

# OBSERVATIONS ON BAR ‘EBROYO’S MARINE GEOGRAPHY

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## ABSTRACT

*Descriptions of the world’s seas are given by Bar ‘Ebroyo (Barbebraeus) in several of his works. An examination of these geographical accounts shows that in composing them Bar ‘Ebroyo has, as usual, used a variety of sources both in Syriac (incl. the Syriac De mundo; Jacob of Edessa’s Hexaemeron or a work dependent thereupon) and in Arabic (incl. works of Bīrūnī; geographers of the “Balkhī” school; Battānī’s Zīj or a related work). A comparison of these accounts also brings to light certain tendencies that Bar ‘Ebroyo developed with the progress of his literary career.*

## INTRODUCTION

When one peruses through works on “Islamic” cartography, it does not take one long to realise that there is essentially one Syriac world map that recurs in such works, namely the map that is usually found in manuscripts accompanying the account of the world’s seas in the Second Base (“on Creation”) of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s *Mnorat qudsbē* (*Candelabrum sanctuarii*, = **Cand.**).<sup>1</sup> Bar ‘Ebroyo is, in other

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<sup>1</sup> At least four versions of the map are accessible in print, namely those taken from mss. **Berlin**, Staatsbibliothek, Preußischer Kulturbesitz,

words, if not the most important, at least the most conspicuous Syriac author in the field of geography as he is in many other fields.

While the versions of this map accessible in print include those which are encumbered with later interpolations (mostly in *gar-shuni*),<sup>2</sup> the place-names given in the simpler, and what must be the original, version of the map can almost invariably be found mentioned in the text of *Cand.*, either in the account of the seas or in the earlier discussion of the “seven climes”.<sup>3</sup> These passages of

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Sachau 81 (190 Sachau), 37v (before 1402/3 A.D.), **Paris**, Bibliothèque nationale, **syr. 210**, 38r (1403/4 A.D.), **Cambridge**, University Library, Add. 2008 (15th c.) and **Paris**, **syr. 299**, 204v (in a copy of the lexicon of Bar ʿAlī, 1499 A.D.). Photographic or schematic reproductions of these maps can be found, besides in Bakos’s edition of *Cand.*, in: R. Gottheil, “On a Syriac Geographical Chart”, PAOS 1888, p. 290ff. (from the Berolinensis, non vidi, reference taken from Chabot, op. cit. infra); J.B. Chabot, “Notice sur une mappemonde syrienne du XIIIe siècle, notes complémentaires publiées d’après les observations de MM. R. Gottheil et C.-A. Nallino”, Bulletin de géographie historique et descriptive 1898.31–43, here p. 40–43 (Paris 210); K. Miller, *Mappae arabicae* (Stuttgart, 1926–31), V.168–172 (Paris 210 and 299) and V, Beiheft, Tafel 81 (Berol. and Cantab.); Y. Kamal, *Monumenta cartographica Africae et Aegyptii* (Cairo, 1926–52), 4/1.1096f. (Parisini and Berol.); G.R. Tibbets, “Part One. Islamic Cartography, 6. Later Cartographical Developments”, in J.B. Harvey & D. Woodward (ed.), *The History of Cartography*, vol. 2, book 1 (Chicago-London, 1992), p. 137–155, here 148, cf. also 147 n. 1 (Berol.); see also E. Honigsmann, *Die sieben Klimata und die πόλεις ἐπίσημοι* (Heidelberg, 1929), 167–178 (Paris 299).

<sup>2</sup> Of the four maps (see n. 1 above), those in the Cantabriensis and Parisinus 299 have the later interpolations, while those in the Berolinensis and Parisinus 210 represent the simpler form of the map. Of the latter, Parisinus 210 is a careless copy where, among other things, the place-names in the 3rd, 6th and 7th climes are written in the reverse order of what should be the case. The Berolinensis is clearly the better copy and the contours of the seas there too are likely to represent fairly accurately the contours drawn by Bar ʿEbroyo himself. – One further manuscript of *Cand.*, photographs of which I have been able to see through the kindness of the owner and the good offices of Prof. Hans Daiber (in the collection of Mr. Elias Assad, London, olim al-Ḥasaka, dated 1405 A.D.), contains the map in its simple form without the interpolations, but is drawn in the form of a rectangle rather than the usual semi-circle.

<sup>3</sup> In *Cand.* II.3.3.1 and II.3.2.1, ed. J. Bakos, *Le candélabre des sanctuaires de Grégoire Aboulfaradj dit Barhebraeus*, PO 22/4, 24/3 (Paris, 1930–3), 95–102 (seven climes), 150–166 (seas); Yuliyos Yesuʿ Çiçek, *Mnorat qudsbē meṭṭul sbetessē ʿidtonoyoto d-Yuḥannon Bar ʿEbroyo mafryono d-madnho* (Glane/Losser, 1997), col. 74–77, 79 (seven climes; columns 78 and 79 are

*Cand.*, however, are not the only places where Bar ʿEbroyo deals with geography. Similar descriptions of the world’s seas can be found in a number of other works by him, namely the *Ktobo d-ṣalgē* (*Liber radiorum*, = **Rad.**), the *Sulloqo hawnono* (*Ascensus mentis*, = **Asc.**), the *Ethicon* (= **Eth.**) and the *Ḥewat ḥekmto* (*Butyrum sapientiae*, = **But.**).<sup>4</sup>

The passages of *Cand.* and *Rad.* dealing with the seas received some attention over a century ago in 1890 when Richard Gottheil published them with an English translation.<sup>5</sup> The relevant parts of *Asc.* and *Cand.* Base II received further attention when François Nau and Ján Bakoš published their editions of these works with

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printed in the wrong order), 108–117 (seas). – The page and line references below, unless otherwise indicated, are to Bakoš’s edition.

<sup>4</sup> **Rad.** I.3.1, Rays (ṣalgē) 5–7: facsimile edition, *Ktobo d-ṣalgē w-shuroro d-shetessē ʾidtonoyoto men syomē d-abun qaddisho Mor Grigoriyos mafryono d-hu Bar ʿEbroyo. Book of Zelge by Bar-Hebraeus. Mor Gregorius Abulfaraj the Great Syrian Philosopher and Author of Several Christian Works 1226–1228* (Istanbul: Zafer Matbaası, 1997; copied by Yeshuʿ b. Gabriel of Zaz in 1996 from an exemplar copied by Malke b. Enosh of ʿAinwardo in 1887 A.Gr., i.e. from Bodl. Or. 467), here 35.16–38.16. – **Asc.** II.1.3–4: ed./tr. F. Nau, *Le livre de l’ascension de l’esprit sur la forme du ciel et de la terre. Cours d’astronomie rédigé en 1279 par Grégoire Aboulfarag, dit Bar-Hebraeus*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1889), 133.12–136.17. – **Eth.** IV.13.5: ed. P. Bedjan, *Ktābā d-itiqon d-ʿal myattrut dubbārē men syāmē d-Bar ʿEbrāyā. Ethicon, seu Moralia Gregorii Barhebraei* (Paris-Leipzig, 1898) 452.18–454.10; ed. Y.Y. Çiçek, *Ktobo d-itiquon d-ʿal myattrut dubbārē men syomē d-Mor Grigoriyos Yuḥannon Bar ʿEbroyo mafryono d-madnho* [Glane/Losser, 1985], 236a 6–b 24). – **But.**, Book of Minerals (= Min.) V.i.1–3: text and translation in Takahashi, “Aristotelian Meteorology in Syriac. Barhebraeus, *Butyrum sapientiae*, Books of Minerals and Meteorology. Edition, Translation and Commentary”, Diss. Frankfurt, 2002; manuscripts used: Florence, Laur. or. 83 (olim Palat. 187; dated 1340 A.D.; = F); London, BL Or. 4079 (1809 A.D.; = L); BL Or. 9380 (1892 A.D.; = I); Vat. syr. 469 (1804 A.D.; = W); Princeton Theological Seminary, Nestorian 25 (19th c.?: = P); Vat. syr. 613 (1887 A.D.; = V). – There is also a brief list of the seas in the *Anṣar rožē* (*Horreum mysteriorum*, = **Horr.**) in the scholia on Gen. 1:9 (ed. M. Sprengling & W.C. Graham, *Barhebraeus’ Scholia on the Old Testament*, Part I: Genesis–II Samuel [Chicago, 1931] 10.21–23), where Bar ʿEbroyo mentions the Ocean with its gulfs (lit. “ears”, *ednoto*), the “Sea Adrias and of Syria” (i.e. the Mediterranean), the “Pontus”, and the seas of “Reed (*suf*)”, “Elam” and “India”.

<sup>5</sup> R. Gottheil, “Contributions to the History of Geography. II. Candelabrum Sanctorum and Liber Radiorum of Gregorius Bar ʿEbrāyā”, *Hebraica* 7 (1890) 39–55. – Gottheil also covered the parts of these works dealing with the rivers and lakes. These parts will not be considered in the present study.

French translations, respectively, in 1899 and 1930–3. Not much work, however, has been done since then on these geographical accounts. This means that we have as yet no translations published in a Western language of the relevant parts of *Eth.* and *But.*, while the translations of *Cand.*, *Rad.* and *Asc.* that do exist require some correction. It has seemed not unworthwhile under these circumstances to provide new translations of the accounts of the seas in these five works and to provide some comments on points of interest in them, mainly in connection with the sources used by Bar ʿEbroyo.

In what follows the order of presentation will be that of the passages in *Cand.*, where we begin with a description of the Mediterranean (ed. Bakos 154.3–155.5) and move on to the Outer Ocean (155.5–158.1) and then to the Caspian Sea (158.3–12). Translations of the passages of *Cand.* will be followed by those of the related passages in the other four works and then by comments on points of interest in these passages. The order of the passages in the four works other than *Cand.* is as follows:

*Rad.*: Outer Ocean (I.3.1.5; ed. Istanbul 35.16–37.6); Mediterranean (I.3.1.6; 37.6–38.6); Pontus and Maeotis/Caspian (I.3.1.7; 38.6–16).

*Asc.*: Outer Ocean (II.1.3; ed. Nau 133.12–134.16); Seas inside the Habitable World (II.1.4; 134.17–136.17), including the Mediterranean (134.22–135.15); Lakes (II.1.5; 136.18–137.18), including the Pontus and Maeotis/Caspian (136.21–137.19).

*Eth.*: Outer Ocean (IV.13.5; ed. Bedjan 452.18–453.11); Mediterranean (453.11–18); Other Seas, including the Pontus, “Hyrcanian” (Caspian) Sea, Sea of Reed and Sea of Elam (453.18–454.2).

*But.*: Mediterranean (Book of Minerals, Chap. V, Section 1, Theory 1–2); Pontus and Maeotis/Caspian (V.1.2, end); Outer Ocean (V.1.3).

Among works that may have been available to Bar ʿEbroyo in Syriac, reference will be made in the following paragraphs to such works as the Syriac version of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *De mundo* by Sergius of Rishʿaino (ob. 536), Jacob of Edessa’s (c. 640–708) *Hex-*

*aemeron* (= *Hex.*) and the anonymous *Causa causarum* (11th c.?),<sup>6</sup> as well as the *Hexaemeron* of Moses bar Kepha (833–903)<sup>7</sup> and the *Book of Treasures* (= *Tbes.*) of Severus Jacob bar Shakko (ob. 1240/1), both of whom mostly closely follow Jacob of Edessa’s account in their accounts of geography. Among works dealing with geography in Arabic, I shall have occasion to compare the works of Bar ʿEbroyo with those of Abû al-Raiḥân al-Bîrûnî (973–1048), whose *K. al-taḥḥîm li-awâ’il šinâʿat al-tanjîm* appears in fact to have been the source of large parts of the Second Base of *Cand.*,<sup>8</sup> as well as with those of the geographers of the so-called “Balkhî” school (incl. Iṣṭakhrî, ob. 934; Ibn Ḥauqal, ob. 980; Muqaddasî, ob. 985). Another group of geographical accounts we shall be concerned with is that in Battânî’s (858–929) astronomical tables (زيج), together with the closely related accounts in Ibn Rusta (fl. ca. 922) and Kharaqî (ob. 1138/9). Reference will often be made also to other works of Bar ʿEbroyo, such as the first, political, part of his *Makṭbonut ṣabnê* (*Chronicon*, = *Chron.*) and his *Anṣar roṣṣê* (*Horreum mysteriorum*, = *Horr.*), along with the works used as sources in these works, such as the *Chronicle* of Patriarch Michael I (the Elder, Syrus) and Juwainî’s *History of the World Conqueror* (*Târikḥ-i jahāngushâ*).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> On the date of this work, see G.J. Reinink, “Communal Identity and Systematisation of Knowledge in the Syriac ‘Cause of All Causes’”, in P. Binkley (ed.), *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts. Proceedings of the COMERS Congress, Groningen, 1–4 July 1996* (Leiden-New York-Cologne, 1997), 275–288, here 287 with n. 51.

<sup>7</sup> I follow J. Reller (*Mose bar Kepha und seine Paulinusauslegung, nebst Edition und Übersetzung des Kommentars zum Römerbrief* [Wiesbaden, 1994] 33) here in placing Bar Kepha’s date of birth in 833 rather than in 813.

<sup>8</sup> See Takahashi, “The Greco-Syriac and Arabic Sources of Barhebraeus’ Mineralogy and Meteorology in *Candelabrum of the sanctuary*, Base II”, *Islamic Studies* (Islamabad) 41:2 (2002) 215–269, esp. 247–252, 255f.

<sup>9</sup> The editions (ed.), translations (tr.) and manuscripts (ms.) used are as follows: *De mundo*, Syriac version (= **De mundo syr.**): ed. de Lagarde (1858) 134–158; partial tr. Ryssel (1880); cf. also the comments on de Lagarde’s edition in A. Baumstark, *Lucubrations Syro-Graecae* (Leipzig, 1894); and the Arabic versions edited by Brafman (Diss. 1985). – **Jacob of Edessa**, *Hexaemeron*: ed. Chabot (1928); tr. Vaschalde (1932). On the relationship of Jacob’s geographical account to Ptolemy’s *Geography*, see now M.G. Schmidt, *Die Nebenüberlieferung des 6. Buches der Geographie des Ptolemaios. Griechische, lateinische, syrische, armenische und arabische Texte* (Wiesbaden, 1999) 57–66, with the literature cited there. – **Moses bar Kepha**, *Hexaemeron*: mss. Paris, syr. 241 and syr. 311; tr. Schlimme (1977). – **Severus Jacob bar Shakko**, *Book of Treasures* (*Ktobo d-simoto*): mss. Paris, syr. 316, London, British Library, Add. 7193; summary in F. Nau, “Notice

The comparison of passages from different works ought also to give us some insights into the relationship between these works

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sur le Livre des Trésors de Jacques de Bartela, Évêque de Tagrit”, JA 9e série 7 (1896) 286–331. – **Causa causerum** (*‘Ellat kul ellon*): ms. Florence, Laur. or. 298, fol. 85r-139r (olim Palat. or. 62 Assemani; wrongly identified as a part of Bar ‘Ebroyo’s *Hewat bekmta* by S.E. Assemani, *Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae et Palatinae codicum mms. orientalium catalogus* [Florence, 1742] 109); tr. Kayser (1893). The edition by Kayser (Leipzig, 1889) was inaccessible to me. – Abû al-Raiḥân Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-**Bîrûnî**, K. *al-taḥbîm li-awâ’il sinâ’at al-tanjîm* (= **Taḥbîm**): facsimile ed./tr. R.R. Wright (1934); Persian version: ed. Humâ’î (1316 h. sh.). – Id., *Ta’rîkh al-Hind* (= **Hind**): ed. Sachau (1887); tr. Sachau (1910). – Id., K. *taḥdîd nibâyat al-amâkîn* (= **Taḥdîd**): ed. Bulgakov-Aḥmad (1962). – Abû ‘Abd-Allâh Muḥammad b. Jarîr b. Sinân al-**Battânî** al-Ṣâbî al-Ḥarrânî, *al-Zij al-ṣâbî*: ed./tr. Nallino (1899–1907) [the references without volume numbers are to vol. III, which contains the Arabic text]. – Abû ‘Alî Aḥmad b. ‘Umar **Ibn Rusta**, K. *al-a’lâq al-naḥṣa*, Book VII: ed. de Goeje. (1892); tr. Wiet (1955). – Abû Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-**Kharaqî**, *Muntabâ al-idrâk fî taqâsîm al-aḥlâk*: excerpt in Nallino, op. cit. (1899–1907), I.169–175 (As noted by Wright in his edition of Bîrûnî, *Taḥbîm*, p. 121 n.2, this passage of Kharaqî, who in fact names “al-Jaihânî and others” as his source, looks very much like a conflation of the material which he derived from Jaihânî and shares with Battânî and Ibn Rusta with the account of the seas in Bîrûnî, *Taḥbîm*). – Abû Ishâq Ibrâhîm b. Muḥammad al-Fârisî al-**Iṣṭakhrî**, K. *al-masâlik wa-l-mamâlik*: ed. de Goeje (1870). – Abû al-Qâsim **Ibn Ḥauqal** al-Naṣībî, K. *ṣîrat al-arḍ*: ed. Kramers, (1938–9); tr. Kramers-Wiet (1964). – Shams al-Dîn Abû ‘Abd-Allâh Muḥammad al-**Muqaddasî**, *Aḥsan al-taqâsîm fî ma’rifat al-aqâlîm*: ed. de Goeje (1906). – **Hudûd al-‘âlam**: tr. Minorsky (1937). – **Yâqût** al-Ḥamawî al-Rûmî (1179–1229), K. *mu’jam al-buldân*: ed. Wüstenfeld (1866–73); partial tr. Jwaideh (1959). – Naṣîr al-Dîn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-**Ṭûsî** (1201–74), *Tadhkira fî ‘ilm al-bai’a* (= *Tadhkira*): ed./tr. Ragep (1993). – Id., *Risâla-i Mu’înîya*: facsimile ed. Dânishpazhûh (1355 h. sh.). – Zakarîyâ b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmud al-**Qazwînî** (ca. 1203–1283), *‘Ajâ’ib al-makhlûqât* (= *‘Ajâ’ib*) and *Âthâr al-bilâd* (= *Âthâr*): ed. Wüstenfeld, (1848–9); partial tr. of *‘Ajâ’ib*, Ethé (1868). – ‘Imâd al-Dîn Ismâ’îl b. Muḥammad b. ‘Umar **Abû al-Fidâ’** (1273–1331), *Taqwîm al-buldân*: ed. Reinaud-de Slane (1840). – Shams al-Dîn Muḥammad b. Abî Ṭâlib al-**Dimashqî**, K. *nukhbat al-dahr*: ed. Mehren (1866); tr. Mehren (1874). – Bar ‘Ebroyo, **Chron.**: references, unless otherwise indicated, are to ed. Bedjan (1890); also ed. Bruns-Kirsch (1789); facsimile ed./tr. Budge (1932). – **Hor.**: various editions and manuscripts. – **Michael**, **Chron.**: ed./tr. Chabot (1899–1910) [the references without volume numbers are to vol. IV, which contains the Syriac text]. – ‘Alâ’ al-Dîn ‘Aṭâ Malik b. Muḥammad **Juwainî**, *Târikh-i jahângushâ*: ed. Qazwini (1912–37); tr. Boyle (1958). – The English translations of the passages, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.

and into the manner in which Bar ʿEbroʾy altered his methods of composition during his literary career.

Concerning this aspect of the study, it should be pointed out from the outset that *Cand.* is the earliest of the five works under consideration, the probable date for the composition of its Second Base being 1266/7 A.D.<sup>10</sup> For the composition of *Asc.* and *Eth.*, too, we have the definite date of 1279 A.D.<sup>11</sup> Manuscripts of *But.* tell us that the part of this work dealing with the natural sciences, the part which concerns us here, was finished on 22nd August 1285, while the work as a whole was completed on 8th February 1286, a little less than six months before the author's departure from this world.<sup>12</sup> The date of *Rad.* is uncertain, but given that it is to a large extent a summary of *Cand.*, its date can be placed after that of *Cand.* with some safety. We also have some clues for the *terminus ante quem* for the composition of *Rad.* in that this work is mentioned by Bar ʿEbroʾy in three of his other works, the *Swod sufiya*, *Anṣar roṣṣé* (= *Horr.*) and *K. d-buddoyé* (*Nomocanon*).<sup>13</sup> Of these three, the usually accepted period for the composition of *Horr.* is mid-Dec. 1277 to 3rd Aug. 1278 (1589 A.Gr.) given in the colophon of ms. Vat. syr. 282 and reported by J.S. Assemani in his *Bibliotheca Orientalis* (II.277).<sup>14</sup> The colophon, however, of ms. Laur. or.

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<sup>10</sup> See ed. Bakos, 221.6–8, where Bar ʿEbroʾy talks of 1575 A.Gr. (1263/4) as being “three years ago”. Cf. Takahashi, “Simeon of Qalʾa Rumaita, Patriarch Philoxenus Nemrod and Bar ʿEbroʾy”, *Hugoye* IV/1 (2001) n. 45.

<sup>11</sup> For *Eth.* we have the exact date of completion, 15th July 1279 in Maragha, given, for example, in mss. British Library, Add. 7194 (F. Rosen & J. Forshall, *Catalogus codicum orientalium qui in Museo Britannico asservatur*. Pars prima, codices syriacos et carshunicos amplectens [London, 1838] 85) and Laur. or. 298, 81r 14f. (in a list of Bar ʿEbroʾy's works); cf. H. Teule, *Gregory Barhebraeus. Ethicon (Memrā I)* (Louvain, 1993) versio ix-x. – For *Asc.*, see ed. Nau (1899) texte 26.4f., 196.10f., traduction (intro.) p. iii.

<sup>12</sup> For the first date, ms. Birmingham, Mingana syr. 310, 216r; for the second, ms. Florence, Laur. or. 83, 227r.

<sup>13</sup> *Swod sufiya* I.4, ed. H.F. Janssens, *L'Entretien de la sagesse. Introduction aux oeuvres philosophiques de Bar Hebraeus* (Liège-Paris, 1937) 54.5, tr. 173; *Horr.* in II Thess. 2:3, ms. Bodl. Hunt. 1, p. 145b 50; and *K. d-buddoyé/Nomocanon* VII.9, ed. P. Bedjan, *Nomocanon Gregorii Barhebraei* (Paris-Leipzig, 1898) 106.10f. (mentioned there together with *Cand.*).

<sup>14</sup> Vat. syr. 282 is itself dated 1633 A.D. and was copied from an exemplar dated 1353/4. The same date of composition is given in BL Or. 12957, reportedly copied in 1353/4 and 1437/8, whereby it is unclear whether 1353/4 is the date of this manuscript itself or its exemplar, but

230 (itself copied in 1278 A.D.) gives the date of composition as mid-Dec. 1271 to 9th July 1272 (1583 A.Gr.),<sup>15</sup> while in ms. Berol. Sachau 326 (182 Sachau; copied in 1297/8), too, the letter indicating the last digit of the year is evidently a *gomal*, = “3” (i.e. “1583”), even if some have tried to emend this to *tet* (= 9) to make the date accord with that given by Assemani.<sup>16</sup> If this earlier date of 1272 for *Horr.* is correct, the date of composition of *Rad.* will have to be placed before that date, *unless* we allow for continued revision of these works by the author after their original composition.

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the coincidence of this date with that of the exemplar of Vat. syr. 282 suggests at any rate that the two manuscripts are related.

<sup>15</sup> See S.E. Assemani (1742) 68; R. Schröter, *Gregorii Bar-Hebraei scholia in Psalmum VIII, XL, XLI, L* (Breslau, 1857). The same date is also given in ms. Bodl. Hunt. 1 (itself dated ca. 1498), while two further manuscripts reportedly give mid-Dec. 1271 as the date of completion (as opposed to commencement) of the work (ms. Charfeh, ancient fonds, syr. 1.4, see J. Parisot, “La bibliothèque du séminaire syrien de Charfé”, ROC 4 [1899] 150–174, here 152; ms. olim coll. Ya‘qûb b. Buṭrus Sâkâ, no.1 [now with Metr. Ishâq Sâkâ?], see B. Dâniyâl, “Al-shâ‘ir Ya‘qûb Sâkâ (1864–1931)”, Journal of the Iraq Academy, Syriac Corporation 6 [1981/2] 301–340, in connection with the present location of the manuscript, see I. Sâkâ, *Mimre mgabbye men mushhoto d-qashshisbo Ya‘qub Sâkâ*, 2nd ed. [Atshâna, 1999] p. 12). – It may be noted that the second colophon in Laur. or. 230 gives the date of the copy as Tue. 24th Ab 1589 A.Gr. (see Schröter [1857] 2). This date was read by S.E. Assemani (1742) 68 as 3rd Ab 1589 (presumably misreading “*yum tlotô*”, “Tuesday”, as the date instead of the day of the week), which happens to be the same as the date given for the completion of the work in Vat. syr. 282. This error of Assemani’s suggests to us the possibility that the date of composition given in Vat. syr. 282 may have arisen out of the conflation of the two colophons in Laur. or. 230, combined with a similar misreading.

<sup>16</sup> So S. Kaatz, *Die Scholien des Gregorius Abulfaragius Bar Hebraeus zum Weisheitsbuch des Josua ben Sira* (Berlin-Frankfurt, 1892) 6, n.1; E. Sachau, *Verzeichnis der syrischen Handschriften der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin* (Berlin, 1899) 596; cf. J. Göttberger, *Barhebraeus und seine Scholien zur Heiligen Schrift* (Freiburg, 1900) 60, n.4. – Some further support for the earlier date of 1272 is provided by Sbath’s report that an Arabic translation of *Horr.* which he saw in Jerusalem (apud Metr. Iliyas Hallûlî) had been made from a Syriac manuscript dated 1585 A.Gr./1273/4 A.D. (P. Sbath, *Al-Fibris* [Cairo, 1938–42] no. 1393).



## 1. MEDITERRANEAN SEA

### 1.1. General

*Cand.* [Bakos 154.3–9, Gottheil 47.1–5, Çiçek 111.5–17]: The Universal Sea (*yammo kullonoyo*) which is outside the whole Habitable World (*'omarto*) and surrounds the whole earth like a single island is called the Atlantic and the Oceanus. Some call its western side in particular the Oceanus. To this [ocean] a narrow mouth (*fumo ališo*) is open from inside [the Habitable World] in the west, which is called the Passage of Hercules (*ma'barto d-'RQLYS*). There, too, are the *Stelae* (*STYL'S*), or Pillars (*qoymoto*), of Hercules. This mouth widens out as it proceeds (*rodê*) westwards and forms the gulf (*'ubbo*) of that sea Adrias (*haw yammo 'DRYWS*), which is the Sea of the Romans and the Sea of Syria (*yammo d-rumoyê w-yammo d-suriya*).

*Rad.* [Istanbul 35.16–18, 37.7–12, Gottheil 53.1, 53.16–54.4]: Ray (*zalgo*): The sea Oceanus surrounds the whole Habitable World (*me' amronito*) like a single island. ... Ray: Here [sc. by the Isles of the Blessed and Gadeira] a narrow mouth is open, whose width is only seven miles, where the *Stelae* (*STLS*), or Pillars, of Hercules (*HRQLYS*), are. It makes a breach (*tora'*) and passes through the middle of the Habitable World (*'omarto*). It extends towards the east [in] a space (*wa'do*) 5,000 miles in length and 800 in width, and forms this sea of us westerners called the Adriatic.

*Asc.* [Nau 134.19–135.4]: While the Universal Sea surrounds the whole Habitable World (*'omarto*) in a circle (*qiqlošo'it*) like a single island, many tongues (*leshshbone*) enter from it into (the Habitable World). The largest tongue among them is the one that enters [the Habitable World] from the narrow mouth, which is opposite the Isles of the Blessed, whose width is only seven miles, and where the Pillars (*qoymoto*) of Hercules are. It extends inside the Habitable World towards the east [in] a space 5,000 miles in length and 800 in width, and forms this great sea called the Adriatic, ...

*Eth.* [Bedjan 458.18–20, 459.10–13; Çiçek 236a 6–9, 23–27]: On this day, as the waters gathered in one place, the Universal Sea was formed, which surrounds the earth like a belt (*qamro*). [Issuing] from it, the particular seas gain mastery (*eshtalla'*) over the face of the earth in various places. ... Through the breach opposite the Isles of the Blessed, where the Pillars of Hercules are, this sea

called the Adriatic enters like a tongue from the Universal Sea into the Habitable World.

*But.*, Min. V.i.1: That sea which surrounds the whole earth like a single island is called the Atlantic. In the west a narrow mouth is open to it at the *Stelae* (*STLS*), or Pillars, of Hercules. Through it it enters the Habitable World as if into some harbour and forms this well-known sea which is called the Oceanus [sic] by many.<sup>17</sup> ... V.i.2.: In the south of this sea there are two gulfs and in them are two islands called the Greater and Lesser Syrtes. In its northern (side) are three gulfs, the Sardinian (*SDRWNYQWN* cod. F, *SRDWNYQWN* ceteri), the Galatian (*GLTYQWN* cod. F) and the Adriatic (*DRYNWS* cod. F), and after these a slanting gulf called the Sicilian (*SQYLYQWN*).

Cf. *De mundo* syr. 139.16–21, 139.23–140.1 [< gr. 393a 16–21, 23–28]: That sea which is outside the whole Habitable World is called the Atlantic and the Oceanus. It also flows around us here. Because on the west a narrow mouth (*fumo ališo*) is open to it from the inside—at what are called the *Stelae* (*STLWS*) of Hercules—its flow proceeds into this sea by us, as if into some harbour, and thus widens out little by little here, spreading out until it embraces (*lobek* < *perilambánō*) the large gulfs which adjoin each other. ... It is said first to widen out to the right after proceeding from the *Stelae* (*STLS*) of Hercules and is divided into two gulfs and passes the islands called the Syrtes, one of which they call the Greater Syrtes and the other the Lesser Syrtes. On the other, northern, side it does not widen out immediately in the same way, but makes there too three gulfs (*\*ubbin*),<sup>18</sup> that called the Sardinian (*SWRDWNYQWN*), that called the Galatian (*GLTYQWN*) and the Great Adriatic (*DRY'S rabbo*). After these is another slanting gulf which is called the Sicilian (*SQYLYQWN*).

There are, I believe, sufficient similarities between the above passages of *Cand.* and *De mundo* syr. to allow us to identify the latter

<sup>17</sup> “Oceanus”: This is the reading of the great majority of manuscripts (*WQYNWS* codd. MWPL; *WQYNWS* cod. V). Cod. F has *DRY'S* over an erasure, under which the ending *-NWS* of the original reading can be deciphered.

<sup>18</sup> In the Greek original of the *De Mundo*, the northern subdivisions of the Mediterranean are called “seas” (*pelágē*) as opposed to “gulfs” (note 393a 26: *ouk éti homoiós apokolpoúmenos*). The Syriac version, which Bar 'Ebroyo is following, ignores this distinction.

as one of the principal sources of the former here (e.g. “called the Atlantic and the Oceanus”, “narrow mouth”, “*Stelae* of Hercules”). A number of elements in the passage of *Cand.*, however, are suggestive of the use also of an Arabic source, such as the names “Sea of the Romans” and “Sea of Syria” for the Mediterranean (cf. arab. *baḥr al-rûm* and *baḥr al-shâm*) and the mention of the “passage” (*maʿbarto*), along with the “pillars”, of Hercules. In connection with the latter it may be noted that the “Passage of Hercules” (*maʿbarat Hîrqlîs*) is precisely the term used for the Strait of Gibraltar by Bîrûnî in his *Taḥîm* (123.5).

The notion of the Ocean surrounding the Habitable World (oekumene) as if the latter were “a single island” can also be found in the *De mundo*, not in the passage quoted above but a little earlier at *De mundo* syr. 138.18–19.<sup>19</sup> The comparison, however, of the Ocean to a “belt” (*qamro*), which we find in the part of *Eth.* quoted above and at a later point in *Cand.*, is not in the *De mundo* and this comparison allows us to connect the passages in question in *Cand.* and *Eth.* with Bar Kepha.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *De mundo* syr. 138.18–19 (< gr. 392b 21–22): “... because they did not discern that the whole habitable world [*yotebto* here, but *ʿomarto* 138.17] was a single island (*hdo gozarto*), surrounded by that sea called the Atlantic”.

<sup>20</sup> *Cand.* [Bakos] 157.11–158.1: “Thus the whole Habitable World lies (*foysbo*) like a single island inside the Universal Sea and (the latter) surrounds (*hdir*) the earth like a crown (*klilo*) the head and a belt (*qamro*) the loins”. – Cf. Bar Kepha, *Hex.*, Paris syr. 311, 46r a 6–10: *ʾWQYNWS man itaw yammo haw rabbo, haw d-it noshin d-omrin meṭṭuloteh, da-krik l-kulloh arʿo ak klilo l-risho w-ak qamro l-haṣṣo* (“The Oceanus is that great sea, concerning which some say that it encircles the whole earth like a crown the head and a belt the loins”). The comparison with the belt is missing at the corresponding place in ms. Paris syr. 241 (172r 29–v3) and is hence also missing in Schlimme’s translation (p. 572). Interestingly, it is also there in the Parisinus (syr. 316, 172v 15–18) of Bar Shakko, *Thes.*, but is missing in the Londinensis (Add. 7193, 70r b20–21). – The comparison with a crown is attributed to Aristotle in Kharāqî [Nallino (1899–1907)] I.175.13f., as well as in Qutb al-Dîn al-Shîrāzî’s *Nāhiyat al-idrâk* (partial tr. E. Wiedemann, “Beiträge zur Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften XXVII”, Sitzungsberichte der physikalisch-medizinischen Societät zu Erlangen 44 [1912] 1–40, here 31) and id. *al-Tuhfa al-shâbîya* (sec. Nallino, I.173 n.(1)). – For further instances in Syriac talking of the Ocean surrounding the earth/habitable world, see Payne Smith, *Thesaurus syriacus* (Oxford, 1879–1901) [= *Thes. syr.*] col. 88, s.v. *ʾWQYNWS*; also Ps.-Berosus, ed. G. Levi della Vida, “Pseudo-Berosus siriaco”, RSO 3 (1910) 7–43, 611–612, here 15.8–9. – The notion is, of course, also very much present in the term

In *Cand.*, *Rad.*, *Asc.* and *Eth.* (also in *Hor.*), though not in *But.*,<sup>21</sup> Bar ʿEbroyo follows earlier Syriac authors in calling the Mediterranean the “Adriatic”.<sup>22</sup> The spelling of the word varies, but the most frequently encountered forms in earlier authors are ʾDRYʾS and ʾDRYWS.<sup>23</sup> Of these the latter seems to be the preferred form in Bar ʿEbroyo.<sup>24</sup> The origin of the forms ending in -NWS, which we encounter at *Asc.* 135.4, *Eth.* [Bedjan] 453.12, *But.* Min. V.i.1 (ʾDRYʾNWS) and *Chron.* [Bedjan] 449.6 (ʾDRYNWS), remains a mystery,<sup>25</sup> unless we can assume some confusion in Bar ʿEbroyo’s mind with the name of the Roman emperor Hadrian,<sup>26</sup> or some vague influence of the ending of the word “Oceanus” (ʾWQY[ʾ]NWS).

The close similarity between the passages of *Rad.* and *Asc.* quoted above requires no further comment. The similarity between the geographical accounts in these two works (also, to an extent, the account in *Eth.*) will also be apparent in much of the rest of this paper.<sup>27</sup>

The names of the gulfs which Bar ʿEbroyo adds in *But.* are clearly taken from the Syriac version of the *De mundo*, which is also

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frequently used in Arabic for the Ocean, *al-baḥr al-muḥîṭ*, the “surrounding sea”.

<sup>21</sup> On *But.*, see pp. 88–89.

<sup>22</sup> R. Payne Smith, *The. syr.* 64 s.v. ʾDRYʾS; cf. Nau [1899] tr. 119 n. 2.

<sup>23</sup> So, for example, Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* 99b 3, 35, 100b 2, 7 etc. (ʾDRYʾS); Bar Kephā, *Hex.* Paris syr. 311, 42r b32, 46r a 3 (ʾDRYʾS), 42v a1, 6, 24 (ʾDRYWS); Michael, *Chron.* 149b 29 (ʾDRYWS, tr. I.292), 411b 6, 9 (ʾDRYʾS, ʾDRʾS, tr. II.414), 515c 3 (ʾDRYʾS, III.62).

<sup>24</sup> We find ʾDRYWS at *Cand.* [Bakos] 154.9, 155.1; *Rad.* [Istanbul] 17.5, 38.10; *Asc.* [Nau] 137.3, 140.13–15; *Hor.* in Gen. 1:9 (ed. Sprengling-Graham 10.22, with *yomē*), in Act. 2:10 (ed. Klamroth [1878] 6.5). – ʾDRYʾS at *Cand.* [Bakos] 161.10 cum cod. Paris. (sed ʾDRYWS Berol.), *Rad.* [Istanbul] 37.12 cum cod. Bodl. (sed ʾDRYWS Gottheil cum Paris. et Berol.).

<sup>25</sup> In Greek, the adjectival form “adrianós” is attested in a fragment of Aeschylus (Liddell-Scott-Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. with Supplement [Oxford, 1968] 24b, s.v.). In Syriac, there is an instance where a word ending in -NWS is used for the “Adriatic/Mediterranean” in the *Chronicon ad 724 pertinens* (ed. E.W. Brooks, *Chronica minora II* [Paris, 1904] 351.7: *yammo rabbo HDRYNWS*).

<sup>26</sup> The emperor is mentioned by Bar ʿEbroyo at *Chron.* [Bedjan] 52.13, 22 (ʾDRYNWS).

<sup>27</sup> On the length and breadth of the Mediterranean given here in *Rad.* and *Asc.*, see pp. 105–106 below.

the source of the error whereby Bar ʿEbroyo turns the Syrtes into islands.<sup>28</sup> The *De mundo* also gives us a reason for the rejection of “Adriatic”, if not for its replacement by “Oceanus”, as the name for the Mediterranean as a whole in *But.*, namely, the realisation upon re-reading of the *De mundo* that “Adriatic” was applied there to one of the gulfs within the Mediterranean. The reason for its replacement by “Oceanus” is more difficult to find, but Bar ʿEbroyo’s knowledge that “some call only the western side [of the Universal Sea] the Oceanus” (*Cand.* 154.5) may have had a role to play in causing the confusion here, since the term “Western Sea” (*yammo maʿrboyo*) is already found applied to the Mediterranean in the 6–7th c. Syriac version of Ps.-Nonnos’ scholia on the homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus,<sup>29</sup> and the name “Sea of the West” (*baḥr al-maghrīb*) is then also frequently given to that sea by the Arabs.

## 1.2. Black Sea (Pontus)

*Cand.* [Bakos 154.9–155.1, Gottheil 47.7–8, Çiçek 111.17–20]: From this gulf a tongue (*leshsbho meddem*) goes out (*metyabbal*) and thins out (*metqaṭṭan*), passes by the walls (*sburo*) of Constantinople, and is called the sea of Pontus (*yammo d-PNTWS/PWNTWS*).

*Rad.* [Istanbul 38.6–10, Gottheil 54.11–13]: Ray. The Sea of Pontus is in the land of the Scythians.<sup>30</sup> Its length is 1,300 miles up to Trebizond and its width 300 miles. From it a narrow tongue (*leshsbho ališo*) passes by the walls of Byzantium and is cast (*rmē*) into the Adriatic Sea.

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<sup>28</sup> Concerning the error in *De mundo* syr., see Ryssel (1880) 27, footnote a; Baumstark (1894) 412. – The Syrtes are rightly counted among the gulfs of the Mediterranean by Jacob of Edessa (*Hex.* 100a 18f.) and, following him, by Bar Kepha (*Hex.*, Paris. syr. 241, 172v a14, syr. 311, 46r a19, tr. 572) and Bar Shakko (*Thes.* Paris. syr. 316, 173r 7, BL Add. 7193, 70v a27; cf. Nau [1896] 312).

<sup>29</sup> In the scholia on ‘Invective II’, 35, ed. S. Brock, *The Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Nonnos Mythological Scholia* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 301, tr. p. 151: *GDYR’ ger iteyh ak ma’lono men ’WQ’NWS lwot yammo maʿrboyo*. Some, at least, of the Ps.-Nonnian scholia were known to Bar ʿEbroyo (see Brock [1971] 16, 31, 33).

<sup>30</sup> The “Scythians” here may well be intended as equivalent to Bîrûnî’s “Slavs (and Russians)”, since the equation of *squtoyē* with the Arabic *ṣaqlība* is encountered elsewhere in Bar ʿEbroyo as well as in Syriac lexica (see Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 2715).

*Asc.* [Nau 136.21–137.5]: Among these is the Sea of Pontus, i.e. of Trebizond, but it is called a sea and not a lake because of its size. Its length is 1,300 miles and its width 300 miles. From it a thin tongue passes (‘*obed* ed. Nau: lege ‘*obar*) by the walls of Byzantium and empties (*shodê*) into the Adriatic Sea, just as the Adriatic [flows] into the Oceanus. Some call this tongue the canal (*tura’to*) of Alexander the son of Philip, as if he had opened it.

*Eth.* [Bedjan 453.18–20, Çiçek 236b 6–8]: There are other seas besides this one [sc. the Mediterranean], the Sea of Pontus and Hyrcania in the north ...

*But.* V.i.2: From the Adriatic a thin tongue goes out towards the north and passes by Byzantium and empties into the Sea of Pontus, ...

Cf. Bîrûnî, *Taḥḥīm* 122.15–123.2 [corr. pers. 168.10–13; Yâqût 21.13–16]: Then, in the middle of the Habitable World, in the lands of the Slavs (*saḡâliba*) and Russians (*rûs*) is the sea known as the Pontus among the Greeks and known among us as [the Sea of] Trebizond because (Trebizond) is a port on (its shore). From it a channel (*khalîj*) goes out, which passes by the walls (*sûr*) of Constantinople and continually thins out until it falls into the Sea of Syria.

A number of features in the passage of *Cand.*, as well as those in later works, allow us to connect these passages with the passage of Bîrûnî’s *Taḥḥīm*. Particularly noteworthy among such features is the mention of the “walls” (*sburo*, arab. *sûr*) of Constantinople/Byzantium.

The word “tongue”, *leshshono* (*d-yammo*), is used several times of a narrow stretch of the sea in the Syriac Bible,<sup>31</sup> while the Arabic *lisân* is also frequently used in that sense. As the direct source of the expression here, however, one might reckon the phrase “*leshshono meddem ališo*” at *De mundo* syr. 140.27 (quoted on p. 118 below), whence we have “*leshshono meddem*” in the passage of *Cand.* quoted above and “*leshshono ališo*”, coupled with the verb “*rmê*” as in the *De mundo*, in *Rad.*

Concerning the name for the Black Sea, it may be noted that Bar ‘Ebroyo constantly uses the form “the Sea of Pontus”, evidently unaware of the meaning of the Greek word “*póntos*”. The usual

<sup>31</sup> See Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 1973 s.v. *leshshono*, 4).

Arabic form “*baḥr buntus*” will have favoured the interpretation “Sea of Pontus” and Bar ʿEbroyo knew furthermore that there was a region of Anatolia called the “Pontus”,<sup>32</sup> so that he may have thought that the name of the sea was derived from the region, not vice versa. The error is avoided by Jacob of Edessa et al.<sup>33</sup>

### 1.3. Lands around the Mediterranean

*Cand.* [Bakos 155.1–3, 4–5, Gottheil 47.8–10, 11–12, Çiçek 111.20–24, 27–29]: Thus, to the south of the Adriatic Sea (*yammo ʾDRYWS*) lie (*foysbo*) Alexandria and Egypt (*meşrin*); to its north Constantinople (*QWSTNTYNWPLYŠ*), Rome and the whole land of the Franks (*kulleb atro da-frangiya*).<sup>34</sup> ... [see p. 93 below] ... To its east are the lands of Syria. So much on this sea of ours (*w-holeyn man d-yammo hono dylan*).<sup>35</sup>

*Rad.* [Istanbul 37.11–17, Gottheil 54.2–6]: ... this sea of us westerners called the Adriatic. To its north are Rome, the land of the Franks (*frangiya*), Byzantium (*buzantiya*) and the whole of Europe; to its south, which is called the Sicilian (gulf), are Abyssinians, Nubians, Berbers, Egypt (*iguptos*), Alexandria and the whole of Libya; to its east, which is called the Sea of the Syrians, are Tyre, Sidon and the whole of Asia.

*Asc.* [Nau 135.3–6]: ... this great sea called the Adriatic, to whose west are the Isles of the Blessed, to whose east Palestine, to whose north Great Rome and Byzantium, and to whose south Africa.

*Eth.* [Bedjan 453.13–14, Çiçek 236a 28–30]: To its east is Syria, to its north are Byzantium and Rome, and to its south is Africa.

*But.* V.i.1: To its east is Asia, to its west are the *Stelae*, to its north is Europe and to its south is Libya.

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<sup>32</sup> Bar ʿEbroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 23.17, 57.25, 258.7, 289.20, 317.23, 416.16; cf. also *ibid.* 313.4, 429.4 (*sfor yammo d-PWNṬWS*).

<sup>33</sup> e.g. Jacob, *Hex.* 100a 14, 100b 25.

<sup>34</sup> PRNGY’ with *yomē* Çiçek, without Bakos.

<sup>35</sup> This last sentence was misunderstood by both Gottheil (1890) 41 and Bakoš (“... the lands of Syria and those of this our sea”, “... les terres de Syrie et les terres de notre mer”). – For the designation of the Mediterranean as “our sea”, cf. *De mundo* syr. 149.19f.: *yammo hono da-hwotan* (gr. 393a 19 *bē ésō thálassa*).

Cf. Bîrûnî, *Taʿfîm* 123.2–4 [pers. 168.13–15]: ... the Sea of Syria (*baḥr al-shâm*), to the south of which are the land of Maghrib (*bilâd al-maghrib*; add *wa-ifrîqîya* pers.) up to Alexandria and Egypt (*miṣr*). Opposite them in the north are al-Andalus and al-Rûm (*rûmîya wa-rûm* pers.) up to Antioch. Between the two are Syria (*bilâd al-shâm*) and Palestine.

Although not all the places mentioned in *Cand.* can be found in Bîrûnî's *Taʿfîm*, there is, I believe, sufficient agreement between the two to indicate that the latter is probably the principal source of the former here. It may be noted in particular that the order "south-north-east" is the same in these two works, but is altered in Bar 'Ebroyo's later works ("north-south-east" in *Rad.*, "west-east-north-south" in *Asc.*, "east-north-south" in *Eth.*, "east-west-north-south" in *But.*).

Of the newly-mentioned places in *Rad.*, the Abyssinians and Nubians had already been mentioned in connection with the Ocean in *Cand.* (155.8). The "Sicilian (Gulf)" may be taken from the *De mundo* (syr. 140.1; cf. *But.* Min. V.i.2), although there it is one of the gulfs on the *northern* side of the Mediterranean. Descriptions of the Mediterranean where Tyre and Sidon feature prominently are found in the *Causa causarum* and in Battânî's *Zîj*, as well as the passages of Ibn Rusta and Kharaqî related to the latter.<sup>36</sup>

In *Rad.* Bar 'Ebroyo adds to his list of places the names of the three continents, Europe, Libya and Asia, and in *But.* the list is reduced to that of these continents only, along with the "*Stelae*" in the west. The division of the Habitable World into three continents goes back to the Greeks.<sup>37</sup> The definition of Europe and Libya (our Africa) as lands to the north and south, respectively, of the Mediterranean and of Asia as lands to the east of these is encountered, among Bar 'Ebroyo's Syriac predecessors, in Jacob of Edessa.<sup>38</sup> We

<sup>36</sup> *Causa causarum*, Laur. or. 298, 131v b28; tr. Kayser 339; Battânî, *Zîj* 27.1; Ibn Rusta 84.17; Kharaqî [Nallino] I.174.17.

<sup>37</sup> Arist. *Mete.* 350a 18–b14; *De mundo* gr. 393b 21–394a 4, syr. 140.24–141.9; Ptolemy, *Geog.* VII.5 etc.

<sup>38</sup> Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* 111a 7–28; followed by Bar Kepha, *Hex.*, Paris syr. 241, 168v b15–169.18, Paris syr. 311, 42r b22–43r b11, with a diagram illustrating this on syr. 241, 169r, syr. 311, 43r (tr. Schlimme, p. 561f., diagram on p. 653; diagram from Paris 241 also in J.B. Chabot, "Notice sur une mappemonde syrienne du XIIIe siècle", *Bulletin de géographie historique et descriptive* 1897.98–112, here 98); and Bar Shakkō, *Thes.*, Paris syr. 316, 171r 11–172r 7, BL Add. 7193, 69r b5–70r a10, with a diagram identical to that in Bar Kepha on syr. 316, 172r, Add.



find much the same definition, but with Asia defined as lands to the east of Egypt in an earlier part of *Cand.* (103.12–104.8;  $\approx$  *Rad.* 17.1–8), in a passage where Bar ʿEbroyo mentions that this is the division according to Ptolemy’s *Geography* but for the rest follows the text of Bîrûnî’s *Taḥḥîm* 141.5–10. A similar definition again, but with Asia defined as here in *But.* as the lands to the east of the Mediterranean, is found at *Asc.* 140.11–18.<sup>39</sup>

#### 1.4 Islands in the Mediterranean

*Cand.* [Bakos 155.3f., Gottheil 47.10f., Çiçek 111.24–27]: In it are the famous islands which are best-known to us, such as Cyprus, Samos, Chios, Rhodes and Sicily.

*Rad.* [Istanbul 37.17–38.6; Gottheil 54.6–10]: In this [sea] are five large islands, the smallest of which is Cyprus, whose circumference is 200 miles; [the circumference] of Sardinia [is] 300, of Sicily 500, of Crete 300, of Corsica [*QWRNWS*, Cyrenus] 350. [There are also] five small [islands], Rhodes, *QWMNWS* [ $<$  “Cos and Chios”],<sup>40</sup> Samos, Euboea, Chios, and 252 others which are not well-known (*d-lo mshammon*).

*Asc.* [Nau 135.7–15]: In it are many islands. Five are large, the first of which is Cyprus; its circumference is 200 miles and it is the smallest of them. The second is Sardinia, whose circumference is 300 miles. The third is Corsica [Cyrenus] and its circumference is 300 miles. The fourth is Sicily and its circumference is 500 miles.

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7193, 70r (cf. Nau [1896] 308f.). – Cf. also Michael, *Chron.* 411b 2–10, tr. II.414, giving a similar definition, but with Greater Asia defined as lands to the east of the Mediterranean, in connection with the jurisdictions of the patriarchates of Rome and Constantinople (Europe), Alexandria (Africa) and Antioch (Asia). – The *Causa causarum*, Laur. or. 298, 134v a1–135r b36 (diagram on 134v; tr. Kayser 344–6), gives a rather different tripartite division of the world, which uses the Mediterranean (called there the “Sea of Hellespont”) as a point of reference, but includes India and much of the Middle East (“Elam, Media, Beth Kaldoye, Athor, Mesopotamia”) in Libya (!).

<sup>39</sup> Cf. also Bar ʿEbroyo, *Horr.* in Act. 2:10 (ed. Klamroth [1878] 6.3–5): “‘Asia’: Lesser: Babel and Khurâsân; Greater: all the land to the east of Egypt. – ‘Phrygia and Pamphilia’: the lands to the north of the Mediterranean (*yammo* ‘*DRYW*’); land of the Franks (*frangiya*) etc. – ‘Libya near Cyrene’: the lands to the south of the Mediterranean; Abyssinians (*habashoye*) etc.”

<sup>40</sup> See p. 95–96 below.

The fifth is Crete and its circumference is 300 miles. The smaller [islands] are five [in number] and are: Rhodes, *QWMWS*, Samos, Euboea, Chios; and 250 others which are not famous (*d-lo ṭbibon*).

*Eth.* [Bedjan 453.14–17, Çiçek 236a 30–b 6]: In this tongue (*leshsbono*) are ten well-known (*mshammboto*) islands. Five of them are large, the smallest of them being Cyprus, and five [are] small; and [there are also] 252 others, which, though not famous (*lo ṭbibon*), are nevertheless not devoid of people (*noshuto*).

*But.:* In it are the large islands Sicily, Samos, Chios, Rhodes and Cyprus, as well as many small ones. They all abound in people (*noshuto*) and crops.<sup>41</sup>

The islands named in the above passages may be summarised as follows. For comparison, I also give the Mediterranean islands listed in Jacob of Edessa's *Hex.*, a list which is repeated by Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko.<sup>42</sup>

*Cand.:* Samos, Chios, Rhodes, Cyprus, Sicily

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<sup>41</sup> Although I follow the vocalised manuscripts (LIPV; which are all of relatively recent date) here in reading *‘alloto*, “crops”, it is difficult to rule out the possibility that the author intends us to read *‘elloto*, “things, equipment, wares”, which would make equally good sense. – For this latter meaning of *‘ellto* (reminiscent of fr. “chose”, ital. “cosa” etc.), see Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 2877, s.v., no. 4; Brockelmann, *Lex. syr.* 524a, s.v., no. 7; add to the references there Bar ‘Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 414.7f. (< Juwainī, *Tārīkh-i jahāngushā* I.60.1f., where Juwainī has *jāmah-bā*, “fabrics”); perhaps also ibid. 504.24. – The likelihood of the reading *‘elloto* will be raised if we can assume that Bar ‘Ebroyo had before him some such passage as the following: Ibn Hauqal 203.6–7, 11–12: “In this sea [sc. Mediterranean] are small and large islands and mountains, uninhabited and inhabited by Byzantines (*Rūm*) and Muslims. The most thriving (*ma‘mūr*) in terms of Islam and the population (*nās*) is Sicily, which is the largest of them, the most abundant in provisions (*akṭbarhā ‘uddatan*), the best defended ... [Cyprus and Crete] were islands abounding in goods (*khair*), supplies (*miyar*) and merchandise (*tijāra*) and there was much import and export to and from them” (for further loci similes, see A. Miquel, *La géographie humaine du monde musulman jusqu’au milieu de 11e siècle* [Paris, 1967–88] III.275 n.1).

<sup>42</sup> Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* [Chabot] 100a 21–30. – Bar Kepha, *Hex.*, Paris syr. 241, 172v a 15–23, Paris syr. 311, 46r a20–28, tr. Schlimme 572. – Bar Shakko, *Thes.*, Paris syr. 316, 173r 7–14, BL Add. 7193, 70v a27–b10; cf. Nau (1896) 313.

*Rad.*: 5 large: Cyprus, Sardinia, Sicily, Crete, Corsica [Cyprus]  
5 small: Rhodes, *qwmnw*s, Samos, Euboea, Chios; and 252 others.

*Asc.*: 5 large: Cyprus, Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily, Crete  
5 small: Rhodes, *qwmnw*s, Samos, Euboea, Chios; 250 unnamed islands.

*Eth.*: 5 large, smallest of which is Cyprus; 5 small; and 252 others.

*But.*: Sicily, Samos, Chios, Rhodes, Cyprus

Jacob of Edessa et al.: 5 large: Sardinia, Corsica, Sicily, Crete, Cypruspeninsulas: Peloponnese, Chersonese; and many others.  
small: Rhodes, Cos, Chios, Samos, Euboea, Ithaca; [and many others, Jacob].

It will be seen that the same five islands are named in *Cand.* and *But.* The choice is somewhat surprising, since Samos, Chios and Rhodes are not among the largest islands in the Mediterranean and we see from *Rad.* and *Asc.* that Bar ʿEbroyo knew this, if not when he wrote *Cand.*, at least by the time he wrote *But.* While it is difficult to find a source in Syriac or Arabic where all five of these are named as representative islands in the Mediterranean, a passage where four of them other than Chios (i.e. Cyprus, Samos, Rhodes, Sicily) are named as the principal islands of the Mediterranean can be found in Bîrûnî (*Taʿhîm* 211.6–7; same list thence in Qazwînî, *ʿAjâʾib* 105.5, tr. Ethé 215).

The lists of the islands in *Rad.* and *Asc.* are similar to those in Jacob of Edessa, Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko.<sup>43</sup> The comparison with the list in Jacob of Edessa, in fact, allows us to solve the mystery of the island whose name appears as “*QWMNWS*” (ܩܘܡܢܘܨ)

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<sup>43</sup> A similar list is found in the Ps.-Aristotelian *De mundo*, but the divergence of that list from the list in *Rad./Asc.* is greater: *De mundo* (Greek) 393a 12–15: large: Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Euboea, Cyprus, Lesbos; smaller: Sporades and Cyclades; “others with different names”. – Syriac version [de Lagarde] 139.12–14 (cf. Ryssel [1880] 25 n.1): Sicily, Euboea, Cyprus, Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Peloponnese, Lesbos [ʿSBWʿS]. – Arabic version F [Brafman (1985), text 87.1–3, tr. 176, comm. 219f.]: Sicily, Euboea, Cyprus, Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Lesbos, Peloponnese, Asâbûs. – Cf. also *Causa causarum*, Laur. or. 298 (= F), 132r a9–13 (tr. K. Kayser 339): “Cyprus, Sicily [SYLYQYʿ cod. F], Crete, Rhodes, Samos, Mytilene, Chios [KYWN F] and many others small ones”; 134v a6–9 (tr. 344): “Sicily, Crete, Rhodes, Cyprus etc.”

in *Rad.* and as “*QWMWS*” in *Asc.* It is evidently a corruption of “Cos and Chios” (*QW W-KYWS*, ܩܠܩܘܣܐ).<sup>44</sup> If this supposition, “*QWMNWS/QWMWS*” < “Cos and Chios”, is correct, the islands named in *Rad.* and *Asc.* will be the same as those listed by Jacob of Edessa, Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko, except for the substitution of Chios for Ithaca, so that here again as in *But.* and *Cand.* “Chios” turns out to be an addition by Bar ‘Ebroyo.

The reason for this peculiar interest on Bar ‘Ebroyo’s part in Chios is unclear. A possible explanation may be sought in a passage of his *Chron.* (ed. Bedjan, 8.7–8) where Bar ‘Ebroyo names “Cyprus, Chios, Sicily and twenty others islands” among the lands allotted to the sons of Ham. The connection of this passage of *Chron.* to the geographical accounts as found in *Cand.* etc. may seem rather distant at first, but the division of the world among the sons of Noah is in fact mentioned at an earlier point in *Cand.* and we find furthermore that a significant number of the place-names mentioned at *Chron.* [Bedjan] 7.26–8.12 reappear in the geographical accounts in *Cand.* etc., often in the forms in which they are found there.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> The corruption seems to have begun early, since “Cos and Chios” already appear written as one word (*QWWKYŠ*) in the manuscript of Jacob of Edessa’s *Hexaemeron* dated 837 A.D. and used in Chabot’s facsimile edition of that work (Lyons, syr. 2), while in the Leidensis (66 Gol., dated 1183 A.D.), too, the two words are apparently written together (*QWKYŠ* sec. Chabot’s apparatus, but read as “Suchis”, which suggests *QWWKYŠ*, by J.P.N. Land, “Aardrijkskundige fragmenten uit de Syrische literatuur der zesde en zevende eeuw”, *VMAW.L* 3. R. 3 [1887] 164–193, here 176). It is particularly noteworthy that Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko (though not Jacob of Edessa) in their respective lists first tell us that there are “five small” islands and then go on to give us a list which, if “Cos” and “Chios” are counted separately, contain six names. It is likely, in other words, that Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko, too, like Bar ‘Ebroyo read the letters representing “Cos and Chios” in their sources as one word. Of the manuscripts of the works of these two accessible to me, the oldest (Bar Kepha, Paris syr. 311, copied ca. 1434 A.D.) has “Cos and Chios” written together as one word (*QWWKYŠ*), although we find them written as two words in later manuscripts (Bar Shakko: Paris syr. 316, 1889 A.D.; BL Add. 7193, “recent” sec. Rosen-Forsshall; Bar Kepha: Paris 241, copied in 1508 A.D. in Cyprus [?]; in the last named manuscript, “Ithaca” is missing from the list along with the peninsulas, while “and Chios” appears to be written *WB’YWS*).

<sup>45</sup> viz. Arabia, Hyrcania, Babel, Persia (*PRS*), Inner India (*hendu gawwoyto*), Sheba, Egypt (*mesrin*), Libya, Africa (*FRYQY*), Cyprus, Chios, Sicily, Alans, Turks, Spaniards, Gadeira. – Chios is mentioned once in Aristotle’s *Meteorologica*, a work with which the relevant parts of *Cand.* and *But.*

In *Rad.* and *Asc.* Bar ʿEbroyo gives us the circumferences of the five larger islands, information which is not given in Jacob of Edessa et al. As in the case of the dimensions of the different seas given in these same works (see pp. 105–106 below), the values given here are the same as those given in Battânî’s *Zîj*, except that the circumferences of Cyprus and Corsica (Cyrnus) have been reversed (Cyprus: 350 miles, Corsica: 250 miles, in Battânî), a reversal which is probably due to misreading of the names of these two islands in Arabic (*QBRŠ*, *QRNS*). Battânî’s *Zîj* (or a related work) may also be the source for the “252 other islands” which Bar ʿEbroyo mentions in *Rad.* and *Eth.* (“250” in *Asc.*), since Battânî tells us there that there are “162” islands in the Mediterranean (*Zîj* 27.4), while the 12th c. Latin translation of the *Zîj* by Plato Tiburtinus talks of “262” islands.<sup>46</sup> It will be remembered, of course, that Bar ʿEbroyo mentions ten of the islands by name, so that his total will also be “262”.

## 2. OUTER OCEAN

*Cand.* [Bakos 155.5–157.11, Gottheil 47.12–49.14, Çiçek 111.29–113.29]: The Sea Oceanus, which is outside the Herculean Pillars, with its flow (*redyo*) proceeding southwards, passes by the lands of the Western Arabs and by the Silver Mountain and the Moon Mountains,<sup>47</sup> from whose caves the waters of the River Nile spring (*nobʿin*), and by the lands of the Abyssinians and the lands of the Nubians, i.e. the whole land of the Cushites. At the end (*sanfo*) of this land there extends from it a certain small gulf (*ʿubbo*) towards the north opposite Egypt (*mesrin*), which is called the Sea of Reed

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are closely connected (342 b36, in the name of the mathematician Hippocrates of Chios, as opposed to the more famous physician of Cos). The name is preserved in the Syriac version of Nicolaus Damascenus’ *Compendium of Aristotelian Philosophy* (ms. Cantab. Gg. 2.14, fol. 332v [= p. 12] 13f.: *ippôgratīs d-men KYS TʿSʿLYʿ, w-law haw osyo d-men QW*) and thence at *Cand.* [Bakos] 121.14 (*ippôgratīs d-men KYS*), but this can hardly be the reason why Bar ʿEbroyo includes Chios among the principal islands of the Mediterranean.

<sup>46</sup> Nallino (1899–1907) I.18 n.9.

<sup>47</sup> Of the two names given here, the “Silver Mountain” (given here in *Cand.*, *Asc.*, *Eth.* and *But.*) is, so to speak, the Aristotelian name (*Met.* 350b 14: *tô arguroûn kaloûmenon ôros*), while the other, the “Mountain(s) of the Moon” (< *selênes ôros*; in *Cand.*, *Rad.* and *Asc.*, but not in *Eth.* and *But.*) is the Ptolemaic name (*Geog.* IV.8.3, 6) and the one usually encountered in Islamic geographical literature, as well as in Jacob of Edessa (*Hex.* 113b 36f.).

(*yammo d-suf*), as being the end and extremity (*sawfo w-sokō*) of the great sea. The sons of Israel crossed it on foot and in it the Pharaoh was drowned. Because of the great number of mountains and rocks in this gulf ships are unable to sail through it except during the day and along the shores. That great sea from which this gulf proceeds is called the Red Sea and this [sea], as it flows towards the east, passes by the lands of Sheba and Saba and the whole land which is simply called the South (*taymno*) and where the trees of frankincense are.<sup>48</sup> At the extremity of this sea called the Red, it forms a great gulf towards the north called the Sea of Fârs. On the western side of this sea is the city called Basra and the whole land of Babel and Seleucia and Ctesiphon. On its northern side are all the lands of the Persians and on its eastern side are the lands of the Indians. The Universal Sea which is outside this gulf, as it flows further towards the east, passes by the lands of the Indians and at their extremity forms a gulf towards the north called the Sea of the Indians. To the west of this sea are the lands of the Indians, to its east are the lands of the Tibetans and after them the lands of the Chinese, and to its north are the lands of the Huns or the Turks (*turqis*), who are the Mongols, that is to say, their first land from which they proceeded (*nfaq(w)*).<sup>49</sup> The Universal Sea which is outside this gulf, flowing further towards the east, passes by the famous islands of the Indians [of] which [one] is called Sarandīb and

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<sup>48</sup> Bar 'Ebroyo will have located "Sheba and Saba" in Yemen or more generally in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula. See Bar 'Ebroyo, *Horr.* in Ps. 72:10 (ed. de Lagarde, *Praetermissorum libri duo* [Göttingen, 1879] 182.16, tr. J.L. Siegel [diss. Chicago, 1928] 144), where "Saba" is glossed as "the South/Yemen" (*taymno*). At Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 155.17, "the South/Yemen and the land of Sheba and of Saba" are mentioned among the lands allotted by Caliph al-Mutawakkil to his son Muḥammad al-Muntaṣir in 235 A.H., where Ṭabarī for example, has "Yemen, 'Akk, Ḥadramaut, al-Yamâma, al-Baḥrain ..." (Ṭabarī, III.1395, see partial tr. J.L. Kraemer, *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, vol. 34 [Albany, 1989] 96 with the parallel passages cited there in 95f. n. 326). – In the map accompanying *Cand.*, however, "Sheba and Saba" is found in the northeastern part of the Arabian peninsula, while the southernmost part of the peninsula is taken up by "Inner Yemen" (*taymno gawwoyo*). This is probably to be explained by the fact that Bīrūnī, *Taḥḥīm* 143.15 places "Saba" in the second clime, while placing "the parts of Yemen south of Ṣan'a", "such as Dhofar, Ḥadramaut and Aden", in the first clime (*Taḥḥīm* 143.10f.).

<sup>49</sup> This is reminiscent of the false etymology that derives the name "Turk" from the Arabic *taraka*, "to leave".

another Qumair,<sup>50</sup> as well as the rest of the islands and mountains from which are brought and conveyed those hot, choice and aromatic spices (*sammonê*), clove (*QRNPWL*, arab. *qaranful*), aloe (*WLNGWG*, arab. *alanjû*), pepper (*PLPL*), camphor (*Q'PPWR*, arab. *kâfûr*) etc., as well as precious stones, corundum (*yaqqundo*) etc. In the same way, extending from the east towards the north, it passes by the lands of the Tibetans and the Chinese, by the lands of the Huns, which I have mentioned, by the lands of the Iberians, and by many lands that are desolate, and impassable mountains. It passes also by the great black mountain in the north and the plains of the Qipchaqs and by the land of the Alans. There it forms a gulf from the north to the south, which is called Warang in the language of that place. In the same way, extending from the north towards the west, it passes by the land of the Scythians, by the cities of the Bulgars, by the whole of land of the Franks (*frangiya*) and by the land of Andalus of the Arabs (*tayyoyê*) which now in our day the Franks have conquered. It ends by the Herculean Pillars, whence it began.

*Rad.* [Istanbul 35.18–37.6, Gottheil 53.1–15]: ... Oceanus, which, beginning at the islands of the Blessed and that (island) in the west called Gadeira, flows outside the whole earth towards the south and passes by the Mountains of the Moon, from which the Nile springs. It encircles the Abyssinians and the Nubians and forms the Sea of the Berbers, whose length is 500 miles and breadth at its extremity 100 miles. It flows further and forms the Red Sea, which thins out and extends for 400 miles in length; the breadth of its extremity, which is the Sea of Reed where Israel crossed, is 200 miles. It flows further, encircles the Desert of Pharan,<sup>51</sup> and forms

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<sup>50</sup> ... *gozroto mshammhoto d-bendvoye d-metqaryo SRNDYB wa-hrito d-metqaryo Q'MYR/QMYR* ed. Bakos et Gottheil 49.3; add. *hdo* post *d-bendvoye* ed. Çiçek 113.5–7 (i.e. "... famous islands of the Indians, one which is called ..., another ...). – *Q'MYR* Bakoš cum Parisino et Berolinensi; *QMYR* Gottheil, Çiçek (< cod. Hierosolymitanus) et cod. Vaticanus. Cf. Bîrûnî, *Taḥḥîm* 122.12 (pers. 168.4). Bîrûnî's "Qumair", associated with the Dîbajât islands (Laccadives and Maldives) at *Taḥḥîm*, loc. cit., as well as at *Hind* [Sachau] 103.3, 8 (cf. also id. *Taḥḥîd* [Bulgakov] 138.8), is a touch more likely to be Madagascar/Comoro (Qumr) (so Wright in his edition of *Taḥḥîm*, p. 122 footnote) than Khmer (Qimâr) as suggested by Wiedemann (1912a) 5 n.4 (so also Nallino [1899–1907] I.170 n.8, Jwaideh [1959] 31 n.4), unless it is in fact a conflation of the two.

<sup>51</sup> "Madbro d-foron": mentioned as the place at the end of the Red Sea ("Arabian Gulf") by Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* 101b 19f., Bar Kephā, *Hex.* Paris syr. 241, 172v a29, and Bar Shakkō, *The.* Paris syr. 316, 174r 4.

the Sea of the Elamites—where the Euphrates and the Tigris empty (their waters)—whose length is 1,400 miles and breadth 500 miles. It flows further, encircles the whole of Fârs and India and forms the Sea of India, whose length is 1,600 miles. In it are 1,370 islands, one of which is called Tīrani or Sarandīb. It is very large. For its circumference is 1,300 miles. In it are tall mountains and many rivers and from it are brought the red and blue (*sosgawno*) corundums [i.e. ruby and sapphire]. It flows further and encircles the East and forms the Sea of the Chinese. It flows further and encircles the North; it passes by the desolate mountains of the Huns, and the lands of Bulgars, Scythians and Alans, and forms the Galatian Sea in which are the nineteen islands of Britain.<sup>52</sup> It encircles the land of the Franks (*frangiya*) and joins the Islands of the Blessed and Gadeira where it began.

*Asc.* [Nau 134.4–16; on the Ocean]: This [Ocean] extends northwards and encircles Spain. It passes in the northwest by the land of the Franks (*frangiya*). It stretches to the north outside the Scythians. It reaches the northeast and confines the land of the Inner Turks (*turqis ganwoyê*), who are the Gog and Magog.<sup>53</sup> It is

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Curiously replaced by the “Desert of the Himyarites” and the “Mountain of Pharan” in *Asc.*, concerning the latter of which it may be noted that the “Desert of Pharan” and “Mount Sinai” are found written closely together on the maps accompanying *Cand.*

<sup>52</sup> Earlier Islamic geographers talk of the “twelve” islands of Britain (Battānī 26.29, Ibn Rusta 85.13f., *Hudūd al-‘ālam*, tr. Minorsky 59, §4.24), while Abū al-Fidā’ 187.12 has “eleven”.

<sup>53</sup> The Biblical “Gog and Magog” (Ezech 38:2, also “Magog, son of Japhet” Gen. 10:2), who appear as “Yājūj wa-Mājūj” in the Koran (XVIII.93–98, XXI.96) and play a significant role in Jewish, Christian and Muslim eschatology, were generally identified with the primitive peoples in the north, especially with the Turks and, after their appearance on the scene, Mongols (on the location of Gog and Magog among Koranic commentators and Islamic geographers and historians, see EI<sup>2</sup> XI.232b, s.v. “Yādjudj wa-Mādjudj” [van Donzel-Ott]; on their association with the Mongols, J.A. Boyle, “Alexander and the Mongols”, *CAs* 24 [1980] 18–35; cf. n. 86, on “Gate of Iron”, below). At *Cand.* 99.2f. Bar ‘Ebroyo follows Bīrūnī in locating the “land of the Huns and those enclosed (*hbishoyê*) Gog” at the eastern end of the fifth clime (< *Tafhīm* 144.14f. “land of the eastern Turks and the walled-in Gog [*yājūj al-musanwarīn*]). – For further references to Gog and Magog in Bar ‘Ebroyo, see *Chron.* [Bedjan] 30.9, where Holophernes is said to be “a Magogian, i.e. a Turk” (< Michael. *Chron.* 64a 30f., tr. I.103); *Chron.* 217.15, where a group of “Huns” called “*Guz̄oyê*” (Ghuzz, Oghuz), who “went forth with the emirs of the Sel-



thought to pass behind the impassable mountains which have been mentioned [cf. 133.23–134.1]. It joins the eastern sea of the Manzoyê,<sup>54</sup> i.e. the Chinese. It passes in the southeast by the whole of Inner India,<sup>55</sup> and then extends to the south along Inner Arabia and the Desert of the Himyarites, outside of the Mountain of Pharan. It passes by Egypt (*iguptos*) and the lands of the Berbers and the Cushites and the whole of Africa. In the proximity of the Silver Mountain, which is also called the Moon [Mountain], it becomes imperceptible,<sup>56</sup> but it is thought to unite after it with the Western Sea, from which it began and with which it ends.

*Asc.* [Nau 135.16–136.11; on seas projecting into the Habitable World]: From the southern sea four tongues enter into the Habitable World. The first is the Sea of the Berbers, which is near the

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juks", are said to be children of Magog b. Japheth b. Noah (< Michael, *Chron.* 566a 31, tr. III.149, where, however, Michael talks simply of "Turks" instead of "Huns" etc.); *Horr.* in Ezech. 38:2 (ed. Gugenheimer [1894] 27.10–13; tr. Dean [Diss. 1930] 58), where "Gog and Magog" is glossed as "the Scythians, the sons of Japheth" (this identification with the Scythians goes back at least to Josephus, *Antiquitates judaicae* I.6.1 [123], cf. K. Czeplédy, "The Syriac Legend concerning Alexander the Great" AOH 7 [1957] 231–249, here 233–237); and *But.* Politica I.iii.6 ("Gugoyê" in the northeast; mentioned along with "Arabs" in the southwest). The continuator of Bar 'Ebroyo's *Chron.*, though probably not Bar 'Ebroyo himself, refers several times to the Ilkhanids as the "House of Magog" (ed. Bedjan, 555.7, 560.20, 579.23, 585.2, 586.9; the passage at 555.7, though relating to events just before Bar 'Ebroyo's death, is likely to stems from the pen of the continuator).

<sup>54</sup> "Manzoyê": Nau's anachronistic translation of the word as "Manchus" (cf. Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 2171) is naturally to be rejected. The word also occurs at Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 513.24 and corresponds there to the Arabic/Persian "manzî" used in Juwainî's *Târikh-i jahângushâ* (ed. Qazwini, I.211.15, III.72.1), apparently as an alternative form of "mâchîn/mâjîn" (on which, see EI<sup>2</sup> IX.617, s.v. "al-Şîn, 1." [Bosworth]; cf. Boyle [1958] I.10 n. 17: "Mâchîn, i.e. Southern China, called also Manzî, the Manji of Marco Polo").

<sup>55</sup> As will be clear from the context, as well as the map accompanying *Cand.*, Bar 'Ebroyo's "Inner India" is the eastern parts of India (almost Indochina), rather than Ethiopia as is sometimes the case in Syriac (see Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 1026f. s.vv. *hendu*, *hendwoye*; Michael, *Chron.* tr. I.258 with n.2). – At Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 8.3f., 5, India is divided into four, the "northern" included among the inheritance of Shem and the "inner, outer and southern" included in those of Ham (< Michael, *Chron.* 8a 34, 9b 3, tr. I.18; "outer" not in Michael).

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Ṭūsî, *Tadhkira* [Ragep] 247.19–23.

west; its length is 500 miles and the breadth of its extremity 100 miles. The second is the Red Sea, which thins out and extends 400 miles in length and the breadth of whose extremity, which is the Sea of Reed, is 200 miles. The third is the Sea of the Elamites, into which the Euphrates and the Tigris pour their waters. Its length is 400 miles and its breadth 500 miles. The fourth is the Sea of the Indians, whose length is 1,600 miles. In it are 1,370 islands, the best-known of which is ʿIṣṣirānī, called Sarandīb in the language of that place. Its circumference is 1,300 miles and in it are tall mountains, from which many rivers flow. From it are brought the red corundum [ruby] and other precious stones. From the eastern sea there proceed many tongues whose sizes and properties have not been charted in books. From the northern sea that well-known tongue called the Galatian proceeds. In it are the nineteen islands of Britain, the best-known of which is Thule, the freezing island.

*Eth.* [Bedjan 453.3–10, 453.18–454.2, Çiçek 236a 13–23]: The Universal Sea, beginning in the west where the Isles of the Blessed are, encircles the Silver Mountain, from which the river Nile descends and which is in the southwest. It passes outside the Cushites and the lands of Sheba and Saba to the south. Reaching the southeast, it confines India, and in the east the Chinese, in the northeast the land of Gog and Magog, in the north the Scythians, and in the northwest the Franks and Spaniards, and thus ends where it began. ... There are other seas besides this one, the Sea of Pontus and Hyrcania in the north [cf. p. 90 above], the Sea of Reed in the south, and that of the Elamites, where there is the reversal of the Euripian waters (*ḥfīkut mayyo* 'WRYPY'); when those [waters] flow (*goyḥin*) they cause the ships to ascend, and when they ebb (*toybin*) they cause them to return.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> The to-and-fro of the waters in the Euripus (as a proper noun, properly the strait between Euboea and the Greek mainland) is mentioned by Bar ʿEbroyo in *Cand.* ("Euripus ['WRYPWʿS]", ed. Bakos 153.6, 11, both times in the singular and so probably to be taken as a proper noun; cf. Bakoš's notes ad loc.) and *But.* (Book of Mineralogy, V.iii.3, "euripus" once in plural and once in singular, both times with initial *ḥē* rather than *olaf* as in *Cand.* and *Eth.*). The immediate source used by Bar ʿEbroyo for the information on the Euripus/euripi there may well be a scholion based mainly on Olympiodorus' commentary on Aristotle's *Meteorologica*, which is now lost but was still present in ʿEbroyo's copy of the Syriac version of Nicolaus Damascenus (cf. Olymp. in *Mete.* [Stüve] 128.35–129.4, 134.17–19; on Nicolaus, cf. n. 45 above; on the relationship between Nicolaus, Olympiodorus and Bar ʿEbroyo, see Takahashi [2002a], id. [2002b] 219–

*But.* Min. V.i.3: Outside the *Stelae* the Atlantic flows to the southwest and passes by the Silver Mountain, from which the Nile rises. As it flows eastwards, it encircles the land of the Berbers and the Cushites. In Arabia it forms the gulf of the Red Sea. This (gulf) in fact extends like a thin tongue into Egypt and forms the Sea of Reed. Then, it passes by the land of Sheba and Saba and forms the Sea of Elam, and then the Sea of India. In the southeast it passes by Inner India. It (then) encircles the East and passes by the Chinese. In the northeast it passes by the land of Gog and Magog. In the north [it passes] by the land of the Turks (*turqis*) and the desolate lands and impassable mountains and forms the Sea of Britain, in which is the island of Thule. Then, it passes by the Iberians, Alans, Scythians and Bulgars. In the northwest it passes by Italy<sup>58</sup> and the whole land of the Franks. In the west [it passes] by Spain. It ends where it began, by the *Stelae*.

The passage of *Cand.* above has a number of elements which are specifically Syriac, or at least Biblical, such as the the combination “Sheba and Saba”,<sup>59</sup> and the explanation attributing the name “Sea of Reed” (*yammo d-suf*) to its location at the extremity (*sanfo*) of the great sea, an explanation that is found in Syriac exegetical works and is also given by Bar ʿEbroyo in his *Horr.*<sup>60</sup>

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228). In *But.*, though not in *Cand.*, Bar ʿEbroyo goes on, after talking about the Euripus/euripi, to mention the “ebb and flow” (*tanbo w-meleʿo*) of the waters in the “Sea of Elam and of India”. Here in *Eth.* Bar ʿEbroyo is talking about the “Elamite Sea” (our Arabian/Persian Gulf), but in a conflation, as it were, of the two passages in *But.* applies the adjective “Euripian” to the phenomenon there.

<sup>58</sup> Italy, which does not face the outer Ocean and which had not been mentioned in this context in Bar ʿEbroyo’s earlier works, is out of place here, but on a schematic map of the seas, where Europe is usually drawn as a thin wedge between the Mediterranean and the outer Ocean, Italy or its equivalent in Bar ʿEbroyo’s Vorlage (“Rûm”?) will not have been very far from the Ocean. Cf. *Hudûd al-ʿâlam*, tr. Minorsky 52, §2.2, where the Western Ocean is said to pass by the extreme limit of “Rûm”.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Psalm 72:10. The combination is also found in the passages of *Eth.* (ed. Bedjan, 453.6) and *But.* quoted above, as well as in the list of localities in the second clime at *Cand.* 97.1 (where it corresponds to Bîrûnî, *Taʿhîm* 143.15, *Sabaʿ*).

<sup>60</sup> See, e.g., Ishoʿdad, in Exod. 15:4 (ed. C. van den Eynde, *Commentaire d’Isôdad de Merv sur l’Ancien Testament*, II. Exode-Deutéronome, textus [Louvain, 1958] 29.3), where this is one of several explanations of the name given. – For the explanation in *Horr.*, see ed.

More prominent, however, are the similarities with Arabic works on geography. It is noteworthy, for example, that Bar 'Ebroyo mentions both the "crossing" by the "sons of Israel" and the "drowning of the Pharaoh" in connection with the Sea of Reed. The story, of course, is both Biblical (Exod. 14–15 etc.) and Koranic (X.90 etc.). The first point is duly mentioned by Jacob of Edessa and other Syriac authors at the relevant place. The latter point, the drowning of the Pharaoh, is not mentioned by them, but is frequently mentioned by Islamic geographers of the Balkhi school.<sup>61</sup> Another point of contact with these geographers is the mention of the difficulty of navigation in (our) Red Sea.<sup>62</sup>

Among the elements the passage of *Cand.* above shares with Bîrûnî's *Taḥḥīm*, we might call attention here to such items as the mention of Qumair, along with the list of spices produced in the southern islands,<sup>63</sup> the "lands that are desolate and impassable

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Sprengling-Graham (1931) 120.19–23 (in Exod. 15:4; whence, as often, the explanation has found its way into the definition of "*yammo d-suf*" in the lexicon of G. Karmsedinoyo cited at Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 2577). – See further: *Causa causarum*, Laur. or. 298, 132r b26–28 (tr. Kayser 339; = Bodl. Laud. 123, 292r, cited in Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. cit.); Syriac recension of the *Physiologus*, ed. K. Ahrens, *Buch der Naturgegenstände* (Kiel, 1892) 86 fin., syr. 48.12–14 (Similarities between certain passages of Bar 'Ebroyo's geography and the apparently interpolated passage on geography in the *Buch der Naturgegenstände* have been noted by Ahrens [footnotes ad loc.], as well as by Bakoš in his edition of *Cand.* [154 nn.1–2, 166 n.1]).

<sup>61</sup> See Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* 101b 9–12 (in connection with the "gulf of Arabia", = our Red Sea), 101b 19–21 (Desert of Pharan); Bar Kepha, *Hex.* Paris syr. 241, 172v b26f., Paris syr. 311, 46r b18–20, tr. Schlimme 573; Bar Shakko, *Thes.*, Paris syr. 316, 174r 2f., BL Add. 7193, 70r b9–11 (both with "gulf of Arabia"); also the Syriac lexicæ cited at Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 1601, 2577; and *Causa causarum*, Laur. or. 298, 132r b23f. (tr. Kayser 339; "Red Sea"). – Iṣṭakhrî [de Goeje] 31.1, [Hîni] 30.1; Ibn Ḥauqal, 46.9f.; Muqaddasî, 11.16; Yâqût, IV.159.6 (s.v. *al-Qulzum*), I.811.21f. (s.v. *Târân*); Qazwînî, *ʿAjâ'ib* 119.4.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Iṣṭakhrî [de Goeje] 30.2–4, [Hîni] 29.16–18; Ibn Ḥauqal, 44.22–46.1; Yâqût, IV.159.23–160.2. – The phrase "along the shores" is not found in these works, but cf. Bîrûnî, *Taḥḥīm* 121.7f.: *wa-innamâ yuslak bi-l-qurb min sâḥilîhi* (with reference, however, to the Ocean rather than the Red Sea).

<sup>63</sup> Corundum (*yâqût*) and camphor (*kâfûr*) are mentioned in the Arabic *Taḥḥīm* (ed. Wright, 211.13–15; similarly in the passage copied thence at Yâqût, *Muḥjam* I.21.12f.). The Persian version of the *Taḥḥīm* (ed. Humâ'î 168.7–9) also names clove (*qaranful*) and aloe-wood (*ʿūd*).

mountains" (*Cand.* 157.5),<sup>64</sup> and the use of the name gulf of "Warang" for the Baltic.<sup>65</sup>

Prominent among the newly-added information in *Rad.* (and *Asc.*) are the dimensions of the different seas. As in the case of the circumferences of the Mediterranean islands (see p. 97 above), the values given here agree closely with those given by Battânî (and Ibn Rusta, Kharaqî).<sup>66</sup> Although similar values are also given by Jacob of Edessa, some of the values given by Bar 'Ebroyo are not found

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<sup>64</sup> This phrase is repeated in much the same form in *But.* ("desolate lands and impassable mountains") and in an abbreviated form in *Rad.* 37.2–3 and *Asc.* 134.8 (cf. also *Asc.* 133.23f.). It goes back to Bîrûnî, *Taḥbîm* 121.11–12: *arḍuna wa-jibâl majhûla kharîba ghair maslûka* ("unknown, desolate and impassable lands and mountains"; in the East, between the Ocean and the land of the Turks).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Bîrûnî, *Taḥbîm* 121.9–10 (pers. 166.18); id., *Tahdîd* 142.12–13; Kharaqî [Nallino (1899–1907)] I.174.14–16 (who follows the wording of Bîrûnî, *Taḥbîm*, but then applies the dimensions given elsewhere for the Maeotis [300 x 100 miles] to this sea); Qazwînî, *Āthâr* 416.3–7 (also the map on p. 8); Tûsî, *Tadhkira* [Ragep] 249.2, with Ragep's comm. ad loc.; id., *Mu'înîya* III.1, facsimile ed. Dânishpazhûh 60.14 (ubi *baḥr* FRNK cod.); Qutb al-Dîn al-Shîrâzî, *Nihâyat al-idrâk*, partial tr. Wiedemann (1912) 30; Dimashqî, 23.11, 139.17f., 146.7 (tr. 21, 182, 193); Abû al-Fidâ, 26.14, 35.9–12 (who tells us that Bîrûnî and Tûsî's *Tadhkira* are the only authorities to mention this sea). – "Warang" is also mentioned at *Cand.* 101.7 among the tribes in the 7th clime (< *Taḥbîm* 145.11; cf. Dimashqî, 22.2, tr. 19).

<sup>66</sup> See the comparative table of the values given by Battânî, Ibn Rusta, Kharaqî and Jacob of Edessa in Nallino's commentary on Battânî (I.167–169), where references are also made to the values in Bar 'Ebroyo's *Asc.* – The values for the dimensions of the seas are not given in Tûsî's *Tadhkira* (at least not in the later recension published by Ragep), the model of *Asc.*, but they are given in Tûsî's earlier Persian version of the same work, the *Risâla-i mu'înîya*, as well as in a number of works related to the *Tadhkira*, namely Qutb al-Dîn al-Shîrâzî's *Nihâyat al-idrâk* (partial tr. Wiedemann [1912] 27–31), the same Shîrâzî's *al-Tuhfa al-shâhîya* and Qâdîzâda's commentary on the *Tadhkira* (Nallino [1899–1907] I.176). The values in the *Mu'înîya* etc., though given in parasangs (*farsang*) rather than miles are usually in agreement, allowing for approximations in the conversion and occasional errors in transmission, with those in Battânî.

in Jacob,<sup>67</sup> and, furthermore, where Jacob and Battânî differ from each other, Bar 'Ebroyo is usually in agreement with the latter.<sup>68</sup>

Battânî's *Zīj* and related works also help us account for the mention of the "Isles of the Blessed" and "Gadeira" as places where the Ocean begins,<sup>69</sup> and, in part at least, for the use of the name "Sea of Berbers" for the Gulf of Aden.<sup>70</sup> They help us, furthermore, to solve the mystery surrounding the island of "Ṭirani" mentioned in *Rad.* and *Asc.* (ṬYR'NY; ṬYRN'NY *Rad.* cod. Paris syr. 216; corruption of "Taprobane", arabicè ṬBRB'NY),<sup>71</sup> and to

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<sup>67</sup> viz. the length and breadth of Gulf of Aden, length of the Sea/Gulf of India (also the circumferences of the islands in the Mediterranean).

<sup>68</sup> viz. the breadth of the Arabian/Persian Gulf (500 miles Bar 'Ebroyo: 700 Jacob), breadth of the Mediterranean (800 Bar 'Ebroyo: 400 Jacob), number of islands in the Sea/Gulf of India (1,370 Bar 'Ebroyo: 1,378 Jacob). Nallino (I.168 n.3) errs when he tells us that Bar 'Ebroyo follows Jacob in giving the maximum breadth of the Red Sea as 400 miles (against Battânî's 700 miles), since the value of 400 miles in Bar 'Ebroyo is that for the length and not the maximum breadth. This value of "400 miles" given by Bar 'Ebroyo both in *Rad.* and in *Asc.* is likely to be due to misreading on Bar 'Ebroyo's part or scribal error in his *Vorlage*, since Jacob and Battânî agree in giving the length of the Red Sea as 1,400 miles (so also Bar Kepha and Ma'sūdî, *Murāj al-dhahab*, ed. Barbier de Meynard-Pavet de Courteille-Pellat [Beirut, 1965–1979], para. 250).

<sup>69</sup> See Battânî 26.17f. (*jaẓā'ir al-su'adā', ghadīra*).

<sup>70</sup> The Gulf of Aden is in fact the entrance to the Red Sea, but is often counted by Islamic geographers as a separate branch of the Indian Ocean. The usual name in Arabic is *al-khalīj al-barbarī* derived from Barbarâ/Berbera on its shore, but the name *baḥr al-barbar* is found in Bîrûnî, *Taḥfīm* 122.9 (pers. 168.1 *daryâ-i barbar*) and the name is also mentioned in such a way as to suggest a connection with the Berbers at Battânî 26.5 (*walahu khalīj bi-arḍ al-ḥabash yamuddu ilâ nâbiyat al-barbar, yusammâ al-khalīj al-barbarī*; cf. Nallino's footnote ad loc.). The *Causa causarum* calls this gulf the "Inlet of Cush" (*ma'lono d-kush*, Laur. or. 298, 131v b14, tr. Kayser 338).

<sup>71</sup> Bar 'Ebroyo evidently found no cause to make a connection between this island and the place he knew from another source and mentions in the form Ṭ'PW'RB'NY at *Rad.* [Istanbul] 16.9. The source mentioned by Bar 'Ebroyo there is Ptolemy's *Handy Tables* (called *ketobo d-PRKYRW'S* at *Rad.* 16.6f.). His immediate source is probably Severus Sebokht, since these two words, along with "Geographicon" (*G'WGR'PYQ'WN*) mentioned by Bar 'Ebroyo at *Rad.* 17.2, are also found in close proximity of one another in Severus' *Treatise on the Constellations* in forms similar to these (Ṭ'PRW'BNY, PRW'KYRW'S, G'WGRW'PYQ'WN; see F. Nau, "Le traité sur les «Constellations» écrit, en 661, par Sévère Sébokht évêque de Qennesrin", ROC 27 [1930] 327–410, 28 [1931] 85–

explain the “red and blue corundum” (*yagqundo summoqo w-sosgawno*) given as the products of that island in *Rad*.<sup>72</sup>

One important alteration Bar ʿEbroyo makes between *Cand.* on the one hand and *Rad./Asc.* on the other is in the sea to which name “Red Sea” (*yammo summoqo*) is applied. In Jacob of Edessa, as well as in Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko,<sup>73</sup> “the Erythrian, or Red, Sea” is what we call today the Indian Ocean, from which two gulfs called by them the “Arabian” and “Elamitic or Persian” (i.e. respectively, our Red Sea and Arabian/Persian Gulf) branch off. With Bar ʿEbroyo, too, this is still the case in *Cand.*, where the “Sea of Reed” (corresponding there to our Red Sea) and the “Sea of Fârs” are said to branch off from the “Red Sea”.<sup>74</sup> In his later works,

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100, here vol. 27, p. 407; cf. id. “La cosmographie au VIIe siècle chez les Syriens”, ROC 15 [1910] 225–254, here 237.1, 240.11f.). – Bar ʿEbroyo himself had called Ptolemy’s *Geography* “*ketobo d-ZWGRPY*” (sic with *ẓain*) at *Cand.* 103.12, a form which suggests an Arabic Vorlage (*jughbrāfiyā*). – The *Handy Tables* appears elsewhere in Syriac under the name “*ketobo <d>qonunē*” (Sergius of Rishʿaino, apud Sachau, *Inedita syriaca* [Vienna, 1870] 225.17).

<sup>72</sup> Battānī 26.13f.: ... *tabrubānī wa-hiya sarandīb, yuhīt bihā thalāthat ālāf mīl, muqābil al-hind min nāhiyat al-mashriq, wa-fihā jibāl ʿizām wa-anhār kathbīra, minhā yukbraju al-yāqūt al-aḥmar wa-laun al-samāʾ* (≈ Ibn Rusta 84.13f. et Kharaqī [Nallino] I.174.1f.: *wa-hiya sarandīb om. Ibn Rusta || muqābil al-hind min nāhiyat al-mashriq om. Ibn Rusta et Kharaqī*). – The alteration/corruption of “3,000” miles to “1,300” miles in Bar ʿEbroyo may be due to the influence of the “1,370 islands” mentioned in the preceding line at Battānī 26.12. – The colour referred to as “*sosgawno*” in Syriac is difficult to determine (“color caeruleus, vel forte coccineus” Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* 2682; “purpureus” Brockelmann, *Lex. syr.* 487a), but Bar ʿEbroyo himself explains the word as “blue” (*ẓarqō*) at *Horr.* in Exod. 25:5 (ed. Sprengling-Graham, 134.29–30), so that it will correspond here to Battānī’s *laun al-samāʾ* (“sky colour”, “sky blue”). – In Arabic the term “*yāqūt*” is applied to various corundums, such as ruby, emerald and sapphire, whereby “*yāqūt*” without further qualification will often be “ruby”, the corundum par excellence (see, e.g., Pseudo-Aristotle, *K. al-ahjār*, ed. J. Ruska, *Das Steinbuch des Aristoteles* [Heidelberg, 1912] 99f., tr. 135f.; al-Tamīmī, *K. al-murshid*, partial ed. J. Schönfeld, *Über die Steine. Das 14. Kapitel aus dem “Kitāb al-Murshid” des Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Tamīmī* [Freiburg, 1976] 39, with comm. on p. 143; A. Siggel, *Arabisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch der Stoffe* [Berlin, 1950] 89; EI<sup>2</sup> XI.262, s.v. “Yāqūt” [al-Qaddumī]).

<sup>73</sup> Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* [Chabot] 101b 2–102b 4); Bar Kepha, *Hex.*, Paris 311, 46r a5–6, b6–33, tr. Schlimme 571, 573; and Bar Shakko, *Thes.*, Paris 316, 173v 11–174r 11, BL Add. 7193, 71r a15–v a6.

<sup>74</sup> We find the same system, placing the “Sea of Reed” and the “Sea of Elam” on the same level as branches of the “Oceanus” (no mention,

*Rad.*, *Asc.* and *But.*, however, the “Red Sea” is placed on the same level as the sea of the “Berbers”, “Elamites” and “Indians” and corresponds to our Red Sea, usually called “*baḥr al-qulzum*” by the Arabs (but “*al-baḥr al-aḥmar*”, Tûsî, *Tadhkira* 249.1).<sup>75</sup>

Among other alterations, we may note the tendency to avoid Arabic place-names and to “classicise” or “Syriacise” these names. In *Cand.*, what is known today as the “Arabian/Persian Gulf”, for example, was called the “Sea of Fârs”<sup>76</sup>; this is altered to the “Sea of the Elamites” in *Rad.* (36.10), *Asc.* (135.21, also 138.15) and *Eth.* (453.20), and to the “Sea of Elam” in *But.* Another example will be the alteration of “al-Andalus” to “Hispania” and of “Sea of Warang” to the “Galatian Sea/Gulf”, while the alteration of “Meş-rin” (arab. *miṣr*) to “Iguptos” might also be included in this category, even if “Meşrin” is a good Syriac word.

In most of these instances of “classicisation/Syriacisation” we probably need not look for a particular source. For one such alteration, however, we can find a definite source in the *De mundo* (syr. 140.15, gr. 393b 9), namely for the alteration of the “Sea of Warang” to the “Galatian Sea/Gulf”, in which are the Britannic islands of Albion and Ierne according to *De mundo*, “the 19 islands of Britain” according to *Rad.* and “the 19 islands of Britain, the best-known of which is Thule” according to *Asc.* This is then altered further to the “Sea of Britain, in which is the island of Thule” in *But.* – The identification of the Varangian (Baltic) Sea with the Galatian Sea (Bay of Biscay/North Sea) will have been caused by the general uncertainty of Islamic geographers over these northern regions, and more particularly by the rarity of references among them to the Varangian Sea<sup>77</sup> and by the fact that Thule is sometimes said to be located near (or even “in”)<sup>78</sup> Britain but is some-

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however, of the “Red Sea”) at Bar ‘Ebroyo, *Hor.* in Gen. 1:9 (ed. Sprengling-Graham 10.22).

<sup>75</sup> Our Red Sea is also called by that name (*yammo d-summoqo*) in the *Causa caesarum* (Laur. or. 298, 132r b 23, tr. Kayser 339). – In the *De mundo*, the “*eruthrá thálassa*” of the Greek (393b 4) is rendered by “*‘ubbo haw d-metqrê d-suf*” in the Syriac version (140.8–9; the Arabic versions of the *De mundo* all have the “Sea of al-Qulzum”, Brafman 88.13, 125.14, 143.3f.).

<sup>76</sup> We do, however, have the “Sea of Elamites, i.e. of the Persians (*for-soyê*)” in the map accompanying *Cand.* – Cf. Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* 101b 29f.: “*‘ubbo haw d-‘ilimoyê awkêt d-forsoyê*”; similarly Bar Kepha, *Hex.*, Paris syr. 241, 173r a4–7, syr. 311, 46r b27f. (tr. Schlimme 573); Bar Shakko, *Thes.*, Paris syr. 316, 174r 6f., BL Add. 7193, 71r b20–23.

<sup>77</sup> See n. 65 above.

<sup>78</sup> So Battânî, *Zîj* 25.16: *jaẓẓrat thûlî allatî fî briṭānîya*.



times associated with the northern sea corresponding to the Baltic.<sup>79</sup> A further contributing factor to the eastward displacement of Britain may be the coupling of Britain with "Iberia" at *De mundo* syr. 140.20 (< gr. 393b 17), where the latter will have been understood to mean "Georgia" rather than "Spain" by Bar 'Ebroyo.<sup>80</sup> – The alteration in *But.* whereby this northern sea itself is now called the "Sea of Britain" rather than "Galatian" may have been prompted in part by unease on Bar 'Ebroyo's part with the fact that a part of the Mediterranean is also called "Galatian".<sup>81</sup>

### 3. CASPIAN SEA/MAEOTIS

*Cand.* [Bakos 158.3–12, Gottheil 50.3–11, Çiçek 114.4–21]: In the land of the Iberians (*iberoyē*) there is a lake which is by itself (*d-mennob w-loh (h)i*) and is not connected to the Universal Sea, so that someone setting out from a certain known place on its shores and travelling around it would be able to reach the spot from which he started, if it were not for that great river called the Âtil [Volga], which pours its waters into this lake. Because of its size and width, they call this lake a sea and not a lake in the books and in the language of common usage. Ptolemy calls it the Sea of Hyrcania and in our day they call it "Khazar". To the west of this lake are the Gate of Iron [Darband], the plains of the Qipchaqs,<sup>82</sup> Shirwân and Ṭabaristân, to its south Greater Armenia, to its east the land of the Iberians and to its north the great desolate black mountain which is at the extremity of the land in the northeast.

<sup>79</sup> See, e.g., *Hudūd al-'ālam*, tr. 59, §4.25, with comm. p. 181 (on §3.8); Miquel [1967–88] III.240.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. p. 117 below.

<sup>81</sup> *De mundo* syr. 139.29 (< gr. 393a 27); cf. pp. 86, 88–89 above. – It is unclear whether (and if so, how) the name "Sea of Britain" in *But.* can be traced back to the Ptolemaic "*Bretannikōs ôkeanós*" (*Geog.* II.3.3, 8.2, 9.1, VII.3.2, 5.2).

<sup>82</sup> "Qipchaqs" (*Q'PŠ'QY'*, *QPŠ'QY'*) occurs in Bar 'Ebroyo's works, usually in the form "the plains of the Qipchaqs", besides here (*Cand.* 158.10) also at *Cand.* 157.6, 162.9 (6th clime), and *Chron.* [Bruns-Kirsch] 483.20, 487.13, 493.1. The first two instances in *Chron.* correspond to the "dasht-i qifchâq" of Juwaini's *Tārīkh-i jahāngushâ* (ed. Qazwini, I.111.1, I.150.1). Bedjan, in his edition of *Chron.* "corrects" the spelling to *QPČ'QY'*, with "č" (456.2, 460.2, 465.23), apparently without any manuscript support. – *Male* "Caspians" Gottheil (1890) 42 et Bakos; *peius* "Cappadocians" [!] Budge, *Chron.* tr. p. 394, 398; *recte* Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* 3699 et Chabot (1898) 36.

*Rad.* [Istanbul 38.10–16, Gottheil 54.13–55.2]: To the north of it is situated the Maeotis, the lake of Caspia, i.e. of rushes (*qnayyo*)<sup>83</sup>; the ancients call it (the lake) of Hyrcania and of the Iberians (*iberoyē*), but in our day it is called “Khazar”. From it a river-like tongue flows into the Sea of Pontus, just as from the Sea of Pontus into the Adriatic and [from] the Adriatic into the Oceanus.

*Asc.* [Nau 137.5–9]: To the north-east of this sea is the Maeotis, the lake of the Caspians, i.e. of rushes; Ptolemy calls it the Hyrcanian and others the Sea of the Iberians. From it a river-like tongue goes out into the Sea of Pontus, just as from the Pontus into the Adriatic.

*But.*: ... from which in turn a river-like tongue goes out towards the northeast and flows into the Maeotis, which is the lake of Caspia, Hyrcania and Iberia (*iberis*).

Here again, the passage in *Cand.* has numerous points of contact with the account of the Caspian Sea in Bîrûnî, as well as the accounts in the geographers of the Balkhi school. The possibility, for example, of circumambulating the Caspian “if it were not for the Atil/Volga” is a point that is constantly mentioned in the accounts of the latter group and later authors dependent on them.<sup>84</sup> Of the localities mentioned, Shirwân and Ṭabaristân are constantly mentioned among the areas on the shores of the Caspian by Arabic geographers, while the “great desolate black mountain” (*turo rabbo w-shohyo w-ukkomu*), despite the insertion of the adjectives “*rabbo w-shohyo*”, must in fact be the “Black Mountain” of the Arabic geographers (usually known by its Persian name, “Siyâh-Kûh”; properly

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<sup>83</sup> The same gloss occurs in *Asc.*, as well as in ms. Paris syr. 207, 247rv (among the notes near the end of a manuscript of Bar Kepha’s Homilies, 15th c.; see Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 3653, 3680, s.vv. *qanyo* et *qaspiya*). Nau in his edition of *Asc.* took *QNY*’ to be a corruption of “Hyrcania(ns)” (*HWRQNY*), despite the fact the “Hyrcania” is mentioned again immediately afterwards in the text. The gloss may well have had its origin in the corruption of “Hyrcania”, but as it stands in the text of Bar ‘Ebroyo it is best understood with reference to the Arabic word *qasab* (“cane, rush, reed”). “Caspian” is usually written with *semkat*, but the form with *sodê* is also encountered (e.g. at *De mundo* syr. [de Lagarde] 140.11; Bar Shakkō, *Thes.*, BL Add. 7193, 70v b24).

<sup>84</sup> See Iṣṭakhri [de Goeje] 8.6–8, 218.2–4 [Ḥinî] 17.24–26, 128.4f.; Ibn Ḥauqal 388.4–6; Muqaddasî 362.2f.; Yâqût I.500.20–21; Qazwîni, *‘Ajâ’ib* 127.28–29, tr. Ethé 260; Dimashqî 146.18f., tr. 194.

the Mangyshlak Peninsula).<sup>85</sup> Two of the place-names mentioned, unless they are alterations made by Bar 'Ebroyo himself, may provide an indication of relatively late works among his sources, namely "Gate of Iron" (*tar'ō d-farẓlō*), which evidently corresponds to the "Gate of Gates" (Bâb al-Abwâb, = Darband/Derbent) of the Arabic geographers,<sup>86</sup> and the "Plains of the Qipchaqs", which seems to have replaced the "plains of the Ghuzz" encountered in earlier works, the latter of these being an alteration which is in accord with historical facts, since the Qipchaqs drove the Ghuzz from the area north of the Caspian in the mid-11th c.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>85</sup> See Iṣṭakhṛī [de Goeje] 8.7, 218.1, [Hīnī] 17.25, 128.3; Ibn Hauqal 13.10, 386.4; Yāqūt I.500.18 etc.; cf. EI<sup>2</sup> VI.415–417 s.v. "Mangishlak" [Bregel].

<sup>86</sup> The application of the name "Iron Gate" to Darband is of relatively late origin (only from the Mongol period sec. Barthold, EI I.984, s.v. "Derbend", so also the successor article at EI<sup>2</sup> I.835, s.v. "Bâb al-Abwâb" [Dunlop]). While the name is one that carries an association with the legendary barrier built by Alexander the Great (see, e.g., A.R. Anderson, "Alexander at the Caspian Gates", Transactions of the American Philological Association 59 [1928] 130–163; id., *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Inclosed Nations* [Cambridge (Mass.), 1932]; cf. S. Gero, "The Legend of Alexander the Great in Orient", BJRL 75 [1993] 1–9), it is unclear whether Bar 'Ebroyo consciously associated Darband with Alexander's Gate. The same phrase as here, *tar'ō d-farẓlō*, is used of the barrier built by Alexander at Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 36.7 (< Michael, *Chron.* 72a 3f., tr. I.113, against the "Huns"), without any specification however of its whereabouts. At *Cand.* [Bakos] 99.2 "the enclosed Gog" are located in the far northeast (cf. Anderson [1932] 91–104); at *Mukhtaṣar ta'rīkh al-dumal* [ed. Ṣāḥhānī (1958)] 58.10–13 the "barrier of Gog" (*sadd Yāḥū*) built by Alexander is linked with, but distinguished from, the "great barrier" (*al-sadd al-aẓam*) "which is in Bâb al-Abwâb" (cf. William of Rubruck's "porta ferrea [Alexandri]" and "claustra Alexandri", *Itinerarium*, tr. Rockhill [1900] 262f.). The more usual name "Gate of Gates" for Darband is used by Bar 'Ebroyo at *Cand.* 99.4 (*tar' tar'in*, in the 5th clime; < Bīrūnī, *Tajhīm* 145.2; cf. *Causa causarum*, ms. Laur. or. 298, 135r 17, tr. Kayser 345, where we have *tar' tar'ē*, again presumably from an Arabic source). For the identification further of Bar 'Ebroyo's *tar'ō d-turqoyē* (*Chron.* [Bedjan] 91.13; < Michael, *Chron.* 382b 2, tr. II.364, *tar'ō d-turoyē*, without "q") with Darband, see J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge* (Leipzig, 1903) 489; EIr VII.13a, 14b (s.v. "Darband" [Kettenhofen], gr. Tzour, arm. Čor). Cf. further the references cited at Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 4506, s.v. *tar'ō d-turqoyē*.

<sup>87</sup> See Minorsky (1937) 316f.; EI<sup>2</sup> V.126a, s.v. "Kīpčak" [Hazzal]. A little after Bar 'Ebroyo's time, the name "Sea of the Qipchaqs" is used of the Sea of Azov in Dimashqī 146.9, tr. 193.

### 3.1. “Iberian Sea”

One puzzling point in the passage of *Cand.* here is the placement of the Caspian in “the land of the Iberians”. This is then repeated in the later works quoted above, where, in *Asc.* for example, the Caspian is called the “Sea of the Iberians”. In these later works, the problem is compounded by the identification of the Caspian with the “Maeotis” (properly, Sea of Azov) and the consequent connection of the Caspian with the Black Sea, although in *Cand.* Bar ‘Ebroyo is still free of this error.

The clue as to why Bar ‘Ebroyo places the Caspian in “Iberia” is provided in the sentences in which he mentions the various names under which the Caspian has been known.

*Cand.* [Bakos 158.3–4, 8–9, Gottheil 50.3, 7–8, Çiçek 114.4–5, 14–15]: In the land of the Iberians is a lake, ... Ptolemy calls it the Sea of Hyrcania (ʾRQNYʾ) and in our day they call it “Khazar” (KZR).

*Rad.* [Istanbul 38.12–13, Gottheil 54.4–55.1]: The ancients call it (the lake) of Hyrcania and of the Iberians, but in our day it is called “Khazar”.

Cf. Bîrûnî, *Taḥbîḥ* 123.7–8, 11–12 (pers. 169.2–170.1, 170.4–6): Near Ṭabaristan is the sea of the port of Jurjân. ... It has been called after the names of all the adjacent countries, but its appellation (*ishtihârûbu*) among us is after the Khazars and among the ancients after Jurjân. For Ptolemy calls it the Sea of Hyrcania.<sup>88</sup>

It would appear from the above that Bar ‘Ebroyo’s “Iberians” corresponds to Bîrûnî’s “Jurjân” (pers. Gurgân, to the southeast of the Caspian), an erroneous correspondence, of course, and a disconcerting one given the relative proximity of the lands in question to the area in which Bar ‘Ebroyo lived and worked, but one which may be explained with reference to the older forms of the name

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<sup>88</sup> “For”: This must be the force of “*fa-*” here, since Jurjân is ancient Hyrcania. The nuance was apparently lost on Bar ‘Ebroyo, as well as on Humâʾî, the editor of the Persian version of the *Taḥbîḥ*, who has “*wa-Baṭlamīyûs û-râ Daryâ-i Arqaniyâ khwânad*” in his text (170.5f.), while reporting the reading “*keb Baṭlamīyûs*” of his best manuscript in his apparatus (we also find the reading “*kî Baṭlamīyûs*”, where *kî* = *keb*, on the page of ms. Tehran, Majlis 6565 reproduced at S.H. Nasr, *Islamic Science. An Illustrated Study* [sine loco (London), 1976] 38, fig. 14).

used for Georgia(ns), such as the Syriac *gurẓān*,<sup>89</sup> and the Arabic/Persian *jurẓān*, *jurjān* (as opposed to the later standard *kurj*).<sup>90</sup>

Bar 'Ebro's placement not only of "Iberia" to the east of the Caspian but also of Greater Armenia to its south suggests furthermore that behind the account of the Caspian Sea in *Cand.* there also lurks a confusion of the Caspian with the Black Sea.<sup>91</sup> This is probably to be explained through the confusion of the names applied to these two seas in some source used by Bar 'Ebro, since we know that the name "Sea of the Khazars", though usually applied to the Caspian, was also applied at times to the Black Sea,<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> See Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* col. 691 and J.P. Margoliouth, *Supplement to the Thesaurus Syriacus* of R. Payne Smith (Oxford, 1927; = PS Suppl.) 71a, s.vv. *GWRZN*, *GWRZNY*; cf. also Land (1887) 180. The definition "*iberiya d-hi gurẓān*" cited from Jacob of Edessa, *Chron.* [Brooks] 281.6 in PS Suppl. is repeated by Michael (*Chron.* 77.1f., tr. I.119) and so may well have been known to Bar 'Ebro. The two instances of "*Gurẓān*/*Gurẓonoyē*" in Bar 'Ebro, *Chron.* (ed. Bedjan, 111.22, 124.1) are taken from Michael (*Chron.* [Chabot] 446b 9, 474b 2, tr. II.469, 522).

<sup>90</sup> See Marquart (1903) 418 n.6; Minorsky (1937) 421. On the related, earlier confusion of "Iberia" and "Hyrkania", Marquart, "Beiträge zur Geschichte und Sage von Ērān" ZDMG 49 (1895) 628–672, here 632f.; id., "Iberer und Hyrkanier", *Caucasica* 8 (1931) 78–113. – "Gurgān" is found alongside "*atro d-iberoyē*" in the map accompanying *Cand.* in ms. Berol. Sachau 81, but in fainter ink like the other later additions to that map. It is absent in the other copies of the early version of the map accessible to me (Paris 210 and London, coll. Elias Assad; cf. n. 2 above). – "Gurgān" does occur once in Bar 'Ebro, *Chron.* (ed. Bedjan, 123.16) without being "translated" into "Iberia", but Bar 'Ebro's immediate source there is not Arabic but Syriac (Michael, *Chron.* [Chabot] 474b 10, tr. II.522, where Michael in fact has "Hyrkania, i.e. Gurgān").

<sup>91</sup> Armenia may have extended to the eastern shores of the Caspian in earlier times (so in Ptolemy's day, and hence the location of the "Armenians and Albanians" at the eastern end of the Caspian in Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* 101a 2–3; cf. Schmidt [1999] 59f.), but never to its southern shores. – The placement of Tabaristān (Māzandarān) to the west, rather than south, of the Caspian in *Cand.* is also worrying, but that at least is a region on the shores of the Caspian.

<sup>92</sup> So in Ibn Khurdādhbih [de Goeje] 103.7, 105.8, 10, 12 etc., although the name is also used for the Caspian at one place in the same work (173.2); cf. Minorsky (1937) 419. – The confusion over the name is reported by Bīrūnī, *al-Qānūn al-Mas'ūdī*, V.9 (ed. Osmania Oriental Publications Bureau [Hyderabad, 1954–6] II.538.20–21, 539.5, A.Z.V. Togan, *Bīrūnī's Picture of the World* [Delhi, 1952] 4.20, 5.2–3; cf. E. Wiedemann, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften XXIX", *Sitzungsberichte der physikalisch-medizinischen Societät zu Erlangen* 44 [1912]

while the name “Sea of the Georgians” (*daryâ-i gurğjân*) is used of the Black Sea in the 10th c. Persian geographical work, *Ḥudūd al-‘ālam*.<sup>93</sup>

Bar ‘Ebroyo’s application of the name “Sea of the Iberians” to the Caspian, his apparent confusion of “Iberia” with Jurjân and his inclusion of the “Iberians” among the peoples along the shores of the northern Ocean (see pp. 97–103, 108–109 above) force us to ask at this point who exactly the people are whom he designates by the name “Iberians”. An examination of the references to “Iberia” in Bar ‘Ebroyo’s *Chron.* and *Chronicon ecclesiasticum* shows that his *iberiya/iberoyê* are usually the Georgia(ns) as we know them, but not quite in every case. A puzzling instance occurs at *Chron.* [Bruns-Kirsch] 71.4, 6, [Bedjan] 66.3, 6, where we find the “Iberians” joining the Goths in the incursions leading to the battle of Adrianople (378 A.D.) and where we find furthermore the word for “Iberians” in the form *iberis* with the ending “-is” as in the text of *But.* quoted above.<sup>94</sup> Only the Goths are mentioned in the corresponding passage of Michael (*Chron.* 152b 28ff., tr. I.294) and in most other sources, but we do find the combined forces of the “Goths and Abarê” at Adrianople in Jacob of Edessa’s *Chronicon*,<sup>95</sup> which suggests that the “iberis” of Bar ‘Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 66.3, 6 may, in fact, be the Avars making an anachronistically early appearance (Avars would have belonged to recent history in Jacob’s day).<sup>96</sup>

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119–125, here 122f.): “Among them are those which because of the size deserve the name of ‘sea’, such as the Armenian Sea of Pontus, known there as the Sea of the Khazars. ... And such as the Sea of Jurjân which is the Sea of the Khazars in truth.” – Cf. also the definition of the “Pontus” as “*baḥr al-khazar*” in Syriac lexicæ (Bar Bahlûl [Duval] 1578.19; Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* 3175).

<sup>93</sup> Tr. Minorsky (1937) p. 53, §3.4, 5; cf. Minorsky’s discussion of the name in his commentary, p. 182f., 421–423.

<sup>94</sup> *GWTY’ W-’YBRY’S ... GWTY’ W-’YBRY’S* ed. Bruns-Kirsch. The second instance also written *W-’YBRY’S* in Vat. syr. 166 according to Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* 136. Both instances “corrected” to “*iberoyê* (‘YBRY’)” in ed. Bedjan.

<sup>95</sup> Ed. Brooks in Brooks et al. *Chronica minora III* (Paris, 1905) 300, right-hand col., l. 4.

<sup>96</sup> In the drastically abridged form of the story given in Bar ‘Ebroyo’s *Mukhtaṣar ta’rikh al-duwal* (ed. Beirut 1958, 83.14–17), Valens’ death is made a part of the war against the Persians, with no mention of Goths or Avars.

"Avars" does occur twice in Bar 'Ebroyo's *Chron.* at ed. Bedjan 89.15, 90.20,<sup>97</sup> where we hear of them raiding Roman territory during the reigns of Tiberius I Constantine (578–82) and Mauricius (582–602), actions which have certain similarities with those of the Goths during the reign of Valens.<sup>98</sup> For our purpose, it is of note that the word "Avars" appears there in the form 'BRYŠ, again with an ending in "-is".

In comparing the two passages about the Goths-Iberians and the Avars, it becomes difficult, in spite the extra *yud* in *iberis*, to avoid the impression that Bar 'Ebroyo somehow associated the people he must have known reasonably well as the *iberoyē* or *iberis* and the people he knew only from remote history as the *abarīs*.<sup>99</sup> Such an association would have involved a major expansion in Bar 'Ebroyo's mind of the Iberian territory beyond the Caucasus into the wide northern steppes.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Corresponding to Michael, *Chron.* [Chabot] 376b 12, 379a 24, tr. II.353, 361 (written 'BRYŠ, with an extra *olaf*, in Michael, but 'BRYŠ in John of Ephesus, ed. Brooks, 324.19, 20 etc.). – The second of these instances belongs to a much-discussed passage of *Chron.* concerning the Avars and the migration of the Bulgars and Khazars. On the passage at Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* 90.19–91.15 as a whole, along with its source-passage in Michael, *Chron.* 379–382, tr. II.361–4 (itself based on John of Ephesus), see Marquart (1898a) 82–85; id. (1898b) 198f.; id. (1903) 15f., 479–491, 529f.; F. Altheim & R. Stiehl, "Michael der Syrer über das erste Auftreten der Bulgaren und Chazaren", *Byzantion* 28 (1958) 105–118; A. Alemany, *Sources on the Alans. A Critical Compilation* (Leiden-Boston-Cologne, 2000) 388f., 392f.

<sup>98</sup> One might note in particular that Avars too on their way to Constantinople reached a place called Adropolis/Adrianople ('DRWPLYWŠ Michael, ed. Chabot 379a 37; 'DRWPWLWŠ Bar 'Ebroyo, ed. Bruns-Kirsch 95.9; 'DRYNWPWLYŠ Bar 'Ebroyo, ed. Bedjan 90.24 and Brooks for loc. cit. of Michael treated as a fragment of John of Ephesus, 341.25; "Adrianopol" Altheim-Stiehl [1958] 109; "Adrōpoliōs (Dérkous poléōs)" Marquart [1903] 482, cf. id. [1898a] 82 n.2).

<sup>99</sup> The possibility that Bar 'Ebroyo distinguished between the "*iberis/abarīs*" written with "-is" (Avars) on the one hand and the "*iberoyē*" with "-oyē" (Georgians) on the other can be ruled out by the fact that the "*iberis*" of *Chron.* [Bruns-Kirsch] 448.7, [Bedjan] 419.26, standing under the command of Zachariah the Small, are clearly the Georgians: "zakari z'uro rish haylo d-iberis"; cf. Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* [Beirut, 1965–66] XII.205.1f.: "zakarī al-ṣaghīr ... wa-huwa kāna muqaddam bādha l-askar min al-kurj".

<sup>100</sup> Further possible causes of confusion, if Bar 'Ebroyo had any occasion to come across such names, include: Kerch (KRČ, KRJ) by the Sea of Azov (cf. Minorsky [1937] 182); a people called \*Karakh (written KRĤ

Whether the classic confusion of *khazar* and *jurx* in Arabic led Bar 'Ebroyo to associate his "Ibero-Avars" further with the "Khazars" is unclear. On one occasion, Bar 'Ebroyo alters the phrase "the khagan, the king of the Avars" (*K'GN malko d-B'RYŠ*) he found in Michael (*Chron.* 379a 30) to "the khaqan, the king of the Khazars" (*K'Q'N malko d-khazaroyê*) in his *Chron.*,<sup>101</sup> suggesting, unless this is simply a slip of the pen,<sup>102</sup> that Bar 'Ebroyo did indeed associate the "Khazars" with the "Avars". Furthermore, at *Chron.* [Bedjan] 217.13, we encounter the definition "Hyrcania, i.e. the land of the Khazars",<sup>103</sup> where, since only the Khazars are likely to have been mentioned in Bar 'Ebroyo's source, the equation of the land with Hyrcania must be his own.<sup>104</sup> We also find the equation "the Georgians, i.e. the Khazars" (*al-kurj wa-hum al-khazar*) in the printed edition of the *Mukhtaṣar ta'rīkh al-duwal*, although here it is risky to determine whether Bar 'Ebroyo wrote "*al-khazar*" or "*al-jurx*" without an examination of the manuscript evidence.<sup>105</sup>

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or *KRj*) in Daghestan (Minorsky, *A History of Sharvān and Darband in the 10th-11th centuries* [Cambridge, 1958] 95f.); and the possible continuity in nomenclature between the ancient Avars and the modern-day Daghestani Avars (Minorsky [1958] 98f., also id. [1937] 447f.).

<sup>101</sup> Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 90.22, corresponding to ed. Bruns-Kirsch 95.8 (where *K'Q'N*). Cf. Marquart [1898b] 199.

<sup>102</sup> The formula "the khaqan, the king of the Khazars" recurs in Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* at ed. Bedjan 96.1, 113.23f., 119.13; cf. also 217.24 (see following note).

<sup>103</sup> Bar 'Ebroyo, *Chron.* [Bruns-Kirsch] 229.5f., [Bedjan] 217.13. The word "Khazars" is written *KRZY'* here and in the phrase "Khaqan of the Khazars" a few lines later (Bruns-Kirsch 229.14, Bedjan 217.24) in ms. Bodl. Hunt. 1 (464d 51, 465a 6) and hence in ed. Bruns-Kirsch (ed. Bedjan has *KZRY'*, followed by *KRZY'* in brackets), but the reading *KZRY'*, besides being an obvious emendation (see preceding note), is found in Vat. syr. 166 (Payne Smith, *Thes. syr.* 1718).

<sup>104</sup> That the Khazars were named in Bar 'Ebroyo's source is confirmed by the parallel passage of *Mīrkhwand* derived from the same place in the lost *Malik-nāmā* (called "*Mulḱ-nāmā*" by Bar 'Ebroyo, but see Cahen, "Le Malik-nameh et l'histoire des origines seljukides", *Oriens* 2 [1949] 31–65, here 32 n.3): *Mīrkhwand*, *Raḡdat al-ṣafā'*, Seljuks, ed. J.A. Vullers, *Mirchondī Historia Seldschukidarum* (Giessen, 1838) 1.7 *dasht-i khaṣar*, 1.10, 2.11 *malik-i khaṣar* (the latter altered to *malik al-turk* in Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* [Beirut 1965–6] IX.473.11ff.; and *Akbbār al-daula al-salḡiqiyya*, ed. Iqbal [Lahore, 1933] 1.9ff.; cf. Cahen [1949] 42).

<sup>105</sup> *Mukhtaṣar*, ed. Beirut 1958, 201.20 (ad annum 514 h.). This corresponds to Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil*, ed. Beirut, 1965–66, X.567.1, where we find "*al-kurj wa-hum al-khaṣar*" in the text, but "*al-jurx*" in the footnote.



It might be added here that there are at least two instances in Bar ʿEbroyo’s *Chron.* where “Iberia” must in fact mean the Hispanic “Iberia” rather than her Caucasian namesake, but Bar ʿEbroyo may have been unaware of the distinction.<sup>106</sup> This inability on Bar ʿEbroyo’s part to distinguish between the two lands called “Iberia” in classical times will then have had a helping role in the placement of the “Iberians” on the shores of the northern Ocean we encountered at *But.*, Min. V.i.3 (see pp. 108–109 above).

### 3.2 Confusion of Maeotis and Caspian Sea

There is much uncertainty in Islamic geographical literature over both the Maeotis (Sea of Azov) and the Caspian Sea. Although Aristotle already states that the Caspian Sea is isolated from other seas (*Mete.* 354a 3–4),<sup>107</sup> the idea that it was in fact connected with other seas persisted both among Greek and Islamic geographers, the sea with which it was purportedly connected sometimes being the northern Ocean and sometimes the Maeotis and the Pontus (Black Sea),<sup>108</sup> while the Maeotis, too, for its part had a life of its own among Islamic geographers, sometimes being detached from the Black Sea and located far to the north of where it is in reality.<sup>109</sup>

The principal culprit that misled Bar ʿEbroyo and caused him, who explicitly states in *Cand.* that the Caspian Sea is not connected

<sup>106</sup> Bar ʿEbroyo, *Chron.* [Bedjan] 38.18, 66.15 (< Michael, *Chron.* 80b 8, 156b 2, tr. I.123, I.306).

<sup>107</sup> Among Bar ʿEbroyo’s Syriac predecessors, Jacob of Edessa, *Hex.* [Chabot] 100b 33–34 and Bar Shakko, *The.* Paris syr. 316, 173v 2f., BL Add. 7193, 70v b 21–26 explicitly state this (but not Bar Kepha, in his *Hex.*).

<sup>108</sup> See RE X.2276–81, s.v. “Kaspisches Meer” [Herrmann], EIr V.51–53, s.v. “Caspian Sea” [de Planhol]. – The Greek *De mundo* (393b 5), in fact, makes the Caspian a gulf of the northern Ocean. In the Syriac version, however, due to the omission of the phrase “on the other side” (gr. *epi tháteron dê*), it sounds as if the Caspian is an extension either of the Indian Ocean or the Red Sea (!) (*De mundo* syr. 140.9–11; cf. also *De mundo* arab. versions F and Y [Brafman] 88.14f., 143.4). – A factor which would have helped keep the idea of a connection between the Caspian and the Black Sea alive in later times is the existence of the communication route between the Caspian and the Sea of Azov via the Volga and the Don (cf. Mašʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, ed. Barbier de Meynard-Pavet de Courteille-Pellat [1965–79] para. 295f.), separated from each other only by a small distance at their nearest points and indeed joined today by the Volga-Don canal (cf. Minorsky [1958] 151 n.1).

<sup>109</sup> Minorsky (1939) 180–182; Miquel (1967–88) III.240 with nn. 3–4; EI<sup>2</sup> I.933–4 s.v. “Baḥr Māyūṭis” [Dunlop].

to any other seas, later to change his mind on this matter may be an infelicitous Syriac translation of a passage in the *De mundo*.

*De mundo* syr. 140.25–28 [< gr. 393b 24–26]: Europe, which is surrounded by mountains,<sup>110</sup> is bounded by the Pillars (*STLWS*) of Hercules and the extremity (*‘eqbo* < gr. *muchoi*) of the Pontus, [and extends] up to the Sea of the Hyrcanians, from which a certain narrow tongue is cast into the Pontus (*haw d-leshshono meddem aliso rmê menneh b-PNTWS*; < gr. *kath’ hên stenótatos isthmós eis tòn Pónton diêkei*). Some [say] instead of this tongue: that river called the Tanais (*TN’YN*).

The rendition of “*kath’ hên*” as “from which” (*d- ... menneh*) is unfortunate and would have led Bar ‘Ebroyo to understand the word “tongue” (*leshshono*, corresponding to gr. *isthmós*), not as “isthmus”, but as “strait”.<sup>111</sup> The last part of the passage about the Tanais (properly, the Don) could then be understood to mean that this strait, being a river-like channel, is also called the “river Tanais”.

Having been misled by the above passage into believing that a channel called the Tanais flowed from the Caspian into the Pontus, Bar ‘Ebroyo could then have been led to identify the Caspian with the Maeotis by such passages as the following, where it is stated that the Tanais flows from the Maeotis into the Pontus.

Battânî 27.7f., 9f. [≈ Ibn Rusta 85.16–86.1, 86.2–4]<sup>112</sup>: There enters it [sc. the Pontus] the river called the Tanais, and its flow is from the north, from the lake called the Maeotis. ... By Constantinople there pours forth from it [the Pontus] a channel which flows as if it were a river and empties into the Sea of Egypt; its breadth by Constantinople is three miles and Constantinople is on it.

<sup>110</sup> “Mountains” not in the Greek; perhaps due to misunderstanding of *bóras* (boundary) as *óras* (mountain), although the notion of “boundary” is represented in the Syriac by “is bounded” (*mettābhmo*; dittography in the Greek exemplar?).

<sup>111</sup> As did at least one of the Arabic translators of the *De mundo* (version F, ed. Brafman, 90.1 *khalij diq*).

<sup>112</sup> Cf. also Kharaqî [Nallino] 175.3–5, where, however, the Maeotis is equated with the “Sea of Warang” due to conflation with Bîrûnî’s *Tafhîm*. Cf. further Marquart (1903) 162.

Michael, *Chron.* 381a 17–21, tr. II.363: ... to the river Tanais, which goes out from the Lake of Maeotis and mingles with [lit. inside] the Sea of Pontus.<sup>113</sup>

Given the correspondence of much of the material elsewhere in *Rad.* and *Asc.* to Battânî-Ibn Rusta (and Kharaqî), we can be fairly certain that Bar ʿEbroyo knew the above passage of Battânî et al., while his knowledge of the passage of Michael is vouched for by the fact he reproduced the sentence above in his own *Chron.* (ed. Bedjan 91.2–4). Battânî et al., in fact, go on to talk about the Caspian Sea immediately following the passage quoted above (Battânî 27.11f.), but it seems that Bar ʿEbroyo’s trust in the Ps.-Aristotelian *De mundo* led him to ignore that passage of Battânî et al. in this case.<sup>114</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It will be clear from what has been said that in compiling his accounts of geography Bar ʿEbroyo made use, as was his wont, of a diverse range of sources accessible to him, both in Syriac and in Arabic.

Among the Syriac sources he certainly used, we can count the Syriac version of the Ps.-Aristotelian *De mundo*, which is used extensively in those parts of the passages quoted above dealing with the Mediterranean, but less in those parts dealing with the Ocean. There are also numerous points of contact with the geographical accounts found in Jacob of Edessa’s *Hexaemeron*, which was later reproduced in abbreviated forms in Bar Kepha’s *Hexaemeron* and Bar Shakko’s *Book of Treasures*. While the similarity of the materials in these three works makes it difficult for us to decide which of them Bar ʿEbroyo used as his immediate source, there appears to be nothing in those parts of Bar ʿEbroyo’s works examined above which requires us to assume direct knowledge of the longer account found Jacob of Edessa’s work. The similarities, on the other hand, with the anonymous *Causa causarum*, which is itself evidently

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<sup>113</sup> This is a part of the passage on the migration of the Bulgars and Khazars, just after the passages on the Avars mentioned above (see n. 97 above). Cf. Marquart (1903) 530 n.1.

<sup>114</sup> It is significant that Bar ʿEbroyo does not give us the dimensions of his Caspian/Maeotis as he does for other seas in *Rad.* and *Asc.* (see pp. 105–106 above). One suspects that this may be due to his inability to choose between the values given for the Maeotis (300 x 100 miles) and the Caspian (800 x 600 miles) by Battânî et al.

indebted both to earlier Syriac works and to more recent Islamic works, are not such as to indicate a use of this work by Bar ʿEbroyo, as opposed to the use of common sources. Bar ʿEbroyo also betrays influences of historiographical and exgetical works in Syriac, which he will have studied for the composition of his own works in these fields.

Among the Arabic works which have been mentioned above, the influence of Bîrûnî's *Taḥḥīm* is already evident in the earliest of the five works of Bar ʿEbroyo examined, the *Candelabrum sanctuarii*, as might have been expected from what we already knew concerning the use of this work in the Second Base of *Cand.*<sup>115</sup> A number of passages in *Cand.* also indicate a debt to the geographers of the so-called Balkhi School. The relative brevity of these passages makes it difficult to determine whether they are based directly on the works of these geographers or on later compilations such as Yâqût's *Muḥjam al-buldân*.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> For the map accompanying *Cand.*, too, Bar ʿEbroyo may have used as one of his models the sketch map of the seas found in the manuscripts of the *Taḥḥīm*, although Bar ʿEbroyo's map combining the contours of the seas with the presentation of the seven climes stands closer in its concept to the map found with Qazwîni's *Āthār al-bilād*. – For the map accompanying Bîrûnî's *Taḥḥīm*, see ed. Wright, p. 124 (from ms. British Library, Or. 8349, 14th c.); pers. ed. Humâʿi, p. 169; Miller (1926–31) V.125f.; Nasr (1976) 38, figs. 14 & 15 (mss. Tehran, Majlis 6565, 12th c.; and Tashkent, Institute of Oriental Studies); F. Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums* (Leiden/Frankfurt, 1967–2000) [= *GAS*] XII.34, figs. 13ab (Berol. Landberg 63 [5666 Ahlwardt], 1238 A.D.; and British Library, Or. 8349). There is a similar schematic map of the seas, no doubt based on Bîrûnî's, in Qazwîni, *ʿAjâʾib* 105, tr. Ethé, p. 216; cf. Miller (1926–31) V.129f. – For the map accompanying Qazwîni's *Āthār al-bilād*, see ed. Wüstenfeld, p. 8; Miller (1926–31) V.131f. – Given Bar ʿEbroyo's use of Ṭûsî's *Tadhkira* in his *Asc.*, another map of some interest to us is that purportedly copied from an autograph of the *Tadhkira* at J. Needham et al., *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1959) 563 (thence also in Sezgin, *GAS* XII.36, fig. 15). The authenticity of this map, however, is cast in doubt by Needham's dating of this "autograph" to 1331 A.D. some half a century after the author's death and the fact that Prof. F.J. Ragep, the editor of the *Tadhkira*, kindly informs me that the manuscripts of the work known to him do not contain such maps (Prof. Ragep points out the resemblance of the map reproduced by Needham to that found in Nisâbûrî's *Tauḍīḥ al-tadhkira*).

<sup>116</sup> In view of Bar ʿEbroyo's debt elsewhere to Naṣîr al-Dîn al-Ṭûsî, it might be mentioned here that the medieval Persian version of Iṣṭakhri's *al-Masâlik wa-l-mamâlik* is attributed to Ṭûsî in ms. Vienna, Nationalbibl. 1271 Flügel (Mixt. 344). The manuscript, however, is of recent date and

Two points in *Cand.*, unless they are alterations/additions made by Bar 'Ebroyo himself, will be indicative of the inclusion among his sources of a relatively late work, namely the mention of the "Gate of Iron" and "plains of the Qipchaqs" among the regions on the shores of the Caspian (*Cand.* 158.10, also 157.6) and the phrase "the land of Andalus of the Arabs, which now in our day the Franks have conquered" (157.10).<sup>117</sup>

One change Bar 'Ebroyo makes between the account in *Cand.* and that in *Rad.* and *Asc.* is the addition of the values for the lengths and breadths of the seas. These values generally agree with those given by Battânî, Ibn Rusta and Kharaqî, as well as with those given by Jacob of Edessa and, following him, Bar Kepha and Bar Shakko. Some of the values given by Bar 'Ebroyo, however, are not found in Jacob and, furthermore, where the Arabic authors and Jacob diverge from each other Bar 'Ebroyo is in agreement with the former, so that Bar 'Ebroyo's source for these values must be sought among the Arabic works, if not Battânî's *Zij* itself, at least a work closely related to it. Further indications of Bar 'Ebroyo's use of Battânî or a related work are provided by the agreement of the values for the circumferences of the islands in the Mediterranean given in *Rad.* and *Asc.* with those in Battânî-Ibn Rusta (these values are not in Jacob or Kharaqî) and by the agreement of a number of further passages, such as that on Taprobane/Sarandîb in *Rad.*, with those in Battânî et al.

Another alteration that can be observed between *Cand.* and the later works is the disappearance of a good number of Arabo-Persian place-names and the replacement of some of these by their Greco-Syriac equivalents.<sup>118</sup> Although in one case at least (replacement of "Sea of Warang" by "Galatian Sea") the change can be

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the attribution is likely to be erroneous (see I. Afshâr, *Masâlik wa-mamâlik (tarjuma-i fârst-i Masâlik al-mamâlik) az qarn-i 5/6 hijrî, ta'lîf-i Abû Ishâq Ibrâhîm Işâkî* [Tehran, 1961] preface, p.V [English], 13f., 18 [Persian]).

<sup>117</sup> The Reconquista had, of course, been in progress for some time, while Granada remained in Muslim hands for two more centuries after Bar 'Ebroyo's death, but it was within his lifetime that cities such as Cordoba (1236) and Seville (1248) fell to the Christians. – Cf. Dimashqî 241.10f.: ... *jazîrat al-andalus, wa-hiya mimmâ malakahu al-muslimûn thumma tarakûhu* (om. *thumma tarakûhu* codd. St.-Pet. et Leid.).

<sup>118</sup> E.g. the disappearance of "Başra", "Qumair", "Âtil", "Shirwân", "Ṭabaristân"; replacement of "Andalus" by "Ispaniya" and of "yammo d-fârs" by "yammo d-ilimoyê"; alteration of 'RQNY' to HWRQNY' and of 'RQLYS to HRQLYS. – It may also be noted that Bar 'Ebroyo had not hesitated to use Arabic words for "clove", "aloe" and "camphor" in transliteration at *Cand.* 155.2 (see p. 99 above).

attributed to a re-reading of the Syriac *De mundo*, it is probably factors other than the use of new sources which are at play behind these alterations. One factor may be the increased familiarity on Bar ʿEbroyo’s part with the Greco-Syriac place-names gained through his researches for the composition of his *Chron.* and *Chron. eccl.*, the date of whose composition falls between that of *Cand.* and that of *Asc.*<sup>119</sup> Another possible factor is an increased sense of Syriac national identity prompted by the new situation in which the Syriac Christians found themselves under Ilkhanid rule.<sup>120</sup>

More generally concerning the relationship between the five works of Bar ʿEbroyo studied here, it may be stated that *Cand.* stands somewhat apart from the others as the earliest of the five. The accounts of the seas in *Rad.* and *Asc.* are very similar to each other, while the account in *Eth.* too, though shorter, shares many features with these. The similarity here between *Asc.* and *Eth.* is not so surprising given that these two works are known to have been composed in the same year in 1279. The similarity between *Rad.* and *Asc.*, on the other hand, is a little more unexpected and this similarity forces us to reconsider the *terminus ante quem* of 1272 for the composition of *Rad.*, which its mention in *Horr.* suggests. In composing the geographical account for *But.*, the last of the five works composed some six years after *Asc.* and *Eth.*, Bar ʿEbroyo apparently made use of his earlier accounts in both *Cand.* and *Rad./Asc.*, but at the same time added some new materials, most notably from those parts of the *De mundo* which he had not used in his earlier works.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> As an indication for the date of composition of *Chron.*, we have the date “Ilul 1587” (1276 A.D.) mentioned at ed. Bedjan 37.18f. (cf. Göttberger [1900] 40). Fiey would have Bar ʿEbroyo composing *Chron.* during his stay in Maragha in 1272–3, apparently on the basis of Bar ʿEbroyo’s statement in the proem to this work that he used the books in the library in Maragha for composing this work (J.M. Fiey, “Āḏarbaygān chrétien”, *Muséon* 86 [1973] 397–435, here 432). It is quite conceivable that Bar ʿEbroyo conducted some of his research in Maragha in 1272–3 and then put together the results of his research a little later. Bar ʿEbroyo no doubt also continued updating this work until close to his death.

<sup>120</sup> See Takahashi (2001), para. 42–47. The composition of *Chron.* and *Chron. eccl.* might in itself be considered an expression of such a sense of identity.

<sup>121</sup> Since *But.* as a whole is a work on Aristotelian philosophy, it is not so surprising that Bar ʿEbroyo should have taken a renewed look, when composing this work, at the *De mundo*, which he will have believed to be a genuine work of the Stagirite.

Geography, unlike philosophy and theology, is a science that deals with particulars rather than with universal and eternal truths, and place-names especially are subject to alteration over time. Bar 'Ebroyo's habit of using diverse sources originating from different periods of history was as a result to prove more a detriment than an advantage for the purpose of composing a geographical account, and his trust in the works of the ancients and in the faulty Syriac version of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *De mundo* in particular was to become a source of error, as we saw in his account of the Caspian Sea.<sup>122</sup> Nevertheless, what we find in the passages of Bar 'Ebroyo's works examined here is a valiant attempt at a synthesis of the various source materials available to him, and makes for a far more interesting reading, at any rate, and a more challenging one for those interested in *Quellenforschung* than many comparable accounts both in Syriac and Arabic from the late medieval period, including that in the work of Bar 'Ebroyo's older contemporary, Bar Shakkō, who was often content merely to excerpt long passages out of a single source.

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<sup>122</sup> One will have to admit that, in matters of geography at least, Bar 'Ebroyo is not so much a first-rate scholar as a "letterkundige" in the sense in which the term was applied to the compiler of the *Skarifos d-tebil* by Land (Land [1887] 169: "De bewerker van den *σάκρυφος* is geen mathematicus, en in het geheel geen geleerde, maar een »letterkundige", die het werk van anderen pasklaar maakt voor een oppervlakkig onderwezen publiek, en in zijne soort niet een van de uitmuntenden.")

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