The date of the Avar surprise.

A Chronological Study.

The date of the Avar surprise is the cardinal point upon which hinges the whole chronology of the campaigns of Heraclius against Persia during the years 620—626 A. D. Earlier historians for the most part followed the account of Theophanes and assigned the barbarian assault on Constantinople to the year 619 A. D. (so e. g. Muralt: *Essai de Chronographie byzantine* p. 275. Clinton *Fasti Romani* II p. 165), but in 1894 Gerland published his dissertation "*Die persischen Feldzüge des Kaisers Herakleios*" (B. Z. III pp. 330—373) in which he argued that it was entirely uncritical to disregard the evidence of the Paschal Chronicle which reported the event as happening on Sunday June 5. 623 in which year June 5. did actually fall on a Sunday. Such accuracy in a contemporary source could not, he contended, be due to mere chance, while there was no justification for accepting the conjecture of Petau (ad Nicephorum p. 108 and p. 109 ed. Bonn), namely to amend *Δαῖσλῳ* ε̅ in the Paschal Chronicle (ad ann. 623) to *Δαῖσλῳ* γ̅, thus giving us Sunday 3 June (619), which would enable us to reconcile this account with that of Theophanes. Gerland's argumentation would appear critically to be very strong: the Paschal Chronicle is a contemporary source¹⁾ and the writer had no end to serve in placing the Avar surprise in one year rather than another: Theophanes is compiling his *Chronographia* at least at second hand in the eighth century and is arranging his material, which was probably not given him under precise year-dates²⁾, in a consciously annalistic framework. Indeed Gerland's

1) Despite Pernice's doubts (Angelo Pernice: *L'Imperatore Eraclio. Saggio di Storia Bizantina. Pubblicazioni del R. Istituto di Studi superiori pratici e di Perfezionamento in Firenze. Sezione di Filosofia e Filologia. Firenze 1905. p. XIV*) there seems no reason to treat the superscription of the Chronicle as the addition of a late copyist, or to think that the work extended beyond the 20th year of the reign of Heraclius = 630 A. D. cf. G. Mercati: *A Study of the Paschal Chronicle. Journal of Theological Studies* VII (1905—6) pp. 397. 412.

2) cf. his use of the poems of George of Pisidia. Gerland's critical position is most strongly brought out in a review of Pernice's book B. Z. XV (1906) pp. 301—307.

position appeared so unassailable that the present writer in 1901 in an unpublished essay¹⁾ attempted the Procrustean task of fitting the history of the reign into this schema, thus placing the Chagan's treachery in 623 and the departure of Heraclius on his second campaign against Persia in 624. Continuous study of all the available material has resulted in the conviction that this is impossible; the aim of the present paper is to prove

- I. That Gerland's date for the Avar surprise — 623 A. D. — is impossible.
- II. That Petau's emendation of the Paschal Chronicle is unjustifiable.
- III. That the suggestion²⁾ that there was an Avar attack on the capital on June 5. 623 which was confused by the writer of the Paschal Chronicle with the earlier treachery of 619 runs counter to our authorities. And finally
- IV. to offer a solution of the difficulty, and to suggest that the true date is in fact 617 A. D.

I. First then to prove that Gerland's arguments for the date 623, other than that derived from the account of the Paschal Chronicle itself, are unconvincing and that Heraclius must have started on his second campaign in 623. To consider Gerland's arguments seriatim:—

(1). Thomas the Presbyter writes³⁾ (quoting the Latin translation) as follows:

Anno 934 (= 623) ingressi sunt Sclavi Cretam aliasque insulas et ibi comprehensi sunt beati e Quennesre e quibus circiter viginti viri interfecti sunt.

Anno 934 ingressi sunt Persae Rhodum: ibi strategum comprehenderunt et deduxerunt captivos insulae in Persidem. Et eo anno processit imperator Heraclius e sede sua: deduxit exercitum ingentem et descendit in dicionem Persarum: vastavit regionem et multos captivos abduxit.

Gerland argues (op. cit. pp. 335—6) that there must be an error in the text, for otherwise Thomas would have written for the second "anno 934" *eodem anno* (or rather the corresponding Syriac expression) and that accordingly for the second 934 we should read 935 = 624 A. D. But it may be urged in answer: (a) it is doubtful whether this is a valid argument in the case of an annalistic work: the more natural

1) The Emperor Heraclius. The Lothian Prize Essay 1901.

2) cf. E. H. R. XXI (1906) p. 142.

3) Scriptores Syri, Series III Tomus IV: Chronica Minora, Versio p. 113 in Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Paris 1903.

conclusion would appear to be that the writer was here compiling his account from two different sources: and (b) there is no entry for 933 (= 622) and the error may just as reasonably lie in the first 934 which may really stand for 933.¹⁾

Meanwhile the text of Thomas distinctly states that Heraclius started on his march into Persia in the year 623.

(2). Gerland points out that Bar Hebraeus (Hist. dyn. p. 99) and Michael Syrus (p. 224—5 Langlois) connect the capture of Rhodes and the departure of Heraclius, placing them both in the year 625. The Hist. dyn. however (p. 99) dates the capture of Jerusalem in the 5th year of Heraclius = 615, though this really happened in 614. Bar Hebraeus may therefore in this case also be a year too late in his reckoning and should rather be quoted as an authority for assigning the Emperor's departure on his second campaign to the year 624, thus agreeing with the Paschal Chronicle. But Gerland failed to notice that there is independent support for the date 625 as being the year of the Persian capture of Rhodes, and this too apart from any connection with the movements of the Emperor. Such independent support is found in the chronicle of Agapius of Hierapolis of which (although the text is not yet published) a Russian translation by Baron Rosen appeared so long ago as 1884.²⁾ The fact is that there are two traditions on the subject, one dating the capture to 625 and the other to 621—2; both are recorded by Agapius of Hierapolis (cf. Rosen, op. cit. p. 68 note) — the 625 tradition is represented by Bar Hebraeus,¹ while the original text of Michael, published by Chabot since the date of Gerland's paper, adopts the earlier year. Thus in Chabot's French translation (Michael Syrus Bk XI. c. 3. apud init. Tome II Fasc. III p. 408) we read „En la première année de Mohammed le Persan Sahrharâz s'empara d'Ancyre: puis il s'empara de Rhodes“ i. e. in 621—2, with which cf. Agapius: Rosen p. 68 under the same year. There is then no reason to think that Bar Hebraeus meant 624 when he wrote 625, and the only conclusion which we may justifiably draw from his chronology is that he was mistaken in the date of Heraclius' departure: we cannot deduce any argument from his account which would favour the year 624 rather than the year 623.

(3). But the point on which Gerland lays most stress is that the narratives given by Theophanes and the Paschal Chronicle respectively of the opening stages of the Emperor's second campaign are totally

1) This has already been noticed by Pernice: op. cit. p. 311.

2) Baron B. Rosen: Zamyetki o Lyetopisi Agapiya Manbidzhskago. Zhurnal Ministerstva Narodnago Prosveshcheniya Chast 231. February 1884. pp. 47—75.

irreconcilable, while that of Theophanes is inherently impossible. The two accounts may be thus represented in tabular form:

Theophanes: 306, 19 sqq. (ed. de Boor).

15 March: Heraclius leaves Cp. and marches *κατὰ τάχος εἰς Ἀρμενίαν*.

20 April: The Emperor *εἰσέβαλεν εἰς τὴν Περσίδα*.

Theoph. further states that on receipt of Chosroes' defiance ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀναλαβὼν τὸ στράτευμα εὐθὺς ἐν τῇ ἐνδοτέρᾳ Περσίδι ἐχώρησε and there occurred a θαῦμα of falling dew which took place ἐν τῇ θερινῇ τροπῇ 307, 21 i. e. about June 21.

Chron. Pasch. ann. 624.

25 March: Festival of the Annunciation. Heraclius leaves Cp. and celebrates Easter at Nicomedia (Easter = 15 April in 624.)

μετὰ τὴν ἑορτὴν he goes *εἰς τὰ ἀνατολικά μέρη*.

Gerland objects that if — as Theophanes tells us — Heraclius started from the capital on 15 March it was quite impossible for him to have advanced through Armenia, and to have crossed the Persian frontier (*εἰσέβαλεν εἰς τὴν Περσίδα*) by April 20, considering that an imperial courier who left Ganzaca on April 8. 628 only reached Constantinople on May 15. 628, while if we accept the proposed emendation of the text of Theophanes (as we should do in the view of the present writer) and read $\kappa\epsilon$ for $\iota\epsilon$ — i. e. if Heraclius only started for Asia on March 25 — the difficulty is but intensified. It must be frankly confessed that if this is the true translation of the words *εἰσέβαλεν εἰς τὴν Περσίδα* the whole account of Theophanes is simply incredible.

But it so happens that we have a precisely similar phrase, only in the present tense, in Theoph. 304, 21 *εἰς τὴν Περσίδα εἰσβάλλει* and without being conscious of this similarity the present writer argued some years ago in an article in the E. H. R.¹⁾ that these words could not be taken to imply an invasion of Persia by Heraclius — his first campaign did not carry him so far. This is indeed proved by Theophanes himself who says a few lines later 304, 25 of Sarbar φοβηθεὶς μὴ διὰ τῆς Ἀρμενίας εἰς τὴν Περσίδα ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰσβαλὼν ταύτην ταράξῃ κτλ. — i. e. the fear of the Emperor's striking for Persia through Armenia has clearly not yet been realised; in fact the words *εἰς τὴν Περσίδα εἰσβάλλει* = "the Emperor strikes for Persia". So here *εἰσέβαλεν εἰς τὴν Περσίδα* is to be translated "the Emperor started on his march for the invasion of Persia".

In 623 Easter Sunday fell on March 27 but in 624 on April 15.

1) The First Campaign of Heraclius against Persia EHR XIX (1904) pp. 694—702.

If therefore the Paschal Chronicle is right in assigning the Emperor's departure to the year 624, Heraclius left the capital on March 25 in order to keep Easter at Nicomedia on April 15; this extraordinary interval of time appears to need some explanation. If however we conclude that the Paschal Chronicle is in reality describing the events of 623 and if we read $\kappa\bar{\epsilon}$ for $\bar{\epsilon}$ in Theophanes there is no contradiction between the two authors, but all fits in admirably. The Emperor leaves Constantinople on March 25. 623 in order to keep Easter on March 27. 623 and *μετὰ τὴν ἑορτὴν* (Pasch. Chron.) on April 20 (Theoph.) he started on his second campaign against Persia.

(4). But the question naturally arises: why this delay in Nicomedia? This is explained for us by Sebeos. The Armenian historian states that a letter was sent to Heraclius by Chosroes in the latter's 34th regnal year¹⁾ (*Histoire d'Héraclius par l'Évêque Sébéos traduite de l'Arménien . . par Frédéric Macler, Paris 1904, p. 79*). But this dating in Sebeos (as is clear from the opening words of c. XXIV. p. 64 and as has been shown at length by Owsepian: *Die Entstehungsgeschichte des Monotheletismus nach ihren Quellen geprüft und dargestellt, Leipzig 1897, pp. 24—25*) = 622 June — 623 June: i. e. the successes of the Romans in 622 cause Chosroes to attempt "a game of bluff". The letter was received very early in 623, for Heraclius was able to make his preparations before Easter — March 27 — in that year.²⁾ Now Theophanes does not mention this letter of Chosroes but he does tell us the content of the Emperor's reply: he wrote that the Persian monarch must *ἢ τὴν εἰρήνην ἀσπασασθαι ἢ ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὴν Περσίδα σὺν τῷ ἑαυτοῦ στρατῷ εἰσβαλεῖν* 306, 23. He then awaits the answer of Chosroes, but meanwhile moves to Asia in order to be ready to carry his threats into immediate execution and, as we have seen, celebrates Easter at Nicomedia. Directly he receives the news that Chosroes is unrepentant and that undisturbed by the Roman victories of 622 still considers the threats of Heraclius as idle menaces, *ὁ βασιλεὺς ἀναλαβὼν τὸ στράτευμα εὐθὺς ἐν τῇ ἐνδοτέρᾳ Περσίδι ἐχώρησε*, and has already reached Persian territory at the time of the summer solstice, or, as Theoph. says in an anticipatory phrase, he marched *κατὰ τάχος εἰς Ἀρμενίαν*, where as we see from George of Pisidia the Emperor's capture of Dovin and other towns created a profound impression. We can thus satisfactorily answer the question with which this paragraph

1) The fact that the text of the letter as given by Sebeos is a free composition of the author and contains O. T. reminiscences is for our present purpose immaterial.

2) Sebeos p. 80.

opened: the Emperor was awaiting at Nicomedia the answer of Chosroes — this received, his plans were already matured and he forthwith advanced against the enemy. In a word, if rightly translated and explained, the accounts of the Paschal Chronicle and of Theophanes mutually confirm each other and point to the year 623 as the date for the beginning of the Persian campaign.¹⁾

Having now considered Gerland's arguments²⁾ we may attempt to prove that it is *impossible* to adopt the date 624 for the Emperor's departure from the capital.

(5). The chronology of Theophanes for the years 623—626 is as follows:

623. The Emperor winters among the Caucasian tribes.

624. The Emperor winters on Lake Van.

625. The Emperor marches into Asia Minor and winters in the Pontic district.

626. The siege of Cp. by Avars and Slavs: Heraclius enters into communication with the Chazars.

Obviously however if the campaign only begins in 624, we have here a winter too many, and Gerland strikes out the winter of 625: the Emperor's march to the W. takes place according to his chronology in 626 spring, and Heraclius marches north to the Pontic district in summer 626 and does not winter there before the siege of the capital. The words of Theophanes in regard to the winter quarters of 625 are these: *ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς (after the victory on the Sarus) ἐπισυνάξας τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λαὸν εἰς Σεβαστείαν τὴν πόλιν ὤρμησεν καὶ περάσας τὸν Ἄλυν ποταμὸν ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χώρᾳ διέτριβεν ὅλον τὸν χειμῶνα* i. e. he chose τὸ Πόντιον κλίμα for his army to rest in as he had done in the winter of 622—3. This account of Theophanes is confirmed by the Armenian historians: Sebeos writes (p. 83) "Quant à Héraclius il prit le butin de leur (the Persian) armée, revint en grand triomphe et arriva dans la région de Césarée, tandis que Šahr Varaz le suivit promptement (this is a somewhat awkward reference to the pursuit of the Emperor by Sahrbarâz from Lake Van to the Sarus). Mais comme l'armée était fatiguée il prit le parti de mettre plusieurs cantons entre [elle et l'ennemi], pour la laisser se reposer et se refaire; les troupes

1) It should further be noticed that Sebeos (p. 81 top) knows that the campaign was not begun until after Easter; the fact that the Armenian author thinks that the Emperor kept the festival in Cp. is unimportant, for Sebeos is by no means well informed as to the details of events which took place in the west.

2) For his interpretation (op. cit. p. 336) of Geo. Pis. de Exp. Pers. 111. 311. See below § VIII.

allèrent dans les régions des Asiatiques, s'y répandirent et y *prirent leurs quartiers*." Heraclius subsequently returns to Armenia and the campaign which terminated the war is recounted. With this compare Stephen of Taron II c. 116 who states that Heraclius marched by Caesarea to Apamea. If we abandon the chronology of Theophanes we must also neglect the independent Armenian account and this seems a hazardous proceeding.

(6). Gerland is inclined to place the battle on the Sarus in April 626 and then Heraclius must immediately have marched north, for the capital had received reinforcements from him before the end of June. Gerland's view thus tends to make the S. W. March of the Emperor appear a somewhat purposeless excursion and Anderson's emendation¹⁾ of the text of Theophanes in the same way takes Heraclius N. again almost immediately. But we may well ask ourselves — what was the Emperor's object and could it have been attained by such a flying visit?

(a). It may at least be suggested that Heraclius was making a serious effort to restore Roman influence in the West. Rhodes (though the precise date is as we have seen doubtful) was at some time between 621 and 625 overrun by the Persians and it may well have been that the invaders who had no navy of their own had commanded Roman shipping in Tarsus (captured in 613²⁾) and other ports and had impressed Roman seamen. If the effective hold of the Persians on this coast-line were permitted to continue it might become a menace to the Roman power on the islands of the Aegean, which were already harassed by the Slavs.³⁾ Theophanes is thus in all probability right in bringing Heraclius to Adana, and we should not correct his text, as has been suggested by Anderson l. c., to Adana.

(b). Further at this time we first hear of a Roman mint which was opened in Cyprus and of which we have coins dated 626 and 627.⁴⁾ We can hardly avoid connecting this with the Emperor's activity in the west i. e. according to Theophanes in the year 625.

1) J. G. C. Anderson: The Road-System of Eastern Asia Minor with the Evidence of Byzantine Campaigns. J. H. S. XVII (1897) pp. 22—44 at pp. 33—34.

2) This chronology the present writer hopes to consider in a critical account of the campaigns of Heraclius which will shortly appear in the *United Service Magazine*.

3) On this cf. I. D. Shishmanov's (Bulgarian) study: *Slavyanski Selischa v Krit i na drugite gr'tski ostrovi*. B'lgarski Pregled. God. IV. Kn. III. June 1897. pp. 62—98.

4) See W. Wroth: *Catalogue of the Imperial Byzantine Coins in the British Museum I* (London 1908) Introduction p. XXVII.

(c). With these plans of Heraclius we may also associate the fact that at some date almost certainly before 626 and undoubtedly after the first Persian campaign in 622 the Emperor wrote to the bishop Arcadius of Cyprus a letter in the form of an edict against Paul the One-Eyed (See Owsepian: op. cit. pp. 43—45.) Now Paul was an Armenian of Theodosiopolis and it is not clear why the Emperor should have sent this edict to Cyprus. All attempts to connect Paul with the island have failed: there is absolutely no evidence for this (cf. Owsepian op. cit. p. 56). But we do know from John of Ephesus (Translation of Schönfelder p. 182) that there were Monophysite communities in Cyprus. The suggestion therefore naturally arises that in 625 the Emperor was making every effort to establish Roman influence in the islands by conciliating Monophysite feeling and holding out hopes of a religious reunion. The destination of the edict which was previously a riddle is thus easily explained. If Heraclius were in fact pursuing some such projects as these he would have needed time for their execution. This is allowed for by the chronology of Theophanes: there is no place for such activity in the scheme of Gerland.

(7). But this is not all. After the Persian defeat on the Sarus Theophanes 315, 2 tells us that Chosroes

νέαν ἐποιήσατο στρατείαν στρατεύσας ξένους τε καὶ πολίτας καὶ οἰκέτας, ἐκ παντὸς γένους ἐκλογὴν ποιούμενος· καὶ ταύτην τὴν ἐκλογὴν τῷ Σάιν παραδούς στρατηγῷ ἄλλας τε ὡς χιλιάδας ἐκ τῆς φάλαγγος τοῦ Σαρβάρου ἐπιλογὴν λαβὼν τούτῳ συνῆψε καὶ ὠνόμασε χρυσολόγχεις· καὶ τούτους ἀπέστειλε κατὰ τοῦ βασιλείως. τὸν δὲ Σάρβαρον σὺν τῷ λοιπῷ αὐτοῦ στρατῷ κατὰ Κπόλεως ἀπέστειλεν ὅπως τοὺς ἐκ δύσεως Οὐννοὺς οὓς Ἀβάρους καλοῦσιν Βουλγάρους τε καὶ Σκλάβοις καὶ Γήπαιδαις συμφωνήσας κατὰ τῆς πόλεως χωρήσωσι καὶ ταύτην πολιορκήσωσιν.

The news therefore of the defeat on the Sarus must have reached Chosroes, troops must have been withdrawn from Sahrbarâz's army and a new force formed: with the remainder of his men Sahrbarâz then received orders to march to Chalcedon, where he had already been many days encamped before the arrival of the Avars (with whom he was to co-operate) at the end of June 626. But according to Gerland the battle on the Sarus took place at the earliest in April 626. This chronology is frankly impossible and Gerland's attempt to defend it¹⁾ is in the view of the present writer quite unconvincing.

(8). We have next to consider the evidence of George of Pisidia.

1) cf. B. Z. XV (1906) p. 304 sq.

The most important passage for our present purpose is Heraclius II 66—97. On a careful reading of these verses as a whole it will be found that the interpretation adopted by editors and historians is untenable. The reader is immediately struck by the extraordinary comparison of the Virgin to a Gorgon (l. 91); the editor boldly states: "at Gorgon hic non est monstrum sed imago Virginis Mariae cuius ope Heraclius iam antea tyrannum Phocam devicerat"; when however we find that but a few lines before (ll. 80—81) the same figure is used for the Persian foe, amazement gives place to the conviction that this cannot have been the poet's meaning. All we need to render the passage consistent and historically of high value is to amend l. 94 and read

l. 90. καὶ πολλάκις τὸ τόξον ἐντείνειν θέλων
βαλεῖν τε τὴν Χάρυβδιν, εἰς τὴν Γοργόνα
τὴν πετροποιὸν τῶν θεατῶν εἰκόνα
στραφεῖς ἐπέσχες τὴν βολὴν ἡπειρμένην.

l. 94. καὶ δὴ κατ' αὐτῆς ἀντιβάλλοντας (instead of ἀντιβάλ-
λοντες) βέλος
ἀνθεῖλλον ὑμᾶς οἱ φιλόρπαγες λύκοι.

We thus get as a history of the early years of the reign of Heraclius:

vv. 66 sqq. settlement of internal disorders.

71 sqq. difficulties from the ravages of the Slavs both on land and sea. This is the only confirmation known to the present writer from our Greek sources of the account of the Slav raids given in the *Miracula S. Demetrii* which Pernice has shewn¹) are to be assigned to the first decade of the reign.

79—94 operations against Persia. cf. the sea victory of the Romans over the Persians (Sebeos p. 79) (in 616 A. D.).

v. 95. A raid on the capital by the northern peoples — οἱ φιλόρπαγες λύκοι (which = in the view of the present writer the Avar surprise) and on this follows the first campaign against Persia in the year 622.

Gerland sees in the Avar surprise an explanation of the return of Heraclius to Constantinople in the winter of 622, but it is to be noted that while in none of our authorities is there any hint of *two* treaties concluded with the Chagan of the western peoples, but the only treaty mentioned is that which followed the Avar surprise, it is the rise of

1) A. Pernice: Sulla Data del Libro II dei *Miracula S. Demetrii Martyris*. Bessarione. Ser. II. Vol. II. Fasc. 65. Anno VI (1902) pp. 181—187.

fresh troubles with these tribes which recalls the Emperor De Exp. Pers. III 313 *καινῶν φροντίδων κινουμένων* — thus implying a previous settlement — and this even though with Gerland we do not refer vv. 311—312 (as the present writer following Pernice would do) to the threatened breach of this particular treaty.

Thus the poems of George of Pisidia can at least be reconciled with a date prior to 621 for the Avar surprise, but it may be suggested that we can go further. There can hardly be any doubt that the theory of the *μυστικὴ θεωρία* celebrated by Heraclius at the close of the war in 629¹) was the child of the pious fancy of George of Pisidia — after six years' work in the Persian campaign the Emperor, like God at the Creation, enters into the Sabbath of his rest. There was no campaigning after the early months of 628 and in this year peace was concluded: which then were the six years of these unbroken campaigns? They must be 623 to 628 and to support this contention we have the much disputed verses Bell. Avar. 250—251.

ἤδη γὰρ εἶχε τρεῖς ἔτων περιδρόμους
καταστρατηγῶν τῆς ἀθέσμου Περσίδος.

i. e. in 626 the Emperor had already been absent three years 623—625.²) The present writer believes that the mystic view of the six years of continuous warfare followed by the year of Sabbatic rest (= 629) compels us to adopt this interpretation of these lines and shews that for George of Pisidia Heraclius set forth on his second campaign in 623 and that therefore the Avar surprise did not take place in that year.

(9). Lastly Gerland has failed to consider the evidence afforded by the "History of the Albanians" written by Moses of Kagankaituk. It is regrettable that no one has yet subjected this work to a rigorous critical scrutiny; Agop Manandian in his Jena dissertation — *Beiträge zur albanischen Geschichte* —³) has taken the first steps towards this study, but he does not assist us with regard to the section with which

1) Theophanes 327, 24. The chronology of the years 628—630 has only been confused by V. Bolotov's lengthy essay *K Istorii Imperatora Irakliya. Viz. Vrem. XIV (1907) [St. Petersburg 1908] pp. 68—124*. Bolotov has been followed by N. Marr in *Tekstui i Razuisvaniya po Armyano-gruzinskoi Philologii IX (St. Petersburg 1909) p. 5*. The present writer hopes shortly to publish in the E. H. R. a special study of the chronology of these years.

2) cf. Pernice: *L'imperatore Eraclio*, p. 311. We must not adopt Hilberg's emendation *τετραετῇ περιδρόμῳ* — the campaign of 622 is not included in the calculation. cf. Isidor Hilberg: *Textkritische Beiträge zu Georgios Pisides*, *Wiener Studien IX (1887) pp. 207-222*.

3) Leipzig 1897, where a useful bibliography will be found.

we are immediately concerned. The present writer being unfortunately ignorant of Armenian has been forced to rely upon Patkanian's Russian translation. The source used by the Xth century historian for this period was it may reasonably be assumed composed by a contemporary of the events recorded¹), and at the outset it may be noted that in the perplexing matter of the regnal years of Chosroes the basis of calculation adopted by Sebeos is not followed. This is proved from the fact that "the luckless year, the year of the death of Chosroes" is given as his 38th regnal year (p. 104) which therefore = June 627 — June 628 so that we gain a fixed starting point for our chronology. But as soon as we proceed to an analysis of this part of the History of the Albanians we find that Moses (or some intermediate compiler) has transposed and thrown into disorder his original source: this can be shewn by a very brief summary of his full and interesting narrative.

After sketching the history of the early years of the reign of Heraclius the author relates on pp. 103—4 that a force of Chazars had carried out a successful pillaging raid on Persian territory and secured much booty. Chosroes writes to these tribesmen, threatening to withdraw Sahrbarāz, Sahin and Krtakarin from the west in order to punish the marauders. The letter which is of considerable length is quoted in extenso and its result was that the Chazars desisted from further pillage and "returned by way of the same gates" presumably as those by which they had come, of which there has been no previous mention. The historian then proceeds in effect as follows: When the great prince (knyaz-vladuiko) Djebuchagan of whom we spoke above heard of the vast booty which had been won, he was inflamed with a desire to secure these prizes for himself and in the 38th year of Chosroes [= as we have seen 627—628] he led a strong force in person, captured Partav and put to flight the governor Gashak whom Chosroes had sent with the express purpose of fortifying and defending that city. [It is to be noted that in the history of Moses as it now stands the name of Djebuchgan has not, so far as the present writer can discover, previously occurred]. The author then recounts the siege of Tiflis and after the delightful incident of the pumpkin, while we are still in the 38th regnal year of Chosroes, we suddenly begin a new chapter (c. XII. p. 110) with the words "After this in the 36th year of the reign of Chosroes" (= June 625 — June 626) the Emperor Heraclius seeking allies sent Andreas to the Chazars to raise forces to undermine the Caucasian mountains leading to the N. E. and to open

1) cf. e. g. p. 104 s. f. (Patkanian).

the gates of Chog (= Derbend). The lieutenant of the great prince of the North whose name was Djebuchagan [now introduced as though mentioned for the first time] welcomed the proposals of Andreas and a force of 1000 men burst through the gates of Dzhor (= Chog = Derbend), fell upon the unsuspecting garrisons on the Kur and ranged pillaging through Iberia and Eger¹⁾, subsequently taking ship and visiting the Emperor Heraclius, when vows of friendship were interchanged and a free-pass was given them for their return through Roman territory. The reader is then transported to the *end* of the 37th year of the reign of Chosroes when on p. 110 he learns of the expedition of Djebuchagan's nephew who from his exalted position is called Shad (presumably = the modern "Shah"?). He ravages Albania and Atrpatakān and then encamps on the Araxes, having captured vast plunder. As ally of Heraclius he writes a letter to Chosroes demanding in his own name and in that of the Emperor the restoration of those towns which Persia had wrested from Rome and threatening to attack Chosroes in person if the answer were unfavourable (p. 111). After the return of the envoy bearing the reply of Chosroes in which Shad was offered great wealth if he would abandon his ally (p. 112) Moses proceeds to narrate the march of Heraclius against Ctesiphon and the termination of the war with Persia.

From this brief sketch we can now attempt to reconstruct the true sequence of events as they were related in the original source from which Moses has drawn his information. The key to this reconstruction lies in the fact that Sahrbarāz and Sahīn (we have no other mention of the Persian general whom Moses calls Krtakarin) were at this time *both in the west only in the summer of 626* and it was in this summer that Sahīn was defeated by Theodore brother of Heraclius and subsequently died of mortification. The letter of Chosroes (given on pp. 103—4) was therefore written in the early summer of 626 before news of Sahīn's disaster had reached Ctesiphon. But the mission of Andreas and the raid of the 1000 tribesmen through the gates of Derbend took place in the 36th regnal year of Chosroes = June 625 — June 626. And we thus understand the reference to the return "through the same gates" i. e. the gates of Dzhor or Derbend. The Chazars then took no further action during the year 626. In fact the whole account of the raid of the Chazars and the letter of Chosroes (on pp. 103—4) with which our analysis opened down to "chrez tye zhe vrata" ("through the same gates"), on pp. 104 med. really

1) cf. N. Adonts: *Armeniya v epochu Yustiniana*. St. Petersburg 1908. pp. 26—7.

follows the visit of the Chazars to Heraclius narrated in c. XII. This point once established, for the rest reconstruction is simple: after the words just quoted from p. 104 med. we should proceed with the account of the expedition of Shad (p. 110—112 top). Then follows the section from the middle of p. 104 beginning with the words "Kogda zhe knyaz-veluiko" ("when the great prince" etc.) down to the end of c. XI p. 110 (= Djebuchagan's expedition and siege of Tiflis) on which probably ensued p. 112 paragraph 1 (= the Emperor's march on Ctesiphon).

The following therefore in summary form is a statement of the chronological results which we have won from this examination:

(a). Heraclius despatches Andreas on a mission to the Chazars late in 625 or so early in 626 that before the Court of Ctesiphon had learned of the defeat of Sahin by Theodore in the summer of 626 (1) the Chazars 1000 strong have captured Derbend, ravaged Iberia and Eger and taken ship to the Emperor (who was probably at Trebizond) and (2) news of this ~~form~~ has reached Chosroes and he has had time to despatch a letter threatening to withdraw Sahrbaráz and Sahin from the west to punish the marauders.

The Chazars on receipt of this letter retire by way of Derbend and take no further action in 626.

(b). Early summer of 627 — before the end of June — Expedition of Sad.

(c). After June 627 but before Heraclius started on his march to Ctesiphon in autumn 627 raid of Djebuchagan and siege of Tiflis.¹⁾

For our present purpose the point of importance is: Heraclius was opening up negotiations with the Chazars probably late in 625, at any rate very early in 626, and this would obviously be easier of accomplishment if he was already, as Theophanes says he was, in the N. of Asia Minor, and not still engaged with Sahrbaráz on the Sarus.

The first part of this paper is now complete: it has been sought to prove that our authorities refuse to be fitted into any scheme of chronology which places the Avar surprise in 623 and the Emperor's second campaign against Persia in 624.

II. Petau's emendation of the date June 5th given by the Paschal Chronicle to June 3 is unjustifiable.

On this point there is a piece of evidence the bearing of which on the present discussion has not previously been duly appreciated. A. Dmitrievsky in his important work *Opisanie Liturgicheskikh Rukopisei khranyashchikhsya v Bibliotekakh pravoslavnago Vostoka* (Kiev 1895)

1) cf. J. Marquart: *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*. Leipzig 1903. pp. 401—2 (notes).

has published a *Typikon* of Constantinople dating from the IX—X centuries. In this *Typikon* under June 5th among other celebrations for that day we read¹⁾:

καὶ ἡ ἔλευσις τῶν βαρβάρων καὶ λιτὴ ἐν τῷ Κάμπῳ.²⁾ Ἐσπέρας εἰς τὴν παραμονὴν ἀναφέρομεν τῷ πατριάρχῃ καὶ εἰς τὸν ὄρθρον ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου ἀντιφώνου εἰσερχόμεθα ἕσω. καὶ κατέρχεται ὁ πατριάρχης καὶ εἰσερχεται διὰ τῆς πλαγίας εἰς τὸ θυσιαστήριον καὶ μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ ψαλλομένου ἀντιφώνου γίνεται εὐχὴ τοῦ Τρισαγίου καὶ ἄρχονται οἱ ψάλλται ἐν τῷ ἁμβωνί τροπάριον ἥχος πλ. δ' Ἀνυμνοῦμέν σε Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ὅτι εἰσήκουσας τῆς τεκούσης σε παρθένου μητρὸς καὶ διεφύλαξας πόλιν εἰς σὲ καταφεύγουσαν κατὰ τὸ μέγα σου ἔλεος. καὶ εἰς τὸν φόρον δοξάζουσι καὶ ὁ διάκονος τὸ μέγα Κύριε ἐλέησον καὶ πάλιν ἄρχονται οἱ ψάλλται τὸ αὐτὸ τροπάριον καὶ εἰς τὴν Χρυσίαν Πόρταν δοξάζουσι κτλ. [the whole service is given at length]. Δεῖ εἰδέναι ὅτι ὁ πατριάρχης ἀναγινώσκει καὶ γίνεται ἡ τάξις ὡς προεγγράπται καὶ μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου κηρύσσει ὁ διάκονος Πρόσχωμεν. Γνωρίζομεν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ ἀγάπῃ ὅτι κατὰ τὴν προλαβοῦσαν συνήθειαν συντρέχοντες ἀπερχόμεθα ἐν τῷ προφητέῳ τοῦ Προδρόμου τῷ ὄντι πλησίον τοῦ Ἑβδόμου τὴν θείαν λειτουργίαν ἐκείσε ἐπιτελοῦντες πάντες συνδράμωμεν [The service follows at much length]. Dmitrievsky gives many *variae lectiones* of other MSS. which the student will consult for himself: for the sake of brevity the present writer must content himself with quoting the Incipit of two Jerusalem MSS. (Jer. Patr. Bibl. MSS. nos. 53 and 285) *Μνήμη* (sic) ἐπιτελοῦμεν τοῦ κάμπου τῆς μετὰ φιλανθρωπίας ἐπενεχθείσης ἡμῖν φοβερᾶς ἀνάγκης ἐν τῇ τῶν βαρβάρων ἐπιδρομῇ δι' ἣν ἐλυτρώσατο ἡμᾶς ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν.

But before we can proceed to note one or two features of this extract from the Constantinopolitan *Typikon* we must determine our position in regard to the account of the rediscovery of the Virgin's robe in a chest in the church of the Theotokos in Blachernae, of which the most convenient text is that of Kh. M. Loparev in *Viz. Vrem.* II (1895) pp. 592 sqq. Loparev refers this homily to the attack of the Russians on Constantinople in 842 A. D., but in the view of the present writer V. Vasil'evsky has proved that this contention is untenable, and that the work refers to the Avar surprise. Vasil'evsky points out that while in the case of the homily on the Virgin's robe (a) the leader of the assailants is at the head of many peoples and himself invited the Em-

1) vol. I p. 78.

2) = of course the Hebdomon: a common place for public thanksgivings. cf. the service after the earthquake in 446, Nilles: *Manuale utriusque ecclesiae* etc. under date Sept. 25.

peror to conclude terms of peace, (b) the Emperor himself is present in the capital and goes in person to the church of the Theotokos, and (c) the Robe is taken from the church at Blachernae to St. Sophia lest it should fall into the enemies' hands — the inhabitants rescue it, it does not rescue them — in the account of Photius of the Russian assault (a) the leader of the barbarians is at the head of a single despised people, his approach is sudden and unexpected, while there is no question of negotiations, (b) the Emperor was absent on a campaign at the time and (c) the Robe was carried round the walls to protect the city. Further in the account of the finding of the Virgin's robe the church of the Theotokos is still unprotected: the wall built in 627 is not yet erected and therefore we must date the work before 626. The author is indeed Theodore presbyter and Syncellus who also composed the homily on the Avar siege of 626.¹⁾

Adopting this conclusion we may compare Theodore's narrative with the extract from the Dmitrievsky Typikon. With the memorial service at the Golden Gate cf. Hom. § 3. When the barbarian was ravaging without the walls the Emperor *ἔλιπεν τὰ βασίλεια καὶ χαμεύνης ἐν ιδιώτῳ διαιωόμενος σχήματι ἐν τῷ ναῷ τῆς Θεοτόκου ὃς Ἰερουσαλήμ ὀνομάζεται* ἔνδον δὲ τῆς πόλεως κείται ἣν Χρυσὴν καλοῦσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ πράγματος ὅσα ἦν δυνατὸν ἐπόνει where he was joined by the Patriarch. God heard the prayers of king and people and intervened. Is the memorial service in memory of this scene? Further with the hymn *Ἀνυμνοῦμέν σε κτλ.* cf. Hom. § 18— a prayer to the Virgin to protect the city from every barbarian foe, it being shewn *ἐμφανῶς* ὅτι τῇ σῇ ἡ πόλις δυνάμει τειχίζεται. ὅσαι δὲ ψυχὰς τε καὶ πόλεις ὑπὸ βαρβάρων ἤδη κεκράτηνται ἀνακάλεσαι ταύτας καὶ ἐξαγόρασον ὡς πάντα ἰσχύουσα.

Though the points of contact are slight, on the whole there can scarcely be any doubt that this service of the Typikon preserved the memory of the city's escape from the Avars. There is one other point: we are not told in Theodore's homily on what day the newly found Virgin's robe was restored to the *ἀγία σόρος*, but we do learn from him that after the vigil in the church of St. Laurence and the service at Blachernae the Patriarch (§ 16) *κλειτὴν τε αὐτὴν ἑορτῶν ἑορτὴν ὦρισε γίνεσθαι ταῖς λοιπαῖς ἑτησίαις ταῖς ἐν Βλαχέρναις τελουμέναις τῇ Θεοτόκῳ ἑορταῖς τε καὶ πανηγύρεσιν.* His direction was carried into effect: the service at dawn in the church of St. Laurence and the rites in the *ἀγία σόρος* duly appear in Dmitrievsky's Typikon (IX—X century).

1) V. Vasil'evsky: Avarui a ne Russkie. Theodor a ne Georgy. Zamyechaniya na stat'yu Kh. M. Lopareva. Viz. Vrem. III (1896) pp. 83—95.

under the date July 2 with the heading *περὶ τῆς Ἑσθῆτος τῆς Παναγίας Θεοτόκου τῆς ἀποκειμένης ἐν Βλαχέρναις* (op. cit. pp. 85—86). We have thereby gained the date for the restoration of the Virgin's robe.

It would thus appear that it is impossible to reject the date June 5th given us for the Avar surprise by the Paschal Chronicle.

III. It has been suggested that there was an Avar attack upon Constantinople on June 5. 623 which was confused by the writer of the Paschal Chronicle with the earlier treachery of 619.

It is true that this solution would in itself appear highly improbable: the compiler of the Paschal Chronicle was not only a contemporary, but it is reasonable to infer that he lived in the capital, since in its last two decades the chronicle is almost solely concerned with events directly connected with Constantinople, and e. g. on the Persian campaigns of Heraclius only reports the contents of one of the Emperor's despatches to the citizens. Such a priori reasoning however is insufficient. It is proposed to shew as shortly as possible that there is no place for such a second Avar attack in the year 623: in this connection we must consider the homily of Theodore on the siege of Constantinople in 626.

This homily, as Sternbach has suggested (*Analecta Avarica*, *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności*: wydz. filol. Ser. II T. XV p. 334. Krakow. 1900), was probably composed for the first service commemorating the rescue of the city i. e. for August 7. 627: it is not only undoubtedly contemporary, but is extremely well-informed. It gives by way of introduction a sketch of the earlier relations between the Avars and the Empire. The author had read George of Pisidia, but even in his prefatory matter is more detailed than the poet. The Avars, fugitives from the Turks (cf. Bell. Avar. 16), had been assisted, as suppliants, by the Empire; when their aged leader died (cf. *ibid.* 74 sqq.) he was succeeded by his eldest son in whose lifetime an aggressive policy was resumed (cf. *ibid.* 87): he in his turn gave place to his younger brother (omitted in Bell. Avar.). Growing in power, the Avars gradually enslaved the surrounding peoples and it was under their third Chagan that plans against the capital were first formed. Heraclius did everything possible to avert the danger, but all to no purpose. Not every library possesses the dissertations of the Academy of Letters of Cracow, and as Sternbach has here published the only satisfactory text of this homily it may be well to quote the actual words of Theodore (p. 301, 30):

Τίς γὰρ οὐκ οἶδεν τὴν ὑπ' ἐκείνου τολμηθεῖσαν πρὸ τούτων τῶν ἐτῶν ἀπάνθρωπον ἔφοδον ὅτε βασιλεὺς μὲν ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ἄκακος κατὰ

τινας συνθήκας ἐξελέλυθε τοῦτον ἐν τοῖς Μακροῖς δεξιωσόμενος τείχεσι¹⁾ πᾶσαν ἀκολουθεῖν κελεύσας φιλοφροσύνης ἐπίνοιαν δι' ἧς ἀνήμερον θῆρα μεταβαλεῖν καὶ τιθασσεῦσαι ἢ ἐλπίς ὑπετίθετο²⁾; τίς δὲ ἀγνοεῖ τὴν ἐπιβουλὴν καὶ τὸν δόλον τοῦ ὄφρα καὶ ὅσον ψυχῶν πληθὸς ἐξ ἀδοκίτου κακίας αἰχμάλωτον ἤρπασεν, ἀνδράσι τε ἅμα γυναικας γέροντας τε καὶ νήπια ἀριθμὸν ὑπερβαλόντας εἰς τὴν αὐτοῦ γῆν δεσμῶν ἀπήγαγεν³⁾; οὐ μέχρι δὲ τοῦτου τῆς κακίας αὐτοῦ τὴν κίνησιν ὥρισεν ἀλλὰ καὶ ταύτην ἠπείλει καταστρέφει τὴν ἐν πόλεσι βασιλεύουσαν⁴⁾ εἰ μὴ πάντων τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ χρημάτων τε καὶ πραγμάτων τὴν ἡμίσειαν μοῖραν κομίσοιτο. καὶ τὴν μὲν τότε κίνησιν πᾶσαν λέγειν οὐκ εὐκαιρον· εἰληφεν ὅλως χρηματὰ τε καὶ πράγματα ὅσα καὶ τὰς Βριάρεω χεῖρας ἐνέπλησαν καὶ τὴν ὠμότητα μετέβαλον ἂν τοῦ Φαλάριδος.⁵⁾ ἀλλ' οὐχὶ καὶ τὴν βδέλλαν ταύτην ἐκόρεσαν, μελζονος δὲ καὶ πλεονος ἀπιστίας ὑπέκκαυμα τῷ κυνὶ ἢ τῶν χρημάτων ἐπίδοσις γέγονε. ταῦτα μὲν γὰρ ἐπὶ σπονδαῖς δῆθεν εἰρηνικαῖς ἐκομίσατο καὶ ὅρκοις πατρίοις διὰ τῶν παρ' αὐτῷ λογάδων τὰ τῶν σπονδῶν ἐπιστάσαστο· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ὅρκος ὁ πάτριος, οὐ χρημάτων τοσοῦτων ἐπίδοσις, οὐ βασιλικὸν τρόπον διάθεσις, οὐ βασιλέως τοσοῦτου σοφία καὶ φρόνησις τὴν ἐκείνου κακίαν ἀλλάξει δυνήται.

There can at least be no doubt as to the reference here: it is clearly to the Avar surprise and the subsequent treaty. Theodore then gives in detail the preparations against Persia: Heraclius entrusts his children and the city to the Virgin and Bonus and even purports to make the Chagan guardian of his sons (Theodore 302, 13 sqq. 33 sqq.). The whole passage is closely parallel to the account of George in the Exp. Pers. though in places more explicit. But directly the Chagan heard of the Emperor's departure from the city (spring 622) he began to mature his plans for an assault on Constantinople both by land and sea and of these an elaborate description is given (ibid. 302, 17 sqq.). (No wonder that Heraclius returned in the winter of 622—3 to give directions for the defence of his capital.) The activity of Bonus and Sergius is then portrayed at length by Theodore (cf. 303, 39 sqq.) and

1) This passage should be added to the texts cited by J. B. Bury, The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century. The British Academy. Supplementary Papers I (London 1911) pp. 67—68 on the local circumscription *Tὰ Μακρὰ Τείχη*.

2) cf. Theophanes 301, 28.

3) cf. Niceph. 146 ed. de Boor.

4) cf. Geo. Pis. Bell. Avar. 65, where we should read with Sternbach op. cit. p. 242:

σπονδὴν μὲν εἶχον πᾶσαν ἐξῆραι πόλιν
πρώτην δὲ τὴν Ἀνθούσαν ὡς πρώτην πόλιν.

And see parallels in Sternbach.

5) cf. Niceph. p. 17, 16.

the prayers of the Emperor's children and of all classes amongst the citizens. Then the alliance of the Chagan with Persia is related and at last the storm bursts and the daily incidents of the Avar siege culminating in the complete repulse of the barbarians are recounted.

Here we have a full contemporary chronological history of the relations between Rome and the Avars from the first contact of the barbarians with the Empire down to 626: in this details are given of both assaults on Constantinople *and there is no place for any other attack on the capital than those already known to us, while the Avar surprise and the ensuing treaty are dated prior to the first campaign against Persia in 622.*¹⁾

Our consideration of the evidence is now complete: the only possible conclusion would appear to be that the Emperor started on his second campaign in April 623 and that the Avar surprise took place on June 5. in some year prior to 622.

IV. It only remains to suggest a solution of the question: How came the Paschal Chronicle to give the perfectly accurate synchronism of Sunday June 5. 623 for the date of the Avar surprise?

Now the Chronicle as we have it is imperfect: its entries for 629 and for 630 (its closing years) are lost, while Vasil'evsky first pointed out in 1896²⁾ what should have been obvious to any careful student that there is a long lacuna probably covering some whole leaves between the words³⁾ *καὶ περᾶσαι πρὸς τοὺς . . and ἐπόντισαν καὶ κατέσφαξαν* in the account of the Avar siege of 626. But not only are there lacunae but it would seem, actual misplacements in our existing text.⁴⁾ There may thus well be some confusion in that part of the Chronicle with which we are at present concerned. If one counts the number of lines occupied by the narration of the Avar surprise in the text of the Bonn edition one finds that they amount to 24, and if a similar calculation be made for the Chronicle entries, from the beginning of the year 618 to the end of the first entry under the year 623 (i. e. down to the words *τῆς βασιλείας Ἡρακλείου Νέου Κωνσταντίνου ἔτος ια'*) the number of lines in the same text is 23 or allowing for a wider space for the entry of the 350th Olympiad 24 lines i. e. that these two sections occupy the same space in the printed text. But the 24 lines of the Bonn text on the Avar surprise take 30 lines

1) cf. I (VIII) supra for the account of George of Pisidia.

2) Vasil'evsky op. cit.: Viz. Vrem. III p. 91. note ¹.

3) 1014 C in med. (Migne). This was subsequently noted, apparently independently, by Mercati.

4) On the whole subject see G. Mercati op. cit.

of Migne's text with one word over, and were it not for certain typographical peculiarities in Migne's text of the above-mentioned 618—623 section which make comparison impossible, this section being of the same length as the Avar surprise section would also have occupied some 30 lines. But Mercati has shewn¹⁾ that the lacuna at p. 160, 13 (Migne) occupied $29\frac{1}{2}$ lines while the lacuna at p. 167, 13 similarly represented 28 lines and since these two lacunae no longer come at the end of a leaf in our Vatican MS. but in the middle of a page he concludes that some 28 to 30 lines of Migne's text are equivalent to one leaf of the archetype from which our Vatican MS. was copied. Adopting this line of argument the present writer would suggest that each of the above sections (a) the Avar surprise relation and (b) the entries for the years 618 to 623 (first entry) were respectively written on a single leaf of the archetype and that these two consecutive leaves of the archetype were simply transposed before that archetype was copied by the scribe who wrote our Vatican MS.

The restored text will therefore read as follows:

end of leaf 1 of archetype:

[617] καὶ ἀπὸ κβ' καὶ αὐτῆς τοῦ Ἰανουαρίου μηνὸς γράφεται τῆς βασιλείας Ἡρακλείου Νέου Κωνσταντίνου ἔτος ε'.

leaf 2 of archetype:

τούτῳ τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ μηνὶ Δαισῶ κατὰ Πωμαίους Ἰουνίου ε' ἡμέρα πρώτη κτλ. containing precisely the account of the Avar surprise:

leaf 3 of archetype: years 618—623 first entry.

i. e. the Avar surprise took place on Sunday June 5. 617 which gives us a perfectly accurate dating, while Heraclius can then start for his second Persian campaign in the year 623 A. D.

London.

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1) op. cit. p. 411.