

Michael Penn

Addressing Muslim Rulers and Muslim Rule*

In recent years scholars have paid greater attention to Syriac texts that speak of Muslims, especially to late seventh-century apocalypses and eighth-century disputations.¹ Such studies are invaluable in elucidating the earliest Christian reactions to the rise of Islam.² Nevertheless, a focus solely on early, polemical works could

* Thanks go to the Mount Holyoke College Faculty Grants Committee that funded the research for this article and especially to Professor Lucas Van Rompay of Duke University for his translation suggestions.

1 For early Syriac apocalypses see, for example: Griffith, *In the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008), 23-35; Gerrit J. Reinink, „Early Christian Reactions to the Building of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem,” *Xristianskij Vostok* 2 (2002): 227-241; Cynthia Villagomez, „Christian Salvation through Muslim Domination: Divine Punishment and Syriac Apocalyptic Expectation in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries,” *Medieval Encounters* 4, no. 3 (1998): 203-218; Han J. W. Drijvers, „The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles: A Syriac Apocalypse from the Early Islamic Period,” in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic East*, v. 1, ed. Averil Cameron and Lawrence I. Conrad (Princeton: The Darwin Press, Inc., 1991), 189-213; Harald Suermann, *Die geschichtstheologische Reaktion auf die einfallenden Muslime in der edessenischen Apokalypik des 7. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: 1985) and the numerous studies on the apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius listed in Gerrit J. Reinink, *Die Syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius*, CSCO, vol. 541 (syri 220) (Louvain: Peeters, 1993), XLVIII-LXI. For early disputation texts see: Michael Philip Penn, „John and the Emir: A New Introduction, Edition and Translation,” *Le Muséon* 121 (2008): 65-91; Barbara Roggema, „The Debate between Patriarch John and an Emir of the Mhaggrāyē: A Reconsideration of the Earliest Christian-Muslim Debate” in *Christians and Muslims in Dialogue in the Islamic Orient of the Middle Ages*, Martin Tamcke ed. (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg, 2007): 21-39; Griffith, *In the Shadow of the Mosque*, 35-39, 73-78; Harald Suermann, „The Old Testament and the Jews in the Dialogue between the Jacobite Patriarch John I and ‘Umayr Ibn Sa’d Al-Ansari,” in *Eastern Crossroads: Essays on Medieval Christian Legacy*, ed. Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2007), 131-141; Gerrit J. Reinink, „Political Power and Right Religion in the East Syrian Disputation between a Monk of Bēt Ḥālē and an Arab Notable,” in *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, ed. Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark N. Swanson, and David Thomas, *The History of Christian-Muslim Relations* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 153-170; Gerrit J. Reinink, „The Lamb on the Tree: Syriac Exegesis and Anti-Islamic Apologetics,” in *The Sacrifice of Isaac: The Aqedah (Genesis 22) and Its Interpretations*, ed. Ed Noort and Eibert Tigchelaar (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 109-124; Sidney H. Griffith, „Disputing with Islam in Syriac: The Case of the Monk of Bēt Ḥālē and a Muslim Emir,” *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 3, no. 1 (2000): np; Gerrit J. Reinink, „The Beginnings of Syriac Apologetic Literature in Response to Islam,” *Oriens Christianus* 77 (1993): 165-187; Sidney H. Griffith, „Disputes with Muslims in Syriac Christian Texts: From Patriarch John (d. 648) to Bar Hebraeus (d. 1286),” in *Religionsgespräche im Mittelalter*, ed. Bernard Lewis and Friedrich Niewöhner, *Wolfenbütteler Mittelalter-Studien* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), 251-273.

2 Some of the most recent discussions concerning Syriac texts about Islam can be found in Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque; The Encounter of Eastern Christianity*

result in a one-sided view of early Christian/Muslim interactions. Two previously unpublished Syriac texts, now housed in the British Library, prescribe how a Christian should address a Muslim ruler. These two documents represent a very different genre of writing than that most commonly studied by scholars of early Christian/Muslim relations and they reflect a much more accommodating, even *real politik*, perspective on Muslim rule than is typically attributed to early medieval Christianity. Their introduction, edition, and translation can help us to better appreciate the diversity of early Christian writings about Islam.

To the Rulers of the World

Sometime in the ninth or tenth century, a Miaphysite scribe named Ṣalibā produced a 93 folio codex now catalogued as *BL. Add. 14,653*.³ In the manuscript's colophon Ṣalibā refers to his work as, „*The History of the Holy Mar Eugene* along with other extracts.“⁴ Mar Eugene's hagiography takes up the first 48 of the manuscript's 93 folios, but this still left Ṣalibā plenty of room for his „other extracts“ which include anonymous memre on Eugene, on the prodigal son, and on mourning for the dead, prayers for the consecration of a bishop, a prayer from the martyr Thaumasius, an extract from Evagrius, Jerome's *Life of Paul*, and, in folios 77a-82a, a collection of seven documents that William Wright calls „forms of letters, to be used in addressing various persons.“⁵

with *Early Islam*, Emmanouela Grypeou, Mark N. Swanson, and David Thomas, eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2006); *Redefining Christian Identity: Cultural Interaction in the Middle East since the Rise of Islam*, H. L. Murre-Van den Berg, J. J. Van Ginkel, and T. M. Van Lint, eds., (Leuven: Peeters, 2005). For a bibliography of earlier studies see Michael Penn, „Syriac Sources for Early Christian/Muslim Relations,“ *Islamochristiana* 29 (2003): 59-78 and Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997).

- 3 Unfortunately, Ṣalibā's colophon does not include a date of composition. The manuscript's dating is thus based on the paleographic judgment of William Wright, *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum 3 volumes* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870-1873; reprinted Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2002), v. 2, 808. Of course this dating is only the *terminus ante quem* for the document itself as there is no indication that Ṣalibā himself composed the work. The text's attitude toward Muslim rule, however, seems much closer to what is found in late eighth- and ninth-century Syriac works such as Timothy I's *Disputation with Al-Mahdi* or Thomas of Margā's *Book of Governors* than with earlier texts. It is thus likely that Ṣalibā copied the work within a century or so of its initial composition. For a description of the manuscript's content see Wright, *Catalogue*, v. 2, 808-809.
- 4 *BL. Add. 14,653*, f. 93a. Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn: A. Marcus und E. Webers: 1922), 191 briefly cites this manuscript referencing its hagiography of Eugene. To my knowledge, no other modern scholar has discussed this manuscript. Eugene's hagiography can also be found in two other manuscripts in the British Library collection, *BL. Add. 12,174* (dated 1197CE), ff. 184a-185b and in the fragmentary *BL. Add. 14,738* (thirteenth-century). An eleventh-century lectionary, *BL. Add. 17,923*, f. 159b, also has a commemoration to Eugene.
- 5 Wright, *Catalogue*, v. 2, 808.

Nothing in these texts explicitly marks them as letters, nevertheless their content does fit Wright's characterization. Each addresses the reader in the second person, speaks about their situation in only the most general of terms, provides exhortation, and ends with a blessing. Due to a missing quire, we only have the last sentences of the first of these works and therefore do not know what it was called. Ṣalibā titled the others: *To the Rulers of the World*, *To an Honored Wise Man*, *Reply to a Bishop and Teacher*, *Reply to an Honored Man of the Congregation*, *Thanksgiving to One who has the Occasion and Ability (to Make) Peace in the Community*, and *Thanksgiving to Those Who Bestow Alms upon the Needy*.

Although each of these works is of interest, the second text, *To the Rulers of the World*, is of particular import for understanding Syriac Christian reactions to the rise of Islam. The work never explicitly states the religious affiliation of the world's rulers. There are at least two reasons, however, for suspected that it envisions them as Muslims. First, Ṣalibā copied this text a century or two into the Abbasid era at which time most rulers in Northern Mesopotamia were Muslims and, for a ninth- or tenth-century reader of Syriac, it was extremely unlikely that the phrase „the rulers of the world“ would connote Christians. Second, the document never refers to Jesus or to the New Testament. To support its points the author alludes to and occasionally quotes from passages in Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles. But nothing in the text draws from solely Christian scripture nor refers to anything, such as Jesus or the Trinity, that might upset a Muslim recipient. This is even more remarkable when compared to the other documents in this collection. Despite only the last six lines of the work preceding *To the Rulers of the World* surviving, even in these few lines there appears a reference to „Christ's power,“ as well as references to the Father and the Holy Spirit.⁶ Of the five documents following *To the Rulers of the World*, four end with a benediction referring to Christ.⁷ The one missing the benediction talks of „the word of our Lord“ and then quotes from the beatitudes.⁸ Similar New Testament citations can be found in most of the other texts such as the last one that speaks of the gospel, „the word of our Lord,“ and „the deeds of our Lord.“⁹

In contrast, *To the Rulers of the World* is cast solely in the shared idiom of Greco-Roman political philosophy and religious monotheism.¹⁰ It begins with an extended metaphor comparing the ruling of the state to the proper management of the body. It then cites the biblical examples of David and Hezekiah as exemplary rulers. It next compares the recipient's beneficent rule to a healthy body. It

6 *BL. Add.* 14,653, f. 77a.

7 *BL. Add.* 14,653, ff. 78b, 79a, 80b, 82a.

8 *BL. Add.* 14,653, f. 80b.

9 *BL. Add.* 14,653, ff. 81b-82a.

10 For a brief overview of Greco-Roman uses of the physical body as a symbol and metaphor for the political body see Dale Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 39-47.

ends will the assurance that God and His angels will support the ruler and that his honor and glory, both in this world and the next, will continue to grow.

The motivation for originally writing *To the Rulers of the World* remains unclear. Speaking of the recipient in only the broadest and most general of terms, the author most likely did not intend the work to be sent to a specific individual. Perhaps it was meant to serve as a general template for correspondence with Muslim rulers. The utility of such a model, however, would have been compromised for having been written in Syriac instead of Arabic. By the time it reached Ṣalibā's hands and was copied into the middle of a collection of hagiographies, prayers, excerpts, and anonymous discourses, the chance of someone coming upon it just when he needed a template for addressing government authorities seems increasingly remote. At this point, if not sooner, it more often functioned as internal literature whose main audience was other Christians. Reading a now hypothetical letter to a ruler served not so much as a model for how to write to Muslim leaders than as an exemplar for the proper Christian attitude toward them.

Concerning the Entrance before a New Emir

Within a few decades of Ṣalibā's preservation of *To the Rulers of the World*, a Miaphysite scribe finished a 189 folio codex now catalogued as *BL Add. 14,493*.¹¹ The manuscript contains over seventy-five different documents including anaphoras, sedras, prayers, benedictions, ecclesiastical canons, and patristic extracts.¹² Toward the end of this work appears a brief text titled, *Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir*.¹³

The text begins by stating that due to Adam's fall and the subsequent decline of humanity, the world needs wise rulers. It then proclaims that „we“ are not leaders as leadership is not for everyone, only those commissioned by God, such as „our“ Emir. It then explains that God chose the Emir just as He previously chose Moses and David. The text then directly addresses the Emir and claims that, prior to his rule, the region was of little regard but now has become renown. Next, the author briefly reminds the Emir of the ephemeral nature of the present world and its

11 Although a colophon (*BL Add. 14,493*, f. 189a) asks the reader to pray for the scribe, it unfortunately notes neither the scribe's name nor the date of composition. The manuscript's dating is thus based on its paleography, which Wright attributes to the tenth century (Wright, *Catalogue*, v.1, 219). As with „To the Rulers of the World“ this only provides a *terminus ante quem* for the work's initial composition, as there is no evidence suggesting that this is an autographon.

12 For a description of the manuscript and its contents see Wright, *Catalogue*, v.1, 219-223.

13 Although scholars have analyzed and translated various sections of this manuscript, to the best of my knowledge, besides Wright's three line catalogue description, there has been no modern discussion or even reference to this particular text.

glory. He concludes by assuring the Emir that God guards and blesses him and his family.

Who is this Emir? The author provides no details about the Emir himself. The praises lavished upon the Emir are quite vague and could quite easily be applied to almost any ruler. The lack of specifics suggests that the work may have been aimed more at Emirs in general than toward any particular ruler. Several factors do suggest, however, that the work sees this generic Emir as a Muslim. First, of course, is the very term „Emir.“ Although a Syriac writer could use this Arabic loan word simply to denote a ruler, its most common use was to speak of a Muslim ruler.¹⁴ Second, at least by the tenth century when this work was incorporated into *BL Add. 14,493*, a regional leader „from a noble race and from an honorable family“ would almost certainly have been Muslim. Third, the text's use of the term „Emir of the faithful“ seems to be a deliberate borrowing from Muslim polity and is used by other Syriac texts to speak of specifically Muslim rulers.¹⁵ Fourth, as with *To the Rulers of the World*, if the work were addressed to a Christian ruler one would expect, especially in the closing benedictions, some reference to Jesus or the Trinity. But, except for a brief quotation from Romans 13:1 where Paul states that all human authorities are ordained by God, the author makes no reference to the New Testament or anything specifically Christian. Finally, in *BL Add. 14,493 Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir* appears immediately after a work titled *Prayers in Arabic and Written in Syriac*. This Karshuni text also begins with words that one should speak to an Emir, albeit in this case an Emir who knows only Arabic. Although it remains possible that a scribe would put a work about a Christian Emir immediately after one about an Arabic speaking (and thus almost certainly Muslim) Emir, this seems unlikely.

Why would a Syriac Christian write this sort of document concerning a Muslim Emir? Both the scribe's title *On an Entrance before a New Emir* and the text's adjacency to a listing of transliterated Arabic prayers on behalf of an Emir, suggest that in the tenth century the work was viewed as a template for how one

14 R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1879), 246; Carolus Brockelmann, *Lexicon Syriacum* (Halis Saxonum: Gottingon, 1928), 27; Amir Harrak, *The Chronicle of Zuqnin Parts III-IV* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1999), 25. Examples of Syriac uses of the term Emir to speak of Muslim rulers include: *The Disputation of the John and the Emir* (Penn, „John and the Emir“), *Disputation between a Monk of Bêt Hālê and an Arab Notable* (cited in Hoyland, *Seeing Islam*, 466); *Chronicle of Zuqnin* (CSCO 104, 174, 258, 282); *Ehnesch Inscription* (Andrew Palmer, „The Messiah and the Mahdi: History Presented as the Writing on the Wall,“ in *Polyphonia Byzantina: Studies in Honour of Willem J. Aerts* [Egbert Forsten: Groningen, 1993], 62); *Life of Rabban Hormizd* (E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Histories of Rabban Hormizd the Persian and Rabban Bar-Idtā* [London: Luac and Co, 1902], 66-67); Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon* (Paul Bedjan, *Chronicon syriacum* [Paris: Maisonneuve, 1890], 112, 244, 249-250, 309, 330).

15 E. g. *Chronicle of Zuqnin* (CSCO 104, 174, 258, 282); *Ehnesch Inscription* (Palmer, „The Messiah and the Mahdi,“ 62); Bar Hebraeus's *Chronicon* (Bedjan, *Chronicon*, 227, 236) uses the phrase „Emir of the believers“ to refer to Muslim caliphs.

might address a Muslim ruler. One could envision how an ecclesiastical official faced with the challenge of visiting or writing to a newly appointed ruler would be pleased to remember that he had a codex containing a list of transliterated Arabic prayers followed by a Syriac document that could give him a helpful starting point for composing his own comments, albeit comments that would later need to be translated in Arabic. A later reader even added a table of contents to *BL. Add. 14,493* making these documents more accessible to anyone who might need their guidance.¹⁶

Nevertheless, even if some who encountered this text soon afterward actually entered before a newly appointed Emir, this was undoubtedly a small percentage of its readership. In many ways this short work may be the ancient analogue to the chapter in *Miss Manners* speaking about the etiquette of attending a dinner at the White House.¹⁷ Although potentially useful for someone attending such an affair, few among Miss Manners' millions of readers is likely to receive such an invitation. Instead, her readership is invited to imagine what such an event would be like and how they would behave on such an occasion. For most of its readers, *Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir* may have served a similar function. Even for those who never would meet an Emir, new or otherwise, the text suggests what such an encounter might look like and what is the most practical Christian response to such an occasion.

Addressing Muslim Rule

As with all writings, circumstance and genre affected the content of *To the Rulers of the World* and *Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir*. Regardless of how frequently these works did or did not function as models for actual interchange with Muslim leaders, one would not expect even hypothetical instructions for how to address Islamic officials to contain extensive critiques of Islam. As a result, these documents' glowing praise of Muslim rulers does not necessarily reflect their authors' true feelings about Muslim rule. Nevertheless, we are a long way from seventh-century apocalypses such as *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* that speaks of Muslim rulers as „barbarian tyrants (who) are not men but ‘sons of desolation,’“ or *The Apocalypse of John the Little* where they „afflict all those who confess our Lord Jesus because they hate the Lord's name,“ or the eighth-century *Disputation between a Monk of Bêt Ḥālē and an Arab Notable* that has a

16 *BL. Add. 14,493*, f. 1b. The index is only partially preserved and the extant fragments do not include *Concerning the Entrance before a New Emir* so we do not know what it was called in this index.

17 Judy Martin. *Miss Manner's Guide to Excrutiatingly Correct Behavior* (New York: Norton, 2005), 609-707.

Muslim interlocutor state, „you are driven by us like sheep to slaughter; and your bishops and priests are killed, and the rest are subjugated and enslaved, night and day, to the king's burdens, more bitter than death.“¹⁸

To the Rulers of the World and *Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir* are important data points illustrating a larger trend among Syriac sources. As apocalyptic hopes faded and it became increasingly evident to Syriac Christians that they would be under Muslim rule for the long term, Syriac authors depicted Muslims, and especially Muslim rulers, in more positive terms.¹⁹ In large part this was, of course, simply good politics. At other times, however, it may have reflected decreased tensions between Syriac Christians and Muslims as they negotiated on-going existence in a pluralistic society.

To the Rulers of the World and *Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir* may also represent an unexplored genre of Syriac writings on Islam. As most studies have focused on works that explicitly speak of Muslims, texts that are more implicit in their discussions of Islam, such as discussions of early medieval rulers, have been overlooked. It is only by including these documents in our analysis that we can even begin to approximate the diversity of early Syriac reactions to the rise of Islam.

18 *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* 11:17 (CSCO 540:31-32); *The Apocalypse of John the Little* (J. Rendel Harris, *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles together with the Apocalypses of Each One of Them* [Cambridge: The University Press, 1900], 20*); *Disputation between a Monk of Bêt Hālē and an Arab Notable* translated in Gerrit J. Reinink, „Political Power and Right Religion in the East Syrian Disputation between a Monk of Bêt Hālē and an Arab Notable,“ in *The Encounter of Eastern Christianity with Early Islam*, 161-162.

19 Similarly, other later works such as the writings of Timothy I, Thomas of Margā's *The Book of Governors*, *The Life of John of Dailam*, and *The Life of Gabriel of Qarmim* speak of Muslims much more positively than seventh- and early eighth-century Syriac documents such as *The Chronicle of Khuzistan*, John bar Penkaye's *Book of Main Points*, *The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ephrem*, *The Edessene Apocalypse*, *The Anti-Life of Maximus the Confessor*, and *The Chronicle of Disasters*. There are exceptions to this trend as one can find some later Syriac depictions of Muslims that are quite negative (e. g. *The Bahira Legend*). Nevertheless, the contrast between *To the Rulers of the World* and *Concerning an Entrance before a New Emir* and the earliest strata of Syriac writings about Islam remains striking.

To the Rulers of the World²⁴

Health is necessary for all the members of the body, and especially for the brain and for the head and for the eyes and for the tongue. For the head because life's strength flows from it to all the other members. And for the brain because this is the administrator of all human actions. And for the eyes because they are the lamps of the body.²⁵ And for the tongue because it is the advocate of all the members. Likewise, virtue and beautiful conduct are necessary for all men, and especially for rulers and for leaders and for priests and for teachers who are appointed for all those who live under them in place of the head and the eyes and from whom all those who are under their authority need to learn. For just as whenever the head is healthy all the members are also healthy, so too whenever the leader is healthy in knowledge and in conduct, so too those under him conduct themselves in accord with proper virtue.

And this we learn from many things, one or two (of which) I present to you for (your) elucidation. David was healthy in knowledge and in conduct just as scripture witnesses (saying): „The Lord chose him, a man in accord with His heart,”²⁶ so that he might do all His will. And because of him, all the people under his power conducted themselves in the fear of God – and not only (his own) people, but also the other people he conquered. In order to become pleasing to him, they familiarized themselves with the fear of God. As he himself said, „Foreigners will submit to me, foreigners will be hindered and turn away from their former paths.”²⁷ And in order to please²⁸ the king, they traveled even to paths on which they had not previously walked. For this (is what the expression) „they will turn away“ makes known, that some in truth and some in order to please yielded to the God of David. And because his deeds were beautiful and his governance was by integrity of heart and he led his kingdom with understanding and with wisdom, his empire also easily obeyed his will and he also deserved blessings from God. And likewise also the blessed Hezekiah whose righteous rule humbled kings of valiant exploits. And his trust in God was a fortified wall for the people. And in his days, virtue was practice among his people. This obtained salvation for his city and gave him deliverance from hardships.²⁹ And God's name was spread among peoples and among kings. Through the wonders that his Lord did because of him in heaven and on earth, offerings were even sent to him from the king of Babylon as signs of his honor and the exaltation of his God.³⁰

24 A marginal note repeats the title, „To the Rulers of the World.“

25 Cf. Mt. 6:22, Lk 11:34.

26 1 Sam 13:14.

27 2 Sam 22:45-46.

28 *Corr.*

29 Cf. 2 King 19:32-37, 2 Chr 32:20-22.

30 Cf. 2 Chr. 32:23.

And also your Excellency, my lord, who is appointed as a head for this people under your authority so that the activity of the head might be seen in you, you take great care to let life flow to them through your person bringing to life deeds of righteousness out of dead deeds. And through your mind, that is healthily conducted by knowledge and by virtue, the weak are strengthened, and the sick become strong, and the nobles³⁶ are encouraged, and the poor are upheld, and the rich are strengthened, and the orphans and the widows are supported, and God is glorified, and your rule is honored. And as the body sees all visible things through the eyes, so too, through you, your entire empire sees all the glory of (your) rule and understands its advantages, and glorifies God, its author. And you are to them like a tongue in the body for you plead on their behalf before kings and governors and rulers who are placed over them. And they receive through you, in word and in deeds, profitable advice for their lives as through a good mediator of their salvation. And your conduct and your knowledge assure them of good things and persuade God to appease the governors' hearts toward your will.

And you will have God as the helper for all the deeds of your governance. And through you He will lead the people subjected to your honor on all the straight paths and the ways that lead to eternal life. And those who in love and in great willingness submit to your authority will multiple and increase. And your commandments and laws will become great and prevail among those who stand against you. And God and His holy angels, who are appointed over your ministration and the protecting of your life, will be pleased with you. And you will find mercy in the eyes of all the temporary rulers. And day after day your honor and glory in the world will increase and grow. And also in the kingdom of heaven you will be seen as great because of your beautiful conduct. And you will leave your sons a good inheritance of honor and of praise by which they will continually be honored by all the generations of the world forever and ever.

...

Concerning the Entrance before a New Emir.

When God created Adam, He made him pure and holy. And when, through the counsel of Satan, he transgressed the commandment and was expelled to the accursed land, he and his children became enslaved to sin and to death and to exhaustion and to affliction and to labor and to weakness and to disobedience and to rebellion. And his children differ in form and stature and will and conduct. And there are among them wise and foolish and keepers of the law and despisers of the commandments. Therefore our race has become in need of rational leaders and wise governors who abolish inequity and teach righteousness and show men the straight ways of the Lord⁴¹ and yoke (them) to the law of harmony that God, by His various and manifold wisdom, made for those under them.

And to us who are subjects, it is right to know that leadership is not right for everyone and (that) governing is not proper for everyone and (that) rule is not suitable for everyone, but (only) for those chosen and appointed by a special lot and by a calling from God, just as Paul said, „All authorities are ordained by God,⁴² and the wise one says, „The world's authority is through the power of the Lord.⁴³ And to His few He gives honor, among them our own blessed Emir. God guards him for he was chosen to lead us as David (led) the Lord's people and as Moses, at that time, (led) Israel. And he will heal whoever is injured and he will bring back whoever has gone astray and he will support whoever is weak and he will guard whoever is strong. And by him the scriptural passage will be confirmed for us: „A wise king establishes the people and through the wisdom of the ruler a district is founded.⁴⁴

For because He gives us peaceful and kind leaders like you, we therefore know that God is pleased with us. For you are from a noble race and from an honorable people and you have praiseworthy conduct and temperate reasoning and a peaceful appearance and a beautiful name that, like sweet spices, comforts those near you. And just as the Queen of Sheba when she came to Solomon said, „Blessed are your wives. Blessed are your servants. Blessed are those who continually hear your wisdom,⁴⁵ we likewise say: „Blessed is our country and our region when it is led by fearers of God like you.“ Our country (was) very weak and

41 Isa. 40:3.

42 Rom. 13:1.

43 Cf. Wisdom 6:3.

44 Sir. 10:1.

45 1 King 10:8.

הַיְּהוּדִים הָיוּ עָנִיִּים וְלֹא הָיוּ שֵׁם בְּתוֹךְ הָאָדָם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.

וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.

וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.
וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם. וְעַתָּה הָיוּ עָשִׂירִים וְשֵׁם הָיוּ לָהֶם.

our region poor. And we had no name among men. And through you and because of you our country and our region have become great. And through you we have obtained pride and a good name.

Because we (are) a small flock, we are chastened by difficult times and we are brought low through various afflictions. And you are wise and understanding. And you know that the world is transient and that its wealth does not stay and its rule and its honor do not last. And henceforth, one readies provisions for the journey of that path that no mortal avoids.

And by God we hope that in your time and in your days our country will be at peace and our region flourish and our afflictions pass away and our grief be forgotten. And the Lord nourishes us, through your hands and in your days, (according to) what we request, that you and the one above you may lead us.⁴⁶ And the Lord guards the life of the Emir of the faithful. And the Lord blesses your leadership and makes your governance successful and makes your rule great and lengthens your life and guards your house and your family and your offspring and your property and what is yours and all that you have. And He is with you forever. Amen.

46 The middle two letters are unclear in the ms.

47 This sentence does not make clear sense and the ms. may have been corrupted at this point.

48 The verb word here translated as „nourishes“ is unclear in the ms. The two other verbs in the sentence, although more clearly written, are also problematic and the translation of this sentence remains tentative at best.