

Bar-Hebraeus on Mukhtaṣar Tarikh al-Duwal
Khalid Dinno, CSSS

Gregory Abu-al-Faraj Bar-Hebraeus was one of the most prolific scholars writing in Syriac in the second half of the 13th century. Of his over 35 books, the one under consideration was the only one he wrote in Arabic, which he wrote during the last month of his life in response to requests by several personalities. He divided history into ten nations or kingdoms, starting from Adam in the First Nation to the Chaldeans in the Fifth Nation, and the Greeks and then the Romans in the Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Nations, and the Muslims in the Ninth Nation, ending up, during his own time, with the transfer of rule to the Kings of the Mongols. This is a remarkable, yet brief, presentation of an extensive history written in Arabic of a high linguistic standard.

A Look at One of the First Armenian Plays in Iran
Duman Riyazi, University of Toronto

Undoubtedly, the culture of the “Armenian Iranians” can be counted among the most important in the history of Iran—a culture that, for all its differences and similarities, was able to create important integrations and influences in Iran. One can find a clear example of such integrations in cultural and artistic influences, especially in the performing arts. Perhaps it can be said that these Armenian communities were among the most important factors in actualizing Iranian drama during the Qajar period. The Qajar (Kadjar) imperial family was an Iranian dynasty that lasted from 1789-1797). In this article, we will try to present and review one of the first Armenian drama documents of Iran during this period.

CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR SYRIAC STUDIES
ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM XXIV

Saturday November 11, 2023
Bahen Centre, Rm 1130
40 St. George St, Toronto, M5S 2E4

9:15 am

General Meeting for CSSS Members

10:00—10:45

Bar-Hebraeus on *Mukhtasar Tarikh al-Duwal*,
Khalid Dinno, CSSS

10:45—11:30

A Look at One of the First Armenian Plays in Iran
Duman Riyazi, University of Toronto

11:30—12:15

Divorce and Alimony in Syriac Legal Tradition
James Toma, CSSS - University of Toronto

12:15—1:00 *Break with Refreshment*

1:00—1:45

Digital Epigraphy and its Application in Syriac Studies
Amir Harrak & Rita Sawaya, CSSS - University of Toronto

1:45—2:30

Whither Syriac Social Science? A Memory Book and its History of the Future
Adrian Zakar, CSSS - University of Toronto

2:30—3:15

Karkha-d-Beth-Slokh: A Content Analysis of the Narrative Associated with the Neo-Assyrian Period
Sihaam Khan, University of Toronto

From Biblical Decrees to Secular Judgements: Divorce and Alimony in the Syriac Legal Tradition

James Toma, CSSS - University of Toronto

The Syriac tradition of law provides a vital lens through which the evolution of divorce and alimony norms can be viewed. Deeply rooted in Scripture, the canons and law books highlight an amalgamation of religious tenets, cultural aspects, and societal demands. Central to this exploration are the causes and conditions regulating divorce, the socio-economic implications affecting the divorced parties, and the woman's *phernītā* (i.e., dowry). By presenting the Syriac legal tradition, we gain insights into the role of Biblical interpretation and its interplay within the law and society.

Digital Epigraphy and its Application in Syriac Studies

Amir Harrak and Rita Sawaya,

CSSS - University of Toronto

In the late 19th century, Northwest Semitic Epigraphy and paleography dealt with various aspects of epigraphy that established a strong foundation to the study of inscriptions. Nonetheless, the digital tools of the 21st century allow for improvement in imaging, drawing, rendering, representation and interpretation of inscriptions. In 2019, a new digital humanities initiative, "GLYPĒ," was launched. Based on Harrak's *Corpus of Syriac and Garshuni Inscriptions of Iraq* (Paris 2010), the "GLYPĒ" Project investigates Syriac inscriptional scripts, reliefs and various monuments, using new technology tools. "GLYPĒ" is currently applying digital epigraphic methods to revisit and study Syriac inscriptions and tangible built heritage monuments of Iraq. The objective of this presentation is to highlight the importance of leveraging new technologies to analyze Syriac inscriptions to study and promote tangible Syriac heritage.

Whither Syriac Social Science? A Memory Book and its History of the Future

Adrian Zakar, CSSS – University of Toronto

This paper examines the role of social science in structuring a memory book of 1915 composed in Arabic by the Syriac scholar and priest Ishaq Armalah. Armalah's memory book, titled "The Disasters of Christians" (Nakabat al-Masihiyyun) offered a scholarly portrayal and eye-witness account of the life and destruction during WWI of various indigenous Syriac, Armenian, and Chaldean communities in and around Mardin. While Armalah was himself a priest, his scholarly work deployed concepts of social science to describe the unique social landscape of Upper-Mesopotamian Catholicisms, and explain the state-sponsored campaigns of dispossession that unmade them between the 1890s and the 1910s. I will explore how Armalah used secular forms and conventions to inject in his narrative of these catastrophic events, possibilities for brighter horizons, and how this invocation of "Disaster" ("*nakba*" in Arabic) fit within an ecumenical tradition of social science among Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian intellectuals in the 20th-century.

Karka-d-Beth-Slokh: A Content Analysis of the Narrative Associated with the Neo-Assyrian Period

Sihaam Khan, University of Toronto

The 6th century AD Syriac manuscript, Karka-d-Beth-Slokh, is known for detailing some of the early history of modern-day Kirkuk. The scholarship that covers with it primarily comments on the historical inaccuracies dealing with the period that saw the advent of Christianity around the 2nd century AD, as well as the later events pertaining to the persecution of Christian Nestorians. This criticism, however, is only merited if one approaches the work with the assumption that it is a historical treatise on the city. The present writer will apply this approach to the narrative chronicling the period that predates Christianity that specifically associated with the Neo-Assyrian Period, which has more so been overlooked by scholarship.