

Bruce checks his chronology by an eclipse which took place in 1553, and which the Abyssinian chronicle assigns to the 13th year of Claudius. This alone would be scarcely satisfactory as a basis for the retrospective control of reigns extending through nearly three centuries; but we find some other checks.

Thus in Quatremère's Makrizi we find a correspondence between Sultan Bibars and the King of Habasha, or of Amhara, *Mahar AMLAK*, which occurred in A.H. 672 or 673, *i.e.* A.D. 1273-1274. This would fall within the reign of Icon AMLAK according to Bruce's chronology, but not according to Salt's, and *à fortiori* not according to any chronology throwing the reigns further back still.

In Quatremère's *Égypte* we find another notice of a letter which came to the Sultan of Egypt from the King of Abyssinia, IAKBA SIUN, in Ramadhan 689, *i.e.* in the end of A.D. 1289.

Again, this is perfectly consistent with Bruce's order and dates, but not with Salt's.

The same work contains a notice of an inroad on the Mussulman territory of Assuan by David (II.), the son of Saif Arad, in the year 783 (A.D. 1381-1382).

In Rink's translation of a work of Makrizi's it is stated that this same King David died in A.H. 812, *i.e.* A.D. 1409; that he was succeeded by Theodorus, whose reign was very brief, and he again by Isaac, who died in Dhulkada 833, *i.e.* July-August 1430. These dates are in close or substantial agreement with Bruce's chronology, but not at all with Salt's or any chronology throwing the reigns further back. Makrizi goes on to say that Isaac was succeeded by Andreas, who reigned only four months, and then by Hazbana, who died in Ramadhan 834, *i.e.* May-June 1431. This last date does not agree, but we are now justified in suspecting an error in the Hijra date,* whilst the 4 *months'* reign ascribed to Andreas shows that Salt again is wrong in extending it to 7 *years*, and Bruce presumably right in making it 7 *months*.

These coincidences seem to me sufficient to maintain the substantial accuracy of Bruce's chronology, and to be fatal to the identification of Marco's story with that of the wars of Amda Zion. The general identity in the duration of reigns as given by Rüppell shows that Bruce did not tamper with these. It is remarkable that in Makrizi's report of the letter of Igba Zion in 1289 (the very year when according to the text this anti-Mahomedan war was going on), that Prince tells the Sultan that he is a protector of the Mahomedans in Abyssinia, acting in that respect *quite differently from his Father who had been so hostile to them*.

I suspect therefore that *Icon Amlak* must have been the true hero of Marco's story, and that the date must be thrown back, probably to 1278.

Rüppell is at a loss to understand where Bruce got the long story of Amda Zion's heroic deeds, which enters into extraordinary detail, embracing speeches after the manner of the Roman historians and the like, and occupies some 60 pages in the French edition of Bruce which I have been using. The German traveller could find no trace of this story in any of the versions of the Abyssinian chronicle which he consulted, nor was it known to a learned Abyssinian whom he names. Bruce himself says that the story, which he has "a little abridged and accommodated to our manner of writing, was derived from a work written in very pure Gheez, in Shoa, under the reign of Zara Jacob"; and though it is possible that his amplifications outweigh his abridgments, we cannot doubt that he had an original groundwork for his narrative.

The work of Makrizi already quoted speaks of seven kingdoms in Zaila' (here used for the Mahomedan low country) originally tributary to the Hati (or Negush) of Amhara, *viz.*, *Aufat*,† *Dawaro*, Arababni, *Hadiah*, Shirha, Bali, Darah. Of these Ifat, Dawaro, and Hadiah repeatedly occur in Bruce's story of the war. Bruce also tells us that Amda Zion, when he removed *Hakeddin*, the Governor of Ifat, who had murdered his agent, replaced him by his brother *Sabreddin*. Now we find in

* 834 for 836.

† On *Aufat*, see De Sacy, *Chrestom. Arabe*, I. 457.