

The book of brilliance by Daniel Ibn al-Hattab / Floris Sepmeijer. — In : Parole de l'Orient : revue semestrielle des études syriaques et arabes chrétiennes : recherches orientales : revue d'études et de recherches sur les églises de langue syriaque. — vol. 19 (1994), pp. 379-387.

Cover title : Actes du 4e congrès international d'études arabes chrétiennes, Cambridge, septembre 1992. — Bibliogr.

PER L1183 / FT4371P

THE BOOK OF BRILLIANCE
BY DANIEL IBN AL-ḤAṬṬĀB

BY
Floris SEPMEIJER

A. MS LEIDEN OR. 1290.....	380
B. INTRODUCTION	381
C. THE FIRST PART: ON THE CONFIRMATION OF THE CREATOR AND HIS ATTRIBUTES	381
D. THE SECOND PART: ON THE INCARNATION OF GOD THE WORD	383
E. CONCLUSION	386
F. OTHER WORKS OF MS LEIDEN OR. 1290	386

This is a close study¹ of the manuscript of «the Book of Brilliance» by the Syriac author DANIEL IBN AL-ḤAṬṬĀB² (born 1327, the year of his death is unknown).

A. MS LEIDEN OR. 1290³

The full title is *Kitāb al-Isrāq fi l-uṣūl al-dīniyyah wa-l-qawā'id al-bī'iyyah al-muqaddasah al-ya'qūbiyyah* (The Book of the Brilliance on the Religious Fundamentals and the Foundations of the Holy Jacobite Church).

The manuscript is on the whole very legible. Sometimes the last two lines at the bottom of the page are difficult to read. It consists of 140 folios and it has twelve lines to the page. It is written in the Coptic year 1315 / A.H. 1007 = A.D. 1598. The name of the copyist is not mentioned in the manuscript. Chapter headings in the manuscript are written in red ink. The page numbers 128-129, 178-179 and 282-283 are missing. The colophon reads as follows: «This copy is a copy of the autograph (*ḥaḍīhi al-nuṣḥah hiya al-ṭāliṭah min nuṣḥat ḥaṭṭ al-muṣannif*)»⁴.

On page 4: 1-16 Daniel says: «I have made this summary (*muḥṭaṣar*) on the Trinity and the Unity of God (*tawḥīd*) and I called it «The Book of Brilliance». I arranged it in an introduction (*muqaddimah*) and two parts (*maqṣid*). The first (part) is concerned with the creator and his attributes and the second with the incarnation (*ittihād*). The introduction deals with the explanation of the terms which he needs in these examinations (*mabāḥiṭ*)».

1) I would like to thank Mrs. Luise VAN LOOKEREN CAMPAGNE-DE KORTE for improving my English. I am using three abbreviations:

WARRĀQ = David THOMAS, *Anti-Christian polemic in early Islam. Abū 'Isā al-Warrāq's «Against the Trinity»*, coll. «University of Cambridge Oriental Publications» N. 45 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992).

CCO = Michael Jan DE GOEJE, *Catalogus Codicum Orientalium Bibliothecae Academiae Lugduno-Batavae*, tomus V (Leiden, 1873).

Handlist = P. VOORHOEVE, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts*, second enlarged edition (Leiden, 1980).

2) GCAL II 281, where a few facts about his life are assembled.

3) CCO, t. V, 85-86; Handlist 140.

4) GCAL II 282: the text «J. 1491, nach 2 Vorlagen, die Kopien des Autographs gewesen sind» has to be corrected in «A.H. 1007 (= A.D. 1598) koptisches Jahr 1315, die Kopie einer Kopie des Autographs gewesen ist».

It appears that Daniel gives a summary of the third and the fourth bases from the «Candlestick of the Sanctuary» by BAR HEBRAEUS (1225 - 1286) without mentioning his name. It is a general survey in twelve bases of the monophysite theology written in Syriac.

B. INTRODUCTION (MUQADDIMAH)⁵

In the introduction (pp. 4:7 - 8:9) DANIEL gives a translation of the explanation (*tafsīr*) of some of the terms which BAR HEBRAEUS gives in the fourth basis of his «Candlestick of the Sanctuary»⁶.

First he deals with the terms substance (*ḡawhar*) and accident (*ʿaraḍ*) and in addition he quotes from the third book the theological concerns (*ilāhiyyāi*), the fifth chapter which is called «He (God) is not a substance» from the work *al-Mabāḥiṭ al-mašriqiyyah* by the Islamic Arabic author FAḤR AL-DIN AL-RĀZĪ (died 1209)⁷. BAR HEBRAEUS gives a shorter quotation without mentioning AL-RĀZĪ. And he continues by discussing the terms the nature (*tabīʿah*) and the hypostase (*uqnūm*) and finally the one (*wāḥid*).

C. THE FIRST PART (MAQŠID) ON THE CONFIRMATION (IṬBĀT) OF THE CREATOR AND HIS ATTRIBUTES

In this part (pp. 8:10 - 95:3) DANIEL translates only a part of the third basis on the theology of the «Candlestick of the Sanctuary» by BAR HEBRAEUS⁸.

5) I have mentioned the chapters, the parts, the proofs and their refutations corresponding with the Syriac text in the analysis of the Arabic translation so that they will easily be found in the «Table des Matières» of the edited Syriac texts. Daniel doesn't mention the chapters and so on.

6) *Le Candélabre du Sanctuaire de Grégoire Abou'l Faradj dit Barhebraeus*. Quatrième Base: de l'Incarnation. Texte syriaque édité pour la première fois avec traduction française par Joseph KHOURY, in PO, t. 31/1 (Paris, 1965) 123, 125 and 127.

7) Wilhelm AHL WARDT, *Verzeichnis der arabischen Handschriften*, Band IV, Berlin, 1892 (reprint Hildesheim, Olms, 1980) 414 (MS 5064, f. 370 b 10-12; A.D. circa 1494). I do thank Dr. Hars KURIO for sending the page. I am also very grateful to Dr. Carl EHRIG-EGGERT who, after the Conference, sent me the pages 459-460 from the second part of the printed edition of Teheran, 1966.

8) *Le Candélabre du Sanctuaire de Grégoire Abou'l Faradj dit Barhebraeus*. Troisième Base: de la Théologie. Texte syriaque édité pour la première fois avec traduction française par François GRAFFIN s.j., in PO, t. 27/4.

Chapter I. One creator (pp. 8:10 - 11:5). The first proof and the second objection.

Chapter III. He is not a body (pp. 11:6 - 13:9). The sixth proof. The corporealizers (*muğassimah*): the second objection and its refutation.

Chapter V. He is knowing (pp. 13:10 - 22:2). The fourth proof. The seven groups (*firaq*) of adversaries, who deny the knowledge of the creator and their objections (*i^ctirādāt*).

Chapter VII. God is not known (pp. 22:3 - 24:12). The first and second proof.

Chapter VIII. The creator is one and he doesn't share his unity (*waḥdāniyyah*) with an other being pp. 25:1 - 27:9.

Chapter IX. The trinity of the hypotases of the divine unity of nature. Rational evidence (*dalīl ^caqlī*) in which six reflexions (*naẓar*): the first, the second, the third, the fifth, the seventh and the eighth and seven witnesses from the Scriptures (*dalīl naqlī*) on the Trinity.

The **chapters II, IV, VI and X** haven't been translated.

In the next section (pp. 45:11 - 95:3), he quotes from the first part on «The Refutation of the Trinity of the three Christian sects» by ABŪ ^cISĀ AL-WARRĀQ⁹ (died 861?) and YAḤYĀ IBN ^cADĪ's answer. He divides it into three chapters (*faṣl*). The quotations from several chapters are short and sometimes they are not literal.

The **first chapter** is concerned with ten objections (*i^ctirādāt*) to the substance (*ğawhar*) (pp. 45:11 - 59:4)¹⁰.

The **second chapter** deals with nine questions (*su'āl*) and their refutations (*radd*) of the properties (*ḥawāṣṣ*), which are the attributes (*ṣifāt*) of ABŪ ^cISĀ AL-WARRĀQ (pp. 59:4 - 74:3)¹¹. DANIEL remarks: «You should

9) Regrettably David THOMAS has edited the text without the answer of YAḤYĀ IBN ^cADĪ.

10) WARRĀQ 86 = YAḤYĀ IBN ^cADĪ § 41; 90: 1-5 = Y. 46; 90: 10-11 = Y. 49; 90: 22-25 = Y. 51; 110: 5, 8, 25-112, 1-5 = Y. 68; 112: 19-20; 114: 9-10 = Y. 70, 72; 122: 8-13 = Y. 85; 134: 20-24; 136: 1 - 2 = Y. 108; 138: 5-8 = Y. 112; 162: 15-17, 20; 164:1 = Y. 132.

11) WARRĀQ 126:4-5 = YAḤYĀ IBN ^cADĪ § 91; 126: 20-21 = Y. 94; 126:22 - 128:1-2 = Y. 95; 128: 5-8 = Y. 97; 128: 9-11 = Y. 98; 128: 17-20 = Y. 100; 130: 9-11 = Y. 104; 164: 5-7 = Y. 133; 164: 20-22; 164: 1-4 = Y. 134.

know that the properties and the attributes are old, fixed synonyms (*alfāz mutarādifa*) which point to one meaning (*maʿnā*) according to the Christians and their difference of opinion has reference to words».

The **third chapter** deals with the hypostases (*aqānīm*) and together with their refutations and the answers to them (pp. 79:5 - 95:3)¹². DANIEL also quotes AL-ṢĀFI IBN AL-ʿASSĀL¹³. With regard to the hypostases he says: «We don't have to listen to someone who says that search (*baḥṭ*) for the controversy about the hypostases is not possible, because it is beyond the strength of a man (*tāqat al-baṣar*)».

It is possible that he has incorporated this part into his translation to provide his co-religionists with arguments in their quarrels with Islamic adversaries.

D. THE SECOND PART (MAQSID) ON THE INCARNATION OF GOD THE WORD

In the second part (pp. 95:4 - 280) he gives a translation of a part of the fourth basis on the incarnation of the «Candlestick of the Sanctuary» by BAR HEBRAEUS. First of all there is an explanation (*tafsīr*) of the word Incarnation (*ittiḥād*) according to the Jacobite view (pp. 95:8 - 96:7).

Chapter I. The possibility of Incarnation (pp. 96:8 - 109:7). The two proofs don't correspond with the five proofs of BAR HEBRAEUS. Four scriptural witnesses: the first, the second, the third and the fourth. He quotes literally on the Incarnation from YAḤYĀ IBN ʿADI (pp. 96:7 - 109:7)¹⁴. He cites the witnesses of the philosophers SOLON and PYTHAGORAS, the latter is not found in the twelve bases of the «Candlestick». There are three doubts (*šakk*) about the Incarnation and their refutations: the first, the second and the third.

12) WARRĀQ 78: 21-23 = YAḤYĀ IBN ʿADI § 23; 80: 3-6 = Y. 25; 80: 15-17 = Y. 28; 100: 8-9; 102: 1-2 = Y. 63; 102: 17, 19, 20, 22 = Y. 65; 108: 13-15, 21-23 = Y. 66; 120: 14-16, 18 = Y. 83; 120: 19-20 and 122: 4-6 = Y. 84; 122: 16-18 = Y. 124; 180: 8-9, 10, 14 = Y. 150.

13) Possibly he quotes from the summary of «The Refutation of the Trinity» by AL-ṢĀFI IBN AL-ʿASSĀL; vide Gerhard ENDRESS, *The Works of Yahyā Ibn ʿAdī*. An analytical inventory (Wiesbaden, 1977) 99.

14) PÉRIER, Arabic text, pp. 74:2 - 75:2.

Chapter II. The Incarnation had already been realized in Christ (pp. 109:8 - 114:1). The continuance (*tawātur*) of the witness.

Chapter III. Proofs, which continually point to the Incarnation of God the Word (pp. 114:2 - 210:3). The preceding prophecies (5). The wonders in his nature (7), the wonders outside his person (5). The wonders he himself performed (20). The perceptible (*maḥsūsa*) (18) and reasonable (*ma^cqūla*) wonders (7), which were performed in his name. Instruction and confirmation. Seven groups (*firaq*) who deny the incarnation and their refutations. With regard to the wonders he quotes from the *Muḥaṣṣal* by AL-RĀZI¹⁵. He doesn't translate from Syriac.

Chapter IV.

Second part. He is one substance from two substances (pp. 210:4 - 226:9). Four rational proofs: the first, the second, the fourth and the fifth. Three scriptural witnesses.

Third part. If Christ were a hypostase, then he also was a nature. Four rational proofs: the first, the second, the fourth and the fifth. Three scriptural witnesses: the sixth, the eighth and the eleventh.

Fourth part. If Christ were a son, a lord and a person, he necessarily was a substance and a hypostase. Six proofs: the first, the second, the third, the fifth, the sixth and the seventh.

Fifth part. MARIA the mother of The Word. The human infirmities of God are mentioned in the holy books. Eleven scriptural witnesses: the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, the thirteenth, the sixteenth and the seventeenth.

Sixth part. The opinion of those who profess two substances. There are three manners (*wagħh*): the second, the fourth and the sixth objection and their refutations.

Chapter V. The holy Jacobite church believes one substance from two substances and the attributes of the substantial difference between two substances are preserved. The first inquiry (*baḥṭ*). There are three proofs (*burhān*): the first, the third and the fourth. The second inquiry into the absurd opinion of the Eutychians, who profess the mixture. Three manners.

15) PO, t. 31/1 (see note 6), where the Arabic text has been printed on page 247: 5,9, 19-23.

One scriptural witness. The third inquiry into the abolition of this absurd opinion and the solving of its doubts. Three answers and their refutations and a witness.

Chapter VI. The human nature has not been changed into the substance of the divine nature after the union and he was infinite and impassible before the resurrection as the Julianists say (pp. 239:4 - 249:12). Three proofs: the first, the second and the fifth. Five scriptural witnesses (fathers of the church) confirm that the body of the Redeemer was passible and mortal before the resurrection : the first, the second, the sixth, the seventh and the eighth. Three scriptural witnesses confirm that the body of Christ our Lord was impassible, immortal and incorruptible after the resurrection: the first, the second and the fourth. The opinion of the Julianists, who are called the phantasiasts. Two arguments (*ḥuḡḡā*): the first and the third objection and their refutations.

He concludes by quoting the thirty christological heresies from the fourth basis on the incarnation by BAR HEBRAEUS (pp. 250:1 - 276:9)¹⁶. The first heresy was SIMON MAGUS' unbelief and the last one was the heresy of STEPHEN BAR SUDAILE. Besides he also makes use of the «Chronicle» (*Kitāb al-^cUnwān*)¹⁷ by AGAPIUS and the «History of Dynasties» (*Muḥtaṣar Ta'rīḡ al-Duwal*)¹⁸ by BAR HEBRAEUS quoting them literally without mentioning their names. The fifth, the fourteenth, the eighteenth, the twenty-first up to the thirtieth heresy are missing in the Chronicle. Only the tenth up to the twelfth, the seventeenth, the nineteenth and the twenty-eighth heresies are to be found in the «History of Dynasties».

Finally additional enlightenment (*ziyāda tabṣira*) (pp. 276:10 - 280:3).

16) *Textes syriaques* édités par François NAU, in PO, t. 13/2 (Turnhout, 1974, reprint) 252-265.

17) *Kitāb al-^cUnwān. Histoire Universelle écrite par Agapius (Maḥboub) de Membij* éditée et traduite en français par Alexandre VASILIEF seconde partie (1), in PO, t. 7/4 (Paris, 1984 (reprint), p. 29: 7-8; p. 49: 8-10; p. 50: 1-5, 8-11; p. 55: 2-7; 56: 9-57,1; p. 59: 10; p. 60: 3-5; p. 64: 4-6; p. 65: 4-5; p. 70: 10-13; p. 71: 10-11; p. 73: 1-4; p. 74: 3-4; pp. 75-77. (different); p. 107: 2-4, 7-10; p. 108: 1-2; p. 114: 4-5; p. 118: 5-9; pp. 120: 6-121: 2.

18) IBN AL-^cIBRI *Ta'rīḡ Muḥtaṣar al-Duwal*, edited by Anṭūn ṢĀLḤĀNĪ (Beirut, Imprimerie Catholique, 1958²) 72:14-15; 73:21-22, 24-25; 75:21-23; 76:6-9, 11-12; 88:7-9.

E. CONCLUSION

As mentioned above it appears that the LEIDEN MS of the «Book of Brilliance» is not the «Book of the Foundations of the Religion» (*Kitāb uṣūl al-dīn*) as GRAF suggested in his *Geschichte*: but for the greater part it is a partly translation of parts of the third and the fourth bases from the «Candlestick of the Sanctuary» by BAR HEBRAEUS¹⁹.

DANIEL also incorporated into his translation some parts from the first part of ABŪ ʿĪSĀ AL-WARRĀQ's «Against the Trinity» and its refutation by YAḤYĀ IBN ʿADI and a quotation from a treatise on the Incarnation by YAḤYĀ IBN ʿADI.

He quotes literally the Arabic text of the *Mabāḥiṭ al-mašriqiyyah* and the *Muḥaṣṣal* by the Islamic Arabic author AL-RAZĪ without translating them from Syriac. He usually gives a literal translation from Syriac. Sometimes he summarises the Syriac text.

DANIEL IBN AL-ḤAṬṬĀB was the first person who translated a small part of the «Candlestick of the Sanctuary» into Arabic. In the seventeenth century it was the deacon SARKIS who translated all the twelve bases entitled «*Manārat al-Aqdās*»: «the Lighthouse of the Sanctuaries»²⁰.

The language of the MS is Middle Arabic and shows a great resemblance to the language of the treatises «The Lamp of the Intellect» and «Affliction's Physic and the Cure of Sorrow» by SEVERUS IBN AL-MUQAFFA^c as described by Refaat Y. EBIED and Michael L. YOUNG²¹.

F. OTHER WORKS OF MS LEIDEN OR. 1290

1. *Risālat ašraf al-ḥadīṭ fī šarafay al-tawḥīd wa-l-taṭlīṭ* (The «Treatise of the most distinguished report on the both distinctions of the unity and the

19) Herman TEULE remarks that the *Kitāb Uṣūl al-Dīn* is a summary of the third and fourth bases of the *Candelabrum of the Sanctuary*, referring to this paper. See Gregory BARHEBRAEUS, *Ethicon*, Mēmrā I, translated by Herman G. B. TEULE, in CSCO 535 (Scriptores Syri, 219), 1993, p. XIV, n. 34.

20) GCAL II, 275.

21) CSCO 365 (Scriptores Arabici, 32) XII-XV; CSCO 396 (Scriptores Arabici, 34) XIII-XVII.

trinity») by MUḤYI AL-DĪN AL-IṢFAHĀNĪ (pp. 285-336)²². The treatise has been edited by M. ALLARD and G. TROUPEAU²³. The pages 337-344 are blank.

2. *Šarḥ al-amāna al-urtuduksiyyah* (The «Explanation of the orthodox belief») by Daniel AL-SURYĀNĪ AL-MĀRIDĪNĪ (pp. 345-439)²⁴. The pages 400-403, 417-418 and 422-424 are blank. This text has not yet been studied.

3. *Mas'ala fī ḥadd al-qiyāma wa 'awdat al-ağsām* («The question about the definition of the resurrection and the return of the bodies»). No author is mentioned (pp. 440-443).

4. *I'tiqād al-firaq al-ṭalāṭa* («The creed of the three groups») by MU'TAMAN ABŪ IṢḤĀQ IBN AL-^cASSĀL (pp. 444 - 447:6)²⁵.

5. *Aṣl ism Allāh ta'ālā ilāh wāḥid* («The root of the name of God the Sublime is one God»). No author is mentioned (pp. 447:7 - 448:4).

6. *Ḥāšiya min kitāb uṣūl al-dīn* (Marginal notes from the «Book of the principales of the religion»). The author is not mentioned (p. 448: 5-11).

7. *Ta'rīḫ min Ādam ilā Nūḥ* (Dates from ADAM till NOAH and so on). No author is mentioned (p. 449). The pages 450-453 are blank.

Floris SEPMEIJER

22) CCO, t. V, 86; Handlist 27.

23) MUḤYI AL-DĪN AL-IṢFAHĀNĪ, *Épître sur l'unité et la Trinité, Traité sur l'Intellect, Fragment sur l'Âme*. Texte arabe édité par Michel ALLARD, s.j. et Gérard TROUPEAU (Beyrouth, 1962) 1-54.

24) CCO, t.V, 86; Handlist 331; *GCAL* II, 283. The text on page 283: (J. 1598 ?) has to be corrected in: (J. 1598). In this connection Herman TEULE remarks that there are two Daniel's: Daniel IBN AL-ḤAṬṬĀB, a contemporary of BAR HEBRAEUS, and Daniel OF MARDĪN, who flourished in the 14th century. This matter will not be examined here. See note 19 (Herman TEULE, p. XV).

25) This is probably the first part of chapter 8 of the *Mağmū'c Uṣūl al-Dīn*, that was published recently. See Samir Khalil SAMIR, s.j., *Dīkr maḏāhib al-Naṣārā li-Mu'taman al-Dawla Ibn al-ʿAssāl (naḥwa sanat 1263 M.)*, in *al-Maṣriq* 66 (1992) 481-491. The first part (*qism*) is untitled precisely: *I'tiqād al-firaq al-ṭalāṭ* (see p. 483). [SAMIR's note].