libellus indicus, in erratica migratione qua ad varias gentes regionesque pervenit, nativam formam non gradatim mutavit, ita ut christianus quispiam eum in graecanico vel orientali habitu legens, peregrinum quoddam hagiographiae monasticae specimen prae manibus habere sibi videretur. Eius transfigurationem sola perfecit fraus pia, si haec pietas est, nimis litterati interpretis.*

³⁷ P. PEETERS, *La Passion de S. Michel le Sabaïte*, in: *Analecta Bollandiana* 48 (1930) 65-98; IDEM, *La légende de S. Orentius et de ses six frères martyrs*, in: *Analecta Bollandiana* 56 (1938) 241-264.

³⁸ M. VAN ES BROECK, *La Vision de Vakhtang Gorgasali et sa signification*, in: E. KHINTIBIDZE, ed. *Proceedings of the First International Symposium in Kartvelian Studies* (Tbilisi, 1988) 181-191; IDEM, *La portée politico-religieuse des visions pour la conversion des peuples*, in: *Revue de l'Institut Catholique de Paris* 53 (1995) 87-104.

By the way, van Esbroeck considered a "classical" example of the hagiographical romance from Delehay, the *Passion* of Eustathius Placida, whose plot is mainly borrowed in the *Aethiopica* of Heliodorus, as a Chalcedonian counterpart to the Georgian *Life* of the king Vakhtang Gorgasali, that is, a romance dealing with the choice of faith by Georgia. This is the best way to illustrate the fact that the closeness between the plots of our romance and of the *Life* of Buddha is relatively unimportant to perceive its hagiographical value.

Indeed, from the literary history standpoint, it is very important to know the exact sources of the literary fiction in the hagiographic legend. This is important not only to the history of literature but even to the critical hagiography, especially to know the *Sitz im Leben* of the document. However, this is of no value if we have to extract from the document its hagiographical message.

No wonder. After Delehay, we know the hagiographical value of the plots in the *Passions épiques*: they are quite arbitrary, that is, in reality, not arbitrary at all but quite hackneyed. But the latter is not a law. Some elegant plots that are already accessible can be used as well. As a result, we obtain such beautiful pieces of hagiography as the *Passion* of Eustathius Placida or our romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph.

Beside the plot, another important matter is the personal names.

The personal names in the *Passions épiques* are to be chosen from different reasons with only unique exception: they are certainly not obliged to coincide with those of the historical personalities. So, even if, in our romance, all the personal names are ultimately going to a Buddhist legend, this does not affect in any way its hagiographical message.

Not only various parables and other literary citations in our romance belong to its "literary stuffing", but also its plot and the personal names in it (the only possible exclusion is the name Pythagoras in the short Greek recension: it is clearly a symbol belonging to the hagiographical legend itself, not to its literary sources). Then, what belongs to its rigid "hagiographical frame"? — Of course, something that was less, if any, noticeable in the eyes of the historians of literature.

Dealing with the *Passions épiques*, while not especially with the hagiographical romances, Delehay has already answered this question. He coined, for these rigid elements, the term "hagiographical coordinates".³⁹ Roughly speaking, the hagiographical coordinate of place

³⁹ H. DELEHAYE, *Cinq leçons sur la méthode hagiographique* (Bruxelles, 1934) (*Subsidia hagiographica*, 21) (see especially Lesson I).

points out the main place of a given cult (*e. g.*, martyrism), and the hagiographical coordinate of time points out a day (or several days) of the liturgical calendar allotted to the specific commemoration(s) related to this cult.

As to the hagiographical romances, the notion of hagiographical coordinates is applicable to them, while not in so simple way as in the cases of the Passions considered by Delehayé.⁴⁰ In our romance, the sacred geography is nevertheless simple: there is only some “kingdom of India”, whatever it means, and a “desert” not otherwise specified (the sacred geography of the short Greek recension is, of course, different but later, and so, not of interest for us). The cultic setting of the romance is the commemoration of the conversion of this “India”. As to the coordinates of time, our case is not simple, while, I hope, still resolvable.

The search of the hagiographical coordinates in the romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph is the main goal of the present study.

2. Where the romance itself localises its “India”

Now we have to go deeper into the geographical realities of the different versions of our romance. First of all, we have to recollect what the versions explicitly say. Then, we should try to interpret their data.

3.1. *What the recensions say*

3.1.1. Long Georgian recension

The long Georgian version is the most reticent in the geographical matters: ქუეყანასა ჰინდოეთისასა, ადგილსა, რომელსა ჰრქჳან ბოლაიტი (p. 3.13-15: “in the country of India, in the land called Bolaiti [= Bolayt]⁴¹”). The same country is mentioned once more in another place (p. 167.27) as შოლაიტი “Sholaiti [= Sholayt]”. The long version is known in the unique manuscript, which prevents us to decide what reading is genuine if we limit ourselves to judging from the text of this version only.

⁴⁰ I deal with this at length in: В. ЛУРЬЕ, *Критическая агиография*. Часть I [B. LOURIÉ, *Critical Hagiography*. Part I] (St Petersburg, forthcoming).

⁴¹ The last *-i* in “Bolaiti” is the marker of Nominative in Georgian. It can be omitted in transliteration of the Georgian proper names. The forms without this marker, ending by the consonant, are those of Predicative; we will encounter them in the short version. The first *i* in “Bolaiti” should be read as non syllable-building, that is, as *y*. So, the toponym is to be read as “Bolayt”. In the short version, we will see spellings with the special Old Georgian letter for *y* (non syllable-building *i*), *ye* *ღ*, whose usage was optional.

In fact, both readings are almost identical in the handwriting of the most Georgian mediaeval manuscripts, *nusxuri*, where the letters *bani* ბ and *shini* შ are hardly distinguishable from each other. Compare *y* and *y*, and, correspondingly, *ყაითე* [Bolaiti] and *ყაითე* [Sholaiti].

3.1.2. Short Georgian recension

The short Georgian version is known from many late manuscripts of the 18th century and two old manuscripts, one fragmentary of the 12th-13th centuries and another one complete of the 13th-14th centuries. It contains the same phrase as we have just quoted according to the long version. This is the only place where this version mentions the name of the country. In different manuscripts, it is read as either “Bolayt” or “Sholayt”. So, according to the manuscripts used in the critical edition, we have the following spellings (p. 3.15 and note 6): შოლატ (Sholayt — thus the majority of the mss including both most ancient), ბოლატ (Bolayt — one ms), ბოლატ (Bolayt — one ms). The majority of the manuscripts of the short version together with one reading of the long version certainly opt for “Sholayt”. This is why the editor of the Georgian version, Ilia Abuladze, made this reading almost “canonical”. However, there is no textological reason to reject the possibility that the genuine reading is “Bolayt”.

It is enough for the moment to state that the country is named either “Sholayt” or “Bolayt”. We have to return to this question below.

The short version contains, moreover, a piece of geographical importance in its very short preface. Here, the author makes reference to his narrator, “Father Isaac, [spiritual] son of Sophronius of Palestine”.⁴² Then, he continues in the name of Fr Isaac: მივიწიე ოდესმე იოპელ და მუნ ვპოვე წიგნი ესე ჰინდოთა საწიგნისა... David Lang’s translation⁴³ here literal: “Once I reached Joppa [იოპელ in all mss, Georgian იოპე corresponds to Greek Ἰόππη] and there, in Indian book-stacks, I found this book...”). The Georgian scholarly consensus, unlike David Lang (and M. van Esbroeck⁴⁴), considers “Joppa” as a corruption of “Ethiopia” (ეთიოპია). Oddly enough, Ilia Abuladze excluded this toponym at all from the Index of place names in his critical edition of

⁴² This information is not necessarily at odds with the long Greek recension indicating as the author of the romance some John of Mar Sabas. See, on the possibility that this information is true but pertains to the short Georgian recension (its original) only, VAN ESBROECK 1993, p. 239.

⁴³ D. M. LANG, *The Wisdom of Balahvar: A Christian Legend of the Buddha* (London—N. Y., 1957) (*Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West*, 20).

⁴⁴ VAN ESBROECK 1993, p. 237.

1957 (p. 217). Then, in 1962, he reprinted the conjecture reading “Ethiopia” proposed by Ivané Dzhavakhishvili in 1899 in his Russian translation of the *editio princeps* of the short version published by Evktime T’aqashvili in 1895.⁴⁵ This conjecture was obviously influenced by the Greek version (see below). We will return to this conjecture in §3.2.1.

3.1.3. Long Greek recension

The Greek recension explains at length what “India” is. No doubt, it is India in our modern sense, because the author attributes the initial Christian presence in our “India” to Apostle Thomas. The Ethiopic version is close to the Greek one here.

For this author, our romance deals with the second conversion of “India”, already converted several centuries ago but became pagan once more under the reign of Abenner (in Ethiopic, Wādagos), father of Ioasaph. This is clearly at odds with both Georgian versions where the unique conversion of “India” is meant and no trace of Apostle Thomas (or any other apostle) is perceivable.

In the Greek recension, however, the identification of our “India” with “Ethiopia” occurs. The most important is the description of the geographical location: “The country of the Indians, as it is called, is vast and populous, lying far beyond Egypt (πύρρῳ μὲν διάκειται τῆς Αἰγύπτου). On the side of Egypt it is washed by seas and navigable gulfs, but on the mainland it marcheth with the borders of Persia (ἐκ δὲ τῆς ἡπείρου προσεγγίζει τοῖς ὁρίοις Περσίδος)” (ch. 1, p. 8.1-4).⁴⁶ The common border with Persia on the mainland is certainly a mark of India in the Indian Ocean, but it is difficult to explain what the need is to describe this India in relation to Egypt and what their alleged common maritime border is.

In fact, in our quotation, two “Indias” are confounded. It is “India-Ethiopia” that could be described as “lying far beyond Egypt” and as having navigable seas and gulfs “on the side of Egypt”, that is, on the normal maritime way from Egypt to Nubia and Ethiopia.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Балавариани. *Мудрость Балавара*. Предисловие и редакция И. В. АБУЛАДЗЕ (Tbilisi, 1962) (*Памятники древнегрузинской литературы*) 115.

⁴⁶ The English translation of the long Greek recension that I quote is always that of WOODWARD, MATTINGLY, [St. John Damascene] *Barlaam and Ioasaph*.

⁴⁷ Alexander Kazhdan was thinking in the right direction when interpreting the localisation of our “India” as an indication to Ethiopia (while he was not so right when implying the identification of this “Ethiopia” with Aksum): A. KAZHDAN, *Where, When and by Whom was the Greek Barlaam and Ioasaph not Written*, in: W. WILL unter Mitarbeit von

The lands lying to the South of Egypt (Nubia and Ethiopia and, sometimes, even further, up to the end of the South "climate") are very often called by both names, "Ethiopia" and "India", while India in the Indian Ocean was normally not called "Ethiopia".⁴⁸

Another important place is the title of the Greek version: "An edifying story from the inner land of the Ethiopians called the land of the Indians (ἐκ τῆς ἐνδοτέρας τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν χώρας, τῆς Ἰνδῶν λεγομένης)..." (p. 5.1). Here it is clear that "India-Ethiopia" is meant.

Therefore, the Greek version's geography is misleading. It confounds two different "Indias" of the ancient world. Such a confounding of two "Indias" is not unknown in the early Christian literature.⁴⁹ The most important and the most influential text is Pseudo-Palladius, *De gentibus Indiae et Bragmanibus* (CPG 6038),⁵⁰ partially included in the recension γ of the *Romance on Alexander*.⁵¹ Pseudo-Palladius' geography is quite precise: he places his Brahmins in "India" identified with "Ethiopia" and describes his way to Aksum, the capital city of his "India", through the harbour of Adulis. He mentions, moreover, bishop Moses τῶν Ἀδουληνῶν.⁵²

Especially interesting to us is the toponymics of the *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (the lost Greek text of the middle of the 4th century known in the Latin version only), where Nubia is called "India minor",

J. HEINRICHS hrsg. *Zu Alexander d. Gr. Festschrift G. Wirth zum 60. Geburtstag am 9.12.86*. [II.] (Amsterdam, 1988) 1187-1209, esp. p. 1194.

⁴⁸ W. WOLSKA-CONUS, Introduction, in: W. WOLSKA-CONUS, Cosmas Indicopleustès, *Topographie chrétienne*. T. I (*Sources chrétiennes*, 141) 17. Cf. K. O'BWENG-OKWESS, *Les différentes acceptions des termes Aithiopia et Aithiopes dans la «Topographie Chrétienne» de Cosmas Indicopleustes*, in: *Journal of Oriental and African Studies* 3-4 (1991-1992) 157-161 (two main meanings, Aksum and the black world as a whole, that is, in no way India in Asia).

⁴⁹ Cf. Ph. MAYERSON, *A confusion of Indias. Asian India and African India in Byzantine sources*, in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 113 (1993) 169-174. Among the most known and most important for the hagiography examples is that of the Preface to the *Acta Bartholomaei*. Cf., in the parallel edition of the Greek and Latin recensions: R. A. LIPSIVS, M. BONNET, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*. II, 1 (Lipsiae, 1898) 128.

⁵⁰ Further on this text and its Latin recension known under the name of Ambrosius of Mailand see: William W.-K. MARESCHE, *The Encounter of Alexander with the Brahmins: New Fragments of the Cynic Diatribe P*. Genev. inv. 271, in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 74 (1988) 59-83, Taf. II.

⁵¹ G. Ch. HANSEN, *Alexander und die Brahmanen*, in: *Klio* 34-35 (1965) 351-380, especially on the influence of Pseudo-Palladius p. 366-380, on the confusion of India with Aksum p. 376-379.

⁵² Wilhelm BERGHOF, Palladius, *De gentibus Indiae et Bragmanibus* (Meisenheim am Glan, 1967) (*Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie*. H. 24). See ch. I, 4 (p. 4.3-7) and I, 1 (p. 2.8-9).

India in Asia “India maior”, and “Exomia regio” (Aksum) is not called “India” at all.⁵³

It is interesting to encounter a similar terminology in a Coptic text, *Passion of Helias*, a martyr who lived in “India”, traveled to the place of his death in “Media” by the sea, and bequeathed to build his martyrion in Egypt.⁵⁴ This hagiographic dossier deserves a profound study, but so far, as it seems, its “India” is a neighbour to Egypt, that is, Nubia.

In the short Greek recension, there is no geographical information about the kingdom of the king Pythagoras.

3.1.4. Ethiopic recension

The Ethiopic version is even more interesting, while basically in agreement with the Greek one. “Now the country of India is very far from the land of Egypt, and it is a very large country, and the population thereof is very great, and rivers and great streams go round about through it, and men travel thither in ships from the country of Egypt; and the desert part of it lieth near the borders of Agam and Fârs” (vol. I, p. 2 / vol. II, p. 2-3). In the notes to his translation from Ethiopic, Budge quite correctly states that both “Agam” and “Fârs” are the Arabic names of Persia (العجم and الفارس, correspondingly) (vol. II, p. 3).

This fragment is certainly not a translation of the existing Greek version. It provides additional data showing that two Indias are confused in our romance. The Ethiopic version mentions explicitly the maritime way to our “India” from Egypt. This is certainly more meaningful than the alleged Egyptian frontier on the sea in the Greek version.

So, both Greek and Ethiopic recensions show that our romance is localised somewhere in that “India” that was also called “Ethiopia”, that is, in Ethiopia or Nubia according to our modern toponymics. The confusion of this “India” with that in the Indian Ocean is secondary.

3.2 What the Georgian versions means

Now it is time to return to the geographical indications of the Georgian versions. As it was already pointed out by Khintibidze, “India” in Old Georgian was used also as a translation of Greek Αἰθιοπία (for in-

⁵³ J. ROUGÉ, *Expositio totius mundi et gentium. Introduction, texte critique, traduction, notes et commentaire* (Paris, 1966) (*Sources chrétiennes*, 124), esp. p. 150-153, 219-230.

⁵⁴ G. P. G. SOBHY, *Le Martyre de Saint Hélias et l'Encomium de l'évêque Stéphane de Hnès sur Saint Hélias* (Le Caire, 1919) (*Bibliothèque d'Études Coptes*, I) 3, 57-58 (Coptic text) / 110 (French translation).

stance, in *Acts* 8:27 where “Ethiopia” means our “Nubia”).⁵⁵ Therefore, the Georgian texts dealing with “India” are in fact consistent with the Greek recension dealing with “Ethiopia”.

However, two problems remain. What do the mysterious “country Sholayt/Bolayt” and some Joppa localised in “India” mean in Georgian?

3.2.1. Joppa in India?

No doubts, it is tempting, together with the Georgian scholarly consensus, to “improve” the reading “Joppa” into “Ethiopia”. Unfortunately, this solution is not as easy as it may seem. Two place names differ not only by the presence or absence of the initial “Eth-”, but also by the ending. Compare two forms of the Adverbialis (the case used in our text): *ოპიდ* (“in Joppa”) and *ეთიოპიად* (“in Ethiopia”). Moreover, we have to take into account that the reading *ოპიდ* is present in all the manuscripts of the short version. Therefore, if it is a scribal error, it must go back to the earliest stages of the manuscript tradition.

I would prefer another explanation, namely, that this is not a scribal error, but a genuine reading of the Georgian text. I think that it is the Georgian author/translator who committed an error by misreading his Arabic source.

Normally, in the mediaeval Arabic texts, the toponym “Ethiopia” is rendered as *كوش* (Kūsh) or something like *ملك الحبشة* (“kingdom of al-Ḥabasha” = Abyssinia). Any transliteration of the Greek place name *Αἰθιοπία* (imaginable in such forms as *اثيروپيا* or *اثيروفيا*) would be not normal. In the same time, in such transliterations would be recognisable an Arabic rendering of the Greek name of Joppa (*Ἰόππη*), Yaffa (in the modern normative Arabic spelling *يافا*, but known in different spellings in the mediaeval manuscripts). This Palestinian town, even under its Greek name, was certainly known to the Palestinian author of the Georgian text. The exact Arabic transliteration of *Ἰόππη* would be *يوفي* or *يوبي*, but any combination with final *alef* and *ya* (such as *يوبا* or *يوقيا*) might be read in the same manner.

But the first syllable *-eth* before *i* might be read as an Imperfect form of the verb *أتي* “to arrive” (the placement of the diacritical dots in the mediaeval Arabic manuscripts was very often quite arbitrary, and so, a letter with three dots, *ta* *ث*, might be easily read as a letter with two dots, *ta* *ت*), whose meaning is close to that of the corresponding

⁵⁵ KHINTIBIDZE, *New Materials*..., p. 494-495. This is an old feature going back to the early Armenian translation school.

Georgian verb მიწევნა “to reach, to approach”. Thus, the Georgian translator might be able to read, “I reach Joppa” instead of “Ethiopia”. The final *i* of the 1st person of Imperfect (آتي) might be considered as merged with the initial *i* of the place name.

I am not daring to say what exactly might be stated in the Arabic source of the author responsible for this reading of the short Georgian version, but I do think that it contained “Ethiopia” where the Georgian author read, “I reached Joppa”.⁵⁶

I think therefore that the Georgian scholarly consensus is right: the reading “Joppa” is a corruption of “Ethiopia”. However, the origin of this corruption is not a scribal error at an early stage of the manuscript tradition, but an error of the author of the Georgian version. This error is of such kind that it betrays an existence of a source in Greek beyond the Arabic direct source of the Georgian version, because a transliteration from Greek of the place name “Ethiopia” is unlikely otherwise.

3.2.2. Sholayt or Bolayt?

The place name “Sholayt” was always interpreted in connection with the *Life of Buddha*, as a derivate of Kapilavastu, Buddha’s place of birth.⁵⁷ This identification seems to me more than doubtful.

Such a reconstruction presupposes a harsh corruption of the initial form. I mean “harsh” in the sense that it would exceed the “typical” corruptions between (that is, at the stage of translation) and within the corresponding languages. The “typical” corruptions are those that occur relatively often and depend on the features of the corresponding languages and their writing systems. Such corruptions are linguistically predicable and explicable. The others are not. *A priori*, during the transmission of the text, a “typical” corruption is more likely than a “harsh” one. Therefore, if some corruption may be explained as a “typical” one, this explanation is to be preferred to its “harsh” alternative.

I see no “normal” explanation for “Sholayt”, but I do see it for “Bolayt”.

The Georgian ბოლაიტი/ბოლაძტი would presuppose an Arabic form such as بولية or (less likely in view of the presence of the vowel *o* in

⁵⁶ It is difficult to imagine here a non-prepositional construction, because, in Arabic, it would be very unlikely to see here an *Accusativus loci* instead of a construction with the preposition في. In Greek, it is also difficult to imagine here a non-prepositional construction. However, any prepositional construction would be not normal before a personal form of the verb.

⁵⁷ Cf., among others, VAN ESBROECK 1993, p. 224.

Georgian) بلية. This corresponds quite well to the toponym Φίλαι (Philae). This is the name of the first important city of Nubia from the side of Egypt.⁵⁸

Φίλαι is the correct spelling; in Egyptian Greek the spellings like Φύλαι, Πύλαι, Πίλαι are equally possible.⁵⁹ The *waw* in Arabic would render the *ypsilon* in Greek (which would correspond to the spellings Φύλαι or Πύλαι).

The final *-t* in Georgian must reflect a consonant in Arabic, theoretically, either *-t* or *-tʔ*. But the latter possibility seems to make no sense, while the former leads to the form of a possessive adjective derived from the toponym Philae.

Definitively, we have to interpret the Georgian "Bolayt" as the correct reading whose meaning is "(the country) of Philae". This is just another indication of Nubia, and, this time, exactly Nubia rather than Aksum.

The attempts to see in "Sholayt" the name of the birthplace of Buddha are linguistically unfounded and inconsistent with the bulk of geographical information of the romance.

3.2.3. A note on the language of the archetypical recension

Our reconstructions of the original forms of two Georgian place names, Joppa and Sholayt/Bolayt, are consistent with the most common scheme in the history of the texts in Palestine: Greek → Arabic → Georgian. Of course, the archetypical recension, even if it was in Greek, was quite different from the long Greek recension and, on the contrary, may be relatively close to the short Greek recension.

All the reconstructed toponyms are relevant to the Christian romance itself, but not to its non-Christian sources. Therefore, all these reconstructions are the arguments favourable to the view that the archetypical recension of our romance was composed in Greek. The Georgian versions, in this case, are going back to the Greek archetype through some intermediaries in Arabic.

⁵⁸ See, on the religious role of Philae and the history of their Christianisation, a comprehensive study in Jitse H. F. DIJKSTRA, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion. A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298-642 CE)* (Leuven, 2008) (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 173).

⁵⁹ Because of the iotacism and disappearance of the phonological meaning of the aspiration. Both phenomena lead to the unconditional change of the corresponding letters. Cf. F. Th. GIGNAC, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*. Vol. I. *Phonology* (Milano, 1976) (*Testi e documenti per lo studio dell'Antichità*, LV [1]), esp. p. 90-95.

There is an urgent necessity to examine the Christian Arabic versions whose proliferation is basically responsible for the variety of the recensions known to us not only in Arabic and in Ethiopic, but, probably, even in Greek.

3.2.4. A note on John of St Sabas

The title of the long Greek recension states that it was πρὸς τὴν ἁγίαν πόλιν μετεχθεῖσα διὰ Ἰωάννου μοναχοῦ μονῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Σάβα (p. 5.2-3). After mutual annihilation of different attempts to identify this John with some otherwise known personage, M. van Esbroeck proposed to see here the same person as the author of a sermon on the day of the Finding of the relics of St Stephan known only in Georgian. The latter was published by Nicholas Marr in 1926 as an anonymous work, but M. van Esbroeck found out the indication of the author in another copy within a homiliary (*mravalt'avi*, lit. "polykephalaion") of the 9th century: თქუმული სიგარისა იოვანე საბანელისაჲ.⁶⁰ This attribution contains one word difficult to translate: "Sermon of *sip'ar* John Sabbaites". The word *sip'ar* is certainly either corruption of another Georgian word or loanword from a foreign language. In his article of 1980 M. van Esbroeck resorted to some conjectures, but in the article of 1993 he tried to translate this word from Arabic. I wholly support his latter decision, while disagree with him in some details.

M. van Esbroeck translates *sip'ar* as the *nomen agentis* from the stem II (Intensive) of the verb *sfr* with the meaning "to send" (*saffār*). He explains, moreover, the change of *a* to *i* in Georgian as a reflect of geminating of the second consonant (which, I must say, is far from being ordinary in the Georgian transliterations of the Arabic words). Therefore, he translates: "...le voyageur ou ambassadeur Jean de Saint-Sabas", concluding that "[i]l nous paraît difficile de ne pas rapprocher ce personnage du dignitaire vertueux qui ramena de l'Inde le récit de Barlaam".⁶¹

However, normally, the meaning *ambassadeur* is to be expressed by a derivate of the stem I, also having, among others, the meaning "to send": *سفير* (*safīr*). Moreover, there is another derivate of the stem I

⁶⁰ M. VAN ES BROECK, *Un Mravalthavi dans le palimpseste A-737*, in: *მრავალთავი [Mravalt'avi]* 7 (1980) 18-21.

⁶¹ VAN ES BROECK 1993, p. 239-240. Then, the author develops a hypothesis that this John could be even John of Damascus writing in Arabic (*ibid.*, p. 240-241). I would consider this view as somewhat excessive. The only thing, about which everybody has to be certain, is that there were many monks in St Sabas bearing the name John.

(having as well the meaning "to scribe"), سافر (*sāfir*), which may signify, in the same time, "scribe" and *voyageur*. The transposition of the vowels in Georgian *sip'ar* towards both *safir* and *sāfir* needs no, to its explanation, a supposition of the influence of geminating. Dealing with the derivatives of the stem I, we already have both *i* and *a*, which could easily be interchanged in the transliteration.

Therefore, it is more reasonable to consider *sip'ar* as rendering of either *safir* or *sāfir* and to translate this title of John Sabbaites as "ambassador", "scribe" or "traveler". I agree with M. van Esbroeck that he is a good candidate to be the same John as that who is mentioned in the long Greek recension.

3.2.5. Hagiographical coordinate of place is most probably Nubia

Now we can see that presence of both "Indias" is traceable in the oldest recensions of our romance. One of them, "India-Ethiopia", is present in the geographical indications only, while the presence of another India is consistent with the rich literary stuff of Indian origin. Therefore, the presence of "India-Ethiopia" is not explicable by the literature needs, while the presence of another India is.

All this looks as if someone responsible for the hagiographical legend (the archetypal form of our romance) has had, on the one hand, the scarcely data mostly limited to the hagiographical coordinates, and, on the other hand, a rich literary stuff mostly of Indian origin. Both seemed to him quite compatible because he, as many others in his time, confounded two "Indias". Therefore, he produced a hagiographical legend on "India-Ethiopia" using the literary stuff obtained from another India.

We have to define the coordinate of place of our legend as "India-Ethiopia". This is a too large region containing no less than four Christian kingdoms, three in Nubia (Nobatia, Makuria, Alodia) and one in Ethiopia (Aksum). Our further identification of "Bolayt" as "(the country) of Philae" moves us more closely to Nubia.

To verify these suppositions, now, we have to examine historical circumstances of conversions of these kingdoms to be able to precise our coordinate of place.

3.2 Why Makuria?

Our "India-Egypt" contains four kingdoms which became Christian sometime before the middle of the 7th century, when our romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph was written down in a quite different milieu, somewhere among the Chalcedonian monks in Palestine. The time lag

between the baptism of the corresponding kingdom and the date of the original recension of our romance (roughly, the first half or the middle of the 7th century) must be not too long and not too short. The event of the conversion of this kingdom must be still actual (that is, the kingdom must be considered as recently converted), but the eyewitnesses of the conversion already disappeared. This leads us to the 6th century as to the date of the conversion of the kingdom in issue, that, in turn, make us exclude Aksum from our list and leave only the three kingdoms of Nubia.

All the three kingdoms of Nubia were converted during the 6th century. However, Nobatia and Alodia became anti-Chalcedonian, while Makuria became Chalcedonian and heavily depending on Byzantium. Now it is clear especially from the recent archaeological diggings in Old Dongola (especially from the Church architecture and epigraphics which is always in Greek and contains even some liturgical elements of the Byzantine rite).⁶²

In the time of the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria John III (681—689) Makuria submitted to the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria (in this time, there was no Chalcedonian patriarch in Alexandria at all).⁶³ Then, even Nobadia accepted many elements of the Makurian-styled Byzantine culture (that the diggings in Faras show), but, most likely, without Byzantine faith.⁶⁴

⁶² See, first of all, the seminal article by M. KRAUSE, *Zur Kirchen- und Theologiegeschichte Nubiens*, in: E. Dinkler, hrsg. *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens im Christlichen Zeit. Ergebnisse und Probleme auf Grund der jüngsten Ausgrabungen* (Recklinghausen, 1970) 71-86 (see here also the bibliography of the earlier scholarship, in a great part outdated after the excavations conducted since 1960, from the start of building of the High Dam at Aswan). L. P. Kirwan then contested the view that Makuria was converted into Chalcedonism. See esp. L. P. KIRWAN, *Some Thoughts on the Conversion of Nubia to Christianity*, in: J. M. PLUMLEY, ed. *Nubian Studies. Proceedings of the Symposium for Nubian Studies, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1978* (Worminster, 1982) 142-145. However, all the objections were answered. Cf.: W. GODLEWSKI, *A New Approach to the Christianisation of Makuria: an Archaeological Note*, in: C. BERGER, G. CLERC, N. GRIMAL (éds.), *Hommages à Jean Leclant. Vol. 2. Nubia, Soudan, Éthiopie* (Le Caire, 1994) (IFAO. *Bibliothèque d'étude*, 106/2) 169-176. Cf. Also Przemysław M. GARTKIEWICZ, *The Cathedral in Old Dongola and its Antecedents* (Varsovie, 1990) (Nubia I. Dongola 2).

⁶³ See esp.: C. Detlef G. MÜLLER, *Stellung und Haltung der koptischen Patriarchen des 7. Jahrhunderts gegenüber islamischer Obrigkeit und Islam*, in: T. ORLANDI, F. WISSE, eds. *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Studies. Rome, 22-26 September 1980* (Rome, 1985) 203-213.

⁶⁴ G. VANTINI, *The Excavations at Faras: A Contribution to the History of Christian Nubia* (Bologna, 1970); cf. the final monograph by the late leading scholar of the Polish archaeological team: K. MICHAŁOWSKI, *Faras. Wall Paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw* (Warsaw, 1974). Cf. also: L. P. KIRWAN, *The Emergence of*

Unlike Makuria, both Nobatia and Alodia were converted during the same 6th century by the anti-Chalcedonian missions (Severianist mission to Nobatia and Julianist and, then, also Severianist mission to Alodia).

The archaeological findings from Nubia with their dating (mostly by the pottery) are in accord with the data of the literary sources. The anti-Chalcedonian historian John of Ephesus deals at length with Nobatia and Alodia, but only indirectly with Makuria. The direct information on the conversion of Makuria is available through the Spanish historian of the 6th century, John of Biclaro (bishop from 591 to 621).⁶⁵ This author, belonging before his consecration to the pro-Byzantine orthodox minority in Arian Spain, gives sometimes exclusive information on the events in Constantinople. Concerning Makuria, he writes as follows:

Under "Anno III Iustini Imp.": "Maccurritarum [*variae lectiones*: macuritarum, mauritarum]⁶⁶; in the parallel place of the *Chronica* of Isidorus of Sevilla: Mascuritae] gens his temporibus Christo fidem recepit" (ed. Mommsen, p. 212 = ed. Campos, p. 40).

Then, under "Anno VII Iustini Imp. qui est Leovegildi V annus": "Legati gentis Maccurritarum [*variae lectiones*: maccuritarum, macuritarum] Constantinopolim veniunt dentes elephantinos et camelopardam Iustino principi munera offerentes sibi cum Romanis amicitias collocant." (ed. Mommsen, p. 213 = ed. Campos, p. 95).

The year third of the reign of Justin II is 567/568, but the editors date the first communication as "AD 569?" (thus Mommsen; Campos ac-

the United Kingdom of Nubia, in: *Sudan Notes and Records* 61 (1980) 134-139. There was a discussion about the possibility of the Chalcedonian bishopric in Faras. Probably, it will be reopened in future, but so far, I consider as definitive the contribution by M. KRAUSE, *Bischof Johannes III von Faras und seine beiden Nachfolger. Noch einmal zum Problem eines Konfessionswechsels in Faras*, in: *Études Nubiennes. Colloque de Chantilly 2-6 juillet 1975* (Le Caire, 1978) (IFAO. Bibliothèque d'étude, 77) 153-164. I have no access to the volume published by the British Museum: W. V. Davies, ed. *Egypt and Africa: Nubia from Prehistory to Islam* (London, 1991).

⁶⁵ Julio CAMPOS, *Juan de Biclaro, obispo de Gerona. Su vida y su obra. Introducción, texto crítico y comentarios* (Madrid, 1960) (*Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Escuela de Estudios medievales, Estudios*. Vol. XXXV). This critical text is almost the same as that of the previous edition by Th. Mommsen: *Iohannis abbatis monasterii Biclarenensis Chronica*, in: Th. MOMMSEN, *Chronica minora. Saec. IV, V, VI, VII. Vol. II* (Berolini, 1894) (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Auctorum Antiquissimi tomus XI*).

⁶⁶ This reading of some mss (while considered by both editors as non-authentic) is consistent with Mommsen's (and, after him, Campos') explanation of the whole lemma as "videntur intelligi Μακκοῦραι Mauretaniae Caesariensis (Ptolem. 4, 2, 19)" (ed. Mommsen, p. 212, note ad l.7; ed. Campos, p. 79). However, both Mommsen and Campos were unaware of the Church history of Nubia, and there is nothing especially important in the Christian history of Mauritania in the same epoch. Therefore, the ethnonym is to be taken in its common meaning "people of Makuria".

cepts this chronology as certain) because, according to the same chronicle, this is the first year of Leovegildus, 569. Then, the date of the Makurian embassy to Justin in Constantinople is, according to Mommensen, “AD 573?” We have to return to the problem of the exact chronology later (§4.4).

What kind of Christianisation is meant in our romance, Chalcedonian or anti-Chalcedonian one? The known Greek recension is explicitly Chalcedonian, but other independent recensions (two Georgian and Ethiopian ones) are compatible with both Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian views. For lack of internal evidence, we have to turn to the external evidence of the text tradition.

If our romance is composed by some monk John of Mar Sabas, it is certainly Chalcedonian and, if so, dealing with the Chalcedonian conversion of Makuria. But, in any way, the whole text tradition testifies the same. The romance is known mostly in the Chalcedonian milieu, and it found its way to the anti-Chalcedonian tradition through the Arabic translations only. Not one trace of the romance is known in either Syriac or Coptic: only some parables introduced into our romance are known also in Syriac-speaking⁶⁷ and Coptic-speaking⁶⁸ realms. The latter fact illustrates only the level of availability of the literary stuff used by the composer of our romance.

We come to conclusion that Makuria is the only candidate to be the Christian kingdom within our “India-Ethiopia” that is meant in the romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph. That is, Makuria is the hagiographical coordinate of place of the corresponding hagiographical legend.

4. The romance and its liturgical calendar

Oddly enough, in the present recensions of our romance there is no date of liturgical commemoration, while several occasions to indicate

⁶⁷ A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Deux paraboles syriaques. (Roman de «Barlaam et Josaphat»)*, in: *Le Muséon* 79 (1966) 133-154.

⁶⁸ The parable on mouse and tree is testified by a Coptic tissue: А. Я. КАКОВКИН, *Коптская ткань с изображением притчи из «Повести о Варлааме и Иоасафе»* [A. Ya. KAKOVKIN, *A Coptic tissue with an illustration to a parable from the “Story on Barlaam and Ioasaph”*], in: *Византийский временник* 59 (84) (2000) 222-225. Cf. also A. VILLECOURT, *Une même parable commune aux Apophtegmes des Pères et à Calila et Dimna*, in: *Le Muséon* 36 (1923) 243-248: Villecourt considered the remarkable closeness of the two relatively long texts as the result of the closeness between their corresponding folklore sources, Egyptian and Iranian. According to Peeters, such a great extent of closeness makes us to pose a question about the borrowing. “Je suis heureux, he concluded, de n’avoir pas à essayer ici, par l’amour de l’art, une solution de ce problème” (P. PEETERS, *Orient et Byzance. Le tréfonds oriental de l’hagiographie byzantine* (Bruxelles, 1950) (*Subsidia hagiographica*, 26) 42).

the date occur. Such are, at least, three deaths of the three principal characters of the romance (Ioasaph, Barlaam and king Abenner). Romance contains, moreover, one even more significant date, that of the birth of Ioasaph. In all the recensions it is described as a great feast accompanied by the predications of the astrologers that the newborn will be a great king, but (as the wisest astrologer said) not of this world. This is a picture patterned after no less than the gospel. Ioasaph is presented as a great messianic figure since his birth. Judging from the agreement in this point of all the recensions, this is the most important liturgical date of the romance. There are three other dates, those of the deaths of the main characters, but they are of relatively less importance.

The four dates together look as some liturgical cycle, but, however, no precision of day and month occur. It is possible that, even in the archetypical recension, such precisions were outside the main text (*e. g.*, in the title) or even outside the text at all, that is, in the calendars only. Let us recall that any given hagiographic work is a part of the documentation of the corresponding cult, but not the complete dossier.

In the liturgical calendars we have a great variety of dates related to the characters of the *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, mostly reviewed by Paul Peeters in his entry in the *Acta Sanctorum*.⁶⁹ They are presented as memories of either one or several from the three main personages of the romance.

There are, in the calendars, several dates in November, several in August, and several in May.

It is clear, that the November dates mentioning Barlaam are sometimes coinciding with the memory of the martyr Barlaam of Antioch (in the modern Byzantine rite November 19, but somewhat different November dates occur in the synaxaries as well), and so, such dates seem to be of late origin and not genuine. The memory of our Barlaam in November may be completely or, at least, in a great extent a consequence of the presence of an earlier memory of Barlaam of Antioch in the same month.

There is a number of the August dates in both Byzantine and Armenian rites, mostly specified as the memory of Ioasaph. Some of them may be genuine, but presently I am unable to deal with them, given a very complicated history of the Palestinian liturgical calendar for August. Liturgical memories of Wisdom/Sophia under different names were peculiar to this month. Our romance, too, is in the line of the Sophia symbolism. This fact is especially known because of the title of

⁶⁹ DELEHAYE *et al.* *Martyrologium Romanus...*, p. 552.

the short Georgian version სიბრძნე ბალაჰვარისი (“Wisdom of Balahvar”) and the theme of the Christian wisdom revealed by Barlaam to Ioasaph as a precious pearl (the symbolism of the pearl throughout the Christian Orient was implying Christ).

Here we will limit ourselves to the May dates, also connected to the memory of the personified Wisdom and, after all, the most important for the whole liturgical cycle to which the archetypical recension of our romance was related.

We will start from what the calendars say to be able to go to what the calendars mean.

4.1. *What the calendars say*

The earliest data of the memory of Ioasaph is provided by some old (11th century) Georgian hymnographical collections (*iadgari*, a liturgical book similar or identical to the Byzantine *menaeon*). It is May 19.⁷⁰ This is the oldest memory related to our romance that we know.

A priori it would seem reasonable to look for this memory in the Palestinian Georgian calendar of John Zosimos.⁷¹ This calendar is composed in the third quarter of the 10th century with a rather scholarly than practical purpose: it collects different, sometime contradicting, calendrical traditions available to the author. Nevertheless, it is the most detailed source on the Palestinian calendars of the pre-Islamic and early Islamic times, even if it is certainly not exhausting. It is much more detailed than the calendar data of the Georgian Jerusalem Lectionary, which covers the Jerusalem liturgy approximately from 450 to 750, but only in its greatest assemblies.

Here, in the calendar of John Zosimos, we find on the May, 19 not the memory of Ioasaph (unknown to that calendar at all), but the memory of some elsewhere unattested martyr Sophinos (სოფინოზ [Sop'inoz]).⁷²

Garitte was skeptical as to identification of this martyr with “Sophia the Healer” (Σοφία ἰατρίνη) mentioned in the Synaxary of Constanti-

⁷⁰ On these collections in relation with the memory of Ioasaph on May 19, see now (with the complete previous bibliography): Hélène MÉTRÉVELL, *Du nouveau sur l'Hymne de Joasaph*, in: *Le Muséon* 100 (1987) 251-258.

⁷¹ The edition, together with a detailed study: G. GARITTE, *Le calendrier palestino-géorgien du Sinaiticus 34 (X^e siècle)*. Édité, traduit et commenté (Bruxelles, 1958) (*Subsidia hagiographica*, 30) [thereafter: GARITTE].

⁷² GARITTE, p. 67: წამებ(ა)ჲ სოფინოზისი “martyrdom of Sophinos”. Cf. commentary *ibid.*, p. 229, where Kekelidze's emendation of “Sophinos” to “Rufinos” (the name of a known martyr) is rejected.

nople on May 22 or May 20 (different dates in different manuscripts).⁷³ No further information on this Sophia is available.

There is, moreover, in the Synaxary of Constantinople on May 30, the memory of some Barlaam, who "died in peace".⁷⁴

All these data are to be taken into account in our research. However, we have to start from some precisions regarding the hagiographical context of our romance.

For this context, there is an exact term coined by M. van Esbroeck: *substrat hagiographique* (hagiographic substrate).⁷⁵ This term covers the hagiographical traditions used in the corresponding milieu to express the meaning of the cult in a given hagiographic composition. In fact, it is impossible to create a hagiographical work *ex nihilo*, that is, in another way than basing on some previous hagiographical "language". This "language" is composed by the previous hagiographical traditions, and such kind of intertextuality with the previous traditions is obligatory for any new hagiographical work.

Our romance has never been studied from this viewpoint, because almost the whole attention of the scholarly community was attracted by the literary stuff of Indian origin (which is, indeed, also a layer of the hagiographic substrate of our romance, but a relatively recent one). However, all this Indian stuff was, in the early 7th century, a newcomer into the Christian hagiography. Then, there were, of course, some more ancient and more fundamental traditions. Now, we have to explore some early layers of the hagiographic substrate of our romance.

4.2. *Sophia and King-Messiah: a testimony of the Kebra Nagast*

An Egyptian and "far-beyond-Egyptian" (Ethiopian) hagiographic substrate appears through the tissue of our romance with an exceptional clarity.

The main figure of a messianic monarch in the North of the African continent was the victorious king of Aksum Kaleb (Ella-Ašbeḥa), the hero of the hagiographical dossier of the martyrs of Nagra (the growth of this dossier started in the 520s). This dossier provided an important part of the plot to the *Kebra Nagast*, whose kernel is to be dated by the

⁷³ H. DELEHAYE, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae, e codice Sirmondiano, nunc Berolinensi, adiectis synaxariis selectis* (Bruxellis, 1902) (*Propylaeum ad Acta Sanctorum Novembris*) [thereafter: DELEHAYE], col. 697-698, 702.

⁷⁴ DELEHAYE, col. 717: Βαρλαάμ ἐν εἰρήνῃ τ.

⁷⁵ M. VAN ESBRÖECK, *Le substrat hagiographique de la mission Khazare de Constantin-Cyrrille*, in: *Analecta Bollandiana* 104 (1986) 337-348.

second half of the 6th and the early 7th century, when the mutual relations between Aksum and Byzantium were especially intensive.⁷⁶

Kaleb is responsible for the destruction of the Judaic state in Arabia and, thus, for the establishment of a Christian kingdom in Arabia instead. Moreover, he gave a new inspiration to the Christianity in his own state of Aksum. This role is quite appropriate to a messianic figure.

In the *Kebra Nagast*, as well as in the subsequent Ethiopian hagiography, the king Kaleb abdicates from his throne and becomes monk. But even this is not the only parallel with our Ioasaph.

What is especially important for our purpose, the *Kebra Nagast* represents itself as a manuscript found in the Constantinopolitan church of Holy Sophia. This is an explicit link with the Sophia imagery.

Therefore, the *Kebra Nagast* is important to our knowledge of the broad context of our hagiographical romance, being a work where a messianic figure of the king who becomes monk is presented within the context of some revelation through the Holy Wisdom.

This context is especially important because of the role of the pre-Islamic Empire of Aksum in the whole structure of the Christian world. Aksum has been considered as a counterpart of Byzantium, as the second great Christian kingdom. Such was the political context for any further consideration concerning the conversion of an African state to Christianity.

4.3. *Hagiographic substrate of the early cult of Constantine: Sophia and Pentecost*

May 22 is the historical date of the death of Constantine the Great, at the Pentecost Day of 337, as reported by Eusebius in his *Vita Constantini* (64, 1-2). Now this is not, however, the memory day of Constantine in the Byzantine rite. The feast of the Equal-to-the-Apostles Holy Kings Constantine and Helene is normally placed on May 21, but in some mediaeval manuscripts of the Synaxary of Constantinople, it is, nevertheless, on May 22.⁷⁷ One can conclude that, in Constantinople, there were some traces of the ancient memory of Constantine on May 22, but this feast was replaced by the common memory of Constantine and his mother on May 21.

⁷⁶ В. М. ЛУРЬЕ, *Из Иерусалима в Аксум через Храм Соломона: архаичные предания о Сионе и Ковчеге Завета в составе Кебра Негест и их трансляция через Константинополь* [B. LOURIÉ, *From Jerusalem to Aksum through the Temple of Solomon: archaic traditions about Sion and the Ark of Alliance in the Kebra Nagast and their translation through Constantinople*], in: *Христианский Восток* 2 (8) (2000) 137-207, where one can find the detailed bibliography.

⁷⁷ DELEHAYE, col. 697-700.

The Georgian Palestinian calendar of John Zosimos contains both feasts, that of Constantine and Helene on May 21 and that of Constantine alone on May 22. The latter feast is also presented in the Georgian Jerusalem Lectionary.⁷⁸ One can conclude that, in the Palestinian rite, the ancient memory of Constantine on May 22 was preserved intact, despite the addition of the new feast on May 21.

On May 22, the Synaxary of Constantinople has, instead, the memory of some Sophia the Healer, unknown to the calendars of Palestine. Despite the presence of an alternative date of memory, May 20, the coincidence with the ancient memory of Constantine is remarkable.

It is hardly possible that this Sophia the Healer was not a personification of the divine Wisdom that healed the Roman Empire under the reign of Constantine. This is certainly a part of the 4th century ideology of the Christian Empire, whose main monument was the pair of temples established by Constantine, that of Holy Sophia and that of Holy Irene. Both were personifications of the ideas, those of the Divine Wisdom and the *Pax Romana*, correspondingly. The dedication of the Sophia temple to Christ, with the *encaenia* (dedication) feast on the Nativity, is, of course, a later development, when the idea of twoness between the churches of Sophia and Irene disappeared and the cult of Nativity emerged, thus, not earlier than in the late 4th century.⁷⁹

One can guess about the exact mode of the original connection between the memories of this Sophia and of Constantine, but, in any case, both memories do have something in common. Most probably, we have here a remnant of an early dedication of the church of Holy Sophia in Constantinople, and this dedication was implying an allusion to the memory of Constantine himself.

The cult of Sophia the Healer is interesting to us because it reveals the roots of the Sophia imagery in the subsequent modifications of the "New Constantine" cult pertaining to so many royal figures of the Christian world, our Ioasaph including.

The death of the first Christian Emperor on the very day of the Pentecost was something more than a very symbolical event. It was as if the fulfilment of a prophecy.

There was, in the early Christianity and in the Second Temple Judaism, a strong conviction that the Messiah has to be born on the feast

⁷⁸ GARITTE, p. 67, 230.

⁷⁹ Both churches were established by Constantine the Great and reconstructed in 360 by Constantius who died in 361. Under Constantius, the parity of two main churches of the capital was still preserved. Cf., about all this: G. DAGRON, *Naissance d'une capitale. Constantinople et ses institutions de 330 à 451* (Paris, 1974) (*Bibliothèque byzantine, Études* 7).

of Pentecost. This tradition is traceable through the pseudepigraphic intertestamentary literature (especially the Book of Jubilees) up to the Book of Ruth, and, in the early Christianity, it was responsible for the Palestinian feast on May 15 that was, most probably, reconsidered as the date of the Nativity of Christ according to the Palestinian tradition.⁸⁰ Such a tradition was responsible for the framing of the death of Constantine the Great in the minds of the contemporaries. Indeed, the death of a Christian is always the day of his nativity, this time, for the eternal life...

Therefore, the day of the Γενεθλία of the messianic figure of the first Christian Emperor who converted the Roman Empire is the Day of the Pentecost, and this fact itself is a demonstration that Constantine is a New Messiah.

The hagiographic substrate of the early cult of Constantine the Great contained both Sophia imagery and that of the Pentecost Day. This was a cult of Sophia revealed on the day of the Pentecost.

4.4. *Sophia, Sophinos, and Ioasaph*

We know that the earliest day of the memory of our Ioasaph is May 19. We know moreover, that the same day is that of the memory of some martyr Sophinos. What this date, May 19, means for the epoch of the conversion of Makuria?

Now we have to return to the date provided by John of Biclaro: third year of Justin II. This would mean AD 567/568, but, under the same year, John insert the first year of Leovegildus who started his reign in 569.⁸¹ This is why Mommsen (hypothetically) and, after him, other historians (with even more certitude) consider the correct date as AD 569.

In 568, May 19 was the eve of the Pentecost, May 20. (In 569, the day of the Pentecost was June 9). This is an argument to prefer for the conversion of Makuria AD 568 (exactly the third year of Justin II) to AD 569 (the first year of Leovegildus).

⁸⁰ For these topics see the unpublished thesis by Walter D. RAY, *August 15 and the Development of the Jerusalem Calendar*. A Dissertation / Directors: Paul F. Bradshaw, Maxwell E. Johnson. Notre Dame University, Department of Theology (Notre Dame, IN, 2000) (the author is now preparing a monograph based on this thesis), and: В. М. ЛУРЬЕ, *Метатрон и Прометей: Вторая книга Еноха на перекрестке проблем. Размышления по поводу книги* [B. LOURIÉ, *Metatron and Prometaya: 2 Enoch on the cross-road of problems. Some thoughts about the book*]; ANDREI A. ORLOV, *The Enochic-Metatron Tradition* (Tübingen, 2005), in: *Scrinium. Revue de patrologie, d'hagiographie critique et d'histoire ecclésiastique* 2 (2006) 371-407.

⁸¹ See a discussion of the available chronological data in: Fidel FITA COLOMÉ, *Indiccionες griegas en lápidas visigóticas*, in: *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 21 (1892) 5-19, esp. 10-11.

For the figure of a "second Constantine" the date of the eve of the Pentecost is perfect. Moreover, the name "Sophinos", being a *hapax legomenon*, is, nevertheless, in the same line as the name of Sophia the Healer whose memory on May 22 is the day of the Pentecost in the year of the death of Constantine.

Martyr Sophinos is known in the Palestinian tradition only, and our romance on Ioasaph is also of Palestinian origin with the same Palestinian date of the memory as Sophinos. Moreover, both are implanted in the ground of the Sophia imagery. This seems to me a sufficient reason to consider both martyr Sophinos and our Ioasaph as two different avatars of the same messianic figure — the figure of the man who converted Makuria, the official date of this conversion being the Pentecost of 568.

Of course, the hagiographical legends of Sophinos and Ioasaph were different, as are their names. But this difference belongs to the literary stuffing and not to the hagiographical frame.

As to the hagiographical frame, they share the same hagiographical coordinate of time and the same hagiographic substrate of the Sophia imagery. And this is not all: both are implanted in the hagiographic substrate of the Constantine cult with its specific features of Pentecost and Sophia.

To sum up, it is most probable that the memory of Sophinos is a remnant of an earlier cult dedicated to the conversion of Makuria. The earliest story about Barlaam and Ioasaph appeared when and where this earlier story was unknown (that is, in Palestine in the early 7th century).

4.5. *May 19 as the date of the birth of Ioasaph*

There is a detail revealing the importance of the Pentecost imagery to our romance even in the eyes of the later adaptors of the early recensions.

According to all known recensions, the birth of Ioasaph was a feast of great importance, the most important festal event in the romance (there are no specific festivities connected to the deaths of the principal characters). Of course, such a presentation of the birth of a messianic figure is in perfect conformity with the tradition of the birth of Messiah on the day of the Pentecost. In conformity with the same Jewish and early Christian tradition (presented even in the Gospel of Luke), the birth of Messiah is accompanied by the prophecies of the astrologers.

The number of the astrologers is in all recensions indicated as great, but only in the long Greek recension it is specified as fifty five (p. 26.2).⁸²

⁸² With unique variant reading «fifty» in the ms D, 11th cent. In his apparatus to the

Normally, the exact numbers in the epical hagiography contain some symbolical meaning, but their symbolism is close to the phenomenon of the so-called *bricolage* described by Claude Lévi-Strausse for the mythological classifications of the primitive peoples.⁸³ In the mythological thinking, everything is isomorphic to everything, and this is why, even in the epical hagiography, the numeric codes are, first of all, the result of the performed classification that reveals the symmetry and harmony of the world.

The number of the astrologers is the only figure in the description of the most important feast. Thus, it is *a priori* probable that it is connected with the date (hagiographical coordinate of time). After all, as a unit of time, “one astrologer” is not worse than “one baby son” (as it was in one of the examples provided by M. van Esbroeck).

In fact, the interval of “fifty five” (of course, not astrologers, but days) is that between May 19 (the oldest known memory of Ioasaph) and March 25 (the so-called “Kyriopascha”, that is, the day of the Julian calendar when the historical resurrection of Jesus is believed took place).

Such a numerical code would be appropriate in the situation when the fixed date of May 19 is still preserved in its connection with the pentecontad cycle after the Easter, but the precise date of the Easter of a specific year became lost. In this case, the date of the Kyriopascha, March 25, could be taken as an invariant date that remains meaningful regardless the precise year.

4.6. *The upper layer of the hagiographic substrate: Nisthereon and Katianos*

The “New Constantine” imagery, the birth of the messianic king on the Pentecost and the revealing through him of the Divine Wisdom

critical edition, Robert Volk provides a parallel from the *Passio* C of St Ekaterina where the number of the sages is fifty. Even if this parallel is relevant, it belongs to the hagiographic substrate and not to the specific symbolical meaning of the figures in our text.

⁸³ On this phenomenon see the pioneering article of M. VAN ESBROECK, *Le Saint comme symbole*, in: S. HACKEL, ed. *The Byzantine Saint*. University of Birmingham XIV Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies (London, 1981) (*Studies Supplementary to Sobornost*, 5) 128–140 [hereafter: VAN ESBROECK 1981], where, among others, there is an example of the symbolical representation of six years of the vacancy of the Alexandrian See by six sons of a matron who were died in the early childhood. Now I am preparing a more detailed review of this question in my forthcoming book on the critical hagiography. As to the phenomenon of the *bricolage*, see especially C. LÉVI-STRAUSS, *La pensée sauvage* (Paris, 1962; many reprints and translations).

are the most fundamental elements of the hagiographic substrate of our legend. It shares them with the earlier cult of martyr Sophinos (whose legend is, unfortunately, lost).

However, there is a feature that is fundamental not necessarily to the lost parts of the hagiographic dossier of the conversion of Makuria, but, at least, to our romance of Barlaam and Ioasaph. This is the plotline of the spiritual healing of a royal child.

In turn, this plotline has its own predecessors in the Judeo-Christian romance on Joseph and Aseneth as well as in the Christian Passions of the 4th and the 5th centuries (Barbara, Irene, Christine, Ekaterina; the latter, in its recension C, as it is established by Robert Volk in his critical edition, was directly used by the author of the long Greek recension⁸⁴). However, unlike these earlier Passions, in the hagiography of the late 5th and the 6th centuries the child is necessarily royal, because the corresponding legends emerged from the quarrels about the official confession of the empire between the partisans and the adversaries of the Council of Chalcedon.

The theme of Chalcedon was quite actual for the Makuria, whose conversion was performed in course of an intensive competition between the Chalcedonians and the Severianists (and even, probably, the Julianists). Therefore, the symbolical language of the spiritual healing of a royal child was to be considered as more than appropriate.

Our romance became a next piece in the previous polemics represented, on the anti-Chalcedonian side, by the *Life of Hilaria*⁸⁵ (composed in Greek but preserved in Coptic only) and, on the side of the Chalcedonians, by the *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos*. What is especially important to us, the *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos*, composed in Greek in Egypt, then translated into Coptic, then translated from Coptic into Arabic, is preserved only in a Palestinian Georgian version from Arabic. The history of this text is, at its final stage, the same as that of our romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph, whose earliest recensions survived also in Georgian versions made in Palestine.

The *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos* was first published and put into the polemical context of its time by Michel van Esbroeck in 1988, but

⁸⁴ Cf. p. 489, in the "Index der nichtbiblischen Quellen".

⁸⁵ J. DRESCHER, *Three Coptic Legends. Hilaria * Archellites * The Seven Sleepers. Edited, with translation and commentary* (Le Caire, 1947) (*Suppléments aux Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*, 4) 1-13, 139-148. About this legend against the background of the earlier Passions, see VAN ESBRÖECK 1981.

his publication⁸⁶ remained almost unattended. Therefore, we have to start from some revaluations and precisions of his conclusions. Such long digressions from our main subject, the romance of Barlaam and Ioasaph, will be justified by our final conclusion, namely, that we have in Nisthereon a direct prototype of Barlaam.

4.6.1. Nisthereon and Katianos and the end of Anastasius

The *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos* is an answer to the Severianists who became the official Church under Anastasius (491—518).⁸⁷ In 505, Anastasius broke the unstable equilibrium between the partisans and adversaries of Chalcedon when John III, patriarch of Alexandria, publicly anathematised the Council.⁸⁸ Then, on August 6, 511, after a series of public debates on faith, Anastasius deposed and exiled patriarch of Constantinople Macedonius. This act became a declaration of war. The uncompromising war, already finished in 482 by the *Henotikon* of Zeno, has been now reopened. Our *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos* was composed during this war as a weapon.

The plot of this *Life* runs as follows. The brothers Nisthereon and Katianos are anchorites in Egypt. Meanwhile, a daughter of emperor Marcian (of course, a fictitious personage: Marcian did never have a daughter) becomes possessed by a malicious demon originated in Egypt. A delegation of Marcian visited the brothers asking them to go to Constantinople to heal the daughter of the emperor. The future emperor Anastasius takes part in this delegation; he is the only member of the delegation who did not receive the blessing of St Nisthereon. Nisthereon explains to him this refuse by a prophecy that Anastasius will soon become the emperor but will follow the doctrine of Severus and cause a lot of trouble for the Church. Then the hagiographer suddenly makes a switch to the 3rd person and the past time, adding (I quote M. van Esbroeck's translation): "Mais il lui est survenu en un instant la punition à la mesure des ses œuvres mauvaises"; the editor consider this phrase as a later interpolation, probably a gloss, alluding to the legen-

⁸⁶ M. VAN ESBROECK, *Une propagande chalcédonienne du début du VI^e siècle: l'histoire des saints Nisthéron et Katianos*, in: *Oriens Christianus* 73 (1988) 136-167. Thereafter: VAN ESBROECK 1988.

⁸⁷ See, as a handful introduction to the history of his reign: C. CAPIZZI, *L'Imperatore Anastasio I (419—518): Studio sulla sua vita, la sua opera e la sua personalità* (Roma 1969) (*Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 184).

⁸⁸ M. VAN ESBROECK, *Le manifeste de Jean III le Nicéote en 505 dans le 'Livre des Lettres' arménien*, in: *Revue des études arméniennes* 24 (1993) 27-46.

dary punishment of Anastasius by the death from the thunderbolt.⁸⁹ Nisthereon goes to the capital and expels the demon. Meanwhile, Katianos remaining in Egypt constructs the new cell for the brothers. For lack of help of his brother, he resurrects a dead who helps him in the work. The resurrected person said that he was dead for 178 years. After Nisthereon returns both brothers live together and die in peace in their new cell.

The only obvious *terminus post quem* is the mention of Severus as the leader of the anti-Chalcedonians. This means 512, the date of his ascension to the See of Antioch. The mention of the "punishment" (death) of Anastasius, 518, is not a part of the genuine text, and so, does not present a *terminus ante quem*.

The hagiographer worked on demand of the monastic community of Manzaleh (probably founded by the holy brothers), and this is why he pays so much attention to the foundation of the monastery and to the geography of the Egyptian monasticism. This purely monastic side of the *Life* was analysed by M. van Esbroeck and is beyond our scope here. What is the most important to us, our text presents itself as a rewriting of an earlier legend on demand of the community of Manzaleh. Therefore, even if the gloss mentioning the death of Anastasius is a genuine remark of the hagiographer, it is certainly not a part of the original legend on St Nisthereon.⁹⁰

It is obvious that the demon originated from Egypt is the teaching of Dioscorus of Alexandria promulgated by the Council of Ephesus in 449, and the healing is the Council of Chalcedon in 451, under Marcian.

In the Church wars around Chalcedon, Marcian was an object of hate of ones and adoration of others. This was a symbolical figure on the same level as that of the emperor Zeno, who was almost a holy man in the eyes of the adversaries of Chalcedon, but a rather unfortunate ruler in the eyes of the Chalcedonians of the post-Anastasian period.⁹¹

⁸⁹ VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 160 (text), 161 (transl.) and note 65, cf. p. 137 (on the interpolation).

⁹⁰ Cf. VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 137.

⁹¹ Not to confound with the Roman attitudes to both emperors, Zeno and Anastasius, that was much more negative because of the so-called "Acacian schism". It is worth noting that "Acacian schism" is a reality of the Western consciousness foreign to the Chalcedonians of the Eastern patriarchates. Patriarch Macedonius, a confessor of Chalcedon deposed by Anastasius, as well as his predecessor Euphemius who was also deposed by Anastasius for his Chalcedonism in 496, were both not in communion with Rome and both commemorated patriarch Acacius in the diptychs. See, for more details, B. LOURITÉ, *L'Histoire Euthymiaque, l'œuvre du patriarche Euthymius/Euphemius de Constantinople (490–496, † 515)*, in: *Warszawskie Studia Teologiczne* 20.2 (2007) 101–134.

It is Zeno to reign of whom is attributed the anti-Chalcedonian legend of Hilaria, an alleged older daughter of emperor Zeno, who became anchorite in Egypt. She went to the court of her father to heal her younger sister, who fell ill by the disease of Chalcedonism (the symbolism of the legend is here absolutely transparent). This time, the healing was the *Henotikon* of 482.

Under the reign of Anastasius (and not earlier), the *Henotikon* was re-interpreted by both sides of conflict as not a peace-making document, but as a confession of faith incompatible with Chalcedon.

Both legends, that of Hilaria and that of Nisthereon and Katianos (especially in the part dedicated to Nisthereon alone, starting from his refuse to bless Anastasius), look at the imperial confessional politics from a remote “monastic corner” in Egypt, but both are dealing with the emperors proclaiming the right faith after a temporarily preponderating of the wrong faith. In fact, the faith of the *Henotikon* was, since the late 5th century, considered as a new revelation and was presented in the hagiography in a New Constantine vein.⁹² The ideology of the Chalcedonian restoration under Justin I and Justinian was shaped with even more strong emphasis on the New Constantine imagery, but, at first glance, there is no trace of such imagery in the *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos*.⁹³

4.6.2. A true but not fulfilled prophecy

In the legend on Nisthereon and Katianos, we have a number code “178”. M. van Esbroeck was convicted that the period of 178 years is to be considered as terminated in 451, the year of Chalcedon. Thus is the implied internal chronology of the legend itself. So, the starting point of the 178-year period is, according to M. van Esbroeck, about AD 272.⁹⁴

⁹² VAN ES BROECK, *La Vision de Vakhtang Gorgasali...*; IDEM, *La portée politico-religieuse des visions...*

⁹³ Even the wording of §5 is not, in fact, establishing any specific link between Marcian and Constantine, despite the impression given by the translation. M. van Esbroeck translates that Marcian resides in “la ville impériale de Constantin” (VAN ES BROECK 1988, p. 147), but, in Georgian, we have here another wording: “to Constantinople, the imperial city” (კონსტანტინეპოლი ქალაქად სამეფოდ; VAN ES BROECK 1988, p. 146). ქალაქი სამეფო is an idiom with the meaning “capital city”; cf.: Д. ЧУБИНОВ, *Грузино-русский словарь* (St Petersburg, 1887) [reprint: Tbilisi, 1984], col. 1089. Such wording as “city of Constantine” is absent, because the Georgian text simply repeats the Greek name of the capital.

⁹⁴ VAN ES BROECK 1988, p. 163, n. 72: «Cela donne virtuellement 272 comme date de décès du mort. Katianos construit donc avec la génération d’Antoine et de Paul bien avant les premières hérésies, qui débutent avec Paul de Samosate. Macaire avait lui ressuscité un homme du temps des pharaons... ». The apophthegm of Macarius referred to here (al-

This is not a date of any significant event. Therefore, it is not fitting as an explanation of our numerical code (because the numerical codes must be exact, at least, in the extent to be recognisable). Moreover, the explanation of this date provided by M. van Esbroeck does not fit the general layout of our legend where 178 years are the interval between two epochs of life divided by one epoch of death. We have to find, as an explanation, two dates of some events positively evaluated, presumably connected to the establishment of the orthodox faith.

There is absolutely no necessity to interpret the resurrection of the dead as an allegory of Chalcedon. It may be the date of an event close to the hagiographer. The epic hagiography needs the unity of the acting time which is always a symbolic epoch, alike the formative epoch that is the acting time of the secular epos. So, if an epic hagiographic legend reflects the historical events belonging to different epochs, they must be represented according to the rule of *téléscopage*, that is, projected to the same symbolic epoch.⁹⁵ For our legend, such a symbolic epoch is that of the Council of Chalcedon. Therefore, it is nothing but a necessity to our legend to project all the events to this epoch, and the marks of the epoch of its origin must be hidden.

Taking into account the necessity of the *téléscopage*, we have to admit that the end of the 178-year period may be the date of the Chalcedonian restoration: either its real date, 518, or an earlier date placed in the near future of the author of the original legend (the *Vorlage* of our hagiographer). The latter possibility means that the initial meaning of the legend was a true prophecy on an impending death of Anastasius. In fact, Anastasius (born *ca.* 430) was already over the age of 80 in 512, when he started his war against the Chalcedonians. The situation with his successor was unclear (thus, a series of the legends concerning the choice of Justin emerged), at least, he did not have the direct heir. In such a situation it is not easy, for some people, to restrain

phabetical *Macarius* 37 with parallels in other collections) does not contain a numerical code. Moreover, the man died in 272 is probably belonging to the generation of Paul of Thebes (who was a young man under Decius, 250—252), but hardly belongs to that of Antonius (251—356).

⁹⁵ The first detailed description of the *téléscopage* is given by Paul PEETERS, *Orentius...* About the formative epoch as the acting time of the secular epos, see esp.: E. M. МЕЛЕТИНСКИЙ, *Поэтика мифа*. 3-е изд. (Moscow, 2000) (*Исследования по фольклору и мифологии Востока*) [English translation: E. M. MELETINSKY, *The Poetics of Myth*. Translated by G. Lanoue, A. Sadetsky (N.Y.—London, 2000)]; IDEM, *Происхождение героического эпоса. Ранние формы и архаические памятники*. Изд. 2-е [*Origins of the heroic epos. Early forms and archaic monuments*. 2nd ed.] (Moscow, 2004) (*Исследования по фольклору и мифологии Востока*).

oneself from making a prophecy about the realisation of the hopes for the radical changes after the death of the very aged emperor.

The number of 178 years is fitting to establish some link between the epoch of Anastasius and the epoch of Constantine. A Constantine imagery is also in accord with the symbolism of our legend: in this case, the resurrection of a dead would mean the resurrection of the orthodoxy of the Roman emperor. Let us elaborate on this possibility.

Constantine died in 337. The year after 178-year period is 516 (the exclusive count seems to be here more appropriable: during the 178th year the resurrected man was still dead, otherwise, in the case of the inclusive count, we would have 515 as the year of resurrection).

There is another feature that makes some relation between Constantine and Nisthereon very likely. In the calendar of John Zosimos there are two memories of both Nisthereon and Katianos, 30 and 31 May⁹⁶ (in the old Georgian *menaia* there is the only one day of their service, May 31). No mention about these saints is preserved in the non-Georgian documents. However, the calendar of John Zosimos (and no other source) contains the memory of some Nisthereon alone on May 23,⁹⁷ the next day after the memory of Constantine, May 22. Given that it was Nisthereon alone, without Katianos, who refused to bless Anastasius and who healed the daughter of Marcian, the symbolism related to Constantine might be limited to him alone; Katianos was not involved into the contacts with the court.

Now, we are prepared to make some precise calculations. Let us recall that the memory of Constantine in the very day of his death, May 22, was also the memory of the Pentecost day that fell in 337 on this same day, May 22. The Pentecost on May 22 is a relatively rare coincidence.⁹⁸ However, we have such a coincidence in 516 (but neither in 515 nor 518).

From the Chalcedonian standpoint somewhere between 512 and 515, it would be reasonable to wait for an apparition of a New Constantine on

⁹⁶ GARITTE, p. 69; cf. p. 237, 238.

⁹⁷ GARITTE, p. 68: ჯსეწეწ(ა)ჲ... ნესტერეონისი მონახონ(ი)ს(ა)ჲ « Memory... of Nestereon the monk ». Garitte in his commentary (*ibid.*, p. 231-232), while notifying the identity of this name with one of those commemorated on May 30 and 31, does not suppose that this Nisthereon is one of the two holy brothers. Moreover, John Zosimos mentions, under July 4, some "Nit'erē" (ნითერეჲ), with no further identification, whose memory is also with no parallel elsewhere (*ibid.*, p. 76, cf. commentary, p. 270-271, where Garitte supposes that this name may be a corruption of "Nisthereon").

⁹⁸ Since the year of the death of Constantine to AD 600 the corresponding years are the following: 337, 348, 427, 432, 511, 516, 522, 595.

the Pentecost May 22, 516, on the day of the most exact anniversary of taking away of the first Constantine. In this case, the choice of May 23 for the memory of Nisthereon might be performed as a continuation of the feast of Constantine on May 22.

Anyway, the exact number "178" must be justified by a non-less exact calculation. This number is perfectly suitable as the link between two days of Pentecost on May 22, in 337 and in 516.

A date between 512 and 516 is acceptable even to our surviving legend on Nisthereon and Katianos, not to say about its *Vorlage*. The latter belonged to an earlier form of the cult with an earlier memory date (May 23), still going along with that of Constantine (May 22).

As it seems, this earliest *Vorlage* of our legend was a work close to the genre of the historical apocalypics. It contained a prophecy on the displacement of Anastasius by an Orthodox monarch in 516. The Constantinian and the Pentecostal imageries colour the figure of this emperor as a quasi-messianic one, and so, make us classify our legend as a work of the *Reichseschatologie*.⁹⁹ As the almost every piece of the historical apocalypics, our legend was written as a sincere prophecy that has never been fulfilled. Anastasius survived the putative date of his death by more than two years. Probably the phrase about his death that we, following M. van Esbroeck, consider as a later gloss was written to replace some inadequate statement about the end of Anastasius in the original text.

The date of 516 must be considered as the *terminus ante quem* of the oldest legend that became the *Vorlage* of the Greek original of the survived Georgian recension. It is also probable that even the known recension was written before this date.

The *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos* is a rare preserved monument of the ideology of the Chalcedonians under Anastasius. As we have noticed elsewhere, this ideology was separated from the original Chalcedonism of Pulcheria and Marcian by the epoch of *Henotikon*, but was not identical to that of the future Chalcedonian restoration under Justin I and Justinian.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ On this genre in general see: G. PODSKALSKY, *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie. Die Periodisierung der Weltgeschichte in den vier Grossreichen (Daniel 2 und 7) und dem tausendjährigen Friedensreiche (Apok. 20). Eine motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung.* (München, 1972) (*Münchener Universitäts-Schriften. Reihe der philosophischen Fakultät*, 9).

¹⁰⁰ LOURIÉ, *L'Histoire Euthymiaque...*

4.6.2. Nisthereon, Sophia, and Pentecost against their anti-Chalcedonian vis-à-vis

We have discussed above (§4.4) how the traditional Sophia imagery resulted in apparition of the memory of the martyr Sophinos on May 19, the eve of the Pentecost Day in the year of the conversion of Makuria (568), and how this memory was replaced by that of Ioasaph. After this, we established a connection between the date of the memory of Nisthereon on May 23 and the Pentecost Day in the year when it was “reasonable” to wait for the fall of Anastasius (516).

The Sophia imagery is also not alien to the *Life of Nisthereon and Katianos*. The mother of the two brothers has the symbolic name “Theognia” (თეογნია; §2, VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 144/145), but they apparently did not have any father (there is no mention about their carnal father at all!). The mother alone brought them up, and they remained with her until her death. This is also a symbolic detail, because they found their father only after this, when they became monks and found out “les saints Pères vieillards” (§2, VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 144, 146/147). These fathers are presented as a collective father of the brothers, as a counterpart of their mother. The brothers “apprenaient d’eux [*sc.*, les saints Pères vieillards] toutes les vertus jusqu’à ce qu’ils soient devenus eux-mêmes accomplis dans toute la sagesse (საბრძნითა = Sophia) qui vient de Dieu ” (§2, VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 146/147). Here, the biblical pair of γνῶσις and σοφία¹⁰¹ enters the game. The brothers receive the Divine γνῶσις from their mother, and the Divine σοφία through their father(s). Moreover, in the preface (§1) the hagiographer presents his work as inspired by the Divine Wisdom: “...car Dieu qui dispose notre vie avec sagesse n’a pas livré à l’oubli la vie de ses saints...” (VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 144/145).¹⁰²

The Sophia imagery and several dates of memory in neighborhood of the Pentecost (May 23, 30, and 31) are, in the legend of Nisthereon and Katianos, an answer to the legend on Hilaria and other anti-Chalcedonian legends of the same epoch in Egypt. The memory of Hilaria is on Tobe 21 (January 16), the Day of Dormition of Theotokos in the Coptic calendar, that was, in turn, based on the Nativity-Epiphany

¹⁰¹ See esp.: Prov. 2:6, 8:12, 30:3; Eccl. 1:16, 17, 18, 2:26, 9:10; Wis 6:22; Sir 21:18; Dan (Th) 1:4; 4 Macc 1:16.

¹⁰² M. van Esbroeck seems to be right when he sees in his phrase a periphrasis of Wis 15:7 (VAN ESBROECK 1988, p. 145, n. 3): ὅτι αὐτὸς [*sc.*, θεός] καὶ τῆς σοφίας ὁδὸς ἔστιν καὶ τῶν σοφῶν διορθότης.

feast on Tobe 11 (January 6).¹⁰³ The accompanying anti-Chalcedonian legends are two legends on St Sophia. One of them (on Sophia of Jerusalem and her three sons) is known only in the Coptic Synaxary (in Arabic) and embraces the whole liturgical cycle from Tobe 11 (Nativity) to Tobe 21 (death of Sophia that is, in fact, the day of the Dormition of Theotokos). Another one, the most known legend on Sophia and her three daughters, is of earlier origin, but is reused here by the displacement to Tobe 30 (January, 25); this date of the Coptic Synaxary is repeated in the Ethiopian Synaxary, while the latter preserves as well a more authentic date of this legend in August.

The situation where a major feast (Dormition on Tobe 21) is accompanied by two feasts of Sophia divided by the interval of about a week or slightly more, has a parallel in our situation with the memories of Nisthereon. It is probable, as it is said above, that the memory on May 23 was established in relation with an earlier recension of the legend, different from the known Georgian version that is certainly meant on May 30 and 31. This whole series is in the neighborhood of the date of a major feast, the Pentecost. The new anti-Chalcedonian feast of Dormition in January was challenged on the base of the renewed conception of the Pentecost as the day of the orthodox faith of Constantine.

4.6.3. Nisthereon and Barlaam

A parallel between two hermits at the court, Nisthereon and Barlaam, both managing to heal spiritually the king's child, is evident but still too vague.

It is important that both hagiographical legends passed to Palestine in the same way, being translated into Arabic and, then, into Georgian. The history of the texts here is enough demonstration that the Palestinian author of the archetypical recension of the romance on Barlaam and Ioasaph might have had access to the legend on Nisthereon and Katianos. However, dealing with the upper layer of the hagiographic substrate, we have to seek possible links between the corresponding cults and not simply between the corresponding texts.

Given, that our legends deal with different regions (Constantinople and Egypt in the case of Nisthereon and Katianos, Nubia in the case of

¹⁰³ On all these matters see, especially, VAN ESBROECK, 1981. About the Dormition in the Coptic rite, see, for more details (including discussion on some points of secondary value with M. van Esbroeck), LOURIE, *L'Histoire Euthymiaque...* (and, especially, note 72, against S. Shoemaker's opinion that the Coptic date of Dormition may be a late Coptic invention of the 6th century).

¹⁰⁴ I mean here the prototype in the sense of the hagiographic substrate, not in the literature tradition. Therefore, the most important is that Nisthereon is a hermit possessing the Divine Wisdom who reached the imperial court and spiritually healed king's child, and that this legend was a weapon of the Chalcedonians in their polemics in Egypt. The latter is important because the Christianisation of Makuria was performed in the course of the competition with the anti-Chalcedonians, and starting from Egypt.

Barlaam and Ioasaph), the corresponding cults, most probably, could have something in common in the hagiographical coordinates of time rather than those of place.

As to their corresponding coordinates of place, we are in the presence of the remarkable parallels. Both are connected to some cult of Sophia in the neighborhood of the Pentecost. The date of May 19 was already discussed above. However, there is also a coincidence on May 30, one of the dates of memory of Nisthereon and Katianos and, in the same time, the memory of some Barlaam who “died in peace”, according to the Synaxary of Constantinople. Could it be that this Barlaam is that of our romance? — I would consider this very probable, and not only because our Barlaam, too, died in peace.

The coincidence with one of the dates of the memory of Nisthereon is much more significant. First of all, Nisthereon is a close, if not the closest, prototype of our character.¹⁰⁴ Secondly, both our romance and legend on Nisthereon are commemorated within the neighborhood of the Pentecost. Let us recall that the main feast in our romance is the date of birth of Ioasaph that is meant to be the Pentecost. Moreover, we know that the earliest memory of Ioasaph is May 19, and so, the earliest memory of Barlaam is to be sought, most probably, somewhere in its proximity.

One can guess what the initial position of the memory of Barlaam was towards that of Nisthereon, but in any way, the most natural explanation is that May 30 became the date of the memory of Barlaam somewhat in the same way as May 19 that of Ioasaph (who replaced the martyr Sophinos). Barlaam replaced Nisthereon on May 30.

5. The archetypical recension: what it was?

It is time to sum up our main conclusions in a few words.

1. The archetypical recension of the Christian legend of Barlaam and Ioasaph, a remote ancestor of the Greek romance composed by Euthymius the Iberian, goes back to the Palestinian monasticism of the first half of the 7th century.

2. It was a relatively short text composed, most probably, in Greek.
3. This hagiographical legend absorbed a rich literary stuff of Indian origin, which became available since the late 6th century. Such a use of it was legitimated by the conviction (widespread and even authoritative in the epoch) that India of the gymnosophists is the same "India" that is located in Africa.
4. The legend was dedicated to the conversion of Makuria in 569 into the Chalcedonian faith.
5. It replaced an earlier legend that was closer to the event of the conversion and whose relict is the memory of martyr Sophinos in the Palestinian calendar of John Zosimos.
6. The legend of Barlaam and Ioasaph was composed on the ground of the hagiographic substrate of the Egyptian Chalcedonian hagiography, also available in Palestine and survived mostly in the Palestinian Georgian translations from Arabic.