A note about the manuscript London Or. 2438*

[Una nota sobre el manuscrito London Or. 2438]

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While studying Kitāb Asfār al-Asrār of Şalībhā,1 an author of the Eastern Church from Mossoul (14th century),2 I collected all the

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* Updated edition of an article published in Journal of Eastern Christian Churches 64(3-4) (2012), pp. 327–330. Unfortunately, though the note number 8, the attached facsimile of London 2348, f. 10v and Sachau 12, f. 47v was not published. I changed some numbers of the paragraphs of expected edition, according to the rhymed prose (sağ) and I added some details about the last question: when these few pages arrived at the British Museum.


2 There is an exact date (1332) at the beginning of index of the work; the author transcribes 3 chapters from Kitāb farā'id al-fawā'id fī usūl al-dīn wa-l-'aqā'id of 'Abdīšū’ (died in 1318); the author writes the history of the Patriarchs of the Eastern Church till Yahbāllāhā († 1317) and says that he was eye-witness, with others, at the opening of the tomb of the Patriarch Ḥanānyū’ 650 years after his death (he died in 699).
manuscripts I could (10); among them there is a manuscript obtained from the British Museum (London Or. 2438).

This manuscript of only 56 folios (23.5 cm wide, 15.25 cm long; 17 lines in each page, written in fair Nashī) contains some extracts from the work of Ṣalībā: some of its pages are damaged, more or less torn, many others are illegible, due to the humidity factor.

Comparing the description of the size of the page and the lines in it, and especially the handwriting of this manuscript with the

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3 Four of them are complete (Vat. Neofiti 54 from the 18th century; Cambridge Addition 2889 written in 1730; Par. Ar. 6732 written in 1885; Par. Ar. 6744 from 19th century); while four are incomplete (Vat. Ar. 110 from 14th century, Berlin Sachau 12 from 14th century; Vat. Borgia Ar. 198 from 19th century; Birmingham Mingana Christian Ar. 19 from 19th century); two are excerpts (London Or. 2438, and Vat. Ar. 687 from 18th century). Others are unobtainable: one in possession of John Osta, Chaldean “chor-bishop” in Cairo (Fihris 2628, cfr. P. Sbath, Al-Fihris (Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes) Supplément (Le Caire, Impr. Al-Chark, 1940), p. 25); another mentioned by L. Cheikho, Catalogue raisonné des Manuscrits historiques de la Bibliothèque Orientale de l’Université Saint Joseph, in MUSJ X (1925), p. 136, who refers to a note in I. Barṣawm, Tārīḫ dayr al-Zaifarān, p. 47; one in S. John seminary in Mossoul (FIEY, Assyr. chrétienne. Contribution à l’étude de l’histoire et de la géographie ecclésiastiques et monastiques du Nord de l’Iraq, Beyrouth 1968, III, p.13 n.5); one quoted by Siouffi, vice-consul of France in Mossoul (cf. Siouffi M., ‘Notice sur un patriarche nestorien’, Journal Asiatique (janvier 1881) 89-96).


* The manuscript was donated to the Museum by Col. S. B. Miles (1838–1914), who was Consul-General of Baghdad in 1879.

5 Cf. 1r-v, 2r-v, 3r-v, 4r-v, 5r-v, 7r-v, 8r-v, 9r-v, 10r-v, 11r-v, 12r-v, 13r-v, 14r-v, 26r-v, 32r-v, 40r-v, 41r-v, 52r-v, 55v.

6 Cf. 1r-v, 2r-v, 3v, 4v, 5r-v, 7v, 32r, 50r-v, 51v, 52r-v.
A note about the manuscript London Or. 2438

I noticed that the handwriting is the same; not only but these few pages of London Or.2438 are some of the pages missing in Sachau 12.

I present in the following table what I discovered about these two manuscripts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>London Or. 2438</th>
<th>Sachau 12 (S)</th>
<th>Our edition</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1v: illegible¹⁰</td>
<td>II,04:1-21</td>
<td></td>
<td>The second preface: answer //11\line1// to Jews and others who oppose our faith in Jesus Christ who was crucified and died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2r-4v¹¹</td>
<td>II,05:52-1:30</td>
<td></td>
<td>II,05:52 is the end of the 5th preface about the meaning of Union / Incarnation and filiation; 3r line 6: 2nd Book, 1st</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹⁰ Notice the way of writing nūn at the end of the word, putting it inverted over alif: šayṭān (cf. attached the facsimile of London 2348,10v and Sachau 12, 47v).
³¹ In the 2nd line of this page I could read the word al-tawādu', that appears at the end of the 3rd preface of the 2nd book of Ṣalībā: cfr. our edition II,03:55.
³¹ After that the text is missing till II,05:52.

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8 Notice the way of writing nūn at the end of the word, putting it inverted over alif: šayṭān (cf. attached the facsimile of London 2348,10v and Sachau 12, 47v).

9 II,04:1-21 means the 2nd book, the 4th foreword, §§ 1-21; II,3:10-II,3:10-29 means the 2nd book, 3rd chapter, §§ 10-29;

10 After that the text is missing till II,05:52.

11 After that the text is missing till II,3:10.
chapter: East is the best direction

II,3:10-29  East is the origin of languages

IV,1:62-79  Some Jewish prophets (Asaph, Ethan, Heman, Jeduthun, Gad, Nathan, Ahijah, Micaiah, Obadiah)

II,5:185-8:9  7th chapter: East was the origin of the faith in God, of the law and the priesthood, and of the promise in Christ. 13th line: 7th chapter: East was the origin of the promise in Christ and faith in him; 15th line: 8th chapter: preaching of the apostles

II,8:29- III,1,2,3,4,5, 6:1-12  18th line: 9th chapter: Profession of faith of the Eastern Christians, translated into Arabic; 20th line: 3rd Book, chapter

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13 After that the text is missing till the end of the chapter; missing also II,4 & 5.
14 This page is not in its place.
15 After that the text contained in our edition II,8:9-29 is missing.
16 After that two pages are white; the text of Şalibā continues with Sachau14r.

33r-40v18 III,8:74-229 41r-49v III,8:253-436
50r-v: 2 illisible black pages
51r-v19 III,8:476-496

17 After that the text contained in our edition III,8:24-III,8:74 is missing.
18 After that the text contained in our edition III,8:229-253 is missing.
19 After that the text contained in our edition III,8:496-619 is missing, but it is in Sachau 15r-20v.
Now the question is: when did these few pages arrive at the British
museum and from where?\footnote{After that the text contained in our edition III,8: 691–842 is missing, but it is in
Sachau 22r–29v.}

In any case the note put at the beginning of the description of
the manuscript\footnote{This manuscript entered in the listing of Oriental manuscripts in 1881 (from
an E/mail of Hedley Sutton, APAC Reference Service, January 8, 2014). Sachau
12 was bought by the State Library in 1884 with other manuscripts of the
Sachau collection (from an E/mail of Petra Figeac, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin –
Preussischer Kulturbesitz Orientabteilung, January 8, 2014).} should be changed, in conformity to the note of
Ahlwardt (about 750/1349) and Sachau (according to the Arabic
handwriting, the manuscript may be written around 14th century).\footnote{Cf. Rieu, Supplement, p. 23: written in fair Neskhi, apparently in the 13th
century.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{20}}\footnote{\textsuperscript{21}}