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**WESTERN SYRIANS  
AND THE FORMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN EAST  
IN THE 6TH CENTURY**

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### **Relevance of the research topic**

This dissertation is dedicated to the civilizational space conventionally called the Christian East, which began to take shape in the context of the great confrontation between the Roman Empire and Sasanian Iran. The situation irrevocably changed in the 7<sup>th</sup> c. in the course of the ‘Arab awakening’ in the Middle East and the ‘Turkic awakening’ in Inner and Central Asia.<sup>1</sup>

The 6<sup>th</sup> c. AD turned out to be, on the one hand, the last period of the Roman Empire as a special derivation of the Roman civilizational type (later usually called Byzantium),<sup>2</sup> and on the other, the point of formation of another civilizational type in the East, parallel to both the Byzantine and Western, i.e., the Christian East. The difficulty of identifying and studying it lies in the fact that it is a collection of non-Greek cultures (with a Greek matrix) united by the Christian faith, which spread in the East quite early - in the 2–4<sup>th</sup> cc., sharing common cultural and social ideas, and politics. It was in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. that this set of Semitic, Caucasian and other peoples, territories and cultures from the marginal (peripheral) zone of Rome, in the course of a series of structural changes, turned into an independent polycentric structure between Rome, Iran and the world of Africa. Its position in relation to the Empire changed and a new civilisational specific appeared.

This dissertation examines the question of how and by what kind of social and religious mythology the Late Antique world in the East had been prepared for transformation into the ‘Islamic world’ even before the emergence of Islam.<sup>3</sup> This mythology has formed several ethno-social phenomena with the help of the

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<sup>1</sup> The Cambridge Ancient History. Volume XIV (Late antiquity: Empire and successors, AD 425-600) / Ed. by A. Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins, M. Whitby. Cambridge, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> In the East the conventional term remained Rome (Syr. Rhōmā, Arab. Rūm, Armen. Hromk', Georg. hromi).

<sup>3</sup> Fowden, G. (2013) *Before and after Muhammad: the first millennium refocused*. Princeton.

‘remaking of history’, among which the Western Syrian ethno-confessional group occupies a central place.

Its formation was boosted by a process, often called ‘Christological controversies’ which could be called by analogy (as done by N. Garsoïan) the ‘Great Eastern Schism’.<sup>4</sup> Struggle against the adoption of the Council of Chalcedon (451), involved Syriac-speaking and bilingual Christians in Syria and Asia Minor, and has become an important factor in shaping the identity of the Western Syrians and their singling out in a kind of ‘proto-millet’. But besides, Anti-Chalcedonianism, which played an important role there, and other features which contributed in the process of the formation of the West-Syrian proto-millet, will also be studied in this work.

Western Syrians (or Syriac-speaking anti-Chalcedonians) played a crucial role in this process of civilisational change. This study proposes a more general conclusion about how the particular forms of their cultural and religious identity contributed to their role in disseminating a Syrian type of ascetic understanding of Christianity in distant countries, the Red Sea region and Transcaucasia.

### **Research goals and objectives**

The purpose of this study is to determine what role the Aramaic-speaking Christians (usually called ‘Syrians’,<sup>5</sup> see below) played in the formation of a ‘sub-civilizational’ community — the Christian East in the last quarter of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> c. The subject of this research is the world of Christian sub-civilizations of the Middle East in the era of Late Antiquity and the collective identity of Western Syrians manifested in the migration processes that formed the Christian East. The object (sources looked at) is late antique hagiographic (and partly homiletic and

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<sup>4</sup> Garsoïan, N. G. (1999), *L’Église arménienne et le grand schisme d’Orient*. Louvain. (CSCO. Subs. 574).

<sup>5</sup> Term ‘Syriac’ is used only to denote Classical Syriac (Edessene Christian Aramaic). ‘Syrian’ does not have any political or territory like modern Republic of Syria or Syrian sanjaks under Ottoman rule.

historiographic) texts reflecting this identity and the process of the formation of the Christian East on the eve of the Arab conquest. Formation of the Christian East as a specific ‘lost’ or un-realized (S. F. Starr’s term)<sup>6</sup> civilization has required a lot of reconstructive work, and the present thesis contributes to this reconstruction.

The objectives of the study comprise identification and reconstruction of the worldview of the Western Syrians in the 6<sup>th</sup> cent., which incited them to take part in the ‘second evangelization’. This revealed a retrospective rethinking of the events of the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. from the perspective of the post-Chalcedonian schism. A second objective was checking the hypothesis concerning the formation of a particular ethno-confessional unity (proto-millet) during the crisis; describing of the West-Syrian identity and isolating its formants; reconstructing two Western Syrian migration waves of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. (in Ethiopian Aksum and Southern Caucasian Kartli); and assessment of the historical value of the sources of these migrations.

### **Value of the research**

As regards theory: the dissertation contributes to those identity studies (ethnic and religious), which are becoming the most important means of reconstructing the motivational mechanisms for the population of Western Asia in Late Antiquity. In the past thirty years, research on religious identity has come to the fore in scientific research. By understanding how identities work, researchers can propose models for reconstructing mentality and behaviour. In addition, many sources in different languages require an integrative effort to isolate the ideological components and model the history of the Middle East on the eve of the Arab conquest. The shaping of the Christian East has largely determined the construction of the Islamic world, and its ideological models (or mentality) have become part of the Islamic mentality.

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<sup>6</sup> Starr, S. F. (2013) *Lost enlightenment: Central Asia’s golden age from the Arab conquest to Tamerlane*. Princeton.

The discussion around the problem of ‘hagarism’ (P. Krone and M. Cook)<sup>7</sup> shows how important it is to reconstruct the world of the pre-Islamic Middle East in understanding the history of the Middle Ages in the East as a whole.

Relationships of Western Syrians (Syriac-speaking Christian group) and the Roman (Byzantine) state served as a constructive basis for religious diversity post-Umayyad Islamic societies. In these states Christians were united in special communities, later called millet (Ar. مِلَّة). To a certain extent, this structure continues to exist today. Modern political and cultural pragmatics, with their challenges, require significant efforts to understand the reasons for the disastrous picture in the East, which led to the actual destruction of the Christian segment of the Middle East (in the 16<sup>th</sup> century this happened in Sudan, in our time – in Syria and Iraq).

The practical value of this dissertation is determined by the importance of different Eastern Christian groups and peoples in the framework of the policy of combating terrorism and the violation of human rights in the modern Near East. The preservation of the ethnic and cultural diversity of the Middle East has become one of the most important tasks for the UN and the OSCE, as well as for individual states that take responsibility for the fate of the region and its peoples. For those working in the Near East, it is important to understand its origin, and to avoid the mistakes of colonialism and expansionism.

### **The author's contribution and research originality**

The main points of novelty highlighted by this research are as follows:

— Novel reference to oriental versions of some texts (a complex of oriental translations of the Life of Basil the Great) and analysis of textual criticism of important sources;

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<sup>7</sup> Crone, P., Cook, M. A. (1997) *Hagarism: The making of the Islamic world*. Cambridge.

- Combining these texts into major trends on the basis of ideological commonalities;
- Providing a new interpretation of a number of social concepts (ascetic desocialisation, ascetical identity, estrangement) and ideological constructions (flight, religious emigration, mission) in the light of social history;
- Building a documentary history and mythological reconstruction of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> c. as mutually reflecting narratives;
- Building up a picture of a Syriac influence and participation in the formation of the Christian East as an integral history;
- Proposing a comprehensive reconstruction of both the Syriac missionary influence in the Red Sea region and Transcaucasia in the Preislamic era;
- A reconstruction of the formation of the Western Syrian ‘proto-millet’ in Late Antiquity as an element of the Islamic world to come.

### **Evaluation of the scholarly achievement of the research field**

The subject of Syriac identity and its impact on civilizational process has recently become one of the central ones in Late Antique and medieval Oriental studies. One should begin from the research on Late Antiquity and its forms in the Eastern part of the Empire, and its impact on peoples and cultures. Research into this historical phenomenon is associated with the methodological crisis and growing dissatisfaction of scholars with the confessional and doctrinal-oriented approach. Research into church and spiritual life has come to the fore, not with a political lens, but of a civilizational reconstruction: more and more people have been studying the behaviour of people and their psychology (fears, hopes, motivations). A great contribution was made by E. Stein and E. Honigmann, who completely transformed the perspective on research of the Christian East. This trend has been continued by

W. Demandt in Germany,<sup>8</sup> P. Brown and G. W. Bowersock (Harvard-Princeton school in the US),<sup>9</sup> and A. Pigagnol in France. This tradition was continued by G. Fowden and F. Millar,<sup>10</sup> who moved from a classical Roman perspective to a late antique one. Their course was continued by J. Tannous. It was in their studies that Late Antiquity began to be studied as a matrix structure for the Middle Ages, and a kind of programme period.

Studies of the social anthropology of the late antique East, which were developed by A. Cameron,<sup>11</sup> P. Brown and Yu. M. Kobishchanov, have been supplemented by F. Millar's material on the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire, the works of V. Grimm on sin and food in the late antique world, the research of F. Rousseau on the everyday nature of church conflicts, as well as works on cities, such as classic books by E. Segal about Edessa, by G. Downey about Antioch, by K. Haas about Alexandria and finally L. Hall's work about Beirut.<sup>12</sup>

New trends appeared in the area of Church history and theology after Syriac, Armenian and other Oriental Christian sources became available to scholars. However, these studies were often carried out in the genre of old dogmatically oriented Church history. But new works already used new approaches and were ready to abandon obsolete schemes. The seminal research by Cardinal A. Grillmeyer on Christological controversies has become an outstanding example of the

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<sup>8</sup> Demandt, A. *Spätantike, D.* (1989 (20072)) *Römische Geschichte von Diocletian bis Justinian 284-565 n. Chr.*, München.

<sup>9</sup> Bowersock, G. W. (1978) *Empires in Collision in Late Antiquity*. UPNE, 2012; Brown, P. (1978) *The making of late antiquity*. Cambridge MA.

<sup>10</sup> Millar, F. (1993) *The Roman Near East, 31 BC-AD 337*. Cambridge, Mass.; Idem. (2015) *Empire, Church and society in the late Roman Near East. Greeks, Jews, Syrians, and Saracens*. Leuven.

<sup>11</sup> Kobishchanov, Yu. (1974) *Aksum*. /Ed. by J. W. Michaels. Philadelphia; Cameron, A. (2015) *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity: AD 395–700*. Routledge.

<sup>12</sup> Segal, J. (1970) *Edessa the Blessad City*. Oxf.; Downey, G. (1970) *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest*. Princeton; Haas, C. (2006) *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict*. Baltimore; Hall, L. J. (2004) *Roman Berytus. Beirut in Late Antiquity*. L.-New York.



description of dogmatic reflection in the genre of intellectual history.<sup>13</sup> A. de Halleux and H. Uthemann created a totally new understanding of the dogmatic debates. E. Wypshicka wrote a cycle of social studies about the church history of Egypt. B. Lourie's works were first carried out within a more traditional genre of Church history,<sup>14</sup> however in later years he created an impressive complex reconstruction of the intellectual struggle of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. An important milestone was the study of F. Booth about the crisis of the Empire (the 'end of antiquity'), in which he proposed an important and interesting idea of Eucharistic research re-orientation with binary oppositions like 'ascetic – ecclesiastical', 'charismatic vs. collective'.<sup>15</sup>

A separate category is represented by research works on the non-Chalcedonian Christianity in the East. After the Russian researchers of the 19th and early 20th cc. (V. Bolotov, A. Brilliantov, A. Kartashov), who looked at the non-Chalcedonian world through the Orthodox 'confessional prism', research after the October coup naturally passed to Europe: Paris and Louvain.<sup>16</sup> However, scholars from the former Russian Empire contributed to the development of a new approach: Estonian A. Võõbus (Vööbus)<sup>17</sup> and Russian A. Vasiliev, who worked in the United States. An important segment of these studies is covered in the writings of modern Polish researcher V. Kosinski about Peter the Fullo and other leaders of the anti-Chalcedonian movement. The question of the non-Chalcedonian impact on Syriac

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<sup>13</sup> Grillmeier, A., Hainthaler, T. (1989–1990) *Jesus der Christus im Glauben der Kirche*. Freiburg–Basel–Vienna. Bd. 1–4.

<sup>14</sup> Lurie, V. M. (2009) *Introduction to Critical Hagiography*. St. Petersburg (in Russian); Idem. (2006) *History of Byzantine Philosophy. Formation Period*. St. Petersburg, (in Russian); Idem. (2000) *The Calling of Abraham. The Idea of Monasticism and its Embodiment in Egypt*. St. Petersburg, (in Russian)

<sup>15</sup> Booth, Ph. (2013) *Crisis of Empire. Doctrine and Dissent at the End of Late Antiquity*. Los Angeles.

<sup>16</sup> Stein, E. (1949) *Histoire du Bas-Empire: De la disparition de l'Empire d'Occident à la mort de Justinien (476–565)*. Paris. Honigmann, E. (1951) *Evêques et Evêchés Monophysites d'Asie Antérieure au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Louvain.

<sup>17</sup> Kosiński, R. *Peter the Fuller, Patriarch of Antioch (471–488)* (2010) *Byzantinoslavica*, 68/1–2, 49–73.

identity and practice was explored in the monograph on social conflict by P. Bell, as well as in the works of D. Taylor.<sup>18</sup>

Studies of late antique hagiography (both the hagiographic texts themselves and the conditions of their creation, ways of reflecting history and methods of historical criticism) occupy a significant place in modern studies of the late antique world. Hagiography came to the fore, since it, like almost no other genre, reflects the surrounding world and its history in the mirror of mass religious consciousness. It was in the hagiographic texts that the processes of re-telling (Averil Cameron coined the term 're-making') the story that we are talking about took place. The history of the study of these texts is unthinkable without the heritage of the Bollandists' Society: H. Rosweyde, D. Papebroch, I. Delehayé, F. Halkin, P. Devos.<sup>19</sup> But more than any other, the merit in any such a heritage belongs to P. Peeters. His research, collected in his book about the 'Deep foundation of Byzantine hagiography', allowed scholars to raise the main question about the role of the Syriac in the late Antique in general in what usually is considered as Christian Oriental or Byzantine. He raised questions about bilingualism and the influence of Syriac behavioural patterns on the surrounding Christian peoples.<sup>20</sup> Understanding the importance of Eastern Christian studies for this concept, including of Byzantine texts, is largely down to him. What Peeters did in the first half of the twentieth century was continued by another Bollandist, M. van Esbroeck. In his numerous articles exploring a variety of hagiographic texts, van Esbroeck revealed the fundamental aspects in the existence of these texts: cross-cutting mythologemes,

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<sup>18</sup> Bell, P. N. (2013) *Social Conflict in the Age of Justinian: its Nature, Management, and Mediation*. Oxford; Taylor, D. *The Psalm Commentary of Daniel of Salah and the Formation of Sixth- Century Syrian Orthodox Identity* (2009) *Church History and Religious Culture*, 89, 65–92.

<sup>19</sup> Delehayé, H. (1923) *Les Saints Stylites*. Bruxelles ; Delehayé, H. (1921) *Les Passions des Martyrs et les Genres Littéraires*. Bruxelles; Halkin, F. (1957) *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca*. Bruxelles.

<sup>20</sup> Peeters, P. (1950) *Le Tréfonds Oriental de l'Hagiographie Byzantine*. Bruxelles.

‘signs of the time’, cyclical plots. Even more important are his studies of private stories about the ‘captive’ Nino-Theognosta, Eustathius, Peter the Iverian, Severus, the Holy Fools and other saints of Late Antiquity.<sup>21</sup> This is precisely the scientific environment that in many respects has generated both a number of issues and the textological basis of this work.

Studies of mass consciousness and identity have become a methodological breakthrough in the study of the late antique world. The topic of identity as a key element of social behaviour has been around since the mid-1960s, in the spotlight first of sociologists and ethnographers, and then of historians. Here it is difficult not to refer to the studies of identity by the Vienna School (R. Wenskus and W. Pohl).<sup>22</sup> One should also especially remember the works of I. Sandwell.<sup>23</sup> P. Brown turned our attention to the mundane nature of the life of the holy man and to the ‘collective representations’ that he shared with the ‘average believer’. He also came close to the question of ‘ascetic identity’. B. Ter Haar Romenay and S. Ashbrook-Harvey with their project on Western Syrian identity took several further important steps in this direction<sup>24</sup>. They were able to isolate an ascetic component as the main and basic one in the overall structure of the identity of the Western Syrians.

It is the study of asceticism in general, as of a Late Antique phenomenon and its forms in the Christian East, that constitutes the most important contribution to the topic of identity. Although the study of asceticism in itself is an independent topic, several important names of researchers who have given this topic a fundamental

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<sup>21</sup> Esbroeck, van M. (1975) *Les Plus Anciens Homéliaires Géorgiens*. Louvain; Idem. *Le résumé syriaque de l’Agathange* (1977) *Analecta Bollandiana*, 95/3–4, 291–358.

<sup>22</sup> Pohl, W. *Concepts of Ethnicity in the Early Medieval Studies* (1991) *Archaeologia polona*, 29, 1–54; Gallander-Murray, A. R., Wenskus (2002) *On Ethnogenesis: Ethnicity and the Origin of the Franks // On Barbarian Identity*. *Critical Approaches to Ethnicity in the Early Middle Ages*. ed. by A. Gillett. Tournhout.

<sup>23</sup> Sandwell, I. (2007) *Religious Identity in Late Antiquity: Greeks, Jews, and Christians in Antioch*. Cambridge.

<sup>24</sup> Ashbrook Harvey, S. A. (1990) *Asceticism and Society in Crisis: John of Ephesus and the Lives of the Eastern Saints*. Berkeley.

significance should be cited. In addition to A. Guillaumont, these include A. de Halleux, S. Brock, the Peña-Castellana-Fernandez group and the group of authors of the famous book by V. Wimbusch and R. Valantasis.<sup>25</sup>

Alongside the theme of structural analysis of ascetic discourse is the theme of heresy and its deconstruction in historical research. The theme of ‘Messalianism’, begun by M. Kmosko, A. Guillaumont, J.-M. Sauget and I. Hausherr, was continued afterwards by K. Stewart, K. Fitschen, D. Kaner and F. Escolan.<sup>26</sup> In their works, as well as in F. Booth’s, a special type of conflict between ascetics and Church institutions has been identified. In the present dissertation this was studied on the basis of the ‘Messalian dispute’<sup>27</sup> Their conclusions made it possible to more correctly determine the place of the Syriac in the Messalians question and, finally remove the problem of this pseudo-heresy from the historical agenda. But the task posed in the work of Tod S. Berzon is even more ambitious – to deconstruct the late antique heresiological discourse (in particular, the results of Christological controversy) and to reveal therein several classifying and xenophobic structural elements. In fact, heresiology has become the forerunner of European ethnography.

Another important section of regional studies should now be mentioned. Studies of the Syriac world would have been impossible to imagine without the classic works of T. Nöldeke, W. Wright, J. Labourt, C. Hage, V. Kawerau, S. Brock, A. de Halleux, A. Vööbus, G. Reinink, A. Palmer, D. Taylor, J. Tannous, S. Ford

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<sup>25</sup> Brock, S. P. *Syriac Perspectives on Late Antiquity*. (1984) Variorum reprints; Brock, S. P. *Studies in Syriac Christianity*. (1992) Variorum reprints; Brock, S. P. *Fire from Heaven. From Ephrem to Romanos. Interactions between Syriac and Greek in Late Antiquity*. (1999) Variorum reprints. Peña, I., Castellana, P., Fernandez, R. (1975) *Les Stylites Syriens*. Milan; Peña, I., Castellana, P., Fernandez, R. (1980) *Les Reclus Syriens*. Milan; *Asceticism* ed. by Wimbusch and V. L., Valantasis R. (New York, Oxf., 1999)

<sup>26</sup> Sauget, J.-M. *La Collection Homilétique-Hagiographique du Manuscrit Sinaitique 457*. (1972) *Proche-Orient Chrétien*, 22, 129–167; 308. Guillaumont, A. (1979) *Aux Origines du Monachisme Chrétien*. Paris; Escolan, Ph. (1999) *Monachisme et église : le Monachisme Syrien du IV<sup>e</sup> au VII<sup>e</sup> Siècle: un Ministère Charismatique*. Paris.

<sup>27</sup> Booth, Ph. *Crisis of Empire*, 9–12.

and other modern Syriac scholars<sup>28</sup>. Various topics of Syriac studies were reflected in the works of V. Berti, A. Bekker, D. Weltecke, Yu. Arzhanov<sup>29</sup> Hagiography research in Syriac would be impossible without B. Bedjan, J.-M. Fiey and more recent S. Ashbrook-Harvey. Further, in Russian Syriac studies one cannot fail to mention the works of A. Dyakonov, N. Pigulevskaya and E. Meshcherskaya<sup>30</sup>. Since Syriac studies are developing very actively, and important works are published almost weekly, one can point only to the main research trends.

Arabic studies, albeit to a small extent, have contributed to the development of topics related to the Syrians. First of all, we must mention the publishers of the Arabic Christian texts in the *Patrologia Orientalis* and *CSCO* series. H. den Heyer, G. Troupeau and others have done a lot for the study of Arab-Christian texts. Research in Aksum is an area in which much was done in the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries by Italian scholars. Works by C. Conti-Rossini, I. Guidi, E. Cerulli, E. Schneider<sup>31</sup> were continued by the modern generation of Ethiopians: O. Raineri, A. Bausi, A. Brita. In addition to the Italian school, mention should be made of the students of Guidi L. Hackspiel, E. Ullendorf, S. Munro-Hay and especially S. Hable Selassie

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<sup>28</sup> Nöldeke, Th., Crichton, J., (2001) *Compendious Syriac Grammar*. Piscataway; Labourt, J. (1904) *Le Christianisme dans l'Empire Perse sous la Dynastie Sassanide (224–632)*. Paris; Brock, S. P. *Early Syrian Asceticism* (1973) *Numen*, 20:1, 1-19; Halleux, de A. *Philoxène de Mabbog* (1963) *Sa vie, ses écrits, sa Théologie*. Louvain; Taylor, D. *The Psalm Commentary of Daniel of Salah and the Formation of Sixth-Century Syrian Orthodox Identity* (2009) *Church History and Religious Culture*, 89, 65-92; Tannous, J. (2018) *The Making of the Medieval Middle East: Religion, Society, and Simple Believers*. Princeton; Ford, S. (2016) *Ordination and Episcopacy in the Severan-Jacobite Church AD 518*. Dissertation. Oxford.

<sup>29</sup> Weltecke, D. Michael *The Syrian and Syriac Orthodox Identity* (2010) *Church History and Religious Culture*, 89(1), 115-125; Becker, A. H. (2006) *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom: The School of Nisibis and the Development of Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia*. Philadelphia.

<sup>30</sup> Pigulevskaya, N. V. (1979) *Culture of Syrians in the Middle Ages*. M., (in Russian); Meshcherskaya, E. N. (1997) *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles /New Testament Apocrypha in Syrian Literature*. M., (in Russian).

<sup>31</sup> *Les Vies éthiopiennes de Saint Alexis l'Homme de Dieu*. ed. by Cerulli E. Louvain, 1969. (CSCO Scr., Aeth. 59).

and H. Brackmann, who wrote a synthetic work on the Christianization of Axum<sup>32</sup>. Important works about the context of early Aksumite history were written by G. Bowersock<sup>33</sup> as well as a group of researchers dealing with the Red Sea region and specifically Himyar in connection with the Naḡran ‘epic’: Ch. Robin, A. Bausi, A. Gori, P. Marrasini, J. Beaucamp, M. Detoraki. In Russian academia, this sector of research is covered by the works of A.G. Lundin, Yu.M. Kobishchanov, A. Korotaev and S. Frantsuzov<sup>34</sup>. In Ethiopian and Sabaic studies in Russia, the contribution of S. Chernetsov to the general history of Ethiopia and Axoum and especially to its historiography is substantial.

Transcaucasia is an actively developing area of research on Late Antiquity. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. a whole galaxy of great Kartvelologists (I. Javakhishvili, K. Kekelidze, N. Marr, E. Takaishvili, I. Abuladze, A. Shanidze, G. Garitte, D. M. Lang, G. Peradze, M. Tarkhnishvili, etc.) and Armenologists (S. Ter-Minasyants, N. Emin, N. Adonts, N. Akinyan, R. Thomson and others) have done a tremendous job introducing a mass of texts to scholarly use and researching the history of the region and interrelations between Georgian and Armenian cultures. It has become evident that the sub-region is not an isolated area and it should be studied in connection with other Eastern Christian sub-regions and cultures. Regarding the more recent period, the works of N. G. Garsoyan, M. van Esbroek, B. Outtier, M. Chkhartishvili, Z. Aleksidze, T. Mgaloblishvili and E. Gabidzashvili, revealing new ties between peoples and texts of the Caucasian Late Antiquity, are of great importance<sup>35</sup>. In latter years, the theme of the “second evangelization” of Kartli, following M. Sabinashvili,

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<sup>32</sup> Guidi, I. (1932) *Storia della Letteratura Etiopica*. Roma; Hable, Selassie S. (1970) *Ancient and Medieval Ethiopian History to 1270*. Addis Abäba; Brackmann, H. (1994) *Τὸ παρὰ τοῖς βαρβάροις ἔργον θεῶν. Die Einwurzelung der Kirche im spätantiken Reich von Aksum*. Bonn.

<sup>33</sup> Bowersock, G. W. (2013) *The Throne of Adulis: Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam*. Oxf.

<sup>34</sup> Frantsouzoff, S. A. (2012) *East of Aden. Rybun Oasis in the 1st millennium BC (Epigraphic Monuments, Religious Life and Social Structure of the Cult Center in Ancient Hadramawt)*. Saint-Petersburgh, (in Russian).

<sup>35</sup> Garsoïan, N. G. (1999) *L'Église Arménienne et le Grand Schisme d'Orient*. Louvain.

K. Kekelidze, N. Chubinashvili and L. Menabde, was further developed by D. Merkviladze, Sh. Matitashvili and the American researcher E. Loosely-Leaming.

Finally, mention should be made of the Byzantine studies, which is a huge and highly developed area, but included in this dissertation only in some specific aspects: textual research, primarily the publication of historical texts, church histories and chronicles, political theory and hagiography. In this area works by A. Vasiliev, C. Mango and G. Dagron are very important. Substantial contribution to this section and to Byzantine political theory and ideology has been made by H.-G. Beck, G. Ostrogorsky, G. Podskalski, A. Kazhdan, E. Cameron, P. Allen. The immense area of Byzantine hagiography which has been lightened by Bollandists like H. Delehayé, F. Halkin and P. Devos received notorious attention in the voluminous work of E. Ehrhard. Modern scholars like A. Kazhdan, D. Afinogenov and S. Ivanov made a further important contribution to the field. Last but not least, one must note P. Alexander, A. Martinez, etc., researchers of Byzantine eschatology.

### **Description of the methodology**

The study is a reconstruction of the process of the formation of ethno-confessional groups in the Late Antique Middle East and its aspects. The methodological basis of the work is a combination of narrative, historical-genetic and comparative methods. Historical, typological, and retrospective methods have traditionally been used for ethno-confessional groups. The typological method, in particular, uses alternative modelling. Some elements of sociological and linguistic (linguo-diachronic) methods are used as well.

Since this dissertation concentrates more on mass consciousness and less on isolated opinions of individual leaders, it is natural that most of the studied texts pertain to the hagiography. This presupposes the usage of the methods of critical hagiography (methodology of the historical analysis of hagiographic texts introduced by the Bollandists). Hagiography produces mass behavioural patterns that motivate people. Actually, models are studied, before passing to the structure of

identity, and from that to general civilizational structure. The use of critical hagiography defines specific terminology: dossier, version, revision, recompilation, etc.

The understanding of the specificity of Western-Syrian sub-civilization is based on the idea of ‘milletization’, an analysis of the disengagement practice in different aspects: its isolation, ethnicization and subsequent desire to obtain legal guarantees and status. Refraining from studying religious consciousness from a confessional-oriented approach, this study follows the rules of objectivist religion study. It should be pointed out that this dissertation has fundamentally abandoned *the traditional exonims* used in religious dispute like Monophysites, (Μονοφυσῖται) and “Nestorians” (Νεστοριανοί, نسطورية). They have arisen in the polemical context and their theological *denotatum* can vary considerably. Whilst paying tribute to scientific and church traditions, greater objectivity was sought and therefore these traditions were in certain aspects rejected. For this study, we also partially decided to turn from the methods (but not from the achievements and discoveries<sup>36</sup>) of old Church history tradition (V. Bolotov, L. Duchesne)<sup>37</sup>. It consisted of the dismemberment of ideological (theological) constructs and fitting historical material under them. As a result, the historical process was reduced to the ‘struggle of Nestorians and Monophysites’ for a correct understanding of philosophical terms. However, in the new works written in the course of the school of study of Late

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<sup>36</sup> Winkler, D. W. *Miaphysitism: A new Term for Use in the History of Dogma and in Ecumenical Theology* (1997) *The Harp*, 10, 33-40; Brock, S. P. *The 'Nestorian' Church: a Lamentable Misnomer* (1996) *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 78/3, 23–35.

<sup>37</sup> Duchesne, (1925) L. *L'Église au VI<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Paris; Bolotov, (1917) V. *Lessons on the History of the Early Church* (in Russian). T. 4. Saint-Petersburgh; Frend, (1972) W. *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement; Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries*. Cambridge; Hage, W. (1996) *Die Syrisch-Jacobitische Kirche in Frühislamischer Zeit: Nach orientalischen Quellen*. Wiesbaden.



Antiquity (E. Stein, P. Brown, G. Bowersock, W. Berti, A. Becker)<sup>38</sup>, the socio-psychological component of the process of the formation of the Christian East gradually came to the fore. The model of the formation process of the Christian East unfolds in *three planes*: civilizational (formation of a new civilizational type); social (formation of a new identity and the emergence of new social groups, increasing horizontal mobility) and intellectual (the emergence of ideological concepts and interpretations of the past).

This dissertation shares the concept of late Antiquity as a special formatting epoch, which formed Byzantium, Christian East, and Islam. We call *Late Antiquity* the historical period 3–7<sup>th</sup> c. with a special social, religious, political and cultural (including language) profile. Of course, this term is modern, and people who lived at that time used political names. In this sense, we try to refer to the inhabitants of the empire as Rhomeans (Ῥωμαῖοι, rhōmayē ). Recognizing the conventionality of the term, we still follow the school technique of Momigliano-Honigman-Stein-Jones-Piganiol<sup>39</sup>. It consists, among others, in the rejection of the predominant application of methods of socio-economic history and the advancement of the study of culture and religion. The study of religious disputes, religious behaviour (restrictive forms of asceticism above all), and religious and cultural identities has become a major subject of study.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Brown, P. (1971–1997) *The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity*. (1998) *Journal of Early Christian Studies*. 6 (3), 103-152; Bowersock, G.W., Brown, P. and Grabar, O., (1999) *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World*. Cambridge, MA; Menze, V. L. (2008) *Justinian and the Making of the Syrian Orthodox Church*. Oxf.; Becker, A. H. (2006) *Fear of God and the Beginning of Wisdom: The School of Nisibis and the Development of Scholastic Culture in Late Antique Mesopotamia*. Philadelphia.

<sup>39</sup> In view of the huge number of works of these authors on Late Antiquity, let us point out for example: Momigliano, A. (1975) *Alien Wisdom. The limits of Hellenisation*. Cambridge; Stein, E. (1959) *Histoire du Bas-Empire: De l'État romain à l'État Byzantin (284–476)*. 2 vols. Bruges; Bowersock, G. W. (1994) *Fiction as History*. Berkeley.

<sup>40</sup> Vaščeva, I. *The Concept of Late Antiquity in Modern Historical Scholarship*. (2009) *Vestnik of Nizhny Novgorod Lobachevsky University* (in Russian). 6–15, 225–230.

In this dissertation, civilizational specificity is investigated from the standpoint of the civilizational approach in its post-Toynbian form, taking into account the theory of subecumene and “overlapping civilizations” (G. Bowersock). We consider the concept of ‘failed civilization’ introduced by F. Starr to be especially important<sup>41</sup>. The Western Syrian culture, like the East Syrian culture in Iran and Central Asia, was supposed to create a special civilizational space of non-Chalcedonian Christianity in the East. But instead, Arab conquests took place, creating what P. Brown called ‘the long late antiquity’, ending with the end of the Abbasid caliphate in the IX c.<sup>42</sup>

In the light of this, it is necessary to define our attitude to the theories of the emergence of Islam as a civilizational system, in particular, to the theory of ‘hagarism’ by P. Crone and M. Cook, of course, in a late form, taking into account criticism and clarification.<sup>43</sup> In general, we can say that the thesis of Krone and Cook laid the groundwork for research on the history of the transformations of the East, first of all, with the help of a reconstructive-hypothetical method; it is in this that the main advantage of the idea of ‘hagarism’ emerged.

As for method, specific written monuments, reflecting the process of the formation the Western-Syrian collective identity were selected and researched. This task was undertaken by methods of semantic analysis, textual and intertextual study of evidence preserved by the written tradition of the Christian East. During both the late-antique and subsequent periods of its existence, the Christian East generated complexes of texts in different interconnected languages, which constituted its specificity and research difficulty. The methods of semantic analysis, textual and

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<sup>41</sup> Starr, F. *Lost Enlightenment*, 23.

<sup>42</sup> This is not the end of the institution of the caliphs, which continued until the Mongol conquest.

<sup>43</sup> Cook, M. A. and Crone, P. (1977) *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World*. Cambridge.

intertextual research of the evidence preserved by the written tradition of the Christian East were applied.

### **Main dissertation topics**

- In the last century of the existence of Western Syria within the borders of Rome, a special identity gradually developed. It was opposed, on the one hand, to the East Syrian cultural identity within the Iranian civilization and to the Greco-Roman – in the framework of Roman. This ethno-confessional identity, the ‘Western Syrian’, started to form its own ‘proto-millet’. It was destined to form a separate civilization in the Middle East, but the Islamic civilization took its shape, so it became a ‘lost’ one.
- Western Syriac identity thus was tied to three components: Roman-centred worldview, social anti-Chalcedonianism, and asceticism. The first component provided Western Syrians with universalism and eschatology. Even the exodus made by the Syrians to the borders of the East (which has been indirectly reflected in the Alexander Romance) was not so much an escape (for which ecclesiastical policy seems to have provided sufficient reasons), as the implementation of the internal program of Romanism. However, it was the combination of Roman eschatological universalism within the same identity paradigm with anti-Chalcedonism, that shaped Western-Syrian identity as a type of Eastern Christianity opposed to both Iran and Rome. It gave rise to an interesting effect in the form of ‘exodus’, the desire to push the boundaries of the Christian world and ‘propagate the truth further in the East’. This is reflected in a number of texts, in particular, in the ‘Alexandria’, as well as in the Ethiopian and Kartli ascetic ‘exodi’. These outcomes are often determined as an escape or emigration, but it seems to be actualization of the dualism inherent in the core of the Christian East. Both Syrian, Armenian, and Georgian spheres, in the course of contact with the Hellenistic and Iranian civilizations, first experienced

internal division, but then were able to overcome it (although traces of division remained) and recreated the unity of their subcivilization. The Syrians did not succeed in that, and the two parts of Syro-sphere, the eastern and the western, went their entangled but separate ways. This division has become constructive. And it was the western part that embodied Roman features to the strongest extent.

Anti-Chalcedonism, understood technically as social rejection of the decisions of the Council of Chalcedon and pro-Chalcedonian compromise, is embedded in the identity of Western Syrians. But apart from the fact that in a social sense it contributed to the emergence of their proto-millet, it in the most acute (and different from the East Syriac) form raised the question of the place of asceticism in Christian society because it worked as a *criterium veritatis*. The ascetic component of Syriac identity created a special set of behavioural attitudes that determined the fate of their carriers. Embracing Christian asceticism with the eschatological antisocial motivation derived from Hellenistic Jewish escapism and its interest in psychology derived from the influence of the ideas of Evagrius, Western Syrians combined the Romani worldview and the anti-Chalcedonian idea of ‘dispersed persecuted group’. This was the new differentiation that contributed strongly to the civilization of the medieval East.

- The specificity of the Western Syrian national and religious identity builds itself on the preservation of the Edessene Aramaic language with its phonetic and graphic specifics along with aforementioned features. The translation movement which is usually associated with the Eastern Syrian milieu took a particular shape within the Western Syrians. Two translations of Severus’s works and some motives in the translated hagiography point to the importance of the connection of Roman identity with Syroglossia.

- In the context of the oppression of the Syrian anti-Chalcedonians by the imperial authorities of Constantinople, a special network model of group behaviour of Western Syrians developed in the framework of the policies of Justin and Justinian. Since the basic model of Eastern Christian behaviour generally included persecution-flight, Western Syrians simply got used to it. The networks of interaction were built on a combination of the idea of the inevitable victimization of the Christian identity, shaped through ascetic practices, and the reinterpretation of history.
- Ascetic flight was a response to the persecution challenge. Asceticism as a system of attitudes and a method of achieving separation from the 'world', i.e. society and social conventions, 'worked' precisely to form a special social type. The Syrians of the Western (Romaic) orientation, instead of reflecting on the foundations and technology of asceticism, like the Eastern (Iranian) orientation, linking them with ontological intuitions, adopted asceticism as a vector of identity.
- This embedding raised the necessity to explain in the general way the Chalcedonian preponderance. The answer was given in the form of a return to the history of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. 'Remaking the past', a reconstruction of the last 200 years of the Empire history, has become the answer to the main question of why history took a wrong turn at the fork in the road. God sent various signs warning of the danger of evasion, but they were not correctly interpreted. However, the experience of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. taught the Syrians that periods of persecution (for example, Julian the Apostate) are followed by periods of peace. This was the period they wanted to see the rule of Justinian and Theodora. The collapse of hopes, oddly enough, was beyond the horizon of this rethinking, it was overshadowed by the Perso-Avar-Slavic invasion, and then the Arab conquest of the Middle East. That is

why Severan Syrians writing in Egyptian exile the 'Julian Romance' idealised Justinian as the new Jovinian.

- The exodus of the anti-Chalcedonian ascetics outside the Roman Empire was also reinterpreted as part of the process of recreating history through the model of parallelism of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> c. centuries. The events that are reflected in the Ethiopian and Georgian hagio- and historiography as the 'coming of the Syrian Fathers' took place earlier (the 'reverend' of the Ethiopian tradition and individual echoes in the dossier of the Thirteen), but memory created detailed stories for them later. Those were connected to the creation of monasteries. This is how the cycles of the Syriac Fathers emerged, which became the basis of the concept of 'second evangelization'. The confusion with the names of heroes, the names of kings, and historical events was caused by the time distance.
- Both dossiers, Ethiopian and Georgian, are not entirely based on historical material, rather it would be more correct to say that the scattered material of the early period was personalized in these files and tied to the history of monastic settlements. By the end of the first millennium, these memories underwent a revision – the new Sinai versions of the Georgian lives indicate a new understanding. It was also at this time that the prototypes of the lives of the Nine Saints were written. Initial migration waves were based on the movement of Western Syrians toward the areas where the Aramaic language was well known thanks to Jewish immigrants, i.e. to increasingly remote parts of the Christian East. In 'Alexandria', this promotion was framed as a search for living water in the far East. These searches had a distinct eschatological character and were associated with the prediction of Gog and Magog.
- The history of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. becomes a matrix of interpretation for the Anti-Chalcedonian Syrian authors of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. Persecution as an idea has become

one of the main ways of understanding what is happening around. Justin's actions against the opponents of Chalcedon were interpreted as a return to the persecution under Julian. Martyrdom (as in the martyrdom of Lucian of Baʿalbek) was one of the main (ancient) responses to persecution. Escapist behaviour was the second answer, which was deducted from the mythologized past. Flight was gradually associated with an ascetic rejection of the world.

- Sources show that in the 6<sup>th</sup> c., the memory of the events of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. was built on the model of the 'first' and 'second evangelizations'. In Kartli and Armenia, the Syrians probably played a very significant role in the first evangelization, which later national historiographies tried to belittle. The Ethiopian dossier of the 'first evangelization' was associated with the history of the Frumentius-Ædesius mission in the reign of Ezana. Its course was reinterpreted as the prehistory of the 'second evangelization' by the 'Roman fathers'. In Nubia, the 'first evangelization' was not associated with the Syrians, it was carried out by Coptic ascetics, but in the 'second' evangelization, the leading role was played by anti-Chalcedonites, which worked on the perception of Nubia as an 'Orthodox country' in Miafisite historiography later.
- Western Syrians did not play a separate independent role in the ecclesiastical politics of Justinian's time. Together with some other anti-Chalcedonians, they hoped for a new 'project of Catholic anti-Chalcedonism' (certainly not 'monophysitism'!). The anti-Chalcedonite movement as a whole was at a crossroads at this time, and its paths were still undecided. This has changed with Islam.
- Ascetic practices and the worldview based on these became the basis of the idea of 'leaving the boundaries of the Empire', which, however, did not initially have political connotations. The expression of the views of the

Western Syrian anti-Chalcedonians were both Severus himself and the founding fathers (Philoxenus, Simeon of Beth-Aršam, James of Serug, etc.), as well as historians, like John of Ephesus. All of them express a cautious loyalty to the empire and were willing to undertake long journeys and even go on missions to remote regions to fulfil the emperor's will.

- Western Syrians created their own mythologized history: they translated the works of Severus, wrote accounts of his life, the lives of John of Tella, Patriarch Theodosius and other ‘founding fathers’ and other *plerophoric* (propagandist and polemical) literature. Gradually, the dispute and division as such receded into the second and even third plan, and the recreated heroic story of two parts moved to the first: the struggle against tyranny by ascetic means and the awareness of one's own special ethnicity through the expansion of the borders of the Christian world.
- An eschatological worldview and feeling based on the idea of the ‘journey of Alexander’ and Romaic mythology allowed Western Syrians to interpret their role in the history of the Empire as the completion and finalization of a higher destiny. This allowed them to ‘leave without leaving’. The model of ascetic ascent (*myatrūtā*) became the national idea and the structural basis of the Western Christian identity. It remained so even when the ‘prodigal sons’ of the Syrian worldview – the Muslim Arabs - came and conquered the Near East. Adherring to the same type of ideology, they created an insurmountable contradiction for Western Syrians: by building a ‘real’ New Rome (Damascus and then Baghdad) to replace the ‘fallen’ one, the Caliphate abandoned everything that was cherished and revered by Western Syrians. After that, they turned from the proto-millet (which Justin and Justinian had made them) into a real millet, and the ascetic-eschatological self-consciousness involved in the Roman family became their national identity, the basis of the ‘Jacobite’ that exists to this day.



- Anti-Chalcedonian asceticism gradually became an ‘ascetic identity’, whose history became a defensive weapon against the competitors in the process of milletization of the medieval Middle East. Wandering (ʔksnayūtā) and renunciation in the form of namelessness (renouncing names and family nicknames) or flight (moving to remote countries with a different culture and language) have become not only typical, but also the most important markers of Western-Syrian identity. In an environment of semi-hidden and then open persecution, Western Syrians gradually developed a special attraction to ‘emigration’, i.e., ascetic estrangement as a new martyrdom. In the spread of ascetic literature, glorifying the heroes of this type, played a major role Akoimētoi [Sleepless] monastery in Constantinople, the Abbot of which, the famous Alexander, acted as a model of the ideal ascetic. Another model that programmed the vast masses of the people was Simeon Stylites, whose life contributed to the translation of the stylites to Byzantium and to the West (in particular to Kartli). The symbolic significance of the hermits, stylites, nameless fugitives, and other ascetics was strengthened by the Syrian cults of these heroes. Other forms included grass-eating (boskism) and enclosure combined with hermitage (hypaithroï).

The last group of conclusions concerns the Syrian influence and presence in the limitrophe zones of the Christian East: Aksum and Kartli.

- In Axum, there is a deep-lying, but poorly distinguished Syriac layer, associated with the oldest (6th c.) form of influence on local Christianity during the ‘second evangelization’. The Geʿez lexicon contains a certain number of Aramaic loanwords, some of which are probably pre-Christian (in other words, Hellenistic-Jewish). These words refer to the layer of ancient Ethiopian culture that can be defined as ‘Judaized’. Hebrew and Hebrew-Aramaic words have become an organic part of this language.

Although analysis of available data does not permit to link the translation of the Gospel directly with the Syrian substratum, it is obvious that ‘ze-Rōm’ (i. e. Syrian) missionaries, probably bilingual, took part in the cultural contact process, bringing Western Syrian customs (and perhaps books) in Axum. That has revived a forgotten patrimony of the ‘first evangelisation’.

- The Syrian anti-Chalcedonite hermits, having left Syria and Mesopotamia, appeared in Axum in the form of several groups of ‘righteous’ (ṣadqān), practicing boskism, who did not find a common language with the local population. All the ‘reverend’ died, leaving behind a hazy memory. Most likely, in the late 5th – early 6th c. at the time of the ‘henotic pause’, several groups of Syrian hermits from the Antioch region crossed the Red Sea and settled in the territory of coastal Axum (Bur, Matara, Baraknaha, etc.). This was the ‘first wave’ of the second evangelization of Axum.
- The Syrian monks of the ‘second wave’ (‘Roman monks’ or the Nine) went to Aksum along the caravan routes of incense merchants through Petra, Tabuk, Hijra, Yaṭrib, Turaba, Ġabal al-Kara and Nağran. Once in Himyār, the monks could find a welcome in the local big Aksum community and get acquainted with Geʿēz. Some reason (perhaps the beginning of the persecution of Christians by the Himyarite authorities) forced them to leave Nağran and move further to Aksum. However, their connection with Himyār remained strong, which is why Caleb's expeditions to Nağran aroused their support. The dossier of saints’ ‘second evangelization’ is consistent with the spread and establishment of Christianity in Axum in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. was most likely associated with some among the Syrian cultural type. However, the dossier of the ‘Nine Fathers’ should be considered for the most part difficult to verify, which practically reduces its historical significance to a minimum. Epic elements at the same time betray strong

ties with the Western Syrian identity mythology and behavioural patterns. In parallel with the 'Nine Fathers' in Aksumite culture (hagiographic literature, art, and liturgics), there remain other Syrian heroes like Gäbrä Krestos and Libānos. In the typification of the Syrian alien monk as a typical anonymous saint who renounces earthly kinship, one can see how the image of the holy ascetic penetrates Ethiopian literature and acquires its own individual features. It can be said, with certain reservations, that in general their asceticism was precisely Syrian (and even partly dualistic, according to Getachou Haile), successfully imported by Syrian immigrants into the Ethiopian tradition.

- An intermediate variant of the Western Syrian influence should be considered the Armenian tradition: in the life of Maštoc' and a number of ancient monuments ('Buzandaran', etc.), elements have been preserved that indicate the influence of Western-Syrian models of asceticism and Syrian anti-Chalcedonism. Mashtots itself is called 'akumit' (i. e. Akoimetos), and there are many other Syriac elements (words and concepts) in the legends about the ancient Armenian monastic life. However, it is impossible to compare the influence of the Syrians in Armenia and Kartli: in the second case, it was much stronger.
- The ancient Georgian tradition is similarly aware of itself through the 'second evangelization' in the dossier of the 'Thirteen Syrian (asureli) Fathers'. As in the Ethiopian tradition, preachers come to the region in several groups. In the 6<sup>th</sup> c., several ascetics, most likely of the Western-Syrian tradition, end up in Kartli, where they find themselves continuing the work of St. Nino, who was cast into partial oblivion due to the Zoroastrian oppression. Their religious and cultural profile is quite clear, but it is impossible to draw a reliable conclusion about their ethnicity based on the texts of the dossier (a previous view held by Kekelidze and

Djavaxisvili seems not very well evidenced now): onomastics data are ambiguous and indicate, in addition to the Syrian, a possible Iranian component. The textology of the dossier 'Thirteen' is complicated by metaphrastic reshaping and the complexity of verifying historical material<sup>44</sup>. Their main feature is a special solitary type of asceticism, mountain asceticism, which is usually associated with the name of Mar Šem<sup>5</sup>on (Svimeone Svet'eli), as well as asceticism in the pit (mġvime), also similar to what can be found in the dossier of the famous stylites around Halab. At the same time, the links with the dossier of Simeon Stylites the Younger (of Wondrous Mountain) are currently seen as the result of late tendentious processing.

- Like the Aksumite 'Nine Romans', the Syrians in the Georgian tradition become the founders of the national monastic tradition and are integrated into its history. In both cases, there is a strongly episodic memory of Syrian immigrants, probably of an earlier, henotic era (470–480-s), reinterpreted later in the logic of the 'second evangelization', the meaning of which was petrified in the founding of famous monasteries (Gareġa, of Šiomġvime, Zedaz(ad)eni, Ciliani monastery, Nekresi etc). All these holy places have become symbolic in Georgian church history as centres of preaching and spiritual life. The reinterpreted history of the first immigrants served as a mythologized basis for this 'second evangelisation' obscuring active Armeno-Georgian contacts which became unwelcomed after the Great Eastern schism.
- Thus, the study of the entire set of documents allows us to formulate several general conclusions describing the process of forming a particular

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<sup>44</sup> M. Chkhartishvili's research allows us to hope that the historical content is verified on the basis of the authorship of a monk called Ioane-Martvili and is isolated as a whole from the comparison of the ancient kimeni- versions with the elements scattered in metaphrases.

self-consciousness of Western Syrians, expressed in the process of ‘proto-milletisation’. Due to the peculiarities of this self-consciousness, they took part in the spread of ascetic Christianity of the West-Syrian type beyond the Syriac-speaking region, primarily in Transcaucasia and in the Ethiopian Aksum. This process actually became the central one at the stage of the formation of the Christian East as a ‘lost (or failed) civilization’ in the 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> c. The forms of self-consciousness and social organization of Western Syrians became one of the fundamental structural foundations of the later Islamic world.

### **Dissertation structure**

This dissertation builds upon the basis of a common cross-cutting narrative, illustrated by individual case studies in order to preserve the proportion between the specific and the general.

The introduction (p. 8–36) describes the problem, and we start with how to solve it. Next is the First Chapter (p. 37–72), devoted to the historical sources of research and its historiography. Because the study is based on the analysis and comparison of texts in several languages, in diachronic, often insufficiently investigated, textual analysis plays an important role in the work. Several sources required an in-depth study of the history of the text.

The second chapter (pp. 73–150) is devoted to the specifics of the worldview of 6th c. Christians, who began to seek answers to questions about the disasters of their time and to reconstruct their identity through history. This reconstruction was carried out on the basis of a rethinking of the past, first of all of the 4<sup>th</sup> c., as the history of the enlightenment of the Christian world by missionaries and the persecution of Christians by the emperors. In these processes, the Syrians were central. Such stories (cases) are analysed as the image of a martyr (by the example of Lucian of Heliopolis), the image of persecution (by the example of the prologue of the oldest Georgian version of ‘Barlaam and Josaphat’), as well as several

examples of rethinking the original history of the Eastern enlightenment (Kartli, Armenia, Aksum, Nubia). In many of these stories, the Syrians played an important role, bringing their behaviour and concepts to different parts of the Christian East. This ‘first evangelism’ was rethought and re-assembled in the 6th c. during the ‘second’ one.

The third chapter (pp. 151–197) is devoted to the role of the Syrians in religious and political processes in the Christian East in late antiquity. The reasoning begins with the definition of the Syrians as the Aramaic-speaking Christian population of the Levant as two types: western and eastern, which constituted a separate subecumene of the Christian East. There is a correlation between dialectal and confessional divisions within this ecumene. In response to the formation by the Greeks of a two-discourse model (according to T. Berzon: heresy-theology), the Syrians form their own churches (parallel hierarchies), go into asceticism and migrate from the borders of the Empire. Essentially, two concepts collided: polycentric (‘proto-millet’) and monocentric (patriarchal), ancient and medieval. Syriac main figures of the struggle against violent Chalcedonianism of imperial Church formulated the utopian idea of a ‘catholic anti-Chalcedoniansm’, in fact a return to the Henoticon model. These attempts are analysed on the texts of anti-Chalcedonian hagiography. A particular example of it was the hagiographic dossier of St. Basil the Great, the famous saint of the 4<sup>th</sup> c. It was reinterpreted in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. in the anti-Chalcedonian environment (around Soterichos of Cesarea). Using the example of the anti-imperial struggle of Basil against Valens as an allegory of the struggle for the true faith and the freedom to practice of the anti-Chalcedonians, the bi-lingual Gaëco-Syriac milieu recreated the message of the dossier. St. Basil can be seen as a precursor of the patriarch Severus, and the ‘wicked Arians’ – as supporters of Chalcedon.

The study of West-Syriac identity and its reflection in the programmatic texts becomes clearer in comparison with the material from the history of Eastern Syrians (maḏnhāyē, Assyrians) belonging to the Church of the East. Analysis of the

controversy over the title of Catholicos (qatolīqā) and the history of the expulsion of theology proponents of Theodore of Mopsuestia from Edessa to Persia shows that it was not theological differences which formed ultimately the Eastern Syrian proto-millet. It was a general understanding of the Eastern Syrian identity of the Iranian type, forged by school learning and the idea of scientific asceticism as technological wisdom. Among Eastern Syrians the idea of religious migration (gālūtā, arab. ḥiğrā) also gained wide popularity. The decree of the emperor Zeno of 489 expelled some representatives of the educational and scientific elite of the Empire, who adhered to Antiochian Christology, to expatriation from the Empire. In historiography, this was reflected precisely as ‘resettlement’, flight, emigration. It is interesting that in later sources this resettlement, coupled with the transfer of the school tradition, grew into a whole myth about the existence of a ‘school in Gundishapuhr’ in the 5<sup>th</sup>? – centuries. But, as G. Reinink showed, this construction was precisely a rethinking of history, an invention of prehistory for the school movement in Iran.

The chapter further examines the struggle of the Western-Syrian Miaphysites for hierarchy and role in this process of Arab-federals. The Syrians began to build their identity around the rejection of Chalcedon. The structure of group identity includes a common activity, but also emotional and cognitive components that determine personal involvement. The Syrian anti-Chalcedonian church tradition gradually began to view the legacy of theological controversy as an inevitable, but no longer active element of its church-ethnic identity, which has become its marker.

Chapter four (p. 198–362) examines the design of Western-Syrian identity. It is based on linguistic self-identification, and in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. gradually the eastern and western Syriac dialects begin to diverge significantly; there is a tendency to two types of dialects, western and eastern. The meeting between St. Basil and mār Aphrēm shows how language stereotypes were reinterpreted in the course of identity formation. Also, on the example of Sergius of Resh<sup>5</sup>ainā, the translation movement of the 6<sup>th</sup> c. is analyzed. as an example of transferring of the Greek intellectual environment to the Syriac one. Further, the influence of eschatology on the identity

of Western Syrians is considered, which reveals the Roman eschatological mythology in three files: the stories of the three Syrians walking to the ends of the world (Life of Macarius), Memrā by Jacob of Sarugh on Alexander the Great (a protagonist of the Alexander Romance) and The Syriac Julian Romance. The thesis on the anti-Roman sentiments of Western Syrians is considered through the material of Severus of Antioch's lives, as well as on the hagiography depicting some of the founding fathers of The Syrian Anti-Chalcedonite Church, Philoxenus of Mabbog and Simeon of Beth-Aršam. The position of John of Ephesus fits into the picture of anti-Chalcedonian Melkite. Anti-Chalcedonism gradually became a marker of West Syriac identity. This can be seen, in particular, in the 'Life of Peter the Iverian', which marks the connection between the Syriac and Georgian environment in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. Resulting from that, the hypothesis about the anti-Roman tendency in the Western Syrians is not confirmed in the sources. Four types of ascetic behaviour that express West-Syriac mentality were examined: wandering (aksnayūṭā), radical renunciation (msarrqūṭā), stylitism (including pit-living) and boskism. The 'progressive transformation' (myatrūṭā), later translated as 'virtue', became a West-Syriac national idea. Various forms of ascetic world-alienation helped to form a West-Syriac prototype of the ethno-confessional group (proto-millet), which finally took shape under Islam.

Chapter five (p. 363–439) examines the hagiographic dossier of Syrian migrants in Ethiopian Aksum: several groups of the 'righteous' and finally Nine Saints. Their names are: za-Mikael Aregawi (አፈጋዊአፈጋዊ, 'old man'), Panteleimon (Pantalewon), Ishak-Garima, Afṣe, Gub(b)a, Alef, Ye-mata (Mat<sup>ṣ</sup>a), who is probably identical with Libanos, Liqanos, Ṣehma and <sup>ṣ</sup>Oṣ. In the chapter the behaviour and ascetic profile of these groups, as well as their onomasticon and information about the translation of the Bible into Ge<sup>ṣ</sup>ez are analysed. The conclusion about the Syrian origin of both the Righteous and the Nine Saints is most likely justified, although our ideas about the filiation of the texts are still far from certain, and this issue requires further philological work. The 'Romean' missionaries, probably bilingual, took part in the cultural process, bringing their customs and,



probably, books and becoming involved in the translation of the New Testament into Ge<sup>5</sup>ez.

Chapter six (p. 440–485) is devoted to the tradition of the Thirteen Syrian Fathers in Kartli. The chapter examines both the general context of the Syrian-Georgian relations in the 6th c., and the dossier of the Syrian Fathers (Iovane Zedazadneli, Davit Garejeli of Desert-dweller, Stepanoz Hiršeli, Iovseb of Alaverdi, Zinon Iqaltoeli, Antonios of Martmqopili, Ise Cilkaneli, Tate Stefan of the Holy Mounatain, Šio of the Pit (Mġvimeli), Ezderioz of Samtavisi, Abibos Nekreseli, Mikel Ulumboeli, Pilos Breteli and Elijah the Deacon). The dossier of the Thirteen Syrians is similar to the dossier of the Nine Saints of Aksum: in both cases there is a strongly epicised memory of Syriac-speaking immigrants, probably of earlier, Henoticon times, which was then rethought in the logic of the ‘second evangelisation’, the outcome of which was the foundation of the monasteries in Kartli. ~ The Davit Gareja, Shiomġwime, Zedazeni, Cilkaneli, and Nekresi monastic complex - all of these places have become symbolic in Georgian church history as centres of preaching and spiritual life.<sup>45</sup>

The Conclusion (p. 486–497) outlines the considerations that resulted from the study of a set of sources of the West Syriac world of the 5–6<sup>th</sup> cc. and its expansion with groups of monks to the Southern Caucasus and the Red Sea areas.

The Appendix to the dissertation (P. 578–674) contains some texts used in the work and their translations into Russian made by the author:

- The Miracle of St. Basil about the Church of Nicea in Greek, Arabic and Georgian versions;
- The Miracle of St. Basil about St. Ephrem meeting St. Basil in Caesarea in Syriac and Greek versions;
- The Acts of the Council of Side according to Photius’ “Myriobiblion”;

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<sup>45</sup> This has been noted by Antonella Britta: Britta, A. (2010) *I racconti tradizionali sulla «seconda cristianizzazione» dell’Etiopia. Il ciclo agiografico dei Nove Santi*. Napoli: 8–18.

- The Memra of Mar Aphrem ‘On the Solitaries’ (a fragment);
- The Syriac Life of the ‘Man of God’ (Syriac and Georgian fragments);
- The Logos III from the ‘Spiritual Ladder’ by John Climacus;
- Fragments from the ‘Historia Ecclesiastica’ of Rufinus about the conversion of Axumites and Georgians;
- Gädlä Ṣadqān (Deeds of the Righteous) – an Ethiopian text;
- Fragment from the Georgian Life of Ioane Zeda-zadneli (version B);
- Fragment from the Georgian Life of S Šio Mġvimeli from the unpublished Life preserved in ms. Sin. N 50.

### Source basis

The first group of sources is represented by the following ascetic texts:

1. Mar Afrem of Nisibis (in the Greek tradition Ephrem the Syrian): ‘Madrašē against heretics’ (Hymni contra Haereses), ‘Mēmṛā on hermits’ (see appendix), mēmṛā on Abraham of Kidōn and Julian Sabbā; ‘Praise of St. Basil’ (Ps.-Ephrem / Ephrēm Græcus).
2. ‘Spiritual Ladder’ (Κλῖμαξ θείας ἀνόδου), a collection of ascetic treatises of the 6<sup>th</sup> c., attributed to the pen of John of Sinai.
3. Iṣḥāq of Nineveh (in the Greek-Slavic tradition, Isaac the Syrian) is the author of five volumes of mēmṛē, the first of which was translated into Greek in the 8<sup>th</sup> c. at Mar Sabba.

The second group is represented by the polemical writings (πληροφορίαι, memorabilia, Syr. ܡܝܡܪܐܝܬܐ) of the anti-Chalcedonian writers:

1. ‘Plērophorīai’ (Greek: , by John Rufus, i.e., the ‘Accounts [of the Council of Chalcedon]’ recorded by him from the words of Peter the Fuller and other informants. John explains it as ‘testimonies and revelations’ (ܡܝܡܪܐ ܡܠܟܐܝܬܐ) that God gave to the saints on the issue of the ‘dyophysite heresy’.

2. The works of Severus of Antioch (a collection of his conciliar sermons and a collection of his letters); Philoxenus / Aksnoyo of Mabbug ('Epistle to Patricius'; Šem'on of Beth-Aršam 'Letter on the School of the Persians', 'Letter on the Naḡran massacre'); John of Tella's 'Confession of Faith'.

3. 'Memra on mār Šem'on' (BHO 1126) James of Sarug .

The third group is represented by the works of secular and ecclesiastical historiographers:

1. Ecclesiastical Histories by Socrates Scholasticus and Hermias Sozomen.

2. Two works of Theodoret of Cyrus: 'Church History' and 'God-loving History' (*Historia religiosa*);

3. 'Ecclesiastical History' by Evagrius Scholasticus;

4. 'Ecclesiastical History' by Theodore Lector (Anagnostes), written in continuation of his compilation 'The Triple History';

5. 'History' of John Diacrinomenos (ὁ Αἰγέτης);

6. The World Chronicle of the Antiochian John Malala, the first Roman chronicler of Syrian origin;

7. 'Ecclesiastical History' by Zacharias Scholasticus (Rhetor); preserved in the Syriac translation of the Western Syriac translator from Amida (569) in the ms. British Library Add. 17202;

8. The works of the Syrian anti-Chalcedonian historian John, bishop of Ephesus and Asia: 'Church History' and the collection 'The Book of stories about the life of Eastern ascetics'.

8. The work of the East Syriac church writer of the turn of the VI–VII centuries. Bar-hadbšabbā 'Reason for the founding of the schools'.

The fourth group includes lives written for the exaltation and glorification of participants in Christological disputes, party leaders or influential ascetics and bishops. Hagiographic texts in the tradition of critical hagiography are combined into dossiers of such figures as:

1. Bishop Rabbula of Edessa (BHO 1023) published recently by C. Horn;
2. Simeon Stylite (Mar Šemʿon): his dossier (BHO 1121) was published in Syriac by P. Bejan (version of Šemʿon of Beth-Hattar) and Assemani (BHO 1124, Syriac version of Deacon Kosmas). The Greek text of Antony (BHG 1682) published by H. Litzmanann. The Arabic versions (BHO 1122–1123) are still in a poor state, there are Coptic, Armenian (BHO 1125) and Georgian (published by G. Garitte) versions;
3. Alexander Akoimetos, whose life was published in 1911 by Emile de Stop in the series ‘*Patrologia orientalis*’;
4. Basil the Great, whose dossier includes a large number of texts; in this study, he is important as the central character of the life of BHG 246y–260. In the extant version, this text is clearly divided into two parts: the encomium and the collection of miracles. The division of the life into two conditional parts (encomium and miracles) was also recognized by the only publisher of the Life, Francois Combefis (1644);
5. Mar Aphrem of Nisibis (St. Ephrem the Syrian) he was the champion of the life BHO 269. The Life is preserved in three manuscripts, the oldest of which is Vat. syr. 117;
6. John Chrysostom, the famous Antiochian preacher and later archbishop of Constantinople, whose Life has been written in the form of a dialogue by Palladius of Hellenopolis (BHG 870);

7. John Calybita, whose dossier (BHG 868–869h; BHO 498–499) was one of the sources of the Greek metaphrase that turned the life of the Syriac Man of God into ‘The Life of Alexeios’;

8. Lucian of Heliopolis (Baʿalbek), whose martyrdom among the ancient Georgian pre-metaphrastic versions, the so-called kimeni (კიმენი, from the Greek *κείμενα*, i.e. simply ‘texts’), was published by K. Kekelidze;

9. Severus of Antioch, leader of the moderate anti-Chalcedonians, whose dossier is preserved in view of two lives (BHS 855, BHO 1060–1064): Zacharias Rhetor (Scholasticus) and John Bar Aphthonia. Arabic version of this text, attributed to Athanasius has been published in 2004 by H. Youssef, Ethiopian one (in fact, an independent text) – in 1909, E. Goodspeed called it ‘the Conflict of Severus’ (= ethiop. *gädl*) .

The fifth group of sources includes hagiographic novels and epic cycles:

1. The cycle of folk-epic narratives about Alexander of Macedonia, called ‘Alexandria’, one of the most widespread and influential texts in the Christian East and beyond. Its hero, the famous conqueror of the East has been reinterpreted as an eschatological pious king. The Syriac version of the novel by Ps.-Callisthenes was written in the VII c., but the Memra (metric homily), attributed (ܡܡܪܐ ܕܡܪܝܢܐ ܕܥܠܝܝܐ) to the anti-Chalcedonian poet Jacob of Sarug, is one of the most important sources on Syrian apocalypticism;

2. ‘The Romance of Julian’ (Yūbīnyānōs), the story of Julian the Apostate, a hagiographic text created in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. in Egypt by the followerd of Severus. It has been preserved in two mss. (oldest one Add. 14.641 dates from the 6<sup>th</sup> c.), which tells about the ascension of the apostate emperor to the throne, his persecution of Christians, the Persian war and death. Published by G. Hoffmann;

3. ‘Bilawhar and Budisat’ (reconstructed title of the novel ‘Barlaam and Josaphat’), the text written in the 6<sup>th</sup> c. by a Western Syrian (according to the

hypothesis of K. Kekelidze). The story is based on the biographical narrative of Siddhartha (Buddha) close to *Lalitavistara*. The Greek text translated from the Georgian was published by R. Falk, the Georgian versions ('Life of Bilawhar and Iodasaph' and 'Balavariani') were published by I. Abuladze;

4. 'The Life of the Man of God' (ⲙⲉⲗⲉ ⲙⲁⲛ ⲙⲉⲧⲉ, BHO, 36–44). The Syriac version of the Life, now recognized as the oldest one, was published by A. Amio on the basis of the mss. Add 17177, Add 14644 and Add 12160 (6<sup>th</sup> c.). Georgian, Armenian, Arabic and Ethiopian versions have come down to us. In later versions, the pseudo-Greek name 'Alexey' (being a disfigured al-ʾksenōs) appears in all the later, Latin and Slavic, traditions;

5. The Ethiopian epic chronicle 'The Glory of the Kings' (Kebra Nagast) published by H. Bezold and translated by him in German in 1905 and by G. Colin in French in 1992;

6. Georgian 'History of Georgia' (Kartlis Cxovreba), a compilation of several historical texts, starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> c. The most important mss. are: list of Queen Mariam (NCRG. S 30, XVII–XVIII centuries), list of Mačabeli (NCRG. H 2135, 1736) and the list of Nicholas of Sameba (NCRG. Q 1219, 1697), Čalashvili's and the ms. discovered by A. Klimiašvili (Mtskheta ms.). The publications of the Kartlis cxovreba make a large and very complex part of kartvelology, at the moment the main printed text is the edition of S. Kauxč'išvili (1956–1973);

7. The story of the Baptism of Kartli 'Mokcevey Kartlisay', was first published by E. Takaishvili in 1091 and translated into Russian by himself (reprinted by I. Abuladze in 1963 in the series 'Monuments of Ancient Georgian Hagiographic Literature').

The last group includes hagiographic cycles of the enlighteners of Ethiopians and Georgians:

1. The dossier of Frumentius and Edesius: the main source of this story is the ‘Ecclesiastical History’ of Rufinus of Aquileia. This text is believed to have as its source the ‘History of the Church’ of Gelasius of Caesarea (Ps.-Gelasius of Cyzicus);

2. The story of Saint Nino has come down to us as part of the story of Gelasius / Rufinus, where the heroine has no name and is called *captiva*. In Georgian, the life was included in the *Mok'cevey Kartlisay*;

3. The cycle ‘Gadla Şadqan’ and other cycles of early Syrian migrants, ‘righteous’, were published by C. Conti-Rossini in 1903. Additional fragments were published by O. Raineri and E. Schneider;

4. Dossier of the Syrian ‘Nine Fathers’ – a large complex sources (‘Homily on the Panteleimon’, ‘Homily on Isaac Garima’, ‘Acts of Aregawi’ (transl. By M. Van den Oudenrijn), ‘Acts of Afşe’, ‘Acts of Likanos’, ‘Life of Libanos’) discussed in the 5th Chapter of the book;

5. The Georgian Dossier of the ‘Thirteen Syrian Fathers’ (David Gareĭeli, John Zedazadneli and Šio of Mghvime, martyrs Abibos Nekreseli and Ise Cilkaneli) were edited by I. V. Abuladze. For the textology of the dossier the work of M. Chkhartishvili, who managed not only to isolate the name of the author (Ioane-Martvili), but also to build a source study scheme that combines the texts of the dossier, is very important.

**Author’s principle dissertation ideas were published in 19 articles:**

Articles indexed in Scopus database:

1. Muraviev, Alexey. «The letters exchange between St. Basil and Julian the Apostate» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 3 (1997): 156–170 (in Russian).
2. Mouraviev, Alexei. «Les noms propres dans les résumés arabes du «roman» syriaque sur Julien l’Apostat» *Parole de l’Orient* 24 (1999): 359–365.

3. Muraviev, Alexey. «Mṣalyānūtha 3. John Chrysostom in Antioch, the Akoimetoι movement and the contents of the ‘Messalian heresy» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 1 (2015): 66–86 (in Russian).
4. Muraviev, Alexey. «The beginning of the second Christianization of Axum: ‘Gadla sadqan’ and the Syrian βοσκοί» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 3 (2009): 181–197 (in Russian).
5. Muraviev, Alexey. «The Acta Justorum (Gädlä Sadqan)». *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 76 (2016): 526–539 (in Russian).
6. Muraviev, Alexey. «The ‘Messalian’ myth of the 4th and 5th centuries and its influence on the debates about asceticism in the Iranian Church of the East 7th century AD.» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 2 (2010): 153–165 (in Russian).
7. Muraviev, Alexey. «‘The Letter to Abba Simeon’ in the collection of ΛΟΓΟΙ of Isaac the Syrian: the story of one pseudo-epigraph» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 4 (2012): 49–62 (in Russian).
8. Muraviev, Alexey. «Mar Ishāq Ninevita and possible medical context of eastern Syriac asceticism» *Parole de l’Orient* 40 (2015): 287–301.
9. Muraviev, Alexey. «A forgotten martyr sub Juliano Apostata: Georgian Passion of St. Lucian of Ba‘albek» *Scrinium* 2 (2006): 146–164 (in Russian).
10. Muraviev, Alexey and Alexander Nemirovsky. «From Nineveh to Suziane. Notes on the topography of Mesopotamia in Syrian sources» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 3 (2012): 67–77 (in Russian).



11. Muraviev, Alexey. «The Encounter of St. Basil and Mar Aprhem in the early Syriac Version from the manuscript of the British Library» *Vestnik Drevney Istorii* 4 (2015): 22–43 (in Russian).
12. Muraviev, Alexey. «Facing the Faceless: Eastern Syriac Mystics before the mystery of effacing self» *Micrologus* 330 (2021): in print.

Articles published in the Journals listed in the HSE High-end journals list:

13. Muraviev, Alexey. «Reconstructed colophon in the text of the Syriac Julian romance as a clue to the mystery of its author» *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 18.2 (2015): 399–407.
14. Muraviev, Alexey. «Where did Simeon the Mountaneerer preach?» *Vestnik PSTGU* 1/7 (2007): 58–66 (in Russian).
15. Muraviev, Alexey. «Mṣalyanuṭā-6. Some notes to the history of Messalian 'heresy': the mystery of Lampet» *Vestnik PSTGU* 62 (2020): 31–57 (in Russian).
16. Muraviev, Alexey. «‘Gedle ṣadkan’ as a hagiographic and historical source for the early Aksum» *Vestnik PSTSU* 4 (14) (2008): 35–39 (in Russian).

Other articles:

17. Muraviev, Alexey and Sebastian Brock. «The Fragments of the Syriac Julian Romance from the Manuscript Paris Syr. 378» *Hristianskiy Vostok* 2/8 (2000): 14–34.
18. Muraviev, Alexey. «La partie syriaque du dossier hagiographique de St. Basile le Grand» *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 256 (1998): 203–210.
19. Muraviev, Alexey. «The Syriac Julian Romance as a Source of the Life of St. Basil the Great» *Studia Patristica* 37 (2001): 240–249.