MULTILINGUAL CHRISTIAN MANUSCRIPTS FROM TURFAN[1]



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INTRODUCTION: CHRISTIAN MANUSCRIPTS FROM CENTRAL ASIA

The Turfan Oasis is located in western China, about 150 km SE of Urumchi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (often referred to as Eastern Turkistan by those outside China). It is situated on the middle branch of the Silk Road,[2] on the northern edge of the Tarim Basin, with the rugged Tien Shan Mountains to the north-west and the vast Taklamakan Desert that fills most of the Basin to the south-east. After the fall of the Turkic Uyghur Empire (744-840), the Uyghurs fled southward to set up kingdoms in Gansu and the Turfan Oasis. In Turfan, the resultant Uyghur Kingdom of Qocho, based in the most important city in the area, lasted over four centuries (ca. 860-1284). Not surprisingly, due to its location on the Silk Road, Turfan was a cultural and religious meeting place. Although most Uyghurs had converted to Manichaeism under the Uyghur Empire, the majority religion in the Uyghur Kingdom of Qocho was Buddhism. In addition to these two religions, Christianity was also present, as is evident from the manuscript fragments and other archaeological artifacts that have been uncovered at Turfan. Much later, Islam became the dominant religion of the area, although the final conversion of the Turfan Uyghurs to that religion did not take place until the 15th century.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Chinese Central Asia attracted the interest of archaeologists and explorers from several European countries (England, France, Germany, Russia and Sweden), as well as Japan.[3] Between 1902 and 1914, there were four German (or rather, Prussian) expeditions to Turfan, led by either Albert Grünwedel or Albert von le Coq. In addition to thousands of artefacts, these expeditions brought back 40,000 manuscript fragments in 20 scripts and 22 languages to Berlin. Despite a turbulent history due to the Second World War and the subsequent division of Germany into East and West, the vast majority of these fragments are still housed in Berlin, split between three locations: 1) the Turfanforschung, in the *Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften*; 2) the Oriental Department of the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*; and 3) the *Museum für Asiatische Kunst* in Dahlem.[4]

Reflecting the religious climate of Turfan, the vast majority of manuscript finds were Buddhist or Manichaean in nature. The Turfan finds were especially valuable in the

development of Turkic and Indo-European (particularly Iranian) philology, due to the many examples of texts in previously unknown or little-known languages, such as Old Turkic, Sogdian, Tocharian, and Bactrian. However, amongst the many fragments, a significant number of Christian texts were also unearthed. We now know that there are slightly over 1100 Christian manuscript fragments: 500 fragments in Syriac, 550 in Sogdian (an Eastern Middle Iranian language) in Syriac script, 50 in Sogdian in Sogdian script and 50 in Old Uyghur (a dialect of Old Turkic) in Syriac or Uyghur script. Although they constitute less than 3% of the total Turfan corpus, they nonetheless testify to the presence of a thriving Christian community in the middle of the Uyghur Kingdom.

Most Christian manuscript fragments were discovered at the ruined Christian monastery of Shüi-pang near Bulayïq (in the Turfan Oasis),[5] beginning in 1905, during the Second and Third Prussian Turfan Expeditions (1904-1907), led by Albert von le Coq.[6] At the same time, some Christian manuscript fragments were also found at other sites in the Turfan Oasis, namely Astana, Qocho, Qurutqa and Toyoq. Like the other finds from Turfan, the Christian materials are generally dated between the 9th and 13th centuries, the duration of the Uyghur Kingdom of Qocho. However, with very few exceptions, these texts have not been dated more precisely, either by archaeological or epigraphic means.[7] The few exceptions concern texts that can be dated to the Mongol era due to the occurrence of certain words not found before that time.[8] With the possible exception of a few texts that may reflect Melkite influence,[9] all Christian texts found at Turfan originated in the Church of the East, which had missions into China as early as the 7th century, as recorded in the famous Xian "Nestorian" Stele.[10]

Not surprisingly, the nature of the Christian monastic community at Bulayïq has determined the genre of the texts found there, which include liturgical texts, biblical texts (Psalters and lectionaries), ascetical and devotional texts, hagiographical texts and prayer booklets. As noted above, most Christian texts from Turfan are in three different languages: Syriac, Sogdian and Old Uyghur. Syriac fragments predominantly reflect the core liturgical and biblical texts, such as the Hudra and the Psalter, but there are also a number of prayer booklets and miscellaneous texts, such as the Legend of St. George,[11] the Legend of Barshabba,[12] and a Dialogue between a Christian and a Jew.[13] The many Christian Sogdian texts (most in Syriac script, but a limited number in Sogdian script) include Psalters, lectionaries, hagiographical and ascetical texts.[14] The relatively few Christian Uyghur texts (in both Syriac and Uyghur scripts) are varied in genre and include the Legend of the Magi and a wedding blessing.[15] In addition, there are Christian texts in two other Iranian languages: the famous Pahlavi Psalter in Middle Persian[16] and a few fragments in New Persian in Syriac script, including a folio from a bilingual Psalter discussed below and fragments of a New Persian pharmacological text in Syriac script.[17]

The Christian fragments from Turfan in Syriac script are currently the subject of a research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, United Kingdom and based in the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.[18] *The Christian Library at Turfan* Project aims to catalogue all manuscript fragments from Turfan in Syriac script, resulting in three separate catalogues for Syriac, Sogdian and Uyghur Turkic texts. Three separate catalogues will be published in the series *Verzeichnis der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland* (*VOHD*).[19] Christian fragments in either Sogdian or Uyghur script will be dealt with in two separate catalogues in the *VOHD* series.[20]

One of the most interesting aspects of the Christian materials from Turfan is what they reveal to us of the multilingual (and to some degree, multiethnic) state of the Christian community there. This has been well summed up by Nicholas Sims-Williams (emphasis mine):

> **Syriac** was always maintained as the primary language of the liturgy, the languages of the local people being admitted into liturgical use only for particular parts of the service such as hymns, psalms, and Bible readings... The Pahlavi Psalter found at Bulayïq may be seen as an import from the mother-church in Iran and the use of **Middle Persian** for the vernacular parts of the liturgy as a feature of the earliest period in the history of the Christian community in the Turfan oasis, before **Sogdian** was raised to the status of a church language... The writers and readers of the Christian Sogdian manuscripts may in many cases have been [Uyghur] Turkish speakers. During the final phase of the monastery's existence... **[Uyghur] Turkish** was probably the principal language of day-to-day business, although Sogdian evidently retained a place beside Syriac as a language of literature and liturgy.[21]

This article surveys some of the more important multilingual manuscript fragments from Turfan, in an effort to shed more light on the roles that Syriac, Sogdian and Uyghur Turkic had in the Christian community in Turfan, in particular the relative status of those languages vis-à-vis each other and what the fragments tell us about the knowledge of Syriac amongst Sogdian and Turkic native speakers.[22]

BILINGUAL FRAGMENTS IN SYRIAC AND SOGDIAN (SYRIAC SCRIPT)

There are 17 bilingual Syriac-Sogdian fragments in Syriac script in the Turfan collection, some of which have been regrouped by Nicholas Sims-Williams into original MSS.[23] The contents are written in Syriac and Sogdian (in Syriac script), a practice that the Turfan materials indicate was common amongst Sogdian-speaking Christians. The texts include portions from four Gospel lectionaries (N2-N5), one lectionary of Pauline epistles (N6) and one Psalter (N7), the underlying Syriac text of which is the Peshitta.

One example of these fragments is **n 190** (T II S 25),[24] part of the Gospel Lectionary N3 (from which no other folios have survived) which contains Luke 2:10-20 and Matt. 2:1-3, Gospel readings for Christmas and the first Sunday after Christmas respectively. The text alternates between the Syriac original and a Sogdian translation in Syriac script. The first line of the recto side gives an example of this alternation with the first two visible words: ܥܠܡܐ (Syriac "the world") ܟܐ (*kát*, Sogdian, "that"). The Syriac marks the end of Luke 2:10.[25]

These fragments are important in demonstrating the importance of both Syriac and Sogdian in rendering the biblical text for the Christian community at Turfan (and possibly elsewhere in Central Asia). Syriac obviously had prestige as the liturgical language of the Church of the East, but translation of the biblical text into Sogdian also demonstrates its crucial role as a *lingua franca* and the fact that the Church of the East was willing to be linguistically flexible in its evangelistic efforts.

BILINGUAL FRAGMENTS IN SYRIAC AND SOGDIAN (SOGDIAN SCRIPT)

14 fragments of a Syriac-Sogdian Psalter have been described by Martin Schwartz and Christiane Reck.[26] In contrast to the lectionary fragments just described, these are written in Sogdian script, as practice

seemingly less common amongst Sogdian-speaking Christians at Turfan, given the relative number of Christian texts we have in the two scripts. The extant fragments contain portions of Ps 5-6, 19-20, 23-24, 28-30, 50, and 51, all obviously translated from the Peshitta. As Schwartz notes, "the format of each Psalm is as follows: (1) the number of the Psalm in Syriac words; (2) the number of the Psalm in Sogdian numerals, consisting of a Sogdian numeral followed by an ordinal suffix; (3) the Sogdian translation of the East Syrian Psalm Title ... (4) the opening verse in Syriac, and (5) the Sogdian translation of the entire Psalm."[27]

Of the relevant fragments listed by Christiane Reck, several are now lost, preserved only in photos, and the specific biblical references of others are yet to be identified. Two examples can however be cited, both glassed together: **So 15490**, side 2, line 3 contains the Syriac rubric ܡܙܡܪ, the end of the first half of Ps 19:1.[28] Under the same glass, **So 15492**, side 1, line 1 contains the Syriac rubric ܕܝܘܕ ܚܕ, the end of the first half of Ps 29:1.[29] The rubric on **So 15493**, side 2, line 1 is difficult to decipher, but may be ؟[ܡ]ܙ ܡܙܡ[ܪ], the beginning of Ps 30:1.[30]

Although Syriac maintains a presence in this Sogdian Psalter, it is more for show, as only the initial line (or half-line) of each Psalm is given in Syriac. As Nicholas Sims-Williams points out, the fact that this Psalter (and a fragment from another Psalter, with the first phrase from Ps 33 in Greek) was written in Sogdian script may "indicate that they were intended for use by laymen as well as monks." Whatever the reason, the Sogdian Psalter seems to indicate a desire by the Turfan Christians to identify more with the local culture than with the Mesopotamian milieu from which the Church of the East originated.

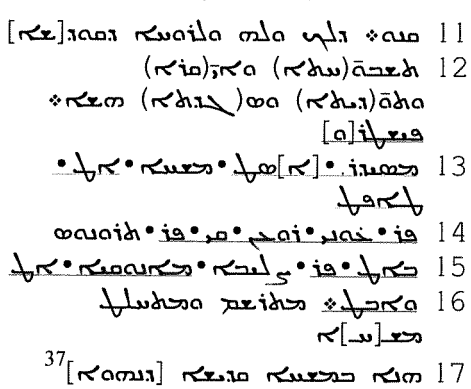
BILINGUAL FRAGMENTS IN SYRIAC AND NEW PERSIAN (SYRIAC SCRIPT)

Werner Sundermann managed to join together two fragments kept in separate places in Berlin that originally formed the only folio remaining from a bilingual Syriac-New Persian Psalter, again written in Syriac script: **MIK III 112** (T II B 57), kept in the Dahlem Museum, and **SyrHT 153** (T II B 64), kept in the Staatsbibliothek.[31] The folio contains Ps 146:5-147:7 according to the Peshitta version of the Bible (Ps 147:5-18 in the Masoretic text used in English Bibles). The Syriac lines are followed by a New Persian translation in the modified Syriac script used for Christian Sogdian and Christian Persian,[32] constituting the earliest known translation from Syriac into New Persian. A rubric on **SyrHT 153**, side 2, line 11 gives the number of the Psalm in Syriac, according to the Peshitta text: ܡܥܣܪ ܘܚܡܫ ܡܐܐ ܘܡܪܟܐ (147).[33]

As with the Syriac-Sogdian bilingual lectionaries, this fragment demonstrates the dual importance of the liturgical language (Syriac) and the emerging *lingua franca* of Central Asia (New Persian). Rather than being content to stick with Sogdian, the Christians at Turfan were willing to adapt with the times and adopt New Persian, which over the course of the 9th and 10th centuries replaced Sogdian amongst the Iranian-speakers in Central Asia, particularly in the Sogdian homeland between the Oxus and Jaxartes rivers (the Amu Darya and Syr Darya), now located in modern-day Uzbekistan. However, as Nicholas Sims-Williams notes, "it is an open question whether they [referring to both the Psalter and pharmacological fragments] were written in the Turfan oasis... or in Sogdiana."[34]

SYRIAC TEXTS WITH SOGDIAN INSTRUCTIONS IN SYRIAC SCRIPT

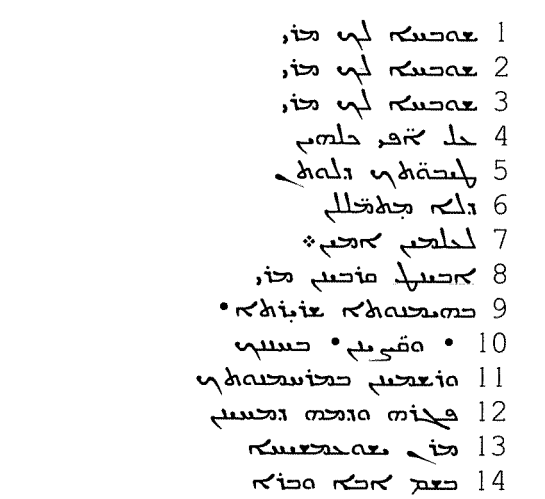
Six fragments have been discovered so far consisting of Syriac texts with Sogdian instructions (often in rubrics).[35] Perhaps the most significant of these texts is an East Syriac baptismal rite with instructions to the priest in Sogdian, preserved in two adjacent folios: **SyrHT 88** (T II B 46 No. 4) and **SyrHT 66** (T II B 20 No. 1). Translated and soon to be published by Sebastian Brock (with Sogdian translation by Nicholas Sims-Williams), the following lines (from **SyrHT 66** recto, lines 11-17; fig. 1) are representtative of this unique text, the earliest example of this particular rite (other manuscripts are from the 15th century or later):[36]



11. *Canon* (Syr. *qano*[*na*]). *For to you and to the Spirit of Holi-*[*ness*]
12. *be glo(ry) and ho(nour) and tha(nksgiving) and w(orship), now. Afterwards*
13. *the priest takes the oil* (Syr. *mešḥa*) *and seals*
14. *that oil* (Sog. *rwγn*) *which is on the altar* (Syr. *tronos*, from Gr. *θρόνος*)
15. *with the likeness of the cross* (Syr. *Ṣliba*), *and*
16. *he says, This oil is marked and mingled*
17. *with the holy oil, [to become...]*

Of particular interest is the use of Syriac for standard Christian terminology and the fact that the first mention of "oil" in the Sogdian instructions uses Syriac *mešḥa*, whereas the second mention uses Sogdian *rwγn*.

SyrHT 83 (T II B 43 No. 1a; figs. 2-3) and **SyrHT 84** (T II B 43 No. 1b) are two adjacent fragments, probably from an original booklet. The folios can be considered a palimpsest; the underlying Syriac text has a Sogdian rubric (in Syriac script), but side 1 has been overwritten with three lines of Syriac and side 2 has been overwritten with eight lines of Uyghur script (before the two folios were separated). Thus it is a trilingual text, albeit not by original intent. The portion with the Sogdian rubric is reproduced here (**SyrHT 83**, side 1, lines 1-8; fig. 2):

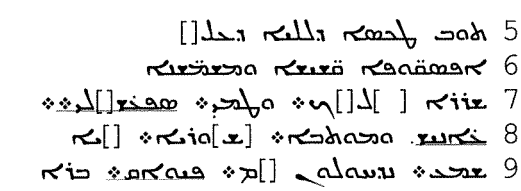


Praise to you, my Lord. Praise to you, my Lord. Praise to you, my Lord, for all of your unspeakable grace (pl.) to us, forever and ever, Amen. Continue (Sog 'bynt).[38] *We draw near, my Lord, in true faith to break through your mercy and sign through your favour the body and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the name of the Father, the Son (and the Holy Spirit).*

This text comes from the Signing and Breaking of the Consecrated Bread and Blood

in the Eucharistic liturgy of the Church of the East. While the text reflects the wording of the current liturgy, there are some insignificant variants between them.[39] The three lines of Syriac overwriting on side 1 of both folios, written in a large hand in light black ink on top of the underlying text, are very difficult to decipher or relate to the rest of the letter.[40] The Uyghur overwriting, perhaps written in the same hand as the Syriac overwriting, will be addressed in the next section.

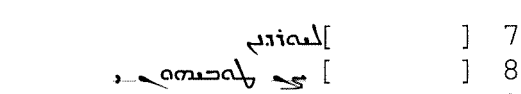
SyrHT 87 (T II B 46 No. 3) is a third text with Sogdian instructions in Syriac script, as shown in this extract from side 1, lines 5-9:

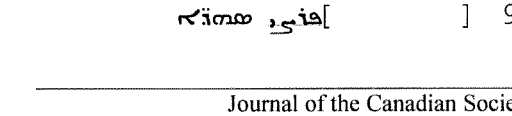


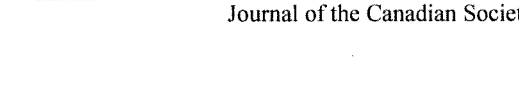
5. *Again, the Taksa (liturgy/office) of the Night about/upon... (?)*
6. *Bishops and priests and deacons*
7. *Truth...* [Sogdian word incomplete and therefore unclear]
8. *Reading* (Sog. *x'nyš*)*: And the Mawtbā* [part of the service sung sitting]*. Beginning... (?)*
9. *Hear. Let them fear... (?). Response* (Sog. *pyw'q*)*. The Son...*

This text deals with a commemoration, specifically that part which pertains to the night, but the use of the preposition ܥܠ "about/upon" is problematic.[41]

The final example of a Syriac liturgical text with instructions to the priest in Sogdian is **SyrHT 158** (T II B 66 No. 4). The fragmentary nature of the text makes it difficult to fully interpret, as an extract from side 1, lines 7-12 shows:







7. [...] *to the Jordan*
8. [...] *from* (Sog. *čn*) *their blessings*[43]
9. [...] *afterwards* (Sog. *prčy*) *the martyrs* (Syr.)
10. [...] *afterwards* (Sog. *prčy*)
11. [...] *quickly* (Sog. *žyrt*)
12. [...] *before* (Sog. *pyrnms 'r*)

These Syriac liturgical texts with Sogdian instructions give interesting insights into the role of the two languages in the lives of priests and others who celebrated the liturgy. The texts themselves are in Syriac, indicating that they were memorized in that language by those who trained for the priesthood. The instructions, however, are in Sogdian, again demonstrating the *lingua franca* that was spoken by most in the Turfan Christian community, at least initially. It is also interesting to note that Syriac, not Sogdian, is generally used for standard Christian terms, such as "oil," "altar," "cross," and "martyrs."

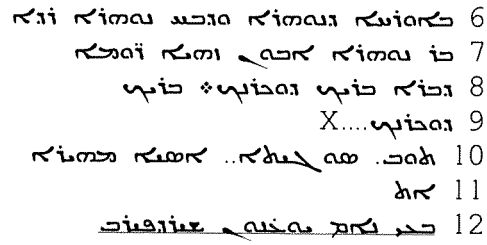
SYRIAC TEXTS WITH MULTILINGUAL MARGINALIA AND OVERWRITING

Nine fragments have so far been discovered containing Syriac texts featuring marginalia or overwriting in either Sogdian script or Uyghur script.[44] **SyrHT 48 and 49** (T II B 11 No. 11) is a double folio from a Syriac New Testament lectionary, featuring readings from the Book of Romans: Rom. 1:24-2:6 for the First Monday and First Tuesday of the Great Fast (Lent), and Rom. 5:12-21; 7:1-7 for the Second Sunday and Second Friday of the Great Fast. In the lower margin of SyrHT 49, side 1 Nicholas Sims-Williams reads the following words written in Sogdian script, in outline form: *'yny pwsty*, "This book ..." This folio is the last in the sequence, so

presumably this sentence continued onto the next (lost) folio, perhaps originally reading, "This book belongs to [name]"?

The Uyghur overwriting on side 2 of **SyrHT 83** and **SyrHT 84** (discussed in the section above) has been described and translated by Simone Raschmann as a text which was "probably a draft for an Old Turkish letter... the two fragments SyrHT 83 and 84 must have been directly stitched together, when the scribe wrote the Old Turkish letter on the one side and the cursive Syriac scribbling on the other side... the Syriac text must have been already damaged by abrasion when the secondary text was written down. An affiliation to the Christian community may be seen in the use of this Syriac manuscript for this Turkish letter and in the Syriac scribbling. The colour of the ink and to a certain extent the characteristics of the script may suggest that the scribe of the lines [i.e. the overwriting in broad brush strokes] on both sides might have been one and the same person."[45] Raschmann translates the text as follows: *To Tängrikän Kün Tugmiš (or Togrıl) Tegin Tüm(?). Let us send as many words (as there are) in this letter. Tämür Saŋun. I, Irsik (?), wrote (it). It is eternal. I, Yu // Tomačak.* If the overwriting in both Syriac and Uyghur was indeed written by the same person (which it appears to be), then he was undoubtedly a Christian. Furthermore, Raschmann notes that the name Tomačak at the end of the text could be interpreted as the Christian name Toma (Syriac ܬܘܡܐ, Thomas) with the Turkic diminutive suffix -čak, yielding "Little Thomas."[46] Why the Uyghur writer chose to "deface" the underlying Syriac text is unclear, but perhaps it occurred at a later time in the life of the monastery, when Syriac was less well-known by the monks.

SyrHT 122 (T II B 58 No. 1a) is a fragment from the Hudra, the primary liturgical text of the Church of the East. Side 1 seems to be the first page[47] from a Hudra designated as Hudra "H" in the hand-list of the Turfan Syriac fragments. Side 2 (which does not contain text from the Hudra) has writing in at least three hands; the last of which is Sogdian in Syriac script, as shown in the extract below (it is unclear if line 12 is in same hand as lines 6-11):



6. *He travelled in the way of light and he sacrificed (?) light*
7. *The Son of light, our venerable Father, the shining heights*
8. *of the Son. Blessed be your remembrance. Blessed be*
9. *your remembrance... X*
10. *Again, a song. The skilled healer*
11. *(?)*
12. *[In] the name of God, Yuhannan (John)* (Sog. *byy n'm ywxnwn...*) *the good scribe* (Sog. *šyr- dpyr*) OR *[In] the name of God, Yuhannan [has written] a good manu[script]*

This text reveals little to us, apart from the name of one of the monks who wrote on the reverse side of a liturgical text presumably used in regular worship services at the Bulayïq monastery. Yuhannan is a very common name in the Syriac tradition and occurs several times in the fragments discussed in this article.

SyrHT 161 (T II B 66 No. 7; fig. 4) is fixed to pasteboard, so the back side is not accessible. It seems to be a list of names, including an Uyghur name in Syriac script, as well as sporadic writing over a "blank" area that may contain faded rubrics:

1. *[Sa]br[išo]' and Daniel and Yuhannan (John)*
2. *and 'Abdišo' and Giwargis (George) and Is[aac?]*
3. *Scholars/students. ??*
4. *And instead of Bögä Totoq...*

This text gives more evidence of what is seen in the Syriac gravestone inscriptions from Semirechye (SE Kazakhstan and NE Kyrgyzstan), namely the use of both Syriac and Turkic names by Central Asian Christians.[48] Presumably, new members of the monastic community took Syriac names when they became monks, as was the case elsewhere with the Church of the East. Bögä Totoq is a classic Turkic name in this list of otherwise Syriac names.[49] If it is a list of either students or scholars at the monastery, perhaps the final line which unfortunately breaks off originally read "and instead of Bögä Totoq, he will have the name [Syriac name]"?

Another enigmatic fragment is **SyrHT 249** (T II B 67 No. 11), which has several partial lines of Syriac on side 1, with two partial lines of Syriac written vertically in the margin in another hand and one line of Sogdian in Syriac script in yet a third hand at the bottom. The main Syriac text, comprising the bottom right corner of the original folio, includes phrases like "piercing of his evil doer (?)" ( ), "he gave deliverance to him" ( ), "they saw snakes (or devils?) in the herd" ( ) and "with joy they answered" ( ), all of which conjure up images of conflict with demonic powers, including biblical events like the deliverance of the Gerasene (or Gadarene) demoniac after Jesus cast the evil spirits into a herd of pigs (Matt. 8; Mark 5; Luke 8) and the report of the Seventy sent out by Jesus who "returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name'" (Luke 10:17). Nicholas Sims-Williams translates the Sogdian line, (*nyst 'dy čn m'xy*) as "it is not one of us."[50] Could this be an allusion to the disciple John's statement to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us" (Mark 9:38), in which case there is a connection to the possible theme of deliverance from demons suggested by the main text?[51]

These Syriac texts with marginal notes or overwriting in Sogdian or Uyghur give us interesting insights into the daily life of the members of the monastic community at Turfan, possibly identifying the owner of a liturgical book or maybe the scribe who wrote it, giving the Turkic name of a member of the community and perhaps showing the thoughts that went through the minds of those who read these texts.

SYRIAC CALENDRICAL FRAGMENTS

The Christian fragments from Turfan include eight fragments which seem to be from Syriac calendrical tables, six of which feature Sogdian on the reverse side.[52] Although similarities in scribal hands suggest some of these fragments may originate from the same original manuscript, they are so few and small that reconstruction of the original texts is not possible at this point. The extant fragments are **SyrHT 67-70** (T II B 22 No. 2), one of which has Sogdian in Syriac script and two of which have Sogdian script on the other side. The Syriac sides reveal at least two, if not three, separate hands.[53] Two other fragments, **So 15850** (T III TVB) and **U 3858**, also have Sogdian script on the other side from the Syriac calendrical tables.[54]

Due to the fragmentary nature of these texts, it is unclear how the Sogdian writing on the reverse side of these fragments relates to the Syriac calendrical tables on the front, with the exception of one fragment, **n 354** (T II B 66 No. 48a; fig. 5),[55] which has calendrical references in Sogdian in Syriac script on side 2, translated by Nicholas Sims-Williams as follows: "... by day and night (?) alike [from] the month [...] until the 19th of the month Kanon Qdim,[56] at night (?) ... Again, after the last (?) fast, after 40 days from Easter is the feast of Ascension, and on the tenth (?) day is the feast [of ...] ..."[57]

FRAGMENTS MIXING SYRIAC AND UYGHUR SCRIPTS[58]

U 338 (T II B 41, No. 1) is a small booklet consisting of ten folios, described in depth by Peter Zieme.[59] It can be divided into four sections: 1) a prayer in Uyghur, written in Syriac script, with 2 lines of Syriac interjected in the middle; 2) a colophon, written in Uyghur script, giving the date (year of the Cow), the scribe's name (Bäküz = Bacchus) and a request to transfer merit to the scribe's father, Yonan (Yuhannan = John); 3) a long Syriac section; and 4) a somewhat different version of the prayer, written in Uyghur script. The prayer describes how "the Saviour, our Lord Messiah" (ܟ݂ܘܬ݂ܓ݂ܪ̈ܛ̈ܟ݂ ܗ̈ܢ̈ܡ̈ܙ̈ ܡ̈ܫ̈ܝ̈ܚ̈, *kutgartači hanımız mšyḥ*) "keeps our bodies healthy" and "rescues our souls" and asks that blessings may come on the "Christians" (ܐ̈ܪ̈ܟ݂ܐ̈ܟ݂ܘ̈ܬ݂ܠ̈ܐ̈ܪ̈, *ärkäkütlär*, reflecting *ärkägün*, the term commonly used to refer to Christians in the Mongol Empire). Zieme speculates that it may have been used as an exercise book to help children learn how to write in both scripts.

Like several of the other fragments discussed in this article, **U 5545** (T II B 9[?])[60] is actually trilingual (although perhaps not initially by design). Side 1 is in Uyghur script, but has not yet been fully deciphered. Side 2 contains 4 horizontal lines of Syriac and Sogdian in Syriac script with an additional vertical line in Syriac, representing two or three different hands:

1]ܥܒܕ̈ܐ [
2]ܫ̈ܘ̈ܒ̈ܓ̈ ܫ̈ܘ̈ [
3 ܥܒ̈ܕ̈ܝ̈ ܫ̈ܝ̈
4 ܫ̈ܘ̈ܒ̈ܓ̈ ܫ̈ܘ̈
5 ܫ̈ܢ̈ܬ̈ (؟) [ ] ܝ̈ܘ̈ܚ̈ܢ̈ܢ̈[61]

1. *servant (or the name 'Abdā)*[62]
2. *monk* (Sog. *swgb['r]*)
3. *we are servants*
4. *monk* (Sog. *swgb'r*) [*spelling confusion*]
5. *Yuhannan (?)... I wrote [it]*

The text seems to be expressing the idea that monks are servants (of God), a sentiment that is not surprising in a monastic community! As Nicholas Sims-Williams points out, if ܫ̈ܘ̈ܒ̈ܓ̈ (*swgbr'*) is indeed intended to represent Sogdian *swgb'r*, then it is either misspelled or has been given a Syriac emphatic ending (ܐ).[63] We have no way of knowing the ethnicities of the scribes involved, but both the Uyghur script on the other side and the Sogdian misspelling suggest they may have been Uyghurs.

U 7252 (T II B 66 [No. 49]) is another trilingual text, comprising Syriac and Uyghur (in Uyghur script) on one side, with Syriac and Sogdian (in Syriac script) on the other.[64] Side 1 consists of four lines of Syriac, followed by seven lines of Uyghur script (with four interlinear lines) and a final line which begins in Uyghur and ends in Syriac. The Syriac is roughly written and difficult to decipher, due to lacunae, but includes stock words and phrases to be expected in religious texts: [ ]ܩ̈ܕ̈ܫ̈ ܠ̈ܟ̈ "to you, holy..."; ܫ̈ܒ̈ܥ̈ "seven"; ܛ̈ܒ̈ܥ̈ "nature"; ܫ̈ܗ̈ܕ̈ܐ̈ "martyr" and ܚ̈ܝ̈ "life." The Uyghur Turkic lines have not yet been published in entirety, but based on a transcription provided by Simone Rasch-

mann,[65] they are similar in content to the draft letter located on side 2 of **SyrHT 83** and **SyrHT 84**, this time addressed to Tängrikän El Almıš Alp Kutlug and including the same stock phrase "Let us send as many words (as there are) in this letter." Given that the last line starts in Uyghur and ends in Syriac, the writer was undoubtedly a Christian.

Side 2 is quite different in content, consisting of several columns in Syriac and Sogdian (in Syriac script). Column 1 contains the letters of the Syriac alphabet from ܐ to ܟ, representing the numbers 1-19. Curiously, there appear to be two lines between the numbers 10 and 11, but these are badly damaged and overwritten with words in larger brush strokes. These two lines start with the letters ܝ and ܟ, representing the numbers 20 and 30, but the words in columns 2 and 3 are not visible here. Columns 2 and 3 spell out the numerals in Sogdian and Syriac. Column 4 gives a list of words which do not seem to bear any relation to the numerals they are next to, but were perhaps used as mnemonic devices. Read from top to bottom, they form a sentence, part of which is discernible: "... angels and men, we praise, while saying Hallelujah, Hallelujah..." Column 5 contains the following letters/ words in Syriac: ܕ, ܝ, ܫ, ܗ and ܐܠܦ, representing the numbers 100, 200, 300, 400 and 1000. Finally, column 6 spells out the equivalent Syriac numerals to the numbers in column 5. Much of the lower half of side 2 is covered with individual words written in large brush strokes. Discernible words include ܗܠܠ[ܘ] ܟܪ, "Father, Hallelujah," ܡܫܝܚܐ, "Messiah," and ܐܠܗܐ, "God." The following lines give an example of how the columns work:[68]

7	ܙ : ܐ : ܣܓܕ	[ ] ܗܠܠ			
8	ܚ : ܫ : ܐ[ܪ]ܒܗ :	[ ] ܡܫܝ			[ ] ܟ
9	ܛ : ܣ[ܓ]ܒ[:]ܣ	ܕ ܡܫܝ			[ ] ܣ ܕ
10	ܝ : ܣ[:]ܡܫ				
11	ܟ ܣ[ܘ]ܗܠܠ	ܐܡܝ			[ ] ܝ
12	ܠ ܕ	ܗܠܠ			[ ] ܫ ܣ ܗ[ܪ]ܒ
13	ܣ[:]ܕ ܗ : ܒ[ܫ]ܬ	ܗܠܠ			ܗ ܗܠܠ

7. *zayn*	*seven* (Sog. *βt'*, Syr. *šb'')*	*angel(s?)...*[69]			
8. *ḥeth*	*eight* (Sog. *št'*, Syr. *tmny')*	*and men...*[70]	*ṣode*		
9. *ṭeth*	*nine* (Sog. *nw'*, Syr. *tš'')*	*we praise, while*	*qoph*	*100* (Syr. *m'*)	
10. *yod*	*ten* (Sog. *δs'*, Syr. *'sr')*				
11. *kaph*	*Father, Hallelujah*[66]	*saying:*	*resh*	*200* (Syr. *m'tyn*)	
12. *lamedh*	*(?)*[67]	*Hallelujah*	*šin*	*300* (Syr. *m'tltyn*)[71]	
13. *yod alef*	*eleven (sog. ywnts, Syr. ḥd'sr)*	*Hallelujah*	*taw*	*Hallelujah*[72]	

Thus, the second side of the fragment seems to have been used for memorizing the numerical equivalents of Syriac letters in both languages, but how this relates to the Syriac and Uyghur text on side 1 is unclear.

These fragments mixing Syriac and Uyghur probably reflect life in the Christian community of Turfan towards the end of the Christian presence there, during the Mongol Empire. At this time, the majority (if not all) of the monks were probably Uyghurs, but they still used Syriac and Sogdian, as evidenced by the mixture of these three languages in two of these fragments. However, the use of Syriac tends to be limited to stock biblical or liturgical phrases and the handwriting samples suggest that the writers had minimal literacy in Syriac.

FRAGMENTS WITH SYRIAC IN UYGHUR SCRIPT

At least three texts exhibit transliteration from Syriac into Uyghur script.[73] **SyrHT 124** (T II B 58 No. 2a; fig. 6) is another fragment from the Hudra. While side 2 seems to be the last page[74] from Hudra "H," side 1, the backside of the last page, has writing in both Syriac and Uyghur script, seemingly from the same hand (similar to SyrHT 287, side 2, discussed below). There are several blocks of text:

Block 1

ܨܠܘܬܐ ܕ݂ ܦܛܝܘܢ

Prayer of St. Pethion

Block 2

[75]ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ [ ]
ܕ݂ܡܪܢ ܝ[ ]
ܕ݂ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕ[ ]
ܐܡܪ[ ]

[Holy] Gospel
of our Lord Je[sus]
Christ [(according to) the preaching]
of John

Block 3

[76]ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ

Gospel

Block 4

ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܕ݂ܡܪܢ ܕ݂ܢ
ܥܠ ܕ݂ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕ݂ܐܡܪ

Holy Gospel of our Lord
Jesus Christ, (according to) the preaching
of John

Immediately to the right of text block four are three lines in Uyghur script, direct transliterations from the Syriac phrase to the left, but mentioning two different evangelists:

1. *'wnklywn qty-š' dmrn 'yšwq* (The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus)
2. *kyrwzwt' dlwq'* (according to the preaching of Luqa/Luke)
3. *m'rqws* (Marqos/Mark)

It is interesting to compare this fragment to SyrHT 122, discussed above. Whereas that fragment has writing in Syriac and Sogdian on the back side of the Hudra text (albeit unrelated to the Hudra text itself), this fragment has Syriac and Uyghur transliteration of Syriac on the back side. Again, the latter was probably penned at a time when Syriac and perhaps even Sogdian were less well-known at the monastery, having been largely supplanted by the use of Uyghur, except in the liturgy itself.

SyrHT 286 and 287 (T III B No. 1) are two fragments from Hudra "H" (possibly from the same folio) which are very similar in nature to **SyrHT 124**. Again, side 1 seems to be the last page[77] from the Hudra; side 2 is blank except for a line of Syriac followed by a line of Uyghur script (other lines on this side are too faint to make out). Both the Syriac and the Uyghur script seem to be from the same hand and look very similar to that on the reverse side of **SyrHT 124**. Again, like the latter, the Uyghur script is a transliteration of the Syriac text:

[ܚܫܝ] ܫܠܝ ܠܗ ܚܠ

Uyg: *ywxn x[ty]a slaw 'ly*

From the more complete sentence in Uyghur script, we can supply the name missing in the Syriac sentence: *Yuhannan (John), the sinner; pray for me.*

One of the real treasures of the Turfan collection is a text consisting of nine folios: eight kept in the Staatsbibliothek (**SyrHT 20-27**) and one kept in the Dahlem Museum (**MIK III 58**) (T II B 10), all of which consist of an underlying Syriac text written in Uyghur script (except for the colophon, which is pure Uyghur). Briefly mentioned by von le Coq and Zieme, it remains unpublished.[78] It is a mixture of passages from the Psalter (roughly two-thirds) and the Hudra (roughly one-third). The Syriac texts were obviously transliterated by ear, since they do not include silent letters which are present in the Syriac text but which were not pronounced in the spoken language. Thus, Syr. ܐܢܬ "you," is transliterated as *at*, with a silent *nun*, not *ant*, as one would expect if the text were being copied by someone who did not know how it was pronounced.

Two lines from this unique text (**SyrHT 27**, side 1, lines 1-2) should suffice as an example. They are from the opening of the Hymn of St. Ephrem for Morning Prayer and quote from Ps 97:11:[79]

Uyghur script:

1. *nwqr' tn'q lztyqÿ wldrys'y*
2. *lyb' qdwd' : 'yswq m'r'n*

Underlying Syriac text:

ܢܗܪ ܙܝܣ ܠܬܫܩܝ. ܘܠܬܫܪ
ܠܟ ܫܘܒܚ ❊ ܡܪܝ ܝܫܘ

Translation:

Light shone on the righteous, and joy on the upright in heart. Jesus, our Lord...

This was probably the final stage in the evolution of the Syriac Psalter at Turfan. Whereas most Psalters found there are either exclusively in Syriac or a mixture of Syriac and an Iranian language (Sogdian or New Persian), this text demonstrates that the monks at a later stage of the community were far more comfortable with Uyghur script than Syriac script, so they transliterated the Psalter and other liturgical texts from the latter into the former.

All of these Syriac texts in Uyghur script clearly show that Uyghur Christian monks in Turfan were able to transliterate at least simple Syriac passages into their native script, often on the blank back sides of liturgical texts. They had heard the phrases so often that they had memorized them in Syriac and could easily render them into Uyghur script. This phenomenon is also reflected in modern (18th-20th centuries) transliteration of Syriac texts (usually liturgical) into Arabic, Cyrillic and Malayalam, intended to help the faithful who are not familiar with the Syriac script recite the liturgy.

CONCLUSIONS

Although many of the Christian manuscript fragments from Turfan have been deciphered and analyzed by eminent scholars of the past and present,[80] these fragments still have much to reveal to us about the nature of the Christian community in Turfan between the 9th and 13th centuries. As Nicholas Sims-Williams has already pointed out,[81] the fragments clearly illustrate the way that Sogdian came to play a role in ecclesiastical settings that was second only to Syriac and how Uyghur functioned as the primary language of day-to-day communication outside of liturgical settings, especially towards the end of the Christian presence in Turfan.

In particular, the presence of bilingual Psalters and lectionaries at Turfan indicates the importance put on translating the Bible into local languages (although so far these

have all been in Iranian languages, not in Turkic). Although the Church of the East retained Syriac as the primary language of the liturgy, it did not do so at the expense of translating biblical and other texts into Sogdian or New Persian. The inclusion in Syriac liturgical texts of instructions to the priest in Sogdian again shows the importance of the latter in the day-to-day life of the Christian community at Turfan, whereas marginal notes in Sogdian or Uyghur give us insights into daily life in the community, including the names of some of its members.

The Syriac texts themselves are generally well-copied, with few mistakes, although samples of Syriac hand-writing practice suggest that the overall literacy in the language, apart from memorized texts, was not high. In the absence of comparable textual material from elsewhere in Central Asia, apart from gravestone inscriptions, it is impossible to compare the situation in Turfan with that in Semirechye or Inner Mongolia, as discussed by Pier Giorgio Borbone, who concludes that "their [the Turkic Önggüds of Inner Mongolia] knowledge of Syriac consisted at the best of a passive competence in the liturgical use, without any active competence."[82]

Thanks to the constant repetition of the Psalter and other parts of the liturgy, the Christian monks of Turfan knew the liturgical texts well and when they transliterated them into the Uyghur script, they retained the proper pronunciation of those texts. Again, by permitting such transliteration, the Church enabled the faithful who were not familiar with the Syriac script to continue to celebrate the liturgy, a practice continued to this day in various Syriac churches around the world.

NOTES

[1] I would like to acknowledge the generous input of the following specialists in Syriac, Sogdian and Old Turkic, without whose help this article would not have been possible: Sebastian Brock (Oxford University), Amir Harrak (University of Toronto), Erica Hunter (SOAS), Simone Raschmann (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences), Christiane Reck (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences), Nicholas Sims-Williams (SOAS), and Peter Zieme (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences). I am also thankful to Clare Hall, Cambridge, for a research grant which made it possible to present this paper in Toronto.

[2] In actual fact, rather than just a single road, it was a network of trade routes, stretching from China through Central Asia to the Iranian and Mediterranean world.

[3] On which, see Peter Hopkirk, *Foreign Ddevils on the Silk Road: The Search for the Lost Cities and Treasures of Chinese Central Asia* (London: J. Murray, 1980).

[4] The history of Turfan Studies is described in Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, *Turfan Studies* (Berlin: Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 2007).

[5] The monastic nature of the community is strongly suggested by the large number of Christian Sogdian texts dealing with asceticism and the spiritual life, including "admonitions, homilies, and treatises on... the seven canonical hours of prayer and the virtues of withdrawal from the world, solitude and silent contemplation within one's cell;" Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Christian Literature in Middle Iranian Languages," in *The Literature of Pre-Islamic Iran,* ed. by Ronald E. Emmerick & Maria Macuch, History of Persian Literature, vol. XVII, (London: I. B. Tauris, 2009), 279.

[6] On this site, see Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Bulayïq," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica,* vol. 4 (1990), 545.

[7] Ibid., 545 notes.

[8] See below, in the discussion of fragment U 338.

[9] See Nicholas Sims-Williams, "A Greek-Sogdian Bilingual from Bulayïq," in *La Persia e Bisanzio,* Atti dei Convegni Lincei 201 (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2004), 623-631; Sims-Williams, "Bulayïq," 274-275.

[10] On the history of the Church of the East in Central Asia, see Gillman, Ian & Hans-Joachim Klimkeit, *Christians in Asia before 1500* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 205-262.

[11] See Miklós Maróth, "Eine unbekannte Version der Georgios-Legende aus Turfan," in *AoF* 18 (1991) 86-108..

[12] See F. W. K. Müller & W. Lentz, "Soghdische Texte II," in *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften (*1934), 559-564.

[13] Soon to be published by Miklós Maróth.

[14] Many of these have been published by Nicholas Sims-Williams. See for example Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Dādišo' Qatrāyā's Commentary on the *Paradise of the Fathers,"* in *AB* 112 (1994) 33-64.

[15] See F. W. K. Müller, "Uigurica I," in *Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse,* II (1908), 5-10; Peter Zieme, "Ein Hochzeitssegen Uigurischer Christen," in *Scholia: Beiträge zur Turkologie und Zentralasienkunde*, ed. by Klaus Röhrborn & Horst Wilfrid Brands (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1981), 221-232.

[16] See F. C. Andreas & Kaj Barr, "Bruchstücke einer Pehlewi-Übersetzung der Psalmen," in *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1933) 91-152; Sims-Williams, "Christian Literature in Middle Iranian Languages," 269-270.

[17] All are to be included in Nicholas Sims-Williams' catalogue of *Iranian Fragments in Syriac Script* in the VOHD series, mentioned below.

[18] Led by Dr. Erica Hunter (SOAS), the research team also includes Prof. Nicholas Sims-Williams (SOAS), Prof. Peter Zieme (Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences), and the author (SOAS).

[19] Currently all in preparation, they are: 1) **5,2.** *Syrische Handschriften.* Teil 2: Texte der Berliner Turfansammlung, compiled by Erica Hunter & Mark Dickens [provisional title only]; 2) **18,4.** *Mitteliranische Handschriften.* Teil 4: Iranian

Fragments in Syriac Script, compiled by Nicholas Sims-Williams; and 3) an edition of Christian Turkic Fragments in Syriac Script [final title not yet determined], compiled by Peter Zieme.

[20] 1) **18,3**. *Mitteliranische Handschriften.* Teil 3: Berliner Turfanfragmente in soghdischer Schrift, compiled by Christiane Reck, and 2) *Alttürkische Handschriften* [final title not yet determined], compiled by Simone Raschmann.

[21] Nicholas Sims-Williams, "Sogdian and Turkish Christians in the Turfan and Tun-huang Manuscripts," in *Turfan and Tun-huang, the Texts: Encounter of Civilizations on the Silk Route,* Orientalia Venetiana IV, ed. by Alfredo Cadonna (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1992), 49-51, 54.

[22] On Christian documents from Dunhuang, 600 km SE of Turfan, which give evidence of multilingual interaction, see Sims-Williams, "Christian Literature in Middle Iranian Languages," 285-287.

[23] These have been previously described in Werner Sundermann, "Nachlese zu F. W. K. Müllers "Soghdischen Texten I", 3. Teil," in *AoF,* 8 (1981) 169-225, and will be included in the VOHD catalogue compiled by Nicholas Sims-Williams, who generously shared information on these fragments with me.

[24] Wherever possible, the current signature of each fragment is given first, with the original T II or T III signature (short for Turfan Expedition II or III) in parentheses, since the latter is frequently cited in the literature. Images of all the fragments are available on either the International Dunhuang Project or the Turfanforschung websites, at the following URLs:

Syriac: http://idp.bl.uk/

Middle Persian Psalter: http://www.bbaw.de/forschung/turfanforschung/dta/ps/dta_ps_index.htm

Sogdian (Syriac script): http://www.bbaw.de/forschung/turfanforschung/dta/n/dta_n_index.html

Sogdian (Sogdian script): http://www.bbaw.de/forschung/turfanforschung/dta/so/dta_so_index.htm

Uyghur Turkic: http://www.bbaw.de/forschung/turfanforschung/dta/u/dta_u_index.htm

[25] Syriac Peshitta text: ܘܐܡܪ ܠܝ ܡܠܐܟܐ ܗܕܐ ܠܐ ܬܕܚܠ ܐܢܐ ܒܫܘܪ ܒܣܪ ܠܟܘܢ ܒܫܘܪ ܕܗܘ ܠܟܠ ܥܡܐ, "And the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for the whole world.'"

[26] Previously described in Martin Schwartz, *Studies in the Texts of the Sogdian Christians* (Dissertation: Near Eastern Languages, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley 1967), 126-144; Martin Schwartz, "Sogdian Fragments of the *Book of Psalms,"* in *AoF* 1 (1974) 257-261; Christiane Reck, "A Survey of the Christian Sogdian Fragments in Sogdian Script in the Berlin Turfan Collection," in *Controverses des chrétiens dans l'Iran sassanide,* Studia Iranica - Cahier 36, ed. by Christelle Jullien (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 2008), 192-193; these will be included in the VOHD catalogue compiled by Christiane Reck, to whom I am grateful for supplying information on these fragments.

[27] Martin Schwartz, *Studies in the Texts of the Sogdian Christians (revised version)* (Dissertation: Near Eastern Languages, University of California, Berkeley, Berkeley, 1982), 158.

[28] Syriac Peshitta text: ܫܡܝܐ ܡܫܬܥܝܢ ܒܟܒܘܕ ܐܠܗܐ, "The heavens declare the glory of God."

[29] Syriac Peshitta text: ܐܝܬܝ ܛܠܝ ܠܡܪܝ ܥܠܡܐ "Bring to the Lord lambs..."

[30] Syriac Peshitta text: ܐܪܘܡܡܟ ܡܪܝ ܕܫܩܠܬܢܝ, "I will exalt you, O Lord, who has lifted me."

[31] The Dahlem fragment was previously described in F. W. K. Müller, "Ein syrisch-neupersisches Psalmenbruchstück aus Chinesisch-Turkistan," in *Festschrift Eduard Sachau,* ed. by Gotthold Weil (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Reimer, 1915), 215-222, and E. Benveniste, "Sur un fragment d'un psautier syro-persan," in *Journal Asiatique* 230 (1938) 458-462. The reconstructed folio is treated in Werner Sundermann, "Einige Bemerkungen zum Syrisch-Neupersischen Psalmenbruchstük aus Chinesisch-Turkistan," in *Mémorial Jean de Menasce,* ed. by Philippe Gignoux & A. Tafazzoli (Louvain: Imprimerie Orientaliste, 1974), 441-452. Both fragments will be included in the VOHD catalogues compiled by Sims-Williams and Hunter & Dickens.

[32] On which, see the *Proposal to add six Syriac letters for Sogdian and Persian to the UCS,* by Nicholas Sims-Williams and Michael Everson (std.dkuug.dk/jtc1/sc2/WG2/docs/n2422.pdf).

[33] Ps 147:1 in the Peshitta is Ps 147:12 in the Masoretic text.

[34] Sims-Williams, "Christian Literature in Middle Iranian Languages," 270.

[35] All will be published in the VOHD catalogue compiled by Hunter & Dickens, although **SyrHT 83 and 84**, containing Uyghur overwriting, will also be included in the catalogue compiled by Raschmann.

[36] I am very grateful to Sebastian Brock for permission to reproduce this extract here. Throughout this article, Sogdian words in Syriac script and their translations are underlined. All translations from Sogdian in this article are by Nicholas Sims-Williams, to whom I also express many thanks. Other translations from Syriac are my own.

[37] Note the occurrence in line 14 of the modified Syriac letter ـڂـ, used to render Sogdian /x/ and Turkic /q/ in Christian texts written in Syriac script. My thanks to Pier Giorgio Borbone for the use of his modified Syriac font which includes this letter. In Christian Sogdian texts, the Syriac letters ـغـ and ـچـ stand for phonetic /γ/ and /č/ respectively.

[38] Remarking on this word, Nicholas Sims-Williams notes: "It is attested as a noun meaning 'union, connection,' but can also be the imperative of a verb meaning 'to attach, join.' Here perhaps it might mean something like 'continue!' or 'join in!' (personal communication, June 11, 2009).

[39] See *Ṭaksā d-kahnē d-'edtā d-madnḥā* [the Priestly Office of the Church of the East] (Mosul: 1928; repr. Chicago: 2002), 40. My thanks to Amir Harrak for identifying and commenting on the Syriac text.

[40] My best reading at this point is: line 1: ܫܡܥ (ʔ), "Hear [illegible word; looks like ܨܠܝܬܐ]"; line 2: ܫܠܝܢ, "we ruled"; line 3: ܫܚܠ, "he beat down." Nicholas Sims-Williams suggests that some of these words may be misspellings, with ܫܠܝܢ a scribal error for ܒܥܘܬܢ, "our petition" and ܫܚܠ a scribal error for ܝܗܒܬ, "you gave." If his suggestion is correct, it renders a more intelligible reading: "Hear... our petition... you gave" (personal communication, June 11, 2009). These misspellings are entirely logical if the writer was indeed an Uyghur with minimal knowledge of written Syriac, since neither Sogdian nor Old Uyghur distinguish between /h/ and /ḥ/, /s/ and /ṣ/ or /t/ and /ṭ/. Thus, ـه is often used for phonetic /h/ and ـط for phonetic /t/ in Christian Sogdian and Uyghur texts. Furthermore, the omission of ـܪ in ـبعوتنا makes perfect sense if the writer was not proficient in spoken Syriac.

[41] Again, my thanks to Amir Harrak for identifying and commenting on the Syriac text.

[42] The first letter is the adapted letter for Sogdian /ž/, currently not included in any Syriac fonts.

[43] As Nicholas Sims-Williams notes, "a particularly interesting grammatical point is the use of Syr. *twbyhwn* [their blessings] as a loanword with Sogd. obl. ending –y" (personal communication, May 7, 2009).

[44] All to be published in the VOHD catalogue compiled by Hunter & Dickens.

[45] From an article to appear soon in a Festschrift.

[46] To my query about whether the partial name preserved as *Yu* might represent Yuhannan (John), Simone Raschmann replied: "The problem with YW is that nothing seems to follow - just these two letters. The name Yohanan (in different writings) is attested in the Old Turkish texts. But, as far as I know, not in this abbreviated form. On the other hand, /m(ä)n/ 'I' at the beginning is a signal for a personal name, which has to follow" (personal communication, October 1, 2009).

[47] Or possibly the first page of a quire.

[48] Thus, there are numerous examples in the gravestone corpus of families in which one generation uses a Syriac name and another generation uses a Turkic or Persian one. Examples include the graves of "Dawlat-eši [Persian], the daughter of Šliha the priest" and "Isaiah the priest, son of the church visitor Qutluq [Turkic];" Mark Dickens, "Syriac Gravestones in the Tashkent History Museum," in *Hidden Treasures and Intercultural Encounters: Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia,* Orientalia - Patristica - Oecumenica 1, ed. by W. Winkler Dietmar & Li Tang (Wien: LIT Verlag, 2009), 32-33, 37).

[49] My thanks to Nicholas Sims-Williams and Peter Zieme (personal communication, May 7, 2009 & May 11, 2009) for clarifying the correct form of this Turkic name, which was originally a Chinese title for a military governor.

[50] Personal communication, September 23, 2009.

[51] Just prior to submitting this article, I managed to connect this fragment (the lower half of a folio) to another one, **SyrHT 254** (the upper half), but time did not permit proper identification of the text or its source.

[52] Mentioned in Sims-Williams, "Christian Literature in Middle Iranian Languages," 285, and to be included in the VOHD catalogues compiled by Hunter & Dickens, Reck, and Sims-Williams.

[53] Another calendrical fragment, **SyrHT 273** (T II D), is illegible on the reverse side.

[54] Mentioned in Reck, 2008, p. 196.

[55] Another fragment, seemingly also calendrical in nature, T II B 66 No. 48b, is recorded as "lost" (presumably during or shortly after World War II) on the hand-list of the Turfan Syriac fragments.

[56] Transliteration of Syriac ܕܝܢܡܒܪ, roughly equivalent to December.

[57] Personal communication, October 1, 2009. There are two more Christian Sogdian calendrical fragments in Syriac script, **n 295** (T II B 46 No. 2) and **n 288** (T III B 61 [h] & T II B 62), which "have calendrical content even though they do not contain calendar tables" (Nicholas Sims-Williams, personal communication, October 16, 2009).

[58] Fragments not included in this article include **SyrHT 154** (T II B 65 b), **SyrHT 322** (T III Kurutka) and **SyrHT 328**. **SyrHT 154** is the lower corner of a Syriac folio that appears to have been joined (glued?) to another piece of paper to form a larger piece. There are five partial lines of Syriac on side 1. Uyghur script in a large hand on side 2 obscures all but a few Syriac characters from the underlying text. Most words are illegible, so the text has not been deciphered yet. **SyrHT 322** is a fragment with several Syriac names and words (including Peter and Paul) on side 1 and Uyghur script on side 2 (yet to be deciphered). **SyrHT 328** is a very small fragment with a few words of Syriac (probably from a liturgical text) on side 1 and remnants of a line of Sogdian script on side 2.

[59] See Peter Zieme, "Notes on a bilingual prayer book from Bulayık," in *Hidden Treasures and Intercultural Encounters: Studies on East Syriac Christianity in China and Central Asia,* Orientalia - Patristica - Oecumenica 1, ed. by W. Winkler Dietmar & Li Tang (Wien: LIT Verlag: 2009), 167-180; also to be published in the VOHD catalogues compiled by Zieme and Hunter & Dickens.

[60] To be published in the VOHD catalogue compiled by Raschmann.

[61] This line is written vertically on the left side of the fragment.

[62] My thanks to Amir Harrak for this latter suggestion, which potentially identifies the name of the monk who wrote it.

[63] Personal communication, October 1, 2009.

[64] Mentioned in Sims-Williams, "Christian Literature in Middle Iranian Languages," 285. Due to its multilingual nature, it will probably be included in three VOHD catalogues: those compiled by Hunter & Dickens, Raschmann, and Sims-Williams.

[65] Personal communication, October 1, 2009.

[66] These words (ܫܡܫܐ ܫܒܥ) are written in large brush strokes by a different hand.

[67] This word (ܫܢܝ) is also written in large brush strokes by a different hand.

[68] My thanks to Nicholas Sims-Williams for guidance in figuring out this side of the folio (personal communication, 13 October, 2009).

[69] The word is not marked as plural, but based on the word below it should perhaps be interpreted as such.

[70] The *seyame* plural marking is missing.

[71] Note the spelling of this word, in contrast to the standard form ܫܡܫܐ.

[72] This word (ܫܡܫܐ) is also written in large brush strokes by a different hand, obscuring the original line underneath, which must have been the Syriac numeral for 400, either ܬܫܡܐ (standard) or ܬܐ ܫܒܥ (non-standard, but following the pattern used for 300 in line 12).

[73] All to be published in the VOHD catalogue compiled by Hunter & Dickens. For the decipherment and translation of the Uyghur script, I am indebted to Peter Zieme.

[74] Or possibly the last page of a quire.

[75] Lacunae are filled in from the Syriac in text block 4. ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ means "the gospel" in a generic sense; ܣܒܪܐ refers to the preaching of a specific evangelist (e.g. Matthew, Mark, Luke or John).

[76] This word seems to be written in a different hand from that of the other text blocks. The word following it is in Uyghur: *''nk tsy "?"* (personal communication, 11 May, 2009).

[77] Or possibly the last page of a quire.

[78] Albert Von le Coq, "Kurze Einführung in die uigurische Schriftkunde," in *Mitteilungen des*

Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen an der Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin. Jahrgang 1919 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1919), 95; Zieme, "Notes on a bilingual prayer book from Bulayık," 169. This text will be published shortly by Peter Zieme and the author of this article.

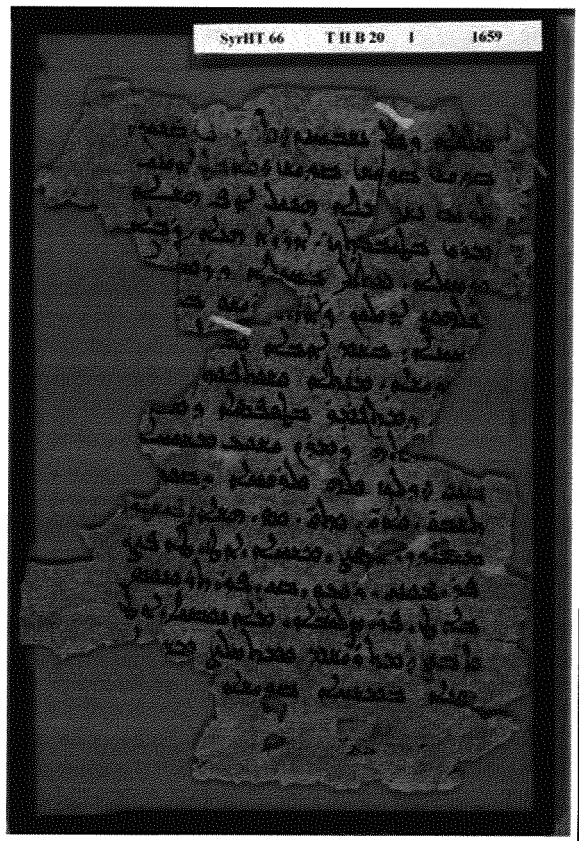
[79] I am indebted to Mar Emmanuel, bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East in Canada, for identifying the source of this text. The Syriac text can be found in the edition of the Hudra prepared by Mar Toma Darmo, Vol. I (Trichur, Mar Narsai Press, 1960), p. 104 (ܡܕ).

[80] Notably Émile Benveniste, Philippe Gignoux, Olaf Hansen, Miklós Maróth, F.W.K. Müller, Martin Schwartz, Nicholas Sims-Williams, Werner Sundermann and Peter Zieme.

[81] See the quotation above, at the end of the Introduction.

[82] Pier Giorgio Borbone, "Siroturcica 1. The Önggüds and the Syriac Language," in *Malphono w-Rabo d-Malphone: Studies in Honor of Sebastian P. Brock,* ed. by George Kiraz (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2008), 7.

Fig. 1
SyrHT 66 (T II B 20 No. 1) Side 1



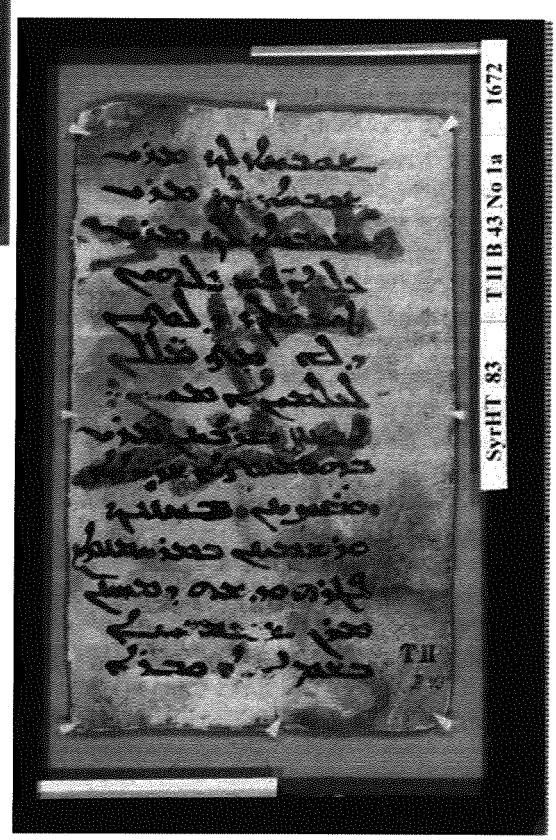


Fig. 2
SyrHT 83, side 1

Fig. 3: SyrHT 83 side 2



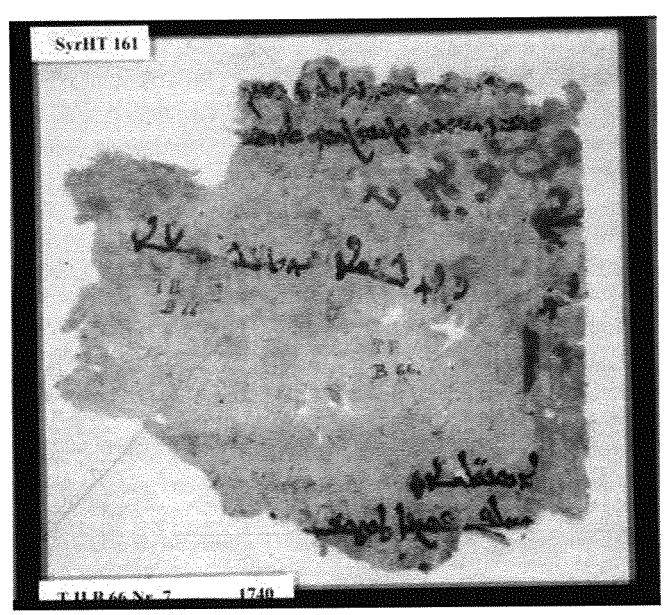


Fig. 4:
SyrHT 161 (T II B 66 No. 7) side 1

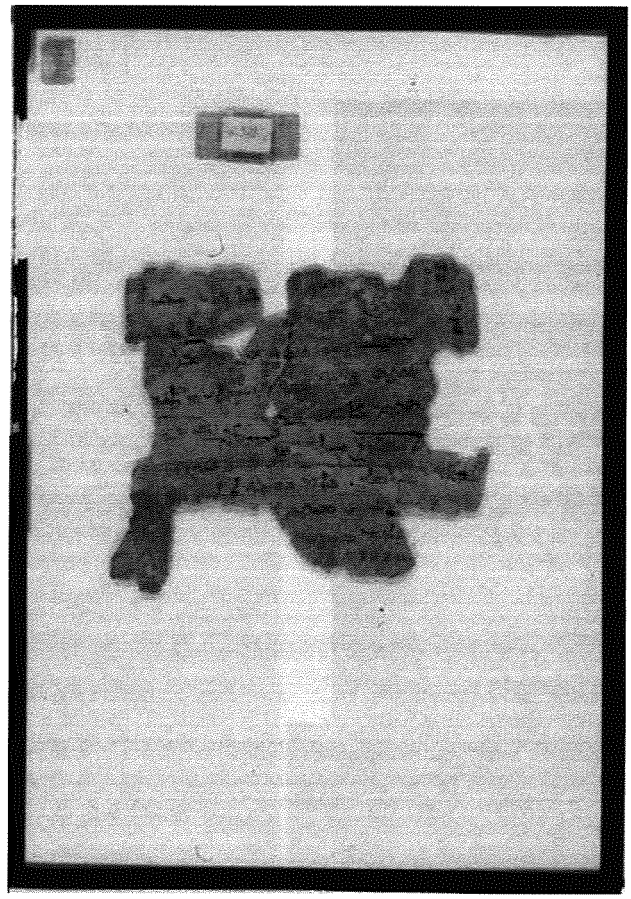


Fig. 5: N 354
(T II B 66 No. 48a)
side 2
→

Fig. 6: SyrHT 124
(T II B 58 No. 2a)
Side 1 ↓

