



CHRONICLE OF EDESSA

CHRONICLE OF EDESSA, a short local history of Edessa (modern Urfa), written in Syriac by an anonymous author and covering chiefly the period from 201-540 c.e. The author of the chronicle, which is preserved in a single 7th-century manuscript, devoted particular attention to damage caused by flooding of the local river in 201, 303, 413, and 525. On the other hand, such external events as incursions by the Huns (403-04, 531) and relations between the Byzantine and Sasanian empires (Kavād's siege and capture of Amida [modern Diyarbakır] and his unsuccessful siege of Edessa in 502-03; the peace treaty of 532; Ḳosrow I Anōšīravān's invasion of Byzantine territory in 540) are noted only briefly.

According to L. Hallier, one of the sources of the Chronicle of Edessa was the Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite, which covers the history of northern Mesopotamia in the years between 497 and 506-07, including a detailed account of the siege of Amida in 502 (Wright). This work was incorporated into an 8th-century Syriac chronicle mistakenly attributed to Dionysius of Tellmaḥrē.

The extant manuscript of the Chronicle of Edessa may have been based on a longer chronicle that is now lost; that work, rather than this abridgment, may have been the source for several later Syriac chronicles (Witakowski). The focus on local floods may have been connected with the emperor Justinian's plans to divert the river, so that it would flow around, rather than through, the town (Procopius of Caesarea, *De aedificiis* 2.7); according to A. N. Palmer, this scheme was accomplished soon after 540.



The standard edition of the Chronicle, with a Latin translation, is by I. Guidi. There are also translations in English (Cowper), German (Hallier, with commentary), and Russian (Pigulevskaya).

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