

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE
PATRIARCH JOHN I
AND THE AMIR OF THE
HAGARENES

by F. Nau

BACKGROUND/DIALOGUE

The JACOBITE Patriarch
John I and
the Amir 'Amr b. al-'As
639 A.D.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN PATRIARCH JOHN AND THE AMIR OF THE HAGARENES... according to the manuscript ADD. 17193 of the British Museum with an appendix... about a document which was said to have been given to the bishop of Tûr 'Abdin by 'Umar.

INTRODUCTION

I. The dialogue: 1. Manuscript, speakers, date; 2-4. The circumstances: the Arab expansion; 'Amr, his dialogues with the Emperor Constantine in 638 and with the Coptic Patriarch Benjamin in 643; 5-6. Analysis of the dialogue of 9 May 639 (18 A.H.); the goal; 7-10. The results: Because of their grievances against the Greek Empire, the power of the Christian dissidents is used by the Muslims. These do not delay either,

to vex and persecute their allies and to show that they acted poorly.

II. Summary of the various events. [deleted]

1. A Syriac manuscript of the British Museum,¹ completed on Tuesday 17 August 874, contains a "letter of Mar John the (Jacobite) Patriarch concerning the dialogue which he had with the Amir of the Hagar-enes", on Sunday, 9 May. The names which are in this letter, a parallel passage in the *Chronicle* of Michael the Syrian,² the general history and the chronology, permit us to say that it concerns a dialogue of "the Jacobite Patriarch John I³ with the Amir 'Amr⁴ in a city of Syria⁵ on Sunday, 9 May 639⁶ (18 A.H.)." The Patriarch, summoned by the Amir, came to see him in the company of five bishops, prominent Christians and numerous believers. A few days after the dialogue he wrote a report⁷ which he sent to the Christians in Mesopotamia to inform them, to reassure them and to request (that) "they should pray for the illustrious Amir, that God give him the wisdom and enlightenment about that which pleases the Lord." This is the report, transcribed and forgotten in the manuscript since 874, which we intend to make known. First we would like to place the report in its setting, in that we will dedicate four pages to the Arab invasion, its causes, its results, as well as the personality of 'Amr, to better understand the feelings and motives of both the famous speakers.

2. Arabia, "land of drought and poverty,"⁸ knew prosperity for hundreds of years when the trade between India and Syria and the West went through its ports on the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea; but from the 6th to the 7th centuries the desolation of the Persians from Syria down into Egypt, combined with that of the Vandals and the Goths in the West, stopped these transactions, and the Arabs, in the refuge of their sand dunes, grew in their uncleanness and their poverty and only waited for a reason to cross the borders to occupy the place of wealthier and less-populated nations.

The pretext had taken the name pan-Islamism.⁹ In the beginning this name corresponded to a poorly defined feeling, which was originally

economic and political as well as religious. The starving Bedouins served themselves to obtain the fruitful areas of land¹⁰ and the lodgings,¹¹ but they at first respected the freedom of religion for the "People of the Book" and even the Christian Arabs — irrespective of whether they were the Nestorian Arabs of Oman from Qatar and Hira, or the Jacobite Arabs of Mesopotamia and Syria — it sufficed to construct a more or less loose political tie among them. As the tie quickly became tighter when the Christian Arabs were brought to change religions out of indifference, weariness or force, yet they showed that they followed Islam less than "the great Arab idea": those of the "hegemony of their race, who protected the latter with their triumphant banner."¹² Following the example of the Tamimits, who answered Muhammad himself: "Only the tribes of robbers have recognized you,"¹³ the recently converted Syrians did not want to step down to follow the Muslims of the first hour, the "flea-ridden" of the Hijaz, all these Bedouins, the eaters of lizards and desert mice, who on their arrival in Syria (each) wore only one shabby tunic, which did not even reach the knees.¹⁴ Overall their pan-Islamism was only a pan-Arabism, or "Arabia over everything."

3. The war machinery, which unified the wishes and desires of millions of people, would only confront a Greek Empire made weary by long wars, an empire which was so broken that it delivered its provinces and armies into the hands of foreign soldiers, which empire was so divided by intolerant imperialism, which in the name of the dogma of state persecuted millions of renegade Christians and Jews. Its pangs of death were brief; the Arabs, who had come through the desert of Syria, took Busra in 634, Damascus 635, Saroug, Seleucia-Ctesiphon and Jerusalem 637,¹⁵ Antioch and the cities of the coast 638. At this date, before the conclusion of the conquest of Mesopotamia in 639, where the Jacobites were powerful it was (only) natural for 'Amr that he would summon the Patriarch to try to make him into an ally. 'Amr was moreover a man of discussion: "Eloquent, experienced in the management of great matters, skillful at solving the hardest situations,"¹⁶ the conference at Adroh brought him yet the reputation of being "the most cunning and unscrupulous" diplomat "of his time."¹⁷ He had already been commissioned with two missions to Abyssinia to

demand the return of deserters.¹⁸ Aside from this we know of two other discussions which surround that of ours: the one with the Emperor Constantine in the year 638, the other with the Coptic Jacobite Patriarch Benjamin in the year 643. Before Constantine¹⁹ 'Amr employed the coarse form when the Emperor asked him what supposed right the Arabs had for possessing Syria: "The right which the Creator gives," answered 'Amr. "The earth belongs to God; He gives it as an inheritance to those of His servants, who please Him, and it is the success of the weapons which reveal His will." This theory, for which the desire for success is sufficient to justify the invasion of a coveted land, is very old, as is seen. It is interesting to notice it in the half brutal half mystical form, which it took in the mouth of a former camel driver in the year 17 A.H. colored by Islam.

4. Five years later, 'Amr shows himself to be unctuous in his discussion with the Egyptian Jacobite Patriarch Benjamin.²⁰ The Jacobites in his army, especially the duke Sanutius, told him of the persecutions of the Greeks against the Jacobites; in particular, he knows that their Patriarch Benjamin, driven away from Alexandria, has been wandering in the monasteries of Upper Egypt for thirteen years and conceives the plan to make them his allies. He addresses a letter of safe-conduct to him, then, as he sees him coming, he calls out: "Truly, in all the lands which we have possessed (up) until now, I have never seen such a man of God as this one here." "Because Benjamin," says the writer of the history, "was of good appearance, he was eloquent and he spoke with calmness and dignity." Afterwards, 'Amr turned to him and said to him: "Resume your rule of all the churches and of your people again and manage their affairs, and if you pray for me, since I will be going to the West and to the Pentapolis to possess them as the rest of Egypt, and if I return after a quick success, I will give you all that you request from me."²¹ And the writer of the history adds that Benjamin prayed for the 'Amr and that he held an eloquent speech with which the 'Amr and all his assistants were astonished. We do not know the contents of the speech this time, we do not know if Benjamin had praised the godliness of 'Amr, the new mystic, or if he caused his (men) to open the gates of the cities for them. But the writer of the history continues: "And all that the holy father said to the Amir 'Amr, the son of

‘As, that he did, and he did not leave out a single letter thereof.” And Michael the Syrian, a Jacobite writer, gravely records in his chronicle: “Concerning the land of Egypt, we have found in the histories that Benjamin, Patriarch of the Orthodox (Jacobites) delivered Egypt to the Tayyâyê.” That is an exaggeration, but it is at least certain that the unctuous diplomacy of ‘Amr was not in vain.

5. We now arrive at the intermediary discussion of the year 18 of the Hagira (9 May 639). One will find the text [deleted] and translation further below, it suffices us here to name the main questions which were asked: “The illustrious general ‘Amir asked whether this is one and the same Gospel, without any difference(s), which is held by all who are Christians and carry this name throughout the world... Why, since there is only one Gospel, is the faith different (divided)?... Who is Christ, is He God or not?... When Christ, of Whom the Christians say He is God, was in Mary’s womb, who carried and ruled Heaven and earth?... Which were the opinion and faith of Abraham and of Moses?... Why did not they write clearly and make known that which concerns Christ?” The discussion is scriptural, and the author continues: “When the Amir heard all that, he only asked that this be proven him by reason and from the Torah alone that Christ is God and that He was born of the virgin and that God has a Son.” John quotes and shows the Greek and Syriac texts of the Bible. The Amir assumed the viewpoint of a Jew present in order to learn whether the Hebrew text conformed with them. The Jew answered, “I do not know exactly,” and “the illustrious general Amir” knew much less. Therefore the Amir hurried to bring the discussion to the legal casuistry, which he knew better than the Greek and the Syriac: “The Amir gradually came to ask about the laws of the Christians, which ones and how they are; whether they are the Gospel or not? He added: When a man dies and leaves behind boys or girls and a wife and a mother and a sister and a cousin, according to which agreement is the inheritance divided among them?” After the answer of the Patriarch, he ended the discussion with: “I beseech you to make one thing of three: either to show me that your laws are written in the Gospel and that you act according to them,²² or that you adhere to the law of the Muslims.” The Patriarch troubled himself to show that the Christians could have other books

besides the Gospel, but this claim of 'Amr, to bring the Christians back to one single book, the Gospel, prepared us for the dilemma which by virtue of advice from 'Umar, he is to have burned the library of Alexandria, in order to bring everything back again to one single book: the Qur'an.

In order to show the importance of this discussion, let us call to remembrance that the Patriarch was quoted as having come with five bishops and nobles, so that "not only there were they congregated in great numbers, the nobles of the Hagarenes, but rather the leaders and governors of the cities and the faithful peoples and the friends of Christ: the *Tanûkâyê*, the *Tu'âyê* and the *'Aqûlâyê*." These three last names show the three most important Arabic tribes who were Jacobites.²³ The author also informs us that the Amir had at the same time quoted certain leading adherents of the Council of Chalcedon, and he closes with: "We send your Grace these few words of numerous things, which were moved in this moment, so that you pray for us without ceasing with zeal and care, and that you supplicate the Lord, that according to His mercy He may visit His churches and His people, and so that Christ provide a solution in these matters, which pleases His will, that He help His church and comfort His people. Even those of the Council of Chalcedon, as we have said further above, prayed for the holy Patriarch, because he had spoken for all Christians and because he had brought them no harm. They sent to him continually and requested his Grace to speak for all (the Christians) and not to bring anything against them; because they knew their weakness and the greatness of the danger and the peril which threatened, if God, according to His mercy, would not visit His church."

Moreover this discussion had a next day, of which Michael the Syrian relates: "'Amr wrote our Patriarch John. When he came to him, 'Amr first said unusual words against the scriptures, and he began to ask him hard questions. The Patriarch solved them all with examples he had taken from the Old and New Testaments and by natural arguments. When he saw his courage and the extent of his knowledge, 'Amr was astonished. Then he gave the following command: 'Translate your Gospel for me into the language of the Saracenes, that means the

Tayyâyê. Only you should not speak of the deity of Christ, nor of baptism, nor of the cross.' The holy one, being strengthened by the Lord answered: 'It would not please God, if I were to cut away a single iota or a single point from the Gospel, even if I were to be pierced with all of the spears and lances which are in your armory.' When he saw that he could not persuade him (otherwise), 'Amr said to him: 'Go and write as you will.'

The Patriarch gathered the bishops and had the Tanûkâyê, 'Aqûlâyê and Tu'âyê come, those who knew the Arabic and Syriac languages, and he commanded them to translate the Gospel into the Arabic language. He ordered that each sentence which they translated must pass before the eyes of all the translators. The Gospel was translated in this manner and presented to the king." (*Chronicle*, II, 431-432)

6. So was the discussion in the year 18. 'Amr, informed of the dissensions which divided the Christians, conceived of a plan to bind them all together in Islam — at least the Jacobite Christians. He accepted only the text of the Torah;²⁴ which is really the most used book in the Qur'an.²⁵ He reduced the main difficulties to three: that Christ is God, that God was born of the virgin and that God has a Son. He could indeed quote numerous verses from the Qur'an contrary to these claims.²⁶ But he had not thought that the discussion concerning the Greek and Syriac texts of the Torah would be continued and had therefore certainly prepared a quick end for it. A few days later, he had at least wished to receive an Arabic Gospel, which was not in contradiction to the Qur'an and which would allow him to bring all the Christian Arabs as a whole over to his side. Certainly that is why he first asked if it was one and the same Gospel, which was held by all Christians, because if there had been many of them, he would have chosen the one most to his advantage, or had at least taken hold of this pretext to demand one more. It had been sufficient for him if it contained no evidence 1. of the deity of Christ, which had already been fought over in the conference; 2. of baptism, which he probably wanted to substitute with the Muslim initiation; 3. of the cross and the crucifixion, which was indeed in contradiction to the Qur'an.²⁷

'Amr had to have seen that if he continued to insist that this would only lead to martyrs being crowned and the creation of enemies — 'Umar seems to have intervened in favor of the Christians — so it appears since he had again applied the unctuous politic, which we saw him practice four years later with the Egyptian Patriarch Benjamin: to promise his support, to give back a few churches, to allow the procession²⁸ and to ask for the aid of prayer and (the) sympathies of the believing Jacobites, up until the danger of later taking back one by one (of all) that which he had conceded as a whole.

We want to use the conclusion of this introduction to develop the results of the conference, in that we make a sketch of the might of the Christian Arabs in the beginning of the Hagira, the services they performed for Islam and what resulted out of this for them. We will conclude that the Christian Patriarchs were wrong in giving their support to pan-Islamism, which had the appearance of being cultivated, moderate and mystical, but was in reality brutal and barbarian.

7. The Christians surrounded Arabia. The Nestorians had bishops in Najran, in Sana, the capital of Yemen, in Socotora, the island of Aloes, in Sohar, the capital of Oman, called Mazoun then, in Khota, in Qatar, in Hagar, on the islands of Deirin, Tharon and Mashmahiq, in Basra, in Hira, in Damascus, in Busra;²⁹ the Jacobites, who were powerful in Yemen, claimed all of the Arab tribes of the north, from Damascus to the Tigris. Aside from this the wilderness was traversed by monks and pilgrims, who — in groups of 700 or 800 people — went to Jerusalem and to Sinai;³⁰ the novels and stories praised proselytism among the Arabs, (and) their trade with India mobilized numerous caravans; the life of a hermit was so well loved, that as a manner of speech there were not any deserts or mountains without dwellers, one could also say that the polytheistic Arabs in Arabia only formed a small island, which was traversed by Christians from all directions. These polytheists, who were named Saracenes by the Greek authors of the 6th and 7th centuries, [deleted] (were to them) ignorant barbarians, shepherds and hunters, in general harmless.³¹ It also occurs among them to go to war especially when hunger or the hope of plunder drives them to it, but

one guards himself against this misfortune in that he surrounds his monastery with a solid wall, which is only interrupted by a single opening, which was four or five meters above the ground. The visitor who properly identifies himself, would be let in by a basket, the honorable predecessor of our elevator.³² The Christians began to equip these barbarians with an alphabet and a script (6th to 7th centuries).³³ At the same time they made traditions in that they took Mecca, its springs and tribes of the area and connected it with Hagar and her son Ishmael,³⁴ just as later they connected the Mongolian rulers of Tangout with the three wise men, and how they showed the mountain in Turkestan on which the ark of Noah rested.³⁵ The role of the Christian monk Sergius, the proven (Bahira) near to Muhammad, is not only probable but necessary,³⁶ in that the Muslim authors, here as in other places, took a Syriac epithet for a personal name.³⁷ The biographies of Muhammad tell of his struggles with the pagans and the Jews, but they do not report that he was at war with the Christian tribes; to the contrary they cite two commendations which he had given to the Christians of Adrok and Aila, he even gave his coat to the latter of these in the city. When we read that Muhammad allowed the people of Najran to remain Christian, we assume that this favor must have been recorded in writing, and the Nestorians indeed produce a credible document in whose preamble one has Muhammad say that the pagan or Jewish Arabs fought with the people of God and argued his doctrine, but that the Christians never had done this.³⁸

It is there where one needs to look for the reason first successes of the Muslims from southern Egypt to deep into Persia.³⁹ We have seen that 'Amr negotiated with the Syrian Christians in 639, and that they performed a service for him in translating the Gospel, the beginning of all the works and all the sciences that the Syrians should later transmit to Islam. In the following year (640) the Arabs crossed the Euphrates; the Edessans came out to negotiate with them and opened their city without resistance, the Jacobite Primates of the Orient handed over Tagrit,⁴⁰ the Bishop Gabriel handed over Tûr 'Abdin (see Appendix 3), and "the armies of the Romans," said Michael, "painfully retired from all the cities."⁴¹ One soon saw the conversion of the cities and peoples all together, as the Ghassanids of Syria and the inhabitants of the

whole coast of the Persian Gulf. These desertions with weapons and equipment necessitated the introduction of schools and monasteries, the philosophy and the mysticism of the Christians into Islam. "Where is the great people of the Mazonites,"⁴² wrote a Nestorian Patriarch in the year 650; "where is the great people of the Mazonites, which has rushed into the abyss of apostasy, just out of love to the half of their goods?"⁴³ Where are the holy places of the Karamani and the whole Fars?"⁴⁴

In Egypt, John of Nikiou teaches us that since the year 641 they helped the Muslims due to the persecution of Heraclius; the inhabitants of Fayoum subjugated themselves to the Arabs, paid them tribute and killed all the Roman soldiers which they met.⁴⁵ After this discussion with Benjamin and 'Amr in the year 643, this movement could do nothing else but grow. Makrizi also relates that 70,000 monks left the desert and came to 'Amr b. al-'As to congratulate him.⁴⁶

8. We condemn this contribution which was performed by the Coptic and Syrian Patriarchs for pan-Islamism, but we do not wish to conceal their motives: they were only Greeks by conquest; their government, instead of attempting to let peace reign among all of its citizens, as was its duty, fomented too much civil discord in that it made itself the instrument of partiality; the Jacobites also saw how their monasteries were confiscated and how their communicants were dispersed.⁴⁷ They had realized that this government, which was so brutal against beings who were without defence, was undermined by materialism and corruption, in that, in the midst of luxury, which lends us the epithet "Byzantine," and with a budget which had not been raised till then, did not think of preparing either arms or permanent or moveable fortifications, in the absence of which bravery alone is nothing more than carelessness and folly. They had seen how their provinces were invaded, and could still ask themselves if certain materialists were in the position to appreciate the ideas of sacrifice and devotion, and whether they had not limited themselves to exploiting them in time of peril.⁴⁸ Because of this one understands how one of them is to have written:

Heraclius did not allow the Orthodox to appear before him

and did not accept their complaint due to the robbing of their churches. For this reason the God of vengeance, who alone is Almighty, who changes the empire of men as He wills, (and) gives to whom He will, and in that manner raises the humble, because He saw the evil of the Romans, who everywhere they ruled plundered our churches and monasteries in a cruel manner and condemned us without grace (and) led the sons of Ishmael out of the region of the south to liberate us out of the hands of the Romans through them.⁴⁹

9. They were freed from the Romans, but they had suffered no less from the pan-Islamists. Limiting ourselves to Egypt, we find that the Muslims took famous personalities as hostage, they mistreated and killed them to sow terror, because John of Nikiou writes: “ ‘Amr had the Roman magistrates arrested and bound their hands and feet with chains and with pieces of wood, and he performed numberless acts of violence, afterwards there was panic in all the cities of Egypt; the inhabitants fled and left their goods behind.’”⁵⁰

This departure gave them the desired pretext to clean out the empty houses and to possess the abandoned goods, to demand regular and unjustifiable sums of money and to burn the cities. John of Nikiou writes:⁵¹ “When the Muslims came into a city accompanied by renegades, they possessed the goods of the Christians, who had fled..., they forced the Christians, to bring the Muslims fodder for their beasts and to deliver milk, honey, fruit and many other things in addition to the regular rations... ‘Amr had the houses of the inhabitants of Alexandria who had fled destroyed, and he ordered the city of the two rivers to be burned. The inhabitants, who were (all) informed of the danger, rescued their goods and left the city, and the Muslims set it afire.’”

It also occurred that ‘Amr had some cathedrals set on fire, as St. Mark’s of Alexandria,⁵² or some of the libraries, as the one in the same city.⁵³ One wanted to cleanse his memory of such abominable crimes, which is not unique in the history of Islam,⁵⁴ but it is not probable that he took the books out of it before he set it on fire, because this trick supposes a finer culture than his.

One part of the inhabitants were taken into captivity; the others were hit with taxes, because John of Nikiou writes:⁵⁵ "After he had defeated the inhabitants of the Pentapolis, 'Amr did not let them remain living there, rather he took a great booty from this land and a large number of prisoners... and the Muslims possessed all of Egypt, of the south and of the north, and they tripled the taxes. It came about that the inhabitants offered to trade their children for enormous sums of money, which they had to pay each month." And if one asks how one can harmonize the deeds of 'Amr with his words, John of Nikiou instructs us that he considered treaties as shreds of paper: " 'Amr dealt with the Egyptians without pity, said John, and did not fulfil the agreements which were made with him, because he was from a barbarous race."⁵⁶

It was much worse when the renegades, who were already dreadful enough in the time of John of Nikiou,⁵⁷ entered the scene with their characteristic rage; they went so far as to form a plot and simultaneously burn down most of the churches of Egypt. "In this moment," writes Makrisi, "the people left the mosques, who had performed the Friday prayers, and were witnesses of a fearful sight: a thick dust, the smoke of the fire, the tumult of the crowd, which was taking away the booty, made one ponder the horrors of the Last Judgment."⁵⁸ The Sultan wanted to punish the guilty, but the Amir showed him that "the true cause of the fire was the perversity of the Christians and their excess of godlessness, for which God (May He be praised!) wanted to punish them."⁵⁹ "A great number of Christians were then killed, and — after various events — the Sultan of Egypt commanded, 'to bring all Christians to him, which could be found.' Everyone who would apprehend them, would be master of their goods and lives..., so that the Christians had to avoid appearing on public roads and that a great number of them became Muslims."⁶⁰

10. These are the consequences of the discussion of 'Amr with John in 639 and with Benjamin in 643. The Christian Arabs, numerous and wealthy, were once more able to serve as a rampart for the Greek Empire and to stop the exodus of the Hagarenes, who let the overpopulation, poverty and greed come out of the sands of the Hijaz.⁶¹

They were the natural dike against all pan-Arabic movements, which were either to fail or develop under their leadership.

When the two Jacobite Patriarchs pacted with the Hagarenes, they took away this last dike, and the pan-Arabism, which triumphed aside from their leadership, quickly became pan-Islamism. The God of vengeance, whom they called, had certainly confronted them with the results of their compromises: He showed them Christian blood, which had been shed by Arab Muslims from Persia to the Pyrenees and the ruins which had been heaped up by the Muslim Turks, from their homeland Siberia⁶² to India and to the Danube. From a Christian viewpoint and a patriotic viewpoint, they could have seen that they had acted badly. They should have left off the care of providence to each that which was fitting for him to receive, to offer their past suffering in the holocaust for their salvation and for the salvation of their people and to give their ruler faithful support, simply because he was their ruler and because the plundering Arabs were unjust aggressors. And if they had failed, if their sacrifice had been in vain, they would have at least had the satisfaction which the fulfillment of duty provides and they would have been able to repeat that which Judas the Maccabee said in an analogous situation: "It is more worthy for us to die in battle, than to see the suffering of our nation. When our day comes, then let us die for our brethren with courage."⁶³

The various facts, which are recorded in our manuscript at the end of our discussion, are similar to the colophons and thus have a chance of being the personal work of the one who compiled them. The agreement of days of the week and the dates of the month are moreover exact. The earthquake on 28 February 713, which is related in much detail, is mentioned in three lines in Theophanes, Agapius and Michael the Syrian. The other events appear to belong to the person of our author: the comet on 8 April 712; the plague from 712 to 713; the plague, the locusts, the hurricane (20 May 714); the hail; the death of Walid (February 715), the avarice of Suleyman; the hail on 27 April 715 and on 20 April 716. [The section of the manuscript listing the events of 712-716 A.D. has been deleted in this edition.]

TRANSLATION

(A) Then, the letter of the Mar John, Patriarch, concerning the discussion which he had with the Amir of the Hagarenes (Mahgroyê⁶⁴)

(B) Because we know that you are anxious and fearful on our account, due to the matter for which we have been called in this area,⁶⁵ (with our holy father the Patriarch,⁶⁶ we inform your Grace that on the ninth of this month of May, the day of the holy Sunday,⁶⁷ we went to the famous General Amir, and this holy father of all (the Christians) was questioned by him, whether this is one and the same Gospel, without any differences, which is held by all of those who are Christians and who carry this name throughout the whole world. - The blessed answered him that it is one and the same among the Greeks, the Romans, the Syrians, the Egyptians, the Cushites, the Hindus, the Armenians, the Persians and the rest of all the peoples and (all) languages.⁶⁸

(C) He asked him yet: "Why, since the Gospel is unique, is the faith different (divided)?" and the blessed answered: "Just as the Law (the Pentateuch) is one and the same and it is accepted by us Christians and by you Hagarenes (Mahgroyê), and by the Jews and by the Samaritans, and each people is divided in faith; it is the same with the faith in the Gospel, each heresy understands and interprets it in various manners, and not as we."

(D) He asked yet: "What do you say (concerning) who the Christ is; is He God or not?" - And our father answered: "(We say) that He is God and the Word, which is born from God the Father, who is eternal and without beginning, and at the end of time He (Christ) became flesh and made Himself into a man for the salvation of mankind by the Holy Spirit and of the holy virgin, the mother of God, Mary, and He became human."

(E) The famous Amir asked him yet this: "When Christ was in the

womb of Mary, He, of whom you say He is God, who carried and ruled Heaven and earth?"⁶⁹ - Our blessed father replied with the same argument: "When God came down to Mount Sinai and spoke with Moses for forty days and nights,⁷⁰ who carried and ruled heaven and earth? because you say that you receive Moses and his scriptures."⁷¹ - The Amir said: "It is God, who was and who ruled the Heaven and earth." - And just after this he heard from our father: "It is also so with the Christ-God; when He was in the womb of the virgin, He carried and ruled the Heaven and earth and everything which is in them as Almighty God."

(F) The illustrious Amir said yet: "Which was the form and the opinion of the faith of Abraham and of Moses?" - Our blessed father said: "Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron and the rest of the prophets, all the wise and the righteous held to the faith of the Christians." - The Amir said: "Why have they not written clearly since then and not made known concerning Christ?" - Our blessed father answered: "They knew it, because they were trusted and near (God), but — (due to) the childishness and the coarseness of the people then, which were inclined to polytheism and held to it, in such measure that they regarded wood, stones and many other things as God, made idols, honored them and brought them sacrifices. Those in error did not want to give them a reason to distance themselves from the living God and to follow error,⁷² rather they proclaimed what the truth is reservedly: 'Hear, Israel, the Lord God is one Lord.'⁷³ because they knew in truth, that there is only one God and only one deity, that of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; they also wrote and spoke in a mysterious manner concerning God that the same is one in deity and (that He is) three substances and persons, then it is not so, one confesses neither three gods nor three deities, nor in any manner three gods or deities, because it is a single deity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as we have said, and the Son and the Holy Spirit proceed from the Father; and, if you want, I am prepared and inclined to confirm this with the aid of the Holy Books."

(G) Then when the Amir heard all of this, he requested only to prove that the Christ is God and that He was born of the virgin and that God

has a Son by demonstrations of reason and from the Law (Pentateuch). - And the blessed said that not only Moses, but also all of the holy prophets prophesied beforehand and wrote this concerning Christ. The one had written concerning His birth from a virgin, another that He would be born in Bethlehem, another (wrote) concerning His baptism; all (of them) so to say (wrote) about His Passion, which brought salvation and about His life-giving death and about His glorious resurrection from the grave after three days; and he began to confirm (this) according to all of the prophets and according to Moses at the same time.⁷⁴

(H) And the illustrious Amir did not accept the (words) of the prophets,⁷⁵ but rather demanded that it be proven him from Moses that Christ is God; and the blessed, along with many other things, quoted this (passage from) Moses: "The Lord let fire and sulfur come down from the Lord on Sodom and on Gomorrah."⁷⁶ The famous Amir demanded, that one show it himself in the book, and our father let him see it, without (possible) error, in the complete Greek and Syriac books. Certain Hagarenes (Mahgroyê) were present with us at this place, and they saw the passages and the glorious names of the Lords and Lord⁷⁷ with their own eyes. The Amir called a Jew, who was there and whom they called knowledgeable in the scriptures, and asked him if it was literally so in the Law. And this one answered: "I do not know exactly."⁷⁸

(I) The Amir then came from this to ask him concerning the laws of the Christians; which and how they are; whether they are in the Gospel or not? He added: "If a man dies and leaves behind boys or girls and a wife and a mother and a sister and a cousin, how does he determine how to divide the estate among them?"⁷⁹ - Then our father said that the divine Gospel instructs and imposes heavenly doctrine and the life-giving regulations, that it curses all sins and wickedness, that it teaches excellence and righteousness and that many things were quoted concerning these — there were not only the nobles of the Hagarenes (Maghroyê) assembled in the crowd, but also the leaders and the rulers of the cities and the believing peoples and friends of Christ, the Tanûkâyê, the Tu'âyê and the 'Aqûlâyê⁸⁰. - The famous Amir said:

“I ask you to make one thing of three: to show me either that your laws are written in the Gospel and that you act according to them, or that you submit to the Muslim law (Mahgra).” And when our father had answered that we Christians have laws, which are just and straight, which agree with the doctrine and the commandments of the Gospel and the canons of the apostles and the laws of the church, the assembly of the first day was dismissed, and we have not succeeded (in being able) to appear before him until now.

(J) (The Amir) also had certain persons of the main followers of the Council of Chalcedon come, and all who were present, Orthodox or Chalcedonian, pled for the life and the retainment of the holy Patriarch; they praised and exalted God, who had given the word of truth in his mouth in rich measure, and who had filled him with His power and grace, according to His true promises, as He said: “They will bring you before the kings and the governors on account of Me, but do not become anxious about how or what you will speak, for it will be given you in that hour what you are to speak, for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaks in you.”⁸¹

(K) We send your Grace these words of numerous things, which were brought into motion in these moments, so that you pray for us without ceasing with zeal and care and so that you entreat the Lord, that He in His compassion visit His churches and His people and that Christ grant a way out of these matters, which pleases His will, that He help His churches and comfort His people. As we have said further above, even those of the Council of Chalcedon prayed for the holy Patriarch, because he had spoken for all Christians, and because he had not caused them any harm. They sent to him continually and they asked his Grace to speak thus for all (the Christians) and not to bring anything against them, because they knew their weakness and the dimension of the danger (κίνδυνος) and the peril which threatened, if the Lord should not visit His churches according to His compassion.⁸²

(L) Pray for the famous Amir, so that God give him wisdom and enlightenment for that which pleases the Lord and what is advantageous for Him. The holy father of the entirety (of the Christians) and

the holy⁸³ fathers, who are with him: Abbas Mar Thomas and Mar Severus, and Mar Sergius⁸⁴ and Mar Aitilaha⁸⁵ and Mar John and all of their holy escort and the leaders and the believers, who are assembled together with us; and foremost our beloved and wise principal⁸⁶ protected by Christ, Mar André and we, the Humble in the Lord, we request your salvation and prayers, always.

II

APPENDIX

[The sections 1 and 2 have been deleted in this edition.]

3. Concerning the document which was given the bishop of Tûr 'Abdin by 'Umar.

[The sections on 1° and 2° have been deleted in this edition.]

3° We have summarized the story of Gabriel the bishop of Tûr 'Abdin (593-667 our calendar) in *les Actes du XIV. Congrès international des orientalistes*, vol. II, Paris, 1906. pp. 55-67. We write, p. 68: "We are led to date the ordination of Gabriel in 629. He was 36 years old then. Later he went down to Gozarta to the Caliph 'Umar b. Khattab. This visit with 'Umar, which interested us little in 1906, today deserves to be placed next to the discussion of John with 'Amr. It is regretful that the story of Gabriel displays some anachronisms which make it suspect. It is possible that it was composed from the 9th to the 10th century, after the plundering of the monastery which is reported by Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. syr.*, ed. Bedjan, p. 144, about the year 830, as one would like to reconstruct the history of the monastery. Nevertheless, it is also possible that the author preserves even older traditions. For example it is interesting to see that he is Nestorian (the Catholicos) and that the leader of the wise could bring questions of the crosses and processions. One could believe that the monks from Tûr 'Abdin, after they had

opened their land to the Arabs, had raised objection to the measures of 'Amr.⁸⁷ It is also interesting to see that the bishop of Tûr 'Abdin pretends to have 'the authority over Tûr 'Abdin to Babylon' from 'Umar, because that was very much the demand of these bishops since the time of the Patriarch Severus bar Mosqa (668-680); they wanted to ordain the bishops of Mesopotamia themselves, cf. Michael, *Chronicle*, II, 456, and caused many schisms. Bar Hebraeus summarizes our history, *Chron. eccl.*, I, 122 (including his anachronism),⁸⁸ without contesting them: 'Gabriel, Archimandrite of Qartamin, was consecrated as bishop in the year 965 of the Greeks (654); he went down to 'Umar b. Khattab,⁸⁹ the King of the Arabs, as he was in Gezirta of Bayt Zabdê, and he received a document (Sigilion) [with] authority over the people of the Christians.' "

This is the summarization of the events which we will transmit and translate. Since Bar Hebraeus saw this as authentic, it is certain, that it — in truth or supposition — had an influence on the fate of Tûr 'Abdin, and that it deserves to be published. One will compare it to the much harder conditions which were laid upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem by 'Umar. (Lebeau, *Histoire du bas Empire*, LVIII, 47.)

[The Syriac text has been deleted.]

TRANSLATION

(M) In the year 965 (654, read: 629)⁹⁰ — in which the Persians left Mesopotamia and Heraclius came to Edessa — the holy Mar Gabriel was consecrated as bishop by the Patriarch Athanasius, in the monastery of Mar Jacob, which is on the mountain of Qoros. And later the holy Mar Gabriel went to the Caliph of the Hanafi,⁹¹ who is 'Umar bar Khattab, in the city of Gezirta, and (this one) received him with great joy. When he was with him for a while, he requested from the Caliph a pergament seal (concerning) the canons with respect to the laws of the Syrians and with respect to the bells and with respect to the processions, which they perform on the feasts of the Lord, and with respect to the crosses,⁹² (to know) whether they would be hindered,

and with respect to the churches⁹³ and the monasteries and with respect to the priests and with respect to the deacons, so that they would not be subject to tribute, and with respect to the monks, so that they be free to speak the litany (*ma'nioto*) before the dead, when they come out of the house to accompany them and to read the litany and the hymns before the (chapels of the) martyrs and to speak before the bishop when he visits his flock,⁹⁴ and everything which they wanted to have according to their rites, so that no one would harass them and that they would not be robbed of their laws.

(N) And the Caliph rejoiced over the arrival of the Mar Gabriel and gave him his signature, so that he could build churches and monasteries as he wished, and he gave him authority from Tûr 'Abdin to Babylon, and he honored him very much, because Mar Gabriel was on the side of the Arabs,⁹⁵ and as they came to this land he let them rule over it, and he made (it so) that the bad Romans disappeared from these regions. And 'Umar knew that the holy Mar Gabriel was an elect of God and that his prayer was heard of God — everything which he requested of God, He gave him — and he accepted his words with favor and came with him into this land, and he subjected it to him and said to the saint: "Demand whatever you will." And he requested mercy from him for all of the Syrians, for the churches and for the monasteries and above all for his monastery. And he gave him a document signed by himself, and behold, it remains to this day, and it was written within that the priests and the deacons did not have to pay any tribute and that the wealthy farmer (each) man had to pay four *zouzes*.⁹⁶ He also ordered in his writing, that if one of the *Hanife* (pagan = Arab) would find a Syrian on a mountain or on a road, that he should go with him to his house, he who would sleep on the mountain or in a vineyard or in the field, he should remain with him and protect him up to his house.⁹⁷ He issued many other ordinances concerning the orphans, the poor and widows, so that one might have pity on them, and for the occasions of the church and the feasts: if one went out at the time of a funeral and one made a procession,⁹⁸ on the feast of Psalms and on Good Friday and at the feast of the Resurrection, if one went out with crosses and the priests and the deacons wore their ornaments, that no

one should hinder them. "And everyone who did them harm, should come under a curse: here (below) he would (experience) the judgment and the beatings, and there (above) he would (experience) hell and torment, because he has trampled under foot our commandment and the commandment of the Prophet of God, Muhammad." And then Mar Gabriel took the writing which (contained) these orders, and he received it and returned to his monastery with great joy, in that he prayed for 'Umar, and he thanked God that He let him find grace before him. Honor be to God! who exalts His servants, who honor His name. To Him be glory, honor and praise, now and forever, in the century of centuries! Amen.

Notes:

[1] Add., ms. 17193. - This is a volume of collections titled "Volume de démonstrations, de collections et de lettres". The extracts are, in general, very brief: 125 different subjects on 99 leaves. The only subjects which we show are the historical ones, and the following catalogue "of the kings of the Tayyâye": Muhammad came to earth (hagira) in the (year) 932 of Alexander the son of Philip the Macedonian (621 A.D.), then he reigned 7 years (d. 7 June 632 ?). After him Abu Bakr reigned two years (d. 22 August 634). After him 'Umar reigned 12 years (d. 3 Nov. 644 ?). After him 'Uthman reigned 12 years (d. 17 June 656) and they were without leader in the war of Safa (Siffin) five and a half years. After this Marwan reigned 20 years (d. April 680). After this Yazid the son of Marwan reigned three and a half years (d. 11 November 683). After Yazid they were without a leader for one year. After him 'Abdulmelek reigned 21 years (d. 8 October 705). After him his son Walid began to reign 1017 in the beginning of the first Tichri (October 705). See the text of Land, "Anecdota Syriaca," II, Leyden, 1868, p. 11, and the dates (according to Weil). Ibid., I, 41-42. One will notice that Jacob of Edessa (ed. Brooks) also ascribes Muhammad seven years, from 621-628.

[2] We are quoting the translation of this passage (p. 16), below.

[3] The Jacobite patriarchs with the name John previous to our manuscript are: John I, 635 - 14 Dec. 648; John II, 744 - Oct. 754; John III, 846-873; the text of Michael, which we have quoted later in the introduction, shows us that it is the first (of these). In addition to this, the catalogue of the "Kings of Tayyâye" ends with the Walid (705-715). cf. above, note 1; and the historical events which we will show, and those immediately following the letter of John from 712-716. It appears that the compilation was carried out at this period of time (which excludes John II and III). Finally the bishops mentioned at the end are placed around 630 by Michael, especially Aitilaha who has a name which was not used often (cf. above, p. 28), are not found under John II and III. Particularly, see the lists of the Jacobite bishops in the *Chronicle* of Michael or the *Revue de l'Orient chrétien*, IV (1899), pp. 447-451, 495-500. The accord between Chalcedonians and the Jacobites also shows that the dialogue took place at the time of the first defeat of the Chalcedonian Greeks, cf. below, note 82. See note in appendix concerning John I, below, p. 268 [deleted].

[4] This name requires discussion. It is transmitted by Michael the Syrian, II, 431. Michael explains in four lines, in accordance with a first abbreviated source, that " 'Amr the son of Sa'd," the Amir of Tayyâye forbade that the crosses appear outside of the churches; he adds the report concerning " 'Amr" and the Patriarch John, which we relate further above in the introduction (p. 16). This source of Michael seems to define both 'Amrs as Bar Hebraeus also understood them, *Chron. eccl.*, I, 275, when he transmitted Michael. Another very developed source, written by Michael in the parallel column, mentions the bubonic plague (*Ibid.*, II, 431, col. 1, and 432, col. 1) and then the prohibition of the crosses in Homs and Damascus by " 'Amr" (quoted, below, n. 87). We know that 'Ubayda, the ruler of Syria, died during the plague mentioned above, and he had 'Amr b. al-'As as his successor, and it thus appears to us to be certain that it is this one here to whom one must attribute this discussion, and also possibly, in spite of one of the sources of Michael, the prohibition of the crosses, because the first source is only a brief summary (perhaps of the second), and the second, which transmits the (more) developed version, brings no

special accusation against 'Amr. Moreover Michael never mentions 'Amr "b. al-'As,' as he should have, II, 450, on the occasion of an assassination attempt against him in Egypt, he names him Sa'id, a name which was often exchanged for Sa'd, cf. *Patr. or.*, I, 501, which gives us one further reason to suppose that the "son of Sa'd" further above was used in place of "son of 'As."

[5] This is shown by the presence of the three Arab tribes, who lived "west of the Euphrates." Cf. below, p. 261 *, n. 3.

[6] In the time of John I, 9 May 633, 639, 644 fall on Sundays. The date of 644 is improbable, because 'Amr, who entered Alexandria in Dec. 643 (*Patr. or.*, I, 494), had to use the next years to conquer the Pentapolis. The date 9 May 633 appears to be too soon, because the Arabs only invaded Syria, and 'Amr, who laid siege to Gaza with 7000 men, was absolutely not qualified to have summoned the Patriarch, because Abu 'Ubayda was his superior (he commanded 37,000 men, cf. Lebeau, *Histoire du bas Empire*, LVIII, 19). Thus only the 9th of May 639 remains.

[7] Add. 17193, fol. 73-75.

[8] H. Lammens, *Mélanges de la Faculté orientale de Beyrouth*, I, 1906, p. 57, which quotes the *Kitab al-Agâni*, XIV, 156, 16.

[9] For us this word means "the religious duty to go out and compel all nations by force to accept Islam."

[10] In certain instances they would confiscate half of the lands if the inhabitants did not want to accept Islam. Cf. *L'expansion nestorienne en Asie*, pp. 230-234. At other times they would take everything, and would divide it among themselves or impose a pact interest, cf. G. Salmon, *Introduction topographique à l'histoire de Bagdad*, Paris, 1904, pp. 15-19.

[11] About 684 A.D. (65 A.H.), in the region of Homs alone there

were 20,000 Yemenites, who together with their relatives formed a group of 100,000 people in lodgings. (H. Lammens, loc. cit., I, 9 ff.) See the interest on lodgings in Noël Desvergers, *L'Arabie*, Paris, 1847, p. 238.

[12] H. Lammens, *Mêlanges*, etc., I, 53.

[13] *Ibid.*, III, 1908, p. 287.

[14] See the references which were quoted by H. Lammens, loc. cit., I, 53, and 56-57. Let us add the following story of Michael, *Chronicle*, II, 421, somewhat abbreviated by Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. syr.*, ed. Bedjan, p. 101, and which shows us which day the Arabian invaders introduced themselves to the Persians. These sent a man from Hirta to spy on the Arabs; "he saw a ma'deen, who [deleted], ate bread and cleaned his shirt (killing the insects). He asked him: 'What are you doing?' The ma'deen answered: 'As you see I am letting new ones come in and driving the old ones out, and I kill the enemies.' And the man from Hirta went to the Persians and said: 'I saw a barefoot people which are poorly clothed but very courageous.' "

[15] We have taken the preceding dates from K. Krumbacher, *Byz. Literatur*, Munich, 1897, p. 950. See the continuation of the events in C. Huart, *Histoire des Arabes*, vol. I, ch. IX-X.

[16] H. Lammens, loc. cit., II, 1907, p. 22.

[17] *Idem*, *ibid.*, p. 24.

[18] Cf. the Qur'an trans. Savary, Paris, Garnier, pp. 15, 16 and 66. - 'Amr also attacked the Christians in Oman in 629, cf. J. Périer, *Vie d'Al Hadjdjadj*, Paris, 1904, p. 244.

[19] Lebeau, *Histoire de bas Empire*, I, LVIII, ch. 56.

[20] *Patr. Orientalis*, vol. I, pp. 494-498.

[21] The chronology of the *Histoire des patriarches d'Alexandrie* is certainly exact. The Arabs enter Egypt during the year 357 of Diocletian (29 August 640 to 641); they distinguish themselves on 6 June 641; take Cairo in March 642; receive tribute for one year from the Melkite Patriarch of Alexandria; finally take Alexandria in December 643, and then conquer the Pentapolis, cf. *Patr. Orientalis*, I, 492-495. - The conquest of Africa was prosecuted further by the successor of 'Amr until the battle of Iacouba, in which the patrician Gregor was killed by 'Abdullah b. Zubayr. One should note that the latter on that occasion expressed the axiom: "Every hairy man is a coward." Cf. É. Quatremère, in *Journal Asiat.*, vol. IX, April 1832, pp. 297-298, quoted by Noël Desvergers, *L'Arabie*, p. 253.

[22] Cf. the Qur'an, sura 5:50,51; "The Christians are to judge according to the Gospel."

[23] Cf. below, p. 43, n. 80.

[24] Concerning the books which are accepted among the Muslims, we wish to remark, that on the 1st, 6th, 12th, 18th, and 24th of the month of Ramadan they celebrate the sending down from heaven of the books of Abraham, Moses, David, the Gospel and the Qur'an; see our edition of "Des fêtes des Muslumans et de leurs jours remarquables," in the *Review de l'Orient chrétien*, vol. XVII (1912), pp. 98-99.

[25] Qur'an 5:45,48,50,70,72,110; 7:156,168,169; 61:6; etc.

[26] Cf. Qur'an 5:19,76,77,79; 6:100,101; 19:91-93; 43:81; 63:59; etc. "Those who say that God is the Messiah, Son of Mary, are unbelievers... If God had a Son, I would be the first to honor Him... Not much is lacking, and the heavens cleave at these words, the earth opens and the mountains break apart at this, that they attribute a Son to the Merciful..."; cf. Qur'an 23:93 - "God has no Son at all." The Trinity is also expressly denied: "Do not say that there is a Trinity in God. He is one," Qur'an 4:169. It is true that for Muhammad the Trinity appears

to have been composed of the Father, Mary and the Son; cf. Qur'an 4:169; 5:116.

[27] Qur'an 4:156 - "They have not crucified him in any way; a man, who resembled him was set in his place." According to the Islamic gospel, which is claimed to be from Barnabas, it is Judas who was crucified in the place of Jesus. When this gospel was referred to, the learned, for whom imperfection is a proof of antiquity, saw in this the Christianity of the Jewish Christians, (allegedly) older than our Gospels. (This is the same *postulate* of two bad Syriac versions of bad Greek manuscripts which predate the Peshitta.) Since the edition of the gospel of Barnabas of L. Ragg, *The Gospel of Barnabas*, Oxford, 1907, James dates its composition in the 16th century. Cf. *Journal of theolog. studies*, vol. IX, April 1908, pp. 458-459. - It is probably our 'Amr b. al-'As who forbid to carry the crosses outside of the church. (Michael, *Chronicle*, II, 432, col. 1), though (he) is said to have (used) an abbreviation of 'Amr bar Sa'd, *Ibid.*, 431, col. 2. Cf. below p. 45, n. 87.

[28] Cf. Appendices, 3°, pp. 277-278.

[29] We have developed this subject and identified the lesser-known names in "L'expansion nestorienne en Asie," *Bibliothèque de vulgarisation du Musée Guimet*, vol. XL, Chalon-sur-Saône, 1914, pp. 205-212.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 214, n. 2.

[31] See especially, *Les récrits du moine Anastase sur les Pères du Sinai*, trans. from the Greek by F. NAU, Paris, 1902.

[32] It is so in Sinai and Scété.

[33] We do not believe that one can prove that the Arabs had written a few works or even pieces of verse, before they had converted the "People of the Book," since pre-Islamic poetry was not even committed to writing, until 100 years after the Hagira; cf. C. Huart, *Journal of*

asiat., Xth. Series, vol. IV (1904), pp. 142-145. We do not fail to recognize what the Arabs *later* did for the arts and sciences.

[34] Cf. Noël Desvergers, *L'Arabie*, Paris, Didot, 1847, pp. 12-13, 98-99. It is in Mecca where the angel let the spring Zamzam bubble to quench the thirst of Hagar and her son Ishmael, who married and became a people group in the area. Abraham built the Ka'ba. The father L. Cheikho published numerous articles in the *Machriq*, (Beirut, 1913-14) about "Christianity and Literature before Islam," which we could not use. Bar Hebraeus writes *Chron. eccl.*, II, 114, that the city Yathrib or Medina, which he punctuates as Median *ytrb dhy mdyn*, took its name from the fourth son whom Abraham received from Keturah, Midian, cf. Gen 25:2. We are far away from the usual etymology of *Medinat al-Nabi*, "The city of the Prophet." Our document only gives the Muslims the name the Agareens (*mahgroyê*, *aphel* participle, formed from *Hagar* to describe the condition); the counterparts in Greek are Ἀγαρηνοί, *Jean Damascène*, ed. Le Quien, I, 110; and with an initial "m," μαγαρισμόν which is close to "Islam"; ἦλθεν ὁ Μουχαμῆθ κηρύσσων τὸν μαγαρισμόν "Muhammad (Moukameth) came to preach Magarism (to be Hagarene)." Cf. Theodore Abucara (Abu Qurra) in the works of John of Damascus, I, 470. (John of Damascus, parag. AG, - ed.) Most frequently one finds Σαρρακηνοῖ, which either correctly or incorrectly refers to Sarah, and sometimes "Ishmaelites." All of these names directly connect the Muslims with Judeo-Christian traditions.

[35] Cf. *L'Expansion nestorienne en Asie*, loc. cit., pp. 276-277.

[36] We have highlighted the personality of Sergius the proven (Bahira) at length in *L'Expansion nestorienne en Asie*, loc. cit., pp. 213-223. The German scholars wanted to reconstruct the role of Sergius with the help of the Arabic writers, which are secondary sources, since they saw the epithet as a personal name. These secondary sources and sources of inclination make of the story of "Bahira" a sort of deceptive presentation, cf. C. Huart, in *Journ. asiat.*, 10th series, vol. IV (1904), p. 127. One must look at the works of the Greeks (and

Syrians) to see what Sergius could have been.

[37] The epithet *bhyr'* (Bahira = proven) is commonly used in Syriac, for example, in the lonely life of John the Small, *Revue de l'Orient chrétien*, vol. XVII (1912), p. 351: ... *twb tsh't' d'b' wdsh' wbhyr' wm''... nry ywhnn 'wr'*. The story of the holy and proven (Bahira) sublime father... *Mar John the Small*. - Ibid., p. 357: *hw mn rb' hw' dyry' bqy' wbhyr'*. The great (one) was a chosen and proven (Bahira) monk. - Ibid., p. 366 - *'stqbl sb' hd rb' wbhyr' d'mr tmn*. A great and proven (Bahira) old man from there, who remained there, etc. In the same manner: concerning Abraham who was first a pagan (*hnp'* = Hanfa) — His apocalypse itself relates, that he went to sell the idols which his father had made — one made of this word “pagan” the name of a religion. (see al-Kindi, parags. E and BD - ed.) - The Hagira is also certainly the era of the sons of Hagar, *bny hgr* or the Hagarenes, *mhgry'*.

[38] Cf. *L'Expansion nestorienne en Asie*, loc. cit., pp. 224-230. In general one uses too much rigor, in my opinion, in researching the sources of the Qur'an. It could only have been concerned with verbal sources, more or less digested or brewed. All the confusions therefore, remain possible and even probable. Cl. Huart emphasizes the influence of the old Arabic poets to peddle and recite just as our troubadours the chansons de gestes, *Journ. asiat.*, 10th series, vol. IV (1904), pp. 130-3 and 165-7. One also may not neglect the informal discussions of Muhammad. Concerning the later introduction of Judeo-Christian traditions in Islam, cf. C. Huart, Ibid., pp. 331-50.

[39] The defection, in the midst of battle, of the Banu Thenoukh, who seem to be the Jacobite Tanûkâyê, saved the Arabs for the first time, cf. below, p. 43, n. 80. The Arabs of the south, whom Sergius had not given their usual wage, were the first to defect and lead their fellow countrymen into Gaza, cf. Theophanes, ad ann. 623; they were defectors who taught the nomads the use of battle machines., Lebeau, *Histoire du bas Empire*, LVIII, 19. Everywhere there was only treason, Romain handed over Busra, Ibid., LVIII, 16; Josias handed over

Damascus, *Ibid.*, LVIII, 25; another handed over the people of Tripoli, *Ibid.*, LVIII, 32; another let the battle of Yarmuk be lost, which led to the defection of the Arabs of Ghassan, *Ibid.*, LVIII, 44; Yukinna (doubtless an Arab, because his name is none other than *Yuhanna* = John) handed over numerous cities, *Ibid.*, LVIII, 49-54; and divided the kingdoms among themselves, *Ibid.*, LVIII, 24; the governors were jealous of one another and did not help one another; LVIII, 35; the others making treaties to their own advantage as Cyrus for Alexandria, LVIII, 63, and John for Osroene, cf. Theophanes, ad ann. 628. The Greek empire succumbed more from the blows of their own than from the blows of the inhabitants of the Hijaz.

[40] Cf. Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, II, 124-126. Quoting *Patr. orient.*, III, 58: Life of Marouta.

[41] *Chronicle*, II, p. 426.

[42] Mazoun was the name which was particularly given Sohar, and in general the region of Oman, cf. H. Lammens, loc. cit., II, 1907, pp. 400-401, and F. Nau, "Maronites, Mazonites et Maranites," in the *Revue de l'Orient chrétien*, vol. IX (1904), pp. 268-276.

[43] Others — at that moment of time — preferred to lose half their possessions. See also Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicle eccl.*, I, 338: "Les habitants du pays d'Alep (après 798) abandonnèrent leur foi tous en même temps, et se firent Arabes." - "The inhabitants of the land Alep all gave up their faith at the same time and became Arabs (after 798)."

[44] Cf. Rubens Duval, *Iso'yahb patriarchae III, Liber epistularum*, Paris, 1905, pp. 179-182, 192.

[45] *Chronicle* of John of Nikiou, ed. Zotenberg, in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits*, vol. XXIV, Paris, 1883, pp. 559, 562-563; cf. p. 570.

[46] *Le couvent des chrétiens*, trans. E. Leroy, in *Revue de l'Orient*

chrétiens, vol. XIII (1908), pp. 198-199.

[47] The Greeks also made the political mistake of decapitating and dispersing the confederation of the Jacobite Arabs for reasons of religious confession. Cf. Michael, *Chronicle*, II, p. 350.

[48] We do not know if the Byzantine government was able to correct itself and stop being the representative of a single group and the oppressor of the rest of the Greeks and to grant all subjects of the empire equality at law and in treatment, because 300 years later (968), when Nicephorus Phocas retook Syria, which had been devastated and depopulated, he requested that the Patriarch John VII come live there and lead his co-religionists back there with him. He promised him religious freedom, but soon did not keep his promise, as he had the Jacobite Patriarch and four bishops brought to Constantinople and (after a two month-long discussion) demanded that they become adherents of the Council of Chalcedon. As a result of their refusal, they were imprisoned. Cf. Michael, *Chronicle*, III, 131; Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, I, 412-414; Assemani, *Bibl. or.*, II, 133-140; Lequien, *Oriens christ.*, II, 1378; & c. It was worse 50 years later (1029) under the rule of Romain, cf. Michael, *Chron.*, III, 140-145, 147, 166-167. To the contrary Michael praised the tolerance of "the Franks" often, *Ibid.*, III, 222, 226, 249.

[49] Michael, *Chron.*, II, 412-413, and Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, I, 273.

[50] *Chronicle*, in notes and extracts of the manuscript, vol. XXIV, Paris, 1883, p. 560.

[51] *Ibid*, pp. 560, 562, 577.

[52] *Patr. orientalis*, I.

[53] Cf. Bar Hebraeus, *Histoire des dynasties*, trans. Pococke, Oxford, 1663, p. 114. One finds it somewhat strange that this volume is not

mentioned by any contemporaries, and one sees a motive for placing it in doubt, and not without reason.

[54] It was in this manner that the books of Severus bar Sakako were likewise carried into the public baths (δημόσιον) of the Sultan of Mosul, cf. Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, I, 411, (in the year 1241).

[55] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 569, 577-578, 585.

[56] *Loc. cit.* p. 578.

[57] *Loc. cit.* p. 585.

[58] "Les Églises des chrétiens," in *Revue de l'Orient*, vol. XII (1907), p. 197.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 208.

[61] In 1178, for example, "driven by famine, a numerous (group of) people set themselves in motion and moved out of Arabia." But this "Hagira" did not find the same success of its predecessors, 100,000 people were killed, and the others drowned, as they tried to cross the Euphrates. Michael, *Chronicle*, III, 376.

[62] Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, III, 151-157, relates how the Turks left the south of Siberia, first as helpers of Persians or Arabs, and finally as invaders.

[63] I Maccabees 3:59; 9:10(b).

[64] "Descendants of Hagar."

[65] Without a doubt Syria, see Introduction , p. 18.

[66] Literally: "With the holy and God-honored Father and Lord and Patriarch of ours."

[67] 9 May 639, see Introduction, p. 33, n. 6.

[68] Nothing is said of the Arabs in this enumeration, it moreover appears from this discussion that the Gospel had not yet been translated into their language, and it was (translated) for the first time in May/June 639 (after the 9th of May and before the departure of 'Amr for Egypt).

[69] The Caliph 'Umar II also seems to have asked this question in his letter to Leo III by saying, "who was holding the heavens and the earth" while Jesus was on the earth?; see Gaudeul, "Leo and 'Umar," *Islamochristiana*, 10 (1984), p. 145, BNM 4944, l. 48 - ed.

[70] Exodus 24:18. - Cf. Qur'an 2:48 and 7:138 - ed.

[71] One will notice without coming to negative conclusions that the Qur'an is not referred to, but only the Pentateuch. The Muslims are very well "Hagarenes," the descendants and disciples of Abraham and "of Hagar." It is very interesting to see that Michael the Syrian, *Chronicle*, II, 403, has Islam originate from Judaism: "Muhammad attached himself to the faith of the Jews, who pleased him... He suggested it to his comrades and won some of them." As a result — because of the right of inheritance — he sent them to plunder the old land of the Jews, Palestine (Ibid). Theophanes informs us also (the year 622), that the Jews had joined Muhammad, because they accepted him as one of their prophets.

[72] The same reason (is given) in the homily of the LXX by Severus of Antioch, p. [303]. *Patr. orient.*, vol. XII, p.21.

[73] Deut. 6:4.

[74] The *Didaskalie* of Jacob (Sargis of Aberga), *Patr. orientalis*, vol.

8, pp. 711-780 (fasc. 5) is dedicated to the proof of this thesis. Moreover, it was written at approximately the same time (640).

[75] The Qur'an, and early Islamic tradition, mention neither the names nor the Books of the prophets, and it is quite certain that Muhammad knew nothing of them - ed.

[76] Gen. 19:24. This text is commented to in the same manner by Severus of Antioch, loc. cit. p. [308]. The Greek is: Καὶ κύριος ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ Σόδομα καὶ Γόμορρα θεῖον καὶ πῦρ παρὰ κυρίου ἐξ οὐρανοῦ. The Syriac is: *wmry' 'ht 'l sdwm w'l 'mwr' kbrt' wnw'r' mn qdm mry' mn shmy'*.

[77] Gen. 19:18, the Syriac gives the plural *mry*, but one should perhaps read: "The glorious name of the LORD and (a second time) of the LORD."

[78] The Masoretic text has been translated word for word in the Greek and Syriac: וְיִהְיֶה הַמַּטֵּיב ... מֵאֵת יְהוָה מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם. All of this seems to show that the Pentateuch had not been translated into Arabic, if not, then one would have based (his decision) — for or against — on this translation.

[79] See below, pp. 270-271 [deleted] on the subject of the "Patriarch John on inheritance." Very early on Roman laws were translated into the Syriac to regulate this casuistry. Land published one of these compilations according to a Syriac manuscript from the beginning of the 6th century, *Leges saeculares*, in *Anecdota syriaca*, I, Leyden, 1872, p. 128. - The preserved collections have been published by E. Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. I and II, Berlin, 1907 and 1908. - We quote the regulations of the edition of the laws of the Spanish Muslims, which was recently published: *Particion de Herencias entre les Musulmanes del rito malequi*, by José A. Sanchez Pérez, Madrid, 1914, in 8°, xvi-312 pp.

[80] These are the main three tribes of the Christian Arabs. See

their conversion and their praise in the "Life of Ahoudemmeh," *Patr. orient.*, III, 21-33. The 'Aqûlâyê, "that is, the people from Baghdad went from Haran to Mabbug and Hamath," writes Michael, *Chronicle*, II, 445. The three tribes seem to be "west of the Euphrates" (*Ibid.*, II, 466-467). The most powerful Christian tribe seems to have been the Taghlibs who were stretched out from Oman and the banks of the Tigris to the valley of the Orontes and Damascus: one said as a proverb, "Without the introduction of Islam, the Taghlib would have invaded everywhere." Cf. H. Lammens, in *Mélanges de la Faculté orientale de Beyrouth*, 1908, III, 1, pp. 262-263. The Tanûkâyê are without a doubt the Benon-Thenoukh (the sons of Tanuk), who made an agreement with Khalid prior to 639 to desert in the midst of battle, cf. *l'Arabie* by Noël Desvergers, Paris, Didot, 1847, p. 235 (according to Kemal-Eddin, *Histoire d'Alep*). Because of this one understands why the "Tanûkâyê" were in the camp of the 'Amr. See in Michael, *Chronicle*, II, 481, the martyr of the leaders of the Taghlibs Mo'adh and Sam'alla, about 709. In Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, II, 123, (*Patr. orient.*, III, 57 quotes) "The Christian Arabs are the Taghlibs, who live in tents."

[81] Matt. 10:19-20 (with Luke 21:12b, paraphrase - ed.).

[82] This entire closing also shows that the discussion took place in 639, as the Arabian victories frightened all Christians, for their internal discord did not delay to begin again. After June, 659 there was a conflict before Mu'awiya in Damascus, between the Jacobite bishops Theodore and Sebokt and the Chalcedonian monks from Mar Maron, and Mu'awiya profited from imposing a monetary fine on the Jacobites. See F. Nau, *Opuscules maronites*, I and II, Paris, 1899 and 1900; E. W. Brooks, *Chronica minora*, II, Paris, 1904, p. 55.

[83] Or "the bishops," because the word *hsy'* is often reserved for them.

[84] Thomas, Severus and Sergius are mentioned in the *Chronicle* of Michael, vol. II, p. 412, in that they formed the entourage of the

Patriarch Athanasius, predecessor to John, when he went to find the Emperor Heraclius. It is natural that they escorted his successor John when he went to find 'Amr.

[85] In 940 (629) named as the bishop of Marga and Gomal, cf. Michael, *Chronicle*, II, 416, 419.

[86] This word appears to describe a superior in the monastery.

[87] Here is that which Michael relates, *Chronicle*, II, 432: "At that time 'Amr, the Amir of the Tayyâyê, forbade that the crosses appear even on feast days and rogation days. This pleased the Jews, and they gave themselves to taking the crosses out of the churches. Then a Christian, who was known by the Amir, was provoked by zeal as he saw how a Jew ran on top of the church of St. John the Baptist (in Damascus), to take away the cross, and went to 'Amr to meet with him and said. 'O righteous Amir! It is not right that you allow a Jew to make our mysteries a derision.' Then as God changed his heart, he said: 'I have not prescribed to take away the crosses, except for those which are displayed in the streets, on the walls...' This order ceased, and the Christians began to carry the crosses at the rogation days, on feast days and in funerals again. Meanwhile, in Emesa and Damascus, they never had this freedom since this edict of the Amir 'Amr was proclaimed."

[88] The manuscript of London, Add. 17265, is of the XIII century, that is, contemporary with Bar Hebraeus.

[89] The editor translated *Bar Chatibi ad sedem* ('wmr') and corrected his writing, *Ibid.*, I, 923.

[90] We have made the remark, *XIV. Congrès des Orientalistes*, Algier, vol. II, 1906, p. 62, that one also finds the date 960 or the word *sm* and since one reads *sm* or 940 (629), all synchronisms are satisfied.

[91] One reads in folio 127 v° that Simon Zaité "built a prayer house

for the Hanife” *bn’ byt s’wt’ ‘hnp’* in the year 707, as the manuscript of London Add. 17265 gives: “He built the mosque, which is south of the church (of Mar Theodore in Nisibe), a house of prayer for the Arabs,” *wbn’ ‘msgd’ dnn tymnh d’dt’ byt s’wt’ ‘th’*. Thus describes *Hanfo*, whose real sense means “pagan,” but sometimes “the Arabs,” as in a manuscript of Paris. - This construction will moreover be explained in detail, *Ibid.*; ms. 375, fol. 176. *wtwb mtl ‘yqr’ dmlk’ dth’ wdnbsm ‘byhwn ‘qwb’h. bn’ ‘l gbh d’dt’ msgd’ rb’ wshpyr’ wsbth tb myqr’t wsm ptwr’ dml’ kl tkbyn dbmdynt’. wklhyn npqth mn ‘dt’ hy dshql hw’. wmnnyh hw’ bh ‘k’hwn th’ wpqyh’ wms’yn’ dsybyn hww*. “Thereupon to honor the King of Tayyâye and to reconcile them with their hearts, (Simon Zaite) built a large and beautiful mosque next to the church (of Theodore of Nisibe about 708), and he decorated it with care and he erected a table, loaded with everything good which was in the city — he took the income of the church for this — and he restored all the Tayyâye, faqihs and euchites who came.”

[92] The manuscript gives “some fastings,” the parallel passage, which is further below gives “some crosses” *slyb’*.

[93] Read *‘dt’*.

[94] Cf. Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, II, 143, where one precedes a Metropolitan and sings *‘wnyt’* and *m’nyt’*.

[95] Literally: “wanted for the Arabs.”

[96] Muhammad imposed four *zouzes* for the poor, but twelve for merchants and the rich, cf. Bar Hebraeus, *Chron. eccl.*, II, 116-118.

[97] This probably means that Gabriel had requested the protection of the Arabs against the Kurds.

[98] *dr’* from *dr* or *dwr*, *circumivit*. Cf. Arabic *duran*, “procession.”