

THE SYRIAC JULIAN ROMANCE AND ITS PLACE IN THE LITERARY HISTORY

Some pieces of Syriac literary production have gained a relative popularity among the scholars, although their fate is marked with different sorts of prejudices and no clear idea about their literary specificity has been made. This is the case of the so called Syriac Julian Romance, a piece of literature we became interested in. First it has acquired an improper genre definition, then it was incorrectly titled and finally it was translated in a quite incorrect and misleading fashion¹.

The first approach was undertaken by the famous Theodore Nöldeke in his article which was in fact first to take into account the significance of this text. Having studied the Syriac manuscript *Add 14, 641* in the British library (India Office department) he came to the conclusion that the main part of the text written in the nice VI-century *estrangelo* should be defined as 'Roman'. After that he had found in the other Syriac manuscript, *Add. (Richmond) 7192*, a partial text on more or less the same subject, he published an additional article the same year². In the two articles he made some preliminary conclusions. He thought that there were many stories of the kind in the Syriac tradition, therefore the *Richmond 7192* text had nothing to do with the long text. It was merely representative of the same family of the 'stories about Julian the Apostate'. Six years later Nöldeke's pupil J. G. E. Hoffman at the initiative of his professor undertook the complete edition of the main part of the *Add.14,641* and the fragment of the *Richmond 7192* under a somewhat vague title 'Syrische Erzählungen'³, probably developing the idea of Nöldeke (in fact he was too much preoccupied with the philological problems of the edition to think of

¹ SIR HERMANN GOLLANCZ, *Julian the Apostate* (London, 1928) is full of errors to such a degree that it should have been helpful to exclude it at all from the scholarly usage.

² TH. NÖLDEKE, Über der syrischen Roman von Kaiser Julian // *ZDMG* 28 (1879) 263–292; IDEM, Ein zweites syrisher Roman über Julians // *ZDMG* 28 (1879) 660–674.

the implications of continuing labelling this collection of texts a *romance*). The distinguished orientalist W. Wright while cataloguing Syriac manuscripts in the British museum was conscious of these dangers and called the *Add.14, 641* simply ܩܘܠܘܨܐ, the name of the supposed author *Aploris*⁴.

For more than a hundred years the heavy reputation of an outright fiction pending over the text precluded scholars from studying it seriously. That means that the very label *romance* has been understood in a particular way, with a sort of historical pretension. R. Gottheil while publishing the selection from the Mar Eusebius story (being the main part of the *Add 14, 641*) in 1938 considered it necessary to accompany this publication with a justification stating that the interest of this text is clearly language and not the story itself, which he called a ‘perfect romance’⁵.

When M. van Esbroeck delivered his paper ‘*Le soi-disant roman de Julien Apostat*’ on the V Symposium Syriacum⁶ there has been made a considerable progress. Twenty three years before this Symposium an Israeli scholar U. Ben-Horin identified the mysterious text from the *Sinai arab. 516* as an Arabic translation of the Syriac text, published by Hoffmann. Fr. van Esbroeck made sharp observations on the Arabic text and its relation to the Syriac original. The most important was that the Arabic version was not a direct translation of the Hoffmann's text but more like a paraphrase of the lost Syriac original. This upset completely the perspective. The idea of van Esbroeck was that there existed some lost Syriac original chronologically preceding the British Museum text which was a translation from Greek. His argument was based upon the

³ J.G.E.HOFFMANN, *Julianos der Abtrünnige. Syrische Erzählungen* (Leiden, 1880) (Quoted below as HOFFMANN).

⁴ This enigmatic personage was transcribed in different ways: Apolinarius, Apollonius etc. We shall turn back to his identity further.

⁵ R. A. GOTTHEIL, *Selection from the Syriac Julian Romance* (Leiden, 1906) IX. A short introductory article betrays the author's sympathy for the unhistorical apologetic of the ‘last romantic on the throne of Roman emperors’ but at the same time he seems to think that only scientific history is deserving attention..

⁶ M. VAN. ES BROECK, *Le soi-disant Roman de Julien Apostat // Symposium Syriacum V* (Roma, 1987) (*OCA* 229) 191–202.

strange transformation of onomastic which made him think that a rough Syriac translation from Greek made in the V century was then put in excellent Syriac about VI century. Fr. van Esbroeck then stated that the text, published by Hoffmann was a piece of hagiography and the title *romance* should be left aside as completely misleading.

Four years later van Esbroeck's hypothesis was criticised in the paper delivered by Han J. W. Drijvers on the next Symposium⁷. Drijvers objected to the idea of the Greek prototype and argued that we are not dealing with the hagiographic text but with the 'religious propaganda tract' written presumably by a Nisibene follower of St. Ephrem the Syrian, most likely in the School of Nisibis shortly after Šabur II's death. He underlined the central role of Nisibis both in the Syriac Julian text and in St. Ephrem's *Madraše ʿon Julian*. The argument of apocalyptic chronology which was significant for both Nöldeke and van Esbroeck, was thought to have purely symbolical meaning in order to justify the temporary cession of Nisibis to the Persians.

H. Drijvers' criticism of Fr. van Esbroeck's idea was justified on some points but there was a place where it missed the aim. This is indeed the crucial question to what literary genre pertains our text. The genre qualification of van Esbroeck (*hagiographie*) seemed to be self-evident and one might have objected to it only on the solid ground of the literary theory⁸. However the definition of the Julian Romance as a 'religious propaganda tract' was also open to a criticism. In fact the very term being external to the theory of the literary genres could well be applied to the different sorts of the literary production. The Syriac literature knows dozens of cases when a work can be qualified so: the *Doctrina Addai*, the Nestorius' *Bazaar of Heracleides* or the *Life of Rabbula* are the examples of such a possibility. On the other hand, the tendency was correctly

⁷ H.J.W. DRIJVERS, The syriac Romance of Julian. Its Function, Place of Origin and Original Language // Symposium Syriacum VI (Roma, 1994) (OCA 247) 201–214.

⁸ Although philological scholarship produced some definitions which could be used in order to clear the label 'romance' I would rather point to the book of Fr. Hyppolite DELEHAYE, L'ancienne hagiographie byzantine. Les sources, les premiers modèles, la formation des genres (Bruxelles, 1991) (SH 73) 13.

formulated, the Syriac Julian Romance was indeed conceived as a sort of the religious and political indoctrination being at the same time a representative of the rare category of mediaeval literature, a hagiographical romance. Within the bounds of hagiography there exists a class represented by such writings as certain parts (namely the story of Vakhtang) from the above mentioned Georgian chronicle cycle (*K'art'lis cxovreba*), the armenian *Agathangelos*, the *Abgar Legend* for Edessa and the famous *Barlaam and Joasaph*. It usually depicts the intimate link between the national history and the life of a holy king or prince assisted by some God-send priestly advisor. It develops usually a royal eschatology⁹, directed against the outer threat (Persians, Tatars, Muslims) and makes quite a free use of the hagiographic and other material. This is all true for our *Romance*, whose main idea was correctly outlined by Fr. van Esbroeck as the *apostasy of the Empire* (the 'second romance' and the 'Eusebius' story') and the *expiation of the Empire* or the *Repentance of Jovian* (the 'letter of Apollonius')¹⁰. The plot is dense and complicated, the holy king Jovian only at the end obtains a spiritual advisor in the person of the saintly bishop Vologeses but in the very beginning he gets a succor in the God-inspired visions. The eschatological tonality is present everywhere throughout both parts but in the story of Jovian it is really dominating. As G. Reinink has shown, the *Syriac Julian Romance* was one of the main sources for the Syriac apocalyptic literature in general and for *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* in particular¹¹. However, this eschatology is not confessional, more than that, in the absence of any confessional (monophysite or other) propaganda we see the proof that the Romance belongs to a rather early date. A. Baumstark thought that «ein edessenischer Mönch auf monophysitischen Boden» wrote the Romance between 502 and

⁹ G. PODSKALSKY, *Byzantinische Reichseschatologie* (München, 1972) 34–36.

¹⁰ VAN ESBROECK, *Le soi-disant Roman...* 195.

¹¹ G. J. REININK, *The Romance of Julian the Apostate as a source for seventh century Syriac apocalypses / La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam. Actes du colloque international, Lyon-Paris 11-15 septembre 1990 / Ed. P. CANIVET (Damas, 1992) 75–86. Cf. F. J. MARTINEZ. The Apocalyptic Genre in Syriac: the World of Pseudo-Methodius // Symposium Syriacum VI. (Roma, 1994) (OCA 247) 337ss.*

532¹² and later scholars did not dare to revise his opinion. But given the synthetic nature of the Romance we should refuse (sic!) to produce a single date for all the parts although it is evident that the war story was written by an eyewitness (H. Drijvers thought him even to be a pupil of St. Ephrem!), the Mar Eusebius story is earlier than all the cycle around *Donatio Constantini* where Pope Sylvester already replaced Eusebius; the apostasy story could have been written at any time — this type of the hagiography was present at a quite early date as we see it e.g. from Lactantius' *De mortibus persecutorum* or from the Church historians.

Tracing the influence of the *Syriac Julian Romance* the regard of Fr. van Esbroeck turned to the Georgian *Life of Vakhtang Gorgasal* (being a part of the *K'art'lis c'xovreba*¹³) which represents a kind of hagiographic literature. The very interest of Dzhuansher in the peripeties of the Julian Romance is somewhat curious. The Romance was used as a justification of the big changes political and doctrinal (the unification of Kartli)¹⁴. Vakhtang has become a symbol of the Bagratid monarchy and even the royal oriflame of the dynasty was called gorgasliani in commemoration of the merits of this king in the reunification of the Kartli and the Georgian nation. It is quite difficult to call properly the Vakhtang story but since the main romance-constituting elements are

¹² Baumstark, *GSL* 183.

¹³ The Life of Vakhtang Gorgasal is a part of the big chronicle *Kartlis c'khovreba* (The Life of Kartli) cf. *Kartlis c'ovreba. Teksti dadgebili ... s. qauSixvilis mier* (The Life of Kartli. Vol. 1 (Tbilisi, 1955) 139–244); russian transl. with commentary: ДЖУАНШЕР ДЖУАНШЕРИАНИ. Жизнь Вахтанга Горгасала / Пер. Г.В. ЦУЛАЯ (Tbilisi, 1986). In Georgian there are three terms *matiane*, *istoria* and *c'ovreba*. All denote history, but the latter is proper to the hagiographical genre, like the greek *ἱστορία*.

¹⁴ k. kekelidze, « *ivlianes romanis* » kvali adrindels Kartul mCerlobaxi // eTiudebi Zveli Kartuli iTeraTuris istoriidan. T. II (K. KEKELIDZE, The Julian Romance as a source of the Georgian Literature // Studies from the History of Ancient Georgian Literature. Vol. II) (Tbilisi, 1954) 70–80. Also: M. VAN ESBRÖECK, Lazique, Mingrélie, Svanéthie et Apkhazie du IV^e au IX^e siècle // Il Caucaso: cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia (secoli IV–XI) (Spoleto, 1996) 195–221.

there¹⁵, I see no contradiction in the assertion that it *is* a hagiographical romance.

The second parallel to the Romance Fr. van Esbroeck has referred to was the Armenian *Agathangelos*. The nature of this text makes it a parallel of the Julian Romance. The hero of the Armenian story is a Christian called Gregor who is in fact no other but Gregory the Enlightener, who baptises the whole Armenia and the king Trdat personally. At the first, one can not avoid an impression that Anak's clandestine oath to the Persian king and his sojourn at Khosrov's court represent some anti-story of his son St. Gregory. Then we encounter a certain Greek noble *Ληθηραῖος* (who's name strangely resembles the name of Eleuthera's father in the 'second part' of the Julian Romance). When St. Gregory enters the service of Trdat himself being a Christian and therefore hiding his identity, he acts like Jovian in the Romance. Though St. Gregory's destiny is different from that of Jovian, his martyrdom is not an end of the story — it is a beginning of the new story or better say a saving of the History. Their deed supersedes their lives: the christianisation of the whole people and conversion of the king runs a parallel to the repentance of the God-chosen emperor for the sin of apostasy and thus returning the Empire to the way of God in the Romance. It is here that the main genre characteristic of the romance is shown.

The influence of St. Ephrem's madraše on the author of the *Romance* which seems decisive to H. Drijvers is another problem. In fact their relation is quite remote (if there is any). We can admit that the Edessan tradition (of which St. Ephrem was one of the representatives) was known to a certain point to the hagiographer, but some important themes of Ephrem are not present in the *Romance*, and ~~the~~ its author does not make use of St. Ephrem's imagery. One of the main themes of the *Romance* is the repentance and expiation of the

¹⁵ M. VAN ESBOECK, La vision de Vakhtang Gorgasali et sa signification // Proceedings of the First International symposium in Kartvelian Studies (Tbilisi, 1988) 221–228; IDEM, Vakhtang Gorgasali et l'évêque Mikael de Mtskheta (in press, I quote a typewritten text).

Empire, however St. Ephrem's madraše concern only the apostasy of Julian and the symbolical meaning of the cession of Nisibis. Certainly St. Ephrem was an eye-witness of the Nisibene tragedy and his vision was probably taken into account, but not exclusively. The parallels between St. Ephrem's madraše and the Romance outlined by Drijvers are only partly convincing. The anti-judaist and anti-pagan themes are common both to the hagiographer and to St. Ephrem but they were exponents of the same tendency of the whole Christian literature Greek as well as Syriac. More serious analysis demonstrates that in the Romance the key-figure is Jovian who is mentioned only occasionally in company of Constantine and Constantius, *ܩܘܨܬܐ ܕܩܘܨܬܐ*. St. Ephrem is obviously more pre-occupied with the destiny of Nisibis, than the hagiographer is. In Ephrem's poetic vision all the symbolic of the surrender of the city is quite important and it is this symbolic perspective that underlines all the material signs of the tragedy: the dead corpse of Julian, the Persian banner over the tower of Nisibis. It is true that the royal eschatology based on the text of the Book of Daniel is present in both writings, but it was expressed a bit differently. For the hagiographer the expiation of the Empire is a *sine qua non* of its existence and a typology of the last Roman emperor who will cede the Empire to Christ, posing his crown on the Cross of Golgotha is also present. Both themes are absent from St. Ephrem's madraše. The most significant difference between St. Ephrem and the Romance is their attitude toward Persia and Šābur II. In Ephrem's opinion Šābur is first of all eternal enemy, king-sorcerer (*ܩܘܨܬܐ ܕܩܘܨܬܐ*), he is called often «the erring one». The viewpoint of the hagiographer is very particular: the Persian king is a partner of Jovian and the intrigue is being played between Jovian, Šābur and mobed Hwarra-Mihr¹⁶.

The essential point is the internal unity of the *Romance*. The present form of the Syriac text is surely a romanesque *synthesis* composed as a single literary

¹⁶ Cf. my article: Учение о христианском царстве у преп. Ефрема Сирина // *ТХХВ* 327–342; also S.H. GRIFFITH, Ephraem the Syrian hymns against Julian // *Vigiliae Christianae* 47 (1987) 238–266; R. MURRAY, *Symbols of Church and Kingdom* (Cambridge, 1975) 244–245.

piece, but nevertheless it is evident that the author used different sources and depended upon several hagiographic traditions. The question of the original language should be left open, for the present Syriac text betrays the hand of the later redactor. Fr. van Esbroeck had observed some irregularities in the name transcription (**a**), the difference of language and style between the ‘apostasy story’ and the rest of the text (**b**) and finally a more succinct character of some passages in comparison with the Arabic version (**c**)¹⁷.

We may conclude therefore that Julian legend is a part of a larger Roman-centred eschatological milieu which was a complex of ideas concerning the destiny of the Christian Empire and the relation «Jerusalem–Rome–Constantinople». It was a common background of the conversion legends (like *Agathangelos*), stories of the foundation of the capital of the Empire by the legendary eponym Byzas¹⁸ and the Constantin story, the stories of the invention of the Cross, naturally terrible apostasy of Julian Apostate and the Last Roman Emperor legend¹⁹. Thus the cycle covered all the eschatological history from the biblical times till the end of the Empire (i.e. the end of the world). As homeric epos was a textbook of national history for the Ancient Greeks, the royal eschatology was for Byzantium and all the Christian East. The eschatological stories of this type ceased to be the only genre where the imperial eschatology could be expressed: it was for a certain time so in the East and was connected with the Arab conquest, but in Byzantium eschatology became ritualized, got incarnated in the chronicles and theology. After the VI century when the west-

¹⁷ Cf. VAN ESBRÖECK, *Le soi-disant roman...* 199–200.

¹⁸ Cf. G. DAGRON, *Constantinople imaginaire. Étude sur le recueil des Patria* (Paris, 1984) 23 et pass. The name of Byzas occurs once in the Romance, namely in the letter to the Constantinopolitans (HOFFMANN p. 75, 12,19 - *Byzws*).

¹⁹ G. J. REININK, *Die syrischen Wurzeln der mittelalterlichen Legende vom römischen Endkaiser // Non Nova, Sed Nove. Mélanges de civilisation médiévale dédiés à Willem Noomen / Ed. M.GOSMAN, J.VAN OS* (Groningen, 1984) (*Medievalia Groningana*, 5) 195–209; IDEM, *Ps.-Methodius und die Legende vom römischen Endkaiser // The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages / Ed. by W.Verbeke, D.Verhelst, A.Welkenhuysen* (Leuven, 1988) (*Medievalia Lovaniensia. Ser.I/Studia XV*) 82–111; P. ALEXANDER, *Byzantium and the Migration of Literary Works and Motifs. The legend of*

ern part was lost and the christological crisis divided the East it should have been reformulated in order to serve a renewed idea of the national Empire.

The problem of the original language is not a simple one. True, the extant text is not a translation from the Greek. Some minor discrepancies between the Arabic and Syriac versions could be explained from the fact that the Arabic text is an abridgment, a sort of resumé of the long Syriac text, just like there may exist sometimes two or more recensions of a Life (a short and a long) which have a number of differences. On the other hand the difference between the story of the Julian's apostasy and other parts is striking and it badly needs explanation. The presumed second Syriac author has assembled different sources in order to produce a coherent narrative. The first one was but a translator of some hagiographical pieces into Syriac.

The central piece is the story of the war, it is presented as a letter from a certain Aploris and is preceded by an interesting request of the abbot ܐܒܕܝܐܝܠ (ܐܒܕܝܐܝܠ, or Gabriel, 'Abdail in the Arabic version)²⁰ of «Sndrūn» (ܣܢܕܪܘܢ):

The letter which 'Abdail superior of the covenant, wrote to Aploris, confident to Jovian the emperor, to whom was entrusted the matter of the defection which took place in the realms.

The title ܐܒܕܝܐܝܠ is rather vague, and I am not sure that it should be translated as confidential minister (*protasecretis*??) as Gollancz did. I would rather propose «a close friend, a sort of ἰκῆστὸς». Unfortunately we know quite bad the Jovian's surrounding to find someone sounding like Aploris, Hilarios or Hiliaris. Nethertheless, I wonder whether we should finally consider him as a pure literary invention and think of the abbot ܐܒܕܝܐܝܠ as a fictitious figure as it was usual before. His name has in the manuscript three forms ܐܒܕܝܐܝܠܐ, ܐܒܕܝܐܝܠܐ and probably

the Last Roman emperor // Religious and Political History and Thought in the Byzantine Empire (London, 1987) ch. XII.

²⁰ Cf the Arabic resumé, fol. 21r, 9–10. The difference of names is probably due to the misinterpretation by the second Syriac translator of the *gomal* and *ryš* taken for 'ayn and *dolath* respectively.

ruk (ܩܘܪܘܟ ܩܘܝܢܘܫ) in the *Acts of Judas Thomas*²⁶. The equivalent to the Syriac Sandaruk in the Greek version of the Acts is ΕΑΐαῆνῶδιεέο. Whatever may lay hidden under the mysterious archimandrite and his dwelling, he was the link between the author of the *Expiation* story and the subsequent Syriac translator.

The way out of this agglomeration of riddles can be found through the comparison with the replicas of the Romance extant in the Arabic historiography. As A. Baumstark once has observed, the *Julian Romance* along with the other hagiographic works forms a sort of the ‘legendarische Prosadichtung’ and as such influenced the Syriac and Arabic chronicles. Baumstark pointed out at at-Tabarī and to al-Ya‘quḩbi’s works²⁷. But I would like to indicate the use of the Romance by another chronicler, from the eastern (‘Nestorian’) side. This is a famous *Chronicle of Si‘irt* written as P. Nautin proposed²⁸ by the famous Iso‘denah of Basra, although some doubt has been expressed recently about this attribution. There quite surprisingly we found a relatively full summary of the *Syriac Julian Romance*. Although we have at our disposition only an Arabic text there should have existed a lost Syriac original. If the ‘second story about Julian the accursed’ is not an addition of the Arab translator, it can provide a valuable source for the reconstruction of the lost Syriac prototype along with the Arabic version from the Sinai manuscript. The manuscript of Mgr. A. Scher had lacunæ and the story looks abrupt, but the main part is preserved in quite a good state.

There are in fact two different accounts on Julian, the first is a regular short account frequently found in chronicles and the second, which is a retelling of the

²⁶ F. BURKITT, The Original Language of the Acts of Judas Thomas // *JTS* 1 (1900) 288; Е.Н. МЕЩЕРСКАЯ, Деяния Иуды Фомы (Культурно-историческая обусловленность раннесирийской легенды) (Москва, 1990) 71–72.

²⁷ BAUMSTARK, *GSL*, 183.

²⁸ P. NAUTIN, L’auteur de la « Chronique de Seert » : Isodenah de Basra // *RHR* 186 (1973) 113–126.

Syriac Julian Romance (نسخه اخرى لقصة اليلنوس اللعين)²⁹. It begins with the general introduction about Julian who rebelled against Constantine the Great, his grandfather. Then follows the fragment about Julian entering the pagan shrine in order to get to know whether he will obtain the kingdom. The magicians, whom he had consulted called for the evil spirits, object of their adoration. When they appeared Julian was frightened and made a sign of the cross on his forehead. Demons flew away and the sorcerers got irritated and told the prince that he had spoiled all the matter. Julian promised them to correct his misdeed. They summoned demons for the second time and poured corruption in Julian's heart so that he had no fear³⁰. Then author adds a lead-in phrase 'Others thus explain the matter of his impiety', and there follows the story of the false oath which Julian ought to pronounce in order to denounce the claim of stealing the king's daughter's gold. As there was no other means to prove the accusation, Julian was made to swear that he has not stolen princess' gold which she had conferred to him believing to his hypocritical devotion and prayer. Julian swore and demons took possession of his soul.

Both fragments are well known to us. This is a part of the 'second manuscript' of the *Romance*. There is in fact a difference in the order of events. The Syriac text gives a story of a certain ܠܝܚܢܘܨ (certainly *Eleuthera* and not 'Alotra'³¹), daughter of ܠܝܚܢܘܨ (Lic[i]n[i]us, Lichnus?) whose belongings were stolen by Julian. She meets the demon of the clock-tower by night in the street called 'The Street of Gold' (ܫܘܩܬܐ ܕܘܘܪܐܘܨ)³², who offers her his help in getting back her property. Taking him for the watchman she accepts and prays the king to make Julian to swear by the image that protects the city clock. Julian

²⁹ Histoire nestorienne (Chronique de Séert) / Éd. A. Scher, P. Dib, (Paris, 1907) (PO V(2)) 230.

³⁰ The story is known to us from the *Ecclesiastical History* of Theodorite: THEODORITES CYRR, *Historia Eccles.* III, 3; (PG 82, 1085).

³¹ Thus Hollancz.

³² HOFFMANN, ... 243, 4.

heard all this and hurried the same night with his friend sorcerer $\varphi\alpha\lambda\zeta$ (Magnus) to the clock-tower, where the demon offers to Julian the mastership of all the earth. Julian accepts and on the third day he comes again and the scene with the sign of the cross takes place. When the incubi are again assembled Julian meets Satan, who surprisingly pronounces a long speech in which Rudolf Asmus has recognised nothing other than the retelling of Julian's discourse against cynic Heraclius³³. This is the story from the Syriac text of the Romance. The complicated question of the order of the manuscripts which was still left open by Nöldeke and Hoffmann may be approached now on the base of this fragment. In fact the hypothesis of M. van Esbroeck which stepped off from another resumé in the Sinai arab. 516 and came to the conclusion about the unity of the two pieces finds confirmation in the Si'irt chronicle.

The Julian apostasy story which has gained already certain popularity and was used for instance by Theodorete of Cyrus in his *Ecclesiastical History*³⁴: περιτυγχάνει δε Ρυθρόπιν ταTMτα προλέγειν υπισχυομένν, •ς τοTMτον εις τινα τσην εκδωλικην σηκσην Ργαγσην κατ επισω γενέσθαι τσην Ρδύτων παρασκευάσας, το□ς Ρπατεξνας δκάλεσε δαίμονας. δκείων δε μετN τυς συνήθους φαντασίας διπιφανέντων, ζνάγκας τοTMτον τ' δέος διπιθεσναι τ² μετόπιν τοTM σταυροTM τ' σημεσον etc. We may suppose that Theodorete used some oral tradition he may have heard from the Syrian people.

Edessan background is evident in the Romance, and here Baumstark and then Drijvers are perfectly right. But the author also proves to be quite well informed about the details of Julian's Persian expedition and Persian ideas about his death and its meaning. The awareness of the author of the *Romance* of the Persian interpretation of the Julian's death is proved by the Taq-i-Bostan bass relief³⁵. It depicts three standing figures of whom two are identifiable as

³³ R. ASMUS, Julians autobiographischer Mythos als Quelle des Juliansromans // *ZDMG* 68 (1914) 701–704.

³⁴ THEODORET CYRR. *Hist. Eccl.*, III, 3. (THEODORET, *Kirchengeschichte* / Hrsg. von L. PARMENTIER (Berlin, 1954) (*GCS* 44) 178.)

³⁵ O. NICHOLSON Taq-i-Bostan, Mithras and Julian the Apostate: an Irony // *Iranica Antiqua* 18 (1983) 177–178. Šabur was identified by L. TRÜMPELMANN, Triumph über Julian Apostata // *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte* 25 (1975) 107–111.

Ahura Mazda and Mithras and the third as a Sassanian king. Ahura Mazda is trampling lying prone figure of Julian. The fact that the supreme Persian god is the triumphant over Roman emperor is quite eloquent — the same interpretation we encounter in the Šabur's talk with the Persian Sages and his letter to the Roman army in the *Romance*³⁶. The striking similarity of the *Romance* with the relief idea can be explained with the Persian origin of the author or his source. A very special place is given to Šabur, whose role is far from being simply positive in the *Romance*. His vizir and ambassador Hwarra-Mihr converted to Christianity by Jovian in person is a counterpart of Jovian, who performs the same duty on the Julian's order. The name of this mobed (I wonder, if ܠܒܝ ܠܡܡܝܢ means *mobedan mobed* or not?) was wrongly vocalised by sir Hermann Hollancz: ܝܡܘܪܝܘܠ is a Syriac transcription of the trivial theophoric name *Hwarra-mihr* and certainly not Arimhar, which made H. Drijvers think that it is a corruption of *Ahriman* (*Anghro-macu*). This is proved by a variant spelling of this name in Hoffmann's text: ܝܡܘܪܝܘܠ³⁷. The most surprising fact about this personage is that he seems to be the first (and original) author of the main source for the *Syriac Julian Romance*. This is not a pure guess for in the second book of his *History of Armenia* Movses Khorenac'i a historian of the VII-th century tells us about some Xwarrahbût³⁸ who was a scribe (?) of Šapuh (Šabur), king of the Persians:

This Khorobyт (*Խորոբուտ*), scribe of Նարյհ (*Նարյհոյ*), king of the Persians, was captured by Greeks when Julian (*Յուլիանոս*), who is called also the Apostate, marched against Ctesiphon with his army; [because] Julian was killed there, Khorobyт returned to Greece *with Jovian* (*Յորիանոս*) at the same time as the imperial officers. *Converted to our faith* (*բրոյ Հաւատոյն դասանեալ*), he received the name of Eliazar (*Եղիազար*). He learnt the Greek and wrote a story of the *Acts of Նարպի and Julian* (*պատմադրեաց զգործս Նարյհոյ և Յուլիանոս*)³⁹.

³⁶ HOFFMANN, ... 191,10sq.

³⁷ Ibid. 104,15; 105,18; 107,1.

³⁸ Cf. О.М. ЧУНАКОВА, Книга Деяний Ардашира сына Папака (Іосква, 1987) 12.

³⁹ MOVSES KHORENAC'I, *The History of Armenia* / Ed. M. ABELEAN, S. YARUT'IWNEAN, revised by A. B. SARGSEAN (Erevan, 1991) II, 70. See the commentary

This witness is extremely important for us because it is clear now that it was the man called Hwarra-Mihr (probably called in Greek simply Mihar) who created the story of Julian and Šabur where he is one of the protagonists. We are not sure about the sources of Movses but it is not excluded that his source (or himself?) mixed up the names. In 1992 B. Ch‘ugaszyan has delivered a paper in New York which is still inedited, where he pointed to *Kârnâmag* as source of Movses for this chapter of his History. Perhaps there were some other. Anyway it is possible that Hwarra-Mihr, Khorobût, Eliazar and Apoloris are the same person. The transformation of Hwarra-Mihr into Khorobût may be explained from the Arabic version which reflected a probable original Greek defective form, something like Ουαρμιχαρ μοβεδ > Syriac ܘܪܡܝܚܐ ܡܘܒܝܕܐ and Arabic اورفهارموباطا⁴⁰. The chronicle of Hwarra-Mihr was sent back to the Orient, probably to some archimandrite (or bishop) called Gabriel of Andrapolis (ܘܪܘܒܝܠܐ or ܘܪܘܒܝܠܐ) or elsewhere. Then it was incorporated in the more extensive story, a genre of the royal chronicle which might well be called just simply «Jovinianos» (like in the London manuscript), in the manner of the «Agathangel» or «Alexander» or even «Constantine» stories which constitute a sort of the continuous hagiographical royal chronicle as it existed in the Christian Orient. It was used then to produce the famous Julian episode in the hagiographical tradition of St. Basil⁴¹.

in: MOÏSE DE KHORINE, Histoire de l'Arménie / Trad. française de A. et J.-P. MAHÏ (Paris, 1993) 222–223.

⁴⁰ Chronicle of Si‘irt p. 235 et alias.

⁴¹ Cf. V. DE BUCK (*AASS* Oct. X, 572–573) and H. DELEHAYE (*AB* 27 (1908) 98–99); see also mine Епископ против кесаря. Истоки одного византийского идеологического мотива // *ААЭ* 4 (1994) 147–149.