

ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND EPIGRAPHIC NOTES ON  
PALESTINE.

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6. *The Land of Promise, mapped in Mosaic at Mâdeba.*—It will be remembered that some years ago the sensational discovery was made at Mâdeba,<sup>1</sup> in the land of Moab, of an extraordinary monument, which until now is unique of its kind—that of a large mosaic pavement, which had belonged to an ancient basilica, and which represented on a large scale a veritable map of Palestine as it was in the Byzantine period. This is acknowledged by all to be an invaluable document from a geographical and archaeological point of view.

It has already been the object of numerous works designed to elucidate its interpretation, which is often difficult—this vast mosaic having suffered much, and many parts of it being even entirely destroyed.

M. A. Schulten has just issued a study in a memoir,<sup>2</sup> which, to judge by its size, would seem to be exhaustive of the matter. Unfortunately, it is far from being so, and, after having read it, one experiences a certain feeling of disappointment. One may say that apart from certain rectifications of details, and notwithstanding a great display of erudition on certain other points—already brought to light elsewhere—the essential questions raised by the mosaic have not been advanced a step further.

M. Schulten endeavours to demonstrate at length that the map of Mâdeba depends closely for its topography on the *Onomasticon* of Eusebius. This is not a new fact; Père Lagrange, in his excellent little memoir, had from the outset, in this respect, made the necessary and sufficient remarks. With regard to this, M. Schulten discusses the question whether, outside the text of the *Onomasticon*, there would not

<sup>1</sup> *Quarterly Statement*, 1897, pp. 167, 213–225 (Clermont-Ganneau); p. 239 (Sir Charles Wilson).

<sup>2</sup> “*Die Mosaikkarte von Madaba,*” &c. (*Abhandl. der K. Gesellsch. der Wissensch. zu Göttingen*), Berlin, 1900; 121 pp. 4to, 3 taf.

have been, accompanying the complete work of Eusebius, a figure map which might have served as a model to the maker of the mosaic of Mâdeba, and he decided in the negative. He refused to see in the *καταγραφή*, of which Eusebius speaks in his introduction, a map of Palestine in the geographical sense of the word; for him this word means the simple enumerative list of localities to the exclusion of all topographical resemblance, either made by Eusebius or borrowed by him from some anterior source. This is far from being demonstrated. St. Jerome, who would naturally have had before him a complete copy of the *Onomasticon*, which he translated into Latin, speaks expressly of a *chorographia* and of a *pictura*. It is easy to say, with M. Schulten, that St. Jerome is mistaken as to the exact value of the terms employed by Eusebius. M. Kubitschek<sup>1</sup> has raised serious objections against this conclusion. For my part, until more fully informed, I consider that the hypothesis of the existence of an Eusebian map and, consequently, of a possible connection between this map and that of the mosaic, is not *ausgeschlossen*, as they say in German. M. Schulten applies himself, on the other hand, to proving, by a minute discussion, that there is no direct connection between the map of Mâdeba and the more ancient mediaeval maps of the Holy Land which have come down to us. No one that I know of has had such an idea, and it is, perhaps, wasting much time and trouble to refute it at such length. One would have preferred to see the author occupy himself more with the topographical and other questions raised by the examination of the map itself. Although he declines on principle to treat these problems, abandoning them, a little disdainfully, to those whom he calls "theologians," he is led to do it several times, but not always in a very happy or very

<sup>1</sup> "Die Mosaikkarte Palästinas" (Mitth. d. K. K. Geogr. Gesellsch. in Wien, 1900, pp. 335-380). Although of more modest dimensions than M. Schulten's large memoir, Professor Kubitschek's dissertation is superior to it in many respects, notably from the point of view of bibliographical information concerning previous works; it has, besides, the advantage of being accompanied by an excellent index to the topographical names of the map—an index the absence of which makes itself keenly felt in M. Schulten's work, which is full to the extent of being rather diffuse.

novel way. It appears to me that he is completely ignorant of the little work which I once published here and elsewhere<sup>1</sup> on the map of Mâdeba. I regret this, because the perusal of it might have saved him from some errors, omissions, or repetitions. I will permit myself to bring to notice some of them rapidly, reproducing for convenience sake the numbers which he has given to the localities, and adding on occasion some new observations.

No. 16.  $[\Sigma v]\chi\alpha\rho \dot{\eta} \nu\bar{\nu}\nu \dots \chi\chi\omega\rho\alpha$ . If one restores either  $[\Sigma v]\chi\chi\omega\rho\alpha$  or  $[A\sigma]\chi\chi\omega\rho\alpha$ ,  $[A\sigma v]\chi\chi\omega\rho\alpha$ , the second name of Sychar, one must compare for the vowelling the Samaritan form קָרִית עַסְכּוֹר, *Kariat 'Askûr*, employed concurrently with the form עַסְכּוֹר, 'Askar.<sup>2</sup>

No. 23. The identity of 'Αλάων 'Αταθ (= 'Αθαδ) with the "area *Atad*" of St. Jerome (Genesis 1, 10), the equivalent of which is wanting in our manuscripts of Eusebius, as well as the singular localisation at Beth Hoglah, had been already pointed out and established by me (*Quarterly Statement*, 1897, p. 220).

No. 29. It is by no means demonstrated that Γοφνά figures on the map as representing *Nahel Eskol*. Eusebius himself

<sup>1</sup> "Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale," vol. ii, pp. 161–175. The omission appears so much the more singular that M. Schulten refers, for the *kleinere Litteratur* on the question, to the "Comptes-Rendus de l'Académie," 1892, p. 144. It is to be presumed that this is only a quotation from second hand, made to acquit his conscience; it is materially erroneous—the date 1892 should be changed to 1897. And, besides, the references contained in the note to which it points—and which are mine—concern only the archeological discoveries made at Mâdeba *before* that of the mosaic.

<sup>2</sup> "Chronique Samaritaine," ed. Neubauer, "Journal Asiatique," 1869, Nov., pp. 463, 464; cf. p. 462, and also pp. 434, 436. I will remark in this connection that the Arabic gloss (p. 462), مَحَنَّةِ الْعُلَيْلِيَّة = العَسْكَرُ الْعَالِيُّ, compared with the other gloss (p. 434), يَسَّكَر = عَسْكَر, tends to confirm the etymological resemblance which I made formerly for the name of this place ("Archæol. Researches in Pal.," vol. ii, p. 335). Moreover, this form يَسَّكَر may serve to explain how there is introduced in the course of time the prosthetic 'Ain in this name of a place. It would not be impossible that the modern عَسْكَر was a contraction of a series of successive forms, such as عَسْكَرْ عَسْكَرْ عَزْكَرْ, "the spring of Sychar," being given considering the importance of the spring which exists in this place.

makes the most express reservation<sup>1</sup> respecting the tradition related by him. Besides, the map inscribes many localities to which one does not attach any Biblical connection.

No. 43. M. Schulten transcribes here and elsewhere *Γιδιθρα*, although the original has clearly *Γιδιρθα*, a form much more probable in itself. I do not think that this is a printer's error, because (p. 93) he transcribes expressly *Gidithra*.<sup>2</sup>

Nos. 48, 49. On the possible identifications of *Θερασπις* and *Βετομελγηζις* (correct *Βετομελγεζις*), see my observations (*l.c.*, p. 218, 219).

No. 51. The identification of *Ka . . . ερουτα* with *Καριαθ Ιαρειμ* is most arbitrary. *Kefr Rāt*, which I had proposed (*l.c.*, p. 220), would agree as well for the position, and much better for the name.

No. 56. *Evetraβa=בְּנֵי נָמ* of the Talmud (*l.c.*, p. 221).

No. 58. [*Σαφ]αρεα*, between Lydda and [*Bet]odegana*, could not correspond in position to the *Sarufia* of Antonin of Plaisance, near Ascalon, which is very far from there. I propose to identify it with *Safriyeh* (Sâfriyeh), which is precisely between Lydda and Beît Dejan.

No. 65. (Ascalon.) It is necessary to restore as I have shown (*l.c.*, pp. 221, 222)<sup>3</sup>: [τᾶν τριῶν ? μαρτύρων] Λίγυπτιών, and to recognise there the mention of the sanctuary of the three famous Egyptian martyrs of Ascalon, whose history Eusebius<sup>4</sup> himself has related.

No. 66. *Ακκα[ρων]* ἡ νῦν *Ακ[αρων?]*. It is hardly probable that the author of the mosaic would have given the modern form to the name if it had differed from the ancient form only, as M. Schulten admits, by the absence of a simple *Kappa*; I would rather believe the difference should be in the termination, *ων*, which was perhaps already dropped in the vulgar tongue,

<sup>1</sup> Ζητεῖται δὲ εἰ ἀληθῆς ὁ λόγος (s.v. Φάραγξ Βότρυος).

<sup>2</sup> M. Kubitschek, *op. c.*, index, has also adopted this form, *Γιδιθρα*, which nothing justifies.

<sup>3</sup> Preceded, perhaps, by the article, *τὸ*, which, followed by the genitive, generally designates sanctuaries on the map.

<sup>4</sup> "History of the Martyrs in Palestine," ed. Cureton, p. 34. Cf. Antonin de Plaisance (Geyer, "Itinera Hieros," p. 180): "ibi (Ascalon) requiesceunt tres fratres martyres Aegyptii . . . vulgariter Aegyptii vocantur."

thus forming a prelude to the present Arabic form 'Aker. Perhaps Ακ[καρα], Ακ[αρα], or even Α[καρ], without Greek termination.<sup>1</sup>

No. 70. I have shown (*l.c.*, p. 221) that Σαφιθα was no other than Tell es-Sâfîé, and I have discussed, in this connection, the origin of this termination *iθa* = *itha* Aramean = *reh* Arabic, which is found in Μωδιθα (Modin, No. 52) = Modiith(a) = *El-Medieh*.<sup>2</sup>

No. 80. M. Schulten rejects, with reason, the restoration τὸ τοῦ ἀγίου Λ[ώτ]; but that which he has substituted ('Α)[αρών] (this would be Mount Hor), has against it the distance and the orientation in comparison with Segor, without considering that the first letter of the name seems to be Λ rather than A.

No. 84. Βητομαρσεα ἡ καὶ Μαιουμας. This enigmatical locality, situated to the east of the Dead Sea, has nothing in common with *Mappriissa*, as Père Lagrange supposed, nor with *Μαιουδος*, as M. Schulten supposes.

M. Büchler<sup>3</sup> has just demonstrated by combining in the happiest fashion the teachings of the classic authors with those of the Bible, the Talmud, and the Midrashim, that Βητομαρσεα is no other than the transcription of בֵית מְרִזָּה, *Beit Marzeah* (*cf.* Jeremiah xvi, 5); that *Marzeah*, or *Marzeiha*, means, like *Maioumas*, a great Syrian feast of licentious nature, and that this double denomination must apply in this case on the map to the place where popular tradition located the famous scene of the fornication of Israel, when they allowed themselves to be initiated by the beautiful daughters of Moab into the impure rites of Baal Peor.<sup>4</sup>

No. 86. The explanation of Ηρασίδιν by Ηρα(ι)σιδ(ι)ον,

<sup>1</sup> Like Βετζαχαρ (No. 69).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sûsitha (Talmud) = Sûsieh = *Hippos* (of the Decapolis).

<sup>3</sup> "Revue des Etudes Juives," 1901, p. 125.

<sup>4</sup> I propose to return elsewhere more in detail to this very interesting question. I will limit myself for the present to recalling that I had already established ("Recueil d'Arch. Orient.", iii, pp. 28, 29; *cf.* ii, p. 390, n. 2), the existence amongst the Phoenicians of a great religious ceremony, called also *Marzeah*, in the *Tarif des Sacrifices* of Marseilles, and in the *Décret Phénicien* of the Pireus.

*Præsidium*, had already been given by me (*l.c.*, p. 222). As for the identification of this locality with Aila, on the Red Sea, proposed by M. Schulten, it is topographically inadmissible.

No. 90 (pp. 25 and 102). The author does not seem to have perceived that the *Bersabe* of the mediæval maps represents, in reality, *Beit Djibrin*, in consequence of an identification arbitrary but current amongst the Crusaders.

I would merely call attention to the localities in the region of Gaza, which M. Schulten registers without comment, and respecting which he might have found in my notice useful observations: No. 93, Ορδα; No. 94, Φωτις (too often altered into Φωρις); No. 103, Ωγα; No. 104, Σεανα; No. 111, Εδραιν, &c. The identity of Θαβαθα (No. 113) with the Θαξαθα of Sozomenos (III, 24) had been established by me<sup>1</sup> even long before the discovery of the mosaic, which has come to fully confirm my hypothesis, as Father Lagrange has already proved (p. 15).

I will conclude these observations here and leave on one side that part of the map which comprises Lower Egypt, wishing to limit myself to Palestine, properly so-called. I will only recur to some important points which have been insufficiently treated, or even totally neglected by M. Schulten.

He has omitted, one does not know why, to represent in his study a small detached fragment of the mosaic, belonging to the northern region, and bearing the legend ΑΓΒΑΡ.<sup>2</sup> Father Lagrange had proposed to recognise in this locality the πέτρα Ἀχαεάπων or Ἀχαεάρη, which Josephus<sup>3</sup> places in Upper Galilee. The names do not appear to me to agree well, and I would prefer to see in the Αγεάρη of the mosaic the town of Γάζαρα or Γαζαρώθ, of which the same Josephus speaks several times,<sup>4</sup> and which should be found also in Galilee; the *Alpha* would be prosthetic, and would imply an original form: *Għbār* (*G'bār*, *Āg'bār*).

<sup>1</sup> "Etudes d'Archéologie Orientale," vol. ii, p. 9, and following.

<sup>2</sup> Fragment A, near the second northern pillar in the plan accompanying the memoir of Father Lagrange, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> "Bellum Jud.," ii, 20, 6; cf. "Vita Jos.," § 37. This is probably the 'Akbarah of the Talmud.

<sup>4</sup> "Vita Jos.," § 10, 25, 45, 47. The ethnic is Γαζαρηνοί.

Some years before the discovery of the great mosaic map Father Germer-Durand<sup>1</sup> noticed an isolated fragment of it, which did not allow one to divine its purely geographical character, or to suspect the imposing whole to which it belonged; it contained the name of *Zασουλάν*, and the remains of the benediction of Zebulun by Jacob (Genesis xlix, 13): “Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea, and his border shall be unto Zidon.”

I was the first to show (*l.c.*, p. 215) that this enigmatical fragment made an integral part of the map, and this has been confirmed by Father Lagrange.<sup>2</sup> M. Schulten speaks of it very incidentally (p. 48), and without quoting his predecessors, as is his custom; but he appears to completely ignore the existence of another fragment, the connection of which with the map I had at the same time pointed out, and which is at least as important, for it remains until now the most northerly point on this map. This fragment had likewise been published with the preceding one by Father Germer-Durand (*l.c.*),<sup>3</sup> who, for the rest, was quite mistaken as to its signification. It is composed of these three lines:—

**CAΡΕΦΘΑ . ΜΑΚΡΑΚΩ  
ΟΓΣΙΤΕΚΗ  
ΗΗΜΕΡΑΕΚΕΙΝΗ**

Father Germer-Durand saw there a woman's name *Sarephtha Macraco* (diminutive of *Macrina*), followed by ὁγσιτεκη, for ὁξυτέκη (ὁξυτόκος), adjective making allusion to a “happy deliverance,” and perhaps by a date. Already, when nothing was yet known of the existence of the mosaic map, I had

<sup>1</sup> “Revue Biblique,” 1895, p. 588. He should have published this fragment as early as 1890 (?) in the “Cosmos” (number of the 11th October), according to a reference made by Father Lagrange, which I have not been able to verify.

<sup>2</sup> Fragment B of his plan (*l.c.*, cf. p. 13). At times this fragment had itself been much mutilated, and reduced to the commencement of lines: **ZA . . .** and **KHC**.

<sup>3</sup> This fragment, and the preceding one, have been published by Father Germer-Durand, not from notes made by him on the spot, but from more or less exact copies taken by the missionaries of the Latin Patriarchate.

proposed, on the contrary, to recognise<sup>1</sup> in this fragment the name of the town of *Sarephtha*, and, not without some hesitation, to restore μακρά κω[μή] “long village,” in comparing a passage from the “Life of Peter the Iberian” (Syriac document of the fifth century), a passage in which I had shown that the locality called קְרִיָּתָא אֲרִיבְתָּא, “long village,” could only, according to the context, represent the town of Sarephtha. This last conclusion has been fully verified by the discovery of the mosaic map, as I immediately pointed out (*l.c.*, p. 216, n. 1),<sup>2</sup> remarking that, since then, one might maintain the reading of the Syriac text without making the correction which I had proposed, the “long village” being really the new name or surname of Sarephtha. I would propose to-day to restore thus all the reading of the map :—

Σαρεφθα [ἢ] Μακρά κω[μή]  
δ'(που) τέκ(ν)[ον ἡγέρθη? ἐν τ-]  
ἡ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ.

“Sarephtha, or Long Village, where (a) child has been resuscitated (?) in that day.”

The legend, thus re-established, would recall the famous miracle of Elijah at Sarephtha (1 Kings xvii, 9–24). It is quite in the style of those scattered in profusion over the rest of the map. The corrections, of an entirely paleographical order,<sup>3</sup> are authorised by the uncertainty of the only copy that we possess.

And now a word on a last question, a capital question which dominates all the others, and which all those who have occupied themselves with the map of Mâdeba have asked without being able to answer it. What is, then, the origin of this extraordinary work ? What is its object ? To what

<sup>1</sup> “Etudes d’Archéologie Orientale,” vol. ii (December, 1895), p. 18, n. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. “Comptes-Rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions,” séance of the 12th March, 1897, pp. 144–145.

<sup>3</sup> ΟΓΙ=ΟΠΟΥ, ΤΕΚΗ=ΤΕΚΝ. The mosäiste employs the relative adverb ὅπου as well as the absolute adverb ἐνθα; compare, for example, ἔρημος Σὶν ὅπου κατεπέμφθη τὸ μάννα, “the desert of Sinai, where the manna was sent.”

need or to what preconceived notion does it respond? What was the idea in fixing thus upon the pavement of the basilica of Mâdeba a representation of the Holy Land as faithful and as detailed as the means of the period permitted? This is a veritable enigma, the solution of which is still to be found.

M. Schulten is not embarrassed by so little. It is probably, he says, the votive offering of some pilgrim, in gratitude for the happy accomplishment of his journey in the Holy Land. It will be confessed that the answer is a little crude. One can hardly explain, on this hypothesis, why, among so many other basilicas where he might have had the work executed—to commence with those of Jerusalem—the pilgrim, if pilgrim there was, should have chosen just the church of a remote town at the bottom of the land of Moab. Votive offering of a pilgrim—or of some quite other personage—the thing is possible. . . . But why Mâdeba? The whole thing lies there, in my opinion, and, as it is said that a question well put is half answered, cannot the solution be the following? It is, of course, a pure conjecture that I am about to risk, but one is obliged to have recourse to imagination when all information fails.

What it is necessary to consider before all is the position of Mâdeba. I am struck by one fact—it is that Mâdeba is situated close to Mount Nebo; it was in the Byzantine period the most important town which stood in those regions where the great memory of Moses still lingered. It was in the immediate neighbourhood that the leader of Israel received from Jehovah the order to climb the summit of Pisgah, where he was to die, and to contemplate in one supreme vision in all its extent this land of Canaan, the Land of Promise, which was to belong to his people, but where he was not himself allowed to enter (Genesis xxxii, 41–52; xxxiv, 1–8; *cf.* iii, 27, 28; Numbers xxvii, 12, 13).

Might it not be, perhaps, this geographical picture, which was virtually unrolled under the eyes of Moses, that it was intended to reproduce in the mosaic of the basilica of Mâdeba, that is to say, in the neighbouring town to this memorable scene?

It is certain that this episode was familiar to the Byzantine

artists. I cannot just now completely verify the matter, not having at hand the precious *Guide to the Pictures* of Mount Athos<sup>1</sup>; but I notice in the mosaics of the basilica of *Ste. Maria Majeure* (Garucci, pl. cxx, 3) the significant mention of the following scene:—"Moses sees the Promised Land from the mountain." Why should they not have had the idea of showing in a realistic way the thing itself that Moses saw, quite close to, if not at the place itself, where he saw it? Nothing was at the time more tempting or more logical.

One could, at all events, on this hypothesis explain the care with which the author of the mosaic indicates the distribution of the territory according to the tribes of Israel and the mention of the various benedictions, not only of Jacob (Genesis xlix) but also of Moses<sup>2</sup> (Genesis xxxiii), concerning the said tribes. It is true, one may say that on this point the *mosaïste* only followed the indications of the *Onomasticon*, which has visibly served him as a guide for the whole; but it is necessary to recognise that the affair must have had a particular interest for him, as he has not thought proper to suppress those long Biblical quotations which are written all over the map, and which singularly complicated his already so arduous task.

One could thus explain equally well why this map comprises not only the Promised Land properly so-called, but also Lower Egypt; that is to say, the scene of the high deeds of Moses and the events preceding the Exodus, which took place in this region.

<sup>1</sup> I have just made the verification. It is negative.

<sup>2</sup> This is the case on the map for the benediction of Benjamin (Deuteronomy xxxiii, 12); for that of Ephraim (Joseph) the passage in Deuteronomy (xxxiii, 13) accompanies the passage in Genesis (xlii, 26). For Dan, the *mosaïste* quotes the Song of Deborah (Judges v, 17), but the legend is incomplete and it admitted, perhaps, also the benediction of Moses. For Judah and Simeon the legends are unfortunately destroyed. As for the names of the other tribes, they are totally missing in consequence of the ravages which the mosaic has undergone.

It is necessary to remark, on the one hand, that the benedictions of Moses immediately precede in the Biblical account the scene of the vision of the Promised Land, and, on the other hand, that it is the symmetrical counterpart of the benedictions of Jacob.

I do not hide from myself that more than one objection may be made to this way of looking at it. It is not, it will be said, for example, Palestine such as Moses could have contemplated it from the summit of Nebo which is represented on the map ; it is a Palestine relatively quite modern, the Christian and Byzantine Palestine contemporaneous with the author of the mosaic. Granted ; but it is necessary to take into account the constant endeavour of the *mosâiste* to recall for each locality the principal recollections of the Old Testament. Above all, it must not be forgotten that the vision of Moses is a veritable vision in the ideal sense of the word—a supernatural vision, not subject to the material conditions of time and space. It is certain that it is humanly impossible to the ordinary eye to perceive from the height of Nebo all the extent of country that Moses is reputed to have viewed. Jehovah had removed for him the limits of space. Why, in the mind of the Christian author of the mosaic, should He not have also removed those of time, and unveiled to the Hebrew law-giver the Palestine of the future at the same time as that of the present ? There is, after all, nothing inadmissible in this naïve conception of the reality.

Another objection, more specious :—The map is orientated to the east ; that is to say, that Palestine unrolled itself to the eyes of a spectator who turned his back on the Mediterranean. The point of view is, then, the inverse of that which Moses must have had from his point of observation on Nebo. To this it may be replied that in such matters the ancients did not allow themselves to be impeded by the logical ideas which prevail in our time ; that formerly the general custom was to orientate to the east, and that the author of the mosaic conformed to this custom even when it disagreed with the particular object he had in view ; that probably, besides, he was not the real designer of the map executed by himself ; that he only had to fix on the ground of the basilica of Mâdeba a pre-existing map—that of Eusebius or of some other—constructed according to the ordinary principles of his time ; that he judged it useless to modify the orientation of it in order to adapt it to his personal point of view, a delicate

operation which would have singularly complicated his task, which perhaps surpassed his topographical capacity, and of which he possibly did not, moreover, perceive the necessity. It sufficed him to have reproduced at his best a map current at his period, and the essential elements of which are visibly borrowed from the *Onomasticon* of Eusebius. What would properly belong to him, if the hypothesis which I have just sketched has any foundation, is simply the fact of his having chosen this special subject to connect it with the local remembrance of the vision of Moses.

*7. The Cufic Inscription in the Basilica of Constantine and the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre by the Caliph Hakem.*—Some years ago there was discovered at Jerusalem, at the east of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a fine Cufic inscription engraved on one of the blocks *in situ* of a wall which made part of the famous *Martyrion*, constructed by Constantine. I then devoted to this document an extensive study,<sup>1</sup> in which, after having deciphered and interpreted the text, I tried to show that it must have been connected with a certain *Mosque of Omar*, of which Eutychius tells us, and which the Moslems had erected, to the great displeasure of the Christians, in the very vestibule of the basilica of Constantine, at the place where Omar, having entered as a conqueror into Jerusalem, and conducted by the patriarch Sophronios in person, had desired to make his prayer. I showed the important consequences which resulted from this datum in connection with the archæological and topographical problem so much discussed of the buildings raised by Constantine on the reputed site of the Passion.

<sup>1</sup> "Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale," vol. ii, pp. 330-362, § 70; "La basilique de Constantin et la mosqué d'Omar à Jérusalem"; cf. *ibid.*, p. 406, and vol. ii, p. 88. M. van Berchem, with whom I had communicated, and who had adopted the historical arguments brought forward by me, has published an interesting notice on the question, which, after having appeared in the "Mittheil. und Nachr. des deutschen Palästina-Vereins" (1897, pp. 70-78), has been reproduced in the *Quarterly Statement* (1898, pp. 86-93); cf. *ibid.*, 1897, p. 302, a short note by P. Golubowich, who was quite mistaken as to the date and the value of the inscription.

Nevertheless, more than one point still remained undecided, amongst others, an essential point, that of knowing from what authority really emanated this rescript, rigorously forbidding to the Christians access to the Mussulman sanctuary, formerly taken from their own sanctuary. What could have been this authority designated by the inscription as *El Hadhrat el-Mutah-hara*, literally "The Pure Majesty"? Does it refer to a Caliph, and, if so, to a Caliph Abasside or Fatimite? To what period could we trace this official text, the formulas of which were, to us, without precedent or analogy?

I have just, by the merest chance, come across a document which, in a very unforeseen manner, brings us the answer to these questions.

I was lately looking over the translation which is being given us by M. Bouriant<sup>1</sup> of the great work of Makrīzī on the topographical and historical description of Egypt, when I happened upon a passage which struck me vividly, and which I reproduce below as given by the translator. It is borrowed by Makrīzī from an earlier chronicle, that of El-Mesihi. It refers to an incident, otherwise without interest for the solution of the question,<sup>2</sup> which took place in Cairo during the course of the month of Rabi' I, in the year 415 of the Hegira (May-June, 1024):—

In consequence, these merchants went to complain to *His Purity*, that is to say to the Emir of the Believers El Taher li 'azaz din allah Abou'l Hassan Aly ben Hakem bi 'amr allah, who gave to the lieutenant of the kingdom . . . instructions, according to which the merchants were required to pay the customary rent of each year.

It is this expression, *His Purity*, which arrested my attention. I asked myself immediately whether this title, thus rendered by the translator and given to the Caliph, son and successor

<sup>1</sup> Bouriant, "Mémoires . . . de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire," vol. xvii, fasc. 2 (1900), p. 610. This meritorious work, when it is finished, will render real service. It is only to be regretted that it should be spoiled by sufficiently serious or inadvertent errors—above all, in that which concerns names of places (I speak principally of those of Syria, which are too often badly transcribed).

<sup>2</sup> It is in connection with a kind of popular procession which seems to have taken place annually at the place called "Prison of Joseph."

to the celebrated Hâkem, might not correspond, perchance, to an original form الحضرة المطهرة, *El-Hadhrat el-Mutahharâ*, that is to say, to the title of enigmatical authority figuring in our Cufic inscription.

Unfortunately I do not possess the Arabic text of the work of Makrizi, printed in Cairo, and as it was during the Easter vacation, the libraries where I could consult it were shut. I thought then of having recourse to the kindness of my learned *confrère* and friend, M. van Berchem, of Geneva, and I wrote him a line asking him to be so good as to verify the matter by his copy.

The reply was not long in coming, and I had the very lively satisfaction of seeing that it fully confirmed my pre-  
vision.

Here are, in effect, according to the extract that M. van Berchem sends me, the identical terms of which the Arabic author makes use<sup>1</sup>:—

وأنهوا حالهم الى الحضرة المطهرة يعني أمير المؤمنين  
الظاهر لعزاز دين الله ابا الحسن على بن الحكم يامر الله اخوه ...

This is categorical. We have then, henceforth, the certainty that this title of *El-Hadhrat el-Mutahharâ*, which figures in our inscription, was a specific title of the Fatimite Caliphs, a title which we did not know until now. It is very probable that it was not invented for the particular use of the son of Hâkem, and that Dhâher had inherited this designation from his father. Did Hâkem himself get it from his father or from his father's predecessors, or did he create and grant it to himself under the influence of the mystical madness which caused him to commit so many extravagances? Hâkem has been accused, we know, by his contemporaries even of having laid claim to being God, or at least an emanation from the Divinity. Assuredly such a title, if he really bore it, was well qualified to give rise to the equivocation,<sup>2</sup> and to contribute to accredit and

<sup>1</sup> Makrizi, "Khitat," i, p. 207, l. 23.

<sup>2</sup> I will return on another occasion to this delicate theological question with regard to certain very curious texts, where the expression *El-Hadhrat*

to propagate accusations of this kind. The question, considered from this particular point of view, is not wanting in interest, but until more fully informed we have no means of solving it. It is already much to be able to say, now, that Dhâher, and, in all probability, his father, Hâkem, bore this unusual title.

It is a veritable ray of light which is shed on this point, until now so obscure, of our inscription. We can now say that the title *El-Hadhrat el-Mutahhara* there designates a Caliph, and a Fatimite Caliph, to the exclusion of an Abasside. I had formerly discussed the *pros* and *cons*, and, without rejecting the first hypothesis, I rather inclined towards the second. It is on the side of the first that the balance now seems to incline. I will not repeat all the various arguments which I had myself indicated<sup>1</sup> as capable of being invoked in favour of it. It will suffice to say that they assume a new and singular force.

Not only are we compelled henceforth to admit that the rescript aimed at by the inscription has for its author a Fatimite Caliph, strictly speaking, the son of Hâkem, at least; but, if one takes into account the political circumstances, the chances are that this Caliph may be no other than Hâkem himself, the destroyer of the Holy Sepulchre, who by this act of vandalism stirred the indignation of Western Christianity, and in the end provoked the first Crusade. Already so interesting in other respects, as I have shown, our inscription, whether it is placed a little before or a little after the destruction, with which it must have an intimate connection, would thus become a historical document of the first order, since it would belong in some measure to the prologue

*el-Mutahhara* appears to designate an entity of Divine nature, notably in a passage in a treatise of religious controversy by Elias, of Nisibis, which has been pointed out to me by Father Ronzevalle, and where it seems to be applied to God. I will limit myself for the moment to quoting this topical passage from the "History of the Doctrine of the Druses," by De Saey (i, p. 224): "The Lord, the God Hâkem, the Holy One, will show himself in all the purity of his greatness exempt from attributes." Cf. *ibid.*, p. 226, note, the expressions قدس الطهارة, معلم القدس, معلم الطهارات applied to Hâkem in the Druse documents.

<sup>1</sup> See, notably, *i.e.*, pp. 309, 310, n. 2, 311, 325, 332–333, 336.

of the great drama of the struggle carried on for centuries between the Cross and the Crescent in the very land in which the beliefs which they symbolised had their common root.

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### JAR-HANDLE STAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, U.S.

By Professor T. F. WRIGHT.



Facsimile of inscription on a jar-handle at Cambridge, Mass. The last letter but one may be a combination of O and N, but all the others are plain—

**ΜΕΝΤΟΠΟΣ ΥΑΚΙΝΘΙΟΣ or ΙΝΟΣ.**

The second word in *Quarterly Statement* January lists is always genitive.

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THE inscription on the Cambridge jar-handle contains the name of the eponymous governor Mentōr, also found in No. 157 of the Tell Sandahannah series. The circumstance that the name of the month is in the nominative and not in the genitive is a deviation from the ordinary formula which does not affect its meaning, and is interesting chiefly for its great rarity. I have examined all the lists of Rhodian jar inscriptions accessible to me, and find, out of about a thousand or more, but one to compare with it. This is an item in the great Pergamion series (No. 912 in Fränkel's "Inschriften von Pergamon") and reads:

**ΕΠ ΙΕΡΕΩ(Σ) | ΑΡΙΣΤΟ(ΔΑ)ΜΟΥ | ΠΑΝΑΜΟΣ.**

The reading on the Cambridge seal must be **ΥΑΚΙΝΘΙΟΣ**, not **-ΙΝΟΣ**.

R. A. S. M.

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