

CONTACTS BETWEEN SYRIAC ORTHODOX AND LATIN MILITARY ORDERS

DOROTHEA WELTECKE*

INTRODUCTION

Syriac Orthodox writers have much more to say about the Latins and are more precise in their descriptions than vice versa. But in general Syriac Orthodox and Latins respectively are on the periphery of either perspective in the written sources.¹ In reality, however, Syriac Orthodox and Latins — traders, monks, knights, scribes, physicians, administrators — certainly met in the streets of Jerusalem, Antioch, Acre, Edessa and elsewhere, and mixed on a day-to-day basis.² Recent systematic research has shown that the Latins even lived close to Oriental Christians in rural areas of Palestine.³ To develop a better understanding of these contacts it seems necessary to focus on intercultural encounters on social strata

* I would like to thank Amill Gorgis and Gabriel Rabo for their advice on Syriac Orthodox social structures. For the abbreviations used in the footnotes see the end of this article.

¹ A. Lüders, *Die Kreuzzüge im Urteil syrischer und armenischer Quellen* (Berlin, 1964); A.D. van den Brincken, *Die "Nationes Christianorum Orientalium" im Verständnis der lateinischen Historiographie, von der Mitte des 12. bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, *Kölner Historische Abhandlungen*, 22 (Cologne, 1973); C. Cahen, "Some New Editions of Oriental Sources about Syria in the Time of the Crusades", in *Outremer: Studies in the History of the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem. Presented to Joshua Prawer*, ed. B.Z. Kedar, H.E. Mayer and R.C. Smail (Jerusalem, 1982), pp. 324-31; Hamilton, *Latin Church*, pp. 188-211, 332-60.

² See J. Prawer, "Social Classes in the Crusader States: The 'Minorities'", in *A History of the Crusades*, v, ed. N. P. Zacour and H.W. Hazard (Madison, Wisc., 1985), pp. 59-116. Recent studies show a systematic approach to intercultural contact, apart from the volumes in the present series see e.g. "Occident et Proche-Orient", in *Contacts scientifiques au temps des Croisades: Actes du colloque de Louvain-la-Neuve 24 et 25 mars 1997*, ed. I. Draelants, A. Tihon and B. van den Abeele (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2000).

³ R. Ellenblum, *Frankish Rural Settlement in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem* (Cambridge, 1998); on Syriac Orthodox estates in the kingdom see J.P. Martin, "Les premiers princes croisés et les syriens Jacobites de Jérusalem", *Journal Asiatique*, 8, Ser. 12 = 133 (1888), pp. 471-90; 13 = 134 (1889), pp. 33-79; A. Palmer, "The History of the Syrian Orthodox in Jerusalem", II, "Queen Melisende and the Jacobite Estates", *Or. Chr.*, 76 (1992), pp. 45-83.

below the official meetings between the Syriac Orthodox high clergy and Latin kings or patriarchs.⁴

Among these the encounters between Syriac Orthodox and military orders present one starting point: in the three great Syriac Orthodox chronicles, namely the one by the Patriarch Michael (d. 1199), the one by the anonymous author of the chronicle ad a. 1234, and the chronicle by the *maphrian*, Gregorius Bar 'Ebrōyō (known in the West as Bar Hebraeus, d. 1286), some 25 passages mention the military orders.⁵ Without already being able to solve all the textual and factual problems posed by these passages, the known Syriac material shall be evaluated and presented here to foster further interdisciplinary discussion between medievalists and orientalists.⁶

As will be seen, the Syriac Orthodox became aware of the military orders immediately after they were founded and accepted them as one of the Latin forces in the Levant. They were well informed about the spiritual concept of the military orders. Contrary to expectations they, apparently, had no objections to it. One could have expected otherwise: the members of the military orders — in the Levant most prominently the Knights Templar and the Hospitallers —⁷ were men who combined reli-

⁴ The since then often quoted passages were gathered by P. Kawerau, *Die Jakobinische Kirche im Zeitalter Byzantinische Arbeiten*, 3 (Berlin, 1960), pp. 82-5. For new sources see H. Kaufhold, "Zur syrischen Kirchengeschichte des 12. Jahrhunderts: Neue Quellen über Theodoros bar Wahbūn", *Or. Chr.*, 74 (1990), pp. 115-51; A.B. Schmidt and P. Halfter, "Der Brief Papst Innozenz II. an den armenischen Katholikos Gregor III.: Ein wenig beachtetes Dokument zur Geschichte der Synode von Jerusalem (Ostern 1141)", *Annuaire Historiae Concilium*, 31 (1999), pp. 50-71.

⁵ BE CE occ.; BE CP; AA 1234 CE/CP II; M (III). Apart from the introductions consult also A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), pp. 298-300, 302, 312-20; J.-M. Fiey, "Esquisse d'une bibliographie de Bar Hebraeus", *Parole de l'Orient*, 13 (1988), pp. 279-312; A.B. Schmidt, "Die zweifache armenische Rezension der syrischen Chronik Michael des Großen", *Le Muséon*, 109 (1996), pp. 299-319; L.I. Conrad, "The Arabic Bar Hebraeus", *Parole de l'Orient*, 19 (1994), pp. 318-78.

⁶ Indices given by the editors and translators of the Syriac chronicles in this case do not prove to be reliable: M 595-7 (III, 201-3); M 598 (III, 207-8); M 612-3 (III, 231); M 614 (III, 235-6); M 644 (III, 287); BE CP 319 (279-80), compare the Armenian revision: *Chronique de Michel le Grand*, Langlois, p. 310 (*lacuna* in the chronicle of Michael); BE CP 323 (283), compare *Chronique de Michel le Grand*, Langlois, p. 314 (*lacuna*); M 720 (III, 379); BE CP 354 (308-9); M 734 (III, 404); AA 1234 CP II 198 (148); BE CP 373-4 (324-5); BE CP 390 (337); BE CP 430 (370), AA 1234 CP II 518 (171); BE CP 442 (379), BE CP 444 (381), BE CP 454 (389), BE CP 462-3 (396); BE CP 543-4 (463); BE CE occ. 669 (670), BE CP 578-9 (492-3).

⁷ See J. Riley-Smith, *A History of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem*, 1 (London, 1967); M. Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge,

gious life and military service. As a form of *vita religiosa* this must have been unheard of within Oriental Christian communities, as indeed it was within Latin Christian communities.⁸ Even for the members of the military orders themselves, their specific form of life could pose theological and social problems.⁹ It is therefore worth noting that the Syriac chroniclers never seem to have been inclined to share the Latin's theological reservations.

Equally surprising is a report indicating that Syriac Orthodox and members of the military orders were killed side by side far up in the north-east of Syria. Both observations consequently lead to the question about the Syriac Orthodox's *own* attitude towards war, which has not yet been investigated systematically.¹⁰ No exhaustive answer shall be attempted here, since the very existence of military involvement of Syriac Orthodox has not received the attention it deserves. These military activities, however, shall be interpreted as the context in which the Syriac reports about the military orders make sense.

II

The majority of the passages in the Syriac chronicles deal with military history. Involvement of Syriac Orthodox is not reported. The first well-

1994); for further reading consult K. Elm, "Die Spiritualität der geistlichen Ritterorden des Mittelalters: Forschungsstand und Forschungsprobleme", in *Militia Christi e Crociata nei secoli XI-XIII*, Miscellanea del Centro di studi medioevali, 13 (Milan, 1992), pp. 477-518; A. Luttrell, "The Military Orders: Some definitions", in *Militia Sancti Sepulcri — Idea e istituzioni: Atti del Colloquio Internazionale tenuto presso la Pontificia università del Laterano 10-12 aprile 1996*, ed. K. Elm and C.D. Fonseca (Vatican City, 1998), pp. 77-88.

⁸ See, however, similar institutions in a similar context, the early militant confraternities in Spain: N. Jaspert, "Frühformen der geistlichen Ritterorden und die Kreuzzugsbewegung auf der Iberischen Halbinsel". in *Europa an der Wende vom 11. zum 12. Jahrhundert: Beiträge zu Ehren von Werner Goetz*, ed. K. Herbers (Stuttgart, 2001), pp. 90-116. I would like to thank N. Jaspert for reviewing the present paper.

⁹ They had to face criticism as well as their own doubts. Exhortations are known to have come from the most approved authorities of the time, see Bernard of Clairvaux, *De laude novae militiae, S. Bernardi Opera*, ed. J. Leclercq and H.M. Rochais, III (Rome, 1963), pp. 207-38. J. Leclercq, "Un document sur les débuts des Templiers", *Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique*, 52 (1957), pp. 81-91; see also R. Hiestand, "Kardinalbischof Matthäus von Albano, das Konzil von Troyes und die Entstehung des Templerordens", *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 91 (1988), pp. 295-323, p. 296 for further references.

¹⁰ See, however, A. Palmer, "De overwinning van het kruis en het probleem van de christelijke nederlaag: Kruistochten en djihad in Byzantijnse en Syrisch-orthodoxe ogen", in *Heilige oorlogen: Een onderzoek naar historische en hedendaagse vormen van collectief religieus geweld*, ed. H. Bakker and M. Gosman (Kampen, 1991), pp. 84-109.

known battle to be mentioned is not, as could be expected, the siege of Damascus in 1148,¹¹ but the conquest of Ascalon in 1153.¹² The next incident mentioned is the battle between Reynald of Châtillon and Prince Thoros of Armenia in Alexandrette in 1156.¹³ It is followed by the battle of Ḥarīm in 1164,¹⁴ Montgisard in 1177,¹⁵ the battle on the river Litani in 1179,¹⁶ and Ḥaṭṭīn in 1187.¹⁷ The military orders are further mentioned in the context of consultations between Richard Lionheart and Malik al-ʿĀdil in 1191,¹⁸ the siege of Damietta in 1219 and 1221,¹⁹ and the conquest of Acre in 1291.²⁰ Here the military orders are depicted more or less like other military powers, who were involved in collecting tribute, in the assault and the defence of towns, and in political negotiations.²¹ Where the chroniclers gathered their knowledge about these battles is a source-critical problem as yet unsolved.²² The passages in question, however, sometimes clearly show Latin²³ and sometimes Muslim provenance.²⁴

Another more general conclusion can be gained from this first glance. Michael and Bar ʿEbrōyō were born in areas of Muslim domination. Michael visited the territories of the Latins several times at the start of his administration, and Bar ʿEbrōyō lived there for part of his earlier life.²⁵ The anonymous is known for his excellent sources for the history

¹¹ M 639 (III, 276); BE CP 313 (274); AA 1234 CP II 149 (112).

¹² BE CP 319 (279-80); *Chronique de Michel le Grand*, Langlois, 310 (*lacuna* in the chronicle of Michael); AA 1234 CP II 155-6 (116-7) does not mention them.

¹³ BE CP 323 (283); compare *Chronique de Michel le Grand*, Langlois, 314 (*lacuna* in the chronicle of Michael).

¹⁴ BE CP 330 (288).

¹⁵ AA 1234 CP II 188-9 (141-2); M 709-10 (III, 375) does not mention them, neither does BE CP 353-4 (207-8).

¹⁶ M 720 (III, 379); BE CP 354 (308-9).

¹⁷ M 734 (III, 404); AA 1234 CP II 198 (148); BE CP 373-4 (324-5).

¹⁸ BE CP 390 (337).

¹⁹ AA 1234 CP II 518 (171).

²⁰ BE CP 578-9 (492-3).

²¹ See also BE CP 430 (730), 444 (381), 454 (389), 462-3 (396), 543-4 (463).

²² Michael's secular sources for the twelfth century are virtually unknown, see the introduction of Chabot to M (I), xxxv-xxxvi; P. Kawerau, "Barbarossas Tod nach ʿImād ad-Dīn und Michael Syrus", *Or. Chr.*, 48 (1964), pp. 135-42; for Bar ʿEbrōyō see the recent studies of Hennis Teule, esp., "The Crusaders in Barhebraeus' Syriac and Arabic Secular Chronicles: A Different Approach", in *East and West in the Crusader States*, 1, pp. 39-49.

²³ At least I would like to suggest this for BE CP 323 (283), which must stem from Michael (now *lacuna*): compare *Chronique de Michel le Grand*, Langlois, p. 314.

²⁴ BE CP 373-4 (324-5), who preferred this version to that of M 734 (III, 404).

²⁵ W. Hage, *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, xxii (1992), pp. 710-2, s.v. Michael der Syrer; H. Teule, in *Encyclopedia of Iran*, viii (1997), pp. 13-5, s.v. Ebn al-ʿEbrī.

of Edessa, which is why he is widely assumed to be of Edessenian origin.²⁶ Be it as it may, he was certainly born after the loss of the County of Edessa to the Muslims but was in Jerusalem when it fell to Saladin in 1187.²⁷ Hence, he must have seen members of the military orders and the places where they stayed in Jerusalem and elsewhere. The chroniclers' starting position being quite equal in this respect, their interest in the military orders turns out to be less so.

The anonymous chronicler mentions the military orders only three times. He was also misinformed about their actions. After all, his intellectual world is not concerned with the West. He records, not whether scholars knew Greek but whether they knew Arabic;²⁸ in fact, he was mainly interested in Arabic culture and the Oriental world. No direct contacts between him and Latins of any position can be detected.

The bulk of the passages is offered by the chronicle of Bar 'Ebrōyō, which is only partly due to the *lacunae* in the chronicle of Michael.²⁹ Most of them concern military history. Some of the passages by Michael, discussed in the following, apparently did not find Bar 'Ebrōyō's interest.

III

Michael the Great describes the origin and early history of the military orders. The passage in question is inserted into his chronicle ad a. 1118 or 1119. It is distinguished by a headline, "taš'itō da-frēr aḥe frangē", that is to say, "a narrative about the *frēr*, the Frankish brethren". Compared to other narratives in Michael's chronicle, no stylistic change can be perceived. From the way the development of the Knights Templar is presented, the narration must have been written in the second half of the twelfth century and before the battle of Ḥaṭṭin in 1187. This is congruent with the assumption made on other grounds that this part of the chronicle must have been written after the year 1165.³⁰ There is no positive

²⁶ Fiey in his introduction to AA 1234 CE/CP II, vii-viii again discussed the evidence concluding with: "Il semble que l'on puisse répondre sans hésiter que l'écrivain était Édessénien."

²⁷ AA 1234 CP II 200 (150).

²⁸ AA 1234 CE II 302 (226); AA 1234 CE II 309 (231).

²⁹ Two passages can be traced, see above notes 11, 12. Concerning the *lacunae* consult Chabot, Introduction in M (I), lx-lxii.

³⁰ D. Weltecke, "Mōr Michael der Große (1126-1199): Die Beschreibung der Zeiten" (unpublished dissertation, Berlin, 1999), pp. 127-30.

proof, however, that Michael himself was the author of this narration and in all probability he used second hand information.

Scholars do not hold this account of the origin of the *fr̄ēr* in high esteem as to the information it provides about the early history of the Knights Templar.³¹ For the present survey, however, another feature comes to light: although the account does not relate any direct encounter between Syriac Orthodox and members of the military orders, it leaves the impression that such encounters must have taken place.

The narration starts off by reporting the first steps of the history of the Knights Templar:

“In the beginning of the reign of *Bagduin II* [=Balwin II (1118-1131)] a Frankish man came from Rome to Jerusalem to pray. He had taken a vow not to go back to his own lands but rather, after helping the King in his battles for three years, he — and the 30 knights, who were with him — would become monks and would fulfil their lives there, in Jerusalem. And when the King and his magnates saw that they succeeded in the battles and virtuously helped the city during their service in these three years, they advised him, instead of becoming a monk and only saving his own soul, to serve in the army together with those, who would accompany him, and to protect those places from brigands. And when he accepted this advice, this man, whose name was *Hū d-Payn* and also those 30 knights agreed and came with him, the King gave them the house of Solomon for habitation and villages for their livelihood. And likewise the Patriarch gave to them some of the villages of the Church.”³²

Whereas this passage describes the assignment of the brethren as an unspecified military service on behalf of the city of Jerusalem, a second definition of their purpose is presented at the end of the narration: “Although they have been founded for the sake of the pilgrims, whom they guarded on the streets, later on they also set off with the kings for the battles against the Turks.”³³

This account reveals some apologetic elements: The virtuous Hugh de Payen and his knights were coaxed into military service with a very convincing argument. Instead of selfishly saving only their own souls by leading the contemplative life of the monks, they are asked to do more,

³¹ Compare Barber, *New Knighthood* (see n. 7), pp. 6, 7, 10; A. Luttrell, “The Earliest Templars”, in *Autour de la Première Croisade: Actes du Colloque de la Society for the Study of the Crusades and the Latin East (Clermont-Ferrand, 22-25 Juin 1995)*, ed. M. Balard (Paris, 1996), pp. 193-202.

³² M 595-6 (III, 201). Concerning the dates of foundation see Hiestand, “Kardinal-bischof Matthäus von Albano” (see n. 9). For a recent discussion of the sources of the origins see Luttrell “Earliest Templars” (see n. 31).

³³ M 596 (III, 203).

to join in good service for others. "Service" (*tešmeštō*) appears to be a keyword of the text. Military service is not only equated to religious service but fighting becomes a form of worship, as, in fact, it was in the conceptions of the military orders:³⁴ "And when it is ordered to go to a place to die, he has no right to say: 'I don't go!' but as he promised, until death, he labours in this service for faith" ("tešmeštō hōdē d-hay-mōnūtō").³⁵

But to whom is this apology directed? The Orientals were not an interested party here, and their approval or disapproval of the way of life of the Knights Templar was of little concern to the Latin authorities. The passage, then, might rather preserve an argument of the early internal Latin conflicts connected with this new form of religious life and its specific discrepancy between the desire for contemplation and military duty.³⁶

As to their religious way of life Michael's account reads: "And they defined their way of life by these rules, to live monastically [*dayrō 'īl*]: that they have no women and do not go to the baths; and that they will never purchase anything separately, but give their entire property to the community."³⁷

By *dayrō 'īl* the Syriac Orthodox writer does not mean monasticism in the Latin sense. In the West, the previous four centuries had brought a great differentiation of rules, customs, statutes, and orders of monks and regular canons, whereas Syriac Orthodox forms of religious life remained individual and flexible. The term only refers to religious life in the community in contrast to the life of the anchorites. It is exactly this aspect of their life being a communal one which is repeatedly stressed, as the narrator says that all the new members, "sons of kings, and kings, magnates, and humble men are united with them in the brotherhood, which is a spiritual one" ("methayadīn 'amhūn b-ahūtō d-ak hōdē rūhōnōytō").³⁸

Both *ahō*, the *terminus technicus* for the *frēr*, and *ahūtō* are well established as terms for religious relationships in the Syriac Orthodox culture.³⁹ Nevertheless some informant must have explained the fact that

³⁴ See above notes 7 and 8.

³⁵ M 596 (III, 202).

³⁶ Compare esp. Leclercq, "Un document" (see n. 9), pp. 86-9.

³⁷ M 596 (III, 201).

³⁸ M 596 (III, 201), the sentence is unclear, perhaps incomplete.

³⁹ For some references see R. Payne-Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, I (Oxford, 1897; reprint New York, 1981), pp. 110-1, who states "Praesertim Christiani se invicem fratres nominaverunt... postea coenobitae monachique nomen sibi assumpserunt, unde Angl. friars...", and *ibid.*, pp. 111-2. Kawerau, *Jakobitische Kirche* (see n. 4), pp. 122-3, and the studies he used were unaware of this fact.

the life of the *frēr* was organized as a spiritual *confraternitas*⁴⁰ and he took pains to translate the Latin and French words. The narrator is also informed about some further peculiarities of Latin religious life: “Their habits [*amnē*] and their rules [*qōnunē*] are written down and are arranged.”⁴¹ The Syriac Orthodox tradition does not distinguish between rules and customs as written documents to regulate religious life, yet the narrator faithfully records both words. Again, someone apparently stressed these facts and translated the terms in question.⁴²

Bearing in mind these translations of words and features of social life, one conceives a certain dialogue. As the narration unfolds and further details about the life of the brethren are related — revealing an amalgamation of features of the Knights Templar and the Hospitallers — two directions of dialogue become evident. The Syriac Orthodox would ask about aspects familiar to him from his own culture and religious experience: How does one become a *frēr*?⁴³ Do they really have no property of their own?⁴⁴ What clothes do they have apart from their white cloak? What do they eat?⁴⁵ How do they earn their livelihood and who does the work for them? The author records all information with equanimity, even the following one:

“And for everybody who dies they celebrate 40 masses, and feed the poor for him for 40 days, every day 40 souls. And his memory will be kept in

⁴⁰ See Hiestand “Kardinalbischof Matthäus von Albano” (see n. 9).

⁴¹ M 596 (III, 202).

⁴² See *La Règle du Temple*, ed. H. Curzon (Paris, 1886); *Die ursprüngliche Templerregel*, ed. G. Schnürer, Studien und Darstellungen aus dem Gebiete der Geschichte, 3/1-2 (Freiburg, Br., 1903); *Cartulaire général de l'ordre du Temple 1119?-1150: Recueil des chartes et des bulles relatives à l'ordre du Temple*, ed. Marquis d'Albon (Paris, 1913); *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des Hospitaliers de St. Jean de Jérusalem (1100-1300)*, ed. J. Delaville le Roulx (Paris, 1894-1906). S. Cerrini, “A New Edition of the Latin and French Rule of the Temple”, in *The Military Orders, II, Welfare and Warfare*, ed. H. Nicholson (Aldershot, 1998), pp. 207-15.

⁴³ Michael 596 (III, 202): “Everybody who comes to be a brother with them is rejected for one year. During that time [not: “On lui lit les règles par sept fois...”] the rules are read to him, and during the whole time he is told ‘See to it that you do not deceive yourself, in case you are not able to live up to the fulfilment of these rules. Do penance and return to your home!’ At the end of that year they say the prayers above the one, who accepts it and promises to carry the burden, as they clothe him in their habit.”

⁴⁴ Michael 596 (III, 202): “They observe however the following custom that nobody is allowed to possess anything for himself, neither a house, nor money, nor other properties.... And if someone is found to have concealed something from the community, or, when he dies, it is discovered that he had something which he did not give to the community, they do not even spread the clothes, which consist of one simple white habit, over [him] for the funeral.”

⁴⁵ Michael 597 (III, 202): “Their food is as follows: on Sundays, on Tuesdays and on Thursdays they eat meat, and the rest of the week milk, eggs, and cheese, but only the priests and the deacons who are serving in the churches drink wine with their bread every day of the week.”

the masses of their churches in all eternity. And those who die in the battles, they count among the martyrs.”

But in addition to these aspects, the Syriac Orthodox learns some features of the Latin way of organising religious life which he would never ask about because there is no equivalent in his own culture. Apart from the documents regulating their lives, these features include most prominently the centralised hierarchy of the knights and their strict rules of obedience and communal life.⁴⁶

A specific feature of the narration requires explanation: if someone neglects the vows he took upon him, “... without mercy and without any intercession he dies by the sword”.⁴⁷ This is obviously a dramatisation of the actual facts as is the description of the recruits of the new order, who are supposed to be “sons of kings, and kings, magnates and humble men”.⁴⁸ Dramatisation is one of the prominent features of the narration.⁴⁹ This feature seems to allow some further considerations: if the initial informant had been a Knight Templar he would deliberately have been telling lies. However, the informant was probably not a Knight Templar. Rather, there seems to be a considerable distance between the chronicler and the initial cross-cultural dialogue.

At the same time, the dramatisation underlines even more strongly the rules and the asceticism of the knights, as well as the widespread recognition of their virtuousness and their fame. This feature, then, has apologetic effects as well.

IV

This narration about the early history of the *fr̄ēr* is followed by another one, concentrating on charity.⁵⁰ Here many of the features of the first

⁴⁶ Michael 596 (III, 202): “... and nobody is allowed to go out without the permission of the prior [*fr̄ēs*], or to sleep anywhere else but in their house or to eat bread but at the communal table.” Michael 597 (III, 202): “And in every city and in every village where they have a house there is a prior or a commander, and according to his command they all serve, each in his own occupation. The one prior common to them all is in Jerusalem. He is the one who rules over all of them, while on no account shall anybody be in charge over anything particular himself.” See A. Forey, “Rank and Authority in the Military Orders during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century”, *Studia Monastica*, 40 (1998), pp. 291-327.

⁴⁷ M 596 (III, 202).

⁴⁸ M 596 (III, 201).

⁴⁹ Perhaps dramatisation is also responsible for the rise of numbers of the first members, which time and again puzzled scholars working with this passage, see above note 33.

⁵⁰ M 598 (III, 207-8).

account reappear; therefore the interpretation just given can now be tested for its validity. As indicated, Michael does not distinguish between the different military orders and only has one set of designations at his disposal, which makes it impossible to identify the *fr̄ēr* mentioned in his chronicle.⁵¹

In the year 1120, the narrator tells us, there was a severe famine in Jerusalem, and the *fr̄ēr*, whose custom it was to distribute food to the poor, were prepared to face death together with them and to share the small remains of their wheat with them. Then a miracle took place and they were able to feed everybody. “And this miracle was proclaimed everywhere for the glory of God.”⁵²

Again apology makes itself felt, this time described as a proclamation, which also reached the Syriac Orthodox. They were now, in fact, an interested party as they, too, were part of the religious and social landscape of Jerusalem affected by the rule of the Latins. Even if this account cannot at present be corroborated, the historical situation where Latins saw the need to legitimate their position towards their oriental Christian subjects is certainly genuine: Michael claims to be an eyewitness to the proclamation of the successful battle of Montgisard in the Principality of Antioch. Thus he learned a certain Latin version of the events, stressing divine support and hence, legitimate Latin warfare and rule.⁵³

Again the use of specific terms reveals the ultimate origin of this piece of information: “... these *fr̄ēr*, that is to say ‘brethren’, those who call themselves *DAWYH* [ܕܘܘܝܗ] which is *alōhōyē*.”⁵⁴ Jean-Baptiste Chabot, the French translator of Michael’s chronicle, translated *alōhōyē* with *divin*, which seems to be a surprising self-designation for the humble *commilitones*. In fact, Michael obviously uses the same term by which the Templars are known from Arabic texts, *ad-dāwiyya*. Apparently this term cannot be derived from the Arabic and therefore different suggestions for loan words from outside have been put forward. Hitti explained the Arabic term as a Syriac loan word, as an arabisation of the

⁵¹ Unlike the anonymous, Bar ʿEbrōyō again occasionally uses the term *ahē* as Michael does.

⁵² M 598 (III, 207).

⁵³ One wonders in which language this proclamation was made: M 718-9 (III, 375); compare BE CP 353-4 (207-8), who copied the account but preferred not to conclude with Michael’s testimony but with quotations from a Muslim source, and a Muslim proclamation of the outcome of the battle issued in Egypt, which further stresses the importance of this medium.

⁵⁴ M 598 (III, 207).

Syriac *dōwē*, *dōwyō*.⁵⁵ But this derivation has been dismissed. Another hypothesis supposes Arabic *dāwiyya* to be the arabised Latin word *devotus* or rather, French *dévo*.⁵⁶

The Syriac sources corroborate this thesis. The anonymous and Bar ʿEbrōyō clearly use an Arabic loan word. Michael’s spelling is a little different. He presents *DAWYH* as a term the brethren use themselves and translates it. His translation of the term *alōhōyō* should indeed be interpreted as “belonging to the god, sacred” instead of Chabot’s *divin*. *Dévo*, therefore, is the original term. But *DAWYH* is a phonetic transcription of the *arabised* term. The Syrian again heard an intermediary, who in this case spoke Arabic.

V

The next two passages to be mentioned report actual contact between Syriac Orthodox and members of the military orders. Inserted ad a. 1130 in the chronicle of Michael the Great is the story of the rather restless Bishop of Segestan, who deserted his diocese in this year and was excommunicated because of that.⁵⁷ Time and again he is provided with a new see and livelihood, conspicuously with the help of a Latin, Jocelyn II, Count of Edessa, who strongly interfered in Syriac Orthodox affairs.⁵⁸ But the Bishop continued to fail and was expelled by the faithful. After 1138:

“... he continued to wander about from one place to another and went to Jerusalem, and as he could not bear it in our monastery, which is there, he joined the Franks who are called *fi-ēr*, and finally he fell into an oven and burnt.”⁵⁹

No identification of these brethren with either of the military orders can be attempted here. But one would like to know why, of all the possibilities he could have chosen, it would be attractive for the Bishop from

⁵⁵ Ph.K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present* (London etc., 1970¹⁰), p. 644, n. 3: “Ar. *Dāwīyah*, corruption of a Syriac word for ‘poor’, the original name of the order in Latin being *Pauperes commilitones Christi* (Poor Knights of Christ).” William Budge was not aware of the meaning of this term; he consequently translated it “wretched Brethren”; compare BE CP in his translation, 324 etc.

⁵⁶ St.R. Humphreys, *El²*, Supplement fasc. 3-4 (1981), pp. 204-6, s.v. *Dāwiyya* and *Isbitāriyya*; H. Hein, “Der Deutsche Orden bei den arabischen Historikern der Kreuzzugszeit”, *Der Islam*, 76 (1999), pp. 148-54.

⁵⁷ M 612-3 (III, 231-2).

⁵⁸ M 612 (III, 231), 628 (III, 259).

⁵⁹ M 613 (III, 232).

afar to join the brethren in Jerusalem. Neither Armenians nor Copts would accept him, and maybe the Latin monastic orders settled in and about Jerusalem decided not to accept him either.⁶⁰ At first sight, this passage is proof only for an isolated spontaneous encounter between Syriac Orthodox and brethren.

There are, however, more clues for connecting pieces in the triangle formed by the military orders, Jocelyn II, and Syriac Orthodox of the County of Edessa, and they are all the more welcome since little is known of the activity of the military orders in this area.⁶¹ One of them is provided by the following lemma ad a. 1133. It alludes to some activity of the *frēr* far up in the north or even outside the Crusader States.⁶² "During the time when this eclipse took place, that is to say the darkness of the sun, 40 knights *frēr* were slain and with them 400 other Christians and the deacon Bar QRYA."

⁶⁰ The miaphysitic sister-churches usually accepted each other's verdicts during the twelfth century as can be seen in a Coptic and in a Syriac Orthodox conflict; see G. Graf, *Ein Reformversuch innerhalb der koptischen Kirche im zwölften Jahrhundert* (Paderborn, 1923). Theodor bar Wahbūn had to leave the monastery of the Armenians in Jerusalem where he sought refuge and was accepted in Cilicia only after the conflict between the Catholicos and Patriarch Michael aggravated, see Kaufhold, "Zur syrischen Kirchengeschichte" (see n. 4). Prof. H.E. Mayer doubts that this encounter is historical and comments: Why should the Latin institution have accepted him, as he probably had nothing to offer? The motive of a bishop falling into an oven is also rather suspicious. This being true, the evidence leaves no room for doubt that the term *frēr* before the arrival of the mendicants can only refer to members of the military orders. Whether or not the narration is considered to be historical requires explanation.

⁶¹ The first settlement of the Hospital dates back to the reign of Baldwin II, perhaps even to the time when he was Count of Edessa. Jocelyn II's first known donation dates from 1134, see *Regesta Regni Hierosolymitani (MXCVIII-MCCXCI)*, ed. R. Röhrich [= *RRH*] (Oenipointi, 1904), n. 206, 137b, 151. Concerning *RRH*, n. 390 see H.E. Mayer, *Varia Antiochena*, MGH Studien und Texte, 6 (Hanover, 1993), pp. 65-74, who dates the original chart to 1143, and *ibid.*, pp. 114-7, n. 3. I would like to thank Prof. H.E. Mayer for correcting this note and for the following reference: R. Hiestand, "Ein unbekanntes Privileg Fürst Bohemunds II. von Antiochia für das Hospital von März 1127 und die Frühgeschichte der antiochenischen Fürstenkanzlei", *Archiv für Diplomatik*, 43 (1998), pp. 27-46. See also C. Cahen, *La Syrie du Nord à l'Époque des Croisades et la Principauté franque d'Antioche* (Paris, 1940), pp. 510-26.

⁶² M 614 (III, 235-6). See *Bartholomaei de Cotton monachi Norwicensis Historia Anglicana (A.D. 449-1298)* etc., ed. H.R. Luard (London, 1859), ad a. 1133, 62: "Eodem anno interfecti sunt omnes milites Templi. Eodem anno tenebrae factae sunt in Anglia et terraemotus; sol similis factus est lunae tertiae." *Matthaei Parisiensis monachi Sancti Albani chronica majora*, ed. H.R. Luard, II (London, 1874), p. 159: "Anno Domini MCXXXIII. Tenebrae factae sunt in Anglia, et terra mota est; sol similis factus lunae tertiae ... Interfecti sunt omnes milites Templi Domini." Usually these passages are identified with the defeat of Damascus in 1129 mentioned among others by William of Tyre, *Chronicon*, pp. 13, 26. See M.L. Bulst-Hiele, *Sacrae Domus Militiae Templi Hierosolymitani Magistri: Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Templerordens 1118/19-1314* (Göttingen, 1974), p. 28, n. 39 and others.

No indication is given as to how this killing came about or where it took place. But some pages earlier the deacon is identified.⁶³ He belonged to the Benē QRYA, who were entangled in a fierce conflict with the Benē KMRA, concerning land property in the vicinity of the Euphrates. The Benē KMRA was the family of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Athanasius VII. The Emir of Amid became involved and the conflict aggravated into a veritable feud. The anonymous relates that the Patriarch was kept in Amid against his will and that he could take leave only after the diplomatic efforts of a certain Syriac Orthodox named Michael bar Šūmōnō, official of the Edessenian administration, second to Jocelyn II himself, who seems to have threatened the Emir with raids.⁶⁴ Hence, the anonymous alludes to military activity of Latins. The context is a little different, since the Count took the side of the Patriarch whereas the *frēr* perhaps fought with the Benē QRYA, but nevertheless the report of the anonymous corroborates the passage in Michael's chronicle.⁶⁵

After the fall of Edessa conditions changed. In 1148 an event took place which brought the future Patriarch Michael, then 22 years of age, involuntarily into direct contact with the *frēr*.⁶⁶ The assault by Count Jocelyn II and his Armenian-Latin troops on the rich monastery Mōr Baršawmō.⁶⁷ According to Michael, the attack has to be seen in the context of skirmishes provoked by the concurrence of Danishmendids and Latins in the border region, taking their toll on several Syriac Orthodox monasteries.⁶⁸ Following Michael's account, the priests accompanying Jocelyn apparently went straight into the church to loot, and afterwards Jocelyn "... ordered his soldiers to inspect the cells and to collect everything to be found in gold, and silver, and brass, and iron, and garments, and carpets".⁶⁹

⁶³ M 602 (III, 213).

⁶⁴ AA 1234 CE II, 302 (226).

⁶⁵ Ten years earlier a Latin-Armenian contingent, also from Edessa, was active in the northern region for different reasons, see G. Dédéyan, "Un projet de colonisation arménienne dans le royaume latin de Jérusalem sous Amaury Ier (1162-1174)", in *Le partage du monde: Échanges et colonisation dans la méditerranée médiévale*, ed. M. Balard et A. Ducellier, Byzantina Sorbonensia, 17 (Paris, 1998), pp. 101-40, p. 105.

⁶⁶ See Kawerau, *Jakobitische Kirche* (see n. 4), p. 84 etc.

⁶⁷ E. Honigmann, *Le couvent de Barsauma et le patriarcat jacobite d'Antioche et de Syrie*, CSCO, 146, Subs.7 (Louvain, 1954); H. Kaufhold, "Notes on the Late History of the Barsauma Monastery", Hugoye (<http://syrcom.cua.edu/Hugoye>), 3,2.

⁶⁸ M 644 (III, 287).

⁶⁹ M 644 (III, 287).

Then the *frēi* were moved to action:

“Some Frankish men who were with him were of those *frēi* that is to say ‘brethren’. When they saw this [the ongoing looting], they said to him [Jocelyn]: ‘We come with you for the battle with the Turks, and for the relief of Christians — not for the plundering of churches and monasteries!’ And as they went away from him, they would not even eat bread nor drink water.”⁷⁰

VI

Gregorius Bar ‘Ebrōyō copied the account about the assault from Michael’s chronicle into his own history of the patriarchs of Antioch, except for this passage.⁷¹ The brethren might not have been of any interest to his intended audience.⁷² His readers must have been quite ignorant of the western world because they needed basic information about such prominent places as Antalya and Cyprus.⁷³ But by omitting this rather dramatic element of the *frēi* defection from Jocelyn’s contingent, a new sinister twist enters the story. In Bar ‘Ebrōyō’s account there is simply no pious person to be seen in the Latin troops. And there is another omission producing a similar effect: as he also cut part of another sentence, the story now reads as if the priests and not the soldiers looted the private cells of the monks!

These and other changes he makes to Michael’s reports on the *frēi* are, however, not decisive clues for a critical attitude of the *maphrian* towards the knights. For twice he records without comment the claim of the *frēi* that their houses and their labour were for the benefit of all Christians.⁷⁴ Such was the answer of the brethren to a diplomatic mission not corroborated by Armenian or Latin sources: The Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius III David (1222-52) and the Armenian Catholicos Constantine (1221-67) are said to have tried to mediate between Isabel,

⁷⁰ M 644 (III, 287).

⁷¹ Lüders, *Kreuzzüge im Urteil syrischer und armenischer Quellen* (see n. 1), p. 15, specially preferred Bar ‘Ebrōyō’s chronicle to Michael’s because of its assumed objectivity, following the *opinio communis* of the scholars, see above note 5. His achievements in historical writing left undiminished, one result of the present paper is that his use of Michael (and other sources!) should be analysed in detail. His additions and interpretations clearly deserve critical treatment.

⁷² The discussion about the intended audience of the historical works by Bar ‘Ebrōyō is still going on, see Conrad, “The Arabic Bar Hebraeus” (see n. 5), and critical to that Teule, “Crusaders in Barhebraeus’ Syriac and Arabic Secular Chronicles” (see n. 22).

⁷³ BE CP 420 (363).

⁷⁴ BE CP 323 (283); BE CP 454 (389).

Queen of the Kingdom of Armenia, the Regent Constantine, and the Hospitallers in Seleucia. There the Queen had sought asylum after the death of King Philip in 1224. According to Bar 'Ebrōyō, the prelates tried to put an end to the schisms and war in Cilicia.⁷⁵

As to encounters between Syriac Orthodox and knights, another prominent passage is brought to mind.⁷⁶ Bar 'Ebrōyō reports the conflict between the Coptic Patriarch of Alexandria, Cyril ibn Laqlaq (1235-43) and the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius III David. This conflict took place in 1237 when Jerusalem again belonged to the Latins, during Ignatius' visit to Jerusalem.

Patriarch Cyril had ordained a Coptic bishop for Jerusalem with jurisdiction over Palestine and Syria up to the Euphrates, including the Latin principalities. By this action he obviously interfered in the jurisdiction of the Syriac Orthodox patriarch.⁷⁷ At the same time, perhaps not coincidentally,⁷⁸ Ignatius was asked by a certain party of the Church of Ethiopia to ordain an Ethiopian as *Abūna*, the *primas* of the Ethiopian Church. Ignatius III was well aware that in doing so he would act against the law but, as Bar 'Ebrōyō writes, he meant to "drive out a nail with a nail". "And immediately he planned not to act without the knowledge of the brethren *Per-per sūrōyē*, the Frankish scholars, in order not to stir up the Egyptian Metropolitan, who was in Jerusalem."⁷⁹

⁷⁵ BE CP 454 (389); see Cahen, *Syrie du Nord* (see n. 61), pp. 634-51, who, although quoting BE's account, does not discuss this particular detail. No further source critical study of this passage can be attempted here. On the other hand, there is no reason to ignore this evidence. Concerning Annenian-Syriac cooperation in Cilicia consult e.g. Schmidt, "Zweifache armenische Rezension" (see n. 5) for further reading.

⁷⁶ See also H. Teule, "It is not Right to Call Ourselves Orthodox and the Others Heretics: Eucumenical Attitudes in the Jacobite Church in the Time of the Crusades", in *East and West in the Crusader States*, II, pp. 12-27, esp. 23-6.

⁷⁷ This was the argument brought forward by critics of Cyril's in Egypt. See *History of the Holy Church*, p. 77 (pp. 158-9). Cyril's own bishops again accused him of interfering in the affairs of the Patriarch of Antioch during reform synods organized by his opponents one year later. See *History of the Holy Church*, pp. 82-3 (pp. 169-73).

⁷⁸ The *History of the Holy Church* points to massive resistance against the administration and the dogmatic position of Cyril among the bishops of Egypt. There were widespread doubts about his Orthodoxy. Doubts of this kind could have caused the Ethiopians to turn to the Patriarch of Antioch as a second Orthodox choice, as it were. Compare the *gravamina* brought forward against Cyril and especially the canons signed by Cyril and the synod in 1239, pp. 84-7 (pp. 175-8). Scholars have hitherto explained the event by national feelings on the side of the Ethiopians, and lack of self-control by Ignatius, see E. Cerulli, *Etiopi in Palestina: Storia della comunità etiopica di Gerusalemme*, I, Collezione scientifica e documentaria, 12 (Rome, 1943), pp. 62-73; see Hamilton, *Latin Church*, pp. 350-1 for further references.

⁷⁹ BE CE occ. 659 (660). *History of the Holy Church*, 77-9 (160), corroborates rumours of a union between Latins and the Coptic Metropolitan of Jerusalem, which were not approved of by the legate of Cyril who had come to Jerusalem to reconcile Ignatius, and who is said to have returned annoyed.

These “Frankish scholars” were the well-trained and multilingual *fratres ordinis praedicatorum*, the Dominicans, who had recently arrived in the Levant and apparently maintained close relations with the Copts. They offered Ignatius their service suggesting that they settle the matter peacefully but the Patriarch went ahead in spite of them and ordained the *Abūna*.

“And the *Per-per sūrōyē* heard about this and burned with anger and went to the brethren Knights Templar and Hospitallers [*dōwayē w-ashtaryē*] and agitated them and gathered their entire chapter. And they came to the Patriarch in great anger and sat down without saluting him. And the head of the brother scholars started and said to the Patriarch: ‘I tell you: who are you? Neither was the city once bought by your wealth nor did you rule it with your sword, but as a stranger you came to us, and for the sake of Christ we received you in love and honoured you. And when you consulted us because of this unlawful act we forbade you. But you held us in contempt and trampled on our word. So why then and how did you do this, tell us boldly!’ On the Patriarch fell fear because of them and he was struck dumb and his face became pale and his lips white. And he did not know what to answer them.”⁸⁰

Then the helpless Patriarch and Bishop Dionysius standing next to him discussed the situation in Syriac. Dionysius, who had acted as the Patriarch’s messenger, took the risk of pretending that the venerable brother scholar had given his consent or that at least he, Dionysius, had understood thus. “Then the noble Franks [i.e. the hierarchy of the knights] said to the head of the brethren: ‘Truly you don’t know Arabic as you should do, and neither does this Bishop.’”⁸¹ Mutual excuses were exchanged, and the matter was settled. The Patriarch thanked his Bishop for relieving him “from the accusation of these tyrants”.⁸²

This story is narrated rather vividly. It is difficult to evade the strong image of those armoured and fierce looking men, roaring at the intimidated Patriarch. With its moments of irony and ruse it seems fit for the amusement among like-minded people. And Bishop Dionysius was a good story-teller, whose testimony Bar ‘Ebrōyō records several times.⁸³ Still, there is no reason to challenge the factual solidity of the account.

⁸⁰ BE CE occ. 659-61 (660-2).

⁸¹ BE CE occ. 663 (664).

⁸² *Ibid.* Kawerau, *Jakobitische Kirche* (see n. 4), p. 85, considered this passage to be significant, although it rather contradicts his concept of good relations.

⁸³ BE CE occ. 637 (638). It is the same Dionysius *sōbō* BE mentioned several times (Abbeloos and Lamy erred in assuming two personalities), whom he apparently knew personally and who died in the year 1273, see CE occ. 697 (698), 745 (746), 771 (772).

Ignatius III David, who is often presented as the Syriac Orthodox patriarch in union with Rome,⁸⁴ — information not corroborated by Bar ʿEbrōyō — is shown here in his utter administrative weakness. The Latin brother scholars, on the other hand, apparently feel entitled to forced action against the Patriarch and to direct church regimen. And they use the knights and their armed authority to support their cause.⁸⁵

VII

Michael the Great reports that knights were killed together with Syriac Orthodox during an eclipse of the sun. One of the dead had been a deacon. Michael's sources for these accounts are unknown. Therefore some further circumstantial evidence shall be examined in this context. Military involvement of Christians in Muslim wars had caused new legal problems, concerning the role of the clergy in particular: from Bishop Jacob of Edessa's (d. 708) answers to some such questions,⁸⁶ two specific historical situations can be discerned. Firstly, the lower clergy resorted to military service as a means to survive in times of severe hardship. Secondly, all inhabitants of the cities were obliged to take part in the defence of the walls in case of war. The Muslim authorities forced the clergy to join the defenders.

Jacob's ruling was mild and compassionate. The deacons should be readmitted to service after some time. Jacob left it to the clergymen to decide for themselves whether they wanted to go back to service after having been forced to kill on the ramparts, and in his view it was ultimately for God to decide whether it was a sin to kill under these circumstances.

⁸⁴ See Cahen, *Syrie du Nord* (see n. 61), pp. 681–8; Hamilton, *Latin Church*, p. 350. Because of BE's silence on this matter and because no consequence of the assumed union was ever traced Teule, "It is not Right to Call Ourselves Orthodox" (see n. 76), voices again doubts.

⁸⁵ They obviously occupied the position of the traditional secular and clerical powers in Jerusalem, who demonstrated little interest for the city during the interregnum, see Hamilton, *Latin Church*, pp. 258–61; see also J. Pahlitzsch, *Graeci und Suriani im Palästina der Kreuzfahrerzeit: Beiträge und Quellen zur Geschichte des griechisch-orthodoxen Patriarchats von Jerusalem*, Berliner Historische Studien, 33 (Berlin, 2001), pp. 259–89. I would like to thank Dr J. Pahlitzsch for critical advice concerning the following paragraph.

⁸⁶ Additional questions of Addai, translated by R. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings of Early Islam*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 13 (Princeton, 1997), pp. 605–6.

Although Christian and Jewish minorities were generally excluded from military service by Muslim law, Syriac Orthodox also carried weapons in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁸⁷ This fact is mentioned in the context of the fierce war between Turkomans and Kurds, which took place in the 1280s. According to Bar ʿEbrōyō and Michael the Great, the Turkomans invaded regions in Greater Armenia after they had defeated all the Kurds in Syria. Bar ʿEbrōyō's report reads:

“... and from Tel-Besmy in the County of Mardin 170 of our Syriac men were killed, and of the village Amrun in the country of Qludia under authority of Melitene 200 of our young men [ʿlōyē] who carry weapons were killed.”⁸⁸

This passage is explicit about the Syriac Orthodox carrying weapons. But Bar ʿEbrōyō does not only quote Michael the Great in this passage. He also interprets Michael's account to some extent, for Michael himself reports the incident as follows:

“And after that, when the governors saw that their countries were desolated because of the Kurds passing through, every one of them in his own country began to attack the Turkomans as there was war and killing all over Cappadocia and in the country of Melitene. At that time, when the Turkomans invaded the region of Qludia, the governor rose against them for war, and from the village and from the rest of the country about 200 young men were killed in the war.”⁸⁹

To Bar ʿEbrōyō it was clear that Syriac Orthodox were actively involved in the fighting, even if Michael the Great hesitates to be explicit about their actions. Michael's account explains his uneasiness:⁹⁰ the military command was in Turkish and Armenian hands.

Michael reports another case of Syriac Orthodox taking part in military action:

“In the year 1449 [1138] when Edessa was almost under siege by the Turks, who were frequently raiding and did not permit its inhabitants to go in and out freely, there assembled in Samosata a multitude of people because of that to provide it with supplies, and with them Frankish horsemen and 300 Romans; altogether there were almost 4000 men, amongst whom was Abū Saʿd, a deacon, physician, and philosopher. As they trav-

⁸⁷ Concerning legal treatment of this fact by Muslim lawyers see A. Fattal, *Le statut légal des non-musulmans en pays d'Islam*, Recherches publiées sous la direction de l'Institut de lettres orientales de Beyrouth, 10 (Beyrouth, 1958), pp. 232-3, and his historical evidence pp. 233-6. See also A.S. Tritton, *The Caliphs and their Non-Muslim Subjects: A Critical Study of the Covenant of 'Umar*, Islam and the Muslim World, 14 (London, 1930; reprint London 1970), pp. 185-6.

⁸⁸ BE CP 370 (321-2).

⁸⁹ M 733 (III, 402).

⁹⁰ BE CP 370 (321-2).

elled forth, an ambush of the Turks assaulted them in the night. This had been ʾIḥusam ad-Dīn, the head of Mardin. Then a multitude of them were killed and all the rest were led away as slaves, he, Abū Saʿd, and Michael bar Šūmōnō,⁹¹ and his son. And Abū Saʿd had not been able to forecast the events of that day by the craft of the futile astronomy.”⁹²

Again Michael bar Šūmōnō, who was also involved in the affair between the Emir of Amid and Jocelyn II, is mentioned here. Michael bar Šūmōnō, the administrator, was none other than the brother of Basilius bar Šūmōnō (d. 1169), at that time Metropolitan of Edessa.⁹³ Basilius was accused of having taken the bishopric out of Jocelyn’s hands, an accusation he rejected in a written answer.⁹⁴

The assembly seems to have pursued the interests of all parties affected by the Turkish actions against Edessa, the Latins being one of them. But the presence of the Latin horsemen is unambiguous evidence that the supreme command was theirs. Hence, Syriac Orthodox were fighting under Latin command just like they probably had done in the year 1133. Joint military action, must then, in all probability, also have been the situation in the north of the county in the year 1133.

It should also be noticed that in the year 1138 a deacon was again involved. The reports of the spectacular sieges of the time reveal that the clergy, and especially the bishops, gained specific functions. They were engaged in the exhortation, and even in the command of the defenders of the cities, and they were targets for diplomatic efforts from the attackers.⁹⁵

Jocelyn II is said to have forced Basilius bar Šūmōnō to join him in his attempt to recapture the citadel of Edessa in 1146.⁹⁶ Basilius also took part in the first defence of the city in 1144, as did the bishops of the Latins and the Armenians. According to the Syriac sources, the three of them in fact shared the command.⁹⁷ As to the people fighting on the

⁹¹ Sic! Compare Chabot’s commentary to M (III, 246), who prefers the reading of the chronicle of Bar ʾEbrōyō, see next note.

⁹² M 622 (III, 264); BE CP 302 (265) continues: “Present with them was Abū Saʿd, a deacon, physician and philosopher, and Michael bar Šmūnō [sic! see previous note] and his son. And he, ʾTemurtaş, also took the castle of KSWs from the Franks.”

⁹³ AA 1234 CE II, 305 (229).

⁹⁴ M 628 (III, 259).

⁹⁵ M 586 (III, 185-6), 648 (III, 295-6). See also BE CE or. 405 (406), where a *maphrian* is related fighting on horseback in the year 1231.

⁹⁶ AA 1234 CP II, 140 (105).

⁹⁷ AA 1234 CP II, 120 (90); M 631 (III, 262). See A. Rücker, “Aus der Geschichte der Jakobitischen Kirche von Edessa in der Zeit der Kreuzfahrer”, *Or. Chr.*, 3. Ser. 10 = 32 (1935), pp. 124-39; Basilius, because of his subsequent collaboration with the new Turkish overlords, was accused of treason by Edessenians, as Michael reports, and was imprisoned for three years in Hromqla by Jocelyn II, M 638 (III, 277); see also Baumstark, *Geschichte* (see n. 5), p. 293.

walls, all three of the chroniclers assure that everyone without exception took his or her specific position in this situation.⁹⁸ Michael (and, by using his account, Bar ʿEbrōyō) also reports military engagement of monks: “And the people of the city — old and young, men and women, and the monks from the mountains — were standing on the walls and were fighting.”⁹⁹

Michael mentions an additional incident in this context:

“During the first capture of Edessa, Bishop Basilius, who was ʿAbbas, was killed together with many; he had been Bishop of Mardin and had left his diocese and returned to live on the mountain of Edessa and there he was crowned.”¹⁰⁰

The passage is ambiguous. It is said that Basilius died a violent death, which is interpreted as martyrdom, and that he was not alone at this moment. One might only assume that Basilius faced death while defending the city; however, no action of the virtuous monk is explicitly stated.

Be it as it may, there are more clues to the fact that monks were not altogether alien to the use of force. In the monastery of Mōr Barṣawmō the memory of an assault lingered on, when about 300 Armenian brigands roamed the area of Melitene in the summer of 1066, looting villages and monasteries. In contrast to the year 1148, the intentions of the brigands were disclosed in time. A provisional guard, consisting of refugees from the region of Qludia camping on the hillside, “mighty men from Tel-Tūrō”,¹⁰¹ fought them off. But still a number of monks and *mšāʿbdē* were caught in an ambush, when they made their way home from Melitene from temporary exile two months later. There was an exchange of arrows, and three monks and two *mšāʿbdē* were killed. After citing their names, Michael the Great concludes: “The reader may pray for them, because they killed the murderers, and they were killed on behalf of the holy monastery.”¹⁰²

⁹⁸ AA 1234 CP II, 121 (91); BE CP 305 (268); M 630 (III, 261).

⁹⁹ M 630 (III, 261).

¹⁰⁰ M 630 (III, 263).

¹⁰¹ Michael 574 (III, 163). It should be noted that several of the incidents recorded here point to the regions of Qludia and Gargar in the northeast of Melitene and at the eastern shores of the Euphrates.

¹⁰² M 575 (III, 164), compare AA 1234 CP II, 46 (33), who relates an assault dated to 1045, when a few hundred Kurds were supposed to have been involved. No action of defence is mentioned.

Obviously monks joined armed action in serious cases of assault, and this could develop into outright war.¹⁰³ The monastery of Mōr Barṣawmō was fortified in the forty years to come, as is well known,¹⁰⁴ and it became a desirable fortress for Turkish and Latin forces alike. As a fortress it must have organised means of defence by manpower, for which there is some evidence: the monastery provided foot soldiers for the Emir of Melitene in the year 1242. Whether it did so voluntarily or not remains an open question.

“The head of Melitene collected his troops, 500 horsemen, and for his assistance he took as well some of the *mšā’bdē* of the monastery Mōr Barṣawmō, proved men, 50 foot soldiers, archers, and they went to meet the Turkomans, and those from Bet Rūmōyē were defeated, and none of the *mšā’bdē* escaped except for some few.”¹⁰⁵

In Bar ‘Ebrōyō’s narration there is some stress on the fact that these men had practise in bow shooting. Their social status is more clearly defined than that of the *ḥlōyē* mentioned above. In the present case they were *mšā’bdē* of the monastery. William Budge and Jean-Baptiste Chabot used “subjects” or “serfs” as a translation. They agree with Robert Payne-Smith who suggested “mancipia monasterii” for *mšā’bdē d-’umrō*.¹⁰⁶ But in this context the term needs further investigation.

Apparently they were employed as armed guardians as were the *nōtūrē* (guardians) Barṣawmō and Eliah, whose names Michael records for the sake of memorial prayer.¹⁰⁷ At least in Mōr Barṣawmō *mšā’bdē* seem to have been employed as guardians on a regular basis. In the insecure position Syriac Orthodox held between Turks, Kurds, Armenians and Latins, they surely chose those entrusted with guardianship very carefully. In fact, the *mšā’bdē* of Mōr Barṣawmō in the twelfth century originated from the same villages and could argue with the monks on an equal level: in 1149 refugees from Gargar camped at Mōr Barṣawmō in

¹⁰³ BE CP 516-7 (440-1) records the dramatic attack on the monastery Mōr Mattai by Kurds in 1261, an incident to which Tritton, *The Culiḥs and their Non-Muslim Subjects* (see n. 87), p. 186 already pointed.

¹⁰⁴ M 575 (III, 164). See Honigman, *Couvent de Barsauma* (see n. 67); H. Hellenkemper, *Burgen der Kreuzritterzeit in der Grafschaft Edessa und im Königreich Kleinarmenien: Studien zur Historischen Siedlungsgeographie Südost-Kleinasiens*, Geographica Historica, 1 (Bonn, 1976); *idem*, “Kirchen und Klöster in der nördlichen Euphratensia: Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasiens”, in *Festschrift für Friedrich Karl Dörner*, ed. S. Sahin, E. Schwertheim and J. Wagner (Leiden, 1978), pp. 389-414.

¹⁰⁵ BE CP 474 (405), see also BE CE occ. 773 (774).

¹⁰⁶ Although *ḥlōyē* could also be servants a decision is at present not possible. For *mšā’bdē* compare Payne-Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, II (see n. 39), pp. 2771-2.

¹⁰⁷ Michael 575 (III, 164).

search for shelter against Turkish raids. Some of the monks, concerned for piety and afraid of becoming the next victims, wanted to expel them from the confines of the monastery.

“However, because there were monks and *nišāʿbāē* in the monastery who were countrymen of those refugees, they could not expel them. Then two parties were formed in the monastery: those who said ‘it would be better to hand over these people’, and those who cried ‘we will not hand them over!’, and they were close to fighting and swords.”¹⁰⁸

Conditions under which armed guardians, fellow countrymen and possibly even relatives of monks under constant military pressure, could have been held in the state of *mancipia* are hard to imagine.

CONCLUSION

In Michael’s account of the early history of the *frēr* one notices some dispassionate interest. It reveals the existence of intercultural dialogue on the forms and terms of religious life. As to his attitude, Michael presents the knights as people who were good to the poor, and even if they were not good to the Syriac Orthodox, they at least refrained from doing them any harm.

Intercultural dialogue produced cultural knowledge on the side of the Syriac Orthodox: scholars of religious orders will find unambiguous transcultural proof that the knights were not monks but brethren in the Syriac sources.¹⁰⁹ Still, in the year 1138, the former Bishop of Segestan is said to have taken the house of the *frēr* as an appropriate abode for a monk, as he was one himself. Clearly, the Syriac Orthodox accepted that the *frēr* led a religious life. At the same time the specific spirituality of the military orders, which equated military and religious service, was known and apparently not objected to by the Syriac Orthodox.

Traces of direct Latin apology for the military orders were discovered. Latin apologetic proclamations to their subjects emerge as another context of intercultural contact. Was it a mere coincidence that these reached the Syriac Orthodox? It seems that, unlike Armenians and Greek Orthodox, they never did matter much to the Latins, neither as friend nor foe. At least this seems to be the message of the silence and the attitude of superiority expressed by the Latin sources.

¹⁰⁸ M 647 (III, 290-1).

¹⁰⁹ Hiestand “Kardinalbischof Matthäus von Albano” (see n. 9), p. 298.

In Bar 'Ebrōyō's report, it is the knights and the newly arrived brother scholars, the Dominicans in Jerusalem, who look down on the Syriac Orthodox Patriarch as a stranger. He describes intercultural contact too, but on unequal levels. The impact of these different forms of cultural contact on the Latin side cannot be assessed at present.

The case of the anonymous chronicler, his mentality so entirely different from that of Michael and also the differences between him and Bar 'Ebrōyō, indicate a factor which should always be taken into account when the relationship between the Latins and the Syriac Orthodox is discussed: strong regional and individual differences may be expected.

All in all, there are not sufficient data to reconstruct a development in the mutual relations. Neither of the chroniclers decided to focus on cases of formal alliance between Syriac Orthodox and military orders. The relevant reports seem to have slipped into their works by chance. The note about the ousted Bishop is a telling exception, supporting the overall impression. But the small passages scattered throughout the chronicles, which are more dense in the fourth decade of the twelfth century and again in the third and fourth decade of the thirteenth century, form a rough picture, which raises further questions.

It comes as a small surprise that the passages about contact with the brethren point to the County of Edessa, the Principality of Antioch, Cilicia, and to the city of Jerusalem. But activity of the military orders in the County of Edessa in connection with Syriac Orthodox matters of concern and together with Syriac Orthodox (auxiliary) troops in the year 1133, does come rather unexpectedly. In order to evaluate this dark passage in the chronicle of the Patriarch Michael, digressions were needed to analyse this particular coalition more closely.

Since this incident was recorded within a context of cooperation between members of the family Bar Šūmōnō both in the secular and the ecclesiastical administration of Edessa and the Count, and since further evidence was found to prove that Syriac Orthodox fought under Latin command in this area, it cannot easily be dismissed. In this context new questions about Latin administration and warfare should be asked. Neither Muslim nor Latin overlords could do without the military support of auxiliary troops. This also resulted in military cooperation with Syriac Orthodox, sometimes voluntary, sometimes undoubtedly less so. Neither Muslims nor Latins provided sufficient security for the Syriac Orthodox subjects against third parties. They were rather apt to turn violently against them. Syriac Orthodox could not afford to be the passive sub-

jects, the non-fighting civilians they are usually taken for today. They had to look for means of defending themselves.

Some preliminary suggestions can be offered here as to how this was done in cities and monasteries. In this context military activity by members of the Syriac Orthodox secular clergy and by monks (as well as women) was mentioned. Their involvement in war seems consistent with their vital social functions in the infrastructure of the communities; as to the historical, theological and legal consequences, further study is needed. A hypothesis for the lack of objections to the spirituality of the military orders on the part of the Syriac Orthodox chroniclers was put forward. Their societies were not conceptualised along the lines of the three *ordines* of *oratores*, *bellatores*, and *laboratores*. Hence, the spirituality of the military orders, which was undermining the western concept, could not cause the same irritation in the Syriac world.¹¹⁰

That so little should be known about these contacts is only partly due to the state of research. Apparently this is an area of a very volatile nature, ambiguous for both lords and subjects. The analysis of the chroniclers' reports revealed some uneasiness on their part to be outspoken about this subject.

It is true that the relations between Syriac Orthodox and Latins are generally described as cordial. Apart from the fact that this assumed cordiality always contradicted the overall disinterest of the Latin sources, what exactly does "cordiality" mean in this context? It is certainly not fit to serve as a historical category. Neither is it fit to qualify relations like these, maintained by people on unequal levels of power, bound by temporary common interests. The memory of the particular relations discussed in the present paper at least was cherished by neither of the two parties.

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE FOOTNOTES

- BE CE occ. *Gregorii Barhebrei Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, 1-11, ed. and trans. J.B. Abbeloos and Th.J. Lamy (Louvain, 1872, 1874), Syriac text and Latin trans.
- BE CP *Gregorii Barhebraeis Chronicon Syriacum*, ed. P. Bedjan (Paris, 1890); *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj, the Son of Aaron, the Hebrew Physician, Commonly Known as Bar*

¹¹⁰ See G. Duby, *Les trois ordres ou l'imaginaire du féodalisme* (Paris, 1978) for the theological foundation of this concept in the eleventh century. O.G. Oexle, "Die funktionale Dreiteilung als Deutungsschema der sozialen Wirklichkeit in der ständischen Gesellschaft des Mittelalters", in *Ständische Gesellschaft und soziale Mobilität*, ed. W. Schulze, *Schriften des historischen Kollegs: Kolloquien*, 12 (Munich, 1987), pp. 65-117.

Hebraeus: Being the First Part of His Political History of the World, trans. E.W. Budge (Oxford and London, 1932), Syriac text and English trans.

AA 1234 CE/CP II

Anonymi auctoris chronicon ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens, ed. J.B. Chabot, CSCO, 82, SS 37 (Louvain, 1953); *Anonymi auctoris chronicon ad a. C. 1234 pertinens*, II, trans. A. Abouna, introd., notes and index J.M. Fiey, CSCO, 354, SS 154 (Louvain, 1974), Syriac text and French trans.

Chronique de Michel le Grand, Langlois

Chronique de Michel le Grand, Patriarche des Syriens Jacobites: Trad. pour la première fois sur la version arménienne du prêtre Ischôk (Venice, 1868).

History of the Holy Church

History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church, Known as the History of the Holy Church, acc. To MS Arabe 302 Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris foll. 287v-355r, IV, 2, Cyril III Ibn Laklak (1216-1243), trans. and ann. A. Khater and O.H.E. KHS- Burmester (Cairo, 1974), Arabic text and English trans.

M (III)

Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199), ed. J.B. Chabot, 4 vols (Paris, 1899-1924; reprint Brussels, 1963), Syriac text (III French trans.).