

A Newly-discovered Version of the Arabic Sibylline Prophecy

by

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Whilst studying the Bodleian Arabic manuscript Huntington 328 for the purpose of producing an edition of Severus ibn al-Muqaffa's *Tibb al-Ghamm wa-Shifā' al-Huzn*¹ the present writers discovered that this manuscript also contains an unrecorded version of an Arabic Sibylline prophecy. The Huntington MS 328 was catalogued by J. Uri in his *Bibliothecae Bodleianae Codicum Manuscriptorum Orientalium*², and he listed its contents as consisting of the following three items :

1. *Canones Apostolorum* (fols. 2v-92r);
2. *Severi filii Mocfae : Medicina Moeroris et Curatio Doloris* (fols. 92v-118r);
3. *Excerptiones ad Patriarcharum, Episcoporum et Sacerdotum officia pertinentes* (fols. 118v-166r).

In the case of the third item Uri gives no further details. An examination of these anonymous excerpts has shown that fols. 154v-160r contain a version of a Sibylline oracle in Arabic, telling the story of the vision by one hundred persons of nine suns, which were held by the Sibyl to represent nine ages of the earth.

The story of this prophecy forms Section Two (القسم الثاني) of the Seventieth Chapter of these excerpts, which are given the title (fol. 153r) :

علامات مجي المسيح الدجال الكذاب ودعواه وما يعمل من الايات الكاذبة³
وما يكون قبل مجيئه⁴ ومعه وبعده ودعواه الكاذبة⁵ عن نفسه انه السيد المسيح
له المجد وعمله الايات الكاذبة⁵ واهلاك السيد المسيح له، عقب⁵ ذلك تكون
القيامة الجامعة.

¹ To appear in C.S.C.O. [Scriptores Arabici] in the near future.

² Pars prima (Oxford, 1787), p. 43.

³ MS الكاذبة

⁴ MS مجيئه.

⁵ MS عقب.

(The signs of the coming of the lying Antichrist, his false claim, his performance of false miracles, what shall happen before he comes, during his time and afterwards, his false claim concerning himself that he is the Lord Christ, to him be the glory, his performance of false miracles, and his destruction by the Lord Christ. After that will occur the general resurrection).

Section One of this chapter consists of quotations from II Thessalonians 2, etc. From the colophon of item 1 (above) on fol. 92r it is clear that this MS dates from the early seventeenth century.

In 1910 J. Schleifer published five different oriental versions⁶ of the Sibylline oracle of the dream of the nine suns, the earliest MS of which dates from the thirteenth century. All of these are ultimately related to the Tiburtine Sibyl⁷. The present writers recently found an Arabic version of this work which differs considerably from the published versions of Schleifer, in Leeds Arab. MS No. 184⁸.

A collation of the Bodleian Huntington MS 328 with the other published versions⁹ shows that this version of the prophecy is substantially the same as Arab. III and Arab. IV up to the beginning of the Sibyl's interpretation of the eighth sun, although this portion is considerably abridged, but thereafter it is almost totally different, and this latter portion (i.e. the interpretation of the eighth and ninth suns) represents approximately three-quarters of the whole piece. In view of this resemblance we propose to designate this version, following Schleifer's classification, as Arab. V.

The *incipit* of Arab. V reads as follows (fol. 154v) :

مختصر كلام سبله الحكيمه الطاهرة ابنة هوفليس¹⁰ راس حنفاء¹¹ افسس
بالاسكندرية، وهو تعبيرها منامات كهنة بمدينة روميه التي راوها فيها وعددهم

⁶ Designated by him : Karshuni, Ethiopic, Arabic I, II, III in his *Erzählung der Sibylle* (Vienna, 1910).

⁷ For the Greek and Latin texts of the Tiburtine Sibyl, see P. J. Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek* (Washington, D.C., 1967); A. Kurfess, *Sibyllinische Weissagungen* (Berlin, 1951); E. Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen* (Halle an der Saale, 1898; reprinted Turin, 1963).

⁸ The text of this version, together with an English translation and notes, has been edited by the present writers for publication in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*. Continuing Schleifer's classification we have designated the Leeds text »Arab. IV«.

⁹ For a number of unpublished MSS which may contain further copies of the oriental Sibylline prophecies, see G. Graf, *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*, Vol. I (Vatican, 1944) [Studi e Testi, 118], p. 294.

¹⁰ Presumably a scribal error for هرقليس.

¹¹ MS حنفا.

مائة كاهن. راوا جميعهم في ليلة واحدة مناماً واحداً منجل اللفظ والمعنى¹²
 واخبروا ملك روميه فقال نريد من يفسر لنا هذه الرويا. فقيّل * له عنها
 (An abridged account of the words of the wise, pure Sibyl, daughter of Heraclius, head of the heathens of Ephesus, in Alexandria, being her interpretation of the dreams of certain priests in the city of Rome which they saw there; the priests numbered one hundred. They all saw in the same night dreams which were alike in form and significance. They informed the King of Rome, who said : »We desire someone who can interpret this vision for us«. He was then told about her.....).

At the conclusion of this version of the Sibyl we read (fol. 159v) :

وكلام الحكيمّة المذكورة¹³ ليس هو حجة¹⁴ في هذا المعنى ولا دليل عليه
 ولا مما يشهد به، وإنما لما كان بعضه مطابقاً لما في الكتب المقبولة ولما قاله
 يوحنا الانجيلي في جليانه ولما قاله عزرا ايضاً هو ايضاً من الممكن القابل الوجود
 والعدم ذكرناه من طريق * العلم به لا الاعتقاد لما يخالف منه كتب الكنيسة،
 فلا يعتدّ منه الا ما يطابق البيعة والشريعة. ولنختم كتابنا هذا¹⁵ بما ياتي ذكره
 من الطلبات راجون بها فتح ابواب الاجابة عنها (؟) الملكوتية العتبات ونفع
 المومنين بالعلم بما اشتمل عليه من وحدانية الباري الثلاثي الصفات ونقلهم به
 الى العمل بالاوامر الانجيلية المسطرات المكتتبات — له المجد دائماً ابداً سرمداً
 امين.

(The words of the aforementioned wise woman are not to be regarded as a decisive proof in regard to this idea, nor as something which may be adduced as evidence, but since some of them are in conformity with what is in the canonical¹⁶ books, and with what John the Evangelist says in his Revelations, and also with what Ezra says, and since it is possible that they will or will not be fulfilled, we have cited them simply to draw attention to them, not to require belief in that which disaggres with books of the Church.

Thus only that which conforms with the Church and the Law is to be believed. Let us conclude this book of ours with a mention of our requests, seeking thereby that the doors of response of the heavenly thresholds may

¹² MS والمعنى.

¹³ MS المذكورة.

¹⁴ MS حجة.

¹⁵ MS هذا.

¹⁶ Lit. »accepted«.

be opened¹⁷ and that the Believers may benefit from the knowledge it contains regarding the triune unity of the Creator; and that we should move them to action through the written, indited commands of the Gospel.

To Him be the glory, for ever and always and eternally. Amen).

As noted above, the earlier part of the text is substantially the same as the versions Arab. III and Arab. IV in spite of different phraseology; there are however a number of significant variations:

1. The scene of the Sibyl's interpretation of the dream is given as Alexandria, not Rome (fol. 154v);
2. The dreamers are described as »priests« (كهنة), not as judges or wise men (*ibid.*);
3. The suns are described as having been seen by the dreamers in a large building with nine pillars (fol. 155r);
4. The third and fourth suns are described purely in terms of colours (*ibid.*);
5. Christ's miracles are described differently in the interpretation of the seventh sun (fol. 155v):
6. The »King of Byzantium« is described merely as the »King from the East«, and a different enumeration of his actions is given (*ibid.*).

In view of the entirely new matter contained in the interpretations of the eighth and ninth suns, we reproduce the relevant part of the text *in extenso*:

* Fol. 155v : والحيل الثامن يقوم فيه رجل من بنى اسماعيل يقول عن الله : قولاً عظيماً وتكون له امة كثيرة ويطيعونه. وفي اخر الزمان يقوم * من امته ملك من الغرب ويصل الى ارض اسراييل ويملك مصر ويبني له مدينة بين النهر والجبل وتكون فيه امانة وعدل وسياسة ويقوم من نسله سبعة ملوك. ويكثر على ايديهم الفتن والقتل والجوارح واخر ملوكهم يكون من امراء سواده¹⁸، ويكون على يديه فتن وبلايا وزلازل، وتقوم عليه الجيوش من المشرق والمغرب والجنوب ويقوم عليه خواصه وغلانته وينهبون امواله ويقوم من اصحابه انسان اصله من المشرق وليس من اولاد الملوك. ويقوم معه قوم معوجون اللسان ويملكون ارض مصر ويتسلطون عليها ويمدون ايديهم للقتل والسبي والنهب والغلاء المهلك والجوع الشديد وتظهر¹⁹ الزلازل ويظهر في السماء كواكب عجيبة من المغرب الى المشرق ويخربون الكنائس ويبطل * القربان والبخور

*Fol. 156r

*Fol. 156v

¹⁷ This appears to be the sense of this obscure passage.

¹⁸ سودا MS.

¹⁹ وتظهر MS.

وتكون الناس كلهم اشراراً وتواقع الذكور²⁰ الذكور²⁰ والاناث والانات وتنقطع حيوان الارض وصيد البر والبحر ولا يرد الزرع بداره ويتنقل الغلاء من مكان الى مكان ويتسلط البربر على ارض مصر سبع سنين ويكثرون الناس الابطهال الى الله تعالى ويسالونه العفو عنهم فيرحمهم ويبعث اليهم الهول الذي ليس عنده رحمة من ارض القدس بمراكب كثيرة وسفن عظيمة، ويصل الى مصر ويقع في قلوب البربر منه خوف عظيم ويكون هلاكهم على يديه ويعمر ما اخبوه من الكنائس والبيع كما كانت، وتظهر له كنوز الارض ويتسلط على مصر ويجمع اموالها ولا يبقى مع احد شيئاً²¹ ويسفك الدماء.²²

ويقوم من المشرق رجل مجهول الاب والام ويملك ويهلك الخلق ويهلك جنوده الترك خلقاً عظيماً²³ ويكونون مثل الجراد ويتساقط الحبالى²⁴ * من خوفهم ويقيمون سبعة سوايع صغار. ويخرج لهم الهول العديم الرحمة مثل الاسد ويهلكون على يديه ويعود الى مستقره بفرح عظيم وتعزز نفسه ويقع الخلف بينه وبين ابن السوداء²⁵ الملك ويتاكر عليه ابن السوداء²⁵ الذي²⁶ هو اخر ملوك بنى اساعيل. فيداخل²⁷ الهول منه الخوف والفزع ولا يستقر معه في مدينة، ويجمع امواله وعساكره ويطلب مدينة اخرى ويتسلط على مواضع عجيبة ويعمل سفن كثيرة²⁸ ويجمع امواله فيها ويطلب الجزيرة الوسطى من جزائر الروم ليهلكها وتكون مدة ملكه وملك نسله نصف وربع اسبوع كبير.

ويقوم بعده رجل يملك مدينة كبيرة بالمشرق ويحمل له الهدايا المجوس والفرنج ويصلح الدنيا ويعمر الخراب ويعمر البيع ويغتر به ابن السوداء.²⁹ وتكون مدته نصف وربع اسبوع وتظهر في ايامه كواكب عجيبة وزلازل ويكون المجهول الابوين * رئيساً ويكون العبد جالس ومولاه يخدم والوليدة جالسة وسيدتها تخدم، ويظهر

²⁰ MS الذكور.

²¹ MS شيا.

²² MS الدما.

²³ MS عطيا.

²⁴ MS الحبالا.

²⁵ MS السودا.

²⁶ MS الذى.

²⁷ MS فيداخل.

²⁸ MS كثير.

²⁹ MS السودا.

الزور والكذب³⁰ وتكون الكهنة والرهبان زناة فسقة يحبون الاكل والشرب ويرغبون في جمع الدينار والدرهم ويضربون الناس بالسنتهم. حينئذ تخرب الكنائس وتقبل الرهبان والقديسين الذين³¹ في الجبال على ايدي اولاد قيذار، يصلون من المغرب ويسفكون الدماء ويكونون مثل الجراد واكثرهم...³² قصار الركب ركاب جبال ومقدمهم راكب حار وحش وفيه وقار ونسك وتخشع وتواطي واتضاع ويكون كثير الجند.

وهذه الامة تصل الى الاسكندرية ويهلكون³³ اصقاعها ويخربون الاديرة ويسطون ايديهم على مصر ويقع فيهم وبينهم الحرب والقتل والفتن والغلاء والجوع والطاعون والموت حتى لا يبقى منهم الا اليسير، يصلون الى الجانب الغربى من مصر وتهرب من قدامهم خلق * عظيم ولا يثبت معهم ملك مصر ويخرج من مصر ويقيم بالمدينة المحروسة³⁴ دمشق. وتكون مدة مقام اولاد قيذار بمصر سنتان ونصفاً. ثم يسير الى اليمن ويطلب الحجاز³⁵ ويقيم هناك يسيراً ومنها الى الكوفة ويختلط بالترك ويتزوج منهم اولاد قيذار ويختلطون بهم ويسيرون الى ارض الشام ويخربون ما تبقى من العارة ويحرقون بالنيران ويخربون القدس ويهلكون القديسين، وشدايد عظيمة ذكرت في كتاب الاصل.

*Fol. 158r

(In the eighth age a man shall arise from the sons of Ishmael, and he shall announce an exalted message from God. He shall have a numerous following, who shall obey him; and at the end of the period a king from the West shall arise from his community, and shall come to the land of Israel, and take possession of Egypt, and shall build for himself a city between the river and the hill country. He shall be characterized by faithfulness, and justice, and good government, and seven kings shall arise from his descendants. But under their authority there will be numerous revolts, killings and woundings.

The last of these kings shall be born of a black woman. In the time of his rule shall occur revolts and disasters and earthquakes. Armies from the east, the west and the south shall rise against him, and his courtiers and servants [also] shall rise against him and plunder him of his wealth.

³⁰ MS والكذب.

³¹ MS الدين.

³² MS appears to read سويدان (= negroes?).

³³ MS ويهللون.

³⁴ MS المعروس.

³⁵ MS الحجاز.

A man from the east shall revolt from among his associates, who is not of the royal line; and there shall revolt with him a people of barbaric tongue. They shall take possession of the land of Egypt and hold sway over it. They shall stretch forth their hands to murder, imprisonment and plunder. [There shall be] ruinous high prices and dreadful hunger; earthquakes shall occur, and strange stars shall appear in the sky, from west to east. They will destroy churches, the Eucharist and [use of] incense shall cease, and all people shall be wicked. Males shall have intercourse with males, and females with females; the animals of the earth and the game of the land and the sea shall become extinct, and the crops shall not be harvested. High prices shall prevail in more and more places.

The Berbers shall hold sway over the land of Egypt for seven years. The people shall make many supplications to God Most High, and shall ask Him to forgive them. He shall have mercy on them, and shall send to them the Terror, who knows no mercy, from the land of Jerusalem, in numerous vessels and great ships. He shall reach Egypt and great fear of him shall descend upon the hearts of the Berbers, and they shall perish at his hands.

He shall restore to their former state the churches and fanes which they had ruined, and the treasures of the earth shall be revealed to him. He shall hold sway over Egypt, and gather in its wealth; nothing shall remain with anyone, and he shall shed blood.

A man of unknown parentage shall arise from the east, and rule and destroy people. His Turkish soldiers shall destroy a multitude of people; they shall be like locusts, and expectant women shall miscarry for fear of them. They shall endure for seven short weeks.

The merciless Terror shall go forth to them like a lion, and they shall perish at his hand. He shall return to his abode with great joy, and his soul shall be proud. Dissension shall occur between him and the son of the black woman, the king; and the son of the black woman who will be the last of the kings of the Ishmaelites shall plot against him.

Dismay and fear of him shall take hold of the Terror, and he shall not be secure in any city. He will gather his wealth and soldiers, and seek another city, and shall hold sway over strange regions and make many ships. He shall collect his wealth into them, and make for the central island of the islands of Byzantium, to destroy [its people]. The period of his rule, and that of his descendants, shall be one half and one quarter of a great week.

After him shall arise a man who shall rule over a great city in the east. The Zoroastrians and the Franks shall carry gifts to him. He shall reform the world and restore the ruins, and restore the churches. The son of the

black woman shall revolt against him. His period shall be a half and a quarter of a week.

In his days shall appear strange stars, and there shall be earthquakes, and the man of unknown parentage shall be a prince. The slave shall sit down while his master serves, and the maidservant shall sit down while her mistress serves. Wrongdoing and falsehood shall be in evidence. Priests and monks shall be licentious fornicators, and shall love food and drink. They shall be desirous of accumulating dinars and dirhams, and shall flay the people with their tongues.

At that time the churches shall fall into ruin; the monks and saints who are in the mountains shall come forth at the hands of the sons of Kedar, who shall come from the west and shed blood, and shall be as locusts. Most of them.....³⁶ with short stirrups and riding upon camels, and their commander shall ride upon a wild ass. He shall be a man of gravity, of asceticism, of humility, of meekness and of modesty, and shall have numerous soldiers.

This host shall reach Alexandria and destroy its environs, and ruin the monasteries, and shall stretch forth their hands over Egypt. There shall occur between and among them war, killing, revolts, dearth, hunger, plague and death, until only a few of them are left. They shall come to the western side of Egypt, and a great number of people shall flee before them. Because of them the king of Egypt shall not be established [on his throne] and shall leave Egypt and reside in the guarded city of Damascus. The period of the stay of the sons of Kedar in Egypt shall be 2 ½ years.

Then he shall go to the Yemen and seek [to seize] the Hijaz. He shall stay there for a short period. From there he shall go to Kufa, and mingle with the Turks, and the sons of Kedar shall intermarry with them. They will go to the land of Syria, and bring to ruin the remains of civilized life, and destroy Jerusalem, and burn it with fire, and kill the saints, and [there shall occur] dreadful, appalling deeds, which are mentioned in the original book).

*Fol. 158r: والحجيل التاسع جرو الاسد يخرج من المغرب بجبروته³⁷ ويصل الى القدس وتقع اعداؤه³⁸ على وجوههم ويهربون منه. ويقوم الملك المذكور ويبني الكنائس وكلما قد خرب في الارض ويبني صور ويعمر الدنيا كلها ويكثر صيدها في البر والبحر وتكثر غلاتها وخيراتها الاولى.³⁹

³⁶ See note 32 (above).

³⁷ MS بجبروته.

³⁸ MS اعداه.

³⁹ MS الاولى.

ويجتمع ملك الحبشة وملك النوبة وملك الهند وملك الصين فى القدس مع جرو الاسد، ويجمع * ساير ملوك الارض وينزل روح القدس على الملك الارثذكسى والملوك كلهم اليه⁴⁰ ينقادون ويطيعون ويكونون فى خيرات كثيرة حتى يجوز الحى على الميت ويقول له قم ابصر النعمة التى جدها الله لنا ونحن فيها. ولا يبقى فى الناس شيئاً⁴¹ من الشرور ولا فقير يلتمس من غيره شى. ويعمر جميع الكنايس والاديرة والمغاير وتكثر الصالحون وسكان الجبال وينبت الله تعالى فى الارض زهرة لم تعرف منذ⁴² انشاء العالم ويبدّر⁴³ الانسان اردباً فيستغل منه مائة اردب.

وفى تام اربع مائة سنة من الملك الارثذكسى تحبل من سبط دان امراة من امراة وتظهر الملائكة للناس وتوصيهم بالتقوى وان لا يقبلوا من الامة التى تحي. ويخرج من الجبال الامة النجسة التى يقال لها جوج وماجوج من المشرق فيهلكون الدنيا وينجسونها لانهم ياكلون الحيات والثعابين والفيران واسقاط النساء والدواب الميتة.

فاما الذى * تولد من سبط دان فالواحدة من صور والاخرى من صيدا، فالواحدة تركب الاخرى وتلد احداثها ولداً ذكر⁴⁴ ويدعى انه المسيح وحقاً هو المسيح الدجال، وصفته طويل القامة كبير الهامة شط الشعر عيناه يضيئان⁴⁵ مثل البرق والشمس طويل الذراعين⁴⁶ قصير الاصابع، عند مولده الحصادون يحصدون الزرع فى الغيط والدم يخرج من الزرع، ويعمل العجايب ويبرى العميان والبرص ويقيم المفلوجين، غير ان الميت لا يقدر يحييه ولا يقيمه ولا له عليه سلطان، ويتبعه خلق عظيم فطوبى⁴⁷ لمن لا يتبعه لان البحور تنشف وكذلك العيون. ثم بعد ذلك بمدة طويلة يبعث الله الشخصين المباركين اخنوخ وايليا يحكمانه ويقولان له انت تضل⁴⁸ الناس بكذبك فيذبجهم على مذبح صهيون ويامر

⁴⁰ These two words are inserted above the line.

⁴¹ شيا MS.

⁴² منذ MS.

⁴³ ويبدر MS.

⁴⁴ ذكر MS.

⁴⁵ يضيان MS.

⁴⁶ MS الذراعين.

⁴⁷ فطوبا MS.

⁴⁸ تطل MS.

*Fol. 159v

الله بقيامتهم بعد يومين ونصف، فيقومون وتترززل الارض بها عليها وينزل على
* الدجال واصحابه خوف عظيم ثم ينزل الله تعالى ناراً من السماء تحرق الارض
كلها وتحرق جميع من يتبعه، ويبعث الله الارياح الاربعة فيحملوا الرماد الى
البحر المحيط.

ثم ينزل السيد المسيح له المجد والالوف من الملائكة حوله وهو راكب
الربوات والملائكة الكثيرة الاجنحة حوله والضباب حول⁴⁹ رجليه. فاذا ابصره
الدجال ذاب هو وجنده كما يذوب⁵⁰ الشمع قدام النار. ثم ان السيد المسيح
يجلس على كرسي مجده ويقيم الموتى والاحياء، ويعزل الصالح والطالح عن يمينه
ويرسلهم الى الحياة الدائمة، والطالح عن شماله الى هاوية الجحيم.

(In the ninth age the Lion-Cub shall go forth from the west in his might, and reach Jerusalem, and his enemies shall fall on their faces, and they shall flee from him. This king shall proceed to build churches, and [to rebuild] everything that had been destroyed in the land. He shall rebuild Tyre, and reconstruct the whole world. Its game shall multiply on land and sea, and its crops and primary products increase.

The Kings of Ethiopia, of Nubia, of India and of China shall gather in Jerusalem with the Lion-Cub. The rest of the kings of the earth shall gather together, and the Holy Spirit shall descend on the Orthodox King. All the kings shall defer to him and obey [him]. [Everyone] shall enjoy great prosperity, so that the living shall come to the dead, saying to them »Arise! See the blessings which God has renewed for us, and which we enjoy«. No wickedness shall remain among the people, nor shall any poor person seek anything from another.

He will restore all the churches and monasteries and anchorites' cells, (lit. 'caves'). The saintly shall be numerous, and the dwellers in the mountains, and God Most High shall cause to grow on the earth a flower [of a kind] unknown since the creation of the world, and a man shall sow one *ardebb* and reap from it one hundred *ardebbs*.

At the end of four hundred years after the Orthodox Kingdom a woman from the tribe of Dan shall conceive of [another] woman, and the angels shall appear to men, and enjoin piety upon them, and that they should not accept [the teaching] of a religion (lit. 'community') which would come. There shall go forth from the mountains the unclean people who are called

⁴⁹ حوله MS.

⁵⁰ يدوب MS.

Gog and Magog, from the east. They shall destroy the world and defile it, for they shall eat snakes, serpents, mice, abortions and dead animals.

As for she who shall give birth from the tribe of Dan : one shall be from Tyre, the other from Sidon. One shall ride the other, and one shall bear a male child, who shall claim he is the Messiah, but in truth he shall be the Antichrist. In form he shall be tall and lofty in stature, with long hair, and his eyes shall gleam like lightening and the sun, and he shall have long arms with short fingers.

At his birth the harvesters shall harvest the crop in the fields, and blood shall come forth from it.

He shall perform wonders, and cure the blind and the leprous, and shall raise the palsied, but he will not be able to revive the dead, nor raise them up, nor shall he have any authority therein. A great number of folk shall follow him, but blessed are they who do not follow him, for the seas and springs shall dry up.

A long time after that God shall send the two blessed persons, Enoch and Elias, to condemn him, saying »Thou hast misled the people through thy falsehood«. He shall sacrifice them on the altar of Zion, but God shall command that they rise again after two and a half days : so they shall rise, and the earth and everything on it shall be shaken by an earthquake, and there shall descend upon the Antichrist and his companions a great dread. Then God Most High shall send down fire from heaven, which shall burn up the whole earth, and shall burn up all those who follow him. And God shall send the four winds, which will remove the ashes into the ocean.

Then the Lord Christ, to him be glory, will come again, having thousands of angels around him. He shall ride above the hills, with many-winged angels around him, and with clouds around his feet. When the Antichrist shall catch sight of him, he and his army shall melt away, as wax melts before a fire. Then the Lord Christ shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and shall raise the quick and the dead, and shall separate the good and the bad, putting [the former] on his right, and sending them forth to eternal life, and the wicked on his left, [sending them] to the pit of hell).

The Coptic provenance of this piece is not only indicated by its context within Bodleian MS Huntington 328, (see contents of MS above), but is also confirmed by numerous internal indications. These include frequent geographical references, Egypt being mentioned nine times (fols. 156r (twice); 156v (3 times); 157v (twice); 158r (twice); and Alexandria twice⁵¹

⁵¹ Other versions mention Egypt only once or twice, and Alexandria not at all. The occurrence of references to monasteries and incense may also be thought to support a Christian Egyptian provenance.

(fols. 154r and 157v.) In addition mention is made of الملك الارثوذكسى (»The Orthodox King«) (fol. 158v), and الملك الارثوذكسى (»The Orthodox Kingdom«) (*ibid.*). There are also some linguistic indications of a Coptic origin for this version of the Sibyl, such as the conflated form من اجل for منجل (fol. 154v)⁵².

⁵² See S. Kussaim, »Contribution à l'étude de moyen arabe des Coptes« in *Le Muséon*, vol. LXXX (1967), p. 186f.