E.J. BRILL'S
FIRST ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF ISLAM
1913-1936

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Photomechanical Reprint

VOLUME VI
MOROCCO—RUZZİK

E.J. BRILL
LEIDEN • NEW YORK • KØBENHAVN • KÖLN
1987
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NEW'I, YAHYA b. PIR 'AI'T b. NASR, an
Ottoman theologian and poet, with the
nom de plume (waghlîat) of New', was born in
Magara (Rumelia), the son of Shaikh Pir 'Ali
in 940 (1533). Up to his tenth year he was taught
by his father then and became a pupil of
Kâramân-zâde Mehmed Efendi. His fellow
pupils were Bâktî, the poet [q.v.], and Sa'd al-Din,
the famous historian [q.v.]. He was an intimate friend
of the former. He joined the 'Ulemä', became
müdderis of Gallipoli in 973 (1565) and after
filling several other offices became a teacher in the
Medresse of Mihir u-Mah Sültân. In 998 (1598) he
was appointed Kâdi of Baghdâd but before he
could take up office Sültân Murâd III appointed
him tutor to his son Muştâfa and to the princes
Bâyazid, 'Othmân and 'Abd Allâh. When after
Murâd III's death (1003 = 1595) the usual slaughter
of the princes deprived him of all the charges, he
retired completely from public life and lived on a
pension granted him by the new sultan. He died
at Stamblu in Dhu 'l-Ka'da 1007 (June 1599) and
was buried in the court of the 'Ulûkh Wefîs' mosque.
His son was New'î-zâde 'Abd [q.v.]

New'î was a man of great learning and his
encyclopedia knowledge was most clearly revealed
in the best known of his works, the Naftâd-i
Farnâmî wa-Makhîsin al-Mutûnî, in which he surveyed
the twelve most important branches of learning;
on it cf. [J. v. Hammer] Encyclopädische Übersicht
der Wissenschaften des Orient, part i. (Leipzig
1804), p. 92 sqq. and the German translation of
the story of Shâdân and Behiîr, ibid., p. 24 sqq.
which forms the concluding section of this work.
Brûsalî Mehemmed Tâhir gives a list of other
prose works in his 'Othatmînî Mülîçefîrî, iii. 437 sq.
with references to the libraries in which they are.
In poetry New'î imitated the style of his contem-
porary Bâktî without however reaching his level.
His poems which were collected in a scarce Diwan
[MS. in Stamblu, Hamidiye library], lack ease and
betray too readily the learned author who frequently
makes his work difficult to understand and with unusual
words and obscure allusions. He tries his skill in
different forms of verse, the kast, ghâzal, and
mehmûn, without however attaining popularity in
any one of them. His fame as a poet is completely
overshadowed by that of his contem-
porary and friend Bâktî. New'î's high position
as an author he owes to his learned work,
particularly the already mentioned encyclopedia,
which was very popular, as is evident from the
numerous MSS. still in existence in European
collections (e.g., Berlin, Bologna, Dresden, Leyden,
London [3 copies], Upsala, Vienna). A Sulaimân-
nâmîe by him (Paris, Bâd. Nat., cod. reg. 44,
Cat. Nû. 308 and F. Babinger, G. O. W., p. 376)
do not seem to be mentioned by his biographers.
His son New'î-zâde 'Abî'î wrote a very full life of
him (p. 418—27 of the dhaî to Taşkhoprû-
zâde's work).

108; Gibb, H. O. P., i. 171 sqq.; Hâdzîdî
Khalîfa, Fedelbetê, i. 120 sqq., also the biogra-
phies of poets by Kânîlî-zâde and 'Abdî.

(Franz Babinger)

NEW'I-ZÂDE 'ÂTÂ'I, 'ÂTÂ' ALLÂH, an
Ottoman author and poet, better known as
'Atâî with the nom de plume New'î-zâde, i.e. son
of New', was born in 991 (1583) in Stamblu, as
the son of the celebrated New'î [q.v.]. After the
death of his father from whom he received his early
education, he placed himself under Kâfażde Fâid
Allah Efendi, the compiler of an anthology, and
later under Aghî-zâde 'Abd al-Halîm Efendi. He
then joined the 'Ulemä' but did not attain any of
the higher offices. After becoming a müsâhin,
he was appointed a judge and served in this
capacity in a number of Rumelian towns like
Loças, Silistria, Rüssîk, Tîrînuvo, Monastîr (Bitolj),
of the summer, being left to their own resources. To be brief, with the help of the Bazzâni Kurds, the Turks sacked Tîhîma, Tîyârî, Dîlîî and Bâz. We may note especially the destruction of the irrigation canals exactly as was done in Sargon's campaign in the same region. The famous church of Mîr Zaia at Dîlîî, of the fourth century, was desecrated for the first time in its long history. Interesting ex voto, Chinese vases, brought there in early days by missionaries, disappeared. The inviolability enjoyed by Mîr Zaia is said to have been due to a letter guaranteeing it written on a piece of cloth, attributed to the Prophet (cf. above). After this disaster the Nestorians withdrew to their summer pastures, at a height of 10,000 feet. This final trial was a painful one. Harassed by the Kurds, with insufficient food and no salt, the Nestorians nevertheless held out. The Patriarch, taking refuge on the plateau of Shina, endured privations which were even harder for him who could not eat meat (even the mother of the patriarch apparent must not eat meat). The Nestorian rû'ât of Gavar were massacred at this time under the orders of Nûrî Bey. Finally in October 1915 a skilful retreat was carried through. The Kurds were actually holding the approaches to the Persian frontier. A detour was effected towards Albâk in the north via Kotranis (Berwar) and the bridges were burned after crossing the Great Zâb. The Kurds succeeded however in threatening the retreat by using the natural bridge of Hezekian, but were driven back by Malay Khoshâba of Tîyârî whose bravery is destined to become legendary. In the month of November the exodus of the Nestorians was completed and they were safe within the Russian lines at Salamas. The Russian authorities organised assistance for the refugees, who to the number of 40,000 were settled in the Persian districts of Khôî Salamas and Urmîya where they remained till 1918. After the departure of the Russians as a result of the revolution, the Nestorians formed detachments with the help of Russian munitions and instructors and opposed the advance into Ahdarbâdijân of the Turks led by 'Ali Ihsân Pâshâ. Towards the end of the summer of 1918, however, their munitions being exhausted, the Nestorians left the region of Urmîya via Sulduz–Sain Kâla–Biǧîr for Hamâshîn where the English forces then were. From there the refugees were sent to the concentration camp of Bakûba near Baghâdâd. The Patriarch was no longer alive. Led into an ambush by the Shîkît Kurdistan chief Ismâ'il Aghâ Simkî, Mîr Shîmîn was treacherously assassinated at Kohnê Şehr on March 4, 1918.

The Nestorian community is now living in scattered groups in the İrâk, Persia, Syria etc. The post-war history of the Nestorians is closely bound up with the problem of the willêyet of Mawâlî, finally attached to the İrâk. The line adopted for the northern boundary of the willêyet in question, however, leaves the Nestorian districts to Turkey and it is very unlikely that they can return there. The martial qualities of the Nestorians were used by the British authorities who raised four battalions from them, which were very useful especially at the beginning of their establishment in the İrâk.

In conclusion a few words should be said about the Nestorians of the region of Lake Urmîya. Those of Salamas believe (Duval, op. cit.) that they are aborigines converted in the early centuries of our era. In 1833 there were however only fifteen Nestorian families, the remaining 3,000 having become Roman Catholics under the bishop Mâr Izhîbr (d. 1789). As to the Nestorians of the plateau of Urmîya, they preserve a tradition according to which their immediate ancestors came down from the mountains five or six centuries ago, which corresponds very closely to historic fact. The Nestorians of Urmîya have been the object of lively competition among the missions, of which the Presbyterian was first established (1832). The Roman Catholic Lazarists followed in 1863 and finally an Orthodox mission, the brotherhood of Cyril and Methodius, began work in 1905. At one time shortly before the War, there were also Anglican and Catherian missions. The work of the missions has made quite appreciable modifications not only in the beliefs of this ancient Christian community but also in its life and customs. Although little information has been preserved on the subject, there is reason to believe that the Nestorians of Urmîya also lived under the authority of mâlîk, who were recognised by the Şâhs as the official representatives of the community. We have seen a number of firmân preserved in the family of Dr. Johanna Malik. They were administered according to the old collection of canon law called Sunhâdos of which Şamashâ Vûstî Kaleta published a new edition in 1916 at the American Mission Press.

This is probably only one of the versions of the Synodicon, which we know in the Abbé Chabot's edition with its wealth of learning. In the eyes of the Muslim authorities the Nestorians were simmi (dîmmî; cf. dhîmma) and their position was regulated by Muhammadan law. With the coming of the missionaries, the position gradually changed. The mâlîka were replaced by millet bâghi, each dependent on his respective mission. The Persian governor had to appoint a serperest, an official whose special duty was to deal with foreigners and those under their protection. During the War a national council called mêtwa was organised, which dealt not only with the defence of Christian interests before the local authorities but, especially after the addition to their numbers of the Nestorians from Turkey, acquired a certain political character but later disappeared in the general débâcle. — In conclusion it should be mentioned that in the present article we have confined ourselves mainly to the Nestorian highlanders of Central Kurdistan. The historical phenomenon that we have been led to study in this connection is far from being so limited and simple, for it demands not only consideration of linguistic problems, the ramifications of which go back to a remote past through Aramaic, but also of facts of ethnology even less known which are implied in the idea of Nestorianism. Finally the geographical area is also enormous if we remember for example the epigraphic material from Russian Central Asia.

Duval, *Dialecto neo-aramien*, 1883). Under the Mongols we find at first that the Nestorian priests (arkau) were treated with consideration at the taking of Baghdad (Hammer, *Riehen*, ii. 152). We know also that Hulagu's wife was a Christian: at the taking of Arbil, the see of an important Nestorian metropolitan (Adhabbdjian was also under it), the lances of the Mongol horsemen bore little crosses. Later, in proportion as the Mongols became converted to Islam, the Nestorians became subjected to persecution, and particularly after the invasion of Timur they sought refuge in the mountains of Kurdistan from which they did not begin to emerge till the beginning of the xvth century when they spread eastwards towards the region of Urmia and S. E. towards Mawzil; Duval (op. cit., p. 9, note 4) gives notes on the different residences of the Nestorian patriarchs after the taking of Baghdad in 1258. It was under the Patriarch Simeon IV in 1450, that an innovation was introduced, making the episcopate hereditary; this produced a schism in the Nestorian community in 1551 when Sulakha was elected in opposition to Simeon Bar Mama. From this dates the term "Chaldeans" henceforth applied to these Nestorians who recognised the supremacy of Rome, while English and American writers speak constantly of the "Assyrians", and lastly the Nestorians themselves like to be called *Zerd*. In Russian the name used is *asor.* In the second half of the xvth century, the bishop Môr Yusif recognised the authority of Rome and received the title of Catholic Patriarch of Babylon and Chaldea, while one of his near relatives, elected patriarch of the Nestorians and remaining faithful to this rite, was enthroned under the same name, henceforth hereditary, of Môr Shim'un and at once set out for the mountains of Central Kurdistan, where his residence was sometimes at Kocanis and sometimes at Dilichmerk. Thus originated this quasi-autonomous community of Nestorian highlanders in which an ecclesiastical authority exists alongside of a purely tribal organisation. Indeed while the supreme power is in the hands of a hereditary Môr Shim'un (passing from uncle to nephew) having the title of *patricia d'mardenkh*, who was consecrated patriarch by the Metropolitan Môr Haanishu, living in Dera Kesh at Shamdmân, each tribe (shiet) had alongside of a bishop (ashena), the ecclesiastical chief, a mâlik or lay chief, distinguished by peacock feathers fixed on his conical felt hat, a characteristic feature of dress. The custom of the men arranging their hair in little pigtails may also be mentioned. The mâlik had power to declare war on another tribe and to conclude peace.

The tribal organisation and mode of life of these highlanders have caused some writers to give them the name of "Christian Kurds" (Garzoni, Lorch).

A. Wigram in the introduction to his *History of the Assyrian Church* thinks that some at least of the Christians of Hakkari [cf. KURD] are of Kurd origin although they deny it vigorously. On the other hand, there are Kurd tribes who remember that they were once Christians. Other writers (Grant), led astray perhaps by the theocratic aspect of Nestorian society, the names and certain Biblical traditions, see in them evidence in support of the hypothesis that the Nestorians are the descendents of the ten tribes of Israel. We know however which actually are the Jewish communities in Kurdistan, quite distinct from the Christian groups in dress and customs. Only their language is also a Neo-Aramaic dialect. — The Highland Nestorians annually pay Môr Shim'un a contribution called *rizh d-shita*. The arrears due to the Turkish treasury were simply left to mount up. Cuinet (p. 749—751), speaking of the autonomous tribes, gives the total of arrears as already 105,000 ZT in his time. There was besides somewhere in the Nestorian country (cf. Lalayan, who gives a photograph) a "rock of the collector of taxes" marking the limit beyond which this official never risked going. — The relations of the Nestorian hillmen with their Kurdish neighbours were no worse than those of the highlanders with one another usually are. The interest of the tribe came before every consideration of religion, so that ad hoc alliances could be concluded between the Kurds and the Nestorians for joint action against their co-religionists.

"The grass grows quickly over the blood spilt in a just battle". A kind of fair play is therefore the ruling principle of the inter-tribal code. There are, it is true, exceptional cases. The pan-Islamism of 'Abd al-Hamid had its unpleasant repercussions in Kurdistan; the Turkish officials appointed there after the revolution of 1907 only complicated the position still further. Since the affairs of the Nestorians and Kurds were conducted on a tribal basis, we find the door of the patriarch's residence open to Kurds and Nestorians indifferently, who come to settle their disputes and hospitality is offered to all alike. On the other hand, we find the Nestorians seeking the good offices of Shaikh Salim of Barzan known as the "Christian Shaikh", who was executed by the Turks in Mawzil at the beginning of the War.

The Nestorians and the Djihad. Even before the official outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Turkey, in August 1914, the patriarch Môr Shim'un was invited by Djedwed Bey, the wali of Wân, to come to see him. Presents were lavished upon him and assurances given that all grievances of the Nestorians would be redressed. As a result of the proclamation of the djihad however, the atmosphere became heavy in Kurdistan. In November, Turkey entered the war and the persecution of the Nestorians of Albâk (Bashkal'a) began at once. In Persia fighting broke out between the Christians of the Urmia region and the Beka'de Kurds. At the end of 1914, the Russians evacuated Urmia and Salamas. Those Christians who did not save themselves in time by going to Djilîk perished in large numbers. As to the Nestorians of the highlands, although the massacres and deportations of Armenians were at their height, the Turks endeavoured to attach the Patriarch to their side and to secure the loyalty of the Nestorians. Complete educational freedom, good rifles, subsidies and grants to the Patriarch and to the bishops and mâliks, all these things were promised in vain. Môr Shim'un retired to the particularly inaccessible district of Dîz from which the Patriarch's personal bodyguard had always been recruited. About this time an "accidental" shot killed Môr Shim'un's uncle Nestorus, who was, it was said, urging a more conciliatory policy towards the Turks. After an interview, which decided matters, the Russian commander at Muhndîk, near Salamas, the Patriarch on May 10, 1915, issued the order for mobilisation. The fortune of war resulted in the Nestorians, at first encouraged by the Russian successes in Wân and Urmia at the beginning
NEŞHİR, Mehemmed, an Ottoman historian, with the nom de plume (mahkhat) of Neşhî; his origin is not definitely known. According to Ewliya Celebi (Şîyārât-nâme, i. 247), he belonged to German-eli [q. v.]. "All, Kunh al-Ağbâr, v. 225 sketches the career of a certain Mevlânâ Mehemmed b. Neşhî among the "ülmân" of Murâd II. According to him, the latter came at an early age to Brussa, studied there at the Sultan Medrese, was appointed müdderris there and died in Brussa. In view of the rarity of the name — indeed it is not otherwise known — it is probable that this Mehemmed b. Neşhî was the grandfather of the historian. As to the latter we know only that he was a teacher in Brussa and it may be assumed that he died there in 926 (1520).

Neşhî wrote under the title Dîjkan-numâ a history of the world in six parts, of which only the sixth, dealing with Ottoman history, seems to have survived. This, usually called Ta'rîh Al-i "Oṯmân, is obviously a compilation but the question is still unsettled whether Neşhî was the compiler or whether he copied a compilation already in existence in order to add as a sixth part (ḵūn) to his own compilation on the history of the world (cf. P. Wittek, in M. O. G., i. 130, who decides for the second hypothesis). There are suspicious echoes of the work of ʿAššîk Pasha-Zaide and of Bihgî's Chronicle (cf. F. Babinger, G. O. W., p. 43 sq.) and it should perhaps be investigated whether the meddâh Neşhî made a popular version of Bihgî's Ta'rîk which was written in an elevated style, or the stylist Bihgî rewrote the work of Neşhî in elegant language. The sixth part of the Dîjkan-numâ is divided into three sections (Zabâdâ: Ewled-ı Əghas, Sa'dîks of Rûm and the House of "Oṯmân. The history of the Ottomans is narrated down to the time of Bayazid II; the work comes down only to the year 1485, that is, as far as his sources go, of which one went up to 1485. He concludes with a ḵâṣda in praise of the ruling sultan in the middle of the reign of Bayazid II. Neşhî had considerable influence on contemporary and later historiography and is frequently cited as a source, e.g. by Al, Saïyid al-Aţî, Saïd b. Neşhî. A full survey of the contents of the Ta'rîk of Neşhî is given by Wittek, in M. O. G., i. 77-150. It has so far not been published.

There are a number of good manuscripts in existence, e.g. in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Suppl. Turc, No. 153, a very handsome MS.) and No. 1183 of the Charles Schefele collection, and in Vienna, Nat. Bibl., No. 986 (cf. Flügel, Katz, ii. 200). Specimens of his text have often been published; see a list of them in F. Babinger, G. O. W., p. 39. Bibliography: Cf. the sources collected by F. Babinger, G. O. W., p. 39, notably J. H. Mordtmann, in Isl., x. (1920), p. 159 sqq.; xii. (1923), p. 168 sqq.; also J. v. Hammer, G. O. D., i. 310. (FRANZ BABINGER)

NENÎM, Saiyid Imâd-ı-Dîn, known as Nesi'm, an early Ottoman poet and mystic, believed to have come from Nesi'm near Baghddûd, whence his name Nesi'm. As a place of this name no longer exists, it is not certain whether the ẓâfâb should not be derived simply from nesîm "zephyr, breath of wind". That Nesi'm was of Turkoman origin seems to be fairly certain although the "Saiyid" before his name also points to Arab blood. Turkish was as familiar to him as Persian; for he wrote in both languages. Arabic poems are also ascribed to him. Little is known of his life; it fell in the reign of Murad I (1355—1390) as his biographers tell us. He was at first a member of the school of Sheikh Shibli (247 = 334 = 861—945) but about 804 (1401) he became an enthusiastic follower of Fadl Allah Hürûfî [q. v.] with whom he was undoubtedly personally acquainted. He championed the views of his master with ardour and at the risk of his life. The poet Refî, author (811 = 1409) of the Beşhârât-nâmê [copies in London, cf. Rieu, Cat., p. 164 sq. and Vienna, cf. Flügel, Kata, p. 461 and 462 (two MSS., the second more complete)], and presumably a Genjî-nâmê (in Vienna, cf. Flügel, Kata, i. 720) was his pupil. A certain Şah Khanânân who was a dervish mystic is mentioned as his full brother. Nesîm met a cruel death in 820 (1417—1418) in Aleppo where he was flayed for his heretical poems on a fêtuâ of the extremely fanatical maфи. He is considered the greatest poet and preacher of the Hûrûfî sect. His work consists of two collections of poems, one of which, the rarer, is in Persian and the other in Turkish. The Turkish Dwân consists of 250—300 gazelles and about 150 quatrains, but the existing MSS. differ considerably from the printed edition (Stambul 1298 = 1881). No scholarly edition has so far been undertaken. The Persian Dwân has not been examined at all. Nesîm's spiritual influence on the dervish system of the earlier Ottoman empire was considerable. The pro-ʻAlîd guilds in particular honour Nesîm as one of their masters, testimony to whose far-reaching influence is found even in the earlier European travellers like Gív. Antonio Menavino (c. 1540; cf. F. Babinger, in Isl., xi. 19, note 1, from which it is evident that N.S. copied him and therefore cannot be regarded as an independent source, as Gîb, H. O. P., i. 356 sq. thought) and Sir Paul Rcaut (xvii century; cf. Gîb, H. O. P., i. 357 sqq.). Nesîm's importance as a poet and mystic can only be estimated and realised in connection with a thorough study of the older Hûrûfî texts, among which a most important one is the Alâ of Wallach, but not recognised by W. Pertsch, Pers. Handschr. Berlin, p. 264 sq. No. 221 by Saiyîd ʻAlt-Ali (d. 822 = 1419) because it might show the connection of the Hûrûfî with the Bektashiya. Nesîm's poems were made popular in earlier times, especially by the wandering Kalender dervishes [q. v.] and were known to every one. Bibliography: Gîb, H. O. P., i. 343 sqq.; J. v. Hammer, G. O. D., i. 124 sqq.; also the Ottoman biographers of poets who however contribute practically nothing to the life history of Nesîm. (FRANZ BABINGER)

NESTORIANS. The Christian community (millet) which we know as Nestorians is at the present day better known under the name of 'ächîrat ok dîlm. Down to the war of 1914 they lived in the central part of Kurdistan which lies between Mawsîl [see MÔSUL], Wân and Urmîya [see URMAYA]. Their main nucleus was represented by the highland Nestorians, in practice independent, living in the inaccessible regions of the highlands on the middle course of the Great Zât, Tişirî, Tûkána, Tûhûb, Dîlût, Dîz, Uri, Salâbekân, Bâz, etc. Outside of this national centre the Nestorians are
found scattered in enclaves among the Muham-
dadan population, Kurd and Persian, of the
adjoining districts: Gawar, Tergawar, Mergawar,
Shamdoṭan (q.v.), on the plateau of Urmia (some
sixty villages), in this town itself; finally in
the north at Salamas, Baghšās’ Khodābād and in
the south in Māwšil and around it (Alkoh etc.).

G e o g r a p h y. It may be useful here to touch
on some of the salient features of the Nestorian
country in the strict sense, which is but very little known.
We mean by this the area on both sides of the
middle course of the Great Zarb, in the part where
it describes an arc towards the east, between 37°
and 37° 30’ N, 43° 30’ and 44° E. In Layard
(Nineveh, i.) we have a description of the Nestorian
districts on the right bank: the upper Tiyaṛi with
Cumbi and the greater part of the Lower Tiyaṛi
with Ashīta and Līzan. We shall give here a
general account of those on the left bank, namely,
going from N. to S. and from W. to E.: Dīzz,
Kiu, the eastern part of the Lower Tiyaṛi, Tal,
Walto, Tkhuṃa (with Tkhub); further to the east,
Dilū, Bāz and lastly Ishṭāzin. All these districts
lie in the folds of the massif which the Turks
know by the general name of Dilū Dāgh, but
which for the natives has a number of summits.
This massif of Dilū Dāgh to some degree forms a
cave in the inverse direction of the arc of the
Great Zarb.

H i s t o r y. The teaching of the Nestorians, who
were very active missionaries, was at one time
very widely disseminated in Asia. An inscription
in Chinese and Syriac was discovered at Singmanz.
At Travancore, in South India, there is still a
Nestorian community in existence. It was under
the Sassanians that the Nestorians played an
important part. It is true that under Shāhpir II (309–
379), Yazdegird I (399–420) and Bahram V
(420–438) severe persecutions took place for
various reasons, of which the extraordinary spread
of the sect was not the least. On the other hand,
purely political reasons, fear of Byzantine influence,
made the Persian government distrustful of them.
We know for example, that the Byzantine emperor
demanded from Bahram V and Khusrav the free
exercise of the Christian religion. Perhaps the
best proof of the good relations between the Nestorian Church and the
state therefore date only from the declaration
of independence of the Eastern Syrian church
under a Catholicos of Seleucia with a dyophysite
confession of faith. The most flourishing period
of Nestorianism was therefore in the reign
of Hormizd IV and at the beginning of the reign
of Khusrav II, i.e. from 578 to 605 A.D. Under
the influence of Gabriel of Sigara, who had gone
over to the monophysites, Khusrav II began to
persecute the Nestorians; one result was that from
609 to 628, the year of Khusrav’s death, the
position of Catholicos remained vacant. Two events
in this period are of special importance to us.
The first was the establishment of Christianity in
Central Kurdistān, where we still find direct and
indirect traces of it at every step: churches,
monasteries, traditions, place-names. In the fifth
century the faith gained ground daily among the people
of the high plateaus of Iran proper and among the Kurds. Petion (d. 447)
conducted a very successful missionary campaign in these
mountains, which was crowned by his martyrdom.
Emulating him, Saba, the “teacher of the heathen”,
went among the Kurds, who were sun-worshippers.

His eloquence supported by numerous miracles
won many converts (J. Labourt, Le Christianisme
dans l’Empire Perse sous la Dynastie Sassanide,
Paris 1904). Let us not forget this first Nestorian
advance into Kurdistān. The oldest Nestorian
churches in Central Kurdistān date from the
fourth and fifth centuries. These are Mār Zaya at Dilū;
Mār Bishu at Iīl; Mār Saba (ruins) at Kočanis;
Mārī Memo at Ormar. The monastery and
church of Mār Saba at Ashīta in Tiyaṛi were also held
in great veneration but we do not know their date.
Secondly we must note here how relations were
established between the Nestorians and Islam (Tor
Andrae, Der Ursprung des Islam und das Christen-
tum, Upsala 1926). The part played by the
Nestorians at a certain period under the Sassanians
explains the conversion of the Yaman to Nestorianism
at its conquest by the Persian general Wahriz in
597. It was in the Nestorian form that Christianity
penetrated into Arabia in the zone of Persian
fluence, i.e. from Ḩadramawt to Palmyra. We
know the names of six Nestorian bishops on the
eastern shore of Arabia. The first to be founded
was that of ʿOmmān (acts of Councils 424, 544,
576, 676). A Christian community on the island of
Sokrātā used to receive its priests from the
Catholicos of Persia. Relations with Persia were
established by sea. By the time of Muhammad the
South Arabian church was already Nestorian. We
have definite evidence of this in the fact that
Saʿyid, prince of Nejdān, came with the bishop
Iḥyāʾyab to Muḥammad to seek favours. Bar Ḥebraeus
who records the incident adds that the Prophet
gave them a document ordering the Arabs to see
that no injury was done to the Christians and to help
them to rebuild their churches. The priests and
monks were to be exempt from the poll-tax,
which besides was not in general to exceed 4 sūr
for the poor and 12 for the state. According to
another source, the bishop only wrote to Muḥammad.
A passage in a letter of Iḥyāʾyab III (647–648)
shows that the relations between Arabs and
Nestorians were very good. This may be attribu-
ted to the fact that the Christology of the
Nestorians was much more acceptable to the
Muslims than that of the monophysites. Every Nestorian
church in the east possessed its own version of
the letter of protection alleged to have been given
by the Prophet (cf. for example that given by
George Dav. Malech in his History of the Syrian
Nation and the old Evangelical-Apостolic Church
of the East). In any case this letter did not pre-
vent (see below) the proclamation of the dīhād
from which the Nestorians later suffered so much.
The life of the Nestorian Church during the
period from the Muḥammadan conquest to the
establishment of the Mongols need not detain us
here, as it is part of the religious history of the
Christian sects. We need only mention as parti-
cularly concerning Aḏharbaḏān that the Jacobite
and Nestorian rites were rivals there. Thus from
630 to 1265 we have a line of Jacobite bishops.
We know also (Assemani, Bibl. Or., mifi. 709) of
Nestorian bishops both to the east of Lake Urmia
and also in the country of Lake Wān and Central
Kurdistān. It is not always easy to identify the
names found there. We have good evidence of
the antiquity of Nestorianism in Salamas where
there is in the burial ground of Khōsraw an
epitaph of the 11th century recording the name of
Khwso Eskolāy “the student Khusrav” (cf.