A Neglected Passage in the "History of the Caucasian Albanians"

C. J. F. Dowsett


Stable URL:
http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0041-977X%281957%2919%3A3%3C456%3AANPIT%22E2.0.CO%3B2-Q

*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* is currently published by School of Oriental and African Studies.

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR’s Terms and Conditions of Use, available at http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html. JSTOR’s Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at http://www.jstor.org/journals/soas.html.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

---

JSTOR is an independent not-for-profit organization dedicated to creating and preserving a digital archive of scholarly journals. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.
A NEGLECTED PASSAGE IN THE

HISTORY OF THE CAUCASIAN ALBANIANS

By C. J. F. Dowsett

In the majority of the extant manuscripts of the Patmut’iun Aluanic by Movses Kalankatuaci, 1 and subsequently in the printed editions 2 and the Russian translation 3 of this work, a passage containing some not unimportant historical information concerning Caucasian Albania in the ninth century A.D. has come to be omitted. In 1897 Xafik Dadean reproduced in Ararat 4 the text of this passage as he found it in two manuscripts in the patriarchal library of Etchmiadzin, but owing to the comparative inaccessibility of the said journal and perhaps also to the fact that the passage has never been translated, it has been overlooked by Western scholars. Fortunately, however, the text is contained in the manuscript of the History belonging to the British Museum, 5 and although it is not the best text among the group of manuscripts which contain the passage, for the readings of the others are often to be preferred, it will be reproduced below as the best complete manuscript text at our disposal at present.

In Book III, Chapter 20, of his History, 6 Movses relates how al-Ma’mūn

1 i.e in those manuscripts first classified as forming Group I by X. Dadean, ‘ The MSS of Movses Kalankatuaçi ’ [in Armenian], Ararat, 1895, 235, 333–88, 425 ; 1897, 67, 161. The passage is contained in Etchmiadzin MSS nos. 1725 (seventeenth century) and 2561 (A.D. 1664), British Museum MS Or. 5621 (seventeenth century), Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale) MS no. 220 (A.D. 1857), Venice (San Lazzaro) MSS nos. 1405 (seventeenth century) and 1146 (C. A.D. 1842), and in a Qarabagh manuscript, variants from which were noted in Venice MS no. 1146; all these manuscripts belong to the so-called Group II and will here be referred to as E1725, E2561, BM, P220, VI, V2, and Q respectively. I am able to quote the Etchmiadzin variants through the kindness of Dr. N. Akinean of Vienna, who allowed me to consult lists of variants in his possession prepared by Dadean. M. M. Al’tman, Istoriichekskii ocherk goroda Gandzhi, chast’ 1 (publication of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the Azerbaijan SSR), Baku, 1949, p. 15, n. 1, mentions an article by T. I. Ter-Grigoryan [Ter-Grigorean] entitled ‘ K voprosam ob ‘ Istori strany albanesko ’ Moiseya Kagankatuaskogo ’ (‘ neizdannaya rukopis’ [unpublished manuscript] n/arkhiva In-ta Istori f A. N. Azerb. S.S.R. no. 991’). From Al’tman’s brief summary of this article we see that Ter-Grigorean also considers the passage under discussion to have been part of the original History. Al’tman (or Ter-Grigorean) rightly points out that ‘ the inclusion [of the missing folios] in the published text of the History of the Albanians adjusts those discrepancies in the chronology of Dasxoranci [Kalankatuaçi] hitherto unexplained ’. I owe this reference to Professor Minorsky who has just (June 1957) received Al’tman’s interesting work.


3 K. P. Patkanov (Patkanean), Istoriya Aqvan Moiseya Kagankatvatsi, St. Petersburg, 1861.

4 X. Dadean, Ararat, 1897, 161 ff.; part of the Armenian text is also quoted by M. Barxutareanç, Patmut’iun Aluanic, Part I, Valarşapat, 1902, 134–5.

5 MS no. Or. 5261; see F. C. Conybeare, A catalogue of the Armenian manuscripts in the British Museum . . ., London 1913, p. 292. My thanks are due to the Director and Trustees of the British Museum for permission to reproduce fol. 242r–243v of this manuscript here.

6 Ed. Šahnazarean, vol. ii, p. 58, ed. Emin (ii.l.21), p. 265, tr. Patkanean, p. 270; these works will henceforth be referred to as S, E, and Patk. respectively.
attacked the Byzantines in the year 280 of the Armenian era (a.d. 831/2) and how ‘after three years’ (i.e. a.d. 834/5) ‘a certain emir Badslī came at the command of the prince of the Tačiks [the caliph]’ and martyred a certain Yovhan in Naxījevan. After this episode most manuscripts, both editions, and the Russian translation continue thus: ‘When another two years had passed after this, Xazr Patgos,2 a furious and merciless man, came and was killed in the same year.’ The date apparently implied by this passage (a.d. 836/7) considerably embarrassed Markwart, who recognized in this "muqadda Xazr, amended to *μαqαq *Xalīd, Khālid b. Yazīd b. Mazyadj, who governed Armenia for the third time under the caliph Wāthiq (824–47) and died whilst marching to attack Išẖaq b. Isma‘il al-Tīfīsī. Since 836/7 is far too early a date for Khālid’s death,3 Markwart felt compelled to make other amendments in the Armenian text as he knew it, and consequently attempted to correct the date by assuming that the reading ‘after 2 (p) years’ was an error for ‘after 8 (n) years’, concluding that the governorship reported by Movšēs Kalankatuaçi fell in the year a.d. 844 or 845. Apart from the fact

1 This name has been much distorted in the various manuscripts and editions: E. Badol; S. Badoli; S, var., Bardoli; BM, Q. Badz mi; VI, V2, Badosi; Patk., 276, Badosi; the form Badslī is contained in a list of variants (in the possession of Dr. N. Akinean of Vienna and microfilmed for me, with his kind permission, by my friend Dr. W. C. H. Diessen of Nijmegen) from a Tabriz manuscript. This is clearly al-Ḥasan b. ‘Alī al-Badāghdašī (الداغداشي), who was appointed governor of Armenia either under the caliph al-Mu‘āmīn (c. a.d. 786–833) according to Ya’qūbi, II 566 (followed by M. Ghazarjan, Armenien unter der arabischen Herrschaft, Marburg, 1908, p. 42, no. 61, and J. Laurent, L’Arménie entre Byzance et l’Islam, Paris, 1919, pp. 344–5, no. 74), or under al-Muṭaṣim (a.d. 833–42), according to Baladāḫūrī, 211. R. R. Vasmer (Faesmer, Chronologie der arabischen Statthalter von Armenien, Wien, 1901, 102–3, dates his governorship as a.d. 218–29 (a.d. 834/5–835/6). Movšēs’ dating is couched in terms too vague to decide the question, but seems rather to support Baladāḫūrī. J. Markwart (Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge, Leipzig, 1908, 462), followed in this by Laurent (op. cit., p. 346, no. 76—e. ‘amar ‘alā baṣīl) and Vasmer (op. cit., 80—* Baṣīl), has been misled by the form Badol(i). Markwart’s analysis of *muqαq Badolī as *μαqαq *Azdi (i.e. Muḥammad b. Sulaimān al-Azdī al-Samarquandī) with its far-fetched explanation of the initial Λ- B, is to be rejected. A correct Armenian form of the name would be *Badslīi; in the form Badolī n s has been confused with n o and displaced.

2 Patgos is the title of ‘governor’, also given below (p. 461, n. 3) to Muḥammad b. Khālid Buḫārā Khulqāš (Buḫar Xoqa Patgos). Hübichmann (Armenische Grammatik, Leipzig, 1895, 223, s. patgsap) considers the form patgos- in T’ormva Aroruni, Patmut’t’un tann Arorunac, ed. St. Petersburg, 1887, 286, hardly correct. Its occurrence (in the singular) here and below, however, confirms this usage.

3 Cf. Ya’qūbi, II 567; Ghazarjan, op. cit., p. 42, no. 64, and p. 50; Vasmer, op. cit., 89; Laurent, op. cit., p. 345, nos. 78, 79, 81; Markwart, op. cit., p. 408, 410–11, 461. Stepannos Tarōnećī (Asolik), Patmut’t’un tiezkan, II, 2, tr. Dalaurier, Paris, 1883, pp. 134–5, gives the date of his march on Tīfīs as 290 A (30 April 841–29 April 842 a.d.) and says that he died (not specifically that he was killed) in the village of Xosapir in Javāvak.1 Ibn Khullīkānī (tr. Slane, iv 230–1) says that he becamе ill on his way to Tīfīs and died at Dvin in a.h. 230 (a.d. 844–5), while the Georgian Chronicle supports Movsēs’ statement that Khālid was killed: ‘Xalīd [i.e. Xalīd] returned a third time and was killed in Javāxēt’ (S. Qaux’īšīvili (ed.), K’art’līs c’zovērea, Tīfīs, 1955, 1, 255; Brosset (tr.), Histoire de la Géorgie, 265).
that Markwart ought to have calculated the eight years from the last date implied by Movsès, i.e. A.D. 834/5, whereby he would have arrived at A.D. 842/3, it is now evident that no amendment is necessary, for between the account of the martyrdom of Yovhan in A.D. 834/5 and the death of ‘Xazr Patgos’, we must restore a passage which finally implies for the death of Khālid a date of 291 A (30 April 842–29 April 843).¹ The complete passage, as contained in British Museum MS Or. 5621, is as follows ²:

TEXT
British Museum MS Or. 5261 fol. 242r–243v

¹ See below, p. 461, n. 7.
² The text reproduced here follows the original manuscript exactly, except that it has been divided into paragraphs and that proper names are printed with capital initials, the original being inconsistent in this respect.

⁹ P220 ḫuẖwāšt. ⁴ P220  ||=✈šaḥš. ⁵ P220 q. u.='r>]|s/>. ⁶ P220  ||s./|w.µ.| ⁷ P220 Q. E2561; E1725 q. u.='r>]|s/>. ⁸ P220; V1, V2 om. ⁹ P220; V1, V2 ṣr/>. ¹⁰ P220 ||s./|w.µ.; E2561, Q... ||s./|w.µ.; V1, V2... ||s./|w.µ.; E1725... ||s./|w.µ.
¹¹ E2561, E1725, Q.; P220 ||s./|w.µ.; V1, V2 ||s./|w.µ.
¹² P220 ||uẖw.µ.||w.µ.µ.
PASSENGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CAUCASIAN ALBANIANS

1 P220 bhinmaanawu emq wr.
2 P220, E2561, Q; E1725 wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq nabunnaw.
3 P220 [q baw.]
4 P220, E1725 wamq marq.
5 E2561, P; P220, E1725 wamq marq.
6 P220, V1, V2, Q; E2561, E1725 wamq marq.
7 E2561, E1725, Q; P220 wamq marq, wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq marq

1 P220 bhinmaanawu emq wr.
2 P220, E2561, Q; E1725 wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq nabunnaw.
3 P220 [q baw.]
4 P220, E1725 wamq marq.
5 E2561, P; P220, E1725 wamq marq.
6 P220, V1, V2, Q; E2561, E1725 wamq marq.
7 E2561, E1725, Q; P220 wamq marq, wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq marq

1 P220 bhinmaanawu emq wr.
2 P220, E2561, Q; E1725 wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq nabunnaw.
3 P220 [q baw.]
4 P220, E1725 wamq marq.
5 E2561, P; P220, E1725 wamq marq.
6 P220, V1, V2, Q; E2561, E1725 wamq marq.
7 E2561, E1725, Q; P220 wamq marq, wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq marq

1 P220 bhinmaanawu emq wr.
2 P220, E2561, Q; E1725 wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq nabunnaw.
3 P220 [q baw.]
4 P220, E1725 wamq marq.
5 E2561, P; P220, E1725 wamq marq.
6 P220, V1, V2, Q; E2561, E1725 wamq marq.
7 E2561, E1725, Q; P220 wamq marq, wamq marq; V1, V2 wamq marq
And the next year there were heavy rains for 40 days and the River Kur filled to overflowing and flooded the land for 15 parasangs beyond its established limits. There emerged from the Caspian Sea a dragon-fish as large as a mountain, and it swallowed the fishermen's fish into its belly, and the fishermen laboured in vain. Then the sailors devised a plan, assembled in one place and cut the fish with a sword in the region of its tail until it died. The Kur bore it away whence it came. Thereafter it was easy for the fishermen to catch the fish, for they came as though released from prison.

In the same year Lord Dawit, Catholicos of Armenia, died, and he cursed those who stole the land of St. Gregory, who were these: Abdelmelk [son of] Jahab, whereby he was killed; Abdla son of Surhar and Abujap't Aracaçi were taken to Partaw and both flayed alive.

And we learned this information about the court of the Amir Momnin: to the right of the court sits the chief of the 'serta who is greater than the chief of the executioners, and on the left the judge and the amir of the Treasury who render justice and (receive) the payment of taxes of the universe. One appears before them at the ninth hour and receives the command on the following day. They also administer the public services.

In the year 286 of the Armenian era, 20,000 horsemen suddenly emerged from Baghdad and ravaged the land of Albania. Hereupon Sahl i Smbatean, who was of the Zarmirhakan family of kings, having as his ally the great martyr George, lifted up his eyes and met them like an eagle swooping down upon helpless birds. And he smote them and scattered them over the plains and put them to flight. In the same year the same Lord Sahl i Smbatean captured the rebel Baban, the murderous, world-ravaging, bloodthirsty beast, and delivered him into the hands of the Amir Momnin. And for his efforts he received a goodly reward from the court, for he received sovereignty over Armenia, Georgia, and Albania, to rule authoritatively and regally over all.

1 Q; P220 NumberFormatException; E2561 NumberFormatException; E1725 NumberFormatException; V1, V2 NumberFormatException.
2 P220, Q, E2561, E1725; V1, V2 NumberFormatException.
3 i.e. A.D. 835/6, one year after al-Badghisâ's arrival in 834/5; see p. 457, n. 1.
5 V1, V2, om.; E1725 'who of the same' (?).
6 Or 'by whom'; V1, V2 'by the sword'.
7 V1, V2 'of Surhal'; E1725 'of Surhar'; BM might be read 'of Sur the concubine (karhî)'.
8 P220, Apučâpr'; V1, V2, Abujafr. 9 i.e. the 'Amir al-Mu'minîn, the caliph.
10 i.e. the gâhib al-shûrâ.
11 i.e. 286 A (1 May 837–30 April 838).
12 See Commentary, section A, below. 13 The identity of this martyr George is not clear.
In the year 287 of the Armenian era Abraham Amir Momnin went with a large army to the kingdom of the Romans and took the great town of Emovria (Amorium) by sword and enslavement. And thence he returned to his abode; he is Apu Sahak.¹

In the same year the Lord of Lords Yovhannēs,² who became lord of Armenia, Georgia, and Albania, supplicated the court a second time for these three lands through Bulxar Xoyta Patgos.³

And in this year a locust came from the direction of the Khazars, an extraordinary thing larger than a sparrow, and it ate up part of the land of Albania.

After two years ⁴ the winter was most severe and afflicted and brought death upon many beasts and herdsmen. And in these days the K'alan'akanacik⁵ came and wrought havoc on the cantons of Sisan Jor and Amaras.⁶ And Ėsay, called Abu Musē, rose against them and routed them.⁷

¹ 287 A (1 May 838–30 April 839 A.D.) is the correct date for the capture of Amorium by Abu Ishāq Muhammad al-Mu'tasim; the town fell in 838 according to Theophanes Cont., III.31 (ed. Bonn, p. 127), more precisely on 23 September 838 according to Arab historians (cf. W. Weil, Geschichte der Chalifen, Mannheim, 1846–62, II, 315; Daghbashean, op. cit., 10). According to Byzantine sources, the caliph was aided in his campaign by the Armenian army (cf. refs. in Laurent, op. cit., p. 212, n. 6; R. Grousset, Histoire de l'Arménie, Paris, 1947, 354).

² This Lord of Lords Yovhannēs who supplicates the caliph through Bulxar Xoyta Patgos (i.e. Muhammad b. Khālid Buhbara Khodhēh, governor of Armenia under al-Mu'tasim; cf. Markwart, op. cit., 410, 461; Ghazarjan, op. cit., p. 42, no. 62; Laurent, op. cit., p. 345, no. 77; Vasmer, op. cit., 84, 87, 88, 89, 103) in A.D. 838/9 is Yovhannēs of Ova, Catholicoz of Armenia A.D. 833–55. He was for a time deposed by Bagarat of Tarōn, and it was the pro-Arab Smbat Ablabas who summoned the synod which restored him to the catholicozate (cf. T'ovma Arcruni, II.6, pp. 114–15; Vardan, Havak'umna patnul'can, XLIII, ed. Venice, 1862, 80; John Catholicos, XIII, tr. St. Martin, 103–4; Step'umnos Orbėlean, I,37, tr. Brosset, p. 102; R. Grousset, op. cit., 350–1). The present passage indicates that a direct appeal was made to the caliph to settle this ecclesiastical dispute, just as in 704 an appeal was made to the caliph by the patriarch Elia to intervene in the Nersēs Bakur affair (see Movses Kakhakatuaci, III.5). We now have a date for Yovhannēs' restoration, elsewhere assumed to have taken place circa A.D. 841 (e.g. R. Grousset, op. cit., 360). Movses' dating affects also Buhbara Khodhēh. Vasmer (op. cit., 89) gives the date of his appointment as 'beginning of 225' (inc. 12 November 839 A.D.), whereas the present passage implies that he was governor already in 287 A (1 May 838–30 April 839 A.D.), which falls in A.H. 224 (23 November 838–11 November 839 A.D.). As Vasmer suggests (loc. cit., n. 11), Laurent's date (op. cit., p. 345, no. 77) for the beginning of Buhbara Khodhēh's governorship (A.D. 840/1) is too late.

² BM, Q, E1725, E2561 have an erroneous punctuation (Bulxar, Xoyta, Patgos) which I have corrected above; P220 has (correctly) Bulxar Xoyta Patkos; V1, V2 (incorrectly) Bulzarzoy Top'agros (!).

³ i.e. 289 A (30 April 840–29 April 841).

⁴ E1725, V1, V2, Balakanacik.

⁵ Amaras is normally referred to not as a canton (gavart) but as a village in the canton of Miws Haband in the province of Arçax; see Ingišen, Storagrut'ivun hin Hayastanaueg, Venice, 1822, 306; Hübchschmann, 'Ortenamen', 350. In two other instances it is called a canton in Movses (below, p. 464). Sisan Jor (Sisan Valley) seems to be otherwise unknown, unless it is to be connected with the canton of Sisakan i kotak in the province of Arçax (Hübchschmann, loc. cit., pp. 349–50, no. 130; Sis + suffix -än t; cf. Sisakan apud Hübchschmann, loc. cit., 467).

The reading K'alan'akanacik⁶ seems to point to k'alak'akan ' pertaining to the town, urban' and k'alak'acik ' townsman', but is as it stands an unlikely formation. It has been left in the above translation because this follows BM, but Balakanacik seems to me the better reading; see below, p. 463.

⁶ At this point the other manuscripts and editions take up the story: 'When another two
COMMENTARY

A. The antecedents of Sahl i Smbatean

In this passage, Sahl i Smbatean, who is called Eransahik at III, 19, is said to be of 'the Zarmirakan family of kings'. This indicates that Sahl was the descendant of the Zarmir Eransahik who was the sole survivor of the Eransahik family when they were treacherously exterminated by Vardan K'aj of the Mihrakan dynasty and was spared only because he was the husband of one of the daughters of Vardan's family. Eransahik is not to be taken as the title of արարանշահ, as Markwart already half guessed. Suggestions that Sahl was a Bagratid or that his family came originally from Taron are to be discarded, or at least revised, in the light of the present passage, which is the only explicit statement on Sahl's origin, hitherto a mystery, found in Armenian sources. One cannot exclude the possibility, however, of this eminently respectable Albanian genealogy having been falsely assumed by Sahl or invented by the historian or his source in an attempt to legitimize Sahl's claim to the throne of Albania.

According to the Arab historians Sahl, although he had been an ally of Babek (Baban), was prevailed upon by Afshin to deliver up the fleeing rebel who had taken refuge with him. For this service Sahl received, according to Mas'udi, a royal robe, a crown, and a horse, and was exempted from tribute, all of which amounts to an official investiture as ruler of Albania. The exemption from tribute must have been no more than official acceptance of the status years had passed after this (i.e. 287 A.D. 2 + 2 = 291 A.D. 842/3). Xazr Patgos, a furious and merciless man, came and was killed in the same year; his son [Muhammad] came, however, and took our land by the sword and enslaved us and burned down many churches and then went to Baghdad. Returning thence at the king's command and expense, he built the city of Ganjäk in the canton of Aršakasän [BM add. in the year 295 (A.D. 846/7)]. After this he raided the land of Siwnik and enslaved the territory of Balk [St. Orb., l.xxxii Balasakan (!)] and descended into a village called Ark'ünaget and straightway ordered the church dedicated to St. Gregory to be burned down . . . .

3. Streifz., p. 457, d.: 'If Sahl i Smbatean receives the title of kawwawar(unzahad) already in 821/2, this, unless perhaps it denotes his descent from the old princely house of the Aronsahik [sic], is incorrect, since Sahl, as we learn from Ya'qubi, took possession of Arran only under al-Mu'tasim'.
4. Daghsashean, op. cit., 6, takes Sahl to be the son of the contemporary generalissimo of Armenia, Smbat Bagratuni; this is completely without foundation and his surprise that Sahl 'is nowhere called the son of Smbat the Generalissimo but merely the son of Smbat' is wholly unjustified. Smbat is hardly an uncommon name in Armenian history.
7. VII, p. 126 (Laurent, p. 113, n. 10) ; Ţabari, iii,1272, mentions 1,000,000 dirhams for himself, 100,000 for his son Mu'awiya, a gem-studded belt, the title of baṭrīq with a tiara; cf. V. Minorsky, op. cit., p. 510, n. 2.
8. Laurent, 74, 113.
PASSAGE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CAUCASIAN ALBANIANS 463

quo, for already in 835, when Muḥammad b. Suleymān al-ʿAzdī al-Samarqandi arrived to govern Armenia, Sahl had revolted against the Arabs and made himself master of Arran; this fact is discreetly ignored by the caliph in 837. The Armenian historian Vardan speaks only of a monetary reward: ‘Sahl, son of Smbat, seizes Baban and receives from Apšin gifts of a thousand kārīr of silver and yet another hundred thousand’.

Movses’ statement that Sahl received sovereignty over Armenia, Georgia, and Albania is, of course, a gross exaggeration. Sahl was not even sole ruler of Albania, and T'ovma Arcruni calls him only ‘lord of Šak'ē’.

Among the prisoners captured by Bogha al-Kabīr in 854 John Catholicos and T'ovma Arcruni mention three Albanian princes: Atnrseh, lord of Xačēn, Sahl son of Smbat, lord of Šak'ē, and Esay Abu Musē, lord of K'tiš in Arçax.

After the murder of the Mihrakans prince Varaz Trdat in 821/2, the last vestige of political unity disappeared from Albania; his murderer Nersheh, son of Filippē, although he is said to have stolen all the possessions of Varaz-Trdat, does not appear to have played any subsequent role in the destiny of Albania. The Albanian princes seem to have ruled independently, although Atnnrseh of Xačēn was probably the most powerful; John Catholicos calls him the ‘great prince of Albania’, he was allied by marriage to the Mihrakans through Varaz-Trdat’s daughter Spram after her father’s murder, and his descendants were the chief rulers of Albania.

B. The Balakanacık

The reading K'ālak'akanacık' of some MSS, which seems to point, although a doubtful formation, to k'alak'akan ‘urban’ or k'alak'acık ‘townsmen’, has been left in the above translation because this follows BM, but Balakanacık’ seems the better reading, the former being possibly a scribe’s attempt to explain the latter.

The Balakanacık’ already appear in the History of the Albanians at III.19. E and S have the form Balakacık’, but this is probably corrupt. Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale) MS no. 219 has Balakeci-s-n, but the readings of the other Paris MSS (nos. 217, 218, Balakanezi-s-n; 221, Balakandeci-s-n; 220, Balanikeci-s) all point to an original reading practically identical with that of our present text. After the account of the unsuccessful revolt of the canton of Balk' in E. Siwnik' against Babek and the latter’s attack on Gelark‘uni in

1 Markwart, Streifz., 461; Laurent, p. 114, note; Ghazarian, op. cit., 50.
2 Vardan, xii, ed. Venice, 1862, p. 79.
5 loc. cit., n. 32.
7 See below, p. 464.
W. Siwnik’ the following year in 276A (a.d. 827/8), Movses relates how, some time before a.d. 830, the Balakanacek’ attack the canton of Berjor and the villages of Ureac, Karnakus, Hakari, and Tap’at in the province of Arqaz, only to be repulsed by the Albanian Step’annos Ablasad with the aid of Babek. In a.d. 830/1 (276A + 2 + 1 = 279A), Step’annos Ablasad is assassinated by Dawn and Sapuh, and the Balakanacek’ again revolt, fortify themselves in Goroz, and according to Movses, hold for 12 years the following cantons of Albania: Upper Vaykunik’, Berjor, Sisakan [i kotak], [Miws] Haband, Amaras, Pazkank’, Mxank’ (all in Arqaz), and Tri (in Utu). At this juncture, Movses tells us that after this, Ablasad’s men seized his murderers and tortured them to death [and] Esay, called Abu Musè, a man of peace, the nephew (sister’s son) of Ablasad, took possession of those same cantons and ruled over all. In the same year, Baban crossed the River Araxes and encamped in the canton of Amaras’. It is clear that if the Balakanacek’ hold these cantons for 12 years, it cannot be until about 841/2 that Esay retrieves them, and this passage must therefore be in the nature of a parenthesis anticipating future events. ‘After this’ must mean ‘after these twelve years’, while the ‘same year’ in which Babek marches against them must refer to 830/1. This intervention of Babek was clearly to the advantage of Esay Abu Musè and it is possible that he, like his uncle Ablasad before him, invoked the Persian’s aid. The impregnable nature of the fortress of Goroz is illustrated by the fact that Babek is reduced to ‘talking words of peace’ to persuade the rebels to surrender—a method markedly different from that employed a few years earlier in Balk and Gelarkuni—and finally returns to Attratakan leaving his general Rostom in charge of the action with strict orders not to do battle with the fortress but to bring it to submission by friendliness. The general, however, ignores the command and attacks, whereupon the men of the fortress, trusting in the power of Christ and carrying crosses and relics of the saints before them, inflict a severe defeat upon the Persian army.

It is clear that the Balakanacek who in 840/1 are defeated by Esay Abu Musè

2 Probably modern Goris (see Gerasy on map appended to H. F. B. Lynch, Armenia: Travels and Studies, London, 1901, 39° 50’ N., 48° 35’ E.). Tovma Aruruni, iii, 70, mentions it (p. 186) as a ‘high place (barjavandak teli)’ and says (p. 187) that it lay ‘near the mountain of K’t’iš’, the headquarters of Esay Abu Musè. Professor Minorsky has calculated (op. cit., 513) that K’t’iš (and therefore Goroz) lay in the region of Shusha. Uxtanès Urbayeci mentions ‘the canton of Goroz near the plain of Partaw, called P’aytakan’ (M. Brosset, Deux historiens arméniens..., St. Petersburg, 1870, 344; Uxtanès Episkopos, Pâmuts’ian başanman Vraç i Hayoç, Ch.64, Valarsapat, 1871, Pt. 2, p. 121).
4 ibid., 352.
5 For the biography of Esay Abu Musè see V. Minorsky, op. cit., 512 ff. Laurent has considerably confused Esay’s genealogy. He takes Varaz-Trdat’s son Step’annos (actually killed as an infant ‘on his mother’s breast’ in 821; cf. Mos. Kal., iii, 19, ed. S, II, p. 54) to be Step’annos Ablasad (p. 112), whence it would follow that Esay, correctly called a nephew of Ablasad elsewhere (p. 113, n. 6), would be Varaz-Trdat’s grandson, which is absurd. On p. 113 Esay is said to be the son of Atmresch son of Sahak of W. Siwnik’, whereas Atmresch’s sons are specifically named (Mos. Kal, iii, 22, ed. S, II, p. 69, tr. Patk., 278) as Grigor and Apuset’.
are the same people who revolted in 830/1, and the present passage is a confirmation of the (approximate) period of 12 years given in iii.19 as the duration of the Goroz rebellion. As to the identity of these Balakanaçik, Professor Minorsky has pointed to Baylaqân, and notwithstanding the unexpected Arabic form of the name of the province the Armenians knew as P'aytakaran, this is historically feasible. The province of P'aytakaran would, like Siwnik', have revolted against Babek who, despite his alliances with local personalities like Step'annos Ablasad and Essa Abu Musê, was unable at this period of his career to control the large territory he sought to wrest from Arab authority.

A further complication in this historico-philological problem is the fact that Step'annos Òrbêlean, referring to the revolt of (according to Mowsês Kalkanka-tuac) the canton of Balk'in 826, appears to attribute it not to Balk' but to the people of Balasakan (the plain of Balasajân). The manuscript in Brosset's possession, however, has the reading Balakan (Brosset: Baghacan) and is clearly to be preferred to Balasakan, which is probably due to scribal confusion. Even if the Balasakan form here were genuine, however, there would be no compulsion to prefer it to Mowsês'. Much of the subject matter of this particular chapter in Step'annos Òrbêlean is probably taken from Mowsês and where the former differs he (Step'annos) is not to be preferred. In explaining, for example, how Vasak of Siwnik called in Babek, he mentions Mruan (Merwañ) as coming to Armenia in 176 A./A.D. 737, whereas Mowsês says the invader to be Sewada and the year to be 270 A. (A.D. 821/2). Mowsês' information is clearly compatible with Babek's dates, while Step'annos is a century out.

C. The 'dragon-fish'

The identity of the [a2]wuyam[a2] višapajukn, literally 'vișap-fish' or 'dragon-fish', which entered the flooded Kura in A.D. 835/6 and caused such anxiety to the fishermen before it was finally killed with a sword, is something of a problem. The word is used in the Armenian Bible and the Armenian Physiologus for Greek κητός. Elsewhere in the Bible κητός is represented by [a2]w kêt, and in the Physiologus višapajukn is used as a gloss on this loanword (i.e. kêt vișapajukn) as well as independently. The Georgian

1 op. cit., 513.
3 Brosset, i, p. 96, n. 3.
5 Jonah ii, 11.
6 N.Y. Marr, Fiziolog—Armyno-gruzinskii izvod (Tekst i razyskaniya..., kniga vi), St. Petersburg, 1904, 26, 98.
7 e.g. Gen. i, 21; Jonah ii, 1, 2.
8 N.Y. Marr, op. cit., 27.
9 ibid., 26.
The equivalent of vişapajuken in the Physiologus is ܡܠInspectable 'veşap'-fish' while kētn vişapajuken is represented by ܡܠInspectable 'vesap'-whale'. By itself, Arm. vişap' is used extensively in the Bible to translate Greek ἁπάκων which itself represents a variety of Hebrew words. The use of veşap', a loanword from the Armenian, is more extensive in the Georgian Bible, for where, e.g. at Jonah ii, 1, the Armenian version has kēt, the Georgian has veşap'i didi 'large veşap', and at Jonah ii, 11, where the Armenian has vişapajuken, the Georgian has veşap'i alone.

In Armenian mythology the vişap is as indeterminate and polymorphous as dragons and monsters anywhere. Its one indispensable characteristic is enormous size; in the words of Vardan Vardapet, 'there is no such thing as a k'aj or a vişap; vişap is only a word, for whatever in the world is of great size is called a vişap'. The same writer explains the vişap of Psalm lxxii, 14 (A.V. 'Leviathan') as referring to Pharaoh. The vişap could be a land or a sea monster, as witness Eznik Kolbaçi: 'They call vişaps both the enormous land-snakes and the mountain-shaped marine beast, I mean whales (kēt-k') and dolphins (delp'in-k'). Do you see that the Scriptures call the great fish born in the sea vişaps? The vişaps are nothing but great land-snakes or enormous fish, concerning which latter it is said that they are as tall as mountains and very big, and that the small fishes are their prey and food, just as some very small insects or animals are those of the big snakes'. The thirteenth-century Georg Vardapet tells us that the Scriptures call the huge whales (kēt-k') in the un navigable seas vişaps on account of their great and monstrous size, and that as the whale vişap-fish (kētn vişapajuken) dwells in distant and deserted seas, so does Satan dwell in barren souls, while an Armenian ritual says that the hosts of unclean spirits shall be crushed by His power as Dagon the vişapajuken by the ark of the Lord.

Although, as far as marine life is concerned, Eznik speciﬁes the whale

---

1 ibid., 26; cf. the German translation by G. Graf, Der georgische Physiologos', Caucasica, fasc. 2, 1925, pp. 105–6.
2 Marr, op. cit., 27, 57.
3 e.g. Exod. vii, 9, 10. Hebrew tannîn, Authorized Version 'serpent'; Job vii, 12, taniš 'whale'; Job xx, 16, pethen 'asp'; Amos ix, 3, nabaš 'serpent'.
5 N. Y. Marr in N. Y. Marr and J. Smirnov, Les viçaps, Leningrad, 1931, and Fiziolog, 98, concludes that the Armenian Bible first had vişap in this passage, translated by the Georgians as veşap' then the Armenians revised it on the Greek text to kēt, while the Georgians retained the old reading.
7 ibid.
9 Georg Vardapet, 'Commentary on Isaiah', quoted by Nor baryirk' haykasean lezwi, ii, Venice, 1836–7, 823, 824.
10 Maktoč, ibid., 824; cf. 1 Samuel v, 1–4.
and the dolphin as vișaps, the monster of 835/6 was neither of these. There are no whales in the Caspian, nor any dolphins, and unless we wish to dismiss the matter as a fisherman's tale, we are forced to look elsewhere for the identification of a marine creature which, though of considerable size, could yet be killed by the sword. The largest fish in the Caspian at the present day are the sturgeon, one variety of which, the Huso huso, can attain a length of four metres and a weight of one and a half tons. In 1827 one of these fish was caught in the Caspian weighing one and a half tons, while a specimen approximately twelve feet long has been caught in the mouth of the Kura. The Huso huso has the largest mouth of any member of the Acipenseridae and feeds mainly on roach, herring, and chub. Berg states that it is now caught singly in the Kura and gives statistics for numbers caught in the lower reaches of the Kura. The 'dragon-fish' of the present passage was probably much further upstream than the lower reaches of the Kura during the flood, and a large sturgeon in unfamiliar waters might well have given rise to the tale reported in Movsēs Kalankatuği. To suggest this explanation is not to be unaware of being, as a non-ichthyologist, somewhat out of one's depth. Eznik has told us that the vișap could be a land or a sea monster. It could also, apparently, be both, for an interesting account of a potentially amphibious specimen, kindly pointed out to me by Dr. D. M. Lang, is contained in the Georgian Life of St. David of Gareja. 'If the dragon had entered the river waters', the angel of the Lord who has killed the monster tells St. David, 'he would have passed on into the sea. By eating the fish there, he would have grown enormous in size, and have overturned many ships in the ocean and destroyed many living souls in the seas'. An ability to become airborne is also reported, for Vardan Vardapet discloses that many people claimed to 'have seen vișaps rise from the earth to the skies'. This might refer to the fact that the whirlwind was looked upon as the action of a vișap; Movsēs Xorenaçi refers to the 'convulsions of vișaps swollen from the blowing of the winds by their gigantic gaping', while John of P'arisos called Sarkawag Vardapet (twelfth century) feels himself obliged to refute the views of 'ignorant peasants', pointing out that 'the swirl of dust from the ground into the air in a hurricane is not a vișap, but a whirlwind'. Eznik also reveals that it was thought that vișaps could assume all manner of shapes (such as those of men,

1 N. A. Bobrinaki, Opredelitel' mlekopitayushchikh SSSR, Moscow, 1944, p. 198: ‘they [Delphinidae] do not occur in enclosed basins, in particular the Caspian (v zamknutykh basseinakh, v chastnosti v Kaspii, obustroyut)’.  
2 L. S. Berg, Ryby presnykh ved SSSR i sopredelnykh stran, Moscow, 1948, i, 57; Bolshaya Sovetskaya entsiklopediya, iv, 1950, 538 (sub art. ‘Beluga’).  
3 Berg, op. cit., p. 61, n. 2.  
5 Berg, op. cit., 61.  
7 Harmunk’ ew pataşanikê, loc. cit.  
8 Patmut’ium Hayoc, iii, 37, ed. Venice, 1881, p. 476.  
9 Treatise on seismology, quoted by Nor barqir‘, ii, 824.
snakes, mules, and camels), lived in palaces, kept beasts of burden, hunted like men, and kept kings and heroes (e.g. Artavazd) prisoner, etc.¹ The literature on the višaps is quite extensive,² but this is, I feel, not the place for an excursion into the world of mythology, which will have to await another occasion.

It will be seen that the present passage so accurately covers the events of the missing period of eight years which Markwart was compelled to postulate on the basis of outside evidence that the question of later invention and interpolation into the text of the History of the Caucasian Albanians hardly arises, and we must rather assume that in some way it came to be omitted from the manuscripts of Group I. Its comparative importance will also be recognized. Apart from minor details (from the linguistic point of view its support for the form patgos is welcome), it implies a reasonable date for the death of Khālid, gives us a plausible genealogy for the prince Sahl i Šmbatean whose origin has hitherto been obscure, corroborates the dates given by Greek and Arab historians for the capture of the Persian rebel Babek and the fall of Amorium, allows us to identify the Arab governor Muḥammad b. Khālid Bukhārā Khodhāh, and, by its mention of the Kʿalakʿanačık’ or Balakanačık’, leads us to a re-examination of the revolts and invasions with which the prince Esay Abu Musē had to contend before establishing his authority in his part of Albania.

¹ Elc alandoğ, i.25, ed. Venice, 1926, pp. 113–15; cf. Movsēs Xorenaci, i.30, ed. Venice, 1881, p. 125, etc.