

External References to Islam

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Robert G. Hoyland in 1997 published an important book entitled *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*. This book contains background, commentary, and evaluation of over a hundred sources that may date between 630 CE and 780 CE, the formative period of Islam, and that refer to the growing phenomenon in either an incidental or purposeful context as an outsider. (The following are extracted from that work).

Table of Contents

1. Doctrina Jacobi (July 634)
2. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (d. ca. 639)
3. Fragment on the Arab Conquests (post-636)
4. Maximus the Confessor (d. 662)
5. Thomas the Presbyter (wr. ca. 640)
6. Homily on the Child Saints of Babylon (640s?)
7. John, Bishop of Nikiu (640s or 690s)
8. Coptic Apocalypse of Pseudo-Shenute (644?)
9. Pope Martin I (649-655)
10. Isho'yahb III of Adiabene (d. 659)
11. Fredegar, a Frankish Chronicler (wr. 650s)
12. Trophies of Damascus (probably 661, possibly 681)
13. Sebeos, Bishop of the Bagratunis (wr. 660s)
14. A Chronicler of Khuzistan (wr. ca. 660s)
15. The Synod of 676
16. Arculf, a Pilgrim (fl. 670s)
17. George of Resh'aina (d. ca. 680)
18. Athanasius of Balad, Patriarch of Antioch (683-687)
19. John bar Penkaye (wr. 687)
20. Anti-Jewish Polemicists (ca. 640-697)
21. The Secrets of Rabbi Simon ben Yohai (post-680?)
22. Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ephraem (post-692?)
23. Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (690s)
24. Anastasius of Sinai (d. ca. 700)
25. Hnanisho' the Exegete (d. 700)
26. Ad Annum 705 (October 705)
27. Jacob of Edessa (d. 708)
28. Coptic Apocalypse of Pseudo-Athanasius (ca. 715)
29. Greek Daniel, First Vision (716-717)
30. The Vision of Enoch the Just (717)
31. Greek Interpolation of the Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (ca. 720)
32. Patriarch Germanus (715-730)
33. Willibald (fl. 720s) and Other Pilgrims
34. John of Damascus (wr. 730s)
35. A Monk of Beth Hale and an Arab Notable (post-717)
36. A Maronite Chronicler (8th century)

37. Isho'bokht, Metropolitan of Fars (ca. 730-780)
38. Stephen of Alexandria (775-785)
39. Theophilus of Edessa (d. 785)
40. T'ung tien (published 801)
41. Life of Gabriel of Qartmin (d. 648, wr. 9th century)
42. Benjamin I, Patriarch of Alexandria (d. 665, wr. 9th century)
43. Bundahishn (redacted 9th century, original possibly late 7th century)

Doctrina Jacobi (July 634)

[Jacob, himself a convert, wrote to encourage Christian faith in Jews of Carthage, forcibly converted in 632, in a tract that was completed before "the thirteenth of July in the seventh indiction," i.e. 634, when Jacob left Carthage. In it his cousin Justus appears telling how he heard of the killing of a member of the imperial guard, or *candidatus*, in a letter from his brother Abraham in Caesarea, in which the following appears.]

When the *candidatus* was killed by the Saracens, I was at Caesarea and I set off by boat to Sykamina. People were saying "the *candidatus* has been killed," and we Jews were overjoyed. And they were saying that the prophet had appeared, coming with the Saracens, and that he was proclaiming the advent of the anointed one, the Christ who was to come. I, having arrived at Sykamina, stopped by a certain old man well-versed in scriptures, and I said to him: "What can you tell me about the prophet who has appeared with the Saracens?" He replied, groaning deeply: "He is false, for the prophets do not come armed with a sword. Truly they are works of anarchy being committed today and I fear that the first Christ to come, whom the Christians worship, was the one sent by God and we instead are preparing to receive the Antichrist. Indeed, Isaiah said that the Jews would retain a perverted and hardened heart until all the earth should be devastated. But you go, master Abraham, and find out about the prophet who has appeared." So I, Abraham, inquired and heard from those who had met him that there was no truth to be found in the so-called prophet, only the shedding of men's blood. He says also that he has the keys of paradise, which is incredible. (*Doctrina Jacobi* V.16, 209. [p. 57])

Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (d. ca. 639)

[In a synodical letter without date, Sophronius gives an extensive list of heretics and asks, in the valedictions, that the following may be granted by God to "our Christ-loving and most gentle emperors":]

a strong and vigorous sceptre to break the pride of all the barbarians, and especially of the Saracens who, on account of our sins, have now risen up against us unexpectedly and ravage all with cruel and feral design, with impious and godless audacity. More than ever, therefore, we entreat your Holiness to make urgent petitions to Christ so that he, receiving these favourably from you, may quickly quell their mad insolence and deliver these vile creatures, as before, to be the footstool of our God-given emperors. (*Ep. synodica*, PG 87, 3197D-3200A [p. 69])

[The following comments are dated to December of 634.]

We, however, because of our innumerable sins and serious misdemeanours, are unable to see these things, and are prevented from entering Bethlehem by way of the road. Unwillingly, indeed, contrary to our wishes, we are required to stay at home, not bound closely by bodily bonds, but bound by fear of the Saracens. (*Christmas Sermon*, 506 [p. 70])

At once that of the Philistines, so now the army of the godless Saracens has captured the divine Bethlehem and bars our passage there, threatening slaughter and destruction if we leave this holy city and dare to approach our beloved and sacred Bethlehem. (*Christmas Sermon*, 507 [p. 70])

If we were to live as is dear and pleasing to God, we would rejoice over the fall of the Saracen enemy and observe their near ruin and witness their final demise. For their blood-loving blade will enter their hearts, their bow will be broken and their arrows will be fixed in them. (*Christmas Sermon*, 515 [p. 71])

[This dates to the 6th of December in 636 or 637.]

But the present circumstances are forcing me to think differently about our way of life, for why are [so many] wars being fought among us? Why do barbarian raids abound? Why are the troops of the Saracens attacking us? Why has there been so much destruction and plunder? Why are there incessant outpourings of human blood? Why are the birds of the sky devouring human bodies? Why have churches been pulled down? Why is the cross mocked? Why is Christ, who is the dispenser of all good things and the provider of this joyousness of ours, blasphemed by pagan mouths (*ethnikois tois stomasi*) so that he justly cries out to us: "Because of you my name is blasphemed among the pagans," and this is the worst of all the terrible things that are happening to us. That is why the vengeful and God-hating Saracens, the abomination of desolation clearly foretold to us by the prophets, overrun the places which are not allowed to them, plunder cities, devastate fields, burn down villages, set on fire the holy churches, overturn the sacred monasteries, oppose the Byzantine armies arrayed against them, and in fighting raise up the trophies [of war] and add victory to victory. Moreover, they are raised up more and more against us and increase their blasphemy of Christ and the church, and utter wicked blasphemies against God. Those God-fighters boast of prevailing over all, assiduously and unrestrainably imitating their leader, who is the devil, and emulating his vanity because of which he has been expelled from heaven and been assigned to the gloomy shades. Yet these vile ones would not have accomplished this nor seized such a degree of power as to do and utter lawlessly all these things, unless we had first insulted the gift [of baptism] and first defiled the purification, and in this way grieved Christ, the giver of gifts, and prompted him to be angry with us, good though he is and though he takes no pleasure in evil, being the fount of kindness and not wishing to behold the ruin and destruction of men. We are ourselves, in truth, responsible for all these things and no word will be found for our defence. What word or place will be given us for our defence when we have taken all these gifts from him, befouled them and defiled everything with our vile actions? (*Holy Baptism*, 166-167 [pp. 72-73])

[In a work originally composed by John Moschus (d. 619), but expanded by Sophronius (d. ca. 639), actually found only in an addition of the Georgian translation, the following entry appears, concerning a construction dated by tradition at 638, i.e., soon after the capture of Jerusalem ca. 637. It appears in a portion concerning Sophronius as recounted on the authority of his contemporary, the archdeacon Theodore, and may have been written down ca. 670.]

the godless Saracens entered the holy city of Christ our Lord, Jerusalem, with the permission of God and in punishment for our negligence, which is considerable, and immediately proceeded in haste to the place which is called the Capitol. They took with them men, some by force, others by their own will, in order to clean that place and to build that cursed thing, intended for their prayer and which they call a mosque (*midzgitha*). (*Pratum spirituale*, 100-102 [p. 63])

Fragment on the Arab Conquests (post-636)

[From the book (p. 116):] "On the front fly-leaf of a sixth-century Syriac manuscript containing the Gospel according to Matthew and the Gospel according to Mark are scribbled a few lines about the Arab conquest, now very faint. The following entries are the most readable:"

In January {the people of} Hims took the word for their lives and many villages were ravaged by the killing of {the Arabs of} Muhammad (*Muhmd*) and many people were slain and {taken} prisoner from Galilee as far as Beth. . . .

On the tw{enty-six}th of May the *Saq{ila}ra* went { . . . } from the vicinity of Hims and the Romans chased them { . . . }.

On the tenth {of August} the Romans fled from the vicinity of Damascus {and there were killed} many {people}, some ten thousand. And at the turn {of the ye}ar the Romans came. On the twentieth of August in the year n{ine hundred and forty-}seven there gathered in Gabitha {a multitude of} the Romans, and many people {of the R}omans were kil{led}, {s}ome fifty thousand.

[From the book (p. 117):] "Beyond this only scattered words are discernable. Wright, the first to draw attention to the fragment, wrote that 'it seems to be a nearly contemporary notice,' a view to which Nöldeke also subscribed. Neither scholar produced evidence to corroborate his assertion, but in its favour is the occurrence of the words 'we saw' on l. 13, and the fact that it was a common practice to jot down notes for commemorative purposes on the blank pages of a Gospel. It is of some significance that the fragment accords with one of the dates given in Arabic sources for the battle at Gabitha (assuming this is to be identified with Yarmuk), namely 20 August AG 947/12 Rajab AH 15 (636), and bears resemblance to certain notices in Theophanes, but Donner is right to advise caution given the unknown provenance and frequent illegibility of the text."

Maximus the Confessor (d. 662)

[From a letter to Peter, governor of Numidia, then in Alexandria, indicating the importance of prayer at this time, between 634 and 640.]

For indeed, what is more dire than the evils which today afflict the world? What is more terrible for the discerning than the unfolding events? What is more pitiable and frightening for those who endure them? To see a barbarous people of the desert overrunning another's lands as though they were their own; to see civilization itself being ravaged by wild and untamed beasts whose form alone is human. (Maximus, *Ep. 14, PG 91, 533-44* [pp. 77-78])

Thomas the Presbyter (wr. ca. 640)

In the year 947 (635-36), indiction 9, the Arabs invaded the whole of Syria and went down to Persia and conquered it. The Arabs climbed the mountain of Mardin and killed many monks there in [the monasteries of] Qedar and Bnata. There died the blessed man Simon, doorkeeper of Qedar, brother of Thomas the priest. (Thomas the Presbyter, *Chronicle, 148* [p. 119])

[From the book (pp. 119-120):] "The mention of Heraclius reigning for 30 years at the end of Section 5 and the lack of any event later than the above suggest that the *Chronicle* was completed in 640 when Heraclius was in his final year."

In the year 945, indiction 7, on Friday 7 February (634) at the ninth hour, there was a battle between the Romans and the Arabs of Muhammad (*tayyaye d-Mhmt*) in Palestine twelve miles east of Gaza. The Romans fled, leaving behind the patrician *bryrdn*, whom the Arabs killed. Some 4000 poor villagers of Palestine were killed there, Christians, Jews and Samaritans. The Arabs ravaged the whole region. (Thomas the Presbyter, *Chronicle*, pp. 147-148 [p. 120])

Homily on the Child Saints of Babylon (640s?)

As for us, my loved ones, let us fast and pray without cease, and observe the commandments of the Lord so that the blessing of all our Fathers who have pleased Him may come down upon us. Let us not fast like the God-killing Jews, nor fast like the Saracens who are oppressors, who give themselves up to prostitution, massacre and lead into captivity the sons of men, saying: "We both fast and pray." Nor should we fast like those who deny the saving passion of our Lord who died for us, to free us from death and perdition. Rather let us fast like our Fathers the apostles who went out into all the world, suffering hunger and thirst, deprived of all. . . . Let us fast like Moses the arch-prophet, Elias and John, like the prophet Daniel and the three Saints in the furnace of fire. (*Homily on the Child Saints of Babylon*, 36 [p. 121])

John, Bishop of Nikiu (640s or 690s)

The entirety of John's [Chronicle](#) is available online.

[From the book (p. 154):] "As regards the conquest of Egypt John does try to outline the movements of the Arabs, though our assessment of his account is hampered by the fact that there is a gap in the manuscript for the years 611-39. He offers some unique information, in particular that the Arabs, 'paying no attention to the fortified cities,' initially raided the Fayyum, an important agricultural oasis to the south of Fustat, whereas Muslim sources say the Arab commander 'Amr ibn al-'As 'advanced directly to Fustat.' John's reconstruction, that the Arabs first took possession of the surrounding districts before proceeding to the city with its defensive fortress, makes much more sense and also accords with what we know of Arab warfare from other sources."

John attributes the Muslim conquest "to the wickedness of the emperor Heraclius and his persecution of the orthodox through the patriarch Cyrus." (*Chronicle*, 121.2) John laments apostasy, saying, "And now many of the Egyptians who had been false Christians denied the holy orthodox faith and lifegiving baptism, and embraced the religion of the Moslem, the enemies of God, and accepted the detestable doctrine of the beast, this is, Mohammed, and they erred together with those idolaters, and took arms in their hands and fought against the Christians. And one of them, named John, the Chalcedonian of the Convent of Sinai, embraced the faith of Islam, and quitting his monk's habit he took up the sword, and persecuted the Christians who were faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ." (*Chronicle*, 121.10-11) The chronicle ends with the capture of Alexandria in 641. Hoyland suggests a date of composition in the 640s because there is no reference to any "monastic activities" such as would be expected from one who "entered the church hierarchy, probably *ca.* 650" (p. 153). John claims in the prologue to have been an eyewitness to some of the more recent events in his chronicle.

Coptic Apocalypse of Pseudo-Shenute (644?)

The Persians . . . will go down to Egypt and much killing will accompany them. They shall seize the wealth of the Egyptians and sell their children for gold, so harsh is the persecution and oppression of the Persians. Many masters will become slaves and many slaves masters. Woe to Egypt on account of the Persians. Many masters will become slaves and many slaves masters. Woe to Egypt on

account of the Persians, for they will take the church vessels and drink wine from them before the altar without fear or anxiety. They will rape the women before their husbands. There shall be great distress and anguish, and of those that survive a third will die of grief and misery.

Then after a while the Persians will depart from Egypt and there shall arise the Deceiver, who will enter upon the king of the Romans and will be entrusted by him with headship of both the military commanders and the bishops. He shall enter Egypt and undertake many tasks; he shall take possession of Egypt and its provinces, and build ditches and forts, and order that the walls of the towns in the deserts and wastelands be [re-]built. He shall destroy the East and the West, then he shall combat the pastor, the archbishop in Alexandria entrusted with the Christians resident in the land of Egypt. They will expel him and he will flee southwards until he arrives, sad and dispirited, at your monastery. And when he comes here, I shall return him and place him on his seat once more.

After that shall arise the sons of Ishmael and the sons of Esau, who hound the Christians, and the rest of them will be concerned to prevail over and rule all the world and to [re-]build the Temple that is in Jerusalem. When that happens, know that the end of times approaches and is near. The Jews will expect the Deceiver and will be ahead of the [other] peoples when he comes. When you see the [abomination of] desolation of which the prophet Daniel spoke standing in the holy place, [know that] they are those who deny the pains which I received upon the cross and who move freely about my church, fearing nothing at all. (Ps.-Shenute, *Vision*, 340-41 [pp. 280-281])

Pope Martin I (649-655)

[Found in a letter to Theodore composed on his arrest in June 653, in which he disclaims any heresy or treason.]

At no time did I send letters to the Saracens nor, as some say, a statement (*tomus*) as to what they should believe; neither did I ever despatch money, except only to those servants of God travelling to that place for the sake of alms, and the little which we supplied to them was certainly not conveyed to the Saracens. (Martin, *Ep. 14, PL 87, 199A [p. 75]*)

Isho'yahb III of Adiabene (d. 659)

The heretics are deceiving you [when they say] there happens what happens by order of the Arabs, which is certainly not the case. For the Muslim Arabs (*tayyaye mhaggre*) do not aid those who say that God, Lord of all, suffered and died. And if by chance they do help them for whatever reason, you can inform the Muslims (*mhaggre*) and persuade them of this matter as it should be, if you care about it at all. So perform all things wisely, my brothers; give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. (Isho'yahb III, *Ep. 48B, 97 [p. 179]*)

[From the book (pp. 179-180):] "The interest of this passage is twofold. Firstly, it is our earliest reference to Christian dealings with Muslims, and it is clear that the Monophysites and Nestorians vied for privileges from their new masters much as they had done in Sasanian times. As far as what should be rendered to Caesar, bishops and monks alike sought tax concessions and other such favours for their people; in matters concerning God they simply requested the freedom to conduct their own affairs unmolested. Secondly, it gives us our earliest reference [as it dates before 640 CE] to the term *mhaggre*. The equivalent Greek form *magaritai* is found in a bilingual papyrus of AH 22/643, which is a receipt from the commander of the Arab forces in Egypt to the local inhabitants for goods provided, and it was probably from such documents or from the scribes that copied them that the Christians learned the term. In turn, the Greek derives from the Arabic *muhajir*, which is the name by which the Arabs are designated on all official documents of the first century of Islam."

[From the book (p. 180):] "A second reference to the Muslims occurs in a letter addressed to Simeon of Rewardashir, whom Isho'yabb desperately exhorts to remain within the fold of the church. He argues that the only possible explanation for the disasters which have been afflicting the Persian and East Arabian Christians under Simeon's authority, in particular the successes of some religious pretender, is their attempt at secession:"

You alone of all the peoples of the earth have become estranged from every one of them. And because of this estrangement from all these, the influence of the present error came to prevail with ease among you. For the one who has seduced you and uprooted your churches was first seen among us in the region of Radan, where the pagans (*hanpe*) are more numerous than the Christians. Yet, due to the praiseworthy conduct of the Christians, the pagans were not led astray by him. Rather he was driven out from there in disgrace; not only did he not uproot the churches, but he himself was extirpated. However, your region of Persia received him, pagans and Christians, and he did with them as he willed, the pagans consenting and obedient, the Christians inactive and silent. As for the Arabs, to whom God has at this time given rule (*shultana*) over the world, you know well how they act towards us. Not only do they not oppose Christianity, but they praise our faith, honour the priests and saints of our Lord, and give aid to the churches and monasteries. Why then do your *Mrwnaye* [inhabitants of a city in Persia] reject their faith on a pretext of theirs? And this when the *Mrwnaye* themselves admit that the Arabs have not compelled them to abandon their faith, but only asked them to give up half of their possessions in order to keep their faith. Yet they forsook their faith, which is forever, and retained the half of their wealth, which is for a short time. (Isho'yahb III, *Ep.* 14C, 251 [pp. 180-181])

Fredegar, a Frankish Chronicler (wr. 650s)

It is said that for three years and more Constans paid one thousand gold solidi a day to the Saracens; but then he somewhat recovered his strength, little by little won back his empire and refused to pay tribute. How this came about I shall set down under the right year in its proper sequence. (Fredegar, *Chronicle*, 162 [p. 217])

The Hagarenes, who are also called Saracens . . . —a circumcised people who of old had lived beneath the Caucasus on the shores of the Caspian in a country known as Ercolia—had now grown so numerous that at last they took up arms and threw themselves upon the provinces of the emperor Heraclius, who despatched an army to hold them. In the ensuing battle the Saracens were the victors and cut the vanquished to pieces. It is said that the Saracens killed in this engagement 150,000 men. Then they sent a deputation to Heraclius with an offer to send him the spoils of battle, but he would accept nothing because of his desire for vengeance on the Saracens. (Fredegar, *Chronicle* [p. 218])

[An account of what appears to be the Battle of Yarmuk (636) follows, in which Heraclius releases the demonic hordes locked up above the Caspian behind brass gates by Alexander the Great, "and through them poured 150,000 mercenary warriors to fight the Saracens:"] The latter, under two commanders, were approximately 200,000 strong. The two forces had camped quite near one another and were ready for an engagement on the following morning. But during that very night the army of Heraclius was smitten by the sword of God: 52,000 of his men died where they slept. When on the following day, at the moment of joining battle, his men saw that so large a part of their force had fallen by divine judgement, they no longer dared advance on the Saracens, but all retired whence they came. The Saracens proceeded, as was their habit, to lay waste the provinces of the empire that had fallen to them. (Fredegar, *Chronicle* [p. 219])

Trophies of Damascus (probably 661, possibly 681)

[In an anti-Jewish polemic, the interlocutor responds, with reference to boasting about God's favor resting upon Christian government.]

"If things are as you say, how is it that enslavements are befalling you? Whose are these devastated lands? Against whom are so many wars stirred up? What other nation is [so much] fought as the Christians?" (*Trophies of Damascus* II.3.1, 220 [p. 79])

[From the book (p. 80):] The very first words of the *Trophies of Damascus*—"Of the divine and invincible church of God"—strike this defiant note. The author is aware that "others" hold Jerusalem, but asserts that "as long as the head and the empire remain firm, all the body will renew itself with ease," and he proclaims Damascus as "the illustrious city beloved of Christ." In the face of the Jew's stinging reply quoted above, the Christian is unabashed: "This is the most astounding thing, that though embattled, the church has remained invincible and indestructible, and while all strike out against it, the foundation has remained unshaken."

Sebeos, Bishop of the Bagratunis (wr. 660s)

[From the book (pp. 124-125):] "There has been much controversy over the authorship of this work. Its first modern commentator tried to identify it with the *History of Heraclius* referred to by five medieval historians and attributed to a bishop Sebeos, presumably the 'lord Sebeos, bishop of the House of Bagratunis,' who attended the Council of Dwin in 645 and witnessed its canons. This was for a long time generally accepted until the researches of Abgarian, who pointed out that the three surviving excerpts from Sebeos' composition are not found in, or even contradict, our anonymous chronicle. So the two must be considered distinct documents, the one by Sebeos having been lost bar the excerpts. . . . Unlike the question of authorship, studies on dating and reliability have not been forthcoming, and a few comments are therefore necessary. There are indications that Sebeos [the anonymous chronicler] lived through many of the events that he relates: he maintains that the account of the Arab conquests derives from fugitives 'who had been eyewitnesses thereof' and, speaking of happenings in 652, declares that the Armenian faith has prevailed 'until now.' Gero considers that Sebeos' notice on the launching of a fleet by Mu'awiya to attack Constantinople must refer to 'the great siege in 674-78.' But the text describes a single assault rather than a long siege, and the event is clearly to be identified with that reported by a mid-eighth-century Syriac source. Both emphasise that a great force of ships was readied and that the expedition took place in the thirteenth year of Constans (654). Sebeos concludes with Mu'awiya's ascendancy in the first Arab civil war (656-61), and the above points would suggest that the author was writing very soon after this date."

[The following is from chapter 30 of Bedrosian's translation:]

I shall discuss the [line of the] son of Abraham: not the one [born] of a free [woman], but the one born of a serving maid, about whom the quotation from Scripture was fully and truthfully fulfilled, "His hands will be at everyone, and everyone will have their hands at him" [Genesis 16. 11,12]. Twelve peoples [representing] all the tribes of the Jews assembled at the city of Edessa. When they saw that the Iranian troops had departed leaving the city in peace, they [122] closed the gates and fortified themselves. They refused entry to troops of the Roman lordship. Thus Heraclius, emperor of the Byzantines, gave the order to besiege it. When [the Jews] realized that they could not militarily resist him, they promised to make peace. Opening the city gates, they went before him, and [Heraclius] ordered that they should go and stay in their own place. So they departed, taking the road through the desert to Tachkastan to the sons of Ishmael. [The Jews] called [the Arabs] to their

aid and familiarized them with the relationship they had through the books of the [Old] Testament. Although [the Arabs] were convinced of their close relationship, they were unable to get a consensus from their multitude, for they were divided from each other by religion. In that period a certain one of them, a man of the sons of Ishmael named Muhammad, became prominent [t'ankangar]. A sermon about the Way of Truth, supposedly at God's command, was revealed to them, and [Muhammad] taught them to recognize the God of Abraham, especially since he was informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history. Because the command had [g104] come from on High, he ordered them all to assemble together and to unite in faith. Abandonning the reverence of vain things, they turned toward the living God, who had appeared to their father--Abraham. Muhammad legislated that they were not to [123] eat carrion, not to drink wine, not to speak falsehoods, and not to commit adultery. He said: "God promised that country to Abraham and to his son after him, for eternity. And what had been promised was fulfilled during that time when [God] loved Israel. Now, however, you are the sons of Abraham, and God shall fulfill the promise made to Abraham and his son on you. Only love the God of Abraham, and go and take the country which God gave to your father Abraham. No one can successfully resist you in war, since God is with you."

Then all of them assembled together, from Havilah to Shur, which is opposite Egypt [The text is corrupt here. The citation is from Genesis 25.18], and they set out from the P'arhan desert [being] twelve tribes [moving] in the order [of precedence] of the Houses of the patriarchs of their tribe. They were divided into 12,000 men, of which the sons of Israel were in their own tribes, 1,000 to a tribe, to lead them to the country of Israel. They travelled army by army in the order [of precedence] of each patriarchy: Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah [Genesis 25. 13-16]. These are the peoples of Ishmael. They reached Moabite Rabbath, at the borders of [124] Ruben's [land]. The Byzantine army was encamped in Arabia. [The Arabs] fell upon them suddenly, struck them with the sword and put to flight emperor Heraclius' brother, T'eodos. Then they turned and encamped in Arabia.

All the remnants of the sons of Israel then assembled [g105] and united, becoming a large force. After this they dispatched a message to the Byzantine emperor, saying: "God gave that country as the inherited property [i kaluats zharhangut'ean] of Abraham and of his sons after him. We are the sons of Abraham. It is too much that you hold our country. Leave in peace, and we shall demand from you what you have seized, plus interest [tokosiwk' pahanjests'uk' i ken zkalealn]". The emperor rejected this. He did not provide a fitting response to the message but rather said: "The country is mine. Your inheritance is the desert [k'oy vichak zharhangut'ean anapatn]. So go in peace to your country". And [Heraclius] started organizing brigades, as many as 70,000 [troops] giving them as a general, a certain one of his faithful eunuchs. He ordered that they were to go to Arabia, stipulating that they were not to engage them [125] in war, but rather to keep on the alert until he could assemble his other troops and send them to help. Now [the Byzantines] reached the Jordan and crossed into Arabia. Leaving their campsite on the riverbank, [the Byzantines] went on foot to attack [the Arabs'] camp. [The Arabs], however, had placed part of their army in ambushes here and there, lodging the multitude in dwellings around the camp. Then they drove in herds of camels which they penned around the camp and the tents, tying them at the foot with rope. Such was the fortification of their camp. The beasts were fatigued from the journey, and so [the Byzantines] were able to cut through the camp fortification, and started to kill [the Arabs]. But suddenly the men in the ambushes sprung from their places and fell upon them. Awe of the Lord came over the Byzantine troops, and they turned in flight before them. But they were unable to flee because of the quicksand which buried them to the legs. There was great anxiety caused by the heat of the sun and the enemy's sword was upon them. All the generals fell and perished. More than 2,000 men were slain. A few survivors fled to the place of refuge.

[The Arabs] crossed the Jordan and encamped at Jericho. Then dread of them came over the inhabitants of the country, and all of them submitted [g106]. That night the Jerusalemites took [126] the Cross of the Lord and all the vessels of the churches of God, and fled with them by boat to the palace at Constantinople. [The Jerusalemites] requested an oath [from the Arabs] and then submitted.

The emperor of the Byzantines was no longer able to assemble his troops against them. [The Arabs] divided their army into three parts. One part went to Egypt, taking [territory] as far as Alexandria. The second part went north [to war] against the Byzantine empire. In the twinkling of an eye they had seized [territory stretching] from the Farthest Sea to the shores of the great Euphrates river, as well as Edessa and all the cities of Mesopotamia, on the other side of the [Euphrates] river. The third part [of the Arab army] was sent to the east, against the kingdom of Iran.

In that period the kingdom of Iran grew weaker, and their army was divided into three parts. Then the Ishmaelite troops who were gathered in the east, went and besieged Ctesiphon, since the king of Iran resided there. Troops from the land of Media [zawr ashxarhin Marats'], some 80,000 armed men under their general Rostom assembled and went against [the Arabs] in battle. Then [the Arabs] left the city and crossed to the other side of [127] the Tigris river. [The Iranians] also crossed the river, pursuing them. And they did not stop until they reached their borders, at the village called Hert'ichan. [The Iranians] continued to pursue them, [eventually] going and encamping in the plain. Present were Mushegh Mamikonean, son of Dawit', the general of Armenia with 3,000 armed men, and also prince Grigor, lord of Siwnik', with 1,000 men. [The Iranian and Arab armies] attacked each other, and the Iranian forces fled before them. But [the Arabs] pursued them, putting them to the sword. All the principal naxarars died, as did general Rostom. They killed Mushegh and two of his sister's sons, as well as Grigor, the lord of Siwnik', along with one son. Some [of the Iranian troops] escaped and fled back to their own land. The remnants of the Iranian forces assembled in Atrpatakan at one spot and made Xorhoxazat their general. Then they hurried to Ctesiphon and took the treasury of the [g107] kingdom, the inhabitants of the cities, and their king, and then hurried to get back to Atrpatakan. But as soon as they had departed and gone some distance, the Ishmaelite army unexpectedly came upon them. Horrified, [the Iranians] abandoned the treasury and the inhabitants of the city, and fled. Their king also fled, winding up with the southern troops. Now [the Arabs] took the entire treasury and returned to Ctesiphon, taking the inhabitants of the cities along too. [128] And they pillaged the entire country.

The venerable Heraclius ended his life in good old age. He reigned for 30 years [610-40/41]. [Heraclius] made his son Constantine swear to have clemency upon all those transgressors whom he had ordered exiled. He made him vow to send each back to his place, and to bring back the aspet, his wife and son, and to establish him in his former rank [i karn arhajin; perhaps, "in the foremost rank"]. "Should he want to go to his land, as I have sworn--may my oath not be false--release him, and let him go in peace".

Heraclius died and his son Constantine ruled. But no one was chosen as general of the land of Armenia [och' ok' entrets'aw zawravar yashxarhin Hayots'], since the princes were disunited and quit each other's presence.

The corruptive army [of the Arabs] arose from Asorestan and came through the valley route to the land of Taron. They took [Taron], Bznunik' and Aghiovit and then, going to the Berkri valley via Ordspu and Gogovit, poured into Ayrarat. None of the Armenian troops was able to carry the bad news to the awan of Dwin. There were, however, three of the princes who went and gathered the dispersed troops: T'eodoros Vahewuni, [129] Xach'ean Arhaweghean, and Shapuh Amatuni. They fled to Dwin, reached the Metsamor bridge, crossed it, destroyed it, and then they went to take the

bad news to the awan. All the people of the land had assembled in the fortress, and they had come in harvest time for the vineyards.

T'eodoros went to the city of Naxchawan. The enemy Busha reached Metsamawr bridge but was unable to cross over. [g108] However, [the Arabs] had as a guide Vardik, prince of Mokka', who was called Aknik ["Little Eyes"]. Crossing the Metsamawr bridge, they raided the entire country. They accumulated a very great amount of loot and captives, then came and encamped by the edge of the Xosrakert forest.

On the fifth day [of the Arabs' sojourn], on a Friday, the 30th of the month of Tre [=the fourth month in the Armenian calendar, November], they came against the city [of Dwin] and it was betrayed into their hands. For they set fires here and there, and drove away the guards on the wall by smoke and by shooting arrows. They then erected ladders, scaled the wall and, once inside, opened the city gates. The army of the enemy poured inside and put most of the city to the sword. Then, taking the loot and booty of the city, they departed and encamped at their same campsite. After passing some days there, they arose and departed by the same route they had come. They had a multitude of captives with them, some [130] 35,000 souls. Now the prince of Armenia, the lord of Rshtunik', who had been concealed in an ambush in the district of Gogovit, went against [the Arabs] with few troops. But he was unable to resist, and so fled before them. [The Arabs] pursued [Rshtunik's troops] killing many of them. Then they went to Asorestan. This occurred in the days of kat'oghikos Ezer.

As a result of that battle, an order came from the emperor [granting] the military command [zawravart'ean] and the dignity of patrician to T'eodoros, lord of Rshtunik'.

All this took place as a result of kat'oghikos Nerses who succeeded Ezer on the kat'oghikos throne.

When the sons of Ishmael had arisen and issued from the desert of Sinai, their king Amr did not accompany them. But when [the Arabs] had militarily routed both kingdoms, seizing from Egypt to the great Taurus mountain, from the Western Sea [the Atlantic Ocean] to Media and Xuzhastan, they then emerged with the royal army [and went] to the [g109] natural borders of the holdings of Ishmael. Then the [Arab] [131] king gave an order to assemble boats and many sailors and to navigate southwardly, going east to Pars, to Sagastan, to Sind, to Srman, to the land of Turan and to Makuran as far as the borders of India. The troops swiftly prepared and implemented the command. They burned every country, taking loot and booty. They then turned and made expeditions on the waves of the sea, and reached their own places.

We heard this [account] from men [who had returned] from captivity in Xuzhastan Tachkastan, who themselves had been eye-witnesses to the events described and narrated them to us.

[The following is from chapter 31 of Bedrosian's translation:]

Now I shall speak about the plot of the Jewish rebels, who, finding support from the Hagarenes for a short time, planned to [re]build the temple of Solomon. Locating the place called the holy of holies, they constructed [the temple with a pedestal, to serve as their place of prayer. But the Ishmaelites envied [the Jews], expelled them from the place, and named the same building their own place of prayer. [The Jews] built a temple for their worship, elsewhere. It [132] was then that they came up with an evil plan: they wanted to fill Jerusalem with blood from end to end, and to exterminate all the Christians of Jerusalem. Now it happened that there was a certain grandee Ishmaelite who went to worship in their private place of prayer [i teghi aghawt'its' iwreants' miayn]. He encountered three of the principal Jewish men, who had just slaughtered two pigs and taken and put them [in the Muslim] place of prayer. Blood [g110] was running down the walls and on the floor of the building.

As soon as the man saw them, he stopped and said something or other to them. They replied and departed. The man at once went inside to pray. He saw the wicked [sight], and quickly turned to catch the men. When he was unable to find them, he was silent and went to his place. Then many [Muslims] entered the place and saw the evil, and they spread a lament throughout the city. The Jews told the prince that the Christians had desecrated their place of prayer. The prince issued an order and all the Christians were gathered together. Just as they wanted to put them to the sword, the man came and addressed them: "Why shed so much blood in vain? Order all the Jews to assemble and I shall point out the guilty ones". As soon as they were all assembled and [the man] walked among them, he recognized the three men whom he had previously [133] encountered. Seizing them, [the Arabs] tried them with great severity [datets'in agahin datestanawk'] until they disclosed the plot. And because their prince was among the Jews present, he ordered [Ew zi ishkan nots'a er i hreits' anti, hramaveats'... The subject probably is the Arab, not Jewish, prince] that six of the principals involved in the plot be killed. He permitted the other [Jews] to return to their places.

Further chapters speak of more conquests of the Ishmaelites (Arabs) and the first Arab civil war (in chapter 38).

A Chronicler of Khuzistan (wr. ca. 660s)

[From the book (p. 185):] "In either case, one would not wish to date the text's completion later than the 660s. The title declares the finishing point to be 'the end of the Persian kingdom,' and certainly there is no clear reference to any event after 652. If, as seems likely, the narrative on the siege of Shush and Shustar derives from eyewitness testimony, then one would not wish to place its composition, given its vividness, much more than two decades after the event. It is not stated that Elias of Merv was already dead, but it is perhaps implied, and this probably occurred not long after 659, when he witnessed Isho'yahb's demise."

Then God raised up against them the sons of Ishmael, [numerous] as the sand on the sea shore, whose leader (*mdabbrana*) was Muhammad (*mhmd*). Neither walls nor gates, armour nor shield, withstood them, and they gained control over the entire land of the Persians. Yazdgird sent against them countless troops, but the Arabs routed them all and even killed Rustam. Yazdgird shut himself up in the walls of Mahoze and finally escaped by flight. He reached the country of the Huzaye and *Mrwnaye*, where he ended his life. The Arabs gained control of Mahoze and all the territory. They also came to Byzantine territory, plundering and ravaging the entire region of Syria. Heraclius, the Byzantine king, sent armies against them, but the Arabs killed more than 100,000 of them. When the catholicos Isho'yahb saw that Mahoze had been devastated by the Arabs and that they had carried off its gates to 'Aqula (Kufa) and that those who remained were wasting away from hunger, he left and took up residence in Beth Garmai, in the town of Karka. (*Chron. Khuzistan*, 30-31 [p. 186])

Regarding the dome of Abraham, we have been unable to discover what it is except that, because the blessed Abraham grew rich in property and wanted to get away from the envy of the Canaanites, he chose to live in the distant and spacious parts of the desert. Since he lived in tents, he built that place for the worship of God and for the offering of sacrifices. It took its present name from what it had been, since the memory of the place was preserved with the generations of their race. Indeed, it was no new thing for the Arabs to worship there, but goes back to antiquity, to their early days, in that they show honour to the father of the head of their people. Hasor, which scripture calls "head of the kingdoms" (Joshua xi. 10), belongs to the Arabs, while Medina is named after Midian, Abraham's fourth son by Qetura; it is also called Yathrib. And Dumat Jandal [belongs to them], and the territory of the Hagaraye, which is rich in water, palm trees and fortified buildings. The territory of Hatta, situated by the sea in the vicinity of the islands of Qatar, is rich in the same way; it is also thickly vegetated with various kinds of plants. The region of Mazon also resembles it; it too lies by

the sea and comprises an area of more than 100 parasangs. So [belongs to them] too the territory of Yamama, in the middle of the desert, and the territory of Tawf, and the city of Hira, which was the seat of king Mundar, surnamed the "warrior;" he was sixth in the line of the Ishmaelite kings. (*Chron. Khuzistan*, 38-39 [pp. 187-188])

The Synod of 676

[From the book concerning the minutes of a council held in May "of the year 57 of the rule of the Arabs" (pp. 193-194):] "Nineteen canons of diverse content were established, a few of which hint at problems of interaction with the new rulers. Canon 6 urges that 'legal cases and disputes between Christians be judged within the church' and that 'those to be judged should not go outside the church before the pagans and non-believers.' Though the wording is vague, the Muslims must chiefly be meant, and we find the same concern in rulings by contemporary Jacobite and Jewish leaders. Canon 14, 'that it is not appropriate for Christian women to consort with the pagans, who are strangers to the fear of God,' is similarly unspecific; in a general way it probably intends all non-Christians, but again it is likely that Muslims were uppermost in the minds of those at the synod, and indeed, we find this issue commanding the attention of a number of contemporary Christian authorities. It is, however, true that there were still pagan vestiges in East Arabia, as is indicated by Canon 18, which forbids Christians to bury their dead 'in the manner of the pagans,' 'for it is a pagan custom to wrap the deceased in rich and precious clothes and, in weakness and despair, to make great lamentations for them.' Canon 19 stresses that bishops should be held in honour and respect by their flock, and that 'believers who hold power are not authorised to exact poll-tax and tribute (*ksep risha wmadatta*) from him as from a layman.' This ruling gives our earliest literary reference to a poll-tax imposed by the Muslims, and illustrates that the latter made use of local inhabitants to collect taxes."

Arculf, a Pilgrim (fl. 670s)

In that famous place where once stood the magnificently constructed Temple, near the eastern wall, the Saracens now frequent a rectangular house of prayer which they have built in a crude manner, constructing it from raised planks and large beams over some remains of ruins. This house can, as it is said, accomodate at least 3000 people. (Adomnan, *De locis sanctis* 1.1.14.186 [p. 221])

George of Resh'aina (d. ca. 680)

After Maximus went up to Rome, the Arabs seized control of the islands of the sea and entered Cyprus and Arwad, ravaging them and taking captives. They gained control over Africa and subdued almost all the islands of the sea; for, following the wicked Maximus, the wrath of God punished every place which had accepted his error. (George of Resh'aina, *Syriac Life of Maximus* XXIII, 312-13 [p. 141])

When Maximus saw that Rome had accepted the foul mire of his blasphemies, he also went down to Constantinople at the time when Mu'awiya made peace with the emperor Constans, having started a war with Abu Turab, the emir of Hira, at Siffin and defeated him. (George of Resh'aina, *Syriac Life of Maximus* XXV, 313 [p. 141])

Athanasius of Balad, Patriarch of Antioch (683-687)

For a terrible report about dissipated Christians has come to the hearing of our humble self. Greedy men, who are slaves of the belly, are heedlessly and senselessly taking part with the pagans in feasts together, wretched women mingle anyhow with the pagans unlawfully and indecently, and all at

times eat without distinction from their sacrifices. They are going astray in their neglect of the prescriptions and exhortations of the apostles who often would cry out about this to those who believe in Christ, that they should distance themselves from fornication, from what is strangled and from blood, and from the food of pagan sacrifices, lest they be by this associates of the demons and of their unclean table. (Athanasius of Balad, *Letter*, 128-129 [p. 148])

John bar Penkaye (wr. 687)

[From the book (pp. 195-197):]

The work's theological stance led its first Western reviewer to characterise it as "without importance as a historical source." Thi judgement is certainly too harsh, particularly as regards its comments upon Muslim times. In the first place, John is noticeably unhostile towards Arab rule. Despite a sprinkling of stock abusive phrases such as "a barbarian people" and "hatred and wrath is their food," John notes the leniency of the Arabs towards the Christian population. The Christian religion and its members were respected: "Before calling them, (God) had prepared them beforehand to hold Christians in honour; thus they also had a special commandment from God concerning our monastic station, that they should hold it in honour." No attempts were made by the Arabs at forced conversion: "Their robber bands went annually to distant parts and to the islands, bringing back captives from all the peoples under the heavens. Of each person they required only tribute (*madatta*), allowing him to remain in whatever faith he wished." And of Mu'awiya's rule John says: "Justice flourished in his time and there was great peace in the regions under his control; he allowed everyone to live as they wanted;" and later adds thta crops were bountiful and trade doubled. In fact, his only criticism was the lack of persecution: "There was no distinction between pagan and Christian," he laments, "the faithful was not known from a Jew."

Secondly, though the coming of the Arabs is conceived of in Biblical terms and as part of God's dispensation, John does use a number of non-scriptural notions. For example, he presents Muhammad as a guide (*mhaddyana*) and instructor (*tar'a*), as a result of whose teaching the Arabs "held to the worship of the one God in accordance with the customs of ancient law." John also makes him out to be a legislator, observing of the Arabs that "they kept to the tradition of Muhammad . . . to such an extent that they inflicted the death penalty on anyone who was seen to act brazenly against his laws (*namosawh*)." The term "tradition" (*mashlmanuta*) implies something handed down, but one doubts that a fixed corpus of rulings from Muhammad is meant. Most likely John is simply relaying the message given out by the Muslims themselves, that they adhere to and enforce the example of their Prophet.

Finally, he is acquainted with a number of news items of internal Muslim affairs, especially those relating to the second Arab civil war, which was taking place as he wrote.

Anti-Jewish Polemicists (ca. 640-697)

[This is found in both the *Dialogues against the Jews* of Anastasius and the anonymous *Dialogue of Papisus and Philo*, one borrowing from another.]

Do not say that we Christians are today afflicted and enslaved. This is the greatest thing, that though persecuted and fought by so many, our faith stands and does not cease, nor is our empire abolished, nor are our churches closed. But amid the peoples who dominate and persecute us, we have churches, we erect crosses, found churches and engage in sacrifices. (Anastasius of Sinai, *Dialogue against the Jews*, PG 89, 1221C-D = *Dialogue of Papisus and Philo* IX, 60-61 [p. 81])

No emperor of the Christians has ever been given up to death by the barbarians, even though so many nations have fought the empire. Not only the emperor [himself], but they also were unable to eliminate his picture with the cross from the gold currency (*nomisma*), even though some tyrants attempted it. Do not consider this a trivial and insignificant thing {that our embattled faith has not ceased and is still standing and not blotted out}, for if God had not chosen and loved ours above all the [other] faiths, He would not have kept it intact among the wolf-like nations. Besides, God would not permit a false faith to prevail over all the extremities of the earth. (Anastasius of Sinai, *Dialogue against the Jews*, PG 89, 1224A-B; also found in *Questions to Antiochus Dux* no. 42, PG 28, 624C-D, excepting the phrase in curly brackets [p. 84])

How was no one able to abolish or take from us the seal of gold? How many kings of the gentiles, Persians and Arabs attempted this and were in no way able? Thus God wished to show that, even if the Christians are persecuted, we reign over all. For the gold sign of our empire is a sign of Christ himself. Tell me, if it is not a sign that the faith and the empire of the Christians is eternal, invincible and indelible, how is it that all you who hate and blaspheme the cross of Christ have fallen away? How are you unable to remove the cross of gold, but even readily receive it? (*Dialogue against the Jews*, PG 89, 1224C-D = *Dialogue of Papiscus and Philo X*, 61-62 [p. 84])

The Secrets of Rabbi Simon ben Yohai (post-680?)

The following is written of one Simon, who hid in a cave from the emperor, after praying for a number of days and asking for enlightenment (Simon ben Yohai, *Secrets*, 78-79 [pp. 309-310]):

At once the secrets of the end and the mysteries were revealed to him, and he sat and began to expound: "And he saw the Kenite" (Numbers xxiv.21).

Since he saw the kingdom of Ishmael that was coming, he began to say: "Was it not enough what the wicked kingdom of Edom has done to us, but [we deserve] the kingdom of Ishmael too?" At once Metatron, the foremost angel (*sar ha-penim*), answered him and said: "Do not fear, son of man, for the Almighty only brings the kingdom of Ishmael in order to deliver you from this wicked one (Edom). He raises up over them (Ishmaelites) a prophet according to His will and He will conquer the land for them, and they will come and restore it to greatness, and a great dread will come between them and the sons of Esau." Rabbi Simon answered him and said: "How [is it known] that they are our salvation?" He (Metatron) said to him: "Did not the prophet Isaiah say that 'he saw a chariot with a pair of horsemen etc.'? Why did he put the chariot of asses before the chariot of camels when he should rather have said 'a chariot of camels and [then] a chariot of asses,' because when he (Ishmael, i.e. the Arabs) goes forth [to war], he rides upon on a camel, and when the kingdom will arise by his hands he rides upon an ass? [Given that he said the reverse of this], the chariot of asses, since he (the Messiah) rides upon an ass, shows that they (the Ishmaelites, represented by the chariot of camels) are a salvation for Israel, like the salvation of the rider on an ass (i.e. the Messiah)."

Another exegesis: Rabbi Simon used to say tht he heard Rabbi Ishmael [say], when he had heard that the kingdom of Ishmael was approaching: "They will measure the land with ropes, as it is said, 'And he shall divide the land for a price' (Daniel xi.39). And they will make cemeteries into a pasturing place for flocks; and when one of them dies, they will bury him in whatever pplace they find and later plough the grave and sow thereon. Thus it is said: 'The children of Israel shall eat their bread defiled (Ezekiel iv.13),' because the unclean field should not be encroached upon."

Again: "And when he saw the Kenite:" and what parable did the wicked one (Balaam) take up, except that when he saw the sons of his (the Kenite's) sons who were to arise and subject Israel, he began

to rejoice and said: "Strong (*etan*) is your dwelling place. I see that the sons of man do not eat save according to the commandments of Etan the Ezrahite."

[From the book (p. 311):] "The increased hostility of the Byzantine empire towards its Jewish communities during the late sixth and early seventh century, which culminated in Heraclius' decree ordering their compulsory baptism, make it unsurprising that a number of Jews should hail the Arab conquerors as deliverers. What our author is trying to do is to justify and find confirmation for such a conclusion from scripture, and to place the affair in the grander context of God's plan for Israel. The use made of Isaiah is fairly explicit. Rather abstruse in the text as we have it is the recourse to Numbers xxiv.21: 'And he (Balaam) saw the Kenite and took up his parable and said: "Strong is your dwelling place and you put your nest in a rock.'" The Kenites are sons of Jethro, Salamians, identified in Byzantine inscriptions and literature as an Arab tribe. Balaam is the Biblical 'prophet of the gentiles' sent to Moab and the Midianites, and so an appropriate figure to prophesy about the Arabs. His first words advance a favourable verdict upon the future of their dominion: 'Strong is your dwelling place.' And the second part seems bound up with the favourable description of 'Umar I in the *Secrets*:"

The second king who arises from Ishmael will be a lover of Israel. He restores their breaches and the breaches of the Temple. He hews Mount Moriah, makes it level and builds a mosque (*hishtahawayā*) there on the Temple rock, as it is said: "Your nest is set in the rock." (Simon ben Yohai, *Secrets*, 79 [p. 311])

Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Ephraem (post-692?)

A people shall rise up from the desert, the offspring of Hagar, handmaid of Sarah, who hold to the covenant (*qyama*) of Abraham, the husband of Sarah and Hagar. They are awakened to come in the name of the Ram (*dekra*), the messenger (*izgada*) of the Son of Perdition. And there will be a sign in the sky as says our Lord in his Gospel (Matthew xxiv.30). . . . The plunderers (*shabbaye*) will spread over the earth, in the valleys and on mountain tops, and they will enslave women, children and men, old and young. . . . (much emotive description of killing, looting and enslavement ensues). . . . They open roads in the mountains and paths in the valleys. They will plunder to the ends of creation and take possession of the cities. Lands will be ravaged and corpses abound upon the earth. All peoples will be laid low before the plunderers. And just when the peoples had endured long on the earth and were hoping that now would come peace, they (the plunderers) will exact tribute and all will indeed fear them. Injustice will increase upon the earth and obscure the clouds. Wickedness will grow thick in creation and rise up to Heaven as smoke. (Ps.-Ephraem, *Sermon on the End of Times*, 61-62 [pp. 260-261])

Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (690s)

[From the book (pp. 264-266):]

It was against this background that our second Syriac apocalypse, attributed to Methodius, bishop of Olympus (d. 312), was composed, most likely in North Mesopotamia by a Melkite or Monophysite author and around the year 690, very near the expiry of the 70 years of rule which it allots to the Arabs. It is a treatise, we are told in the preface, "about the succession of kings and the end of time . . . about the generations and the kingdoms, how they were handed down in succession from Adam until today." Sure enough, we are taken on a trek through six millennia of history on to the "last millennium, namely the seventh, in which the kingdom of the Persians will be uprooted, and in which the sons of Ishmael will come out of the desert of Yathrib." The latter have been summoned by God "to be a chastisement in which there will be no mercy," a punishment for the unparalleled

dissoluteness into which the Christian community had fallen. In performing their task, the Arabs commit the most heinous atrocities against the Christians: "captivity and slaughter," "exacting tribute even from the dead who lie in the ground;" "they will not pity the sick nor have compassion for the weak," "they will ridicule the wise, deride the legislators and mock the knowledgeable;" "wild animals and cattle will die, the trees of the forest will be cut, the most beautiful plants of the mountains will be ravaged, opulent cities will be laid waste;" "they will make the sacred garments into clothing for themselves and their sons, they will tether their cattle in the shrines of the martyrs and in the burial places of the saints." The magnitude of the horrors is explained by the fact that "these barbarian rulers are not men, but sons of destruction and they set their faces toward destruction." God's purpose in allowing all this to happen to his chosen ones is to sift the wheat from the chaff. "Not all those who are from Israel are Israel" says the author, citing Romans ix.6, and indeed, "a great many of those who are sons of the church will deny the true faith of the Christians, the Holy Cross and the life-giving Mysteries. Without compulsion, torments or blows, they will deny Christ and put themselves on a par with the unbelievers (*kapure*)," "they will separate from the assembly of the Christians of their own accord." It is the worst of the Christians who will be believed and hold high rank, whereas "the trustworthy, the clerics, the wise and the good will be held in contempt."

Then comes the tenth and last week. The Christians will suffer even greater hardship, persecution and oppression, whilst "those tyrants will be enjoying food and drink and rest, and they will be boasting of their victories. . . . They will dress up like bridegrooms and adorn themselves as brides, and blaspheme saying: 'The Christians have no saviour.'" But suddenly, "the king of the Greeks will come out against them in great anger," and the Arabs will be made to endure one hundredfold what they inflicted upon the Christians. "There will be joy on the whole earth; men will dwell in great peace; the churches will be renewed, the cities rebuilt, and the priests set free from tax." This "final peace" is disrupted by an onslaught from the northern peoples and the emergence of the Antichrist. As soon as the latter is revealed, the king of the Greeks will go up and stand on Golgotha, and the Holy Cross will be put in that place where it had been erected when it bore Christ. "And this Last Emperor will put his crown on top of the Holy Cross and stretch out his hands to heaven, and he will hand over the kingdom to God the Father."

Anastasius of Sinai (d. ca. 700)

[Compiled ca. 690, in the preface to a work mostly concerned with the Monophysites:] Before any discussion we must first anathematize all the false notions which our adversaries might entertain about us. Thus when we wish to debate with the Arabs, we first anathematize whoever says two gods, or whoever says that God has carnally begotten a son, or whoever worships as god any created thing at all, in heaven or on earth. (*Viae dux* 1.1.9 [p. 94])

When they (the Severans) hear of "nature," they think of shameful and unbecoming things, the sexual organs of the bodies of men and women. Because of that they avoid this word as if they were pupils of the Saracens. For when the latter hear of the birth of God and of His genesis, they at once blaspheme, imagining marriage, fertilization and carnal union. (*Viae dux* 10.2.169-170 [p. 94])

[From the book (p. 98):] In the course of one answer the author observes that the "present generation" faces a period of spiritual crisis resembling that endured by the Children of Israel during the Babylonian captivity, for "we see our brothers and servants of the faith pressed by great need into nakedness, toils and labours." (Anastasius of Sinai, *Questions*, no. 88) This sounds like an allusion to the contemporary plight of Christians now living under Arab rule, a situation which indeed appears to have provoked a fresh set of questions. How can one redeem one's sins if, having been reduced to servitude or captured in war, one can no longer attend church, fast or observe a

vigil freely and at will? (*ibid.*, no. 87) Are all the evils which the Arabs have perpetrated upon the land and the Christian community always a result of God's will? (*ibid.*, no. 101) What is one to say regarding Christian women who, as slaves and captives, have given themselves up to prostitution? The answer to the latter is that it depends whether they have done so out of hunger and need, or from wantonness and pleasure. (*ibid.*, no. 76) The Muslims are, however, only present as oppressors, and their beliefs receive no attention beyond a note that ideas such as that "Satan fell on account of not bowing down to the man (Adam)" belong to "the myths of the Hellenes and the Arabs." (*ibid.*, no. 80)

[From the book (p. 99), about a narrative composed ca. 660 about miracles of saints in Sinai:] Anastasius clearly does not regard the Muslims favourably; he calls them the nation that has sullied and profaned the holy summit. And in an account of a vision of fire that had appeared on the mountain some years earlier, he writes angrily of some Saracens, also present, who had expressed their disbelief and blasphemed the holy place, its icons and its crosses. He jeers at them, saying that no such miracles had occurred "in any other religion, or in any synagogue of the Jews or Arabs."

[From the book (pp. 99-100):] This tone is more prevalent in Anastasius' second collection, compiled ca. 690 and entitled: "Encouraging and supportive tales of the most humble monk Anastasius, which occurred in various places in our times." Its apologetic aim is declared openly by Anastasius, who tells us that he has selected only those tales "which concern the faith of Christians and which will bring great comfort to our captive brothers and to all who listen or read with faith." The theme of "our captive brothers" runs through this anthology, and many instances are given of the harsh trials facing Christian prisoners-of-war. Near the Dead Sea in the region of Zoara and Tetrachyria, Cypriot prisoners worked in appalling conditions on public estates. Christian workers performing forced labour at Clysma in Sinai were refused permission by their Jewish master to attend a mass in honour of the Virgin Mary, though they were granted a reprieve when this Jew was suddenly struck dead by a falling beam. Among the individual cases there is Euphemia, Christian maid to a Saracen woman at Damascus who would beat her every time she returned from receiving communion, but Euphemia persevered nonetheless and was finally redeemed by some man who apparently made a habit of such action. George the Black, who apostatised when a child but reconverted on reaching adulthood, was betrayed by one of his own fellow captives and perished by his master's sword.

Note well that the demons name the Saracens as their companions. And it is with reason. The latter are perhaps even worse than the demons. Indeed, the demons are frequently much afraid of the mysteries of Christ, I mean his holy body . . . , the cross, the saints, the relics, the holy oils and many other things. But these demons of flesh trample all that is under their feet, mock it, set fire to it, destroy it. . . . (*Narrat.*, C1 [pp. 100-101])

[From the book (p. 101):] And he backs this argument with examples. At Damascus a possessed man named Sartabias was told by his demon that he would be taking temporary leave of him while he accompanied the Arab army on its expedition to the straits of Abydos of Constantinople, for "our prince has sent guards in order that we help our comrades the Saracens on the trip to Constantinople." Back in 660 Anastasius had himself witnessed demons participating in the clearing work commissioned by the Muslims on the Temple Mount. And ca. 670 a secretary at Damascus, John of Bostra, was sent on a mission by the governor (*symbolos*) to interrogate possessed girls at Antioch. Via the latter's mouths the demons within them inform John that what they fear most from the Christians is their cross, baptism and the eucharist. When asked which among all the faiths of the world they prefer, they reply: "That of our companions. . . . those who do not have any of the three things of which we have spoken and those who do not confess the son of Mary to be God or son of God."

[In a homily of the 690s:] When Heraclius died, Martin was exiled by Heraclius' grandson and immediately the desert dweller Amalek rose up to strike us, Christ's people. That was the first terrible and fatal defeat of the Roman army. I am speaking of the bloodshed at Gabitha, Yarmuk and Dathemon, after which occurred the capture and burning of the cities of Palestine, even Caesarea and Jerusalem. Then there was the destruction of Egypt, followed by the enslavement and fatal devastations of the Mediterranean lands and islands and of all the Roman empire. But the rulers and masters of the Romans did not manage to perceive these things. Rather they summoned the most eminent men in the Roman church, and had their tongues and hands excised. And what then? The retribution upon us from God for these things was the almost complete loss of the Roman army and navy at Phoenix, and the progressive desolation of all the Christian people and places. This did not stop until the persecutor of Martin perished by the sword in Sicily. But the son of this man, the pious Constantine, united the holy church by means of an ecumenical council. . . . This blessed Council . . . has for twenty years halted the decimation of our people, turned the sword of our enemies against one another, given respite to the lands, calmed the seas, checked the enslavement, and brought relaxation, consolation and peace in great measure. (*Sermo*, PG 89, 1156C [pp. 102-103])

Hnanisho' the Exegete (d. 700)

[From a commentary on the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem in Matthew xxi.9:] Why, when Israel has not celebrated people nor priests nor kings nor illustrious prophets so exclusively as it has Jesus, do the quarrelsome Jews, who hate God, stubbornly oppose that Jesus should be known as God? For if he were a deceiver, as they have shamelessly maintained, who of this ilk would be honoured by the people as God? And if he were a deceiver, why would he then become known as one who came in the name of the Lord and be immediately praised and proclaimed as King of Israel? And if he were [only] a prophet, as idly says some new folly (*ayk da-mpaqqa leluta hdatta*), [like those who said]: "*this is Jesus the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee*" (Matthew xxi.11), when and to which of the prophets did the people cry out Hosannah, both as adults (Matthew xxi.9), and as children whose reason is not yet mature (Matthew xxi.15)?

Ad Annum 705 (October 705)

A report giving information about the kingdom of the Arabs, and how many kings there were from them, and how much territory each of them held after his predecessor before he died.

Mhmt came upon the earth in 932 of Alexander, son of Philip the Macedonian (620-21); then he reigned 7 years.

Then there reigned after him Abu Bakr for 2 years.

And there reigned after him 'Umur for 12 years.

And there reigned after him 'Uthman for 12 years, and they were without a leader during the war of Siffin (*Sefe*) for 5½ years.

Thereafter Ma'wiya reigned for 20 years.

And after him Izid the son of Ma'wiya reigned for 3½ years.

{In margin: and after Izid for one year they were without a leader}

And after him 'Abdulmalik reigned for 21 years.

And after him his son Walid took power in AG 1017, at the beginning of first Tishrin (October 705).

[From the book (pp. 394-395):] "This list of Arab rulers is found in a late ninth-century manuscript of very varied contents, sandwiched between 'select sentences from the proverbs of Solomon' and 'extracts from the discourse of Isaac of Antioch on prayer.' Its provenance is thus unknown and it is presumably incomplete since the promised statistics regarding Muslim-occupied lands do not appear. Rather than the ten years apiece granted them by Muslim sources, Muhammad is given a seven-year reign and 'Umar, possibly to make up the shortfall, is accorded twelve years. An accession date is provided for Wahd alone, which suggests that the list did end with him and that this event was recent. Hence October 705 or shortly after is the most probable time of composition."

Jacob of Edessa (d. 708)

[From the book (pp. 161-162):] "The subject matter [of his *Canons*] is diverse, but a large proportion is taken up with the issue of purity, both in liturgical and social practice. In the social sphere this meant caution in one's dealings with heretics and unbelievers. Thus one should not make altar coverings, priests' garments or drapes from cloth on which is embroidered the Muslim profession of faith (*tawdita hagarayta*); and one should lock the church doors during a service lest 'Muslims enter and mingle with the believers, and disturb them and laugh at the holy Mysteries.' Jacob does, however, recognise that one must sometimes bow to constraint, and nowhere does he recommend martyrdom. Usually one should not eat with a non-orthodox, but if a Chalcedonian or Muslim governor ordres it, then 'need allows it.' If in dire need a deacon may serve soldiers on campaign, and if compelled by the Arabs, a monk or a priest may participate in battle, though he faces suspension if he kills someone. And Jacob is willing to be lenient in matters that 'do no harm.' Priests may give the blessing of the saints to Muslims or pagans (*mhaggraye aw hanpe*), and may teach the children of Muslims, Harranians and Jews. They may pardon and give the eucharist to (presumably repentant) apostates in danger of dying, and bury them after their death, if no bishop is in the vicinity."

We should not rebaptise a Christian who becomes a Muslim or pagan (*kristiyana da-mhaggar aw mahnep*) then returns, but the prayer of penitents is to be said over him by the bishop and a period of penance enjoined upon him. (Jacob of Edessa, *Replies to John*, A13 [pp. 162-163])

A woman who is married to a Muslim and who says that she will convert to Islam (*thaggar*) unless she is given the host, should be granted it, but with a penalty that is appropriate for her to receive. (Jacob of Edessa, *Replies to Addai*, no. 75 [p. 163])

[From the book (p. 163):] "These two rulings demonstrate how early apostasy to Islam became a serious issue, a fact vividly illustrated by a contemporary apocalypse which laments that 'many people who were members of the church will deny the true faith of the Christians, along with the holy cross and the awesome Mysteries, without being subjected to any compulsion, lashings or blows.' But though he probably wished to declare to renegades that they would be taken back, Jacob was not advocating a policy of 'anything goes.' Around the first case he drapes a veiled threat, intimating that such apostasy may deprive one of the grace of baptism; and in the latter instance he insists that 'even if there is not fear of her apostatising' some 'rebuke' was necessary 'so that other women fear lest they too stumble.'"

[From the book, regarding a chronicle by Jacob (p. 165):] "All we have regarding Islam are the notices that 'Muhammad (*Mhmt*) went down for trade to the lands of Palestine, Arabia and Syrian Phoenicia,' that 'the kingdom of the Arabians (*arbaye*), those whom we call Arabs (*tayyaye*), began

when Heraclius, king of the Romans, was in his eleventh year and Khusrau, king of the Persians, was in his thirty-first year' (620-21), and that 'the Arabs began to carry out raids in the land of Palestine.'"

Your question is vain . . . for it is not to the south that the Jews pray, nor either do the Muslims (*mhaggraye*). The Jews who live in Egypt, and also the Muslims there, as I saw with my own eyes and will now set out for you, prayed to the east, and still do, both peoples—the Jews towards Jerusalem and the Muslims towards the Ka'ba. And those Jews who are to the south of Jerusalem pray to the north; and those in the land of Babel, in Hira and in Basra, pray to the west. And also the Muslims who are there pray to the west, towards the Ka'ba; and those who are to the south of the Ka'ba pray to the north, towards that place. So from all this that has been said, it is clear that it is not to the south that the Jews and Muslims here in the regions of Syria pray, but towards Jerusalem or the Ka'ba, the patriarchal places of their races. (Jacob of Edessa, *Letter to John the Stylite* no. 14, fol. 124a; summarized by Wright, *Catalogue*, 2.604, and translated by Crone and Cook, *Hagarism*, 173 n. 30 [pp. 565-566])

That, therefore, the Messiah is in the flesh of the line of David . . . is professed and considered fundamental by all of them: Jews, Muslims and Christians. . . . To the Jews . . . it is fundamental, although they deny the true Messiah who has indeed come. . . . The Muslims, too, although they do not know nor wish to say that this true Messiah, who came and is acknowledged by the Christians, is God and the son of God, they nevertheless confess firmly that he is the true Messiah who was to come and who was foretold by the prophets; on this they have no dispute with us. . . . They say to all at all times that Jesus son of Mary is in truth the Messiah and they call him the Word of God, as do the holy scriptures. They also add, in their ignorance, that he is the Spirit of God, for they are not able to distinguish between word and spirit, just as they do not assent to call the Messiah God or son of God. (Jacob of Adessa, *Letter to John the Stylite* no. 6 [p. 166])

Coptic Apocalypse of Pseudo-Athanasius (ca. 715)

After these things the good God will become angry, because they had altered His true faith. He will divide the unity of the kingdom of the Romans and of their empire in return for their having divided His great Might into two natures. . . . He will give the power to the kings of Persia for a little while and they will afflict the earth in their days. . . . After this, God will remove the kingdom of the Persians and will stir up upon the earth a mighty people, numerous as the locusts. This is the fourth beast which the prophet Daniel saw. . . . That nation will rule over many countries and they will pay a tax to it. It is a brutal nation with no mercy in its heart. . . . (numerous iniquities detailed). . . . Many Christians, Barbarians, Greeks, Syrians and from all tribes will go and join them in their faith, wanting to become free from the sufferings that they will bring upon the earth. They will dwell in many countries and become the masters of them, and they will inherit them. Their leader shall live in the city called Damascus. . . . They will gather all the gold, silver, precious stones, bronze, iron, lead and the beautiful garments. The name of that nation is Saracen, one which is from the Ishmaelites, the son of Hagar, maidservant of Abraham. (Ps.-Athanasius, *Apocalypse*, 9.1-8 [pp. 282-283])

First, that nation will destroy the gold on which there is the image of the cross of the Lord our God in order to make all the countries under its rule mint their own gold with the name of the beast written on it, the number of whose name is 666. Afterwards they will count the men and write their names in their documents, and set upon them high taxes. . . . Afterwards they will measure the whole earth with the fields and the gardens, and they will count the cattle. . . . At their end . . . they will take the strangers in the cities and the villages, and wherever they find them, they will call for their return and they will throw them into prison, for many at that time will leave their cities and their villages and go abroad because of the violence of the oppression of that nation. (Ps.-Athanasius, *Apocalypse*, 9.9-10 [pp. 283-284])

Greek Daniel, First Vision (716-717)

[The document begins with an account of "three sons of Hagar" who attack Constantinople:] All these will slaughter a host of Romans {from two and three years old and younger}. They will gather together toward the sea and the number of that people will be a myriad myriads. . . . {And in that place many will deny our Lord Jesus Christ and the holy gifts, and will follow the apostates. Every sacrifice will cease from the churches, the liturgy of God will be mocked and the priests will be as laymen.} And Ishmael will cry out in a loud voice, boasting and saying: "Where is the God of the Romans? There is no one helping them, for we have defeated them completely." (Ps.-Daniel, Greek, *First Vision*, 3.1-5, section in curly brackets only in the Oxford manuscript [pp. 297-298])

[From the book (pp. 298-299):] "Only one historical event is recorded by the author, namely the Arab siege of Constantinople begun in 716. The exact routes taken by the Arab generals are given, though unfortunately we cannot verify these. It is related how they 'will make a bridge in the sea with boats' and how the Byzantine nobles flee to the mountains and islands. Thereafter there is a shift to eschatological time with God despatching a champion to relieve the Christians. This liberator is inspired by the imaginary figure of the Last Emperor of ps.-Methodius, whence his being thought 'dead and useless' and his establishing peace on earth with the help of his sons. But it is also modelled on the historical figure of Leo III, who was crowned in the autumn of 716 and who was, as is described in the *First Vision*, from 'the inner country of the Persian and Syrian nations' and the bearer of a name beginning with 'K' (his baptismal name was Konon). The author was thus writing at the outset of Leo's reign, in the winter of 716-17, when the Arabs were outside the walls of Constantinople itself."

The Vision of Enoch the Just (717)

[From the book (pp. 301-302):] "The *Vision's* historical allusions are rather vague, but its immediate inspiration would seem to be the siege of Constantinople and its aftermath. The 96 years allowed for Arab rule take us to 717-18, the year in which the Arabs were driven away from the capital in ignominy. If we discount the disputed reigns of 'Ali and Mu'awiya II, the ninth king of the Arabs is Sulayman (715-17), whose death marks the failure of their siege. Moreover, it is said how, 'when the Romans shall destroy the southern people, they shall smit them first upon the sea and the Lord shall cause a storm to rise and drown them,' which describes exactly the fate of the Muslim fleet on that occasion. Jubilation at their victory appears to have given some Byzantines hope that the final defeat of the Arabs was at hand. Like ps.-Methodius, the *Vision* of Enoch stoutly defends the Roman empire's status as the last empire, which will endure until the end of time, when it will hand over custodianship to God. 'It shall be diminished for the reprovng of its sins,' but 'the people of Ishmael . . . shall not be able to exterminate them.' And in the end 'there shall remain no more strength in the dragon as before.'"

Greek Interpolation of the Syriac Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (ca. 720)

Then the sons of Ishmael will go with countless chariots and horses. They will come out in the first month of the ninth indiction and will seize the cities of the East, overwhelming all of them. They will be divided into three bodies of troops: one division will march in the direction of Ephesus, another toward Pergamon and the third toward Malagina. Woe to you lands of Phrygia, Pamphilia and Bithynia! When it becomes cold, Ishmael will seize you. . . . The whole cavalry of Ishmael will arrive, and the first among them will set up his tent against you, Byzantion. He will start fighting and he will smash the gate of Xylokerkos and enter as far as Bous. . . . Then the Lord God will remove the cowardice of the Romans and cast it into the hearts of the Ishmaelites and the courage of the Ishmaelites into the hearts of the Romans. Turning round, the Romans will chase them away from

their property, striking them without mercy. Then what is written will be fulfilled: "How could one man chase a thousand and two pursue ten thousand" (Deuteronomy xxxii.30). Then also their sailors will be brought to an end and will be annihilated. Then suddenly the king of the Greeks will come out against them. . . . (Ps.-Methodius, Greek tr., *Apocalypse*, 13.7-11 [p. 296])

Patriarch Germanus (715-730)

It is worthy of our more special observation that not now only, but very often, reproaches of this kind have been urged against us by Jews and by the actual servants of idolatry, whose intention was to cast a blot on our immaculate and sacred faith. . . . The word of truth stops the mouth of these by the mention of their own peculiar abominations, branding with infamy the heathen with the wickedness and abominations of Gentile sacrifices and fables, making the Jews to blush, not only by reminding them of the frequent lapses of their fathers into idolatry, but, further, of their own opposition to the divine law which they made such a boast of holding. . . . With respect to the Saracens, since they also seem to be among those who urge these charges against us, it will be quite enough for their shame and confusion to allege against them their invocation which even to this day they make in the wilderness to a lifeless stone, namely that which is called *Chobar*, and the rest of their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers as, for instance, the ludicrous mysteries of their solemn festivals. (Germanus, *Ep. ad Thomam episcopum Claudiopoleos*, PG 98, 168A-D [pp. 105-106])

[From the book (p. 107):] The only other allusion to the Muslims made by Germanus occurs in his sermon commemorating the Constantinopoitans' deliverance in 718 from the Arab siege of their city. It is a celebration of the role of the Virgin, who "alone defeated the Saracens and prevented their aim, which was not just to capture the city, but also to overthrow the royal majesty of Christ." Throughout the oration the Christians are presented as the Israelites, "who with the eyes of faith see Christ as God and therefore confes that it is truly the Theotokos who bore him." The Muslims, on the other hand, are cast in the role of the impious Egyptians, "who say regarding Christ: 'I do not know the Lord,' and think concerning his mother: 'She is by nature a woman; she can in no way come to the aid of those who glory in her assistance.'" The sermon ends on a hopeful note, for like the Egyptians the Muslims are cast into the sea and the Christians live to fight another day.

Willibald (fl. 720s) and Other Pilgrims

[From the book (p. 225):] In 720 he had set out from England as a young man and travelled through France on to Rome, where he remained for three years 'under monastic rule.' 'Then Willibald . . . asked his friends and companions to help him by their prayers to . . . reach the . . . walls of the city of Jerusalem,' and on Easter day, 28 March 723, he departed with seven comrades for the Holy Land. But on reaching 'the land of the Saracens at a city beside the sea called Tartus' and walking as far as Hims, 'the pagan Saracens, who had discovered that some strange travellers had arrived, suddenly arrested them and took them prisoner. Not knowing what country they had come from, they took them to be spies.' They were brought before a rich old gentleman who said: 'Many times I have seen people coming here, fellow countrymen of theirs, from those parts of the world. They mean no harm. All they want to do is to fulfill their law.' Nevertheless, the governor 'ordered them to be kept prisoner till he discovered from the king what he should do about them.' But their confinement was not a harsh one. A merchant, though unable to ransom them, made sure that they had food, that they bathed on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and took them to the church and market on Sundays. 'And the people of that city were interested in them and liked coming to look at them there.' A Spaniard, whose brother was royal chamberlain, and the captain, who had brought them from Cyprus, then accompanied the governor to 'the Saracen king whose name was *Mirmumnus*,' by which is presumably meant the title 'commander of the faithful' (*amir al-mu'minin*). Once informed

of their case, the caliph replied: 'Why should we punish them? They have committed no crime against us. Give them their permit and let them go!'"

John of Damascus (wr. 730s)

[John of Damascus, *De haeresibus* C/CI, 60-61 (pp. 485-486):]

There is also the people-deceiving cult (*threskeia*) of the Ishmaelites, the forerunner of the Antichrist, which prevails until now. It derives from Ishmael, who was born to Abraham from Hagar, wherefore they are called Hagarenes and Ishmaelites. And they call them Saracens, inasmuch as they were [sent away] empty-handed by Sarah (*ek tes Sarras kenous*); for it was said to the angel by Hagar: "Sarah has sent me away empty-handed" (cf. Genesis xxi. 10, 14).

These, then, were idolators and worshippers of the morning star and Aphrodite whom in fact they called *Chabar* in their own language, which means "great." So until the times of Heraclius they were plain idolators. From that time till now a false prophet appeared among them, surnamed Muhammad (*Mamed*), who, having happened upon the Old and the New Testament and apparently having conversed, in like manner, with an Arian monk, put together his own heresy. And after ingratiating himself with the people by a pretence of piety, he spread rumours of a scripture (*graphe*) brought down to him from heaven. So, having drafted some ludicrous doctrines in his book, he handed over to them this form of worship (*to sebas*).

[John of Damascus, *De haeresibus*, C/CI, 63-64 (pp. 486-487):]

They call us associators (*hetairiastas*) because, they say, we introduce to God an associate by saying Christ is the Son of God and God. To them we say that the prophets and the scripture have transmitted this, and you, as you affirm, accept the prophets. . . . Again we say to them: "How, when you say that Christ is the Word and Spirit of God, do you revile us as associators? For the Word and the Spirit are inseparable. . . . So we call you mutilators (*koptas*) of God."

They misrepresent us as idolators because we prostrate ourselves before the cross, which they loathe. And we say to them: "How then do you rub yourselves on a stone at your Ka'ba (*Chabatha*) and hail the stone with fond kisses?" . . . This, then, which they call "stone," is the head of Aphrodite, whom they used to worship and whom they call *Chabar*.

[John of Damascus, *De haeresibus*, C/CI, 64-67 (p. 487):]

This Muhammad, as it has been mentioned, composed many frivolous tales, to each of which he assigned a name, like the text (*graphe*) of the Woman, in which he clearly prescribes the taking of four wives and one thousand concubines, as if it is possible (story of Zayd is told; cf. Qur'an xxxiii.37). . . . Another is the text of the Camel of God, about which he says that there was a camel from God (story of Salih's camel; cf. Qur'an xci. 11-14, vii. 77). . . . You say that in paradise you will have three rivers flowing with water, wine and milk (cf. Qur'an ii. 25, xviii. 31, xxii. 23). . . . Again, Muhammad mentions the text of the Table. He says that Christ requested from God a table and it was given to him, for God, he says, told him: "I have given to you and those with you an incorruptible table." Again, he mentions the text of the Cow and several other foolish and ludicrous things which, because of their number, I think I should pass over.

[John of Damascus, *De haeresibus*, C/CI, 67 (p. 487):]

He prescribed that they be circumcised, women as well, and he commanded neither to observe the sabbath nor to be baptised, to eat those things forbidden in the Law and to abstain from the others. Drinking of wine he forbade absolutely.

[John of Damascus, *De haerisibus*, C/CI, 61 (pp. 488-489):]

He says Christ is the Word of God and His Spirit (cf. Qur'an iv. 171), created (iii. 59) and a servant (iv. 172, xix. 30, xliii. 59), and that he was born from Mary (iii. 45, and cf. *'Isa ibn Maryam*), the sister of Moses and Aaron (xix. 28), without seed (iii. 47, xix. 20, xxi. 91, lxvi. 12). For, he says, the Word of God and the Spirit entered Mary (xix. 17, xxi. 91, lxvi. 12), and she gave birth to Jesus, a prophet (ix. 30, xxxiii. 7) and a servant of God. And [he says] that the Jews, acting unlawfully, wanted to crucify him, but, on seizing [him], they crucified [only] his shadow; Christ himself was not crucified, he says, nor did he die (iv. 157). For God took him up to heaven to Himself . . . and God questioned him saying: "Jesus, did you say that 'I am son of God and God?'" And he says, Jesus answered, "Mercy me, Lord, you know that I did not say so (v. 116). . . ."

A Monk of Beth Hale and an Arab Notable (post-717)

This Arab man then, O my lord, was one of the chief men before the emir Maslama and by reason of a malady which he had, he came to us and remained with us for ten days. He spoke freely with us and debated much about our scriptures and their Qur'an (*quran*). When he saw our rites performed at the appropriate seven times, in accordance with what the blessed David said: "Seven times a day I praise you for your judgements, O righteous one," he called me to him. And because he had acted as steward in the government for a long time and because of his exaltedness and our lowliness, he would speak with us via an interpreter. He began by reproving us for our faith, saying: "You make prayers much, night and day you are not silent, and you outdo us in prayer and fasting and in your petitions to God. However, in my own opinion, your faith rules out that your prayers will be accepted." (Monk of Beth Hale, *Disputation*, fol. 1a [p. 466])

[From the book (pp. 470-472):]

At the beginning of the text the author informs his patron, Father Jacob, that he will put the disputation into the requisite question-and-answer form. So might we have here a literary redressing of a real debate? Can we, in other words, detect any material that might derive from interaction with a Muslim? A number of features are worth considering. When asked why the Christians do not "profess Abraham and his commandments," the monk has to request clarification: "What faith of Abraham do you desire for us, and what are his commandments that you wish us to perform? The Arab said: circumcision and sacrifice, because he received them from God." The two practices are attested for the Arabs in pre-Islamic times, and it has been proposed that they became the pillars of the nascent Islamic faith, which was a religion of Abraham. All one might note in addition here is that a Syriac chronicle has Muhammad's initiation of sacrifice mark the beginning of the new Muslim polity, and that the "faith of Abraham" (*tawdita d-Abraham*) which the monk queries echoes the equivalent Qur'anic expression *din Ibrahim*.

In the debate on the Godhead, whether God is three or if He has a son, the Arab is asked about "the one who is called by you 'Isa bar Maryam and by us Jesus Christ," and he replies: "In accordance with what is from our Muhammad (*Mhmd*), we also bear witness to what he said, [namely that he is] the Word of God and His Spirit." This is drawn from Qur'an iv. 171, and also the term 'Isa ibn Maryam is the standard formula used by the Qur'an to refer to Jesus.

The Arab asks: "What is the reason that you adore the cross when he did not give you such a commandment in his Gospel?" This the monk counters with the observation:

I think that for you, too, not all your laws and commandments are in the Qur'an which Muhammad taught you; rather there are some which he taught you from the Qur'an, and some are in *surat albaqrah* and in *gygy* and in *twrh*. So also we, some commandments our Lord taught us, some the Holy Spirit uttered through the mouths of its servants the Apostles, and some [were made known to us] by means of teachers who directed and showed us the Way of Life and the Path of Light.

The Chapter (*sura*) of the Cow (*al-baqara*), now the second in the Qur'an, is evidently considered by the monk to be a separate source of law. In the legend of Bahira it appears as the name of the whole Book, and in the Muslim tradition too there are indications that it had a certain distinctiveness. For example, at the battle of Hunayn, 'Abbas calls his men to arms with the cry: "O followers of the Chapter of the Cow." The identity of the next two alleged sources of Muslim law adduced by the monk is less clear. One might assume them to be also chapters of the Qur'an, but it is not obvious which would be intended. Almost certainly the Gospel and the Torah are meant, and the Syriac is attempting to convey the Arabic names for these scriptures: *Injil* and *Tawrah*; the corruption of the letter forms is fairly minor and is easily explained as the result of a thousand years of transmission.

The text is somewhat difficult to date. If the "emir Maslama" whom the Arab serves is to be identified with Maslama ibn 'Abd al-Malik (d. 738), then this would yield a *terminus post quem* of 710, when he was appointed governor of Mesopotamia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and probably after 717, when he gained notoriety among Christians for his role as commander of the siege of Constantinople. In his account of Muhammad's initiation of the Arabs into monotheism the monk says that "he first brought you to know the one true God, a doctrine which he had received from Sargis Bahira." The association of Sergius and Bahira is not otherwise attested before Thomas Artsruni and Mas'udi, both writing in the early tenth century; 'Abd al-Masih al-Kindi (wr. 820s?) speaks rather of "Sergius surnamed Nestorius and John known as Bahira." It is of course possible that Kindi is confused, but in any case the casual reference here suggests that the story was already well enough known not to require any introduction, and one would not wish to put this before late Umayyad times.

A Maronite Chronicler (8th century)

[The following notices appear in a chronicle for the years AG 969-975, i.e., 658-664 CE.]

AG 969: Mu'awiya has his sister's son Hudhayfa killed. Ali was slain "while praying at Hira." Mu'awiya went down to Hira and received allegiance from all the Arab forces there.

AG 970: There was an earthquake in Palestine. A dispute was held between the Jacobites and the Maronites "in the presence of Mu'awiya." When the Jacobites were defeated, Mu'awiya ordered them to pay 20,000 denarii. "So it became a custom for the Jacobite bishops that every year they give that sum of gold to Mu'awiya so that he not loose his hand upon them." There was another earthquake. The emperor Constans had his brother Theodore put to death, then went to fight the northern peoples in order to avoid the protests his action had provoked.

AG 971: "Many Arabs gathered at Jerusalem and made Mu'awiya king and he went up and sat down at Golgotha and prayed there. He went to Gethsemane and went down to the tomb of the blessed Mary and prayed in it. In those days when the Arabs were gathered there with Mu'awiya, there was an earthquake," much of Jericho fell, as well as many nearby churches and monasteries.

"In July of the same year the emirs and many Arabs gathered and gave their allegiance to Mu'awiya. Then an order went out that he should be proclaimed king in all the villages and cities of his dominion and that they should make acclamations and invocations to him. He also minted gold and silver, but it was not accepted because it had no cross on it. Furthermore, Mu'awiya did not wear a crown like other kings in the world. He placed his throne in Damascus and refused to go to the seat of Muhammad."

AG 972: A severe frost. Once Mu'awiya had consolidated power, "he reneged on the peace with the Romans and did not accept peace from them any longer, but said: 'If the Romans want peace let them surrender their weapons and pay the tax (*gzita*).'"

(Folio Missing)

AG 974: Raid of Yazid ibn Mu'awiya upon Constantinople.

AG 975: Raid of Abd al-Rahman ibn Khalid, commander of the Arabs of Hims, into Byzantine territory.

The text stops here, but it is probable that it extended further in the original document. The author belonged to the Maronites. The anonymous author has been variously identified as Qays al-Maruni (tenth century) and Theophilus of Edessa (d. 785). Mitigating against an early (7th century) date is the reference to minting of coins by Muslims, which is not reliably attested before Abd al-Malik in the 690s.

Isho'bokht, Metropolitan of Fars (ca. 730-780)

[From the preface of his "Composition on the Laws," explaining that his reason for writing is different from that of earlier authors concerning natural science:] Rather I came to this composition for the following reasons: I have observed that there are many differences among people in the matter of laws, not only from religion to religion, from language to language and from nation to nation, but also in one and the same religion, nation and language, as in the religion of Christianity. While the Jews in every place have one law, as also the error of the Magians and likewise also those who now rule over us, among the Christians the laws which are determined in the land of the Romans are distinct from those in the land of the Persians, and they in turn are distinct from those in the land of the Arameans, and different from Ahwaz, and different in Mayshan, and likewise also in other places. Thus also from district to district and city to city there are many differences in the matter of laws. And though the religion of the Christians is one, the law is not one and the same and we shall speak of the reason for that later. Moreover, we have learnt that in the same place the laws determined by earlier generations are other than the later generations, each man according to his knowledge and according to his wish. Because of this I desired to assemble, as far as possible, those things which I have learnt from the tradition of the earlier generations, whether from those fathers who were in our churches or from those who were in other churches, and also what I arrive at from straight thinking, and [then] to put it in this book for the education of myself and of those who, like me, felt in need of such instruction. (*Corpus iuris*, 1.1.8-10 [pp. 206-207])

Stephen of Alexandria (775-785)

[The story of Epiphanius, an Arab merchant, about the "new" and "strange" happenings in Arabia:] In the desert of Ethrib there had appeared a certain man from the so-called tribe of Quraysh (*Korasianou*), of the genealogy of Ishmael, whose name was Muhammad and who said he was a prophet. He appeared in the month of Pharmuti, which is called April by the Romans, of the 932nd

year (from the beginning of Philip [[571 CE?]]). He has brought a new expression and a strange teaching, promising to those who accept him victories in wars, domination over enemies and delights in paradise. (Stephen of Alexandria, *Horoscope*, 21 [p. 304])

Theophilus of Edessa (d. 785)

[From the book (pp. 401-405):]

Besides his scientific output Theophilus is also said to have . . . penned a 'fine work of history.' It has been suggested that the latter work is to be identified with the *Syriac Common Source* that was used by Theophanes, Dionysius of Tellmahre (partially preserved for us by Michael the Syrian and the chronicler of 1234) and Agapius of Manbij for much of their information on events in the Muslim realm. A careful comparison of the chronicles of these three authors confirms this hypothesis. . . .

Theophilus' dependents give very different accounts of Muhammad and the rise of Islam, so it is difficult to be sure of Theophilus' own opinions on the matter. Dionysius and Agapius do, however, follow the same basic outline, which is almost certainly that of Theophilus:

1. In the year 933/935 of the Greeks, 11/12 of Heraclius, 30/31/33 of Khusrau, Muhammad appeared in the land of Yathrib.
2. On journeys to Palestine, he had gained some religious knowledge.
3. He now called the Arabs to the worship of the one God.
4. Muhammad gradually won over all the Arabs.
5. Muhammad's followers waged campaigns beyond Arabia, while he remained in Yathrib.
6. Muhammad's teachings.

The last section concludes with a description of paradise, which was retained by all and which makes clear their dependency upon a common source:

Theophanes: He said that this paradise was one of carnal eating and drinking and intercourse with women, and had a river of wine, honey and milk, and that the women were not like the ones down here, but different ones, and that the intercourse was longlasting and the pleasure continuous.

Dionysius: They say that there is carnal eating and drinking in it, and copulation with glamorous courtesans, beds of gold to lie upon with mattresses of gold and topaz, and rivers of milk and honey.

Agapius: He mentioned that in paradise there is food and drink, marriage, rivers of wine, milk and honey, and black-eyed women untouched by man or spirit.

Except for this extract, Theophanes almost totally ignores Theophilus for his notice on Muhammad, drawing instead, indirectly, on Jewish and Muslim sources. Agapius abridges Theophilus, as he himself acknowledges, and supplements him with material from the Muslim tradition. That leaves Dionysius, who seems to me to preserve best Theophilus' entry, but confirmation of this will require further research.

T'ung tien (published 801)

[From the book (p. 244):] "In 801 Tu Yu presented his encyclopaedic administrative tract, the *T'ung tien*, to the throne. He had begun it as long ago as 768 while serving at Yang-chou on the staff of his patron Wei Yüan-fu, military governor of Huai-nan. Tu Yu was a political thinker on a grand scale, and this original draft dealt with the whole history of human institutions from earliest times down to

the end of the reign of emperor Hsüan-tsung (712-56). Over the years he continued to add material on new and important developments. Large sections of the work were not written by Tu Yu himself, but were taken over integrally from the *Cheng tien* of Liu Chih (d. ca. 760), a political treatise in historical form, and from the *K'ai-yüan li*, the official ritual code completed in 732."

This particular passage is ultimately based on the experiences of Tu Huan, who was taken to Iraq as a prisoner before returning to China in 762. The first two paragraphs are also found in the *T'ang History*. The text reads (pp. 245-249):

During the Yung-hui reign period (650-56) of the Great T'ang, the Arabs (*Ta-shih*) sent an embassy to the court to present tribute. It is said that their country is west of Persia (*Po-ssu*). Some [also] say that in the beginning there was a Persian who supposedly had the help of a spirit in obtaining edged weapons [with which] he killed people, subsequently calling for all the Persians who came and, according to their rank as *mo-shou*, were transformed into kings. After this the masses gradually gave their allegiance, and subsequently Persia was extinguished and Byzantium (*Fulin*) was crushed, as were also Indian cities; [the Arabs] were everywhere invincible. Their soldiers numbered 420,000 and by this time their state was 34 years old. When the original king had died, his office passed to the first *mo-shou*, and now the king was the third *mo-shou*; the royal surname is *Tu-shih*.

The men of this country have noses that are large and long, and they are slender and dark with abundant facial hair like the Indians; the women are graceful. [The Arabs] also have literature that is different from that of Persia. They raise camels, horses, donkeys, mules, and sheep. The soil is all sandy and stony, unfit for cultivation and without the five grains. All they have to eat is the flesh of camels and elephants. After having crushed Persia and Byzantium, for the first time they had rice and flour. They solemnly worship a celestial spirit. It is also said that their king once sent men to take a ship loaded with provisions and set sail across the sea. When they had sailed for eight years without reaching the western shore, they saw in the middle of the ocean a squarish rock on top of which was a tree with red branches and green leaves. Up in the tree, in clusters, grew little mannikins six or seven inches long. When these saw the men, they did not speak, but they all were able to smile and move their arms and legs. Their heads were attached to the branches of the tree. If a man picked one and put it in his hand, it would wither and turn black. [The king's] envoys took one branch and brought it back and today it is in the Arab royal residence.

Tu Huan's *Ching-hsing chi* says: Another name [for the capital] is Kufa (*Ya chü-lo*). The Arab king is called *mumen*, and his capital is located at this place. Both men and women are handsome and tall, their clothing is bright and clean, and their manners are elegant. When a woman goes out in public, she must cover her face irrespective of her lofty or lowly social position. They perform ritual prayers five times a day. They eat meat, fast and they regard the butchering of an animal as meritorious. They wear silver belts about the waist from which they suspend silver daggers. They prohibit the drinking of wine and forbid music. When people squabble among themselves, they do not come to blows. there is also a ceremonial hall which accommodates tens of thousands of people. Every seven days the king comes out to perform religious services; he mounts a high pulpit and preaches the law to the multitudes. He says: "Human life is very difficult, the path of righteousness is not easy, and adultery is wrong. To rob or steal, in the slightest way to deceive people with words, to make oneself secure by endangering others, to cheat the poor or oppress the lowly—there is no sin greater than one of these. All who are killed in battle against the enemies [of Islam] will achieve paradise. Kill the enemies and you will receive happiness beyond measure."

The entire land has been transformed; the people follow [the tenets of Islam] like a river its channel, the law is applied only with leniency and the dead are interred only with frugality. Whether inside the walls of a great city or only inside a village gate, the people lack nothing of what the earth

produces. [Their country] is the hub of the universe where myriad goods are abundant and inexpensive, where rich brocades, pearls and money fill the shops while camels, horses, donkeys and mules fill the streets and alleys. They cut sugar cane to build cottages resembling Chinese carriages. Whenever there is a holiday the nobility are presented with more vessels of glass and flasks and bowls of brass than can be counted. The white rice and white flour are not different from those of China. Their fruits include the peach and also thousand-year dates. Their ripe turnips, as big as a peck, are round and their taste is very delicious, while their other vegetables are like those of other countries. The grapes are as large as hen's eggs. The most highly esteemed of their fragrant oils are two: one called jasmine and the other called myrrh. The most esteemed of their fragrant herbs are [also] two. . . . Chinese artisans have made first looms for weaving silk fabrics and are the first gold and silversmiths and painters. . . . They also have camels and horse-drawn vehicles. Of their horses tradition says that those born of union between dragons and mares on the coast of the Persian Gulf have the belly small and the feet and ankles long; the good ones do 1000 *li* in a day. Their camels are small and fast, have a single hump, and the good ones can do 1000 *li* in a day. There are also ostriches four feet tall and more with feet resembling those of camels; a man can ride on its neck a distance of five or six *li* and its egg is as big as three pints. There is also the *chi* tree which has fruit like summer dates that can be used to make oil for food and to cure malaria.

The climate is warm and the land is without ice or snow. The people all suffer from malaria and dysentery; in the space of a year five out of ten die. Today [the Arabs] have absorbed forty or fifty countries, all of them reduced to subjugation, [the Arabs] parcelling out their troops so as to secure their territory all the way to the Western ocean. It is also said that Zarang is over 700 *li* southwest of Amul. Those Persians whose surname is Chu are from this country. Their city is fifteen *li* square and they have used it to make the gates of their city. In the city there are salt ponds and also two Buddhist establishments. Its territory measures 140 *li* east to west and 180 *li* north to south. Villages come one after another and there are trees so close together that they cast interlocking shadows circling them completely; there is quicksand everywhere. To the south there is a large river which flows into their territory and is divided into several hundred canals which irrigate the entire region. The land is fertile and its people clean. The walls [of the buildings] are tall and thick and the bazaar is level; the wood is carved and, further, the floors are painted. There are also fine cotton fabrics and lambskin coats, the value of the best of which is estimated at several hundred pieces of silver. The fruits they have include red peaches, white crabapples, white and yellow plums, and melons, the big ones being called *hsün-chih* of which but one is enough to make a meal for ten men, and *yüeh-kua* which are over four feet long. Vegetables include turnips, radishes, long onions, round onions, cabbage, Asian wild rice, creeping beans, indigo, *tan-ta*, sweet fennel, shallots, bottle gourds and grapes which are especially abundant. There are also oxen, wild horses, ducks and rock chickens.

It is their custom to take the fifth month as [the beginning of] the year. Every year they give each other gifts of painted jars. There is a bath festival and a swing festival. The Arab governor of the eastern marches resides here and from here all the way to the Persian Gulf Arabs and Persians dwell mixed together. As to their customs, they worship Heaven and do not eat the meat of animals dead of natural causes or meat kept overnight. They smear their hair with fragrant oil.

It is further said that Syria (*Shan kuo*) is on the western boarder of the Arabs and has a circumference of several thousand *li*. They build houses with tile roofs and pile up stones to make walls. Rice and grain are very cheap. There is a large river flowing eastward which enters Kufa. Merchants are constantly going and coming, buying and selling grain. The people are large in stature and their clothing is voluminous, somewhat resembling the gown of a Confucian scholar. Syria has five military governorships with over 10,000 soldiers and horses. On the north it borders the Khazar Turks. North of the Khazars are other Turks whose feet resemble those of oxen and who like to eat human flesh.

Life of Gabriel of Qartmin (d. 648, wr. 9th century)

This lord Gabriel went to the ruler (*ahid shultana*) of the sons of Hagar, who was Umar bar Khattab, in the city of Gezirta. He (Umar) received him with great joy, and after a few days the blessed man petitioned this ruler and received his signature to the statutes and laws, orders and prohibitions, judgements and precepts pertaining to the Christians, to churches and monasteries, and to priests and deacons that they do not give the poll tax, and to monks that they be freed from any tax (*madatta*). Also that the wooden gong should not be banned and that they might chant hymns before the bier when it comes out from the house to be buried, together with many [other] customs. This governor (*shallita*) was pleased at the coming to him of the blessed man and this holy one returned to the monastery with great joy. (Gabriel of Qartmin, *Life* XII, 72 [p. 123])

[From the book (pp. 123-124):] "That Gabriel, as metropolitan of Dara and abbot of Qartmin, met with an Arab general to establish terms is likely, and exemption from taxes was often sought for monks and priests as one of these terms. Ostentatious worship, however, of which the use of the wooden gong and chanting before a bier are a part, did not become a literary theme until the eighth century. This account is, then, a later fabrication and belongs to the genre of documents which sought to delineate the ideal Muslim-Christian treaty and endow it with authority by attributing it to famous Muslim figures."

Benjamin I, Patriarch of Alexandria (d. 665, wr. 9th century)

[This is stated by patriarch Dionysius of Tellmahre (818-845 CE):] Concerning the land of Egypt we have found in histories that Benjamin, the patriarch of the orthodox, gave Egypt to the Arabs. The Copts handed over Alexandria and Egypt to the Arabs because they were oppressed by the persecution of the Chalcedonians. Cyrus, the Chalcedonian patriarch, who tied the red slipper of kings to one foot and the sandal of monks to the other, like one who has royal and religious authority, drove out the patriarch Benjamin. He left and went to the Arabs and promised that he would hand over to them Alexandria, if they would expel Cyrus and restore the churches to him. When he had promised and they had confirmed it with oaths, he returned and informed his people and they surrendered Alexandria to the Arabs. (p. 133)

Hoyland suggests that this is a confused reflection of an action taken by Benjamin when Byzantium recaptured Alexandria in 646, given that Benjamin returned to Alexandria in 644, a full three years after the Muslims had conquered.

Bundahishn (redacted 9th century, original possibly late 7th century)

When the sovereignty came to Yazdgird, he reigned twenty yeras; then the Arabs entered Iran in great numbers. Yazdgird did not contend with them in battle. He went to Khurasan and Turkestan and asked for the assistance of horses and men. They killed him there. Yazdgird's son went to India and brought an army and troops. He was slain before coming to Khurasan. The army and troops were destroyed and Iran remained with the Arabs. They promulgated their own laws of irreligion, dissolved the bonds of the institutions of the men of old and weakened the Mazdaean religion. They brought into use the washing, burying and eating of polluted matter. From the beginning of creation till this day no evil more grievous than this has come, since by reason of their evil deeds distress and desolation and lamentation have made their abode [in Iran]. By reason of their wicked laws and wicked faith, [there is] pestilence and want and other evils. It is stated in the Religion that there shall come an end of their accursed rule. (*Bundahishn*, 33.20-23 [p. 325])

[From the book (pp. 325-326):] "Chapter XXXV lists the Zoroastrian priests. At the end one 'Farrbay whom they call Jadagih son of Ashawahisht' speaks of himself in the first person. He names as his contemporary a certain Zadspram, who is known as the author of a similar compendium. From an epistle of his elder brother Manushchihir, dated to AD 881, Zadspram may be inferred to have been active in the late ninth century. The earliest recension of the *Bundahishn*, complete with the additional chapters, is likely, then, to have been made about this time. Since the attempt at a comeback by Yazdgird in 651 and by his son Peroz in 678 are noted, but not that of his great-grandson Khusrau in 728, it is possible that this apocalyptic section derives from the late seventh century, but this cannot be proven."