

# The Buddha's Journey to the West: The Textual Traditions of *Barlaam* and *Josaphat* from a Linguistic Perspective

CHIA-WEI LIN

*Université de Lausanne*

**Abstract:** This paper examines the textual tradition of *Barlaam and Josaphat* (*BĒJ*) from a philological and linguistic perspective. Originally a collection of jātaka stories framed by the biography of Śākya-muni Buddha, *BĒJ* was translated from an Indic source via Middle Persian into Arabic. From Arabic, *BĒJ* was rendered into Georgian, from Georgian into Greek, then from Greek into Latin. The Greek and Latin versions in turn gave rise to numerous translations into the medieval vernaculars of Europe—Germanic, Slavic, and Romance. The first part of the paper focuses on the frame story in Arabic, Georgian, and Greek, examining how the Buddhist narrative of the Buddha's life was 'Islamicized' and 'Christianized' in the course of its translation and adaptation. The second part of the paper surveys the different versions of *BĒJ* along its transmission route from India through Central Asia to Europe. While previous research focuses on *BĒJ* within individual literary traditions, the present paper proposes to read *BĒJ* as a global phenomenon of language contact and intercultural exchange.

**Keywords:** translation studies, Buddha biography, intercultural contact, Buddhist–Christian exchange

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## 1. Introduction

*Barlaam and Josaphat*<sup>1</sup> (henceforth *BĒJ*) is the epitome of pre-modern transcultural, interreligious, cross-linguistic phenomena that took place on the Eurasian continent and beyond. *BĒJ* is a collection of *jātaka* stories framed by the Buddha's biography and circulated widely throughout the medieval Middle East and Europe. Parallels to its narratives can be found in various Buddhist narratives of the Buddha's life, including Aśvaghōṣa's *Buddhacarita* [Acts of the Buddha], *Lalitavistara* [Extensive Play], *Mahāvastu* [Great Story], *Fo bengxing jijing* 佛本行集經 [Sūtra of the Collection of the Past Activities of the Buddha, T no. 190], and *jātaka* tales from diverse Buddhist traditions. *BĒJ* was first translated from an Indic source into Manichaean Middle Persian (now lost), which was subsequently translated into Arabic (*Kitāb Bilawhar wa-Būdāsaf*, ca. eighth century),<sup>2</sup> from Arabic into Georgian (the long version titled *Balavariani* and the short version titled *Sibrzne Balahvarisi* [Wisdom of Balahvar]), and from Georgian into Greek (*Historia Barlaam et Ioasaph*, ca. tenth century). Traces of *BĒJ* in Central Asia, attested in Manichaean Persian and Old Uyghur fragments, were discovered by the German Turfan Expeditions at the beginning of the twentieth century. In terms of religious context, the transmission of *BĒJ* from India to Europe also reflects its transformation from a Buddhist narrative into different Manichaean, Islamic,

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<sup>1</sup> The title is derived from the names of the protagonists, *Barlaam* and *Josaphat*, in the Latin version. In this paper, I will use *Barlaam and Josaphat* as a general term to refer to the whole textual tradition of *BĒJ* in different languages.

<sup>2</sup> In the present paper, Persian and Arabic are transliterated according to the standard of the Deutsche Morgenländische Gesellschaft (DMG). Greek and Hebrew follow the transliteration standard published by Société de littérature biblique (SBL). Georgian is transliterated according to the system used in Fähnrich, *Kartwelisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch*. Chinese is transcribed according to the *Hanyupinyin fangan* 漢語拼音方案. Japanese is transcribed according to the Hepburn romanization. If not otherwise indicated, the English translation and emphasis in **bold** are mine.

## Transmission of *Barlaam and Josaphat*

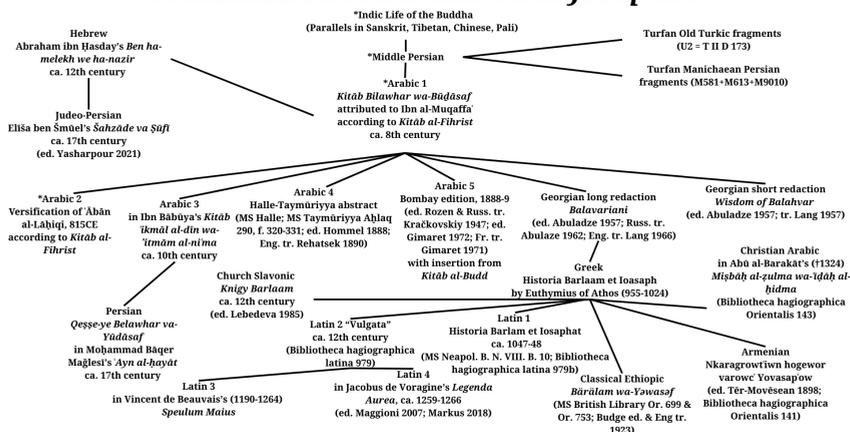


FIG. 1 Transmission of *Barlaam and Josaphat*.

Jewish, and Christian adaptations.

When *B&J* was introduced to the Islamic and Christian worlds, it achieved remarkable literary success and popularity. From the Islamic Arabic version, *B&J* was translated into Hebrew, Persian, and Judeo-Persian. From the Greek version, *B&J* was translated into Christian Arabic, Old Church Slavonic, Armenian, Classical Ethiopic, Latin, and from Latin into almost all major medieval European vernaculars, including Old French, Old Catalan, Old High German, Middle English, and Old Norse. *B&J* became so popular in the Christian world that both St. Barlaam and St. Josaphat were incorporated into the liturgical calendar of Greek Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>3</sup>

When Jesuit missionaries arrived in China and Japan in the

<sup>3</sup> Almond, 'The Buddha of Christendom', 393–96. In the Georgian Orthodox Church, St. Iodasap is commemorated on May 19; in the Russian Orthodox Church, St. Barlaam and St. Josaphat are commemorated on November 19; in the Greek Orthodox Church, St. Ioasaph is commemorated on August 26; in the Roman Catholic Church, St. Barlaam and St. Josaphat are commemorated on November 27.

sixteenth century, they brought the story of *B&J* with them and translated it into Chinese (*Sheng ruo sa fa shi mo* 聖若撒法始末, 1645, MS BnF Chinois 6758)<sup>4</sup> and Japanese (in *Sanctos no gosagueo no uchi nuqigaqi* サントスの御作業のうち抜き書き [Extracts from the Acts of the Saints], 1591), creating cultural ‘doublets’ of the Buddha’s biography in Asia: a medieval Buddhist version from India and a Christian retelling in the early modern era. There was also a Tagalog translation of *B&J* by Fr. Antonio de Borja (1712).<sup>5</sup>

It is important to note that, when we speak of the ‘translations’ of *B&J*, we do not use ‘translation’ in the modern sense of the term, that is, a translation that faithfully and accurately reproduces the text in the original language. Rather, the translators of *B&J* not only rendered the text from one language into another, but also employed other methods such as paraphrasing and cultural translation to localize Buddhist and Indian concepts. Furthermore, translators of *B&J* often embellished, adapted, or rewrote the text so that it conformed stylistically to a certain local literary genre, whether Christian hagiography or Arabic poetry. Religious scriptures, such as the Quran and the Bible, are often cited by the translators, either implicitly or explicitly. Høgel proposes a useful distinction between Greek *metarphrastēs*, ‘translator’ (with stress on the penultimate syllable) and *metaphrastēs*, ‘rewriter’ (with stress on the ultimate syllable).<sup>6</sup> In this sense, we may fittingly call the translations of *B&J* ‘metaphrastic’, which encapsulates both the sense of ‘translating’ and ‘paraphrasing, rewriting’.

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<sup>4</sup> There are two additional abridged versions in Chinese, one in *Sheng nian guang yi* 聖年廣益 [Extensive Benefits for the Holy Year] (1738), and the other in *Shan song xing shi* 衫松行實 [The Deeds of Shan Song] (MS BnF chinois 6765, ca. eighteenth century).

<sup>5</sup> cf. Blanco, ‘Reversions to Native Custom’, 230–39. For the edition of the Tagalog version, see Almario, *Barlaam at Josaphat*.

<sup>6</sup> Høgel, ‘Euthymios the Athonite’, 11–12.

## 2. The Buddha Biography in *Barlaam and Josaphat* (Arabic-Georgian-Greek)

Although the order and numbers of stories included in different versions vary, translations of *BḒḒJ* reflect a similar core structure: the Buddha's biography in the frame story (with two protagonists—Josaphat, a prince in search of the Christian or Islamic faith, and his spiritual teacher Barlaam,<sup>7</sup> a sage from Sri Lanka) and parables recounted by Barlaam. While some of the fables are verifiably derived from Indian or Buddhist traditions and find their parallels in various Buddhist corpora (Sanskrit, Pali, Chinese, Tibetan, etc.), others are added later by the translators, drawing inspirations from contemporary Arabic literature,<sup>8</sup> Biblical stories,<sup>9</sup> Christian hagiography, or other Christian writings.<sup>10</sup> A table summarizing the order of parables between different Arabic Georgian, and Greek versions can be found in Lang, 'Bilawhar Wa-Yūdāsaf'.

The frame story of *BḒḒJ* follows a basic structure that closely parallels the Buddhist narrative of the Buddha's life: the prince's birth; growing up in the palace; seclusion from the outer world;

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<sup>7</sup> For convenience of reference, I use their Latin name in the following section. The names in Arabic بوزاسف or يوداسف *būdāsaf* or *yūdāsaf*, in Georgian იოდასფ *Iodasap* and ბალაჰვარ *Balahvar*, in Greek Ἰώασαφ *Ióasaph* and Βαρλαάμ *Barlaám*.

<sup>8</sup> For instance, de Blois, *Burzoy's Voyage to India*, 34–37 shows that the parable 'The man in the Well' was taken from *Kalīla wa Dimna*, a collection of animal fables based on *Pañcatantra* and translated into Arabic.

<sup>9</sup> For instance, Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf*, 111–17 suggests that the parable of the sower bears similarity with the same fable in the Arabic translation of the *Diathessaron* by *Abū l-Faraǧ ibn al-Ṭayyib* and in al-Muḥāsibī's *Kitāb al-ri'āya*, although there lacks definitive evidence that the parable of the sower in *BḒḒJ* is borrowed from one or the other.

<sup>10</sup> For instance, the complete version of *Apology of Aristides* is inserted into the Greek version of *BḒḒJ*. This makes *BḒḒJ* a valuable testimony for *Apology of Aristides*, which is otherwise only preserved in Syriac and fragmentarily in Armenian.

encounters with illness, old age, and death; temptation by women; departure from the palace into the wilderness; and enlightenment. A reader familiar with Buddhist literature will quickly recognize several similarities between the frame story of *B&J* and the narratives of the Buddha's final life in the Buddhist canons. The following section will offer examples that illustrate how the Buddha's biography was translated and transformed into a Christian hagiography during the process of translation from Arabic via Georgian into Greek.

The frame story begins with a king<sup>11</sup> in India, who possessed all the power and wealth in the world, yet his only regret was that he had no son. The king was handsome, audacious and haughty, victorious over his enemies, endowed with profound wisdom and judgement. In the Islamic Arabic version,<sup>12</sup> the story is set in a time when asceticism (*nusk*) was spreading in the kingdom. When the king came to power, Satan (*aš-Šayṭān*) persuaded him to persecute the ascetics of the Religion (*al-dīn*),<sup>13</sup> and their followers, in order to welcome idol-worshippers (*'abl al-'awṭān*). After the persecution, only 'the patient and the just' (*ṣabūr ṣādiq*) remained steadfast in their Religion (*al-dīn*).<sup>14</sup>

In the Georgian *Balavariani*, the king is described as a pagan (*ḡamarti*) who persecuted 'the servants of Christ' (*kriṣṭes msaxurtay*). Like the Arabic version, after the persecution, the king brought the 'servants of idols' (*kerpi msaxurtay*) to his court and worshipped them. The only people who remained in their Christian faith were those who wholeheartedly and truly believed in Christ (*srulta xolo*

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<sup>11</sup> The king's name is جنيسر *Ġunaysar* in Arabic, აბენეს *Abenes* in Georgian, Ἀβεννήρ *Abennēr* in Greek, and Avenir in Latin.

<sup>12</sup> More precisely, the Bombay Arabic version, on which the edition of Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf*, is based. For the textual history of the Arabic versions, see section 3.4. The 'Islamic Arabic' version is to be distinguished from the 'Christian Arabic' version, which was retranslated from Greek into Arabic.

<sup>13</sup> In Arabic, *dīn* (faith, religion) typically connotes the religion of Islam.

<sup>14</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf*, 9–10.

*da češmaritta kristes aymsarebelta*).<sup>15</sup> In the translation from Arabic into Georgian, it is evident that the Islamic elements are replaced with their Christian equivalents.

The Greek version is similar to the Georgian version, but the Christian tone is intensified, and the focus is shifted to the king's persecution and the martyrdom of the Christians. It is said that the king was enraged against the monastic order (*katà tōn toũ monadikoũ schēmatos logádōn thumomachōn*) and he led a 'truceless and sudden war' (*áspondon...akērukton pólemon*)<sup>16</sup> against them. Some of the monks ended their life through martyrdom (*marturion*) and attained infinite bliss (*aléktou ... makariótētos*).<sup>17</sup> This shift in focus demonstrates that the Greek version is more thoroughly 'Christianized', reframing the narrative as a story of martyrdom.

An element that is present in the Bombay Arabic version but absent in the Georgian and subsequent translations is the queen's dream of a white elephant entering her body during her pregnancy with the Buddha. Consider, for instance, the Tibetan translation of the *Buddhacarita*:<sup>18</sup>

Before she conceived, she saw in her sleep a white lord of elephants entering her body, yet she felt thereby no pain.<sup>19</sup>

*mngal dang nye bar ldan pa nyid kyi sngon rol du/ de ni gnyid song  
glang po'i dbang po dkar po zbig/ rang nyid la ni rab tu zbugs sogs  
mthong gyur la*<sup>20</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli redakciebi*, 3–4.

<sup>16</sup> The phrase reuses Demosthenes' *De corona* 18.262: ἦν γὰρ ἄσπονδος καὶ ἀκήρυκτος ὑμῖν πρὸς τοὺς θεατὰς πόλεμος (For you, the war was without truce or armistice against your audience.) Dilts, ed., *Demosthenis Orationes*. This is one of many instances in which the translator of Greek *B<sup>ε</sup>J* reuses phraseology from Classical Attic literature.

<sup>17</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/1*, 12–13.

<sup>18</sup> This verse is absent in the Sanskrit version of the *Buddhacarita*.

<sup>19</sup> Johnston, trans, *The Buddhacarita Part II*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Derge Tanjur *mdo 'grel (ge)*, 2a.

This passage is echoed by the narrative at the beginning of the Bombay manuscript of *B&J*:

(The king's) chief wife was a woman of beauty, noble lineage, and virtue. In her dream, she saw a white elephant descend from the sky and approach her until it stood over her womb, yet it caused her no pain.<sup>21</sup>

*kānat ra'asu nisā'i l-maliki 'imra'atan dāta ḡamālan wa-ḥasabin wa-faḍīlatin wa-'inna-hā ra'at fī-mā yarā n-nā'imu ka-'anna fīlan 'abyaḍa yaṭīru min-a l-ḡawwi tumma danā min-hā ḥattā qāma 'alā baṭni-hā fa-lam yuḍirra-hā bi-šay'in*<sup>22</sup>

When Josaphat was born, a sage came to the king and prophesied that Josaphat would have great achievement in the future. In the Buddhist life story of the Buddha, as recounted in Aśvaghōṣa's *Buddhacarita*, a sage (*ṛṣi*) named Asita visited the king and prophesized that the prince Śākyamuni would attain enlightenment (*bodha*) in the future:

But hear the reason for my visit and be rejoiced. In the path of the Sun I heard a divine voice saying, '**To thee is born a son for Enlightenment.**'<sup>23</sup>

*prayojanam yat tu mamopayāne tan me śṛṇu prītimuṣeḥi ca tvam divyā mayādityapathe śrutā vāg bodhāya jātas tanayas taveti (Buddhacarita 1.57)*<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> My translation.

<sup>22</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf*, 10.

<sup>23</sup> Johnston, trans., *The Buddhacarita Part II*, 12–13. Corresponding to the Sanskrit version, the Chinese translation (*T* no. 192, *Fo suoxing zan* 佛所行讚) has 'They said that to the king a son was born, who will attain the path of perfect enlightenment' (言王生太子, 當成正覺道, *T* no. 192, 4: 2c22). The Tibetan translation reads 'your son is born to realize enlightenment' (*byang chub rtogs pa'i ched du khyod kyi sras bltams zhes*).

<sup>24</sup> Johnston, ed., *The Buddhacarita Part I*, 6. The emphasis in bold is added by me.

In the Arabic version, the *ṛṣi* is transformed into an astrologer (*munaḡḡim*). Instead of attaining enlightenment, the prophecy declares that the prince will become an *imām* (leader) of religion and asceticism (*imām al-dīn wa-nusk*):

He said: 'I don't think that this honour, this high degree, this superiority, which, according to our observations, this boy must attain, is anything other than the honour of the hereafter. I estimate nothing but that he **will be a guide of religion and asceticism**, and that is an excellence in the ranks of the hereafter.'

*wa-qāla mā 'aẓẓunu hādā š-šarafa wa-l-manzilata wa-l-faḍla lladī waḡadnā hādā l-ḡulāmu yaḅluḡu-hū 'illā šarafa l-'āḅirati wa-lā 'aḅsubu-hū 'illā sa-yakūnu 'imāman fī d-dīni wa-n-nuski wa-hādībi faḍīlatun fī daraḡāti l-'āḅirati*<sup>25</sup>

Similar to the Arabic version, in the Georgian *Balavariani*, it is an astrologer (*varsḡulavtṃracxveli*)<sup>26</sup> who comes to the king to deliver a prophecy. However, rather than being predicted to be a leader of 'Religion and asceticism', the prince is predicted to become a leader on the 'path of truth' (*gza čēšmarīḡebisa*) in the long Georgian version, *Balavariani*:

He declared: 'My verdict is that the glory which this child shall attain is not the glory of this world; but I believe that **he is to be a great guide upon the road of truth.**'<sup>27</sup>

*aman tkua: me esre vḡgoneb, vitarmed didebay ese. romelsa miemtxuevis ḡrmay ese, ara ars amis soplisa didebay, aramed esret vḡgoneb, vitarmed didi činamzyuari iḡos gzasa mas čēšmarīḡebisasa*<sup>28</sup>

The shift to the Christian faith is, again, more explicit in the

<sup>25</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawḡar wa Būdāsf*, 18–19.

<sup>26</sup> Ge. *varsḡulavtṃracxveli* is a calque of Greek *astrologós* (astrologer, < *astēr*, star, + *légō*, to count), formed from *masḡlavi* (star) and *mricxveli* (counter).

<sup>27</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 60.

<sup>28</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*.

Greek version, where the translator exhibits a clear intention to ‘Septuagintize’ *Βεῖζ*, reshaping it into a typical Christian hagiography by incorporating biblical quotations and Christian phraseology:

From that which I learn from the courses of the stars, O king, the advancement of the child, now born to you, will not be in thy kingdom, but in another, a better and a greater one beyond compare. **I also believe that he will embrace the Christian religion**, which you persecute, and I believe that he will not be disappointed of his aim and hope.<sup>29</sup>

Ἐξ ὧν με διδάσκουσιν οἱ τῶν ἀστέρων δρόμοι, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἡ προκοπή τοῦ νυνὶ γεννηθέντος σοι παιδὸς οὐκ ἐν τῇ σῆ ἔσται βασιλεία, ἀλλ’ ἐν ἑτέρῳ κρείττονι καὶ ἀσυγκρίτως ὑπερβαλλούσῃ. δοκῶ δὲ καὶ τῆς παρὰ σοῦ διωκομένης αὐτὸν ἐπιλαβέσθαι τῶν Χριστιανῶν θρησκείας, καὶ οὐκ ἔγωγε οἶμαι τοῦ σκοποῦ ἐκείνου καὶ τῆς ἐλπίδος ψευσθήσεσθαι.<sup>30</sup>

While the prophecy in the Georgian version claims that Josaphat will be ‘a guide on the path of truth’ (*cinamzguari gzasas mas čšmaritebisasa*), the Greek version expands on this significantly, stating explicitly that Josaphat will ‘embrace the religion of the Christians’ (ἐπιλαβέσθαι τῶν Χριστιανῶν θρησκείας).<sup>31</sup>

After hearing this prophesy, the king grew concerned that the prophecy might one day come true. To prevent this, he built a secluded city where his son would live, and carefully handpicked the prince’s teachers (Table 1):

<sup>29</sup> Woodward and Mattingly, trans., *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, 33, with my modification.

<sup>30</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2*, 26.

<sup>31</sup> θρησκείας, literally ‘religious worship, cult’ emphasizes the aspect of service and worship of God, cf. Bauer, *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 718.

TABLE 1

Arabic	Georgian	Greek
<p><i>wa-taḥayyara la-bū min-a t-tiqāti min-a l-buddāni wa-z-zu'urati wa-l-ḥadami wa-taqaddama 'ilay-bim 'anna lā yaḍkurū fi-mā bayna-hum mawtan wa lā ḥayātan wa-lā 'āḥiratan wa-lā dīnan wa-lā nusu-kan wa-lā fanā'an wa-lā zawālan</i><sup>32</sup></p>	<p><i>da vi var ayizarda q̄rmay igi basak̄ita da ḥnobita, merme brzana ganḡen-ebay kaḡtay misgan. da amḡno msaxurta, rayta ara ḡarmoiyon ḡinaše misa ḡsenebay siḡudili-say da salmobisay, arca saukunoysey, da arca simartilisay da arca cod-visay, da arca siberisay da arca siḡabuḡisay, da arca siglaxaḡisay da arca simdidrisay</i><sup>33</sup></p>	<p>ἀπρόϊτόν τε εἶναι παρεκελεύσατο, παιδαγωγούς αὐτῶ και ὑπηρετάς καταστήσας, νέους τῆ ἡλικία και τῆ ὄρασει ὠραισιτάτους, ἐπισκήψας αὐτοῖς μηδέν τῶν τοῦ βίου ἀνιαρῶν κατάδηλον αὐτῶ ποιήσασθαι, μη θάνατον, μη γῆρας, μη νόσον, μη πενίαν, μη ἄλλο τι λυπηρόν και δυνάμενον τὴν εὐφροσύνην αὐτῶ διακόπτειν</p>
<p>He chose trustworthy people to be his tutors, nannies and servants. He ordered them never to speak among themselves of <b>death and life, of future life and earthly life, of asceticism, of annihilation and of the end.</b></p>	<p>When the boy grew up in body and intelligence, Abenes replaced these men by other retainers, warning them not to make any mention in the prince's presence of <b>death, of disease, of eternity; neither of righteousness nor of sin; neither of old age nor of youth; neither of poverty nor of wealth.</b><sup>34</sup></p>	<p>He forbade any to approach him, appointing, for instructors and servants, youths seemly to behold. These he charged to reveal to him <b>none of the annoys of life, neither death, nor old age, nor disease, nor poverty, nor anything else grievous that might break his happiness.</b><sup>35</sup></p>

The list of phenomena to be removed from the prince's life is clearly reminiscent of the list of sufferings (Skt. *duḥkha*) in Buddhism: birth (*janma*), disease (*vyādhi*), old age (*jarā*), and death (*marāṇa*). In each version, this list is expanded with various elements. In the Arabic version, the Quranic concepts of *'āḥira* (afterlife) and *dunyā* (this world) are added, as well as *nusk* (asceti-

<sup>32</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawbar wa Būdāsf*, 19.

<sup>33</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 10.

<sup>34</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 60.

<sup>35</sup> Woodward and Mattingly, trans., *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, 35.

cism), which the prince is destined to embrace. In the Georgian version, typical Christian concepts such as *saukuno* (eternity), *simartle* (justice), and *codva* (sin) are added. The Greek version, by contrast, adds a more general statement: *mè allo ti lupēròn kai dunámenon tèn euphrosúnēn autō̄(i) diaskóptein* (anything grievous that can disturb his happiness).

The frame story transitions into individual parables when the sage Barlaam from Sarandīp (Sri Lanka, in the Arabic and Georgian versions; from Sennaar in the Greek version) heard the news of the prince and came to visit him, aiming to enlighten the prince on things he was curious about. The description of Barlaam is succinct in the Arabic version:

His news reached an ascetic from Sarandīb called Bilawhar.<sup>36</sup>  
*fa-balaḡa ḡabara-hū 'ilā raḡulin min-a n-nussāki min 'abli Sarandīb*  
*yuqālu la-hū Bilawhar*<sup>37</sup>

In the Georgian and Greek versions, Barlaam is a Christian monk who observes monastic rules and is blessed by the Holy Spirit (Table 2):

TABLE 2

Georgian	Greek
<i>esme visme kacsa ḡmrtis moḡ uaresa, romeli ganšuenbul iqo čsita monazon-tayta da savse iqo igi sulita čmidita da qovlita sibrznita romlisa saxeli Balabvar, kucqanasa Sarnadibisasa.</i> <sup>38</sup>	Ἐγένετο γὰρ κατ'ἐκείνον τὸν καιρὸν μοναχός τις, σοφὸς τὰ θεῖα, βίω τε καὶ λόγῳ κοσμούμενος, καὶ εἰς ἄκρον πᾶσαν μοναχικὴν μετελθὼν πολιτείαν. ὅθεν μὲν ὀρμώμενος καὶ ἐκ ποίου γένους οὐκ ἔχω λέγειν, ἐν πανερήμῳ δέ τιτι τῆς Σενααρτίδος γῆς τὰς οἰκῆσεις ποιούμενος, καὶ τῆς ἱερwsύνης τετελειωμένος τῇ χάριτι. Βαρλαάμ ἦν ὄνομα τούτῳ τῷ γέροντι. <sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> My translation.

<sup>37</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf*, 33.

<sup>38</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 27.

<sup>39</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2*, 48.

Georgian	Greek
<p>Now this report reached a certain man who loved God and was graced by the Holy Spirit and all manner of wisdom; his name was Balahvar and he dwelt in the land of Sarnadib.<sup>40</sup></p>	<p>There was at that time a certain monk, learned in heavenly things, graced in word and deed, a model follower of every monastic rule. Whence he sprang and what his race, I cannot say, but he dwelt in a waste howling wilderness in the land of Senaar, and had been perfected through the grace of the priesthood. Barlaam was this elder's name.<sup>41</sup></p>

It is evident that the figure of Barlaam is an invention in the literary tradition of *B&EJ* and has no parallel in Buddhist literature. In Buddhism, the Buddha attained enlightenment alone without the help of any teacher. Deeg suggests that Barlaam reflects the mendicant in the Buddhist version of the Buddha's biography whom the bodhisattva met as the last of the four encounters during his four departures.<sup>42</sup>

### 3. *Barlaam and Josaphat from India via Central Asia to Europe*

The following section introduces the transmission of *B&EJ* from a linguistic perspective. Since the transmissions of *B&EJ* across different languages is too expansive to fit into one single paper, here I will focus on the line of transmission from Turfan into Arabic, Georgian, and Greek.

#### 3.1 Manichaean Persian Fragment from Turfan

At the beginning of the twentieth century, several German expeditions to the region of Turfan (modern-day Xinjiang, China)

<sup>40</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 71.

<sup>41</sup> Woodward and Mattingly, trans., *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, 62.

<sup>42</sup> Deeg, 'In Search of a Lost Version', 104.

brought back around 40,000 fragments in an exceptionally diverse range of languages. Among these, scholars have identified an Old Turkic fragment in Old Uyghur script and an Early New Persian fragment in Manichaean script that bear witness to the textual tradition of *Bēšf*.

The Early New Persian fragments, combined from M581+M613+M9010 of Berlin Turfan-Collection, have been edited by Henning.<sup>43</sup> The fragments, written in Manichaean script, display interesting linguistic features. The orthography is archaicizing, meaning that many words are spelled as if they were Middle Persian. For example, NPers. *va* (و <*w*>) ‘and’ is spelled as <*wd*> like in Middle Persian, the Ezāfe particle *-i* is spelled as <*yg*>, and words ending in *-e* (NPers. *o* <*-h*>) are spelled with <*-g*>, e.g. <*’ndyšg*> (ENPers. *andēša*, ‘thought’).<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, some other linguistic features reveal the relatively late composition of this text, indicating it belongs to the Early New Persian period rather than Middle Persian. First, one finds several Arabic loanwords, which enter only in the stage of Early New Persian, such as <*jwmlg*> (from Arab. *ǧumla*). The fragment also includes verses in the Arabic poetical form of *qaṣīda*.<sup>45</sup> It is therefore important to note that what we are dealing with here is not a direct witness of the Middle Persian version of *Bēšf*, but rather its descendent in New Persian, composed a few centuries later.

The fragment is identified as part of the *Bēšf* story, because it contains the names of the two protagonists, <*bylwbr*> and <*bwdysfš*> on the verso, line 4 and line 7.<sup>46</sup> These are very likely the name forms on which the Arabic names *Bilawbar* and *Būdāsaf* are based. The spelling <*bwdysfš*> is similar to Manichaean Parthian <*bwdysdf*> or

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<sup>43</sup> Henning, ‘Persian Poetical Manuscripts’. The manuscript is available on Digitales Turfan-Archiv, Mitteliranische Texte in manichäischer Schrift, m0581 + m0613 + m9010 seite2. [https://turfan.bbaw.de/dta/m/images/m0581plus\\_seite2.jpg](https://turfan.bbaw.de/dta/m/images/m0581plus_seite2.jpg)

<sup>44</sup> Henning, ‘Persian Poetical Manuscripts’, 90,

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 94. The *-š* is 3sg. enclitic pronoun, which does not form part of the name of *bwdysf*.

<bwdsdf><sup>47</sup> and Buddhist Sogdian <pwtystβ>.<sup>48</sup>

Despite its fragmentary nature, Henning was able to identify that the heading in red ink corresponds to page 83, line 1 of the Bombay Arabic manuscript (table 3).<sup>49</sup>

TABLE 3

Persian	Arabic
[ (lw)hr (‘c)b] jwd’g	<i>fa-ftaraqā ‘alā hādā tilka l-laylati tumma</i>
[ b’z ’(m)d(n) ‘yg bylwhr	<i>‘āda ‘ilay-bi l-qābilata fa-ḥayyā-bu wa-</i>
[ (h)c) ‘c ps by’md nyz (b’)z <sup>50</sup>	<i>radda ‘alay-bi tumma ḡalasa</i> <sup>51</sup>
...Bilawhar parted ... the return of Bilawhar.....[At nightfall] thereafter he did indeed come back, made... and bowed to him.	and they parted that night. Then he came back the following night, and he saluted him, he replied to him, and he sat down.

### 3.2 Manichaean Old Turkic Fragment from Turfan

The Old Turkic fragment written in Old Uyghur script, U 2 (formerly T II D 173)<sup>52</sup> from the Berlin Turfan-Collection, was edited in works by von Le Coq and Radloff.<sup>53</sup> According to von Le Coq, although the story may appear Buddhist at the first sight, the stapled binding form of the book (instead of a *poṭhi* book or book roll) shows that the fragment is unlikely to be of Buddhist origin. Furthermore, the use of punctuation marks in red ink also suggests

<sup>47</sup> Durkin-Meisterernst, *Dictionary of Manichaean Middle Persian and Parthian*, 116.

<sup>48</sup> Gharib, *Sogdian Dictionary*, 332.

<sup>49</sup> Henning, ‘Persian Poetical Manuscripts’, 92.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 95, verso 1.8–9.

<sup>51</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsf*, 65.

<sup>52</sup> The manuscript is available on Digitales Turfan-Archiv, Uigurische Texte, U 0002 recto. <https://turfan.bbaw.de/dta/u/images/u0002recto.jpg>

<sup>53</sup> von Le Coq, ‘Ein christliches und ein manichäisches Manuskriptfragment’; and Radloff, ‘Altürkische Studien VI’.

Manichaean influence.<sup>54</sup>

Like the Manichaean Persian fragment, the Old Turkic fragment is identified to be part of a *B&CJ* story based on the appearance of the names *činak* (Chandaka, the charioteer of Śākyamuni) in recto lines 1, 3, and 7, *bodhisav tegin* (Bodhisattva-prince) in recto line 2, and *Satudan* (Śuddhodana, father of the Buddha) in verso line 13. The story recounts that the Bodhisattva prince (Śākyamuni), who had been barred by the king from seeing any form of suffering in the world, encountered an old man on the street for the first time. The charioteer Chandaka then explained to the prince what old age was:

(Chandaka says:) My lord, this man was once young and healthy, just like you, a young man full of youth and beauty. Now he is old, ill, he lies there, looking sick and ugly. Then Bodhisattva said: we, too, having lived long, will eventually become dust.<sup>55</sup>

*t(ä)ñrim bu kiši öñrä yigit igsüz sizintäg kiçig körtlä urı ärti. ämti q(a)rđı iglädi ig tägip muntag körksüz bolup yatur. ötrü bodis(a)v inčä tip aymış bizma uzun yaşap kiniñä munčolayu kog bolur är.*<sup>56</sup>

This is a famous episode in the life of the Buddha, which can be found in many texts that narrate the Buddha's life. Consider Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita* 3.30–31 for example:<sup>57</sup>

Old age it is called, that which has broken him down, —the murderer of beauty, the ruin of vigour, the birthplace of sorrow, the grave of pleasure, the destroyer of memory, the enemy of senses.

For he too sucked milk in his infancy, and later in course, of time he crawled on the ground; in the natural order he became a handsome

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<sup>54</sup> von Le Coq, 'Ein christliches und ein manichäisches Manuskriptfragment', 1204.

<sup>55</sup> My translation.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 1209, lines 8–16.

<sup>57</sup> It is important to emphasize that *Buddhacarita* cited here is merely a parallel narrative and not the source of *B&CJ*.

youth and in the same natural order he has now reached old age.<sup>58</sup>

*rūpasya hantrī vyasanam balasya śokasya yonir nidhanam ratinām  
nāśaḥ smṛtīnām ripur indriyāṅām eṣā jarā nāma yayaīṣa bhagnaḥ*

*pītam hy anenāpi payaḥ śisutve kālena bhūyaḥ parisṛptam urvyām  
krameṇa bhūtvā ca yuvā vapuṣmān krameṇa tenaiva jarām upetaḥ*<sup>59</sup>

The same episode appears in both the Arabic and the Georgian versions. Like the Old Turkic version, both versions also underline the deterministic view about death (Table 4):

TABLE 4

Arabic <i>Kitāb Bilawhar wa-Būdāsaf</i>	Georgian <i>Balavariani</i>
<i>fā-qālū hādā l-haramu. fā-qāla Būdāsaf wa-fī kam balaḡa r-raḡulu mā 'arā. qālū fī mi'ati sannatin 'aw naḥwa dālīka. qāla fā-mā warā'a dālīka. qālū l-mawtu.</i> <sup>60</sup>	<i>xolo mat brkucs: ese daḡulebuli ars dyctay, rommeli miçevnul ars šemaḡebita dyctayta moḡlebasā zalisasa, hxedav, da ḡovelta dycta moakldebis. brkua ḡirmaman man: da ḡovelta zeda moičevisa ese? brkucs: he, moičevis, uḡuetu dauštes siḡudilsa.</i> <sup>61</sup>
They said: 'this is old age'. Būdāsaf said: 'How old is the man I see?' They said: 'He is a hundred-year-old, or approximately so'. He said: 'And what comes after this?' They said: 'death'. <sup>62</sup>	They told him: 'This is a man who is ancient of days, on whom increasing age has brought decreasing strength, until he has reached the condition in which you see him. Henceforth he will decline still further every day.' The lad asked: 'And does this fate befall every human being?' They answered: 'Yes, it does, unless death forestalls it.' <sup>63</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Johnston, trans., *The Buddhacarita Part II*, 37–38.

<sup>59</sup> Johnston, ed., *The Buddhacarita Part I*, 24.

<sup>60</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsaf*, 29.

<sup>61</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 24.

<sup>62</sup> My translation.

<sup>63</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 68.

### 3.3 Arabic

As can be seen in Fig. 1, there are multiple (Islamic) Arabic versions of *BḒJ*, but all go back to a prototypical Arabic version. The existence of this now-lost Arabic prototype of *BḒJ* is evidenced by an entry in the *Kitāb al-Fibrīst* [The Book of Catalogue], a catalogue of Arabic books compiled in 337 AH/987 CE by Ibn al-Nadīm. The catalogue is usually regarded as a reliable source among Arabic philologists. Among the books listed under the section titled *ʿAsmāʾu kutubi l-Hindi fī l-ḥarāfāti wa-l-ʿasmāri wa-l-ʾaḥādīt* (names of Indian books on fables, conversations, and anecdotes),<sup>64</sup> there are three books attributed to Ibn al-Muqaffāʿ (102 AH/720 CE–139 AH/756 CE):

1. *Kitāb al-Budd* [The Book of the Buddha]
2. *Kitāb Bilawḥar wa-Būdāsaf* [The Book of Bilawhar and Budasaf]
3. *Kitāb Būdāsaf mufrad* [The Book of Budasaf Only]<sup>65</sup>

If Ibn al-Nadīm’s attribution is correct, *BḒJ* would be a ‘sister text’ to the famous *Kalīla wa-Dimna* [Kalila and Dimna], an Arabic collection of animal fables derived from the *Pañcatantra* [Five Treatises], which was also translated by Ibn al-Muqaffāʿ.

The three books listed in the *Kitāb al-Fibrīst* probably served as the prototypes of the different Islamic Arabic versions.<sup>66</sup> The most significant but also the youngest one among them is a lithographed book printed in Bombay in 1888/1889 under the title *Kitāb Bilawḥar wa-Būdāsaf*, which also serves as the basis of Gimaret’s 1972 edition.<sup>67</sup> While the Bombay manuscript is the most complete version

<sup>64</sup> Flügel, *Kitāb al-Fibrīst*, 305.

<sup>65</sup> *Kitāb Būdāsaf mufrad* has been identified to be a portion of *Nihāyat al-ʿarab fī ʾaḥbār al-furs wa-l-ʿarab* [The Ultimate Goal on the history of the Persians and the Arabs], see Lang, ‘The Life of the Blessed Iodasaph’, 390.

<sup>66</sup> cf. Toral-Niehoff, ‘Die Legende “Barlaam und Josaphat”’, 115–18.

<sup>67</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawḥar wa Būdāsaf*.

available, it is neither the prototype of the other Arabic versions nor the direct *Vorlage* of the Georgian versions.<sup>68</sup>

Another version translated by Ibn Bābūya (311 AH/923 CE–381 AH/991 CE), a Shia Islamic scholar, forms part of his *Kitāb 'ikmāl al-dīn* [Book of the Perfection of Religion]. Ibn Bābūya's version was shorter than the Bombay manuscript, as the latter is interpolated with *Kitāb al-Budd* mentioned above in the *Kitāb al-Fihrist*. The third version is a rendition into Arabic verse by 'Ābān al-Lāḥiqī, who also produced a versified version of the *Kalīla wa-Dimna*. Unfortunately, no manuscript of this versified version has been preserved or identified until today.

The names of the protagonists as well as other proper names in the Bombay Arabic version show affinities with the Manichaeic and Buddhist predecessors. The prince's name, Būdāsaf, is clearly derived ultimately from Sanskrit bodhisattva via some Iranian intermediaries. Manuscripts report two variants of the name, *Būdāsaf* and *Yūdāsaf*. This variation can be easily accounted for by the similarity between ʾb and ʾy in the Arabic script, which are only distinguished by one dot. In practice, scribes might have misread ʾb as ʾy or inadvertently added an extra dot to ʾb. Compared with the spelling <*bwdysf*> in Manichaeic Persian, the second syllable in Arabic *-dā-* diverges from Persian *-dī-*. This difference can be explained by what Arabic grammarians called *imāla*, namely the fronting of [a:] to a sound similar to [e:].<sup>69</sup>

The history of the name *Bilawhar* is more complex and has long been subject to debate. At the beginning of the twentieth century, scholars presumed *Bilawhar* was derived from Skt. *bhagavān* (Venerable One).<sup>70</sup> However, the phonological discrepancy between *Bilawhar* and *bhagavān* makes this theory untenable. De Blois suggests instead that *Bilawhar* is not of Indic origin. Rather, it is a cross between Arab. *billawr* (crystal, loaned from MPers. *bēlūr*) and Arab. *jawhar* (jewel, loaned from MPers. *gōbr*).<sup>71</sup> Arguing against De Blois, Degener sug-

<sup>68</sup> Gimaret, trans., *Le Livre de Bilawhar et Būdāsf*, 55–61.

<sup>69</sup> Sims-Williams and de Blois, *Dictionary of Manichaeic Texts*, 101.

<sup>70</sup> cf. Kuhn, *Barlaam und Joasaph*, 36.

<sup>71</sup> De Blois, 'On the Sources of the Barlaam Romance', 14–15.

gests that the etymon of *Bilawhar* is Skt. *purohita* (house priest).<sup>72</sup> From *purohita* one might reconstruct MPers. *\*blwht*, which resembles the letter shape of *\*blwbyr*. Through metathesis, *\*blwbyr* then becomes *bylwbr*, the form attested in the Manichaean Persian version.<sup>73</sup>

Equally problematic is the Arabic name of the king <ğnyśr> *Ġunaysar*,<sup>74</sup> which is presumably derived from Skt. *Śuddhodana*. However, no satisfactory explanation has been provided for how *Śuddhodana* could have been transformed into *Ġunaysar*. Another puzzle is that the king's name becomes *Abenes* in Georgian, with no convincing explanation for the shift from Arab. *Ġunaysar* to Ge. *Abenes*. Similarly, the name of the kingdom's capital city, Arab. <šwlbṭ> *Šawilabatt*,<sup>75</sup> is presumably derived from Skt. *Kapilavastu* or Pkt. *Kapitalvatthu*. Yet, here too, no satisfactory explanation has been offered.<sup>76</sup>

### 3.4 Georgian

The two Georgian versions, the long recension *Balavariani* and the short recension *Sibrzne Balabvarisi* [Wisdom of Balahvar], play a significant role in the transmission of *B&J*. Among philologists of Eastern Christianity, it is a common working assumption as Greek was the 'exporting' language of Christianity and Byzantine cultures. When multiple versions of the same text exist in different languages within Eastern Christianity (such as Coptic, Syriac, Armenian,

<sup>72</sup> Degener, 'Barlaam the Priest'.

<sup>73</sup> See *ibid.*, 529–30 for a more detailed explanation of the potential graphical confusion.

<sup>74</sup> The vocalization is based on the reading of Gimaret, trans., *Le Livre de Bilawhar et Būdāsf*.

<sup>75</sup> The vocalization is based on the reading of *ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> De Blois, 'On the Sources of the Barlaam Romance', 14, n. 11 suggests that Pahlavi script <kp> could look like <sp>, hence MPers. *\*kpl'pt* > *\*spl l'pt*, which is rendered in Arabic as *šwlbṭ*. Most of the conjectures or proposed explanation for such cases are based on misinterpretations of the Pahlavi script, which often creates ambiguity because a certain grapheme can represent multiple phonemes.

Georgian, Arabic, and Church Slavonic), it is typically assumed that the Greek version is the source for all the other translations. This is also the case in Georgian: while a substantial number of Greek texts were translated into Georgian in the Late Antiquity and Medieval periods, so far only two texts are verifiably translated from Georgian into Greek. The first one is *Balavariani* and the second is *Abukura*.<sup>77</sup>

The short Georgian version was first discovered and published by Georgian-Russian linguist Nicholas Marr in 1889, around fifty years before the long Georgian version. Manuscripts of the short version were subsequently discovered in Georgia and abroad. The most important discoveries, however, were the two manuscripts located in the Greek Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem, Georgian 36 and Georgian 140. Jerusalem Georgian 36 is the earliest and most complete manuscript of the short recension known today, dated back to the thirteen or fourteenth century. Jerusalem Georgian 140 is the first witness of the long recension, also dated to the thirteen or fourteenth century. The long recension (*Balavariani*) based on Jerusalem Ge. 140 and a synoptic edition of the short recension (*Wisdom of Balahvar*) were published together in a parallel edition by Abuladze.<sup>78</sup>

The manuscript Jerusalem Georgian 140 is significant because it helps determine the relationship between the Arabic, Georgian, and Greek versions of *B&EJ*. With new evidence from this manuscript, scholars can confirm that the Georgian *B&EJ* serves as a bridge between the (Islamic) Arabic version and the Greek version.

Although explicit information about the composition date of the text is absent, internal evidence allows scholars to date the Georgian *B&EJ* to after the ninth century. One piece of the internal evidence is the Iranian loanwords attested in the *Balavariani*.<sup>79</sup> Historically, Georgian was influenced by surrounding languages, particularly

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<sup>77</sup> Aleksidze, 'Georgian', 220–22. *Abukura*, also known as *Passion of Michael of Mar Saba*, is supposedly translated from Arabic (which is lost) into Georgian and from Georgian into Greek. The Greek version forms part of the *Life of Theodoros*.

<sup>78</sup> Abuladze, 'Introduction', 22–24.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 34–35.



raphy. Although the Bombay Arabic manuscript is not the direct *Vorlage* of the Georgian *Balavariani*, some passages show close literal correspondence. For example (Table 5):

TABLE 5

Arabic <i>Kitāb Bilawhar wa-Būdāsaf</i>	Georgian <i>Balavariani</i>
<i>wa-qad 'azamtu l'ān 'a'mala fī 'amri 'āḥirati 'amalan 'alā qadri mā kāna min quwwati 'amalī fī 'amri d-dunyā wa-lam 'aḡīd li-dālīka waḡhan 'illā 'anna l-ḥaqqa bi-n-nussāki</i> <sup>85</sup>	<i>aç mnebavs, rayta viḡuaço saukunoysa mistwis zlierad, vitarca ese moḡuaçe var sopelsa amas šina aramed araray ars sxuay čemda, garna šertvad monata mat kristęsta, romelta-igi zravali čiri ševamtxwie.</i> <sup>86</sup>
I have therefore resolved <b>now</b> to work for my future life <b>to the same degree as I have</b> worked for this life, and I have found <b>no other way of doing so than</b> to join the ascetics.	<b>Now</b> I wish to strive mightily towards the life eternal, <b>to the same degree that</b> I have striven in the affairs of this world. I see <b>no other alternative but</b> to unite myself to Christ's servants, whom I have subjected to such great persecution. <sup>87</sup>

In this passage, we see that certain functional words correspond to each other: Ge. *aç* 'now' = Arab. *al-'ān* 'now'; Ge. *vitarca* 'like' = Arab. *'alā qadri mā* 'to the same extent that', Ge. *araray ... garna* 'not...except' = Arab. *lam ... 'illā* 'not...except'. Where Georgian deviates from Arabic, it reflects adjustments to religious elements. Arab. *'āḥira* 'afterlife'<sup>88</sup> becomes Ge. *saukuno* 'eternity', Arab. *nussāk* 'ascetics' becomes Ge. *monani kristęs* 'servants of Christ'.

Mistranslations can also help determine the direction of translation. There are two translation mistakes in the Greek *Β&J* that can only be explained if it was translated from Georgian. The first example comes from the speech of a Christian follower who was being persecuted by the king (Table 6):

<sup>85</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawhar wa Būdāsaf*, 21.

<sup>86</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 13.

<sup>87</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 61.

<sup>88</sup> An Islamic term for the life after, in contrast to *dunyā* 'this world', cf. Quran (Cairo Edition) 2:127.

TABLE 6

Georgian <i>Balavariani</i>	Greek
<i>dyes ganumzadis çamadi novagt-moquaresa da xvale šesaçmelad matlta mistsis igi.</i> <sup>89</sup>	Σήμερον γὰρ βρώμασιν ἡδέοις [sic] τὸν φάρυγγα αὐτῶν καταλέανας, κατάβρωμα τοῖς ἐχθροῖς ἔλους αὐτοὺς αὔριον τίθησι. <sup>90</sup>
Today it prepares the gourmet a sumptuous banquet, and tomorrow it turns him over as food for the worms. <sup>91</sup>	For today it warms their throat with pleasant food, tomorrow it will make all of them food for their enemies.

The mistake here is that Ge. *matlta* (oblique plural of *matli*, worm) is translated as Gr. *ekbthrois* (dative plural of *ekbthros*, enemy). The Greek translator probably misread Ge. მატლთა *matlta* (for the worms) as Ge. მტერთა *mçerta* (for the enemies, oblique plural of *mçeri*, enemy).<sup>92</sup>

The second example comes from the speech of a man whom the king encountered on the road:

TABLE 7

Arabic	Georgian	Greek
<i>qāla 'anā rağulun 'artuqu l-kalāma bi-l-kalāmi</i> <sup>93</sup>	<i>brkua vnebulman: me kaci var sitqvisa mçervali</i> <sup>94</sup>	Ὁ δὲ πένης ἐκεῖνος καὶ ἀσθενής, Ἐγώ, φησίν, ἄνθρωπός εἰμι θεραπευτῆς ῥημάτων. <sup>95</sup>
He said: I am a man who patches words with words. <sup>96</sup>	The wounded man answered: 'I am a patcher of words'. <sup>97</sup>	The poor sick man answered, 'I am a physician of words'. <sup>98</sup>

<sup>89</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 8.

<sup>90</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2*, 126.

<sup>91</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 58.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 58, n. 1.

<sup>93</sup> Gimaret, ed., *Kitāb Bilawbar wa Būdāsf*, 73.

<sup>94</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 12.

<sup>95</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2*, 30.

<sup>96</sup> My translation.



FIG. 2 First page of *Balavariani*, Greek Patriarchal Library of Jerusalem MS Georgian 140 (<https://www.loc.gov/resource/amedmonastery.00271073355-jo/?sp=3&st=image>).

While Arab. *'artuqu* (I patch) and Ge. *mḱervali* (patcher, tailor) match each other, Greek deviates with Gr. *therapeutēs* (physician). The Greek translator probably misread Ge. მკერვალი *mḱervali* (tailor) as Ge. მკურნალი *mḱurnali* (physician).<sup>99</sup>

### 3.5 Greek

Connected to the textual issues surrounding the Georgian long and short recensions discussed above, the authorship of the Greek version of *BḘJ* has been much debated until it settled down in recent years. In the Byzantine tradition, the Greek *BḘJ* is attributed to John of

<sup>97</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 61.

<sup>98</sup> Woodward and Mattingly, trans., *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, 39.

<sup>99</sup> Rayfield, *The Literature of Georgia*, 64.

Damascus (ca. 675/676–749), and this attribution is followed by the Latin and Slavonic traditions as well as all the versions derived from them. With the discovery of the Georgian manuscripts in Jerusalem, it has now been established that the Greek version was translated from Georgian, and that Euthymius of Athos (Ge. *Ekvtime Atoneli*, 955–1024), a Georgian monk on the Monastery of Great Lavra on Mount Athos, has translated the Georgian version of *B&EJ* into Greek. In addition *B&EJ*, Euthymius the Athonite translated numerous religious treaties and philosophical works from Georgian into Greek and from Greek into Georgian.<sup>100</sup> The authorship of Euthymius is corroborated by some Greek manuscripts that indicate Euthymius of Athos as the translator in the colophon. For instance, the colophon of manuscript Cod. Parisinus gr. 1771<sup>101</sup> reads:

Discourses beneficial for the soul brought from the interior region of the Ethiopians to the land of the Romans and translated from the Ethiopian language into Greek by Euthymius, the most holy monk of Iberia,<sup>102</sup> who became a teacher at the Great Lavra of St. Athanasius of Mount Athos. Bless us, Father.<sup>103</sup>

Λόγοι ψυχωφελείς μετενεχθείσαι ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν ἐσωτέρας χώρας εἰς τὴν Ῥωμαίων γῆν καὶ μεταβληθείσα ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν διαλέκτου ἐπὶ τὴν Ἑλληνίδα γλῶσσαν παρὰ Εὐθυμίου[ευθυμίου cod.] τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου μοναχοῦ τοῦ Ἰβηρος[ήβυρος cod.] τοῦ καὶ γεγονότος καθηγητοῦ τῆς μεγάλης λαύρας [λάβρας cod.] τοῦ ἀγίου Ἀθανασίου τοῦ Ἁγίου Ὁρους. Εὐλόγησον πάτερ<sup>104</sup>

It is noteworthy that in many Greek manuscripts, *B&EJ* is described as a story stemming from Ethiopia. This is part of a long tradition in

<sup>100</sup> For a detailed discussion of the authorship debate, see Volk, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/1*: 3–95.

<sup>101</sup> Manuscript L of family c in the classification according to *ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Iberia is the Greek name given for the region corresponding to modern-day Georgian, not to be confused with the Iberian Peninsula in Western Europe.

<sup>103</sup> My translation.

<sup>104</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2*, 5.

the Byzantine world and its periphery since the Greco-Roman period that often confuses Ethiopia with India.<sup>105</sup> In Georgian, too, the name *Hindo* (Indian) and its derivatives were used to refer to both India and Ethiopia.<sup>106</sup>

The Greek version diverges from the Georgian version in that *Balavariani* is only the ‘skeleton’ of the composition. The Greek version is a ‘metaphrastic’<sup>107</sup> adaptation of *Balavariani*, expanded with Biblical quotations, rewritings, snippets from other Christian literature as the ‘flesh and blood’ of the text. The sources of these additions include the *Life of St. Mary of Egypt*, the work of Agapetus Diaconus, the *Apology of Aristides*, homilies of John Chrysostom, and the *Narrative* of Pseudo-Nilus of Ancyra.<sup>108</sup> The following example illustrates how Biblical quotations are incorporated into the Greek version (Table 8):

TABLE 8

Georgian <i>Balavariani</i>	Greek
<i>da çarvida kaci igi munve, udabnosa gare, çmidata mamata tana.</i> <sup>109</sup>	Καὶ ἐξελθὼν ὁ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν ἔρημον, λυπούμενος μὲν ὅτι οὐ μεμαρτύρηκε, μαρτυρῶν δὲ καθ’ ἡμέραν τῇ συνειδήσει καὶ ἀντιπαλαίων πρὸς τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ ἐξουσίας, πρὸς τοὺς κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, πρὸς τὰ πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας, ὡς φησὶν ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος. <sup>110</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Schneider, ‘The So-Called Confusion between India and Ethiopia’.

<sup>106</sup> For the examples, see Fähnrich and Sardshweladse, *Altgeorgisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*, 1603.

<sup>107</sup> See Section 1 for the concept of ‘metaphrase’.

<sup>108</sup> Volk, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/1*, 96–140.

<sup>109</sup> Abuladze, ed., *Balavarianis Kartuli Redakciebi*, 9.

<sup>110</sup> Volk, ed., *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/2*, 24.

Georgian <i>Balavariani</i>	Greek
So that man departed immediately and withdrew to the wilderness outside to join the holy Fathers. <sup>111</sup>	So the man of God went out and withdrew to the desert, grieved to have lost the crown of martyrdom, but daily a martyr in his conscience, and <b>'wrestling against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness';</b> as saith Blessed Paul. <sup>112</sup>

The underlying narrative is shared between the Georgian and Greek versions: the holy man persecuted by the king went into the wilderness. In the Greek version, however, a quotation from the New Testament *Ephesians* 6:12 is added. The quotation is marked explicit by the phrase *hōs fēsin ho makáros Paúlos* (Thus says the Blessed Paul).

The proper names in the Greek version show a tendency to match, if possible, names that appear in the Bible. Thus Ge. *Iodasap* becomes Gr. *Iōsaph*, likely influenced by the biblical name *Iōseph* (Joseph). In the Latin version, the name is fully Christianized to Lat. *Iosaphat* (from Heb. *Yōšāpaṭ*), a name attested in Latin Vulgate 2 *Chronicles* 17–21. Ge. *Balahvar* becomes Gr. *Barlaám*, likely influenced by the name of prophet Gr. *Balaam* attested in Septuagint *Numbers* 22. The king's name Ge. *Abenes* becomes Gr. *Abennēr*. Although the shift *s* → *r* might look phonologically difficult to explain, it can be attributed to imitation of the biblical name Gr. *Abennēr* (from Heb. *'Abnēr*). Similarly, the place name Ge. *Sarnadib* (Sri Lanka) becomes Gr. *Sennaár* (from Heb. *Šin'ār*), a place attested in the *Septuagint* Genesis 11:2, referring to the southern region of Mesopotamia.

Table 9 summarizes the proper names discussed so far:

<sup>111</sup> Lang, trans., *The Balavariani*, 59.

<sup>112</sup> Woodward and Mattingly, trans., *Barlaam and Iosaph*, 31.

TABLE 9

Manichaean Persian	<i>bwdysf</i>	<i>bylwbr</i>	-	-	-	-	-
Arabic	فسانوب B(/Y)ūdāsaf	رعولب Bilawhar	رسينج Gunaysar	طبلاوش Šawilabaṭṭ	بىدنرس Sarandīd	سكار Rākīs	نوهبلا al-Bahwan
Georgian	იოდასაფ Iodasap	ბალაჰვარ Balahvar	აბანეს Abenes	შოლაიტი Šolaiṭi	სარნადიბ Sarnadib	რაქის Rakhis	თედმა Tedma
Greek	Ιώασαφ Iōasaph	Βαρλαάμ Barlaám	Ἀβεννήρ Abennér	-	Σενναάρ Sennaár	Ἀραχίς Arachés	θευδᾶς Theudás
Latin	Iosaphat	Barlaam	Auennir	-	Sennaar	Arachis	Theudas

At the stage of Greek, it can be said that *Bḗf* completes its transformation from a Buddhist biography of the Buddha to a Christian hagiography of two Indian saints. The Greek version served as the basis for numerous translations into other languages: Latin, Christian Arabic, Armenian, Russian-Church Slavonic, Old French, Serbian-Church Slavonic.<sup>113</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have demonstrated how *Bḗf* underwent adaptations across different religious traditions in its journey from India to Europe. In section II, we focused on the frame story of *Bḗf* in Arabic, Georgian, and Greek. Although the narrative structure of the frame story retains elements of a Buddha biography, the religious motifs are replaced in each translation. In Arabic, the prince *Būdāsaf* becomes an ascetic (*nāsik*), inspired by the ascetic *Bilawhar* from *Sarandīp* (Sri Lanka). In Georgian and Greek, the prince *Iodasap/Iōasaph* becomes a follower of Christ, inspired by the monk *Balah-*

<sup>113</sup> For detailed information of manuscripts and editions of each version derived from Greek, see Volk, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos VI/1*, 495–515.

*var/Barlaám* from *Sarandīb/Senaar*. In section III, we traced the transmission route of *BḒJ* from Turfan via West Asia to Europe. It has been demonstrated that linguistic methods are a valuable tool for philologists in determining the translation route of Arabic (ca. ninth century) to Georgian (ca. ninth century) to Greek (ca. tenth century). The proper names in *BḒJ* play a crucial role in determining the direction of translation. The Greek version is not only a translation but also a ‘metaphrastic’ adaptation of Georgian, to which the translator incorporates Biblical quotes and other Christian literature to fulfill its theological purpose. The proper names in Greek exhibit a tendency to imitate existing Biblical names.

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#### Abbreviations

Arab.	Arabic
Arm.	Armenian
<i>BḒJ</i>	<i>Barlaam and Josaphat</i>
ENPers.	Early New Persian
Ge.	Georgian
Gr.	Greek
Heb.	Hebrew
MPers.	Middle Persian
NPers.	New Persian

Pkt.	Prakrit
Skt.	Sanskrit
T	<i>Taisbō shinsbū daizōkyō</i> 大正新修大藏經. See Secondary Sources, Takakusu and Watanabe, eds.

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