

HARAN GAWAITA

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THE HARAN GAWAITA

ܣܗܘܘܢܐ ܕܗܪܢܐ

AND

THE BAPTISM OF HIBIL-ZIWA

ܘܕܒܘܬܐ ܕܗܝܒܝܠ ܙܝܘܐ

THE MANDAIC TEXT REPRODUCED

TOGETHER WITH TRANSLATION, NOTES AND COMMENTARY

BY

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The *Haran Gawaita*, on account of its fragmentary character, has suffered more than any other Mandaean text at the hands of late copyists who emended and edited parts which were faulty or misunderstood. Their grammatical solecisms and misspellings have added to the difficulty of translating an already obscure text. The most sanguine of translators could hardly claim with a clear conscience that the more **difficult** and involved passages had been adequately rendered into English. The present translator is aware that some renderings are **too** free and others too literal, **and** can **only** ask for indulgence on such counts.

The *Haran Gawaita* is perhaps the **most difficult** of all the Mandaean books, the Kabbalistic portions of the *Alf Trisar Šuialia* excepted. It abounds in ambiguous words and phrases and its predictions concerning the future are often veiled by a dark vagueness of language akin to that employed by Nostradamus and others who have peered into the future. The prophecy concerning the return of the Messiah, although it calls Jesus a "false" messiah, paints a picture unexpectedly fair of His reign on earth. One is inclined to wonder if a Christian text has been inserted or whether a passage recounting His downfall has disappeared from the original.

The colophon attached to **D. C. 9** is more than usually illiterate and I have not translated it.

E Civitate Vaticana, die 11 decembris 1959:

Fr. PETRUS CANISIUS DE, Ep. Porphy.

Vic. Gen. Civ. Vat.

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INTRODUCTION

ABBREVIATIONS

- D. C. (= «Drower Collection») Mandaean manuscripts in the Bodleian Library and in the possession of the author of this book.
- G. R. *Ginza: der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer übersetzt und erklärt*, von Mark Lidzbarski (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1925).
- J. B. *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer* von Mark Lidzbarski (Töpelmann, Giessen, 1915).
- J. R. A. S. *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.
- M. L. *Mandäische Liturgien, mitgeteilt, übersetzt und erklärt* von Mark Lidzbarski (Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1920).
- MMII *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran, their Cults, Customs, Magic, Legends and Folklore* by E. S. Drower (Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1937).
- P. Persian.

Present-day Mandaean living in Lower (Iraq and in Khuzistan) have often assured me that their ancestors migrated from the north. Of this very definite tradition I gave some account in my book *The Mandaean of Iraq and Iran*¹, in which I incorporated some corroborative legends taken down verbatim from some of the older men. In these stories, a 'Tura d Madaia' occurred too often to be a pure invention. The 'Jebel Haran' was mentioned once.

The *Haran Gawaita*², the text here translated, is considered by Mandaean to be the true history of their race. Yet, in the *Ginza Rba* there is only one reference to "Haran", "cedars from Haran"; although there are two references to a place called Hauraran to which the *Draša d Yahia* refers once. To quote from these books (translations of them may be found in Lidzbarski's *Der Ginza* [G. R. pp. 502 and 593], and his *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer* [J. B. p. 232]):

"Speak to them of the pure Hauraran".

"He lifted him up and showed him Hauraran in which souls become perfect" (G. R.).

"This living water has come from the great Hauraran" (J. B.).

Hauran and Hauraran appear in a personified form in the *Niania*, a volume of liturgical prayers, sometimes as a single genius or heavenly power; and a being called Hauraran-Karkawan-Ziwa is invoked.

Lidzbarski rooked for the original home of the Mandaean in the West. In his Introduction to G. R. he says:

"Ich suchte ihren Sitz auch enger zu lokalisieren; im Transjordan-gebiete angesichts des Hauran-Gebirges ... Von Genius Hauran vermutete ich, dass in ihm das vergottete Hauran-Gebirge erhalten sei ..." (p. vi).

And in his *Mandäische Liturgien*, p. xix:

"In den Gebeten begegnen wir offer dem Genienpaar **האוראן** und **האוראראן** ... Der zweite Name ist eine Erweiterung des ersten durch

¹ (Clarendon Press: Oxford 1937).

² The two words are pronounced Ha-rang-awaita: the "rang" as something between the English words "rang" and "rung"; the "th" as th in "thought". Note that *Haran* is not pronounced How-ran.

Wiederholung eines Konsonanten ... Der Name **המוראן** ist also der primäre. Ich identifiziere ihn mit dem geographischen Namen **הורן**. Es könnte an sich die Haurān-Ebene wie das Haurān-Gebirge sein. Aber gerade für die Vergottung von Bergen haben wir viele Beispiele aus der semitischen Welt. Da nun der Haurān unter ihren höheren Wesen erscheint, setzt voraus, dass er in ihrem Gesichtskreis gestanden hat. ... Daher ist nicht anzunehmen dass jene Urgemeinschaft ihren Sitz in den öden Gebieten östlich vom Haurān-Gebirge hatte. Hingegen kommt die im Westen liegende fruchtbare Haurān-Ebene, in deren östlichem Horizont das Gebirge sich erhebt, gut in Betracht¹.

In J. B. xvi he contended that Mandaeism can only have originated in Jewish circles:

“Ihre Terminologie in Lehre und Kultus ist so stark durch das Alte Testament und das Hebräische beeinflusst, wie man es sonst ausserhalb des Judentums nicht findet” (J. B. xvi).

He notes elsewhere that, although a bitter hatred of Jews is constantly shown in Mandaean literature, the Mandaeans themselves refer to a group of followers led by John the Baptist (Yahia-Yuhana) in Jerusalem. He recognises, however, and scholars have recently accentuated this fact, that Mandaean rites and religion are strongly tinged by Persian ideas, eschatology and rituals; words, and details of cult are often purely Persian.

While John the Baptist is in no sense the founder of their faith in Mandaean eyes, he is mentioned in the prayer which asks for the remission of sins for the dead, a prayer which names spirits of light, patriarchs, and holy men of past times as well as the recently dead. This prayer also petitions for:

“those three hundred and sixty-five priests who came forth from the place of Jerusalem the city; forgiving of sins be there for them”.

The story of “Miriai”, her conversion to the Mandaean faith and her flight from an already partially ruined Jerusalem to the Euphrates is referred to several times in the *Draša d'Yahia*, especially in the Miriai fragment (see J. B. pp. 123 ff.), and in the *Ginza Rba* there is a reference to Miriai which resembles the story in the *Haran Bawaita*. Anuš-‘Uthra¹ says:

“I took upon me a bodily form and went to the place Jerusalem; I spoke with my voice and preached, I became a Healer to Miriai. A

¹ Professor F. C. Burkitt (*Church and Gnosis*, Cambridge University Press 1932, pp. 110-112) suggested that the Mandaean Anuš-uthra was “the Marcionite Jesus”.

Healer I was for her, for Miriai, and I gave her complete health. I was called a Healer of Kušta that cureth and taketh no fee. I took Miriai down into the Jordan and baptised her and signed her with the pure sign. And from Miriai, the perfect one, Yaqif and Bnia-Amin went forth. From Yaqif and Bnia-Amin three hundred and sixty-five disciples (or “priests”) went forth. They went forth, and Jerusalem, home of the Jews, waxed wroth and dew the disciples who pronounce the Name of Life¹.

When Anuš-‘Uthra appeals to Heaven, Jerusalem is completely destroyed, as in the *Haran Bawaita*. Miriai's conversion is also the theme of a song in the *Niania*².

So much for published texts. I will now select a few relevant passages from some of the legends which I collected, condensing them as far as possible.

- a) MMII pp. 268-9. The narrator said that wood to build the Ark was collected on the “Jebel Harrañ” (The story was told in Arabic).
- b) MMII pp. 261-3. Moses was against the Mandaeans and had quarrelled with them in Egypt. King Ardban (Artabanus) of the Mandaeans had a vision and heard a voice coming out of the House of Life saying “Rise ... (etc.). He rose and led them out of Egypt by way of a sea which divided (The crossing of the ‘Yama d' Suf’ [Red Sea] follows). The legend continues with the settlement of sixty thousand Mandaeans led by Ardban (Artabanus) in the ‘Tura d' Madai’ (Median hill-country?). The story of Yahia-Yuhana follows: an embroidery on the story related in the *Draša d' Yahia*.
- c) MMII pp. 266 ff. “Abraham was of our people — we called him Bahram”. The narrator continued by relating the story of his circumcision as a result of disease (c.f. the account given by the Egyptian Manetho). Al-Birūni (tenth century) repeated the story, more or less in the Mandaean form, beginning “The remnant of these Šābians are living in Harrañ, their name (*al-Harrāniya*) being derived from their place”.
- d) MMII pp. 273-282. In this legend a darwish named Bahram (or Bihram) was described as being a Mandaean, and member of a celibate community “in the north”. It describes making images of the planets, in a manner which was apparently not inconsistent with the faith. “At one time the Mandaiia (Mandaeans) were the masters of the north and of this country also. Their origin was of the mountains, and they always loved the mountains better than the plains, for in the hills there are springs in which to bathe, in winter warm, and in summer cold. For our people have always loved bathing and

¹ For the German translation see G. R. 341. ff.

² See M. L. pp. 209 ff.

- washing". The story ends with the baptism of John by 'Manda d Hiia' almost as told in the *Ginza Rba* (G. R. pp. 192-6).
- e) MMII pp. 282-6. This story makes Miriai daughter of a "king of 'Babylon'; "and she was a Jewess". "Once on a time the Mandaeans and Naṣoraēans and 'tarmidi' (priests, disciples) had their dwellings in Jerusalem". The story ends with the flight of Mandaeans and Naṣoraēans from persecution in Jerusalem to the 'Ṭura d Madai' and the destruction of Jerusalem.
- f) MMII pp. 309-318. "The Mountain of the Madai...! Where are our people? In which spot?" It replied: "They are in the Jebel Madai" (for Arabs call the Jebel Mandai the Jebel Maddai). This story hints that the northern Mandaeans were vegetarians.
- g) MMII pp. 319-325. "How the Mandai (*Mandaiia*) and their 'ganzi-bra' left the Mountain of the Madai for a better country further North". This story describes how some Mandaeans in Madai (Media?) decided that "they would leave the Jebel Mandai and go back with those who had come from their country in the north, where there was no dirt, nor wild beast, nor any harmful thing".
- h) MMII pp. 369-399. Towards the end of this story which is largely Persian and gives a version of a story of the Shah-Nameh, a place named at-Ṭib is mentioned. "There is a region called at-Ṭib near the river Karun... its name was not formerly at-Ṭib but was called 'Matha d Naṣuraiia'".

The Jewish origin of the Ṣābiyun¹ is supported by the scholarly Al-Birūni, who writing at the beginning of the eleventh century says that the "real Ṣabians" (C.A.N. p. 188) are:

"the remnants of the Jewish tribes who remained in Babylonia when the other tribes left it for Jerusalem in the days of Cyrus and Artaxerxes. These remaining tribes... adopted a system mixed up of Magism and Judaism like that of the Samaritans in Syria".

In my *Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran* I quoted — not always correctly, as my knowledge of Mandaic was still that of a beginner — from the *Haran Gawaita* which I thought then, and still think, of importance. The text is highly prized by Mandaeans themselves, and it undoubtedly chronicles an ancient and sincerely believed tradition. I venture to think that it may contribute to the solution of the problem of the origin and religious background of this most interesting people. We are no longer quite where we stood when

¹ Mandaeans are called Ṣābiyun by Arab writers; (*Ṣabba* or *Ṣubba* in the colloquial).

considering this question. Reitzenstein¹, and recently several Swedish scholars², have drawn attention to Persian elements in Mandaean beliefs, practices and language. A book published in Uppsala in 1949³ brought evidence to show that some of the most ancient Manichaean psalms, the Coptic Psalms of Thomas, were paraphrases and even word-for-word translations of Mandaic originals; prosody and phrase offering proof that the Manichaean was the borrower and not vice-versa. It was therefore suggested that at an early stage Manichaeism was contemporary with Mandaeanism and that the writer of the psalms was steeped in Mandaean literature.

It is worthy of note that the *Haran Gawaita* speaks of 'Naṣuraiia', Naṣoraēans, rather than of *Mandaiia*, Mandaeans. In the ritual literature of the sect the term "Naṣoraean" is used to describe the priest, and "Mandaean" the layman. 'Mandaiuta' is the state of the layman, 'Naṣiruta' that of the priest, the adept. This being so, may not 'Mandaiia' be a form of 'Madaia' "Mede" rather than a derivation from the non-Mandaic word 'manda' as meaning "gnosis"? Not only is there no instance of 'manda' being used for the word "knowledge" or "gnosis" in Mandaean writings, but it is employed in a totally different sense as denoting the cult-hut and enclosure. As will be seen, the *Haran Gawaita*, trustworthy or not, states that in the highlands of Media there were Naṣoraēans, and that it was to these that the persecuted disciples of John fled from Jerusalem.

The author of our text sometimes speaks of Naṣoraēans as if they were Parthians. It must be remembered that, until comparatively recently, nationality in the Middle East was barely recognised; it was religion rather than blood which claimed loyalty⁴. Mandaeans speak as if their original "home" was Ṭura d Madai — the Median highland. Distinctive in type Mandaeans certainly are; many remark a striking likeness between the priestly caste and Samaritans. Recent anthropological research carried out with painstaking thoroughness, has revealed that the 'Subba'

¹ *Die Vorgeschichte der Christlichen Taufe*, R. Reitzenstein (Teubner, Leipzig and Berlin, 1929). For an inscription referring to a baptized sect found in the Hauran see op. cit. p. 18 and note.

² E.g. G. Widengren, Ivan Engell, etc. See also Reitzenstein op. cit. pp. 48-9.

³ *Studies in the Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Torgny Säve-Söderbergh.

⁴ Jews are an example of this confusion of race and religion. There are black Jews in India and Abyssinia and fair, snub-nosed Jews coming from Eastern Europe; yet all are "Jews".

(Mandaean) can be classified as members of the Iranian Plateau race¹. Bar Khuni in the Scholion² repeats a foolish story attributing the foundation of the sect to a mendicant named Ado, who "was born in Adiabene", and although the absurdities of the tale are self-evident, Theodore Bar Khuni was apparently familiar with some Mandaean literature, and Ado's journey south into Mesene may be a distortion of the Mandaean migration into Khuzistan and Lower Mesopotamia.

I have two copies of the *Haran Gawaita*: one, copied in 1088 A. H. forms the eighth section of a very long scroll entitled *Alf Trisar Šuiālia* (D. C. 36)³. The first seven parts represent a Mandaean priest's library, and are a collection of manuscripts, mostly fragmentary; some begin and end in the middle of a sentence. (I have a second copy of *Alf Trisar Šuiālia*, D. C. 6, which like scroll Code Sabēn 16 in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, has no eighth part). My other copy of the *Haran Gawaita* (D. C. 9) appears to have been detached from a copy of the *Alf Trisar Šuiālia*, for the copyist writes:

"Then ye shall know that these are seven (eight?) *diwans* which are put together into one *diwan*".

A *diwan* according to Steingass⁴ is in itself a miscellany: "a miscellaneous collection from various authors", and the seven *diwans* may be the missing section referred to above.

The two copies differ little, even reproducing obvious errors, which is natural since both, judging by the list of copyists, started

¹ Dr. Henry Field (*The Anthropology of Iraq*, pt. 1, no. 2, p. 303) notes that "in general the Subba were considerably lighter in skin color than the Arabs of central and southern Iraq... often as light in pigmentation as northern Europeans... the Subba are distinguished from all other peoples in Iraq by the quantity of head, face and body hair". And on p. 310: "a definite number of the Subba can be classified as members of the Iranian Plateau race". Dr. Field's research was the more valuable because the Šubba (Madaeans) have been segregated over a long period by strict religious law. In spite of a high degree of homogeneity, however, Dr. Field concludes that the Šubba are not an entirely single racial stock. On the whole, Dr. Field's report corroborates the Mandaean tradition of a migration from Media into Southern Babylonia and Persia.

² See Pognon, *Inscriptions Mandaites*, Paris, 1898, pp. 224 ff.

³ In J.R.A.S. 1941 I summarised the contents of the first seven sections of *Alf Trisar Šuiālia*.

⁴ *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary*, F. Steingass, Ph. D. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co Ltd.), London, 1930.

from a single and rare copy in a mutilated condition¹. For some time I was reluctant to translate the text for much of it, especially at the beginning, seemed oddly inconsequent, disconnected and senseless. When I re-examined the manuscripts recently, I discovered the reason. Here and there, especially in the first part, the narrative is sprinkled freely with double circles. Now the double circle in other Mandaean texts indicates either a complete break in matter or subject corresponding to the period or full stop, or it is a sign that a recitation in antiphon is to pass to the other priest or priests participating. It dawned upon me that the lavish use of the symbol represented breaks in a manuscript badly damaged by fire or water, passages which were either missing or unreadable. The conscientious copyist, unwilling to leave any part of so precious a document unrecorded, filled in blanks by the double circle. My theory was confirmed by the fact that as the roll continued, the double circle disappeared.

The text begins in the middle of a sentence, and is in itself a riddle. Who was the "him"? Who was it that took refuge in "Haran Gawaita" just before the Christian era? It is evident that he was neither John the Baptist nor Christ, although a fragmentary and polemical reference to Christ and his brother follows, succeeded by a legendary life of John the Baptist. The story of John differs from that in other Mandaean texts; for instance, Zachariah is not mentioned. The Mandaean has no theory of divinely inspired scripture; to him the immutable and sacro-sanct elements of his religion are the ancient rituals, baptism and the various forms of the sacramental meal. It does not worry him that there are a number of creation stories, contradictory of one another or that there is confusion in his heterogenous pantheon of spirits of light and darkness. What does matter is that no rule of ritual purity be broken, and that every gesture and action prescribed for ritual shall be rigidly observed.

¹ I have discovered no copy in European libraries.

HARAN GAWAITA

(D. C. 9., D. C. 36)

TRANSLATION

(Note Where breaks in the text are indicated by a double circle I have substituted points).

My Lord be **praised**. In the name of the Great **Life**, healing, vindication, health, soundness, speaking and hearing, **joy** of heart and forgiving of sins be there for me, Zakia Zihrun son of Šadia, and **far** my offspring and brothers (and **sisters**), and for my parents, in the strength of Yawar Ziwa and Simat-Hia¹. *Finis*.

And Haran **Gawaita**² receiveth **him** and that city in which there were Naşoraeans, because there was no road for the Jewish rulers. Over them was King **Arđban**³. And sixty thousand Naşoraeans abandoned the Sign of the Seven and entered the Median hills⁴, a place where we were free **from** domination by *all* other races. And they built cult-huts (*bimandia*) and abode in the Call of the Life **and** in the strength of the high **King** of Light until they came to their end⁵. And they loved the Lord, that is, Adonai⁶, until in the House of Israel there was created something which was not placed⁷ in the womb of **Mary**⁸, a daughter of Moses. It was hidden in her womb for nine months and bewitched her⁹ until the nine months were fulfilled and she was in labour and brought forth a **messiah**.

... and he called the people to himself and spoke of his death and took away some **of** mysteries of the (**sacred?**) Meal¹⁰ and abstained

¹ Thus D.C. 36. D.C. 9 begins "This is the Diwan of Haran Gawaita" and the copyist gives his name as Ram Zihrun son of Maliha.

² "The **Inner** Haran". Is this the city Harran or the Ĥaurān? Probably the latter.

³ Artabanus, but which? History knows five kings of Parthia with this name. The Artabanus contemporary with Christ was Artabanus III, but the passage above might refer to an earlier Artabanus.

⁴ In both manuscripts 'tura d Midai'.

⁵ 'alma d akaliun'. Unusual: one would expect 'akiliun'.

⁶ In D.C. 36 this is plainly 'marh d Adunai' "the lord of A".

⁷ "d layahib", "not given", i.e. not begotten by her husband?

⁸ Later in the manuscript; Mary is called Mariam.

⁹ The Pael form of HZA with 'l' or 'l' = "to influence" (for evil), "get the better of", "bewitch" (of a demon). Lit. "bewitching her".

¹⁰ 'unasibh lrazia d kilta mnh ulgaṭ pumh mn kilta'. The passage is obscure. I take it to refer to the sacramental meal eaten for the "raising up" of the soul ('kilta' = "food", "a meal"). The first half of the sentence might also mean "he took the mysteries of the food therewith".

from the Food. And he took to himself a people and was called by the name of the False Messiah. And he perverted them all and made them like himself who perverted words of life and changed them into darkness and even perverted those accounted Mine. And he overturned all the rites. And he and his brother dwell on Mount Sinai, and he joineth all races to him, and perverteth and joineth to himself a people, and they are called Christians.

... and from Niṣrat¹ (*Nazareth*), a city of the Jews, which is called the city of Qum.²...

... because it is a shrine³; for Mercury founded a community in Qum, and Saturn founded a community in Sinai...

... (*Jews were settled?*) in the Arab region which is called Basra, which is (*also*) called Sufat-Zaba⁴...

... one. The First Life conceived a plan for gaining a grasp⁵ in order to destroy the mysteries⁶ of Adonai from the seas and to destroy the plot of Ruha⁷ and Adonai⁸ which came (*emanated*) from the House of Ruha; to ruin the scheme of Ruha, before the presence of the great Father of Glory and to propagate⁹ the mysteries (*of the Great life?*)...

¹ Cf. the Syriac *ܢܨܪܬ*. I have not found this place name in any other Mandaean text.

² 'Qum', P.S. Supp. "'Qum', W. of Hamadan and 80 kilometres NNW of Kašan". Does this fragment mean that Jews had named some settlement in this area after Nazareth?

³ 'škinta' in Mandaic usually applies to the cult-hat in the sacred area; hence "sanctuary", "shrine".

⁴ D.C. 9 has 'Suf Zaba' and D.C. 36 'Sufat-Zaba'. The former means "River of Reeds" and the latter "River of the End". Both would be applicable to the Shaṭṭ-al-'Arab, which is the stream formed by the Tigris and Euphrates after they have joined at Qurna. This river opens after the port of Baṣrah into the Persian Gulf. The lower part of the former province of Baṣrah is marshy and overgrown with reeds.

⁵ Or "gaining a party or faction".

⁶ "Mysteries" refers throughout to rituals, particularly to ritual meals commemorating the dead.

⁷ Ruha is the personification of human desire and lust. She is sometimes called Ruha-ḡ-Qudša (Holy-Spirit), but not in this text. By her son 'Ur she was mother of the seven planets and the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

⁸ Adonai is described in Mandaean texts as the sun-god worshipped by the Jews. Yahu never figures as a Jewish deity but is named often in exorcisms and magic.

⁹ I have ventured to think that 'šarhab'il' (in both texts) is an early miscopying of 'šarubia' "to propagate", šarhabiel, a fertility spirit, is mentioned later in the narrative.

... in Tmar¹, the pure Jordan, and bore witness to the Truth². And in the great Jordan a pure seed was formed... and came and was sown in the womb of 'Nišbai, so that from it³ a child might come into being, a prophet of the great Father of Glory, praised be His name! in order to destroy the building of Ruha and Adonai.

... in the House which Ruha, and her seven sons built I surrounded all the district...

... Madai⁴, which Ruha and her seven sons could not reach because on it (*were people who belonged?*) to Hibil-Ziwa⁵...

... of the Life, and to propagate a race in the House which Ruha and her seven sons built, so that she should not have dominion... in the midst of the worlds, and he shall be called Yahia-Yuhana, the prophet of Kušta⁶, the apostle... who dwelt at the city of Jerusalem; a healer⁷ whose medicine was Water of Life, a healer that healeth... (*evil spirits?*) which go forth from Ruha and Adonai to destroy the physical body.

... Then... when the boy was born Anuš-'Uthra⁸ came by command of the great Father of Glory and they came before Hibil-Ziwa by command of the great Father of Glory and⁹ travelled over deserts towards Mount Sinai and proceeded ... towards a community called Ruha's that is situated near the place where the Ark was built (...?)

¹ A small town named Thamara was situated to the S.E. of the Dead Sea.

² 'Kušta' (Right, Right-dealing, Truth) is personified by the Madaeans, and resembles the Persian 'Aka'. See p. 17 n. 5.

³ D.C. 9 has 'mana' for 'mnh'.

⁴ Judging by the context the words preceding 'Madai' were 'ṭura ḡ' - the mountain(s) of Media.

⁵ A saviour-spirit, sometimes called Yawar-Ziwa.

⁶ Kušta, see note 2.

⁷ This "healer" according to the *Ginza Rba* (see G.R. pp. 29-30) is Anuš-'Uthra, who "cometh and travelleth into Jerusalem when he had clothed himself in a garment of clouds of water" (*baptiem?*). "He assumed a bodily appearance but was not clad in an earthly garment. In him there is no heat or wrath. And he cometh in the years of Pilate, a governor of the world, but Anuš-'Uthra cometh to the world in the strength of the high King of Light. He maketh the sick to walk, he openeth (*the eyes of*) the blind, he cleanseth lepers and setteth the broken upright and maketh cripples walk, the deaf and dumb to speak and the dead to live, and he winneth converts amongst the Jews". Professor Burkitt (*Churoh and Gnosis*, p. 111) saw in this passage an adaptation from Marcionite teachings about Jesus. This is possible, but it is very certain that Madaeans never identified Anuš-'Uthra with Jesus.

⁸ See p. vi, note 1.

⁹ The text has 'ḡ' in both copies, but the particle is meaningless.

and she¹ will be a deliverer (*midwife?*) to the child² ... into Parwan³, the white mountain, an earthly place. And (in?) that place the fruit and sky⁴ are large. There ... (*groweth?*) the Tree which nourisheth infants⁵. And they took back Sufnai the lilith to a (?) place so that when they should perform⁶ a living⁷ baptism to purify the child, the apostle of Kušta, Yahia-Yuhana...

...And they did not alter the order or commands which emanated from the presence of the great Father of Glory... Sufnai the lilith took him (*the* child) before the eyes of his mother fell upon him... at the order of Anuš-'Uthra. And they mounted up towards Parwan, the white mountain... (*a place where*) fruit and sky is (are?) large. There they set down Yahia near the Tree which nourisheth nurslings... Then Sufnai the lilith returned to her place. When thirty days had passed, Hibil-Ziwa came at the command of the great first Father of Glory, and he came to the Median hill-country⁸ and sent Anuš-'Uthra to Bihram, son of 'uthras⁹ and to the Median

¹ "She" probably refers to the lilith Sufnai, who must have been named in a missing passage as the midwife.

² D. C. 9 has 'yardna' for 'yalda'. Perhaps 'parqa' is "crossroad", making the sentence "it is the cross-road to the Jordan". D. C. 36, the older text, is probably the correct version.

³ Parwan. In the *Draša d Yahia* it is related that at the birth of John, the Jews, furious at the promised greatness of the child, sought to destroy him. "When Anuš-'Uthra heard this, he took the babe and brought it to Parwan the white mountain, upon which sucklings and babes are reared upon 'mambuha'" (sacramental water). Lidzbarski thinks (J. B. p. 116, note 3) that Parwan Tura must be identical with another mountainous district often referred to as Tarwan. It is worthy of note that the five-day feast of purification in the spring is called Parwanaiia by Mandaeans.

⁴ The sentence is corrupt. In the two passages where this phrase occurs (see below) 'rba' is singular. The sky or firmament is never called "large" elsewhere. It probably was "fruit and crops" or something of the kind.

⁵ Mandaeans believe that children who die before baptism; are conveyed to a pleasant limbo where they suck the milky fruit of a tree called 'lana d mrabia yanqia'. There is a picture of this tree in the *Diwan Abatur (Studi e Testi, 151)*.

⁶ Literally "showed forth".

⁷ A corrupt or mutilated sentence. 'Haia' (living), the fem. of 'haia', means also "midwife". The sentence probably meant originally that the midwife, Sufnai, was baptised with the infant. Mother and midwife should both be baptised after a birth, and the baby should be baptised as soon as possible.

⁸ D. C. 9 has 'tura d madai'; D. C. 36 here and in another passage 'tura d midai'. See p. 5, n. 4.

⁹ Bihram (called Behram and Bahram by modern Mandaeans) might be the founder of Mandaean baptism-rites. When immersion takes place, the

mountains. And they took Bihram from the Median hills and went: (to Parwan?) and performed baptism and baptised the child beside the Tree that nourisheth nurslings. And (*when*) he was seven years old, Anuš-'Uthra came and wrote for him the A, Ba, Ga, Da¹. ...and, until he was twenty-two years old, he taught him about all *naširuta*².

... then, at the command of the great Father of Glory he set the crown on him³ and seated him beside himself, until they came to the city of Jerusalem amongst the community which Ruha founded... all belonged to her and to her seven sons except (those from?) the Median hills⁴, Aharan⁵...

... Hibil-Ziwa, of the Median hills, from which they wandered from mountain to mountain. ... mountain⁶ to the city of the Našoraeans is a distance of six thousand parasangs; it is called the enclave ('hdara') of Hibil-Ziwa... Then Yahia-Yuhana took the Jordan and the medicine Water (of Life) ... and he cleansed lepers, opened (*the eyes of*) the blind and lifted the broken (maimed) to walk on their feet⁷... by the strength of the lofty King of Light — praised be his Name! — and gave speech and hearing to all who sought (him). And he was called in the world "envoy of the High King of Light" — praised be his Name! — (*even*) at the (*very*) abode and building of Ruha and Adonai and her seven sons.

And he taught disciples and proclaimed the Call of the Life in the fallen House (Temple?). Forty-two years (*he* dwelt) therein, and then his Transplanter⁸ looked upon him and he arose with his Transplanter, praised be his name! ..and a time arrived, sixty years after Yahia-Yuhana had departed the body ...the Jews, just as

Mandaean baptist says, 'Šbiit bmašbuta d Bihram rba br rurbia' "Thou art baptised with the baptism of the great Bihram, son of the mighty". Bihram's name is pronounced at the ritual submersion of polluted vessels. Bihram is the Avestan and Iranian Verethraghna, the genius of victory; but perhaps the Bihram mentioned at baptism is a human Bihram.

¹ Cf. a similar anecdote in the Gospel of Thomas.

² 'Naširuta' comprises all that a priest learns: prayers, rituals, theology, secret interpretations, exorcisms and astrology.

³ That is, consecrated him priest. The 'taga' (crown, Suet) is the badge of priesthood.

⁴ 'Tura d Madai'. It is evident in this passage that 'tura' refers to a range of hills, not to a single mountain.

⁵ 'Aharan' in both mss.

⁶ "From the hills" if the missing words were 'mn tura'.

⁷ Verbally identical with the passage in the *Ginza Rba* quoted in note 7, p. 5, except that there the healer was Anuš-'Uthra.

⁸ I. e. the death-angel, Šauriel.

their former strength (*returned?*) to Ruha and Adonai, who became **arrogant...** Hence, after sixty years, Ruha and Adonai planned to **erect... the fallen House' (Temple)** and spoke to Moses the prophet **and the children of Israel who had built the House (Temple)...** Then they raised an idle cry against the tribes of Anuš-'Uthra, the Head of the Age, and shed their blood so that not a man of the disciples and Nasoraean were left... Then the Jordan and its tributaries shrank back and mounted the dry land beside it¹. And the light of the banners² of Abatur³ and Anuš-'Uthra (*was quenched?*)... Then Ruha scattered the Jews... who is called 'of the House of the Seven', and then Adonai sent a staff... And he spoke over it and struck Suf-Zaba⁴ and the waters that abide in Suf-Zaba were divided, like the two mountains of a gorge and there was a road. And Ruha brought those (*Jews?*) over Suf-Zaba. And she⁵ built for them, and pressed out for them clay brick that is sacred, and constructed a building and they set up for it column after column of falsehood, and raised up each (*fallen?*) column... and Darkness was formed therefrom, **and they settled (therein?) the Jews, who sinned and caused havoc.. (The new Jerusalem had?) three walls,** of which each was removed from its fellow, **and he teacheth about them..** And Ruha surrounded the latter Jerusalem of the Jews (*with these walls*) and then... Ruha... the Jews, and they could not remove the walls from them⁶... Then Anuš-'Uthra mounted up to his fathers and said, to them, to his fathers: "Thou didst bring the Jews and Ruha over Suf-Zaba **and she (Ruha) has built a building and has surrounded (it by) seven walls so that I am unable (to aid?) their armies?** What have ye ordered about us"? ... (*In this wise*) did Anuš-'Uthra speak with

¹ This word in the plural means "banks" or "the dry ground beside water". Cf. a passage in the *Ginza Rba* 'shaq lriqath' "it leapt its banks".

² For most Mandaean ceremonies a banner is planted in the ground. The streamer, of white silk, is several yards long. See MMII pp. 108-9.

³ Abatur Muzania weighs departed souls in his scales; Abatur Rama is his heavenly counterpart.

⁴ River of Reeds (see p. 4, note 4). The narrator has harked back to the Israelitish crossing of the "Red Sea" ('Yama Suf') of which the Cambridge Ancient History says (vol. ii, p. 361) "the account of the journey from the 'Red Sea' (יָם סוּף 'Sea of Reeds'; the precise identification is uncertain) is built up of stories that belong to a later stage...". Since 'Suf Zaba' was identified earlier in the text with the Shaṭṭ-al-'Arab in Lower Mesopotamia, this "crowding" may refer to some return of Jewish settlers in Babylonia to Palestine.

⁵ Read 'bnatun' for 'bnalun'.

⁶ The besieged Jews?

⁷ The besieged host; Romans?

his fathers; and told them, how it had happened. Then there came and arose the great Father of Glory together with his mild son Hibil... and they acted¹, and then Hibil came... towards Anuš-'Uthra and said to him: "Go down into Media and take seven shafts, that is seven darts, and go and pronounce (*magic*) words over them. **And take with thee seven guards from Mount Parwan² and take for them bows and they shall speak** aver them seven (*magic*) words, and they **will crumble the sacred brick in the House of Ruha;** for at every place where those arrows fall fire will break out and will devour (*it, rising*) into the sky and eat into the ground for twelve *nashis* by virtue of those pure and important spells. And the rule of Ruha and her seven sons and of the Jews will be brought to nought from now until the end of the world".

Thereupon Anuš-'Uthra changed nothing of that which they commanded him (*to do*), and Hibil-Ziwa came and burnt and destroyed Jerusalem and made it like heaps of ruins³. And he went to Baghdad⁴ and killed (*there*) all the *cohens* and took away government from them and pounded (*to*) dust⁵ every city in which there were Jews⁶. Moreover for the eight hundred years that their government was in Baghdad they exercised an autonomy amongst themselves — four hundred rulers — (for) the duration of a Jewish autonomy in Baghdad was eight hundred years; four hundred rulers from the Jews (*Jewish community*) wielded kingly office.⁷

Thus the House of the Jews came to naught and met its end, and the Host of darkness became powerless.

Those seven guards, who (*were of the?*) Chosen Elect⁷, summoned

¹ D. C. 9 has 'wabar' for 'wabad'.

² See p. 6, n. 3. Note that in this passage Parwan is stated to be in Media.

³ The destruction referred to here must be that by Titus in 70 B. C. If the narrative is continuous, rebellion of the Jews followed by siege and destruction began "sixty years" after John the Baptist. It is unlikely to be Hadrian's massacre and conquest of the Jews in 135 A. D. after Bar-Cochbar's rebellion.

⁴ For Baghdad read Babylon and Babylonia throughout. The whole vilayet of Baghdad as well as the city was called Babil by travellers well into the Middle Ages, and the narrator is addressing readers of his time.

⁵ D. C. 9 has 'uharga'; D. C. 30 'uharqa'.

⁶ This might refer to a massacre of the Jews which occurred during the anarchy which prevailed after the conflict of Artabanus III with Tiridates. Dr. N. C. Debevoise (*Political History of Parthia*, Univ. of Chicago, 1938, p. 164) says: "Within Seleucia there was continual strife between opposing elements. The native or Babylonian group and the Jews at first combined against the Greeks with success; but the Greeks managed to alienate the natives from their former allies, and together they massacred thousands of Jews".

⁷ I. e., were "Nasurania", Nasoraean.

by Anuš-'Uthra' at the word and command of Hibil-Ziwa, came as the great Father of Glory had commanded. And one of them was Zazai son of Hibil-'Uthra'. Him Anuš-'Uthra installed in the city of Baghdad. And Anuš-'Uthra installed one whose name was Papa son of Guda upon the great Tigris and at the mouth of the 'Ulai (*Karun river*). And one, named Anuš son of Naṣar-Hiia, Anuš-'Uthra installed at its source. Anuš-Šaiar son of Nsab (*he installed*) on the Euphrates, and one whose name was Brik-Yawar son of Bihdad he placed² at Pnmbit (*Pumbdita*³) a territory situated at the end of Sura⁴. And one, whose name was Nṣab son of Bihram, he placed on the mountain(s) of Glazlak⁵, and one whose name was Ska-Manda he set at the extremity of the mountain of the Water-springs situated at the tail-end of the Parwan range at the place from which those seven kings went forth and dispersed, (*namely, those seven guards*) who came with Anuš-'Uthra to conquer Darkness and to bring the plot of Ruha to nought. And they annihilated the rulers of the Jews and made them as if they had never existed. And Anuš-'Uthra placed them (*the seven viceroys*) at the seven corners of the House⁶, upon the seven horns of the worlds, in order to crush the power of Darkness and to establish the Call of the Life and to make void the rebellious outcry.

When Anuš-'Uthra had done that by order of Hibil-Ziwa whom the great Father of Glory commanded, Anuš-'Uthra went to the 'Tura d Madai' (Median mountains), called Haran. Gawaita, and brought Bhira son of Šitil⁷, a descendant of Artabanus king of the Nasoraean and set him up in Baghdad (*Babylon*) and installed him in sovereign power (*as its sovereign*). And in his company there were sixty Nasoraean, and the Nasoraean in Baghdad (*Babylonia*) multiplied and became many. Some of the tribe of Bhira son of Šitil, Nasoraean, came with him until there were four hundred maškna⁸ in Baghdad.

¹ This name and others in the text appear to be 'malwašia', secret names used for religious and magical purposes. See MMII pp. 81-2.

² 'yatib'. One would expect 'autibh'.

³ This must be Pumbditha on the Euphrates where there was a celebrated Jewish academy. The site is near the modern town of Fallujah on the Euphrates.

⁴ At Sura, a town in southern Babylonia between the canals, there was a noted Jewish academy.

⁵ I have been unable to identify this place-name.

⁶ Mandaean writers often refer to the earthly world as "the House".

⁷ See note 1.

⁸ The cult-hut and sacred enclosure are called the 'maškna' or 'manda', the hut itself being the 'bit maškna', or 'bimaškna' or 'bimanda'.

And it was revealed to me (?) and to all of them in this book; and they acted upon this reliable base¹ acting according to this (*its*): light² and removing nothing from this writing of great revelation³ that was given to Adam the first man and to his descendants (*and to*) all who bear witness unto this light and illumination until worlds' end. Naught shall pass away from the Word of the great Father of Glory, praised be his Name!

Then the said Zazai, one of the righteous elect⁴, rose to the firmament and abode with Yurba⁵ sixty-two days, and ascended to his fathers; but those (*other*) six chosen righteous ones sent forth their descendants into the world. And in the earthly world there are some of the children (*descendants*) of disciples whom Yahia-Yuhana taught, and amongst the Nasoraean some from the first planting of kings⁶ from the beginning, middle and end; (*yea*) there are some amongst the Nasoraean at the latter end of the age, for they go forth that ye may be filled, and Nasoraean of the end of the age are amongst their descendants. (*But*) from the Root of those disciples of Yahia-Yuhana there come forth (*also*) people of no degree⁷, for, when they speak of "descendants of kings of Baghdad) of the kingdom in Baghdad⁸", (*they forget that?*) two hundred and eighty years have passed since some of the sons of those disciples

¹ The expression 'širša taqna' or šarša taqna' has a wide application ('taqna' = firm, true, reliable, orthodox, 'širša' = root, basis, source, foundation). It can therefore be applied to the Mandaean faith, race or stock, or to a piece of orthodox literature, and in general is often used when referring to the community, as in Christian literature is the word "Church" (D. C. 9 has mistakenly, 'wa' before 'taqna').

² The word 'zhara' also means "warning" or "admonition" and as used when referring to the liturgy indicates that at certain passages names of deceased persons are to be inserted.

³ I have been doubtful about this word. The usual words for "revelation" and "scroll" respectively are 'galiuta' and 'magalta'. The doubling of the 'l' points to "roll" or "scroll", but the root GLA in the Pael ("to disclose" "reveal") doubles the 'l'.

⁴ Lidzbarski translated 'bhira zidqa' as "Manner von erprobter a-rechtigkeit". I have paraphrased by using a religious phrase expressive of the meaning.

⁵ 'Yurba', a spirit associated with the sun. The purgatory of Šamiš (the sun), is that to which those of other religions are sent (See *Diwan Abatur* p. 30; *Stude e Testi*, 151).

⁶ Here "kings" probably means "priests". See p. 7 note 3.

⁷ 'Takša' = (a) order, rank, degree, station; (b) rule, regulation, etc. A person 'd latakša' is one who is ill-bred and lawless, uncontrolled, ill-mannered.

⁸ Unbracketed words in italics are a gloss.

of **Yahia-Yuhana** went forth, so that Ruha cometh and confuseth them and twisteth words and perverteth seals¹ and changeth phrases and prayers" by agency of descendants of those disciples, that is, those disciples that were propagated from Jewish seed². For the Son of the Pure Drop, the **Mystery**³, (*was of?*) the Jews, **Jerusalem of the Jew**⁴. Ruha caused them to obey the mysteries of the body, and (**so**) they fell away from purity (*the pure doctrine?*).

I will tell you, (**Oye**) priests who live in the Arab age, (*of that which occurred*) before the Son-of-Slaughter⁵, the Arab, went out and prophesied as a prophet in the world so that they performed circumcision like Jews and changed sayings — for he is the most degraded of false prophets. Mars accompanieth him because he is the Seal of prophets of the Lie, (*although*) the Messiah **will** appear after him at the end of the age! I will inform you, Naṣoraeans, that before the Son-of-Slaughter, the Arab, emerged and was called prophet in the world and Mars descended with him, he drew⁷ the **sword** and converted people to himself by the sword. About eighty-six years before the Son-of-Slaughter, the Arab, Adonai sent Šurbiš-Ruha⁸ who is his spouse, to the city of Tib, called locally the City of **Ašganda**⁹ because of all that was done (*during*) his rule¹⁰ in Baghdad. (For) Ašganda (*dwelt?*) in Tib; it was his native place; and it was called "the city of Šganda" (*also*) because in it there were Naṣoraeans and *rišamia* (ethnarchs)¹¹. And there was one *rišama* called Qiqil.

¹ 'Hatmia' = "signs", "seals"; i. e. the signings with water and oil at baptism.

² An inversion: the root is QHD "to cry, call aloud". The psalm beginning 'Tušbihan' ("praises") is called the great 'qadaha' in D. C. 34.

³ D. C. 36 has 'zida' ("malice") for 'zira' ("seed").

⁴ Anuš-Uthra? Bihram? Yahia-Yuhana?

⁵ Unbracketed words in italics are a gloss.

⁶ 'Šhaṭ'. ŠHT = "to cut the throat, slaughter ritually". Cf. Arabic شط "to be bloodstained". Muhammad is meant of **course**.

⁷ D. C. 9 has 'šafil'. The Imperfect tense is used; I have substituted the Perfect throughout.

⁸ 'Šurbiš'. Possibly a composite word from the root ŠRHB "to propagate" and 'bii' "evil".

⁹ 'Šganda' or 'Ašganda' is sometimes used as a 'malwaša' name (see p. 10 n. 1). The child or youth of priestly family who **assists** priests during rituals is called an 'ašganda' or 'šganda' (Sumerian 'aš-gan-da' = "minister, messenger", Accadian 'ašgandu').

¹⁰ 'malkuṭh' i. e. Ašganda's term of **office** as head of the sect?

¹¹ A 'rjš amā' (= "head of the people") is a higher in rank than a 'ganzibra'. The grade is **now** obsolete.

And Adonai sent **Šurbiš-Ruha** into this world, and said to her: "Go, appear to **Qiqil** of the Naṣoraeans disguised as Hibil-Ziwa, so as 'to take his judgement away from him.. And 'distort the words by which the structure of (*their faith*) is defined. When thou hast done this, the whole nation of the Naṣoraeans **will** turn to us".

And Ruha-Šurbiš, wife of Adonai, went and dwelt upon (*entered into*) Qiqil of the Naṣoraeans and disguised herself as Hibil-Ziwa — and there is none lovelier than Hibil-Ziwa whom the souls acknowledge! And she taketh away the judgement of Qiqil and instructeth him and saith to him: "I, Hibil-Ziwa, have brought1 parchment and reed-pen², so write a Root of Life³ and a Saying and a Mystery, and disseminate (*them*) send (*them*) forth and act in accordance with them. For the Life hath sent me and I have come to thee".

Thereupon Qiqil brought parchment and reed-pen and wrote and distributed (*doctrine emanating*) from Ruha, whilst his understanding was reft from him. So schism ensued amongst the Naṣoraeans and candidates for priesthood⁴ as result of those writings which he had written. Then she removed herself from his presence, and Qiqil's mind and understanding returned and he recanted his wards and revoked phylacteries⁵ (*scrolls?*) of her construction and that which had been taught to him by Ruha, yea, every writing that he had by him of those writings (*dictated*) by Ruha, he burnt in the fire. And he sent to the Naṣoraeans and candidates for priesthood (*saying*): (Bring the writings which I give (*gave?*) you; burn them with fire, for she (*Ruha*) deluded me⁶ when I knew not from whom she came". And he took away his writing from such Naṣoraeans as practised the orthodox faith?, and they gave it to him and he burnt it in the fire. But all those who were of the Root

¹ D. C. 36 has 'atit' for 'aitit'; D. C. 9 has 'aita' ("there exists").

² For 'magalta uhilfa' (parchment and reed-pen) both **Mss** have 'magalta ušilfa' (Cf. 'maglaba ušilfa' "lash and whip"). A miscopying.

³ The title or titles of some heretical composition?

⁴ 'Ašwalania', learners, neophytes, are candidates for priesthood **during** the time of their **instruction** and initiation.

⁵ Elsewhere, 'qmahia' is a word meaning phylacteries; talismans, written exorcisms meant **to be** carried on the person.

⁶ D. C. 9 has 'aminṭul d šraṭtan kt layadit mn manḥ' ('Ašraṭtan' = 'ašraṭtan', "tricked me by illusion").

⁷ See p. 11, n. 1.

of the Jews' **did** not bring it back nor **give it to Qiqil**, and some of those writings remained with them.

And Hibil-Ziwa hath delivered this saying and warning to Naṣoraean who exist at the end of the last age: "Beware, and again beware! Act only (*in accordance*) with this writing of the Great Revelation¹. The (*Mandaean*) Root (Church)² shall be steadfast, shall testify, shall act and not neglect this pure warning, and (*so*) will ascend to the presence of the Father³. (But) any man who doth not testify to this Way or lay hold of it, seeketh darkness and will fall. (*O*) ye Naṣoraean who shall exist at the end of the last age, I exhort you, be firm and act according to this book — its name is the Great Revelation. For at that time peoples, nations and tongues will multiply, and every individual will seek his own gain. And books and religions treatises⁴ of Ruha and Adonai (*'s making*) will be many, and through them souls⁵ will sink down to the Darkness⁶".

Thus, before the appearance of the Son-of-Slaughter, the Arab, the Christian, Idumaeen⁶, Jewish, Hurdabaean⁷ and Dilbilaeen⁸ peoples became many. The peoples were divided and languages became numerous; even the languages of Naṣoraean multiplied. This; and then sovereignty was taken from the descendants of King Artabanus, and (they were driven) from Baghdad; the Hardbaean (*Sasanians*) taking over the kingdom. (*Nevertheless*) there remained one hundred and seventy banners⁹ and *bimandia*¹⁰ in Baghdad¹¹.

¹ I think that this must refer to the *Alf Trisar Šwialia*, which deals minutely with many questions of ritual and doctrine.

See p. 11 n. 1.

² Here the plural may refer to the Great Life ('Hia Rbia') which is plural (= the All-Father), or it may be "fathers" (ancestors).

³ 'Sigia' (lit. "a way") is a term often applied to a ritual scroll. Hence, any document which deals with doctrine and ritual.

"Their souls" is written.

⁴ 'Dumaiia', Edomites, Idumaeans. (See *Diwan Abatur, Studi e Testi*, No. 151, p. 45).

⁵ 'Hurdabaiia'. The 'Hardbailia', 'Hurdabailia', 'Hirdubailia', 'Hardubailia' or 'Ardbailia' ("those that seek strife") are mentioned often in Mandaean texts. It is evident that the Sasanians are meant, since their rule followed that of the Parthians in Babylonia. The term seems to be applied also to the inhabitants of Persis.

⁶ 'Dilbilaiia'. This appears to be a miswriting of the 'Dilmaiia', i. e. the inhabitants of the ancient Dailam (see *Sfar Malwašia*, Luzac, London, 1949, P. 207).

⁷ See p. 8, n. 2.

⁸ Mandaean sanctuaries, see p. 10, n. 8.

¹¹ As before, (see p. 0, n. 4) read "Babylonia" for "Baghdad!"

And so a Hardabaean (*Sasanian*) dynasty ruled for three hundred and sixty years¹, and then the Son of Slaughter, the Arab, set up as king, went forth and took a people to himself and performed circumcision. (*Even them*), after this had happened and these events had taken place, sixty banners (*still*) remained and pertained² to me³ in Baghdad. Then he took the sword and put to the sword from the city of Damascus unto Bit Dubar, which is called Bdin⁴. He governed it all and ruled over the lord of the hill-country of the Persians who are called Hardbaean⁵ and took away sovereignty from them.

Then, when this had taken place, in time there came (*one*) Anuš, called the son of Danqa, from the uplands of the *Arsaiia* [from (to?) the city of Baghdad *bišuš*⁶ kings of the planting of Artabanus, and brought in his own, belonging to Muhammad, son of 'Abdallah son-of-Slaughter, the Arab⁷, when he was seven hundred years old⁸.

And he took him from his city to Suf-Zaba which is called Basrah, and showed him the hill-country of the Persians⁹ (*unto?*) the city of Baghdad. And Anuš ('*Uthra?*) instructed the Son-of-Slaughter, as he had instructed hug-son-of Danqa, about this Book¹⁰ (*compiled*) by his fathers, upon which all kings of the Naṣoraean stood firm. And a list of kings¹¹ is in this book, which teacheth (*chronicleth?*) from Adam, king of the world, unto King Artabanus, (*yea even*) unto Anuš-son-of-Danqa, who were (*all?*) of the Chosen Root. Then he told him about the king of the Ardubaiia¹² (*Sasanians*); about all he sought to do and (of) his connection¹³ with the children of the

¹ Sasanians ruled from A. D. 226-636 (see Nöldeke, *Tabari*, p. 436).

² The author uses continuously the historic present.

³ Presumably Hibil-Ziwa. He is supposed to be the narrator.

⁴ I have not identified this place name.

⁵ See p. 14, n. 7.

⁶ Or 'bihnuš'. I have come across no such word hitherto. The whole passage is unintelligible. Should it be 'banuš' ("with Anuš") meaning that Anuš-bar-Danqa was accompanied by his namesake, the spirit Anuš-'Uthra?

⁷ D. C. 9 has "Arabs".

⁸ The obscure paragraph in square brackets must be corrupt. I can make nothing of it.

⁹ See p. 14, n. 7.

¹⁰ The "Book" here probably refers to the *Ginza Rba*, which contains a list of Parthian rulers.

¹¹ See n. 10.

¹² D. C. 9 has mistakenly 'Arbailia' (Arabs). I have followed the older text.

¹³ Were 'kibša' "conquest", "subjection" here, it would not be followed by 'mn' (cf. *šm*, J. p. 630).

great Nation of Life¹; in order that they (the *Moslems*) should not harm the *Naṣoraean*s who lived in the era of his government².

Thus did Anuš-son-of-Danqa explain and speak so that, through the power of the lofty King of Light — praised be his name! — it was not permitted to the Son-of-Slaughter, the Arab, to harm the congregation of souls, owing to the protection afforded by these explanations of the Great Revelation — praised be its name!

And, concerning that which I found in these commentaries on the Great Revelation³, I found not (*its equal?*) amongst all the treatises and *mišria*⁴ and miscellanies about the Great Life which were in libraries and in my possession. I went round to all the *Naṣoraean riš-amia*⁵ that there were; I saw many scripts, writings of research and manuscripts of the Great Revelation, but saw not the like of this well-established Source. For it is reliable, existing from ancient times and eternally, from the beginning of the eighth world unto worlds' end. (*These are*) writings which teach orthodox procedure, that are all clarity. Instruction about the beginnings of all light and the end of all darkness is found in these writings of the Great Revelation and not found in any other books. That which is taught in this book and Road of the Righteous hath been bestowed upon the righteous⁷ unto worlds' end; this Road of the Righteous hath been bestowed upon (every) son of the True Root, upon (every) son of the Pure Drop who, when listening to the words and teachings of this writing of the righteous, witnesseth publicly thereto, and his mind testifieth thereto and is enlightened. But when a foolish person heareth these trustworthy words his mind groweth dark and he doth not appreciate them, nor can (such a person) discern that they are pure sayings. And (*their*) colours die away from his mind like as a burgeoning plant (*fadeth*) and the mot from which it appeared⁸.

¹ 'Šurba d hiia' (lit. "planting of Life") an expression often used for "the Mandaean".

² This episode suggests that Anuš-Uthra inspired his namesake Andbar-Danqa to convince Moslems that Mandaean were "people of a book" and that he showed the *Giṣza Rba*, or other sacred Writings as a proof that they were not pagans.

³ I. e., the *Alf Trisar Šuialia*? (See pp. x-xi).

⁴ 'Mišra' "boundary", "line of demarcation". Here, if 'sigiia' ('c'ways') refers to books (see p. 14 n. 4), 'mišria' must mean some kind of literary composition — exorcisms?

⁵ See p. 12, n. 11.

⁶ 'Tuqna' (Cf. J. 117) (2) "to do a thing properly".

⁷ Read 'išalmania' thib. D. C. 36 omits.

'Hibil-Ziwa expounded these interpretations and revealed and declared: "Any *Naṣoraean man* in whose library these explanations are found should beware lest he reveal in the presence of foolish persons (*mysteri*s) penetrated¹ and revealed by deeply thinking theologians²; because he that revealeth anything that is weighty in this writing (*book*) in the presence of foolish and ill-conditioned 'uthras who would bring pure words into contempt, layeth up for himself sixty causes of stumbling and sixty sins³. (But he that is silent before foolish persons concerning such interpretations)⁴ sixty offences and sixty sins shall be forgiven him and Abathur will grasp (*his hand*) in honourable *kušta*⁵.

Then Hibil-Ziwa — praised be his name! — taught that every man who concealeth (*the Great Revelation?*) it but observeth it, when his measure is full⁶ he will rise up without sin and (*moreover*) will loose and take with him sixty (*souls*) who are bound.

And he will rise up towards his fathers and his Father⁷ will take his hand in honourable *kušta* and he will be acclaimed as one in a thousand like Abathur Rama. And he will behold the great Countenance of Glory and will take His hand in honourable *kušta* and will be set at the King's right hand. (*For*) he whose mind testifieth

¹ A play on words such as Mandaean love. In the previous paragraph, teaching revealed to an unappreciative and stupid person is likened to a burgeoning sprout ('qadaḥa') which withers away. Here we have 'qdihia' — penetrated (*mysteri*s) — and 'qadaḥia' — those who penetrate deeply — (*into* hidden meanings).

² 'Qadaḥia' (Cf. J. p. 1313 𐌌𐌆𐌆𐌆, "one able to enter into the depth of a Biblical subject"). I have translated freely in order to convey the sense.

³ This passage is a faulty paraphrase of sentences in (a) *Alf Trisar Šuialia* and (b) *Giṣza Rba*, left side, viz. (a) 'anat latigalil l' utria bliia d mašitilun lrazia dilan ulayadia mahu amria' (Reveal nothing to foolish 'uthras who will bring our mysteries into contempt and know not what they say); (b) 'Kulman d mitqal ulaiiḥ l' muta saim lqudamḥ šitin ušit tiqlata' (He that stumbleth and curseth Death layeth up for himself sixty-six causes of stumbling). See G. R. p. 425.

⁴ Some such sentence must have occurred here; as it stands, the passage is contradictory.

⁵ 'Kušta' is a ceremony of pact and peace; a sign of fealty and acceptance of fealty. It is performed by two persons. Each clasps the right hand of the other, and when the grip is released, each of the two carries his right hand to his lips and kisses it. In Mandaean literature, *Kušta* is often personified. See p. 5, n. 2.

⁶ Literally "when his measure is complete", i. e. "when his time (to die) has come". D. C. 36 'šalimḥ', D. C. 9 'šlimḥ'.

⁷ The Great Life (see p. 14, n. 3). The verb is in the singular.

to these teachings about orthodox procedure¹ belongeth to the portion of the lofty and great **King** of Light, and hell-beasts² and purgatory demons have **no** power over him”.

And then Hibil-Ziwa — praised be his name! — taught Naṣoræans about the end of the last age. For evil will increase and pollutions **will** be many and abound in the world, since it is decreed that wickness **will** increase and pollutions multiply greatly in the world; because it is destined in that age. So that of a great shekel of gold but half-a-drachma's weight **will** rise up to the Light; everything will sink down into Darkness. In that period and epoch — from the rule of the Arab Son-of-Slaughter unto the end of the worlds — persecution and tribulation will increase for Naṣoræans; purity³ **will** decrease and pollutions, adultery, theft and fraud **will** increase. And men **will** be polluted and during that period man will drink the blood of fellow-man. All that is fair (will *disappear*)⁴, (*but*), amongst Naṣoræans, he that is steadfast in and holdeth to these teachings and this great revelation will rise up by the path of believers and **will** behold the great Countenance of Glory.

Hibil-Ziwa taught concerning this age — that is, the age of the Arab Law — that it must needs occupy its destined span⁵, for the Law is constituted of four mysteries; part⁶ therein is (of) the Light, and part therein wholly Root of Darkness. And it endureth for (?) two kings⁷. To it was imparted a kind of order. It is formed from four natural humours: the Root of Darkness is composed of and arrayed in blood, gall, (*wind*)⁸, and mucus.

¹ 'Tuqna', see p. 16, n. 6. (Much of the *Alf Trisar Šuiatia* is concerned with the proper performance of rituals, with purificatory rites etc.).

² See *Diwan Abatur*, p. IS., notes 4 and 6.

³ Read 'dukia'.

⁴ The sentence seems incomplete.

⁵ 'Mnawath baiia mikal', "seeketh to accomplish its allotted portions". Mandæans have a belief, founded on astrology, that the stars allot a certain period to Arab rule and religion. The great epochs and ages of the world are governed by certain stars and constellations, and by spirits of Light or Darkness according to, the period allotted to each.

⁶ D. C. 7 has 'mn' for 'mna'.

⁷ 'akil trin malkia' (Af. of KUL or KIL = (a) to measure, compute, (b) to complete, finish, to endure for, last). Here doubtful. "Two reigns"?

⁸ A commentary on the prayer 'Tušbihan' (see M. L. p. 131) has "And where it said 'Turn away, cast out, remove and bring to naught angels of wrath, ice and hail from the land and house of N. son of N.', these are the four mysteries, blood, gall, wind and mucus; they are the angels of wrath — ice, hail

(*But*) the habiliments of the soul are formed of mystery¹, light and the jordan; the sod is formed by proper observance² of the three mysteries, by purification³ of the four natural humours is the soul's vestment formed⁴. For this is the eighth world, and it **will** turn from this 'habilitment, this 'garment' in which it dwelleth; it will not tarry therein.

(*During*) this Arab age every evil creature multiplieth like evil weeds that grow apace, and peoples, nations and languages disperse and become measureless and numberless, like the Darkness that came into being with abundance⁵.

Hibil-Ziwa taught that "At the latter end of the world, when the Arab, the Son-of-Slaughter, hath completed his (*allotted*) four thousand years, it will come to pass that the false messiah, son of Miriam, will succeed him, and that he **will** come and will show forth signs (*wonders*) in the world until the birds and the fish from sea and rivers open their mouths and bless him and give testimony, until (*even*) the clay and mudbrick in a building bear witness to him, and until four-legged creatures open their mouths and testify to him"⁶.

And Hibil-Ziwa explained (*further*): "(*But*) you, O Naṣoræans, and righteous elect men, testify not to him, for he is a false Messiah that walketh by fraud and sorcery. He is Mercury, who attracteth attention⁷ and doth whatsoever he wisheth and his mind is filled with sorcery and frauds. I declare to you, (*ye*) chosen righteous ones and (*ye*) perfect ones that that are steadfast, abide by this pure line of separation⁸ and alter no word or command of the great Father

hunger and thirst from which the soul was freed". (Blood, gall, venting wind, and mucus or spittle, are polluting in the eyes of Mandæans). The passage occurs in the *Alma Rišaia Rba* (D. C. 41).

¹ The word 'raza' "mystery" is especially applied to ritual meals consumed in the name of the dead.

² 'Tuqna', see p. 18, n. 1, and p. 16, n. 6.

³ 'Šiṭa' has several meanings: (a) purification, cleansing, (b) lucidity, clearness, (c) gushing-out, pouring forth, coming in abundance.

⁴ D. C. 9 has 'štararh lbuša lbuša', D. C. 36 'štararh lbuša'.

⁵ See note 3.

⁶ Cf. *Giṅza Rba* (left side): — "It will happen that the false Messiah will come and become lord of the whole world... From East to West he will come on a day and even clay brick will testify to him from the wall" (G. R. p. 414). See also Pognon, *op. cit.*, pp. 155 and 226.

⁷ D. C. 36 mlaḡaṭ ainia; D. C. 9 'mlaḡtia ainia' lit. "holdeth eyes".

⁸ 'Mišra' (see p. 16, n. 4).

of **Glory**, that He may take, **you** by the hand, watch over you and deliver you out of the hands of the children¹ of **Krun**”².

Hibil-Ziwa taught: “When the Messiah hath returned, ascending to the sky — and his reign **will** last six thousand years — he will ascend and **assume** his first body. From that epoch until worlds' end, wickedness will depart from the world; that which issued from the earth **will** enter the earth and that which descended from the sky will return and enter the sky. And there will be righteous³ people in the world, and no man will covet his neighbour's goods. And people's senses will return to them and they will not perform circumcision; they **will** be converted and Naṣoraean will increase in the world. The eye of envy⁴ will be lifted from them and the sword will depart from the world. It will be as if the sword brought by the **Son of Darkness**⁵, he whose sword was of the world of **Satan**⁷, had never been in the world⁶. And with it (goeth?) a force which he possessed not in the world⁸, until Mars came and set up his sign and bound him thereto by oath.

“(Pea), there **will** be righteous people and government will revert to sons of the Great Family of Life, and they will be diligent and have the ascendancy. (But) kings bring accusation against the age, just as the Root of Naṣoraean reprove it⁹, for, before all (else) they cared for agriculture and gladdened the king (?)¹⁰. And people will be converted, and there **will** be righteous people and righteousness **will** increase. And fifty thousand years **will** pass in calm ease without disturbance, and all will keep to one word (*speaking one language*), and there **will** be no hatred, envy or dissension amongst them, and ill-will¹¹ shall be removed from the minds of all peoples, nations and tongues”.

Hibil-Ziwa explained (*further*): “When (*these*) portents occur

¹ D. C. 36 ‘bnh d bnh d Krun’; D. C. 9 ‘bnh d Akrun’.

² Krun (Chronos?) is a ruler of the world of darkness or under-world.

³ Or “perfect”.

⁴ Or “crookedness of vision”.

⁵ D. C. 9 has ‘balma’; D. C. 36 ‘alma’. Here D. C. 9 seems the more likely,

⁶ ‘Ayum’. Cf. the spirit in G. R. called ‘Daum’ (Of-Darkness).

⁷ D. C. 9 has ‘aita’ (deception, illusion) for ‘Šatana’ (Satan).

⁸ D. C. 36 has ‘alma’ after ‘balma’, making the sentence “force he had not in the world until Mars cometh and set up his sign”.

⁹ D. C. 9 has ‘maukia’ (Af. NKA); D. C. 36 ‘malkia’. Context indicates that D. C. 9 is the more likely word here.

¹⁰ The whole passage is obscure, and translation tentative.

¹¹ ‘Zira’ is obviously a miswriting for ‘either’ *zida* (wrath, malice) or *zhira* (resentment, venom). “Ill-will” covers both meanings.

and the time hath came; those **fifty thousand years**¹ will be my allotted portion, mine, Yawar-Ziwa's, because the first age was (*the age of*) Anuš-Uthra and its consummation (or “development”)² was bestowed upon me, Hibil-Yawar-Ziwa.

“Then the latter part of the age and the decadence and end of the world **will** be given to Mamit³ the Least-of-her-Brethren⁴; (*her portion*) followeth my portion, **Hibil-Yawar-Ziwa's**.

“Thus the latter end of the age and the decadence and final end of the world is given to Mamit daughter of **Qin**⁵, the mother of the Seven (*who?*) occupied seven portions, and the eighth was given to Amamit as hers, for her own. And, as the utter end of light meaneth⁶ the beginning of total darkness, so the portion of Qin, the decadence of the Arab age and the end⁷ of the eighth world (*succeeded mine*)”⁸.

Hibil-Ziwa — praised be his name! — taught concerning the Wörd, that is the Great Mystery: “This writing, that is the Diwan of the Great Revelation from the beginning of worlds of light unto the end of the eighth world, this Road of the Righteous shall not fail, because it is (*concerneth?*) the portion of Father-Life, the Ancient, the First — praised be His name!

“Let every man of the Nasoraean and Mandaean who may be living in the eighth world be steadfast and bear testimony and act according to this reliable basis, and with a sincere heart and believing lips be of my allotted portion, mine the High King of light, so that thereby Habšaba (Sunday)⁹ may be his deliverer, and save him from the children¹⁰ of Krun; and I will set him at my right hand. (But) any Nasoraean or Mandaean that is of the True Root, yet doth not bear testimony to this Road of the Righteous but testifieth according to the Way of Ruha, their words have I rejected. (*Such a one*) will not be my allotted portion but **will** belong to Ruha

¹ D. C. 36 has ‘zibnia’ for ‘šnia’.

² Pa. of SQM (to complete, make perfect, consummate, develop).

D. C. 9 has Amamit for Mamit throughout. Amamit appears in the *Ginza Rba* as the wife of Zartai-Zartanai (a king of the underworld) and as an epithet for Libat (Venus). The word ‘mamit’ (ממית) = “death”, “pestilence”.

³ ‘Ahia’ = *Geschwister*, i. e. both brothers and sisters.

⁴ ‘Qin’ a queen in the underworld.

⁵ ‘tbiat’? (Ethpa. BUA. To produce, bring about, result in).

⁶ D. C. 9 has ‘ušfula’ for ‘šifulta’.

⁷ A free translation. See p. 18, n. 5.

⁸ ‘Habšaba’ “the First Day of the Week” is personified by Mandaeans as a saviour-spirit.

¹⁰ see p. 20, n. 1.

and the Messiah. Habšaba **will** not be **his** helper, and he **will** not be delivered out of the hands of the sons of **En**".

These doctrines were imparted by Hibil-Ziwa to the sons of the great Family of Life. And he enlighteneth their minds and instructed their intelligence about the **King** of Light — praised be His name!

And this is a copy of the *Diwan d. Gadana Rabtia*¹. *Finis*².

This is the Diwan of Great Revelation called the *Haran Gawaita* which I copied for myself for the third time. I am poor, striving and childlike, a slave that is all sin, (*unworthy to*) kiss the shoes on the feet of Naşoræans, dust beneath the feet of the pious and least amongst my fellow *ganzivri*³. I am Zakia-Zihrun son of Rabbi Ram, son of Rabbi Yahia-Yuhana son of Rabbi Ram son of Yahia-Baktiar son of Rabbi Adam-Mhatam son of Rabbi Bihram-Brhiiia son of Rabbi Adam-Zakia son of Rabbi Brhiiia, family name Kuhailia. I copied from my own copy a third time. I am Zakia-Zihrun son of Rabbi Ram son of Rabbi Yahia-Yuhana son of Rabbi...⁴ family name Kuhailia... from a copy of a *Diwan* belonging the great, lofty and respected one, a reliable priest, Rabbi Mhatam son of Yahia-Bayan son of Yuhana-Şadan son of Zakria-Br-Hibil son of Zakria known as Dihdaria, and his family name Sabur. And he had no oopy but this. And Life is victorious, *Finis*.

Thus this venerated Diwan, Explanations and Great Revelation called the *Haran Gawaita* was set in order and completed on Friday the twenty-sixth of the Month of Second Sowing, which is Nisan (*in the sign of*) the Ram, the year of Friday⁵ in the year one thousand, and eighty-eight of Arab chronology — may the (*world*) founder, upon them, and Manda-d-Hiia make impotent their raging against the great Congregation of Souls! (*It was copied*) in the city of Shustar by the waters of the Duganda, and in the court⁶ of the respected craftsman Nairuz son of Hadat, his name' being Yahia son of Bihram son of Adam son of Yuhana-Şadan son of Zakria-br-Hibil son of Zakria son of Zihrun, known as Dihdaria, his family name being Sabur — may Manda-d-Hiia forgive him his sins! So

¹ Gad was the Babylonian gad of good fortune, to whom even Jewish exiles paid tribute. 'Gadana' = "fortunate, auspicious" or "divine", "godlike".

² S.a = 'saka', terminus, end.

³ A 'ganzibra' is a rank above 'tarmida' "priest".

⁴ A break.

⁵ I. e., a year which began on a Friday.

⁶ A 'tarbasa' appears to have been a three-walled chamber, the open side of which fronts an outer courtyard or private garden.

⁷ That is, his 'malwaša': see p. 10 n. 1.

these venerated Diwans were assembled from beginning to end with care, knowledge and meticulous research. And my co-editor was my elder brother, a reliable and skilful priest, Rabbi Yahia-Yuhana son of Rabbi Ram, (*his*) family name being Kuhailia. Manda-d-Hiia forgive him his sins!

(Here the text of D.C. 36 breaks off. An autobiographical note added about 168 years later concludes the manuscript. It describes an outbreak of cholera which carried off the entire Mandaean priesthood, and the uncanonical methods resorted to in order that a few literate members of priestly families could be ordained as priests)¹.

D. C. 9, (copied by the same priest who wrote the autobiographical appendix added to D. C. 36) ends:

"This is the Diwan of Great Revelation called *Haran Gawaita* which I, poor and lowly (etc.) Ram Zihrun son of Rabbi Sam-Bihram (etc. etc.) copied from two diwans..."

One of the two was a copy of a copy of a copy of the *Haran Gawaita* of D. C. 36, and the other is also traced back to D. C. 36 so that it seems likely that by 1088 A. H. only one ancient and imperfect copy had survived.

¹ See pp. 67-8 and Translator's note.



I.V.S