Aramaisms in the Qur'ān and their Significance

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Priusquam nostris temporibus memoria rerum antiquarum adhiberetur ad oeognidis reliquias recte intelligendas, fieri non potuit quin docti homines perverse de oeognide judicarent: quamquam non tam perverse, quam eis judicandum esset, nisi pudor restitisset et nimia quædam antiquitatis æstimatio quominus clarissimo Græcorum pœtæ obtrectarent.

– Friedrich Nietzsche, *De Theognide Megarensi* 1864

Prologue[1]

When we look at Late Antique Syro-Palestine and Arabia in the early seventh century, the time when Islam is said to have become a religion, an interesting yet complex mosaic of cultures and languages can be observed. Linguistically, various languages were spoken and written. Here we confront a common long-persisting misconception, namely that the Arabs were largely illiterate before Islam. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Roughly speaking, Arabia in Antiquity was divided into three geographical regions: *Arabia Felix*, *Deserta* and *Petraea*.

In the South-western corner (approximately modern Yemen), *Arabia Felix*, or "Happy Arabia," various South Arabian Semitic languages were spoken, the most important of which is Sabaean, written in a Semitic script which split off from the Syro-Palestinian alphabetic tradition during the Bronze Age. Ancient Yemen was heavily involved in the spice and incense (later also the silk) trade from which it garnered considerable wealth.

To the North, in what is now more or less Saudi Arabia was the Classical *Arabia Deserta*, or "Abandoned Arabia," home to Mecca and Medina, a region sparsely inhabited by nomadic tribes and various oasis settlements, often caravanserais for the long-distance trade. The contemporary local languages are nowadays designated as Ancient North Arabian: they are inter-related Semitic (oasis) dialects that, however, are not direct ancestors of

Classical Arabic. Inscriptions in these languages or dialects are attested roughly from the sixth century BC to the sixth century AD throughout the region into the modern Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The writing culture of *Arabia Deserta* was thus borrowed from the South – i.e., they used variants of the Ancient (epigraphic) South Arabian script.
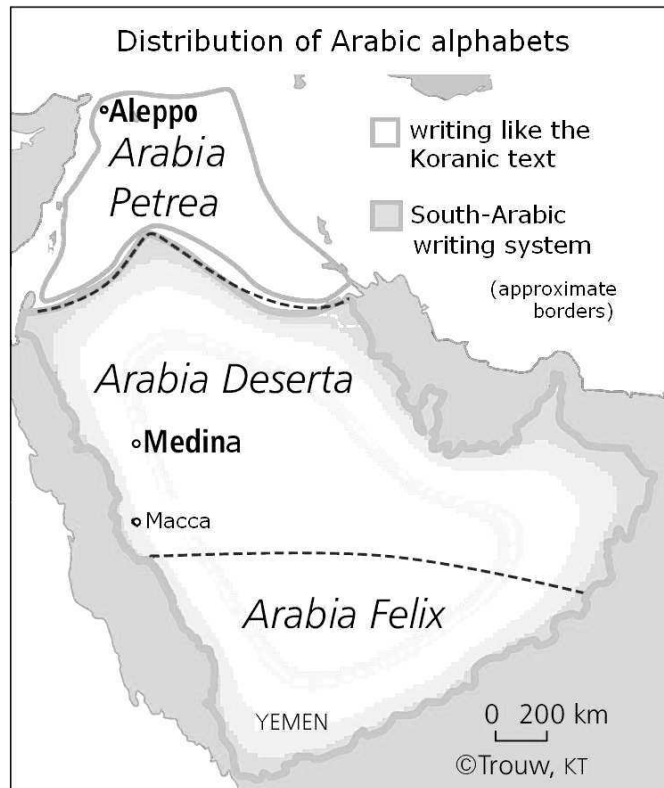

Figure 1: Distribution of Arabic Alphabets; with kind permission of *Trouw* (Dutch daily newspaper).

Further to the North, in the geographical area of Syro-Palestine (which includes the Egyptian Sinai, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and South-eastern Turkey and North-western Iraq) was *Arabia Petraea*, or the *Provincia Arabia*, the Roman border province whose capital was Petra. This region had been exposed to Greco-Roman culture for close to a millennium. The major written languages here were Greek and various Aramaic dialects, the most important of which was Syriac. Furthermore, much of the population of this region (unlike in *Arabia Deserta*) had converted to one form or another of Christianity (which was anything but an homogenous, monolithic entity).

Arabic	Translit.	Syriac	Hebrew	Geʿez	OSA	Ugaritic
	ʾ					
	b					
	t					
	ṯ					
	ǧ					
	ḥ					
	ḫ					
	d					
	ḏ					
	r					
	z					
	s					
	š					
	ṣ					
	ḍ					
	ṭ					
	ẓ					
	ʿ					
	ġ					
	f					
	q					
	k					
	l					
	m					
	n					
	h					
	w					
	y					
	ś					

OSA = Old South Arabic

Hatched boxes (in the lines with Syriac and Hebrew letters): Phonemes lost in Aramaic, in Arabic replaced by the nearest phonetic equivalent

Black boxes: equivalent missing

The Arabic letters for ǧ, f, q, and n and the Syriac letters for d and r merged due to cursive writing.

Figure 2: Alphabets of the Ancient Middle East.

The important point that must be noted is that although in *Arabia Petraea* Aramaic and Greek texts are often attributed to the Nabataeans, Palmyrenians and others who were actually neither Aramaic nor Greek, their names and occasional stray words in inscriptions show that they were ethnically Arabs. We are dealing with a situation similar to that of medieval Western Europe in which Latin was the written language, while the spoken languages (vernaculars) were the precursors of the languages spoken today.

Briefly summarised, the Arabic language (especially with regard to the primary diagnostic feature, the definite article ال‍ – *al-*) and script of *Arabia Petraea* are the precursors of the classical Arabic script and language. Before Islam, texts in the Aramaic script are hardly attested south of the modern state of Jordan and then only in the extreme North-west corner of modern Saudi Arabia. In *Arabia Felix* and *Deserta*, other scripts and languages were current. It is in *Arabia Petraea* that we find occasional Arabic texts in an Aramaic script and even Arabic written in Greek characters. A sixth/seventh century fragment of Psalm 78 found in the Umayyad "Mosque" at Damascus shows just how close this Arabic is to what would later morph into Classical Arabic (e.g., إمالة – *imāla*). The precursor to Classical Arabic was thus spoken in Syria, not in the Hijaz.

We now have two independent sources of *prima facie* contemporary evidence—aerial linguistics and script distribution—to show that the language of the Qur'ān must be based on a Syro-Palestinian Arabo-Semitic dialect and that the script employed was not that used in Mecca and Medina of the period, but the one used in *Arabia Petraea*. If the Qur'ān is actually a product of the Hijaz, then we would expect it to be in a different (Ancient North Arabian) Semitic language and written in a different script. That is not the case. The traditional account of the Qur'ān's origins is not supported by the evidence.

The peculiar thing about the Arabic script we are familiar with today is its polyvalence—i.e., it needs diacritical dots (اعجام – *i'ǧām*) to distinguish between otherwise identical consonantal characters (رسم – *rasm*). For example, the Arabic glyph ٮ can be read as *b* (ب), *t* (ت), *ṯ* (ث), *n* (ن) and medially as *y* (ي). Thus the Arabic script distinguishes eighteen glyphs that are made distinct by diacritics to render twenty-eight phonemes. A part of this polyvalence is not phonetically conditioned; it is due to the cursive erosion of distinct forms (e.g., *b*, *n*, medial *y*). In other cases, it is due to the fact that a twenty-two letter Aramaic alphabet was later supplemented to render additional Arabic phonemes (i.e., sounds that Aramaic had lost, but which survived in Arabic) by adding diacritical dots, a practice already found e.g. in Palmyrenian Aramaic, to the nearest phonetic approximant. This, along with borrowed Aramaic orthographic customs (such as ة, the *tā' marbūṭa* to mark the feminine ending, the *alif otiosum*, etc.) and the method of adding vowel marks (حركات – *ḥarakāt*) shows unmistakably that Arabic

writing evolved from a long tradition of writing Aramaic and can, therefore, only have occurred in a region where the Arabs had had a long exposure to Aramaic writing culture: that is Aramaic writing was *arabicised*—note that the perhaps anachronistic notation of suffixed case vowels which had been lost in Aramaic at least a millennium and a half previously is known in Arabic grammar as such (إعراب – *i'rāb*). The only place where this could have happened is *Arabia Petraea*. If the Qur'ān were actually a product of Mecca and Medina, then (besides it being written in a different Semitic language) it would have had to have been composed in the South Arabian script which unambiguously differentiates each of the twenty-eight phonemes of Arabic and which, by this time, had a twelve hundred year tradition in the Hijaz. That this ideally suited script was not used means that it was unknown to the writers of the Qur'ān (the only attestation hitherto of pre-Classical Arabic being written in the Ancient South Arabian script is by an apparent resident alien at Qaryat al-Fāw on the North-Western edge of the Empty Quarter, situated on a major trade route from the Yemen to Eastern Arabia and the Gulf – see M. C. A. Macdonald, "Ancient Arabia and the Written Word," in idem (ed.), *The development of Arabic as a written language* (Supplement to the PSAS 40; Oxford, 2010, 17).

The fact that both the script and language of the Qur'ān point to the Classical *Arabia Petraea* of Syro-Palestine, and not *Arabia Deserta*, is further supported by the fact that the Qur'ān's vocabulary is largely borrowed from Aramaic, especially Syriac, the liturgical language of the local churches. Needless to say, the semantics of the technical religious vocabulary of the Qur'ān, the spelling of the names of biblical figures, and the often subtle biblical allusions presuppose an intimate knowledge of biblical literature in its Syro-Aramaic tradition. Syro-Palestine was heavily Christianised by the seventh century. Although there is some evidence of Christianity and Judaism in "happy" and "deserted" Arabia during this period, it just does not appear to have had the critical mass necessary to launch a new religion. Furthermore, the theological, doctrinal controversies that gave rise to the "heresies" that permeated Late Antique society were largely absent, or rather were not so significant outside of the Roman Empire. Thus, all of the contemporary epigraphical, literary, and linguistic evidence points to Islam being a product of Arabs living in Syro-Palestine.

This claim stands in stark contrast to the traditional narrative of a *blitzkrieg* from the Hijaz into Syro-Palestine. This event has vexed modern archaeologists. There is simply no archaeological support for a quick, violent and destructive invasion of Syro-Palestine as reported by traditional Islamic sources. Instead, excavations reveal a continuity of occupation and culture: the period in question is, archaeologically speaking, quite uneventful and

conservative. The major cultural changes in ceramics and the like (such as the introduction of glazed wares) only occur in the eighth century. There is an uninterrupted settlement continuum through the Umayyad period (in which the mosaic as an art-form reached its peak) into Abbasid times. Even then the change is gradual rather than sudden. Where there was change, it consisted of a tendency towards smaller settlements in the countryside, which became favoured over towns. Archaeologically speaking, then, an Arab or Muslim conquest of Syro-Palestine is invisible. And the reason for this was that the Arabs were already living in the region as evidenced by their language.[2] In the end, archaeology, epigraphy and linguistics mitigate against a Hijazi origin of the Qur'ān. The latter can only be a product of Hellenistic Syro-Palestine.

1. Introduction

We have now seen that, based on archaeology, script geography and areal linguistics in the Late Antique Roman-Byzantine Middle East (including Arabia), the Qur'ān could not have originated in the Arabic script or language in the Mecca/Medina region. Current epigraphic and linguistic knowledge decisively contradicts the traditional narrative; one must instead look more closely at greater Syria, toward the Ghassanids and in particular the Lakhmids or the descendants of deported Arabs from in and around Merv. This is where the precursor of the Arabic language we know today was spoken, and where the transition from *Aramaic* to *Arabic* script was completed. If these arguments for how and where the Qur'ān was written down are examined, then much of its content will be easier to understand.

The following article will proffer a discussion on the theological and technical loan-words in the Qur'ān. By taking these into consideration, it becomes clear that Syria must be considered as the most likely place of origin of the holy book of Islam.

A reader of the Qur'ān will quickly notice its biblical legacy. What also stands out, however, is how the Qur'ān understands the Bible. This supposedly revealed book asserts the biblical lore it conveys as historical fact. The Qur'ān is guilty of the same mistake that many Christians and Jews still make today, specifically, confusing revelatory truth, or biblical historiography, with actual history. As the Qur'ān largely recognises the historical validity of Judaeo-Christian salvation history, as would be expected based on the period of its writing, which can be seen for example in 2:136 (also 3:84):

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ

وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِن رَّبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ

وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

qūlū āmannā bil-lāhi wa-mā unzila ilaynā wa-mā unzila ilā 'ibrāhīma wa-
'ismā'īla wa-'isḥāqa wa-ya'qūba wal-asbāṭi wa-mā 'ūtiya mūsā wa-'īsā wa-mā
'ūtiya l-nabiyyūna min rabbihim lā nufarriqu bayna 'aḥadin min-hum
wanaḥnu lahu muslimūna

Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allāh and that which is revealed unto us and
that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob,
and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, and that which the
prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of
them, and unto Him we have surrendered. (Pickthall)

Thus the Qur'ān cannot claim any historical authenticity for itself. Historical
and critical biblical research over roughly the past two-hundred years has
uncovered the complex origins and history of the Hebrew Bible and the
Christian New Testament, granting some aspects remain to be clarified in
detail. Nonetheless, while academic Bible research can show that hardly any
story in the Bible is historically true in the modern sense of the word, this
must also apply to the versions of these biblical stories which appear in the
Qur'ān.[3] This subject would best be clarified elsewhere, but in passing we
merely want to note, for instance, that the narrative of the Deluge clearly
must have originated from a similar *topos* out of Mesopotamia, where floods
were very frequent and where a very early literary model of the (Sumero-
)Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh* came from. Another example is the question
of whether Abraham/Ibrahim was the first monotheist. This can be ruled out.
Today we know that the blessing of Abraham by Melchizedek (Genesis 14:19)
does not refer to a single God as the translation based on an understanding of
the Epistle to the Hebrews might suggest ("Blessed be Abram by God Most
High, Creator of heaven and earth"). Rather, this verse refers to three deities
(a more correct translation would be: "Blessed be Abraham by *Elyon*, *El*, [and
El], *the Creator of heaven and earth.*") The same goes for Moses. There is no
way he could have been the founder of Israelite Monotheism (and it must be
explicitly noted that the monotheism attributed to Moses has nothing to do
with the Amarna period in Egypt). For one, the narratives concerning him
have a complex history of composition which only began centuries after the
events were allegedly narrated. Similar remarks could be made in regard to

the doctrine of angels or prophecy. Hence, the Qur'ānic understanding of the Bible rather represents the preliminary end of a long history of development. The Qur'ān therefore largely follows in the traditions of the Judaeo-Christian divine revelations.[4]

But where does this monotheistic, biblical, influence on the Qur'ān come from? In the past, also based on Islamic traditional literature, it has been reported that local Jewish and Christian Arabic tribes exerted varying degrees of influence on "Muḥammad." Some epigraphical evidence also suggests a history of Judaism in Arabia, as well as Christian missions in the region.[5] Of course, there were also various tribes with diverse traditional Semitic religions other than Judaism and Christianity, and the Qur'ān pursues a polemic against these as well, although surprisingly enough quite imprecisely. Some evidence for these religions has been found in the form of inscriptions, although these, as we have noted, are not particularly helpful or informative and are mostly related to the kingdom of Sheba in present day Yemen. North Arabian inscriptions are for the most part simply graffiti and mostly inconsequential, except perhaps for possible theophoric elements in the individual names. Although it is entirely possible that an originally pagan "Muḥammad" could have had Jewish and Christian teachers from whom he would have been taught about both Judaism and Christianity, as well as about the Old and New Testaments from which he created a new, autonomous, religion, I have my doubts about this interpretation.

Although there is still a lot of work to be done in the archaeological exploration of Arabia, so far this research has simply not produced sufficient evidence for mass conversion to Judaism and Christianity in the region to make a plausible case supporting the idea of a direct transfer of these religions to Islam. This applies especially to Christianity, which in my opinion is presupposed by the Qur'ān. On the other hand, there is nothing in the holy book of Islam which could be exclusively interpreted as Jewish, or at least no traditions which could be evaluated and attributed uniquely to (rabbinic) Judaism. The Qur'ānic stories originating from the Hebrew Bible certainly could have come from a Christian source, for example from an Aramaic translation of the Bible.

To thoroughly investigate the possible origins of the Qur'ān, it is essential to analyse the text itself.

One particularly notable problem with trying to do this is that a critical edition of the Qur'ānic text does not exist. That is, no raw consonantal text (رسم – *rasm*) without diacritical marks (إعجام – *iʿğām*) with variant readings of relevant early manuscripts exists. There is also no diachronic etymological dictionary of Arabic. The current stage of text-critical research into the Qur'ānic text takes the Cairo edition of the Qur'ān as the standard, which essentially means that Qur'ānic textual criticism is at the same stage of development as were biblical studies in the seventeenth-century. This was a

time when a conflict was raging over whether or not the Masoretic vowel-pointing was revealed together with the text itself to Moses on Mount Sinai. Some Jewish scholars, such as Ibn Ezra, had previously pointed out that the addition of vowels must have originated with the Tiberian Masoretes only in the Middle Ages. This thesis gained notoriety among Christian scholars in the sixteenth century through Elias Levita, although it was highly contested, especially by the Buxdorfs. It was Louis Cappel who first scientifically proved this theory in his anonymous work *Arcanum Punctationis Revelatum*, which was published by the Leyden professor Thomas Erpenius in 1624. Since then, and in fact even before then, the text of the Hebrew Bible, as well as that of the New Testament, was understood in a context of ongoing change. Thus the Old and New Testaments should not historically be considered "canons." This term must be understood here as an anachronism, in part thanks to many recent discoveries such as the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947. The development of comparative linguistics has also helped to transform our understanding of these texts. No respectable Old Testament Bible scholar today would still rely on works like מחברת מנחם – *Maḥbäräṯ Mənaḥēm* by the tenth century Menahem ben Jakob ibn Saruq of Cordoba, or שרשות כסף – *Šạršōṯ Käsäp̄* ("Chains of Silver") of the thirteenth/fourteenth centuries by Joseph ibn Kaspi from the Provence region. Similarly, no scholar would rely on early scientific dictionaries, which in some respects are based on the work of mediaeval Jewish scholars. One such example would be the *Lexicon hebraicum et chaldaicum complectens omnes voces, tam primas quàm derivatas, quœ in Sacris Bibliis, Hebrœâ, and ex parte Chaldœâ linguâ scriptis extant ...* (Basel, 1631[1]), by the Buxdorfs (père et fils). It was very well known in its time, as was the *Lexicon et commentarius sermonis hebraici et chaldaici veteris testamenti ...* (Amsterdam, [1]1669; [2]Frankfurt, 1689) of Johannes Coccejus from Bremen. Regardless, it is likely that many theologians today–to their own detriment–would not understand enough Latin to use these resources anyway!

These works were ground-breaking in some respects at the time of their writing, but for modern academic Bible study they have become obsolete. The advancement of academic Hebrew and biblical Aramaic lexicography over the course of the last two centuries can be seen by the various editions of Wilhelm Gesenius' lexicons.[6] The eighteenth edition of this publication has recently been completed by the Old Testament scholar and Egyptologist Herbert Donner from Kiel, and is now regarded as the "state of the art" tool for serious Bible scholars. The older works, especially those compiled by mediaeval Rabbis, are of course still valuable. They are important in their own right for research into the rabbinical, or classical Jewish understanding of biblical writings–I even used the first edition of Gesenius on occasion during my studies of rabbinical texts. However, they are now essentially useless for

understanding the conceptual meaning of biblical words and texts at the time of their supposed writing. This makes it all the more surprising that Qurʾānic exegesis is still based on pre-scientific works, such as the deservedly famous العرب لسان – *Lisān al-ʿarab* of Ibn Manzur, living in the thirteenth/fourteenth century, or المحيط القاموس – *Al-qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* by al-Firuzabadi, who lived in fourteenth/fifteenth century Iran.

These dictionaries, as well as those produced by Western scholars, offer profound support for the reading of classical Arabic texts, but are only of limited use in the philological work related to the "first Arabic book," since they assume the later Islamic interpretation of it. Here would be the place to mention the *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum* of Jacob Golius, a Leyden scholar and Erpenius' student (Leyden, 1653), as well as the revised edition by Georg Wilhelm Freytag (*Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, 4 Vols.; Halle, 1830–1837). Also worth mentioning are Al-Zabidi's العروس تاج – *Tāǧ al-ʿarūs* and the subsequent extended *Arab-English Lexicon* (incomplete; London, 1863–1893) by the English scholar Edward William Lane as well as the *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* (Leyden, 1881) by the Dutch Orientalist Reinhart Dozy and the *Wörterbuch der klassischen arabischen Sprache* by the Tübingen arabist Manfred Ullmann (Wiesbaden, 1970–). Despite Fück's conclusion that a philological-etymological dictionary would be required for any translation of the Qurʾān, as for study of the Bible, such a resource does not actually exist for the former. The most recent Qurʾānic dictionary is the *Arabic-English Dictionary of Qurʾānic Usage* by the scholars Elsaid M. Badawi and Muhammad Abdel Haleem, published (twice!) by the renowned Leyden publishing house E.J. Brill in 2010. This dictionary is far from reaching the same scientific level as the new edition of the "Koehler-Baumgartner" biblical Hebrew lexicon,[7] also published by E.J. Brill, which includes epigraphical findings and results of comparative Semitic linguistics, among other things. The older works certainly drew from the most current knowledge of their time, but the newer Qurʾānic works have yet to reach a state of the art academic level, thus scientific philological study of the Qurʾān is still for the most part impossible.

The problems with interpreting the Qurʾān are essentially the same as with Bible exegesis. Religions are human creations and are thus constantly evolving; they are not fixed programmes, despite what fundamentalists say. Without critical analysis, any reading of for example the *Germania* by Tacitus, Roman Law, the Bible, the Qurʾān, *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, or any other literary work, will only ever be understood in terms of the present views and circumstances of the reader. For example, every Christian today knows at least roughly what is supposedly meant by the religious terms "Son," "Trinity," and "Last Supper." However, the current meaning(s) of these words simply represent the provisional end of a long semantic evolution, and in no way have the same meaning they did during the time when Jesus is said to

have lived. Historical linguistic research into the meanings of Hebrew and Greek words is well established, but with Arabic this work has hardly yet begun. With this method, we can see that the *Donatio Constantini* is a forgery and that the surviving copies of the *Karelsprivilege* have nothing to do with Charlemagne. The Greek of the New Testament is not the Greek of the Homeric epics; the language of the Hebrew Bible is not the same rabbinic language of the *Mishna* and the *Tosefta*. Likewise, the Arabic of the commentators (مفسرون – *mufassirūn*) is not the Arabic of the Qurʾān.

Here, it must be pointed out that the philological method is universally applicable; it can be applied to any text. Although the traditional commentary literature (تفسير – *tafsīr*) on the Qurʾān is important for understanding this book in the context of Islamic traditions, it is not really useful for research into its origins and original meaning. This problem has been previously mentioned on occasion, even by Old Testament scholars who regularly draw on Arabic vocabulary for their research. The remarks of L. Kopf are important to note here:

> A large portion of the vocabulary that Arabic philologists have recorded and interpreted was not previously known to them either from everyday usage or from comprehensive reading. Their main task, then, was not to find a clear and definitive meaning for words that were already known to every scholar, but rather to find meanings for rare and lesser-known words, which they very well may have encountered for the first time in their professional endeavours. There were two essential foundations for this type of research which were missing, specifically knowledge of other Semitic languages and the availability of large and systematically structured sets of linguistic data. As a result, many imprecise and even completely absurd definitions arose. The numerous varying meanings which have been assigned to many seldom-used Arabic words should be seen as the result of efforts undertaken without adequate resources by philologists attempting to explain difficult expressions using the resources available to them … Since the knowledge of other Semitic languages was missing and parallel passages were often not available for comparison, the floodgates were opened to this type of guesswork. Especially often, the use of different methods led to varying results. Along with the erroneous definitions provided by philologists themselves were others which were motivated by either religious considerations … or old linguistic traditions of the "pre-scientific" times.[8]

An example of this can be seen in the oldest monument of the Arabic language, the كتاب العين – *Kitāb al-ʿayn* by Al-Ḥalil ibn Aḥmad al-Farahid,[9] which does not even discuss commonplace words like كلب – *kalb* "dog," كثير – *kaṯīr* "many," or even the very common adverb كل – *kull* "all." Kopf provides

a good example of the workings of traditional Arabic philology (*art. cit.* 298) from the above mentioned القاموس المحيط – *Al-qāmūs al-muḥīṭ*, specifically the common word كرسي – *kursī* "chair." This lexeme is obviously related to the Hebrew lexeme כִּסֵּא – *kissē'* "throne" (but must be borrowed from a later Aramaic form such as Syriac ܟܘܪܣܝܐ – *kursyā*), but in this work it surprisingly takes on the meaning "knowledge," alongside its primary meaning. This is due to the "Throne Verse" (2:255) of the Qur'ān:

$$\text{وَسِعَ كُرِسِّيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالأَرْضَ}$$

wasiʿa kursiyyuhu l-samāwāti wal-arḍa
"His Throne comprehends[10] Heaven and Earth."

There are many such examples from traditional Arabic lexicography.[11] However, the previous example makes the problem sufficiently obvious: the traditional dictionaries are not helpful in determining the Qur'ānic meaning of Arabic words. They are more comparable to unrealistic thesauri. Imagine what would happen if *Beowulf* or Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* were read using a dictionary of modern English usage. Goethe's "Seek only to confuse people, it is too difficult to please them" surely applies, then, to research on Arabic words of the Qur'ān.

2. Foreign Words as a Feature of Cultural Exchange

Thus, there is no academic critical edition of the Qur'ān and no scientific study of its lexicon. Anyone who reads the Qur'ān in Arabic (or is even perplexed by the varying renditions of the translations), will quickly become confused. Each word can seemingly be assigned an unexpected meaning according to the preferences of each researcher, thanks to the legacy of the older traditions. A student of comparative Semitic linguistics will also be confused, as the necessity of such leaps often remains a mystery.

What also stands out to Semiticists is the high frequency of foreign words in Qur'ānic Arabic. Foreign words are an interesting linguistic phenomenon; they can reveal something about the history of the speakers of a language and their past encounters.[12] We can see this in German, for example. The vocabulary relating to wine production is of Latin origin, suggesting that this aspect of Germanic culture was introduced by the Romans (for example, "Wein" ("wine") <*vinum*, "Kelter" ("wine-press") <*calcatura* etc.). This becomes especially clear when we also consider the fact that the regions in Germany where traditionally the most wine is produced previously belonged to the Roman Empire – beer was the traditional beverage of the Germanic peoples.[13]

It is also not surprising that the English Christian vocabulary has largely Latin origins as well: *advent, accident* (*accidens* <συμβεβηκός), *confession,*

confirmation, Eucharist, host, liturgy, mass, mission, oblate, passion, pastor, real presence, sacrament, substance etc., leaving no doubt as to how and from where Christianity spread to the English (vis-à-vis the Greek derivation of such words in Slavic languages and even in Arabic). It is important to note here that these words have a specific theological meaning in English, regardless of what their definitions are in classical Latin (or their respective etymologies).[14] In addition to these loan-words, there are also so-called loan-translations. These are verbatim *(verbum pro verbo)* translations from Latin to English which (etymologically) make no sense in the latter. The meanings of the terms are thus derived from the donor language, like "holy spirit" (<*spiritus sanctus)*, "holy" (<*sanctus*), "shepherd" (<*pastor*), "body" (*corpus* <σῶμα), "baptism" (<*baptismus*[15] <βαπτισμός) or even "God," in the sense of a single and specific entity (<*deus*), etc. Most of these words have long since been adopted into English (as well as other European languages) and are no longer even perceived as foreign.

Thus it should come as no surprise that there are also foreign words and loan-translations in the Bible. For example, the Old Testament contains lexemes derived from Akkadian (and Sumerian),[16] Egyptian,[17] Greek,[18] Aramaic[19] etc. The Greek New Testament further reflects its origin in the Semitic world through its usage of many borrowed terms, like *Mammon* (Matthew 16:24; Luke 6:9,11,13) or the last words of Jesus: "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachtani*?" (Mark 15:34; Matthew 27:46 <Psalm 22:2).[20] The use of these words, especially in the field of theology or in other scientific areas, is not a coincidence, but rather has a lot to do with the introduction of previously unknown novel concepts or terms into the intellectual realm of a particular language. One example of an old (pre-Hebrew) loan word in the Old Testament must suffice here to briefly illustrate this process: The Hebrew loan-word הֵיכָל – *hēḵāl* "temple" (actually found in all Northwest Semitic languages) is derived from Akkadian *ekallum*, which itself goes back to Sumerian é.gal "big house." This indicates that the construction of an architecturally specific building, imagined as the house of a deity, is a custom that has its origins in Mesopotamia. Confirmation of this can also be found in the archaeology of the Early Dynastic Period (early Bronze Age). Similarly, there are many loan words in the tale of the construction of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1–9), which describes the construction of a ziggurat (namely, inspired by the famous one commenced by the neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II). In this case, the loan words come from a later language stratum, like for example לְבֵנָה – *ləḇēnāʰ* "a sun-dried mud brick"– in Akkadian *libittuᵐ*. The fabrication and use of mud bricks was also a Mesopotamian practice–in Palestine one built with stone.

3. The loan-vocabulary of the Qur'ān

Returning to the main topic of this paper—the foreign words (including the loan-translations) in the text of the Qur'ān—it should have been made clear above that these must relate to the texts and faiths with which the authors of the Qur'ān were in contact. In this section I deal primarily with the work of the Australian scholar Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān,* which thankfully has been re-published by the Brill publishing house (2007).[21] In this compilation, he deals with three hundred and eighteen different words (without inflected forms; in the following, I add a few more). The Qur'ān contains three to seven thousand words, depending on how the different word-forms are counted. Bearing this in mind, between six and ten percent of the vocabulary is of foreign origin. This in itself is not surprising, considering that approximately eighty percent of English words have foreign roots (from an etymological point of view), without this completely obscuring its Germanic origins. With respect to the Qur'ān it is important to note, however, that all of the important theological terms stem from Aramaic and in fact largely from Syriac. A few are potentially of Ethiopian or Persian origin, but many Iranian words were in all likelihood borrowed into Arabic through Syriac. I will also show that a few key terms demonstrate prior knowledge of the classical Syriac translation of the Bible, the *Peshitta.* An interesting example of this situation is the word خردل – *ḫardal* "mustard seed" in the Qur'ānic verses 21:47:

وَنَضَعُ الْمَوَازِينَ الْقِسْطَ لِيَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ فَلَا تُظْلَمُ نَفْسٌ شَيْئًا ۖ وَإِن كَانَ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ

خَرْدَلٍ أَتَيْنَا بِهَا ۗ وَكَفَىٰ بِنَا حَاسِبِينَ

wa-naḍaʿu l-mawāzīna l-qisṭa li-yawmi l-qiyāmati fa-lā tuẓlamu nafsun šayʾan wa-ʾin kāna miṯqāla ḥabbatin min ḫardalin ʾātaynā bi-hā wa-kafā binā ḥāsibīn[a]

"And We shall set up balances of justice on the Day of Resurrection, then none will be dealt with unjustly in anything. And if there be the weight of a mustard seed, We will bring it. And Sufficient are We to take account."

And Qur'ān 31:16

يَا بُنَيَّ إِنَّهَا إِن تَكُ مِثْقَالَ حَبَّةٍ مِّنْ خَرْدَلٍ فَتَكُن فِي صَخْرَةٍ أَوْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ أَوْ فِي الْأَرْضِ

يَأْتِ بِهَا اللَّهُ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَطِيفٌ خَبِيرٌ

yā-bunayya ʾinna-hā ʾin taku miṯqāla ḥabbatin min ḫardalin fa-takun fī ṣaḫratin ʾaw fī s-samāwāti ʾaw fī l-ʾarḍi yaʾti bi-hā llāhu ʾinna llāha laṭīfun ḫabīr[un]

"O my son! If it be (anything) equal to the weight of a grain of mustard seed, and though it be in a rock, or in the heavens or in the earth, Allāh will bring it

forth. Verily, Allāh is subtle (in bringing out that grain), well-aware (of its place)."

It will be obvious to a knowledgeable reader that these verses bear a certain resemblance to the "Parable of the Mustard Seed" in Matthew 13:31–32 and to the "Healing of a Demon-Possessed Boy" in Matthew 17:20 (Mark 4:31, Luke 13:19 and 17:6 have less bearing here). The Peshitta actually translated the Greek ὡς κόκκον σινάπεως with ܦܪܕܬܐ ܕܚܪܕܠܐ – *perḏtā d-ḥardlā.* The Arabic word is also found in allegedly "pre-Islamic" poetry (*Divan Hudhail* 97:11), suggesting at least the possibility that the word was adopted even earlier. Although this may be the case, the fact is that the Aramaic[22] loan-word *ḥardlā* is not a common lexeme (and has more common synonyms), and also that it is used in the specific context of the same parable by all accounts, make it extremely likely that we are dealing with the influence of an Aramaic source.

   The example given above is striking. However, it could be argued that this was a migrant word which was acquired along with the product it describes, as is the Greek word cited in the Gospels τό σίναπι (comp. German "Senf") which seems to come ultimately from Akkadian. There are certainly examples of such as well. Consider خمر – *ḥamr* "wine" (2:219; 5:90f; 12:36,41; 47:5), which undoubtedly stems from the Aramaic ܚܡܪܐ – *ḥamrā* (compare this to the word used in Old Testament poetry חֶמֶר – *ḥämär <*ḥamr*), since the wine trade in the Syro-Arabian world at that time was firmly in Christian hands (and the Arabic root means "to cover, to hide.")[23] The word خبز – *ḥubz* "bread"– not a customary food item among the ancient Arabs–is only found in the dream of the baker in Sura *Yusuf* (12:36). It stems from the Old Ethiopian ኅብስት – *ḥəbəst* (with the retroactive assimilation < ኅብዝት – *ḥəbəz(ə)t*, compare to Tigré ሕብዛት – *ḥəbəzat* "thick, round bread.")[24] Also consider زجاجة – *zuğāğa* "glass," a commodity most likely imported from the Aramaic world <ܙܓܘܓܝܬܐ – *zəgugīṭā* (cf. Revelations 21:21) or زيت – *zayt* "olive," a tree not native to Arabia <ܙܝܬܐ – *zaytā* (this word for this fruit was also lent to Africa, for example ϫⲉⲉⲓⲧ/ϫⲟⲉⲓⲧ – *djeit/djoit*, ዘይት – *zayət*, and to the East, e.g. classical Armenian ձէթ – *jêt'* and Georgian ზეთი – *zeti* with the meaning "oil"– the primary exported product made from the olive), because the tree was originally only native to the eastern Mediterranean coast. These loan words are interesting because they point toward Syria as the source of the main cultural contact of the Arabs, and much less toward Ethiopia. There are also isolated (Middle-) Persian loan words, mostly for imported luxury goods, such as إستبرق – *istabraq* "silk brocade" (i.e. from the same source which the English word is ultimately derived from). In such exceptional cases,

the words must have been borrowed from Persian and not through Syro-Aramaic due to their morpho-phonetic features. Old South-Arabic loan words are surprisingly rare, especially since according to the traditional narrative, the Qur'ān emerged in the "back-yard" of this linguistic and cultural entity.

Although these examples are very interesting and warrant further study in their own right, they shed but little light on the linguistic origins of the Qur'ān–they all could have been borrowed at any given time: the relevant trade routes are ancient. We are interested in focussing on the technical theological vocabulary, as it was described above for English. When we find Syro-Aramaic vocabulary in the Arabic of the Qur'ān whose specific religious and liturgical meanings depend on the donor language, we can draw conclusions about the intellectual environment and the sphere of influence which led to its emergence. However, in the following analysis some philological exceptions are taken into account. They are already apparent from the examples given above. As Jeffery has already noted (*op. cit.* 39f.), foreign words in the Qur'ān belong to three basic groups:

1. Words that cannot be Arabic (or even Semitic) at all, like for example إستبرق – *istabraq* "silk brocade." This could be compared in English to the word "schnitzel."

2. Words which have attested Arabic roots, but with a different meaning, like for example خمر – *ḫamr* "wine" (most of the infamous homonymous roots in Arabic belong in this category). This is roughly comparable to the English word "cool" in German; although it is etymologically related to *kühl*, in German it takes on only a specific meaning derived from modern colloquial English.

3. Homonyms, words which are genuinely Arabic but have a nuanced technical meaning alongside their Arabic meaning and must be borrowed. An English example would be "gill"– which usually refers to the breathing organs of fish and is of Germanic origin; the measure mostly used for alcohol, derives from French as indicated by its pronunciation, and ultimately from a Late Latin term for a jar. Loan translations ("calques") also belong in this category (see e.g., "Holy Spirit" *supra*).

I would also like to add a fourth category, which is:

4. Lexemes with a seemingly Semitic root which must be borrowed due to their morpho-phonetic forms. These include the names of biblical figures, such as the Patriarchs, as I will show in the following sections. Compare in English "vessel" (vs "vat").

4. The Vocabulary of Writing in Arabic

Without getting into the specifics of word formation and other morpho-logical details of Semitic languages, I would like to briefly discuss one of their main characteristics: the interaction between consonants and vowels. The consonants provide a rough indication of the meaning; for instance the root √*ktb* usually has something to do semantically with writing. Through the addition of vowels (but also consonants)–mostly according to a particular modification sequence–the specific meaning can emerge, as we see with the given root:

كتب	/kataba/	"he wrote"
كتبنا	/katabnā/	"we wrote"
يكتب	/yaktubu/	"he writes/will write"
نكتب	/naktubu/	"we (will) write"
أكتب	/aktaba/	"he dictated"
يكتب	/yuktibu/	"he dictates/will dictate"
استكتب	/istaktaba/	"he had (something) written/copied"
يستكتب	/yastaktibu/	"he orders/will order (something) written/copied"
كاتب	/kātib/	"writer" (actually "writing" -active participle)
مكتوب	/maktūb/	"letter, something written" (passive participle)
مكتب	/maktab/	"office, desk"
مكتبة	/maktaba/	"library, bookshop"

As this root is widespread throughout Semitic languages, the problem is ob-vious. In the North-West Semitic branch of Semitic languages, both the Canaanite branch (e.g. Phoenician-Punic and Hebrew) and Aramaic, as well as Ugaritic of the Late Bronze Age, attest this root in this meaning in various derivations. However, writing is a relatively new phenomenon in human his-tory. Its first beginnings hearken back to southern Mesopotamia of the fourth millennium bc, and then somewhat later in Egypt. Our own alphabet de-veloped under Egyptian influence and its origins are to be found among Semitic miners in the Sinai during the first half of the second millennium bc. Consequently, the original meaning of this root cannot logically have been "to write." Further proof of this lies in the fact that this root is found neither in Akkadian (Assyro-Babylonian), nor in South-Semitic.[25] We can thus es-tablish that the root √*ktb* only came to describe the action of writing at some later time, and only in the North-West Semitic languages. Other branches of the Semitic language family used other roots, since different and certainly older writing traditions than what we today call Arabic existed there, as we have briefly seen (*supra* §0).

In addition to semantically describing "writing," this root in Arabic also carries a second, independent meaning, namely "to bring together, to bind, to close, to stitch."[26] This is an example of an homonymous root, whereby one meaning is from Arabic itself and the other was necessarily borrowed and adopted into the language. The meaning "to write" must have been taken over from Aramaic when the Arabs of Syro-Palestine adopted and adapted Aramaic writing culture. Jeffery (*op. cit.* 249) suggests that the borrowing may have happened at al-Ḥīrah (الحيرة)[27]–the seat of the Lakhmids–as I have discussed elsewhere. Regardless, the use of the root √*ktb* in its borrowed sense of "to write" further indicates the influence of the Syro-Aramaic writing culture on the Arabs resident in Syro-Palestine.

If we look at the semantic domain of literacy in Arabic, interestingly enough we find only loan-words. Take, for example, the root √*ṣḥf* mentioned above. This root is attested in the Arabic of the Qur'ān as the noun صحف – *ṣuḥuf* (the plural of صحيفة – *ṣaḥīfa* "sheet, page;" Modern Standard Arabic: "newspaper"), always in the sense of something previously revealed: 20:133 (صحف الأولى – *bayyinatu mā fī ṣ-ṣuḥufi l-ʾulā*), as well as 53:36 (صحف موسى – *ṣuḥufi mūsā*); 74, 52; 80:13; 81:10; 87:18f. إن هذا لفي الصحف الأولى صحف – إبراهيم وموسى – *ʾinna hāḏā la-fī ṣuḥufi l-ʾulā ṣuḥufi ʾibrahīma wa-mūsā*)[28] and with an indication of the new revelation 98:2 (رسول من الله يتلو صحفا مطهرة – *rasūlun mina llāhi yatlū ṣuḥufan muṭahharatan*). There is no doubt that we are dealing with a loan-word from South Semitic (linguistically, not necessarily geographically speaking). It is already well-documented in "pre-Islamic" poetry for one, and it also appears in Sabaean and Qatabanian as TfAS – *ṣḥft* (pl. fAS – *ṣḥf*)[29] "document." This root was borrowed once again later on into Arabic, however, this time from Classical Ethiopian as مصحف – *muṣḥaf* "book" (actually, a bound volume of the Qur'ān)–in Gəʿəz this is the customary word for "book," but also "holy writing" (i.e. the Bible), i.e., መጽሐፍ – *maṣəḥaf* (also pl. መጽሐፍት – *maṣəḥafət* [scil. ቅዱሳት – *qəddusāt*]).[30] The Arabic verbal derivation with the meaning "to misread, to falsely place diacritical marks" is in Form II (D-Stem), which here is an indication of its secondary, nominal derivation (which in turn produced the noun تصحف – *taṣaḥḥuf* "mistake in writing, distortion").[31] Here we can see the Qur'ān in the context of Late Antiquity: the vocabulary of writing is borrowed from the neighbouring cultures from which the Arabs took their writing traditions. Since the (Syro-Palestinian) Arabs were for the most part in contact with the Syro-Aramaic writing culture, as is evident from the visual resemblance which both writing systems display, it is not surprising that most of the roots describing this action were borrowed from that culture. Other terms come from more distant regions such as southern Arabia and Ethiopia.

There are other Qur'ānic expressions with reference to the written word that are also borrowed. For example, سجل – *siǧill*, a *hapax legomenon*, is documented in the Qur'ān only in 21:104. The classic commentators had great

difficulty with this word and translated it in different ways, such as "angel" *as-Sijill* (i.e., "engel" in Keyser's Dutch translation), "the secretary of *Muḥam-mad*" (Pickthall), or as "sheet" ("Blatt" Paret). In post-Qur'ānic Arabic, it is defined as "an anthology of judiciary rulings" (>"archive, land registry," etc.) and forms a denominal verb the D-stem "to record, to note." Although the relevant passage السجل للكتب كطي السماء نطوي يوم – *yawma naṭwī s-samāʾa kaṭayyi s-siǧilli li-l-kutubi* (21:104) is still difficult (at least for me), this word originates from Latin, specifically from *sigillium* (<*signum*)–also the origin of the word "seal" in English. This word was also borrowed by Greek as σιγίλλον and often had the meaning "imperial edict" or "decree" in the Byzantine Em-pire. Whether the word was borrowed into Arabic directly from Greek or through a derivation of the Syriac ܣܝܓܝܠܝܘܢ – *sigiliyōn* "diploma (spec. quo chalifa patriarcham confirmat)" (Brockelmann, 459a; compare, for in-stance ܡܣܓܠܣܢܝܬܐ – *msglsnyt'* "libellus, scriptum accusatorium") remains uncertain. In my opinion the latter is more likely.

Furthermore, the word *Qur'ān* itself is an Aramaic loan-word, as Chr. Luxenberg convincingly shows (*Die syro-aramäische Lesart des Koran*, 2nd edition 2004: 81ff.; cf. Jeffery *op. cit.* 233f). This word is derived from the root √*qr'* (*pace* al-Jawhari *aṣ-Ṣaḥāḥ* s.v. <*qarana*!), which primarily means "to read (aloud)" in modern Arabic. Of course this cannot be the original meaning, for the same reasons discussed above regarding the √*ktb*–"writing" must exist before anything can be *read*. In Akkadian (*qerûᵐ*) and in Ugaritic we come across this root in the meaning "to call; to invite." In South Semitic, this root has nothing to do with the semantic domain of reading. In Sabaic it means "to command" and exists in Old Ethiopian, possibly as a relic, as ቈረቈረ – *qʷərəqʷera* "to cry out, to knock, to be confused."[32] But then again, the semantic development of "to call" > "to read out" >"to read aloud" (> "to read") was only carried out in the North-West Semitic languages (Hebrew, Phoenician-Punic, Aramaic, etc.) during the Iron Age and then further in a particular theological sense, like the Hebrew מִקְרָא – *miqrā'* "reading" (Nehe-miah 8:8, which the German *Revidierte Eberfelder* renders literally with "das Vorgelesene," i.e., ". . . and caused them to understand the *reading*"– most other translations render the Hebrew with "book, scroll"), which subse-quently became the common designation for the Hebrew Bible in later Hebrew. Following the path set out by Jeffery and Luxenberg, I would also suggest that the Arabic term *Qur'ān* derives from a Syriac usage such as ܩܪܝܢܐ – *qrīnā (ḏ-kṯāḇā)* which can also have the meaning "scriptura sacra" (Brockelmann 690b).[33]

The same holds true for أسفار – *asfār*, the plural of سفر – *sifr* "book," only found in the Qur'ān in 62:5:

مَثَلُ الَّذِينَ حُمِّلُوا التَّوْرَاةَ ثُمَّ لَمْ يَحْمِلُوهَا كَمَثَلِ الْحِمَارِ يَحْمِلُ أَسْفَارًا

maṯalu llaḏīna ḥummilū t-tawrāta ṯumma lam yaḥmilu-hā ka-maṯali l-ḥimāri yaḥmilu ʾasfāran

"The likeness of those who are entrusted with the Law of Moses, yet apply it not, is as the likeness of the ass carrying *books*." (Pickthall)

As well as in سفرة – *safara* (sing. سافر – *sāfir*) in 80:15, actually "writer (transcriber)" and not angel, or messenger, as it is often translated. The root √*sfr* in Arabic has many meanings, for instance: "to remove a woman's veil," and "to send (someone) away, to expel," "to travel, to go on a journey" etc. In any case, nothing that could be interpreted as "book," as was even acknowledged by the early commentators,[34] which makes a borrowing from Syriac quite certain. The quote from 62:5 just cited in which the *Torah* (توراة – *tawrāt*) is cited in conjunction with "books" (أسفار – *asfār*) makes it clear that (some component of) the Bible was being referred to here, the same way it still is in modern Arabic, e.g. سفر التكوين – *Sifr al-takwīn* "the Book of Genesis."

Words derived from this root and with this meaning have a long history in the Syro-Aramaic donor and ܣܦܪܐ – *sāp̄rā* "scriba."[35] The Aramaic meaning of this root itself ultimately stems from Akkadian: *šapāru^m* "to send (a message), to write (to)" with derivations like *šapru^m* "envoy, messenger," *šipāru^m* "regulations, instructions," *šipirtu^m* "message, letter, instruction" etc.[36]

Another Arabic root denoting things written is again certainly borrowed from Syro-Aramaic and of Akkadian origin, namely √*sṭr*.[37] In the Qurʾān this verb always appears in relation to the "well-preserved tablets" (في لوح محفوظ – *fī lawḥin maḥfūẓin* 85:22), at least in the conventional interpretation[38] (17:58; 33:6; 52:2, 37; 54:53; 68:1; 88:22). The verb *šaṭāru^m* is commonly used in Akkadian to indicate the activity of writing (originally thus "to incise," much like Greek γράφω) and has nominal derivations like *šaṭāru^m* (infinitive) "(trans)script, document" and with similar meaning *šiṭru^m*, *šiṭirtu^m*, *mašṭaru^m* "inscription, prescription." This root is used only as a participle in Hebrew and Imperial Aramaic in the sense of "clerk" or "scribe." In Syriac, as well as some other Aramaic dialects, there are substantives such as ܐܫܛܪܐ – *šṭārā* "syngraphum" (*melior* "syngraphus"), by which the Peshitta translates סֵפֶר - *sēp̄ar* "book" in Jeremiah 32:10, and renders χειρόγραφον, "debt certificate" in Tobit 5:3 and Colossians 2:14. The Aramaic word appears to be derived from Akkadian *šaṭāru^m*, mentioned above. It appears to be a morphologically unproductive root in the former language. Here it must be noted: rts – *s¹ṭr* is the predominant verb in the Old South Arabian languages for "to write." However, I think it is unlikely that this root is directly borrowed from Akkadian, meaning there may be an Aramaic connexion. The causative forms rtsh – *hs¹ṭr* and rts – *s¹ṭr* with the meaning "scribe" must also be noted; they have

only been documented in the last, monotheistic, period of Sabaean,[39] but a Qatabanian or Sabaean source cannot be ruled out entirely. In any case, we have another term describing writing borrowed from a neighbouring language.

The well-preserved planks, or rather the "guarded planks" (Pickthall), mentioned above, is the last term related to writing to be discussed here. It is interesting in terms of the third category mentioned earlier–it is a true Arabic word with a borrowed technical meaning. The root √*lwḥ* with the meaning "plank, board" is well-attested throughout the Semitic languages,[40] e.g. Akkadian (nominal) *le'u^m*. In Arabic, as well as in "pre-Islamic" poetry, it is used as in Qur'ān 54:13 for the wooden planks of Noah's Ark: وحملناه على ذات ألواح ودسر – *wa-ḥamalnāhu 'alā ḏāti 'alwāḥin wa-dusurin*, similar to the አልዋሕ – *'aləwāḥ* (sg. ለውሕ – *lawəḥ*)[41] in Acts 27:44 of the Ethiopian version of the New Testament where it specifically refers to the planks used by those who couldn't swim to save themselves when the boat taking St. Paul to Rome struck a reef before Malta. In Hebrew, it (לוּחַ – *lūᵃḥ*) is mentioned in connexion with the construction of the altar of burnt-offering in Exodus 27:8 (*et passim*). The archetype of the Qur'ān is what is being referred to in Sura 85:32, mentioned above, and in 7:145ff. The term refers to the "stone tablets," which the Lord delivered to Moses on Mt Sinai – the same word we find used in Hebrew in Exodus 24:12 (*et passim*) which is also used here by the Targums (לוּחֵי אבנא – *lūḥē 'aḇnā*) and, significantly, the Peshitta (ܠܘܚܐ ܕܟܐܦܐ – *lūḥē d-kēp̄ā*). The semantic development of "board" > "writing tablet" appears to have first occurred in Akkadian, also in the theological sense similar to the *le'u ša balāṭi* "tablet of life" (that is, on which destinies are written). Wax tablets are apparently being described here, i.e. similar to the *tabula cerata* or perhaps more appropriately the mediaeval *diptycha ecclesiastica*.[42] The word had already been recorded in Amarna-Canaanite with this meaning (358:9), also in Ugaritic, Hebrew (e.g. Proverbs 3:3; 7:3; Song of Songs 8:9; Isaiah 30:8; Jeremiah 17:1), and in some forms of Aramaic. So, we have here a technical loan word from Akkadian which spread throughout neighbouring languages. There is no possibility, however, that the Arabic word is directly borrowed from Hebrew–here we must once again look into Aramaic, specifically Syriac. As we noted, in the Peshitta ܠܘܚܐ – *lawḥā* is used in Exodus 24:12 and elsewhere, as well as for the *INRI*-inscription (τίτλος) of Pilate on Jesus' cross in John 19:19,[43] for example, and is therefore certainly the source of the Arabic word.

5. Borrowed Terms in the Qurʾān

5.1 Introduction

So far it has been shown that the literary culture from which the Qurʾān emerged was in close contact with both the Syro-Aramaic region and its local manifestations of Christianity. This has been made clear by the borrowings from Aramaic already discussed.[44] Many of the words discussed here have undergone a long evolution—even the Hebrew word that everyone knows: "Torah"—until they eventually acquired the meanings they now have (or are given) in the Qurʾān. The fact that the Arabic vocabulary with regard to reading and writing stems from the language of the culture(s) from which the writing culture was adopted is not surprising. It can be compared to German *lesen* (< Latin *legere*– "to read") and *schreiben* (< *scribere* – "to write"). If we dig a little bit deeper, though, we find a surprising abundance of key theological terms borrowed from Aramaic in the vocabulary of the Qurʾān. Here I will mention just a few from Jeffery's work with a few additional comments of my own.

5.2 Adam: آدم – *ʾādam*

The Hebrew word אָדָם – *ʾāḏām*, as in Ugaritic, Phoenician etc. means "human(ity)" (in Sabaean, "vassal, subject"). In the Qurʾān however, it appears only in the sense of the name of the first human (compare to ابن آدم – *ibn ādam* lit. "son of Adam"="human," as in 7:35, for example). This interpretation can already be found in the Septuagint. In the Hebrew story of creation, אָדָם – *ʾāḏām* was translated as ἄνϑρωπος "human" until Genesis 2:15; however, in the next verse, when God places humans in the Garden of Eden, the Hebrew word was understood as a name and was transcribed as Αδαμ. The interpretation of this word as a proper noun "Adam," can already be found in later books of the Hebrew Bible such as I Chronicles 1:1 and Hosea 6:7. This is also the understanding of this lexeme in the New Testament (for instance Romans 5:14 *et passim*) and in fact Christianity in general until the early modern period. Although the root √ʾdm retains its Aramaic meaning in Syriac, ܐܕܡ – *ʾāḏām* is always used as the name of the first human, just as in Classical Ethiopian አዳም – *ʾādām*. Although this root is well attested in Arabic, for example اديم – *ʾadīm* "skin," its interpretation as the name of the original human assumes a prior knowledge of Christianity or Judaism. Verses like Qurʾān 3:59, 7:172 (تقولوا يوم القيامة – *taqūlū yawma l-qiyāmati*) and 124:20ff. make it obvious that we are dealing with a Christian influence. Because *Adam* is only used in the Qurʾān to describe the first human, whereas in Hebrew it was originally used as a term for humans in general, Arabic presupposes a certain exegetical evolution. Thus, this word falls into the third category listed above.

5.3 Islam: الإسلام – *al-ʾislām*

The root √*šlm* (>Arab. *s-l-m*) is well-attested with the meaning "to be complete, finished" in most Semitic languages. Another meaning emerged from this one: "to be healthy, well," as can be seen in Akkadian. The meaning "peace" as in Hebrew *shalom*, in the sense of a greeting is a logical development. In Arabic, the IInd form has undergone the development "to make healthy, unharmed" > "to protect from damage" >"to deliver safely" > "to deliver" (compare to the French *sur-rendre*), in the sense of *dedito*. The original semantics can certainly be found in the Qurʾān, for example in 31:22 ومن سلم وجهه إلى الله – *wa-man yuslim waǧha-hu ʾila-llāhi* "And whosoever submits his face (himself) to Allāh," as well as in 2:112 and 131. The verbal root from which the noun الإسلام – *ʾal-ʾislām* (causative!) is a nominal derivation, is used here as a religious *terminus technicus*, once again certainly presupposing a Syriac semantic development. The causative conjugation ܐܫܠܡ – *ʾašlem* is also found in Syriac in the sense of "to commit" (Luke 1:2, John 18:35, 19:30 (the Spirit), Acts 8:3 (to a prison); > "to betray" >Matthew 10:4 etc.) but also as a specifically Christian term: "*to commit* to the faith," so in the sense of "to be devoted to" or "to be dedicated to" (i.e. *devotio*). Therefore, *Islam* does not mean "peace" in the sense of a *pacificatio* or *debellatio*, but rather it means to commit oneself to the will of God, i.e. "surrender," "dedication," *dedicatio*. This is another example of a genuine Arabic root which took on a secondary Christian-technical meaning–this belongs in the third category as well.

5.4 God: الله – Allāh

Although there can be no doubt that the root of this word is a good and genuine Arabic lexeme, its morpho-phonetics point rather to Syro-Palestine than to the Hijaz; I have discussed the problems associated with it elsewhere.[45] Briefly, the form *ʾil* as a noun to denote a deity is well-attested in Semitic. The word *ʾil* can in Semitic refer to a god but is also the name of the chief divinity of the Semitic pantheon ʾIl (>ʾEl).[46] The singular *ʾlh* (already attested, though rarely in Ugaritic), however, seems to be a back-formation of the plural *ʾilhm* (which is a strategy sometimes employed in Semitic to make a tri-radical root out of a bi-radical one in the plural) that is only found in North-West Semitic and Ancient North Arabian. *ʾlh* is especially common as the generic term for a(n unnamed) god in Aramaic where this form largely replaces *ʾl*[47] and which also seems to be the source of this form in Ancient North Arabian. The usage in Arabic, however, in which *ʾilāh* is appended with the article *al-* (see *supra* §0) to denote "*The* God" (i.e. the one and only) and not *a* god or the chief deity of a pantheon, presumes the invention and evolution of monotheism. The roots of this term can be found in later passages of the Hebrew Bible that

refer to the God of Israel as הָאֵל – *hā-'ēl* "the God" (instead of using the plural אֱלֹהִם – *ᵉlōhīm*; as in Phoenician) which becomes the norm in later Jewish and Christian dialects of Aramaic: e.g. Official Aramaic מאת לי ביהו אלהא "you have sworn to me by *Yahu*, the God" (*TAD* B2.2,r.4); Syriac ܐܠܗܐ – *'ălāhā* "(the) God" (both *status emphaticus*, i.e. determined). Thus, the base form *'lh*, the usage of the definite article (أداة التعريف – *'adāt at-ta'rīf*), and that this form, despite the availability of other lexemes (see *infra* §7.2.2) was used to denote "God" and not just "God," but "God" in a "Judaeo-Christian" un-derstanding shows that this lexeme with this specific meaning was borrowed, also because it starkly contrasts with traditional Semitic forms of divine address. This is further supported by the fact that Arab Christians also use this word when referring to God.[48]

Further support for the adoption of this term can be found in the usage of epithets for this monotheistic deity. Besides ربّ – *rabb* (§7.2.2), one also finds e.g. السكينة – *as-sakīna* (2:248; 9:26,40; 48:4,18,26) which is variously rendered, e.g. Pickthall "peace of reassurance," Yusuf Ali "assurance," Shakir "tran-quility;" the officialesque Muhsin Khan translation has "Sakinah (peace and reassurance)." The ultimately Jewish origin of this term was recognised by Keyzer in his Dutch rendition (9:28) "dat de arke waarin de Godheid woont." In later Rabbinic Judaism, שְׁכִינָה – *šᵉkīnāʰ* (not in the Hebrew Bible, but cf. e.g. Exodus 25:8 וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכָם – *wᵃ-'āśū lī miqdāš wᵃšākantī bᵃṯōḵām* "And have them make me a sanctuary, so that I may *dwell* among them"; Deuteronomy 33:16 וּרְצוֹן שֹׁכְנִי סְנֶה – *u-rᵉṣōn šoḵnī sᵉnäh* "and for the good will of him that *dwelt* in the bush"; in later tradition, such as with Saadia Gaon in the tenth century, the term came to mean the شرف الله "honour of God" i.e. כָּבוֹד – cf. idem, كتاب الأمانات والإعتقادات – *Kitāb ul-'amānāt wal-i'tiqādāt* ed. Landauer p. ٩٩) became a term used to indicate that the "Divine Presence" was *residing* (שָׁכַן – *šāḵan*) when e.g. "ten are gathered for prayer" (*Sanh.* 39a), "three sit as judges" (*Ber.* 6a), "one goes into exile" (*Meg.* 29a) from whence derived meanings such as "peace," "tranquility," "holiness" etc., attributed to the presence of the divinity, arose (cf. Greek σκηνή/ σκῆνος – lxx "tabernacle" Exodus 26:1 Καὶ τὴν σκηνὴν ποιήσεις δέκα αὐλαίας ἐκ βύσσου κεκλωσμένης; also Euripides, *Ion* 806 σκηνὰς ἐς ἱεράς). This term, as ܫܟܝܢܬܐ – *šḵīntā*, also entered Christian Syriac with the meaning "divine presence," e.g. Peshitta II Chronicles 5:14 (ܘܠܐ ܐܫܟܚܘ ܟܗܢܐ ܠܡܩܡ ܠܡܫܡܫܘ), Aphrahat ܒܝܬ ܟܗܢܐ (ܗܢ ܡܕܡ ܗܘܐ: ܡܛܠ ܕܐܬܦܠܓܠ ܣܓܝܐܐ ܕܢܥܠܘܢ ܗܝ ܗܘܐ ܘܢܦܩܬܗ), ܕܢ ܡܕܡ ܕܫܟܝܢܬܗ ܕܩܕܝܫܐ – "leprosy went out from the presence of the Holy One" (D. Ioannes Parisot, "Aphraatis sapientis persae demonstrationes," in R. Graffin (ed.), *Patrologia Syriaca*, (Paris, 1894–1907); note also N. Séd, "Les Hymnes sur le Paradis de Saint Ephrem et les traditions juives" *Muséon* 81 (1968): 455–501). This loan-word presupposes theological developments in Judaism and their borrowing into Oriental Christianity.

5.5 Hell: جهنم – *ǧahannam*

This word is clearly borrowed and presupposes a complex development, namely the differentiation between heaven and hell, in other words a final judgement for humanity. This notion, introduced through apocalyptic ideas, is by no means an originally Semitic one. In fact it is not even found in the Hebrew Bible; the dead all descended to *Sheol*, regardless of their deeds in this life. *Sheol* in the Hebrew Bible is in many ways quite similar to the archaic Greek notion of Hades. *Gehenna* was originally the name of a place, גֵּי־(בֶּן־)הִנֹּם – *gē-(bän-) hīnnōm*, the "Valley of (the son of) Hinnom," in other words where the Jerusalemite Moloch (not a divinity!) cult was practiced (see for example, 2 Kings 23:10, Jeremiah 7:31f, where children were burned alive for the Lord). As for the word-form, there are translations in the Septuagint, along with transcriptions, such as γαιβενενομ, γαι-βαναι-εννομ as well as the contracted phonetic form γαιεννα(μ), which is then attested in the New Testament as γέεννα. With regards to the meaning, we find it in the apocryphal literature, e.g. in 1 Enoch[49], 4 Ezra, and later in the Sibylline Oracles as a place of future punishment for sinners and evildoers. The word appears in the New Testament with this meaning, e.g. Matthew 5, Mark 9 etc. The doctrine of hellfire and the eternal suffering of non-believers, still widespread today, has a long (unhistorical!) history of development–it testifies to a combination of an ancient sacrificial cult, Zoroastrian beliefs, together with a good dose of Hellenistic influence. The Qur'ānic-Islamic doctrine of after-life, similar to and derived from the Christian one, is thus a later development, and therefore presumes the development(s) described. The Arabic form with the preserved final {-m} could indicate a borrowing from *Hebrew*, however, the Old Ethiopian ገሀ/ናም – *gaha/ hānam* could just as easily be the source of this loan word (possibly through Hebrew or from now lost Greek spelling). Syriac ܓܗܢܐ – *gihannā* scarcely applies here. Thus the lexeme along with the associated beliefs were necessarily derived from Christianity.[50]

5.6 The Satan: الشيطان – *aš-šayṭān*

Obviously the notion of a master of hell presupposes the concept of hell itself. The Arabic word, like ours, has its origins in Hebrew. The etymology is still unclear; however, the details do not need to be worked out here.[51] In the Hebrew Bible, we find שָׂטָן – *śāṭān* in the earlier books with the meaning "adversary," such as 1 Samuel 29:4 where David is identified as a (possible) *satan* of the Philistines (lxx: μὴ γινέσθω ἐπίβουλος τῆς παρεμβολῆς), as we also see in 1 Kings 11:14, 23:25 and Numbers 22:22–32. Only the Chronicler uses this word as the name of a particular person, the (proto-)Devil, 21:1 (compare to the lxx: Καὶ ἔστη διάβολος ἐν τῷ Ισραηλ καὶ ἐπέσεισεν τὸν Δαυιδ

τοῦ ἀριθμῆσαι τὸν Ισραηλ), which was most likely also meant in Zachariah 2:1f. (an intermediate stage might be the Book of Job). The origin of this term could stem from legal terminology, where it refers to a "prosecutor," such as in Psalms 109:6. In the New Testament, we find this form, the Σατανᾶ (= διά-βολος, lit. "the confuser"), also found in the Rabbinic literature (although entirely absent in later Judaism), which developed into the personification of evil–in contrast to Jesus, who is portrayed as an advocate, the παράκλητος. This meaning is also found in the Peshitta, ܣܵܛܵܢܵܐ – *sāṭānā* (this form could stem from Hebrew, just as well as from Greek). The Arabic form *šayṭān* may have previously been borrowed by pre-Islamic Arabic in the sense of "evil spirits," for example 6:71:

$$\text{كَالَّذِي اسْتَهْوَتْهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فِي الْأَرْضِ حَيْرَانَ لَهُ أَصْحَابٌ يَدْعُونَهُ إِلَى الْهُدَى ائْتِنَا}$$

ka-llaḏī stahwat-hu š-šayāṭīnu fī l-ʾarḍi ḥayrāna la-hū ʾaṣḥābun yadʿūna-hū
ʾilā l-hudā ʾtinā

"… like one bewildered whom the devils have infatuated in the earth, who hath companions who invite him to the guidance …" (Pickthall)

Which is roughly a synonym to the جن – *ǧinn* "genies." Although this could be the case, the word is probably borrowed from the Ethiopian ሰይጣን – *sayṭān* (<Aramaic), a lexeme that can also possess this nuanced meaning (pl. ሰይጣን – *sayāṭən*, pl. ሰይጣናት – *sayāṭənāt* "demons"). In any case, the connexion between the incarnation and this word makes the semantic development clear and shows that it culminated in Christianity, as found e.g. in 58:19.

5.7 Forgiveness: حطة – *ḥiṭṭa*

In this context I will also discuss حطة – *ḥiṭṭatᵘⁿ* "forgive" (2:58; 7:161) and the common verb خطى – *ḥaṭṭā* "to sin" (خطيئة – *ḥaṭīʾa* "sin"), all of which presume the semantic evolution of this root which took place in Hebrew. The root √*ḥṭ'* originally had the meaning "to fall short of, to miss," similar to Arabic "to miss the mark (shooting)" in the causative IVᵗʰ stem. In this sense, the word is used, for example, in Isaiah 65:20 ". . . for one who dies at a hundred years will be thought a mere youth, and one who falls short of (החוטא – *haḥōṭā'*, literally "misses") a hundred years will be considered accursed." The beginning of the development "to miss" > "to displease" (as a result of misconduct) can be seen, for instance, in Proverbs 8:36 "But those who miss (חטאי – *ḥoṭə'ī*) me injure themselves. All who hate me love death." From here, the developmental path to indicate a misdemeanour is easily understandable–a development that was also completed in Akkadian *ḥaṭûᵐ*, Ugaritic *ḫṭ'*, as well as in Sabaean, Qatabanian, etc. However, there is a large difference between *offence* (with or without intention) and *sin*, in the sense of a moral offence against a deity. This understanding is not found in the older parts of the Hebrew Bible, but rather is the result of a later, complicated, theological evolution of the

term, which cannot be examined in any detail here. Nonetheless, the New Testament notion of sin is not a self-evident development. In this specific theological-technical sense we find the Syriac ܚܛܐ – *ḥṭā* "peccavit" (with nominal derivations, such as ܚܛܐ – *ḥṭā*, ܚܛܝܬܐ – *ḥṭītā*, ܚܛܝܬܢܝܐ – *ḥṭītānāyā*, ܚܛܝܢܐ[52] – *ḥeṭyānā*, ܚܛܝܐ – *ḥṭāyā* etc.). In Arabic as well as in Old Ethiopian, this root with the semantic domain briefly touched upon here can only have been borrowed from Syriac. In fact, its use in these languages presupposes hamartiology.

The meaning of the word حطة – *ḥiṭṭa* "forgive" is clear to all commentators; however, their work has not yet produced a satisfactory derivation. Based on their suggestions, I suspect a possible borrowing of the meaning from Hebrew *Pi'el* (D-Stem), חִטֵּא – *ḥiṭṭē'* "to cleanse (of sin)."

5.8 Angel: ملائكة – *malā'ika*

Finally, one other important term for Islam should be mentioned. Once again, this term underwent a long semantic development before it came to have its Qur'ānic meaning.[53] The word ملائكة – *malā'ika* "angel" obviously assumes a prior conception of the existence of such spiritual beings. Indeed, this word stems from the Hebrew מַלְאָךְ – *mal'āḵ* (from the root √*l'k* "to send a message").[54] This nominal derivation means "messenger," or the bearer of a message in the older parts of the Hebrew Bible, as in Ugaritic, for example. In this sense it is even attested in Ezekiel 23:40:

> "And furthermore, that you have sent for men to come from afar, unto whom a messenger (מַלְאָךְ – *mal'āḵ*) was sent"

That this word came to mean a divine being sent by God to bring a message to humans is the result of an inner-"Israelite" development mitigated by external influences. The later traditions that we find in the New Testament, as well as elsewhere, depicted Gabriel (גַּבְרִיאֵל – *gaḇrī'ēl* "Man" or "Hero of God," Daniel 8:15ff; 9:20ff.) and Michael (מִיכָאֵל – *mīḵā'ēl* "Who is like God?"; Daniel 10, 13ff.) as "angels"[55]—it cannot be a coincidence that these just happen to be the only two angels referenced by name in the Qur'ān, as in 2:98:

مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِلَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَجِبْرِيلَ وَمِيكَالَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَدُوٌّ لِّلْكَافِرِينَ

man kāna ʿaduwwan li-llāhi wa-malā'ikati-hi wa-rusuli-hi wa-ğibrīla wa-mīkāla wa-'inna llāha ʿaduwwun li-lkāfirīna

"Whoever is an enemy to Allāh, His Angels, His Messengers, *Jibrīl* (Gabriel) and *Mīkā'īl* (Michael), then verily, Allāh is an enemy to the disbelievers."

The use of both the terminus technicus ملائكة – *malā'ika* and the proper nouns جبريل – *ğibrīl* and ميخائيل – *mīḫā'īl* must have been borrowed, in terms of both the words themselves and the underlying concept. These words were borrowed by Syriac from Hebrew. In the Peshitta, ܡܲܠܲܐܟܵܐ – *malāḵā* is expressed in the sense of the Hebrew term (e.g. Genesis 16:7); the same is true of the Greek term ἄγγελος as we see in this verse in both the Septuagint and in the New Testament. The Syriac lexeme was in turn borrowed by Old Ethiopian መልአክ – *mal'ak*. Whether these words were adopted into Arabic directly from Syriac or possibly through Gəʿəz is difficult to determine.

Incidentally, it should also be noted that the early commentators surprisingly considered Gabriel foreign and there are countless different spellings such as جبرائيل – *ğibrā'īl* besides جبريل. The Arabic spelling of Gabriel جبريل is a phonetic rendition of /ğibrīl/. This must be derived from a Syro-Aramaic form such as ܓܲܒܪܝܐܝܠ – *gaḇri'el*, compare to Γαβριὴλ, thus /găbri'əl/ > /găbrîl/ > /ğĭbrīl/ (vowel harmony!). The vocalisation of Michael ميكال – /mika'al/ can by no means be genuine–the theophoric element /'el/ (*supra* §5.4) would never have been understood as such. Furthermore, the alternate form ميخائيل – *mīḫā'īl* is a transcription of a North-West Semitic spelling, most likely a Syriac transcription (< Hebrew, *supra*) ܡܝܼܟܵܐܝܠ – *miḵā'īl* (i.e. Syriac post-vocalic ܟ – {k} is pronounced as /x/ which can be rendered in Arabic with خ – {ḫ}).[56] The orthography and vocalisation of these forms contradict the possibility that an indigenous Arabic tradition is the source of these names. Because of their Semitic etymology, these can only be phonetic transcriptions whose origins are to be found in another language, namely *in casu* Syriac.

This is also incidentally the case with many names of biblical figures in the Qur'ān. With an authentic Arabic revelation, we would expect to see etymological spelling and not a transcription of Aramaic (or Ethiopic) forms, which themselves were often borrowed from Greek. This applies for example to Isaac إسحاق – *isḥāq*; based on the Hebrew form, יִצְחָק – *yiṣḥāq*, in Arabic something like يصحق – *yaṣḥaqu* or even يضحك – *yaḍḥaku* ("he laughs") would be expected, that is if there had been a genuine tradition of the traditional folk etymology of Genesis 17:17; 18:12. In this sense, this form can only be a phonetic transcription of the Syriac form ܐܝܼܣܚܵܩ – *isḥāq*; in other words, this form would not have been understood as a conjugated verb + a theophoric element (<*yiṣḥāq-'el*). We find a similar situation with the name Israel إسرائيل – *isrā'īl* ultimately from the Hebrew יִשְׂרָאֵל – *yiśrā'ēl*. Although the etymology of the first (verbal) element remains unclear,[57] it is a (short) prefix conjugation with the theophoric element /'l/ (compare to the discussion above §5.4 on "Allāh"). The Arabic orthography recognised neither the verb nor the name of God as such and is certainly to be understood as a transcription of a Syriac form ܐܝܼܣܪܵܐܝܠ – *isrā'el* or similar (var. ܢܣܪܐܝܠ – *(y)isrā'el*,

ܐܝܣܪܐܝܠ – *isrā'el*; or less likely < Ethiopic እስራኤል – *əsrā'il*). Surprisingly, the same phenomenon also applies to the orthography of Ishmael: إسماعيل – *ismā'īl* does not express the Hebrew יִשְׁמָעֵאל – *yišmā°ēl* "God heard (scil. the request for a child, i.e. son)," so <√*šm°* "to hear" + *'l* "God"–in fact it can only be a transcription of a form ܐܝܫܡܥܝܠ – *išma'īl*.[58] Concerning the name Jacob, يعقو – *ya'qū* and يعقوب – *ya'qūb* are indeed etymological renditions of the Hebrew יַעֲקֹב – *yă°qōḇ* >Syriac ܝܥܩܘܒ – *ya'qub*; however, the disagreement among the early Qur'ānic commentators regarding the etymology of this name (cf. Jeffery, *op. cit.* 291) makes it clear that the name was borrowed, especially since the verbal root عقب – *'aqaba* can have a similar meaning to Hebrew עָקַב – *'āqaḇ*, cf. Genesis 25:26; 27:36.[59] Furthermore, the fact that the verbal prefix in Arabic is written here without any knowledge of its derivation must certainly indicate a borrowing from Syriac. A similar situation occurs with Arabic يوسف – *yūsuf* <Syriac ܝܘܣܦ – *yawsep* (with vowel harmony in Arabic) <Hebrew יוֹסֵף – *yōsēp*. It cannot simply be a coincidence that the Arabic spelling of biblical names always transcribes Syriac orthography rather than following Semitic etymology. This alone makes it quite clear that the Qur'ān is not so much entirely new revelation to an illiterate prophet, but rather it must be viewed as a continuation, or rather an evolution, of a literary tradition that had already been long established.

Further evidence of this can be seen in cases where the diacritical marks were apparently incorrectly placed on the consonantal skeleton, such as يحىى – *y-ḥ-y-y* for "John (the Baptist)" /yaḥyà/. Of course what is meant here is the Hebrew יוֹחָנָן – *yoḥānān* >Syriac ܝܘܚܢܢ – *yuḥanān*–only a *rasm* نحىى can form the basis of this, which by mistake was not pointed يحنن – *y-ḥ-n-n* (see above §0 on the phonetic polyvalence of the Arabic archigrapheme ٮ)–the issue is made clear by the Christian Arabic realisation of this name as يُوحَنَّا – *yuḥan-na*. An interesting case of this phenomenon in the extra-Qur'ānic tradition is the exegetical fate of the Egyptian bureaucrat *Potiphar*, in Hebrew פּוֹטִיפַר – *pōṭīpār* (Genesis 37:36 and elsewhere; Syriac ܦܘܛܝܦܪ). In Sura *Yusuf* (12), he is not mentioned by name and in v. 21 is merely called الذي اشتراه من مصر – *allaḏī štarā-hū min miṣra* "The man from Egypt who bought him" (in vv30 and 51 العزيز – *al-'azīz* "the powerful one"). In the commentary literature, we though find for instance وهو قطفير – *wa-huwa qiṭfīr* "and he is *Qiṭfīr*" (*Tafsir Jalalayn* a.l.; also for example Al-Baizawi, Djami, قصص الأنبياء – *Qiṣaṣ al-'anbiyā'* [my edition: Cairo, n.d., pp. 94ff.] etc.). Here it is important to establish that *qiṭfīr* is by all accounts meaningless gibberish, however *pōṭīpār* is an Egyptian personal name <*p3-dj-p3-r°*, "given by Ra."[60] Clearly فطٮر was written (i.e. the Arabic archigrapheme ٮ can render either ف – {f} or ق – {q}) reminiscent of the Syriac ܦܘܛܝܦܪ – a form perceived as foreign, where there was likely very little guidance and a(n incorrect) guess was ventured.

6. On the Five Pillars of Islam

6.1 Introduction

The influence of Syro-Aramaic on the theological vocabulary of the Qur'ān should by now be evident. The examples given above may appear to have been selected at random, but they were chosen pars pro toto to make a point. To complete this picture, I will discuss a few key terms, namely the "Five Pillars of Islam" (أركان الإسلام – *ʾArkān al-ʾIslām*):

1. The profession of faith: الشهادة – *aš-šahāda*
2. Prayer: صلاة – *ṣalāṭ*
3. Charitable giving: زكاة – *zakāt* or صدقة – *ṣadaqa*
4. Fasting: صوم – *ṣawm*
5. Pilgrimage: حج – *ḥaǧǧ*.

Although these terms could all be genuinely Arabic lexemes based on their morpho-phonetic structure, their technical meanings, as they relate to faith, clearly suggest Syriac as their origin in most cases.

6.2 The profession of faith: الشهادة – *aš-šahāda*

The Arabic root √*šhd* "to testify," here in the specific sense of "to bear witness to one's faith," presupposes Syriac ܣܗܕ – *shed* with a similar meaning,[61] for example in Deuteronomy (5:20):ܕܓܠܬܐ ܣܗܕܘܬܐ ܚܒܪܝܢ ܥܠ ܬܣܗܕ ܠܐ – *lā tsaheḏ ʿal ḫarīn sāhdūṯā d-daggāltā* "Neither shall you bear false witness against your neighbour." In the New Testament, this root is used (compare to the noun ܣܗܕܐ – *sāhdā*) to express the Greek root μάρτυρ-: μάρτυρ "witness," μαρτυρίαν "testimony," μαρτυρέω "to testify" etc., for example in John 3:11:

> ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ὅτι ὃ οἴδαμεν λαλοῦμεν καὶ ὃ ἑωράκαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν, καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἡμῶν οὐ λαμβάνετε –
> "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness."

> ܐܡܝܢ ܐܡܝܢ ܐܡܪ ܐܢܐ ܠܟ܆ ܕܡܕܡ ܕܝܕܥܝܢ ܚܢܢ ܡܡܠܠܝܢ ܚܢܢ. ܘܡܕܡ ܕܚܙܝܢ ܡܣܗܕܝܢ ܐܢܚܢܢ ܘܣܗܕܘܬܢ ܠܟ ܡܩܒܠܝܢ ܐܢܬܘܢ.
> *ʾamīn ʾamīn ʾāmar-nā lāḵ: d-meddem d-yāḏʿīn ḥnan məmalləlīn ḥnan. wə-meddem da-ḥzayn mashəḏīn ʾanaḥnan. wə-sāhduṭan lāk mqabbəlīn ʾaⁿtun*

The nuanced meaning of *martyrs* (شهيد – *šahīḏ* ~ ܣܗܕܐ – *sahdā*), used to describe a person who dies for their beliefs in both languages, is also noticeable. A borrowing from Syriac is the only feasible possibility here.[62]

6.3 Prayer: صلاة – *ṣalāṭ*

The root √*ṣlw* in Arabic is only used in the second (factitive) conjugation and would seem to be denominal. A look at Aramaic shows the meaning of ܨܠܐ – *ṣlā* in the Peal to be "inclinavit, flexit" etc.–the physical act of bowing (compare to 2:43 واركعوا مع الراكعين – *wa-ārkaʿū maʿa r-rākiʿīn*). In the second form, the D-stem (Syriac: *Pael*), however, it is used in the sense of "to pray,"[63] for example Matthew 6:6:

ܐܢܬ ܕܝܢ ܡܐ ܕܡܨܠܐ ܐܢܬ ܥܘܠ ܠܬܘܢܟ. ܘܐܚܘܕ ܬܪܥܟ. ܘܨܠܐ ܠܐܒܘܟ ܕܒܟܣܝܐ

tarʿāḵ: wə-ṣalā laʾḇuḵ daḇ-ḵesyā. wa-ʾḇuḵ d-ḥāzeh bə-ḵesyā neprʿāḵ bə-ḡelyā

"…pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly."

Here once again the semantics of Syriac are determining–the Arabic term can have its origins only in Syriac, based on the specific use of this root in the sense of bowing to ask something of God, and which displays the long semantic evolution that led to this meaning. Indicative of such a conclusion is also 48:29:

تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِم مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ

ذَٰلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي الْإِنجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطْأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ

عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ

tarāhum rukkaʿan suǧǧadan yabtaġūna faḍlan mina l-lāhi wariḍwānan sīmā-hum fī wuǧūhihim min aṯari l-suǧūdi ḏālika maṯaluhum fī l-tawrāti wa-maṯa-luhum fī l-inǧīli kazarʿin ʾaḫraǧa šaṭʾahu fāzarahu fa-istaġlaẓa ʿalā sūqihi yuʿǧibu l-zurrāʿa

"… You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allāh and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of pros-tration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers …"

Here, it is clear that Qurʾānic prayer, by its own account, is based on biblical practice. This is supported by the fact that this root was also borrowed from Syriac into Late Sabaic (Period E; cf. n39) 𐩮𐩡𐩩 – *ṣlt* "prayer," along with monotheism, e.g. Ha11:3–5 (Ash 1952.499; cf. I Gajda, *Ḥimyar gagné par le monothéisme (IVᵉ-VIᵉ siècle de l'ère chrétienne). Ambitions et ruine d'un royaume de l'Arabie méridionale antique* (Université d'Aix-en-Provence, 1997):

l-ys¹mʿn Rḥmnn ṣlt-s¹m
"may Rḥmnn listen to his prayer" (cf. §7.2.4 on Rḥmnn);

Gar Bayt al-Ashwal 1:2–3 (Gajda, op. cit.)

b-rdʾ w-b-zkt mrʾ-hw ḏ-brʾ nfs¹-hw mrʾ ḥyn w-mwtn mrʾ s¹myn w-ʾrḍn ḏ-brʾ klm w-b-ṣlt s²ʿb-hw Ys³rʾl
"avec l'aide et grâce de son Seigneur qui s'est créé lui-même, seigneur de la vie et de la mort, seigneur du ciel et de la terre qui a créé tout et avec les prières de son peuple Israël."

Of further significance here is that the adjectival noun ساجدا – *suǧǧadan* "prostrating" in the Qurʾānic quotation just given, must also be of Syro-Aramaic origin.[64] The common Aramaic root √*sgd* (Syriac ܣܓܕ – *sged*) "to bow down" has a long history in this language of being used to denote "prostration" as in "The Words of Aḥiqar" (*TAD* 3 C1.1:13): אַ[חר גהנת וסגדתֹ "...לם אחיקר קדם אסרח[אד]ן מלך [אתור "...[T]hen, I bowed and prostrated myself, verily <I> Aḥiqar, before Esarh[addo]n, [King of] Assyria" (note Late Sabaic 𐩪𐩴𐩵 – *s³gd* "to submit," e.g., *w-s³gd l-hmw l-ys³ḥln* "he submitted himself to be subject to" – Wellcome A 103664, Gajda, *op. cit.*), but then evolved to "worship, prayer, adore, venerate"[65] as in the Old Syriac gospels, Matthew 2:2 where the Magi tell Herod ܚܙܝܢ ܓܝܪ ܟܘܟܒܗ ܒܡܕܢܚܐ. ܘܐܬܝܢ ܠܡܣܓܕ ܠܗ – "For we have seen his star in the east and have come to *worship* (*l-masgad*) him." From this root, the unsurprisingly nominal derivatives in the meaning "worship, adoration, veneration" (cf. in Bar Hebraeus, *Menerat Qudshe* ܣܓܕܬܐ ܢܘܟܪܝܬܐ i.e. "idolatry"), so ܣܓܕܬܢܝ – *segdtānāy* "pertaining to veneration," ܣܓܘܕܐ – *sāḡōḏā* "worshipper," ܣܓܕܬܐ ܕܨܠܝܒܐ – *segdte d-ṣlīḇā* "veneration of the Cross," ܒܝܬ ܣܓܕܬܐ – *bēṯ segdtā*, lit. "house of worship, prostration," but also the term for the lection John 14:15–31 (read on Whitsun and the eve of Good Friday) etc. The word in the meaning "submisse venerari, precibus venerari (homines, Deum)" also seems to have been borrowed by Old Ethiopic from Syriac as ሰገደ – *sagada*.[66]

It should thus be no surprise then that a nominal derivation of this root then is also found which denotes the *place* of worship. So for example in Samaritan Aramaic to denote a pagan temple (*Tibat Marqé* 1.856): ושרו תפוכה בבתי סגדתון "and they began overturning some of their shrines." Frequently in Nabataean, a place of worship is denoted as a *mšgd*. This word– already attested at the Persian-era Jewish military colony at Elephantine (Egypt; *TAD* B7.3:3): בח[רם אלה]א במסגדא ובענתיהו "{Oath to be sworn} … by Ḥ[erem the go]d at the "place of prostration" (i.e. shrine) and by Anat-Yahu"[67]–is from whence the Arabic word مسجد – *masǧid* is derived, i.e. literally "place of prostration." Thus the Islamic manifestation of prayer and its location have Aramaic predecessors in Syro-Palestine and not in the far distant Hijaz. Finally, with regard to the act of prayer (صلاة – *ṣalāh*) itself in

Islam, as a recent study has shown, all of its major features are pre-Islamic with many interesting parallels to be found in Mesopotamian and Ancient Egyptian depictions.[68]

6.4 Charitable giving: زكاة – *zakāt* or صدقة – *ṣadaqa*

The giving of alms, which is the obligation to provide a particular portion of one's wealth (نصاب – *niṣāb*) to the destitute and needy as well as other defined social groups. زكاة – *zakāt* can hardly be derived from زكى – *zakā* "to clean" as some traditions claim. The nearest cognate meaning of this root is found in Jewish Palestinian/Galilean Aramaic זכי – "to give to charity." The precursors of this semantic development can probably still be seen in Syriac ܙܵܟ݂ܘܼܬ݂ܵܐ – *zākūṯā* "acquittal, innocence" (also "grave of a martyr")—or possibly in Jewish-Babylonian-Aramaic, Palestinian Targum-Aramaic and Galilean Aramaic זְכוּתָא – *zəḵūṯā* "reward, commendable deed." The latter seems more likely to me.

The "voluntary donation" صدقة – *ṣadaqa* has a specific meaning and thus is certainly of foreign origin. In Amorite, Ugaritic, (older) Hebrew, Sabaean, Gəʿəz, etc. this semantic domain encompasses "justice, to be righteous, to be documented as true" (compare *the Tzaddik*; Sadducee) – from which the classical commentators derived the Arabic term.[69] The development of "to be righteous" > "that which is right(eous) > "that which is proper (to give)" > "to give charitably" > "to give a portion, toll" was completed in Aramaic. Syriac, which renders here the /ṣ/ with {z} is less relevant here. However, here we do find a similar semantic development: ܙܵܕܘܼܬ݂ܵܐ – *zadūṯā* (<√*zdq*!) "beneficium, eleemosyne," for example, as in Matthew 6:2, where this word expresses the Greek ἐλεημοσύνη:

ܐܸܡܲܬܝ ܗܵܟܹܝܠ ܕܥܵܒܸܕ ܐܲܢܬ ܙܵܕܘܼܬܵܐ ܠܵܐ ܬܸܩܪܹܐ ܩܲܪܢܵܐ ܩܕܵܡܲܝܟ ܐܲܝܟ ܕܥܵܒܕܝܼܢ
ܢܵܣ݂ܒܲܪ ܒܐܲܦܹ̈ܐ ܒܲܟ݂ܢܘܼܫܵܬ݂ܵܐ ܘܲܒܫܘܼܩܹ̈ܐ܂ ܐܲܝܟ ܕܢܸܫ݂ܒܚܘܼܢ ܡܸܢ ܒܢܲܝ ܐ̱ܢܵܫܵܐ ܘܐܲܡܝܼܢ
ܐܵܡܲܪ ܐ̱ܢܵܐ ܠܟܘܿܢ ܕܩܲܒܸܠܘ ܐܲܓ݂ܪܗܘܿܢ

ʾimmattī hāḵēl d-ʿāḇed ʾatt zadūṯā lā teqrā qarnā qadmayḵ ʾayḵ d-ʿāḇdīn
nāsbar baʾpe ba-ḵnušāṯā wa-ḇ-šuqe: ʾayḵ d-nešbḥun men bnay (ʾ)nāšā wa-ʾmīn
ʾāmar (ʾ)nā lḵun d-qabbelᵘ ʾaḡrhun

"So when you give alms do not sound a horn before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward."

This usage is also found elsewhere: ܡܸܕܸܡ ܕܝܢ ܕܡܸܬܝܼܗܸܒ ܠܕܲܝܪܵܬ݂ܵܐ ܘܠܲܐܟ݂ܣܸܢܝܵܕ݂ܘܿܚܹܝܢ ܘܙܵܕܘܼܬ݂ܵܐ "... whatever has been donated to monasteries, guest-houses, and alms" (E. Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher* Vol. 3, 176:2).

The unaltered root √*ṣdq* found in Western Aramaic is, however, in all likelihood the source of the Arabic borrowing. So for example Christian-

Palestinian ܙܕܩܐ – *ṣdq'* as well as the Hebrew word borrowed by Jewish dialects צְדָקָה – *ṣəḏāqāʰ* "liberality, especially almsgiving."[70] Although the exact Aramaic source of this word is not clear, it is most likely the same one which lent this word into Classical Ethiopian ፃድቃት – *ṣadəqāt* (pl.; sing. ፃድቅ – *ṣadəq*). In any case, the particular semantic development of the root √*ṣdq* here, from "righteousness" to "alms(giving)" is somewhat convoluted so as to preclude the same semantic development having occurred twice independently. The precedence of this development in Aramaic certainly shows that it was borrowed by Arabic. The fact that it, unlike most of the borrowed Aramaic lexemes hitherto discussed, seems to have been borrowed from a Jewish Western Aramaic dialect could indicate that it is an Islamic continuation of an originally Jewish custom, possibly a relic of Islam's Judaeo-Christian origins (see §7.2.9).

6.5 Fasting: صوم – *ṣawm*

In Arabic, the root √*ṣwm,* in the limited religious sense of forgoing food, drink, sexual intercourse etc., can only have been borrowed–its phonology disqualifies it being Arabic. In Ugaritic the word is attested as *ẓm* with this meaning. Were صوم – *ṣawm* a genuine Arabic lexeme, we would then expect to see something resembling ظوم – **ẓawm.* The origin of this word is most likely the Hebrew צום – *ṣôm* "to fast"[71] (verb Qal "to fast, a self-depreciation rite, generally performed during the day"; Gesenius[18] s.v.), since Aramaic ܨܘܡ – *ṣwm* must itself also be a loan-word: proto-Semitic /ẓ/ evolved into /ṭ/ in Aramaic, which would here have resulted in ܛܘܡ – **ṭwm.* In Judaism, rites of fasting were not uncommon, e.g. צומא רבא – *ṣō/awmā rabbā* "the great fast" (i.e., *Yom Ha-Kippurim*; *PTMeg*70.b: 25[2]). Fasting was also widespread in early Christianity, particularly in its Oriental varieties, something which requires no further explanation in light of its Jewish roots. We merely note here the month-long fast during Advent (ܨܘܡܐ ܕܣܘܒܪܐ/ܕܝܠܕܐ – *ṣawāmā ḏ-suḇrā/ḏ-yaldā*). Both the word and the religious concept were likewise borrowed by Old Ethiopian, i.e. ጾም – *ṣom* from Aramaic, certainly with the introduction of Christianity.[72] Thus, this lexeme demonstrates in a striking manner the Judaeo-Christian roots of Islam.

6.6 Pilgrimage: حج – *ḥaǧǧ*

This word, specifically referring to the Meccan pilgrimage appears also to have been borrowed. Again, the semantic development of the root betrays its Syro-Aramaic origins. In Biblical Hebrew, the root √*ḥgg* is defined as a religious festival in general and is commonly derived from the verbal root √*ḥwg* "to draw a circle, to measure precisely" (compare to طواف – *ṭawāf*), so originally "to dance in a circle" >"to take part in a procession." In Arabic

though, besides the by all accounts quite specific verbal meaning "to undertake the Ḥaǧǧ," this root furthermore encompasses a second, judicial semantic domain, e.g. حجة – *ḥuǧǧa* "argument, proof, plea etc." (probably related to a secondary form حق – *ḥaqq* "truth"; note Sabaic 𐩢𐩴 – *ḥg* "to command" etc., Classical Ethiopic ሐገገ – *ḥagaga* "to legislate" ሕግ – *ḥǝgg* "law"). As this Arabic root is very productive in the semantic domain of law and displays no other obvious connexions to (the) pilgrimage, it seems certain that it is a loan. This premise is supported by the fact that the meaning "to celebrate" in a specifically religious context is wide-spread throughout Aramaic,[73] and is an Hebraism—cf. the Jewish wish *Chag sameach* "happy holiday." Especially in Syriac though, this root in a religious sense becomes quite productive: ܚܓܐ – *ḥaggā* "feast," ܚܓܝܘܬܐ – *ḥaggāyūṯā* "festivity" ܡܚܓܝܢܐ – *mḥaggǝyānā*, ܡܚܓܝܢܘܬܐ – *mḥaggǝyānūṯā* "festivity," ܡܚܓܝܢܐܝܬ – *mḥaggyānā'īṯ* "in a joyous or festal manner," also in conjunction with "worship" (*sgd* see sub §5.2) with Jacob of Sarug:[74]

<div align="center">

ܠܥܣܘܕ ܣܓܕܝܢ ܚܓܐ ܘܟܢܫܐ ܘܐܬܪܘܬܐ:

</div>

… l-yēšūʿ sagdīn ḥaggā wǝ-kenšā wǝ-'aṯrūṯā

"… groups and assemblies and regions worship Jesus."

It is also in this language that we see the further, less obvious semantic development to *pilgrimage*, e.g. ܚܓܝܐ – *ḥaggāyā* "solemnis; peregrinans ad festum agendum."[75] In Sabaean we find 𐩢𐩴 – *ḥg* most often with the meaning something along the lines of "divine destiny, claim, authority; order," although in late Sabaean it can also mean "pilgrimage" (e.g. seemingly in Ha 11; cf. ad §6.3). This must constitute a borrowing from Aramaic and may possibly be attested in Old Northern Arabic (Thamudic) as well.

In the German version of this article, I left some possibility open that this word might be the product of an inner-Arabic development. The fact, however, is that the semantics of religious festivity culminating in a pilgrimage derive ultimately from Hebrew, from whence these semantics entered Aramaic, preclude such. Furthermore, since then, I have become increasingly convinced that the association of Islam with Mecca first came about during the Abbasid period, when Mecca seemingly emerges out of nowhere – the بكة – *bakkah* of the Qur'ān simply cannot be convincingly associated with this city as I intend to demonstrate in a forthcoming publication. Therefore, the pilgrimage to Mecca is not so much the Islamic reinterpretation of an indigenous Hijazi rite, but rather the later transposition of a Syro-Palestinian Judaeo-Christian one to the Hijaz. In passing, it should be noted that the lesser, voluntary Meccan pilgrimage, the عمرة – *ʿumrah* also has Syro-Aramaic roots: <√ʿmr ("to dwell") "habitavit specialiter in coenobio," i.e. to lead a monastic life ܥܡܪܝܐ – *ʿumrāy* "monk." So too إحرام – *iḥrām*, the sacred state

in which one enters to perform these pilgrimages has Syro-Aramaic origins, scil. the causative conjugation of the root √ḥrm, i.e. ܐܚܪܡ – aḥrem "to devote, to consecrate"[76] whose specific semantics were in turn borrowed from Hebrew as can be seen by comparing the Peshitta with the Masoretic Text of Leviticus 27:29:

ܘܟܠ ܚܪܡܐ ܕܡܚܪܡ ܡܢ ܐܢܫܐ ܠܐ ܢܬܦܪܩ. ܐܠܐ ܡܬܩܛܠܘ ܢܬܩܛܠ.

we-kul ḥermā d-maḥram min (ʾĕ)nāšā lā neṭpreq ʾellā metqāṭlū neṭqtel

כָּל־חֵרֶם אֲשֶׁר יָחֳרַם מִן־הָאָדָם לֹא יִפָּדֶה מֹות יוּמָת:

kol-ḥäräm ʾăšär yᵒḥŏram min-hā-ʾāḏām lō(ʾ) yippaḏeʰ mōṯ yūmāṯ

"None *devoted*, that may be *devoted* of men, shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death." (JPS)

Here again, it is the specific religious semantics of this root that reveal its Syro-Aramaic heritage in Arabic.

7. سورة الفاتحة – The First Surah of the Qurʾān

7.1 Variations of the Fātiḥa

In the previous sections, I have discussed some of the theological vocabulary of the Qurʾān and of Islam. It is has been shown that the words discussed (as well as many others) are largely borrowed from Aramaic, especially Syriac– the language of a large portion of Eastern Semitic Christianity during the time of "Muḥammad." In conclusion then, it is perhaps fitting to provide an example of a Qurʾānic text, in order to demonstrate the role of Aramaic in context. For simplicity's sake, I will take the opening Sura, the *Surat Al-Fātiḥah* (سورة الفاتحة), the "Exordium." Here I provide a literal Anglicisation and a table of notes where the borrowed words are briefly explained.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾

الْحَمْدُ لِلهِ رَبِّ الْعَلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ

نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾

صِرَطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ

عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ﴿٧﴾

1. *bi-smi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm*	In the name of God the merciful Merciful
2. *al-ḥamdu li-llāhi^A rabbi^B l-ʿālamīn^C*	Praise be to God, the Lord of the eternities
3. *ar-raḥmāni^D r-raḥīm*	The merciful Merciful
4. *māliki yawmi^E d-dīn^F*	Who will reign on the day of judgement[77]
5. *iyyāka naʿbudu^G wa-iyyāka nastaʿīn*	You alone we worship and you alone we ask assistance
6. *ihdinā ṣ-ṣirāṭ^H al-mustaqīm^I*	Guide us on the straight path (=faith)
7. *ṣirāṭa l-laḏīna anʿamta ʿalayhim ġayri l-maġḍūbi ʿalayhim wa-lā ḍ-ḍāllīn*	The way of those upon whom you have bestowed your mercy, not (the way) of those who have fallen to (your) anger and who go astray

Although the Qur'ān claims to be unique and singular, its textual transmission is no more unique than that of its predecessors (scil. the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament). The notion that only one version of the text exists is an anachronistic myth and other interesting versions of the text, *in casu* Sura 1, are attested, such as the two published by Jeffery.[78] Here I give them, including his translations:

1. nuḥammidu llāha rabba l-ʿālamīn   نُحَمِّدُٱللَّهَرَبَّٱلْعَالَمِينَ

2. ar-raḥmāna r-raḥīma   ٱلرَّحْمَنَٱلرَّحِيمَ

3. mal'aka yawm ad-dīn   مَلَّاكَيَوْمِٱلدِّينِ

                          هَيَّاكَنَعْبُدُوِيَاكَنَسْتَعِينُ
4. hayyāka naʿbudu wa-yyāka nastaʿīn

                          تُرْشِدُسَبِيلَٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ
5. turšidu sabīla l-mustaqīm

6. sabīl l-laḏīna naʿʿamta ʿalayhim   سَبِيلَٱلَّذِينَنَعَّمْتَعَلَيْهِمْ

                          سِوَىٱلْمَغْضُوبِعَلَيْهِمْوَلَاٱلضَّالِّينَ
   siwā l-maġḍūbi ʿalayhim wa-lā ḍ-ḍāllīna

We greatly praise Allāh, Lord of the worlds,
The Merciful, the Compassionate,
He who has possession of the Day of Judgment.
Thee do we worship, and on Thee do we call for help.

Thou dost direct to the path of the Upright One,
The path of those to whom Thou hast shown favor,
Not that of those with whom Thou are angered, or those who go astray.

1. *bi-smi llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm*   بِسْمِ ٱللهِ ٱلرَّحْمٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

2. *al-ḥamdu li-llāhi sayyidi l-ʿālamīna*   أَلْحَمْدُ للهِ سَيِّدِ ٱلْعَالَمِينَ

3. *ar-razzāqi r-raḥīm*   ٱلرَّزَّاقِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

4. *malʾaki yawm ad-dīn*   مَلَاۤكِ يَوْمِ ٱلدِّينِ

5. *inna laka naʿbudu wa-inna laka nastaʿīnu*   إِنَّ لَكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِنَّ لَكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

6. *ʾaršid-nā sabīla l-mustaqīm*   أَرْشِدْنَا سَبِيلَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمِ

7. *sabīla l-laḏīna mananta ʿalayhim*   سَبِيلَ ٱلَّذِينَ مَنَنْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

siwā l-maġḍūb ʿalayhim wa-ġayra   سِوَى ٱلْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَغَيْرَ

ḍ-ḍāllīna   ٱلضَّالِّينَ

In the Name of Allāh, the Merciful, the Compassionate.
Raise be to Allāh, Lord of the worlds,
The Bountiful, the Compassionate,
He who has possession of the Day of Judgment,
As for us, to Thee do we worship, and to Thee we turn for help,
Direct us to the path of the Upright One,
The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed favors,
Not that of those with whom Thou art angered,
Nor that of those who go astray.

These two versions present very interesting variations, although I will not elaborate on them here – I hope to have the chance to deal with this elsewhere. Most of the variants reflect the use of synonyms. These reveal that the textual tradition is not nearly as consistent as is suggested by believers.

Before the borrowed vocabulary of this Sura is discussed in detail, it should be pointed out that due to these loan-words and the theological concepts that underlie them, the Sura contains many *cruces interpretationis* and hence the meaning of many verses (آيات – *āyāt*) was unclear to the traditional commentators.[79]

7.2 Discussion of the individual forms

7.2.1 (=A) الله – Allāh

Allāh الله <*al-ilāhu*, "God"–see above §5.4.

7.2.2 (=B) رب – *rabb*

This lexeme from the root √*rbb* in the sense of *Rabbi* ("master, teacher") is a technical term, cf. NT ῥαββί. Without wanting to go into excessive detail here, I merely note that the semantic development of this specific meaning was completed in Aramaic. In Late Sabaean of the monotheistic period, this is attested as 𐩧𐩨 𐩺𐩳𐩵 – *rb yhd* "Lord of the Jews," as well as in Old Ethiopian as ረቡ – *rabbān*, also borrowed from Aramaic. Thus, it is no surprise that we find this usage well-attested in Syriac as e.g.: ܐܒܪ – *rabbān* and ܐܒܪܘܠܝ – *rabbūlī* (diminutive) etc. and which are obviously loan words in Arabic (as well as their derivations, such as "to own, to control" etc.).

In passing, it should be noted that the usage of رب – *rabb* here displays the undoubtedly Christian origins of the Qur'ān and precludes an ancient Arabic monotheistic tradition that hearkens back to the mythical figure of Abraham:[80] behind the epithet "Lord" lies the name of the Hebrew deity *Yahweh* (Hebrew יהוה, the Tetragrammaton). In an earlier stage of what became Judaism, reflected by the consonantal Hebrew text of the Masoretic tradition, there was no prohibition in pronouncing the name of the deity (which is confirmed by Hebrew names such as יְשַׁעְיָהוּ – *yəšaʿyāhū* "Y. is salvation," i.e. *Isaiah* and e.g. the texts from Elephantine). In later Jewish and Samaritan tradition, this name was considered to be too holy which is reflected in the vocalisation tradition of the Masoretic text which points this word (a *Qrê pepetuum*) as יְהֹוָה, that is with the vowels of אֲדֹנָי – *ăḏōnāy* "my Lord" (which was misunderstood by the early Bible translators who thus falsely read the word as *Jehovah*).[81] Whether it was Jews or Christians who first rendered the name of the deity with Κύριος "Lord" in Greek texts such as the translation of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, is not entirely clear although there was a tendency in some Greek Jewish texts to write the Tetragrammaton in Hebrew/Aramaic letters.[82] That is Judaism always remembered that the name of their God was yhwh. Although some later Christian writers were still aware if this,[83] in Christian tradition already attested by the New Testament, "Lord" (Κύριος, Syriac ܡܪܐ, ܡܪܝܐ – *mārē*, *māryā*, *mārā*) has become an epithet (and not the given name) of the Deity.[84] The fact that the Qur'ān shows no knowledge of the Jewish tradition[85] and follows Christian usage is a certain indication of this book's Semitic Christian origins (see below §7.2.9). Thus

the Islamic conception of God as "Lord" and not being named *Yahweh* precludes any notion of an old Hijazi tradition or direct Jewish influence.[86]

7.2.3 (=C) علامين - *ʿālamīn*

The root √*ʿlm* in Arabic has the basic meaning "to know" > "science," cf. modern calqued forms of similar compounds ending in -*logy*: علم الاحياء – *ʿilm al-ʾāḥyāʾ* "biology," علم الإجتماع – *ʿilm al-iǧtimāʿ* "sociology," علم الحساب – *ʿilm al-ḥisāb* "mathematics" etc.[87] The meaning "eternity" (sg.), "eternities" (pl.) is a borrowing from Aramaic. For the original sense of the word here, compare Ugaritic "duration" > "eternal," such as *lht wʿlmh* "now and forever," as well as the title of a deified dead King *mlk ʿlm* "eternal King" (cf. *ḥq3 ḏt* as a title of Osiris!)–very similar to the usage dealt with here, also in Hebrew וַיהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֱמֶת הוּא־אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים וּמֶלֶךְ עוֹלָם – *wạ-yhwh ᵉlōhīm ᵃmäṯ hû'-ᵉlōhīm ḥayyīm ū-mäläk ʿolām* "But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, the eternal king" (Jeremiah 10:10) and וַיִּקְרָא־שָׁם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֵל עוֹלָם – *way-yiqrā'-šām bə-šēm yhwh ʾēl ʿōlām* "and there he called on the name of the Lord, the Eternal God" (Genesis 21:33; cf. also in Syriac ܒܬܘܠܬ ܥܠܡܝܢ – *bəṯūlaṯ ʿālāmīn* "Mary ever virgin," ἀειπάρθενος). From this original sense, under influence of **apocalypticism**, the meaning "future, or coming time" > "end time" > "eternity" developed, which also exists in the plural in Hebrew (for emphasis), for example Psalms 77:8 הַלְעוֹלָמִים יִזְנַח | אֲדֹנָי וְלֹא־יֹסִיף לִרְצוֹת עוֹד – *hạ-lə-ʿōlāmīm yiznạḥ | ᵃḏonāy wə-lō'-yōsīp̄ li-rəṣôṯ ʿōḏ* Has his unfailing love vanished forever? Has his promise failed for all time?" (*Statenvertaling*: "in eeuwigheden," so also lxx αἰῶνας). This semantic domain is also attested in Aramaic with this meaning, e.g. Daniel 2:20 שְׁמֵהּ דִּי־אֱלָהָא מְבָרַךְ מִן־עָלְמָא וְעַד־עָלְמָא – *šmēh dī-ᵉlāhā' məḇāraḵ min-ʿālmā' wə-ʿaḏ ʿālmā'* "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever," and is also attested in the plural. This word is used in Syriac with this meaning, however also in the further semantic development >"land" such as Matthew 4:8:

ܬܘܒ ܕܒܪܗ ܐܟܠܩܪܨܐ ܠܛܘܪܐ ܕܛܒ ܕܐܡ. ܘܚܘܝܗ ܟܠܗܝܢܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕ̇ܥܠܡܐ ܘܫܘܒܚܗܝܢ [88]
tūḇ daḇreh ʾaḵelqarṣā lə-ṯurā də-ṭāḇ dām. wə-ḥawyeh kul-heyn-malkwāṯā d-ʿālmā wə-šuḇḥ-heyn
"Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour."

In the Syriac New Testament, as well as in other sources, the singular often has the meaning "world" and the plural is frequently used in the expression لعالم عالمين – *lə-ʿālam ʿālmīn*, lit. "eternity of eternities," such as for example in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:13: εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας) or even in the sense of "eternal life" (ܥܠܡܐ – *ʿullāmā*).[89] This meaning of the word has been borrowed by Late Sabaean[90] and by Old Ethiopian.[91] In the interest of brevity: God as the Lord of eternity is well attested in Syriac which presupposes the

apocalyptical notion of eternity and this is the product of late Jewish/early Christian theological developments; the Arabic equivalent can only have been borrowed–whereby the customary translation "Lord of the Worlds"[92] should in light of the preceding be more properly rendered by "Lord of Eternity."[93]

7.2.4 (=D) رحمن – *raḥmān*

The term الرحمن – *ar-raḥmān* "the merciful" as an epithet of God has long been recognised as a borrowing. The noun *rḥm* in Semitic originally means "womb," also in Ugaritic, for example (with the derived connotation "wo-man").[94] From this, the term "motherly love" >"mercy" developed in Hebrew and Aramaic, and it also came to be used to describe a divinity, for example already at Tal Faḥariye l. 5 (*KAI*[5] 309), where it is said of the god Ḥadad: *'lh rḥmn zy tṣlwth ṭbh* "merciful God, to whom prayer is good."[95] It is also often used in this sense in the Hebrew Bible. In post-biblical Judaism, however, this term becomes a description of God, such as in the Tosefta (סדר נזיקין מסכת בבא קמא פרק ט,יא[96]) where it says: כל זמן שאתה רחמן הרחמן מרחם עליך – *kōl zəmān še'attāh raḥmān hā-raḥmān mərahēm 'ēlekā* "Whenever you are merciful, the Merciful will show you mercy."[97] This term was also used to describe gods at pagan Palmyra, where it was also used as an epithet for an otherwise unnamed deity which was often worshipped together with *Allat* and *Shamash*,[98] such as *lbryk šmh l'lm' ṭb' rḥmn' wtyr'* "May his name be blessed forever, the Good, the Merciful, and the Compassionate." In Syriac, a derived form was used–Greenfield[99] wonders whether Christian Syriac avoids this expression in reaction to the pagan use of *rḥmn'* and uses ܡܪܚܡܢ – *mraḥmān* instead, for example in James 5:11: ܡܛܠ ܕܡܪܚܡܢ ܗܘ ܡܪܝܐ ܘܡܪܚܦܢ – *meṭṭūl da-mraḥmān hu māryā wa-mraḥpān* (from Greek: ὅτι πολύσπλαγχνός ἐστιν ὁ Κύριος καὶ οἰκτίρμων) "for the Lord is full of compassion and mercy."[100]

In Sabaic of the late monotheistic period (cf. also Ha11 *supra* §6.3), we find forms of this root used as both an epithet and as a name for a God, which has already been shown by an inscription. Some of these are clearly Jewish, such as *CIH* 543 (note also Gar Bayt al-Ashwal 1, *supra* §6.3):

1 [b]rk w-tbrk s¹m Rḥmnn[101] ḏ-b-s¹myn w-Ys³r'l w-	Bless and be blessed the name of Raḥmān who is in heaven, and Israel and
2 'lh-hmw rb-yhd ḏ-hrd(')'bd-hmw pn₁ w-	Its God, the Lord of the Jews who helped his servant pn₁ and
3 'm-hw bdm w-ḥs²kt-hw s²ms¹m w-'l-	his mother pn₂, and his wife pn₃ and their

4 wd-ḥmy ḍmm w-'bs²ʿr (w-)mṣr-	children pn₄ and pn₅ (and) pn₆
5 m w-kl bḫt̲-h [...]	And all of their kin ...
6 [.]w[...]	... and ...

And other (later?) ones are apparently Christian, like the long inscription commemorating the building of the dam at Marib by Abraha, *CIH* 541 (only the relevant opening passage is cited here):

1 b-ḫyl w-[r]d' w-rḥ-	With the power, support and mer-
2 mt rḥmnn w-ms¹-	cy of the Raḥmān and his Mes-
3 ḥ-hw¹⁰² w-rḥ [q]ds¹ s¹ṭrw	siah and the Holy Spirit, wrote
4 n ms³ndn 'n 'brh ...	this inscription, I Abraha ...

As can also be seen for example in another inscription, *Ry* 508 (the ending, l. 11):

11. ... w-b-]ḫfr rḥmnn (ḏ)n ms¹ndn bn kl ḥs¹s¹{s¹}m w-mḫdʿm w-trḥm ʿly kl ʿlm rḥmnn rḥmk mr' 't	... and with the protection of Raḥmān for this inscription against harm and robbers. Because you Raḥmān are merciful for the entire world, you are the merciful Lord.

In this last inscription, we see the use of the three loan termini discussed here: *rb*, *ʿlm* and *Raḥmān*. In some inscriptions, a pagan deity might be referred to instead of or alongside the Judeo-Christian God. It is also important to note that in Sabaic inscriptions which refer to Judaism and Christianity, an originally Aramaic term was used to describe God (note too the middle Sabaic text,+/- 3ʳᵈ cent. ad, *CIH* 40:5 where reference is made to a deity *rḥm s¹gḥ bʿl s³ydm*). As I have argued previously, I do not believe that Sabaic culture had any significant influence on Islam; rather we are dealing with a borrowed term for "God." الرحمن الرحيم – *ar-raḥmān ar-raḥīm* then, should be translated as either "the most gracious Merciful One" or "the merciful Raḥ-mān" (كرياليسون – ? – *kry'lyswn*). The usage described here thus has a long history and its Qur'ānic meaning must derive from (Judaeo-)Christian Aramaic divine nomenclature.

<div align="center">

7.2.5 (=E) يوم- *yawm*

</div>

The lexeme يوم – *yawm* "day" is doubtlessly a genuine Arabic word. Its es-chatological semantics, here, in the sense of "day of judgement" (يوم الدين – *yawm ad-dīn*), "day of the resurrection" (يوم القيامة – *yawm al-qiyāma*; cf. Syriac *qyāmtā*, *qayyāmtā* "Resurrection," e.g. Matthew 27:53 [... μετὰ τὴν ἔγερσιν αὐτοῦ...], Peshitta: ܘܡܢ ܒܬܪ ܩܝܡܬܗ ܥܠܘ ܠܡܕܝܢܬܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ ܘܐܬܚܙܝܘ ܠܣܓܝܐܐ; cf. also §7.2.10 *infra*), or "the last days," must be a borrowed term,

as such presuppose the notion apocalyptic prophecy which was especially prevalent in early forms of Christianity (re. the Second Coming of Jesus).[103]

7.2.6 (=F) الدين – *ad-dīn*

The word الدين – *ad-dīn* used here meaning "the (final) judgement," but also in the sense of God as "judge." Although the semantics of judgement as they relate to this root are indeed very old, as can be seen e.g. from Ugaritic *dn* and Akkadian *diānu/dânu*, the usage of the term to indicate the *final judgement*, or of God as the *judge* on the last days, is a product of the developments touched upon above in 7.2.5. The understanding of God as a "judge" (דיין/ܕܰܝܳܢܐ – *dayān(ā)*) as well as the expectation of a "day of judgement" (Hebrew: יום הדין – *yōm had-dīn* /Aramaic יום דינא – *yōm dīnā*) was quite common among contemporary Jewish and Christian circles and was thus unsurprisingly also borrowed by Old Ethiopian as ደይን – *dayən* "damnation." It is indicative of borrowing that the Arabic term with the meaning "judge" is only used as an epithet of God on the Last Day–in Syro-Aramaic[104] it is the general term for judge, analogous to the generic Arabic lexeme القاضي – *al-qāḍī*. The restricted eschatological usage of this term to describe God at the Final Judgement illustrates that this (late Christian) concept was borrowed along with its vocabulary.

Here it should be noted that in Arabic الدين – *ad-dīn* can also mean "religion" (even if not yet in the modern sense as a terminus technicus; not only with regard to Islam as "the Religion," but also used significantly in Arabic Christianity). The restrictive semantics here also indicate a borrowing from Syriac دين – *dīn* /ܕܝܢ – *dayn* "religio" (cf. Brockelmann, *Lexicon* 151 s.v.) which in turn was borrowed from Iranian,[105] cf. Avestan *daēnā* "insight," "revelation" > "conscience" > "religion" (> Farsi دين – *dīn*; also Classical Armenian դեն – *den*). Thus while the root √*dyn* may well be Arabic, the technical theological meanings of God as the "Judge" at the "Final Judgement" and its use to denote (the revealed) 'Religion' are clearly borrowings from Syriac where the former meanings had their theological semantic evolution and the latter meaning was borrowed from Persian.

7.2.7 (=G) عبد – *ʿabd*

The root √*ʿbd* "to serve," from which the lexeme عبد – *ʿabd* "slave" comes, is once again a true Arabic word. The semantics of slavery, also attested in e.g. Hebrew עבד – *ʿāḇāḏ* (the verb is expressed in the Peshitta as ܦܠܚ – *plaḥ*), are well-attested in Semitic, but are not directly relevant here. In Aramaic, this root normally forms the general verb for "to do, to make" (Hebr. עָשָׂה – *ʿāśāʰ*,

Arab. فعل – *faʿala*), though in Syriac[106] we also see an expanded meaning for this root in the semantic domain of religion. Here, in this technical sense, it can mean "to celebrate" and "to worship, to adore," such as in Acts 20:16: ܐܢ ܗܘ .ܕܝܢ ܡܫܟܚܐ: ܝܘܡܐ ܕܦܢܬܝܩܘܣܛܝ ܒܐܘܪܫܠܡ ܢܥܒܕܝܘܗܝ. – *d-ʾen meškḥā: yawmā d-penṭiqāwsṭī b-ʾurišlem neʿbḏīwhy* "… if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost," and which can also have the meaning "ordination, consecration."[107] It would thus seem that here and in similar cases the cultic activity of human adoration of the Deity is intended, i.e. "to worship" and not "to serve (as a slave)."

<div align="center">

7.2.8 (=H) صراط – ṣirāṭ

</div>

The lexeme صراط – *ṣirāṭ* "path" is certainly a loan-word from Latin *strata* >στράτα >(ܐܣܛܪܛܐ – *esṭrāṭā*) > صراط- *ṣirāṭ*,[108] a word that entered the region with the Roman road-building occupiers, cf. also the English word "street," with the same origins. The word is common in the Qurʾān and often appears with the adjective مستقيم – *mustaqīm*. It can also be used in the figurative sense to mean a teaching, such as those of Moses (Qurʾān 37:118) وهديناهما الصراط المستقيم – *wa-hadaynā-humā ṣ-ṣirāṭa l-mustaqīma*, or significantly Jesus (3:51) إن الله ربي وربكم فاعبدوه هذا صراط مستقيم – *ʾinna llāha rabbī wa-rabbukum fa-ʿbudūhu hāḏā ṣirāṭun mustaqīmun,* as well as in the general sense (7: 16) قال فبما أغويتني لأقعدن لهم صراطك المستقيم – *qāla fa-bi-mā ʾaḡwaytanī la-ʾaqʿudanna lahum ṣirāṭaka l-mustaqīma*. What is actually meant by the "straight path" is not mentioned here; in this sense it is similar in meaning to شريعة – *šarīʿa* (e.g. 45:18) >"legislation." Typically the *path* is taken to mean the *path of Islam*, but this is practically impossible from a historical perspective[109]– and would in any case be an anachronism–a reference here to Islam is just as inconceivable as Qurʾān 2:2 ذلك الكتاب لا ريب فيه هدى للمتقين – *ḏālika l-kitābu lā rayba fīhi hudan li-l-muttaqīna* referring to the Qurʾān we have today.

Since a critical edition of the Qurʾān still does not exist, as I mentioned earlier, we can neither assess nor rely on *variae lectiones*. Of interest here though are the texts with significant variant readings published by Jeffery and cited above.

Both of these texts use a common synonym for صراط – *ṣirāṭ*, namely سبيل – *sabīl*, a word which too is borrowed from Aramaic. In Syriac, ܫܒܝܠܐ – *šḇīlā* renders the Greek κανών ("rule, standard, principle;" > قانون) in Galatians 6:16 and Philippians 3:16, but also τρίβος in Matthew 3:3 "Prepare the *Way* for the Lord," and τροχιά in Hebrews 12:13—so "path" here is meant in the figurative sense of "path" or "way of life," i.e., "route of salvation." The Greek terms are synonyms for ὁδός, a lexeme which can also describe Christian beliefs and the Christian *Way* of life in the New Testament, such as in John

14:6.[110] The latter Greek word is typically translated by ܐܘܪܚܐ – *'urḥā* in the Peshitta, which is a synonym in Syriac for ܫܒܝܠܐ – *šḇīlā*.

This latter Greek word, however, is also used to describe the new faith, cf. Acts 9:2: Saul wants to apprehend those who "belonged to the Way" (ὅπως ἐάν τινας εὕρῃ τῆς ὁδοῦ ὄντας, ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας = ܕܢܐܪܕܢ ܒܣܗܕܐ ܐܘܪܚܐ ܓܒܪܐ ܐܘ ܢܫܐ – *d-rāḏen b-sāhḏē 'urḥā gaḇrē 'aw neše'* – "so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women …"), to take them as captives to Jerusalem, cf. also 19:23 (Ἐγένετο δὲ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον τάραχος οὐκ ὀλίγος περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ), and also the alleged statement made by Paul in 22:4: ὃς ταύτην τὴν ὁδὸν ἐδίωξα ἄχρι θανάτου θανάτου δεσμεύων καὶ παραδιδοὺς εἰς φυλακὰς ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναικὰς (ܘܠܗܕܐ ܐܘܪܚܐ – *wa-l-hāḏē 'urḥā reḏpeṭ ᶜdammā l-mawtā: kaḏ 'āsar ʰwīṭ wə-mašlemʰwīṭ l-beyṭ 'asīrē gaḇrē wə-nešē* "And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women"). It is important to note here that at Paul's trial in chapter 24, Tertullus describes him as the πρωτοστάτην τε τῆς τῶν Ναζωρα ίων αἱρέσεως in v. 5, to which Paul replies in v. 14 ὁμολογῶ δὲ τοῦτό σοι, ὅτι κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν [Peshitta: ܝܘܠܦܢܐ – *yūlpānē* "doctrine"] ἣν λέγουσιν αἵρεσιν οὕτω λατρεύω τῷ πατρῴῳ Θεῷ, πιστεύων πᾶσι τ οῖς κατὰ τὸν νόμον καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς προφήταις γεγραμμένοις. Here we see the "Way" as an early self-description for Semitic Christians. Their opponents though, first the Jews, and later Greco-Romans, described them as Nazarenes.[111] Seeming confirmation for this proposal is given by 19:36:

$$\text{وَإِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَبِّى وَرَبُّكُمْ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ هَٰذَا صِرَٰطٌ مُّسْتَقِيمٌ}$$

wa-inna l-laha rabbī warabbukum faᶜbudūhu hāḏā ṣirāṭun mustaqīmun
[Jesus said] "And lo! Allāh is my Lord and your Lord. So serve Him. That is the right path." (Pickthall)

It is of course obvious that the Qur'ān was revealed spontaneously from heaven above just as much as was the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament. The holy book of Islam presumes a prior knowledge of oriental Christianity, as the discussion in the previous sections should have made clear, especially in as much as that the Qur'ān shows a definite familiarity with the Peshitta. Thus if the roots of the Qur'ān are to be found in a (heterodox) current of Semitic Christianity–something which I am only briefly able to touch upon in this article–then the mysterious "Path" is self explanatory: it is a religious self-description.

7.2.9 Excursus النصراني "Nazarene" and الأنصار "Anṣar"

At this juncture, it is worthwhile to briefly discuss the term "Nazarene." As Pritz[112] has already explained, an inhabitant of Nazareth would not have been described as Ναζωραῖος,[113] rather the term stems from Isaiah 11:1: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse (יִשָׁי – *yišāy*), and a branch (וְנֵצֶר – *wə-nēṣär*) shall grow out of his roots."[114] This term, along with Ἰεσσαῖοι (> Isais, Jesse),[115] were terms used to denote indigenous Christianity before it became Graecised and the name Χριστιανός became common.[116] However, Ναζωραῖος was preserved in the Semitic languages as the word for Christianity, such as Arabic النصراني – *al-naṣrānī* and Hebrew נוֹצְרִי – *nōṣrī*.[117] Although the root √*nṣr* in Arabic has the well-attested meaning "to help, to support" alongside its "Christian" meanings and derivations, I have long wondered whether the الأنصار – *al-ʾanṣār*, the Medinan helpers/supporters of "Muḥammad" in the Qurʾān, were actually Christians–perhaps they were about as Muslim as Jesus was from Nazareth?[118]

Although interpreting الأنصار – *al-ʾanṣār* as "Christian" might at first seem outrageous; a second look in light of the context of its *Sitz im Leben* in Late Antiquity could make this hypothesis entirely plausible. Both attestations of this word in the Qurʾān (9:100,117), are found together with المهاجرون – *al-muhāǧirūn* "émigrés,"[119] and taken in their own right offer no bearing at all for their interpretation in later Islamic exegetical traditions. Sura 9:100:

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَانٍ رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ

عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ

الْعَظِيمُ

wa-s-sābiqūna l-ʾawwalūna mina l-muhāǧirīna wa-l-ʾanṣāri wa-llaḏīna taba-ʿūhum bi-ʾiḥsānin raḍiya llāhu ʿanhum wa-raḍū ʿanhu wa-ʾaʿadda lahum ǧan-nātin taǧrī taḥtahā l-ʾanhāru ḫālidīna fīhā ʾabadan ḏālika l-fawzu l-ʿaẓīmu

"And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhajireen and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct–Allāh is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, where they will abide forever. That is the great attainment."

Sura 9:117:

لَّقَد تَّابَ اللَّهُ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنصَارِ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ فِي سَاعَةِ الْعُسْرَةِ مِن بَعْدِ

مَا كَادَ يَزِيغُ قُلُوبُ فَرِيقٍ مِّنْهُمْ ثُمَّ تَابَ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنَّهُ بِهِمْ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ

la-qad tāba llāhu ʿalā n-nabiyyi wa-l-muhāǧirīna wa-l-ʾanṣāri llaḏīna ttabaʿūhu fī sāʿati l-ʿusrati min baʿdi mā kāda yazīġu qulūbu farīqin minhum ṯumma tāba ʿalayhim ᵓinnahū bihim ra'ᵓūfun raḥīmun

"Allāh has already forgiven the Prophet and the *Muhajireen* and the *Ansar* who followed him in the hour of difficulty after the hearts of a party of them had almost inclined [to doubt], and then He forgave them. Indeed, He was to them Kind and Merciful."

We can only conclude from these verses that both were pious, God-fearing groups of people. There is no further information provided by the Qur'ān itself. The later traditions referring to a possible flight of the prophet "Muḥammad," along with faithful followers (المهاجرون – *al-muhāǧirūn*) to "Medina" (المدينة), a city *sui generis*, are just as irrelevant here as is for example the *Liber de infantia* for research on the historical Jesus. Examining the morpho-phonology of the Arabic root √*nṣr* discussed here, it can only be concluded that it is a borrowing. The semantics "to help, to support" would seem to be a secondary denominal derivation from الأنصار – *al-ʾanṣār* and thus presuppose later Islamic tradition. It is not the customary Arabic word for "to aid, to help" and usually only means such in a theological context (especially the *ʾAnṣār* which always only refers to the supposed Medinan *helpers* of "Muḥammad"). The original meaning of this root in Arabic was certainly "to Christianise, to convert to Christianity." Unsurprisingly then, in the Qur'ān this root is also frequently used to describe Christians, such as 2:111:

<div dir="rtl">اَلَن يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصَارَىٰ</div>

lan yadḫula l-ǧannata ᵓillā man kāna hūdan ᵓaw naṣārā

"None will enter Paradise except one who is a Jew or a Christian."

2:113:

<div dir="rtl">وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ لَيْسَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَقَالَتِ النَّصَارَىٰ لَيْسَتِ الْيَهُودُ عَلَىٰ شَيْءٍ وَهُمْ يَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ كَذَٰلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ مِثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ فَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ</div>

wa-qālati l-yahūdu laysati n-naṣārā ʿalā šayʾin wa-qālati n-naṣārā laysati l-yahūdu ʿalā šayʾin wa-hum yatlūna l-kitāba ka-ḏālika qāla llaḏīna lā yaʿlamūna miṯla qawlihim fa-llāhu yaḥkumu baynahum yawma l-qiyāmati fī-mā kānū fīhi yaḫtalifūna

"The Jews say 'The Christians have nothing [true] to stand on,' and the Christians say, 'The Jews have nothing to stand on,' although they [both] recite the Scripture. Thus the polytheists speak the same as their words. But Allāh will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection concerning that over which they used to differ."

My own rendition:

"The Jews say: 'The Christians don't have [anything/a leg] to stand on.' The Christians say: 'The Jews don't have [anything/a leg] to stand on." Though they (both) are based on (the Holy) Scripture. Even the ignorant [~ pagans?] express themselves in a similar way. On the Day of Resurrection, God will judge among them regarding their controversy."

Or 3:67:

$$\text{مَا كَانَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ يَهُودِيًّا وَلَا نَصْرَانِيًّا}$$

mā kāna 'ibrāhīmu yahūdiyyan wa-lā naṣrāniyyan
"Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian."

The first meaning, "to help," might also be found in Late Sabaean 𐩬𐩮𐩧 – *nṣr*,[120] where 𐩮 /ṣ/ can be confused with 𐩼 /ẓ/. However, this is a lexeme that is only attested in late texts, and which was mostly used in a fixed expression to describe a god, often the above mentioned *Raḥmān,* such as in *CIH* 540:81f:

b-nṣr w-rd' 'lhn b-ʿl s¹myn w-'rḍn
"With the help and support of God (Allāh!), who is above heaven and earth."

Here though, the meaning "protection," or verbally "to preserve, to guard, to protect" is conceivable and in light of the comparative evidence from Hebrew, Akkadian, etc. would be seemingly more appropriate. Since the later Aramaic realisation of this root is √*nṭr*[121] and it is attested in Ugaritic as *n-ġ-r*,[122] the proto-Semitic root can be presumed to have been *√*nẓr*. This then would also be the expected form of the root in Classical Arabic. And in fact, such a form is well-attested, namely نظر "to behold" etc.; note also correspondingly Gǝʿǝz ነጸረ - *naṣṣara* "to view" (መነጸር – *manaṣər* "spectacles"). The semantic development then appears to have been "to look, to see, to behold" >"to protect" (cf. *(re)garder* in French and *to watch* in English). Hence the Arabic root √*nṣr*, on account of its phonetic shape, must be a borrowing.

Arabic must therefore have borrowed this root as a designation for Christianity, as did other Semitic languages, and then later reinterpreted it in the sense of "to help." As mentioned above, and already noted by Eusebius, the origins of this root are the Hebrew noun נֵצֶר – *näṣär*.[123] "Judaeo-Christians"[124] called *Nazarenes* as well as a sub-sect of them, the *Ebionites*, are well-

known in Church History as Christians, who to some extent still felt bound by the Jewish ("Mosaic"—also an anachronism) Law.[125] Often, they are mentioned in connexion with the so-called "Hebrew" Gospel, τὸ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον. According to the preserved testimonies,[126] this document was supposedly similar to the canonical Gospel of Matthew, apparently a collection of Jesus' logia written in Hebrew. This gospel, only preserved in fragmentary quotations of some Church Fathers,[127] is by all accounts originally identical to what later became known as the "Gospel of the Nazarenes"[128] and the "Gospel of the Ebionites,"[129] although no witnesses from these groups themselves have survived, but only (hostile) views and quotes as preserved by Church Fathers. It is important to remember in this regard that there were many manifestations of Christianity during the first few centuries ad, before that what became orthopraxis could establish itself. It is probably more appropriate to speak of "Christianities," as is evident from the work of heresiologists, such as Epiphanius of Salamis, a contemporary of SS Augustine and of Jerome, who wrote the *Panarion*. According to these few, pejorative, and often secondary accounts, the Nazarenes, among others, were Jewish Christians. The main difference between their sect and the emerging (Greek-influenced) orthodoxy was their continuing adherence to Jewish customs.

This is not the place to deal with the native Christianities of the Syro-Palestinian world during Byzantine Late Antiquity–a field of study that is in any case beyond the expertise of this author.[130] The evidence is in any case by all accounts scarce and often confusing. In the citation from Epiphanius given above, it is said that originally "all Christians were called Nazarenes" (πάντες δὲ Χριστιανοὶ Ναζωραῖοι τότε ὡσαύτως ἐκαλοῦντο). However, here he lists them as one of sixty Christian heresies, between the Cerinthians (Κήρινθιανοὶ)[131] and the Ebionites (Ἐβιωναῖοι), in accordance with his assessment of when they came into existence. One of course must exercise due caution when employing such sources besides their depreciatory nature, we can no longer ascertain and assess the sources used.[132] Although Epiphanius undoubtedly saw and read "heretical" scriptures himself, which will be discussed in due course, he appears in most cases to give preference to Nicaeophile informants, usually not because of any greater reliability of their reports, but because of their orthodox views. Furthermore, using these accounts, it is also difficult to assess the extent of the alleged heresies numerically and chronologically.

The three heretical traditions just mentioned have in common using the said "Gospel according to the Hebrews," an adherence to Jewish customs, such as circumcision. The Cerinthians (*Pan.* i.29) in addition distinguished between "Jesus" and the "Christ" ("Adoptionism")—Jesus was a common man, the child of Mary and Joseph, whereas Christ (i.e. the Messiah, the

"anointed one") came into him at the former's baptism and departed from him at his crucifixion, without thole. The most orthodox group of the three were seemingly the Nazarenes. In terms of their Christology, they were in fact Jews (ὄντες μὲν κατὰ τὸ γένος Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ τῷ νόμῳ προσανέχοντες καὶ περιτομὴν κεκτημένοι–28.5), who believed in Christ.[133] The Ebionites, a branch of the Nazarenes, according to Epiphanius, were similar to them; however, they lived according to stricter purity requirements (they were supposedly also vegetarian) and one group by this name believed in the virgin birth of Jesus.[134] Furthermore, they supposedly also rejected consuming wine.[135] There were supposedly also other similar sects, such as those of the Assyrian Tatians (Τατιανός; idem, sub i.46).

The rejection of Paul[136] among these groups (re. Baur's "Petrine" Christianity) and in Epiphanius' "refutation" 5:2–4 is a common recurring element in such descriptions. In this account, a certain inaccuracy is also noticeable, for example things that are ascribed to the *Nazarenes* by Epiphanius are attributed to the Ebionites by Irenaeus in his work *Adversus Hæreses*,[137] a source used by both Epiphanius and Eusebius. In all likelihood, this has to do with Epiphanius' classification and not actual contemporary self-descriptions – all of these groups could have described themselves as Nazarenes, which Epiphanius was aware of.[138] Also common among these groups, as mentioned, is the use of a supposedly Hebrew *original version* (which is likely better understood as Aramaic in this time[139]) of the Gospel of Matthew *Hebraice*.[140] The Ebionites are said to have used nothing else but this text.[141] At least some of the Nazarenes also made use of only *one* Gospel, which is always described as a Semitic composition.

Although an attempt to precisely define the respective doctrine(s) of this/these sect(s) based on surviving testimonies, the previous observations are of seemingly unanimous and of considerable significance. We see that these Judaeo-Christians adhered to some extent to Jewish laws, including circumcision and the rejection of unclean meat, along with some particular views concerning the nature of Jesus Christ. When we consider the Qur'ānic view of these issues, which cannot have originated *ex nihilo* and show signs of having a long and accepted tradition, it is clear that these must have originated among such milieux. A case in point is the Docetic or perhaps Gnostic Christology found in 4:157–158 (on which see G. Said Reynolds, "The Muslim Jesus: Dead or alive?" *BSOAS* 72 (2009): 237–258) in which Christ is depicted as one who shewed the "Way of God" rather than being the Redeemer:

لَوۡ قَوۡلِهِمۡ إِنَّا قَتَلۡنَا الۡمَسِيحَ عِيسَى ابۡنَ مَرۡيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن

شُبِّهَ لَهُمۡ وَإِنَّ الَّذِينَ اخۡتَلَفُوا فِيهِ لَفِي شَكٍّ مِّنۡهُ مَا لَهُم بِهِ مِنۡ عِلۡمٍ إِلَّا اتِّبَاعَ الظَّنِّ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ

يَقِينًا بَل رَّفَعَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَيۡهِ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا احَكِيمًا

"And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, Allāh's
messenger–they slew him not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them;
and lo! Those who disagree concerning it are in doubt thereof; they have no
knowledge thereof save pursuit of a conjecture; they slew him not for certain.
But Allāh took him up to Himself. Allāh was ever Mighty, Wise." (Pickthall)

We must though bear in mind that we don't know of every such sect and
their doctrines, nor are testimonies by these groups themselves preserved,
and the accounts of heresiologists on the Nazarenes stop *grosso modo* in the
fifth century. This, however, does not mean that such "heresies" ceased to
exist, but only that combating other ones which posed more serious threats to
the by then established Orthodoxy became more urgent. Besides the fact that
both the Qurʾān and Islamic tradition preserve Jewish tradition and a non-
divine Christology, especially the former's usage of the loan-word mentioned
above, الإنجيل – *al-ʾinğīl* is notable in light of the preceding especially since in
the Qurʾān it is only ever used in the singular (although Arabic has a perfectly
sound broken plural, namely الأناجيل – *al-ʾanāğīl*). This word is naturally
frequent in the Qurʾān, for example, in Sura 5:46:

وَقَفَّيۡنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابۡنِ مَرۡيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡهِ مِنَ التَّوۡرَاةِ وَآتَيۡنَاهُ الۡإِنجِيلَ

فِيهِ هُدًى وَنُورٌ وَمُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيۡنَ يَدَيۡهِ مِنَ التَّوۡرَاةِ وَهُدًى وَمَوۡعِظَةً لِّلۡمُتَّقِي

*wa-qaffaynā ʿalā ʾāṯārihim bi-ʿīsā bni maryama muṣaddiqan limā bayna ya-
dayhi mina t-tawrāti wa-ʾātaynāhu l-ʾinğīla fīhi hudan wa-nūrun wa-muṣaddi-
qan li-mā bayna yadayhi mina t-tawrāti wa-hudan wa-mawiẓatan lil-mut-
taqīna*

"And We sent, following in their footsteps [scil. The Hebrew prophets], Jesus,
the son of Mary, confirming that which came before him in the Torah; and
We gave him the Gospel, in which was guidance and light and confirming that
which preceded it of the Torah as guidance and instruction for the righteous."

The exclusive usage of the singular form strongly indicates that only one
Gospel was used by the writers of the Qurʾān and not the four "canonical" (an
anachronism here) Ευαγγέλια, something that cannot be attributed to

coincidence—although this could at least theoretically also be explained by the use of Tatian's *Diatessaron*.[142]

Another point of interest regarding this connexion is the geographical placement of these groups. Epiphanius places both the Nazarenes[143] and the Ebionites[144] in the Transjordan (cf. §0 *supra*) at Pella (*Taqabat Fahl*), in the Decapolis (after a flight from Jerusalem), Paraea (Abila in Moab, today *Abil ez-Zeit*), Kokabe in Qarnaim, specifically Ashtaroth (cf. Genesis 14:5), as well as in Coele-Syria[145] around the Beroea (today Aleppo) and in Arabia (scil. Petraea) in general. This brings us, as was noted at the beginning of this article, to the region of the Nabataeans, also that of the Ghassanids and Lakhmids, the area in which Qur'ānic Arabic and Arabic script emerged. A further remark of Epiphanius is also of importance in this respect. In his polemic against the persistence of circumcision after the death of Christ (30:26ff.), he notes that this custom was also prevalent among other sects (30:33–cf. already Herodotus, ii.104; Josephus, *Contra Apionem* i.22): ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ Σαρακηνοὶ οἱ καὶ Ἰσμαηλῖται περιτομὴν ἔχουσι καὶ Σαμαρεῖται [καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι] καὶ Ἰδουμαῖοι καὶ Ὁμηρῖται "The Saracens, too, also called Ishmaelites …" From this, we can establish that the *Saracens* (not Ἄραβες!) at this time did not yet belong to these groups, but on the other hand, the association with Ishmael already existed.

The Arabic usage of theologically loaded terms dealt with here, صراط – *ṣirāṭ* ~ Syriac ܫܒܝܠܐ – *šḇīlā* ~ Greek τροχιά or ὁδός "path," i.e. "Christianity," الأنصار – *al-ʾanṣār* <Greek Ναζωραῖοι "Nazarenes," i.e. "Christians," الإنجيل – *al-ʾinǧīl* <Greek (τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον) εὐαγγέλιον "Gospel (of Matthew)" taken together, including their placement in Arabia Petraea, where the language and script used in the Qur'ān must have also emerged, form a strong body of evidence, or as Tor Andrae noted:

> L'idée de révélation chez Mahomet témoigne donc d'une parente avec la doctrine ébionite-manichéenne, qui ne peut être fortuite.[146]

Indeed, some memory of this tradition may be preserved in Islamic literature, in the *ḥadīṯ* (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* i.1.3) relating to the commencement of "Muḥammad's" prophecy, when it is related that Kahdijah took her husband to her cousin Waraqah ibn Nawfal ibn Asad ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzza (ورقه بن نوفل بن أسد بن عبد العزّى بن قصي القرشي) who confirms the prophethood of the Messenger of God: هذا الناموس الذي نزل الله على موسى "This is the law[147] which God had sent down to Moses …" Previously, he is introduced:

بِهِ خَدِيجَةُ حَتَّى أَتَتْ بِهِ وَرَقَةَ بْنَ نَوْفَلِ بْنِ أَسَدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعُزَّى ابْنَ عَمِّ خَدِيجَةَ ـ وَ كَانَ

امْرَأ تَنَصَّرَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، وَ كَانَ يَكْتُبُ الْكِتَابَ الْعِبْرَانِيَّ، فَيَكْتُبُ مِنَ الإِنْجِيلِ

بِالْعِبْرَانِيَّةِ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ، وَ كَانَ شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا قَدْ عَمِيَ

"Khadija then accompanied him (scil. "Muḥammad") to her cousin Waraqah bin Naufal bin 'Asad bin 'Abdul 'Uzza, who, during the "Days of Ignorance" (ǧāhiliyyah) converted to Christianity (tanaṣṣara) and used to write the book with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel in Hebrew as much as Allāh wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight."

Although this tradition is not unanimous, as elsewhere the Gospel he read is described as being in Arabic (iv.55.605, cf. nearly identical ix.87. 111):

وَ كَانَ رَجُلاً تَنَصَّرَ يَقْرَأُ الإِنْجِيلَ بِالْعَرَبِيَّةِ

"He was a Christian convert and used to read the Gospel in Arabic."

This is also found in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (I.301/160a):

وَ كَانَ امْرَأ تَنَصَّرَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَ كَانَ يَكْتُبُ الْكِتَابَ الْعَرَبِيَّ وَ يَكْتُبُ مِنَ الإِنْجِيلِ

بِالْعَرَبِيَّةِ مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ أَنْ يَكْتُبَ وَ كَانَ شَيْخًا كَبِيرًا قَدْ عَمِيَ

"And he was the man who had converted Christianity in the "Days of Igno-rance" and he used to write books in Arabic and, therefore, wrote the Gospel in Arabic as God willed that he should write."

Whatever the historicity of these accounts are,[148] they offer some confir-mation for what has been set out in the preceding, including the revelations to the رسول الله being thought of as being in the Judaeo-Christian tradition along with the use of one Gospel.

Why then did later, a new cult, namely Islam emerge? The answer is relatively simple. Concrete accounts by the Church Fathers regarding the Nazarenes *cum suis* largely cease during the course of the fifth century ad, i.e. after Theodoret Cyrensis; later references such as by Eugippus Abbas Africa-nus, Isidore of Seville, Paschasius Radbertus (who coined the term "evange-lium Nazarenorum") were largely copied from the older authors quoted in the preceding.[149] In most cases, it is assumed that these by all accounts rela-tively small Judaeo-Christian sects experienced a quiet and well-deserved death and thence disappeared from history entirely. However, if one con-siders the vehemence with which John Chrysostom, Bishop of Antioch in the

fourth century, combated these groups in his surviving homilies, it would indeed be surprising if they had actually disappeared so suddenly, nigh spontaneously.[150] The small number of Nazarene Jewish Christians mentioned by the Church Fathers (Justin and Origen use the symbolic figure[151] of 144,000 for the entire Roman Empire), are clearly programmatic and secondary. If we look at the flourishing of Christian communities of different types in Coele-Syria however during the first few centuries (von Harnack, *op. cit.* 660–682) as well as the movement toward Arabia (idem, *op. cit.* 699–705; Briquel-Chatonnet *art. cit.*), we can only be puzzled, as was von Harnack (p. 72). He ascribes the surviving image of the circumstances of the time, handed down through the church history, to the fact that "in gewisser Weise … ja das Christentum bis auf den heutigen Tag griechisch geblieben <ist>" ("In a certain way … Christianity has indeed remained Greek until today").[152]

In my opinion, the stress on Hellenism and its influence is understandable for von Harnack's time, but nonetheless still too strongly emphasised. From a historical perspective, it would seem that the later success of Islam in this region was because for a large part the inhabitants of Coele-Syria had no affinity for Greek-influenced (Orthodox) Christianity. Inland, however, in the Transjordan, on the borders of the Arabian Desert, there where the Greek influence was not as prominent as it was in regions closer to the Mediterranean coast, there was no reason why a Jewish-Semitic Christianity could not have survived and even flourished in this area until the seventh century, much as did other regional "heresies" such as Arianism in Germania or Donatism in Africa.

Even after the fifth century, especially after the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Theodoret's (393–457) "*Arabia hæresium ferax,*" Wansbrough's *Sectarian Milieu*, continued to apply. The struggle between pro- and anti-Chalcedonian elements continued to be fought out at many levels in the East. Various attempts were made to re-unite the Church. There were meetings with anti-Chalcedonians in Constantinople in 532 (the "Conversations with Syriac Orthodoxy"), Justinian's efforts in the next decade to have the "Three Chapters" condemned and then the Second (Fifth Ecumenical) Council of Constantinople in 553 (which recognised the hypostatic union of Christ as two natures, one divine and one human, united in one person with neither confusion nor division) by which Justinian hoped to reunite Chalcedonians and Monophysites in the East, but which really only gave rise to yet another group, the so-called "neo-Chalcedonians" (which emphasised the synthesis of natures in Christ). Increasingly the matter became more and more confused as various parties denied or shared communion with others and competing bishops were ordained. Justin ii and the empress Sophia also attempted to bridge the theological differences unsuccessfully at Callinicium. Heraclius twice promoted a compromise: firstly advocating Sergius' doctrine of *Monoenergetism*[153] discussed first at the Synod of Garin in 622. Although this

proposal initially seemed to gain wide acceptance, it was officially denounced by staunchly Chalcedonian Sophronius after he became Patriarch of Jerusalem in 634. He saw this compromise as a threat to Chalcedonian Orthodoxy and as promoting Dyothelitism–the doctrine of the two wills of Christ.

Sergius and Heraclius too abandoned Monoenergetism. In 638, they released a slightly amended formula, called theἜκθεσις. In this revision, the question of the energy of Christ was not relevant; instead, it promoted the belief that while Christ possessed two natures, he had only a single will, the teaching of *Monotheletism*. The "Doctrine of the Single Will" as proscribed in the *Ecthesis* was sent as an edict to all four eastern metropolitan sees and when Sergius died in December 638, it looked as if Heraclius might actually achieve his goal of ecclesiastical unity. However, in the same year Pope Honorius I, who had seemed to support the new formulation, also died. His successor Pope Severinus condemned the *Ecthesis* outright (and was thus denied his seat until 640). His successor Pope John IV also rejected the doctrine completely, leading to a major schism between the eastern and western halves of the Catholic Church at the moment Heraclius was dying.

Subsequently, Heraclius' grandson Constans II, who rejected the doctrine of Monotheletism was determined to end the dispute with the West. Consequently, he ordered that all discussion about the Monothelite doctrine was to cease and that all theological positions were to reflect the *status quo ante* of Chalcedon, issuing his Τύπος in 648 to this effect. Ignored in the West, the *Ecthesis* was condemned by the Lateran Council of 649. This infuriated emperor Constans who ordered the abduction and trials of Pope Martin I and Maximus the Confessor. In 668 Constans died, and Monothelitism was condemned once and for all at the Third Council of Constantinople (the Sixth Ecumenical Council, 680–681) in favour of Dyothelitism.

The events which I have attempted to relate in an oversimplified form in the preceding largely coincide with what is traditionally seen as the "Arabic Invasions," the enigmatic human tsunami from deserted Arabia which, as we saw, was entirely apocryphal. While we often read that the new conquerors permitted the non-Chalcedonians to practice their faith in peace, there actually was no need to bend their beliefs to the Byzantine hierarchy; or rather official orthodoxy disappeared with the Byzantine overlords. As the areas that remained to the empire were largely Chalcedonian, the need to reach a theological compromise soon disappeared. Even today, the Council of Chalcedon–which made official the dogma of the Trinity–is still rejected by the Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, and Ethiopian churches, collectively known as "Oriental Orthodoxy." In light of this, it is no surprise that in the homeland of Christianity most people have rejected Hellenistic Christianity. They either cling to a non-Chalcedonian branch or have converted to Islam.

However, Heraclius' failed attempts to unite Christendom under one acceptable Christological formulation might be an explanation as to why Heraclius is the only Roman Emperor whose memory is preserved in Islamic literature, and quite positively too. Some traditions claim that he recognised "Muḥammad" as the Prophet of God whilst others claim that he was a Muslim and tried to convert his Court to the new religion.

Jewish Christianity however, unlike these other "heresies," was rejected by more than just the Nicene main church. As their name suggests, they felt simultaneously Jewish *and* Christian–and this at a time when both religions were distinctly differentiating themselves from each other and were thus consciously carving out their own independent identities. They were denounced as Christians by the Jews[154] and accused of heresy by the Christians.[155] Independence was probably the only way out of this balancing act. It is nonetheless clear that Islamic theology must have emerged from a Judaeo-Christian antithesis to Byzantine orthodoxy.

7.2.10 (=I) مستقيم – *mustaqīm*

The word *mustaqīm* "straight" e.g. in the phrase الصراط المستقيم – *aṣ-ṣirāt al-mustaqīm* is of course reminiscent of the "straight paths of the Lord" (ἃς ὁδοὺς Κυρίου τὰς εὐθείας) in Acts 13:10. This derivation of the root √*qwm* here is by all accounts Arabic. Other meanings, however, are likely borrowed from Aramaic, such as يوم القيامة – *yawm al-qiyāma*, discussed above in (§7.2.5), in the sense of "resurrection" (ἀνάστασις)–cf. i.a. Syriac ܩܝܡܐ – *qyāmā* in the NT with this meaning:[156] ܗܘܐ ܢܬܦܪܥܘܢܟ ܕܠܝܬ ܠܗܘܢ ܡܛܠܘܒܝܟ ܂ *wə-ṭūḇayk d-layt l-hūn d-nefrʿūnāk nehweʾ gēr pūrʿānāk ba-qyāmā də-zaḏīqē.* Here, once again, the concept of resurrection of the dead is borrowed together with the term that accompanies it–the semantic development "to get up" > "to revive" was first completed in Syriac. The term الحي القيوم – *al-ḥayyu l-qayyūmu* "the eternally existent and the eternal preserver of creation (2:255; 3:2; 20:111) is also borrowed. ܚܝܐ – *ḥayyā* "life" also means "salvation" in Syriac, such as in Luke 3:6: ܘܢܚܙܐ ܟܠ ܒܣܪ ܚܝܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ – *wə-neḥzē kul bsar ḥayyē ḏalāhā* "…and all flesh shall see the salvation of God," however also in the sense of the (eternally) living God, such as in John 6:69:

ܚܢܢ ܗܝܡܢܢ ܘܝܕܥܢ܂ ܕܐܢܬܗܘ ܡܫܝܚܐ ܒܪܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܚܝܐ

ḥnan haymenən w-īḏaʿn: d-ʾan-ṯ-ʰū mšīḥā brēh d-ʾalāhā ḥayyā

"And we believe and are sure that you are that Christ, Son of the living God."

Or 1 Peter 1:3:

ܡܒܪܟ ܗܘ ܐܠܗܐ ܐܒܘܗܝ ܕܡܪܢ ܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ܂ ܗܘ ܕܒܚܢܢܗ ܣܓܝܐܐ ܐܘܠܕܢ ܡܢ ܕܪܝܫ܂ ܒܩܝܡܬܗ ܕܝܫܘܥ ܡܫܝܚܐ܂ ܠܣܒܪܐ ܕܚܝܐ

mḇaraḵ ʰū ʾalāhā ʾabūʰy d-māran yešūʿ mšīḥā: haw d-ba-ḥnānēh sagīʾā ʾaw-ləḏan men drīš: ba-qyāmtēh d-yešūʿ mšīḥā: l-saḇrā d-ḥayyē

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead ..."

In each case, however, the Syriac word ܩܝܡܐ – *qyāmā* can also be understood in the sense of "to preserve, to exist eternally" (1 Peter 1:25):

ܘܡܠܬܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ ܩܝܡܐ ܠܥܠܡܝܢ. ܘܗܕܗ ܗܝ ܡܠܬܐ ܗܝ ܕܐܣܬܒܪܬܘܢ

wə-melṯēh dalāhā qayāma lə-ʿālmīn wə-hāḏēh ʰy melṯā hāy d-ʾestaḇartūn

"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

Outside of the Bible it is used with a different meaning, roughly with the semantics of ὑπόστασις. The use of this root in the theological context to denote a characteristic of God, specifically the resurrection, can only be a semantic borrowing from Aramaic.

8. Conclusion

In the preceding, an argument has been made that points to Syro-Palestine as the Qurʾān's likely place of origin. In the Prologue (§0), it was briefly argued that both script-distribution and language (areal linguistics) point to this region. After discussing the significance of loan-words (§§1-2), especially in relation to the Qurʾān (§3), some loan-words in various semantic spheres were discussed: in relation to the vocabulary of writing (§4)–which supports the argument made in §0; some key theological terms (§5); the "Five Pillars of Islam" (§6); and, finally, the loan vocabulary found in the First Sura of the Qurʾān was discussed (§7). Briefly, we can note here that the loan vocabulary of the "first" Arabic book, the holy book of Islam, largely employs words of Syro-Aramaic origin for key terms with isolated and sporadic *Wörter und Sachen* also deriving from Southern Arabia and Ethiopia; Persian loans usually entered Arabic via Syriac.

It is important to note here, that the focus of this exercise was not on Semitic cognates, or proto-Semitic etymologisation. Rather, an attempt was made to show the borrowed semantic load of especially theological termini technici.[157] Both the quantity as well as the nature of the borrowed terms discussed here clearly shows that the authors of the Qurʾān possessed an intimate knowledge of the Syriac Bible, probably the common version of the time, the Peshitta (=*Vulgata*). Although some of the terms discussed also found their way into Old South and especially Old North Arabic languages

after their transfer to monotheism (cf. n39), the concentration of Syro-Aramaic terms, as well as the writing system is indicative of a transfer from Syriac.

The vocabulary of a language can tell the story of its speakers (cf. n12), and to what extent they came into contact with other peoples. Thus English has borrowed but a few lexemes from the Celtic languages (as opposed to many Anglicisms in Celtic languages)[158] which says something about the nature of the contact. The Viking Age left its traces in the vocabulary Old English,[159] and even more so the Norman Conquest with a myriad of French and Latinate loans; Dutch maritime technology, thanks to which Britannia once ruled the waves, left its linguistic traces too,[160] as did the Dutch colonial presence in New York on *Americanese*.[161] The Raj continues to live on in the vocabulary of English.[162] Vocabulary and semantics are a powerful tool, that, when properly applied, can tell us something about the past of the respective speakers. As with the inner-Semitic loans in Arabic, in English the North Germanic, Old Norse and West Germanic Dutch loans at first glance seem to be quite English even as do many Old French loans from the Norman period. Nonetheless their semantics and morpho-phonology betray their foreign origins.

As has been shown, the roots of what we now know as "Arabic" are to be found in Syro-Palestine, especially in the *Jazirah* (cf. note 2). This area has a left a long written record and the linguistic history of the region can be traced to at least the third millennium since the finds from Ebla (Tal Mardikh) have come to light. It should then come as no surprise that the Arabic language spoken here displays to some extent in its vocabulary this past. Some words, such as that for an alcoholic beverage discussed in note 23 are old words that have stuck to the product denoted by it (cf. "mead" in English), but whose morpho-phonetic forms betray the path(s) taken. This product even reached Ethiopia, where its realisation indicates that it, like the Arabic form, must have been borrowed from Syro-Aramaic with its introduction.

In the case of theological vocabulary, we are not dealing with a word describing a product, rather with a lexeme denoting an idea. Naturally, in both cases, the existence of the product or idea is a pre-requisite. As was discussed in §1, the theological evolution of Judaeo-Christian monotheism was a long, drawn-out and intricate process. Philology can help us to understand when words took on certain meanings and help us date texts by identifying anachronisms both in the vocabulary and contents of texts. The vocabulary of the Qur'ān betrays its place and time of origin.[163] Here, Classical Ethiopic serves as an interesting comparative case. As was seen in the examples given in the preceding, Gəʿəz loans are infrequent in Arabic (and some of them suggested here were in all likelihood borrowed by Arabic from a lost Syro-Aramaic source). However, it was also shown that, like Arabic, it borrowed much of its Christian theological vocabulary from Syriac.[164] That is,

a similar process of conversion to Christianity led to the adaption of Aramaic vocabulary by Arabic speakers in Syro-Palestine as by Gǝʿǝz speakers in Ethiopia – much like the borrowing of Latin terms in English and other Western European languages discussed above.

Islam, as a "religion of the book," and its consequent development of such a belief system of course presupposes the presence of a literate and literary culture. The present article sheds some light on the evolution of this culture over the course of Semitic and Semito-Hellenistic religious history, as well as the formation and development of monotheism. Since both the Qurʾān and Islamic tradition view biblical historiography as history that actually occurred – an anachronism – they constitute a part of this continually evolving revelatory truth. Understood in this way, the religion that emerged from the Qurʾān is one of many on a continuum that began in the Syro-Palestinian region: the local cults of the Bronze and Early Iron Ages gave rise to the religions of Judah, which later brought about manifestations of Jewish religion when the former came into contact with Hellenism. This later gave rise to Judaisms[165] and Christianities, from which Islam would later arise. The latter as a religion which originated "in the full light of history" only makes sense in the context of Church History.

There is no historical basis for asserting that these religions and their traditions enjoyed one uninterrupted and continuous course of development. If we look at the various interpretations of scripture in Judaism, such as those found in the orders of the Mishna, the Tosefta, and the Talmuds, or, for example, the confusion with regard to the nature of Jesus Christ[166] and his Death in early Christianity,[167] we can only conclude that we are dealing with the invention of traditions and not with the preservation of ancient ones. The remarks of Adolf von Harnack on nascent Christianity in the introduction (p. iv) of his previously mentioned *Mission und Ausbreitung*, are also relevant for Islam:

> The oldest missionary-history is buried under legends, or rather replaced by a tendentious history which supposedly played out in just a few decades in all the countries of the world. This story has been worked over for more than a thousand years–because the creation of the legend about the apostolic missions started in the first century and continued on until the Middle Ages, and even continues to flourish into modern times; its uselessness is now generally recognised.[168]

The use of the word "uselessness" (*Wertlosigkeit*) here applies to the value of traditions and tradition literature (including sacred texts) as historical sources. While for the scientific historical-critical study of Judaism and Christianity such is generally accepted, Islamic Studies today still often uncritically

accepts the primacy of traditional literature. Whilst such retain relevance for homiletics, they have but little value for hermeneutic investigations such as scientific exegesis. The question with which Nietzsche commenced his historical-critical study on the life of the sixth century bc Greek poet Theognis:

> "illos enim aetati ejus propiores nescio an verisimilius sit de eo rectius
> judicasse, quam nos recentiores viros" applies here as does his own answer:
> "neque illis neque his omnibus in partibus suffragandum esse mihi persuasi."

Indeed, the ancient sources had potentially more information at their disposal than we will ever have. However, this information was used selectively and uncritically and (cf. ad n132) we must understand how ancient historiography worked[169] – Herodotus did not set out to become the "Father of History," but rather to tell a good story. We must learn not to read more into sources than they can properly render. Furthermore, in the case of religious history, textual documentation is usually not contemporary to the events related: for Islam, the relevant sources only commence at the end of the eighth/early ninth century, i.e. a century and half after the events which they purport to narrate. At best, they then can only tell us what their authors thought happened elsewhere in the early seventh century. While these texts undoubtedly contain some historical information, they do not qualify as scientific historical sources; they interpret the past in light of an orthodoxy fashioned post factum as von Harnack noted. Texts that are viewed as sacred by faith groups relate *Heilsgeschichte* and not history.

The religions known today popularly as the "Abrahamic" faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, traditionally justify at least part of their veracity on the fact that their respective scriptures relate to the intervention of their deity in history with his human creations in a past, normally formative period of these respective faiths. Hierophany in these religions usually commences with a narrative of origins placed in a mythical past, to demonstrate that the deity is eternal having existed before time and is the creator thereof, and which then continues displaying the close relationship of the deity with those whom he has chosen, his elect. The revelation of the deity to his elect was then written down in a canonical form that has validity for all time. Whether or not these texts actually contain the *ipsissima verba dei* is not a question that science can ask or is able to answer, this is a religious question that must be asked and answered by the believers and theologians of the respective faiths. The question though whether sacred time and historical time are or were once congruent, however, is one which concerns the essence of science, since if sacred time is historical time then the latter should also be provable by factual evidence. We know that the religious scriptures in question, the Hebrew Bible, the New Testament and the Qur'ān, like much of the literatures contemporary to them, largely contain allegory, a pre-modern, pre-

scientific manner of illustrating complex ideas and concepts in a digestible, concrete way and indeed for much of the history of these faiths their scriptures were interpreted in such a fashion. One must remember that kerugma is a theological and not an historical concept.

Hence it is clear that if we wish to seriously understand the origins of such religious traditions, we must transcend traditions and traditional literature–as they are not evidence driven – but rather employ historical and textual criticism.[170] Here, it must be noted that the only evidence for the Islamic narrative of its beginnings is the said narrative. As such it is no different from the Hebrew Bible or the New Testament. What would later become Islam only enters the light of history in Syro-Palestine with the caliphate rise of the Umayyad Caliphate under Muʿāwiyah I (cf. n119)–who in inscriptions and contemporary accounts saw himself as a Christian–an independent confirmation of the arguments proposed here. Historically speaking, the Hijazi origins of Islam in Mecca and Medina and the rule of the "Rightly Guided Caliphs" (الخلفاء الراشدون) are entirely apocryphal, and indeed the sagas which narrate this period are riddled with anachronisms–much like the David saga in the Hebrew Bible or the biography of Jesus in the Gospels. As was briefly seen in the preceding, and which is also evident from the anti-Chalcedonian Christology expressed by the later Umayyad Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān in his inscriptions found in the "Dome of the Rock" (مسجد قبة الصخرة), the religious sentiments which would later crystallise as Islam were a reaction to Byzantine orthodoxy. As such, their *Sitz im Leben* must be the Syro-Palestinian hotbed of theological controversy and not the far-off Hijaz, where such debate would have been largely irrelevant. As has been shown, the classical Islamic interpreters of the Qur'ān, such as Ṭabarī, often had no idea as to the meaning of Qur'ānic verses. They were often not Arabs, or even native speakers of Arabic, and lived during the Abbasid period. Unsurprisingly, in distant Baghdad, the Aramaic heritage stored in the Qur'ān went unnoticed. It is in this period when the origins of Islam were retroprojected to the Hijaz for theological reasons (cf. Galatians 14:22-26), but the discussion of such must be the subject of its own study.

In the preceding (§7.2.8), we have noted that two Arabic words found in the Qur'ān and which were borrowed from Aramaic, namely صراط – *ṣirāṭ* and سبيل – *sabīl* have by all account the semantic load of the New Testament terminus technicus ἡ ὁδός "the Way" and denote the religion adhered to. Furthermore (§7.2.9), the apocryphal helpers of "Muḥammad" at Medina, the الأنصار – *anṣar* were seen to be Ναζωραῖοι which does not refer to Nazareth, but rather is another old term for Christianity deriving from the Messianic interpretation of the Hebrew word נֵצֶר – *nāṣär* "branch" in Isaiah 11:1. In the works of the Church Fathers, written after Constantine's toleration of

Christianity which facilitated the later emergence of an imperial orthopraxis, it was seen that *Nazarene* was a term loosely employed to describe what might be anachronistically called "Judaeo-Christians," i.e. Jewish followers of Jesus, who rejected the teaching of Paul and continued in some manner to adhere to the Jewish Law (including circumcision). Although the sources are polemical and somewhat imprecise, it was seen that some of these groups believed, as does the Qur'ān, in the virgin birth of Jesus while rejecting his divinity. They are also said to have used but one Gospel (written in a Semitic language, probably Aramaic), corresponding to Qur'ānic usage (الإنجيل – *al-'inǧīl*) and additionally rejected the consumption of alcohol. We thus see in the convergence of vocabulary, creed and practice the roots of what would later evolve into Islam. Here we have a convincing explanation for the curious phenomenon of Islam's retaining Jewish custom while believing in a psilan-thropic, parthenogenetic Jesus Christ. Indeed the use of رب – *rabb* "Lord" as an epithet of God (§7.2.2) certainly confirms Christian rather than Jewish origins.

Here we see the historical background from which Islam would emerge. I have, however, only been able to portray a landscape in broad outlines here: much still remains to be investigated. As long as what is customarily known as "Islamic Studies" (or for that matter "Biblical Studies") merely continues to paraphrase tradition, ignorance will prevail. The fashionable ideology of the post-colonial age to ascribe ahistorical unicity to peoples once colonised by Europe only serves to promote ignorance and prejudice and the nonsensical division between the "East" and the "West." Worthwhile contributions to science and fundamental research desiderata *in casu* would be a critical edition of the Qur'ān and a diachronic lexicon of its vocabulary.

This being said, the preceding should have made clear the value of philo-logical investigation of the Qur'ān. In contrast with the cluelessness or per-plexity of early commentators such as Ṭabarī in mind, as well as the legendary hagiographic narratives of Ibn Isḥāq, Ibn Saʿd, Wāqidī etc. (who must have used *aḥādīṯ* as sources, as Goldziher has already noted), the only conclusion is that Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, unsurprisingly preserved no his-torical memory of its origins: traditions can only surface after the completion of a formative period and the creation of an hierophantic revelatory history. It should by now be clear that the emergence of Islam belongs to the discipline of Church History, just as early Christianity is a part of Jewish history. Thus the actual historicity of Muḥammad is just as irrelevant as that of Moses, David or Jesus–their respective fates in later traditions lead lives of their own. Ultimately all manifestations of "Abrahamic Faiths" are by definition each other's heresy.

9. References

Unless otherwise stated, the definitions provided in these dictionaries have been used:

Akkadian:
>   W. FRHR. VON SODEN, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* 3 Vols. (Wiesbaden, 1965–1981).

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>   R. P. A. DOZY, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes* 2 Vols. (Reprint; Beirut, 1991).
>   E. W. LANE, *Arabic–English Lexicon* 8 vols. (Reprint; Beirut, 1997).

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Ugaritic:
>   G. DEL OLMO LETE AND J. SANMARTÍN, *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition* 2 Vols. (Leyden, 2003).

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correction of the oriental citations and formatting. Prof. M. Schub (Hartford) was kind enough to provide additional corrections and suggestions. In order to improve readability, transcriptions of most of the examples (except those in Greek) have been included. They are meant to facilitate reading and are not intended as exact phonetic renditions.

Notes

1   This section is a summary of the arguments presented in another article: R. M. Kerr, "Von der aramäischen Lesekultur zur arabischen Schreibkultur: Kann die semitische Epigraphik etwas über die Entstehung des Korans erzählen?" in M. Gross and K.-H. Ohlig (eds.), *Die Entstehung einer Weltreligion I: Von der koranischen Bewegung zum Frühislam* (Berlin/Tübingen, 2010), pp. 354–376.

2   This area, roughly the Jazira (roughly the former province known as the Djézireh) encompassing the Chabur, Euphrates and Tigris basins in NE Syria, SE Turkey and NW Iraq is what was usually meant by "Arabia" in Antiquity. Here e.g., is found an Ἀραβάρχης at Dura-Europos (cf. C. B. Welles et al., *The Excavations at Dura-Europos*. Final Report V, Part I [New Haven, 1959], 115 Nr. 20, 5); at Sumatar Harabesi in modern Turkey, five inscriptions were found at the ancient cemetery bearing the Syriac pendant ܫܘܠܛܢܐ ܕܥܪܒ – *šulṭānā d-ʿarab* "Governor of Arab(ia)" (cf. H. J. W. Drijvers and J. F. Healey, *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene* [Leyden, 1999], 104f. et passim); at Hatra, a mlkʾ dy ʿrb(y) "King of Arabia" is attested (cf. B. Aggoula, *Inventaire des inscriptions hatréenes* [Paris, 1991], 92 Nr. 193, 2; 135f. Nr. 287, 3–4)–note also e.g. Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* V.xxi.86 "Arabia supra dicta habet oppida Edessam, quæ quondam Antiochia dicebatur, Callirhœm, a fonte nominatam, Carrhas, Crassi clade nobile. Iungitur præfectura Mesopotamiæ, ab Assyriis originem trahens, in qua Anthemusia et Nicephorium oppida. . . . [87] ita fertur [scil. Euphrates] usque Suram locum, in quo conversus ad orientem relinquit Syriæ Palmyrenas solitudines, quæ usque ad Petram urbem et regionem Arabiæ Felicis appellatæ pertinent." This is the "Arabia" which St Paul must have visited (Galatians 1:17). Noteworthy in this regard is that Fredegar (Chronicon lxvi) even localises the Hagarenes somewhat more to the North: "Agareni, qui et Sarraceni, sicut Orosii [Boh. Eorosii] liber testatur, gens circumcisa a latere montis Caucasi, super mare Caspium, terram ..."

3   For example, see Sh. Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People* (London, 2009), p. 64–189 and the references it cites as well as the now classical work by Th. L. Thompson, *The Bible in History. How Writers Create a Past* (London, 1999).

4   This is not the place to deal with this question in detail. However, I will refer to the discussion in M. S. Smith, *God in Translation* (Tübingen, 2008), as well as the references it cites.

5   Cf. F. Briquel Chatonnet "L'expansion du christianisme en Arabie: l'apport des sources syriaques," *Semitica et Classica* 3 (2010). Note also the comments of François Villeneuve "Jamais le christianisme n'arrive à prendre pied bien loin au sud en Arabie," and that beyond a line passing approximately the latitude Aqaba, "il n'y a tout simplement presque aucune trace chrétienne" (F. Villeneuve, "La résistance des cultes béthyliques d'Arabie face au monothéisme: de Paul à Barsauma et à Muhammad," in H. Inglebert, S. Destephen and B. Dumézil (eds.), *Le problème de la christianisation du monde antique* (Paris, 2010), pp. 219–231, here 228).

6   W. Gesenius, *Hebräisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch über die Schriften des Alten Testaments. . .* (Leipzig, 1810–1812), 2 vols. 18th edition, H. Donner et al. (eds.), Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch über das Alte Testament* (Berlin etc., 1987–2010), 6 fasc.

7   Compare the remarks of J. Fück, *Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1955), 166ff. L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner et al. (eds.), *Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; trans. M. E. J. Richardson; Leyden, 2002).

8   "Ein großer Teil des Wortschatzes, den die arabischen Philologen aufzeichneten und erklärten, war ihnen weder aus dem alltäglichen Gebrauch noch von ausgedehnter Lektüre her bekannt. Ihre Hauptaufgabe bestand deshalb nicht in der Festlegung genauer und treffender Erklärungen für Wörter, die jedem Gebildeten geläufig waren, sondern im Auffinden der Bedeutungen seltener und unbekannter Wörter, denen sie wohl zum ersten Male im Zuge ihrer professionellen Tätigkeit begegneten. Da ihrer Forschungsarbeit auf diesem Gebiet zwei notwendige Grundlagen fehlten, nämlich die Kenntnis anderer semitischer Sprachen und das Vorhandensein von ausgedehntem und übersichtlichem sprachlichen Rohmaterial, entstand eine Menge von ungenauen und sogar völlig abwegigen Worterklärungen. Die vielen verschiedenen Bedeutungen, die einer großen Anzahl seltener arabischer Wörter zugeschrieben wurden, sind grundsätzlich als Ergebnisse von Versuchen verschiedener Philologen aufzufassen, schwierige Ausdrücke mit Hilfe der unzulänglichen Mittel, die ihnen zur Verfügung standen, zu erklären ... Da die Kenntnis anderer semitischen Sprachen fehlte und Parallelstellen gewöhnlich nicht herangezogen werden konnten, wurde auf diese Weise mannigfaltigen Vermutungen Tür und Tor geöffnet. Besonders oft führte die Anwendung verschiedener Methoden zu abweichenden Ergebnissen. Zu den irrigen Wörterklärungen, die von den Philologen selbst stammten, gesellten sich noch andere hinzu, die entweder auf religiösen Erwägungen beruhten, ... oder in alten sprachlichen Traditionen aus der 'vorwissenschaftlichen' Zeit ihren Ursprung hatten." L. Kopf, "Das arabische Wörterbuch als Hilfsmittel für die hebräische Lexikographie," *Vetus Testamentum* 6 (1956): pp. 286–302; quote from p. 297.

9   S. W. Wild, "Neues zur ältesten arabischen Lexikographie," *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 112 (1962): pp. 292–300. Here I cite the edition published in 1967 in eight volumes in Baghdad.

10 R. Paret "His throne comprises the heavens and the earth." Here the problem is also obvious: the Arabic verb وسع – *w-s-ʿ* can mean "wide, to be spacious, to house" >"to have understanding," depending on the context. I must confess that I do not think I have ever come across the latter meaning.

11 Cf. Wild, art. cit. 50 with extreme examples, like ضحك – √ḍḥk "laughter" as "menstruation" in 11:71 وامرأته قائمة فضحكت – wa-mraʾatu-hu qāʾimatun fa-ḍaḥi-kat "His wife (Sara) who was standing there, laughed," cf. Genesis 18:11–15.

12 This is how we can determine the path of Gypsies from India to Europe, for example; see L. Campbell, *Historical Linguistics* (Edinburgh, 1998), 363f.

13 The Latin word for beer, cerevisia, is itself a loan-word from Gaulish, compare Welsh *cwrw*.

14 See for example to W. Stroh, *Latein ist tot, es lebe Latein!* (Berlin, 2007), 121–135.

15 The first major Latin Christian author Tertullian uses "tinctio."

16 P. V. Mankowski, *Akkadian Loanwords in Biblical Hebrew* (Winona Lake, 2000).

17 T. O. Lambdin, "Egyptian Loanwords in the Old Testament," *JAOS* 73 (1953): 144–155.

18 As for example in the book of Daniel which therefore could not have originated in the time of Nebuchadnezzar II.

19 Cf. M. Wagner, *Die lexikalischen und grammatikalischen Aramäismen in alt Hebräisch* (Berlin, 1966)–now somewhat outdated.

20 Matthew: Ηλι ηλι, λεμα σαβαχθανι; Peshitta: ܐܝܠ ܐܝܠ ܠܡܢܐ ܫܒܩܬܢܝ Western Syriac 'īl 'īl ləmānā šḇaqtāny, Eastern Syriac: 'ēl 'ēl ləmānāh šḇaqtāny; OT: אֵלִי אֵלִי לָמָה עֲזַבְתָּנִי – 'ēlī 'ēliīlāmā 'āzaḇtānī "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

21 Although early Islamic commentators also dealt with this topic, their work was deficient because they generally did not know the donor languages which were mentioned. Cf. Jeffery, op. cit. 12–35 and Kopf, art. cit.

22 Cf. S. Fraenkel, *Die aramäischen Lehnwörter im Arabischen* (Leyden, 1881), 141.

23 The other Qur'ānic root for an intoxicating alcoholic beverage √skr (سكر – sakar 16:67; سكرى – sukārā 4:42, 22:2; verbal سكرت – sukkirat 15:15) is also of Aramaic derivation: Syriac ܫܟܪܐ; JBA שיכרא/שכרא – šḵar, ša/iḵrā etc. In Aramaic, the root √ḥmr is used for grape-based intoxicants whilst √skr denotes such made from dates or grain (i.e. beer) –cf. e.g. Numeri Rabbah 10:8 (ad Num. 6:3): למה כפל הכתוב יין ושכר והלא יין הוא שכר ושכר הוא יין "… are not yáyin ("wine") and šēḵār the same thing?" … יין זה חי ושכר זה מזוג "yáyin ("wine") is unmixed and šēḵār mixed wine"–is of Akkadian origin (wine did not grow in Southern Mesopotamia!): šikarum "beer" >Hebrew שֵׁכָר – šēḵār >τό σίκερα "strong drink" vs οἶνος "wine" e.g. Luke 1:15 καὶ οἶνον καὶ σίκερα οὐ μὴ πίῃ "and he shall drink neither wine nor strong drink"~ܡܫܬܐ ܠܐ ܘܫܟܪܐ ܘܚܡܪܐ – wə-ḥamrā wə-šiḵrā lā nešte (; >Ethiopic ሰከረ – sakara, cf. e.g. Psalm 106(107):27: ይንጉ፡ወተዐውኩ፡ከመ፡ ሰኩር፡ወተሰጥሙ፡ከሉ፡ፕበሙ። We must be dealing with an Aramaic borrowing: were the form Ethiopic or borrowed from Akkadian, a realisation with ሠ /ś/, i.e. *ሠከረ would be expected)–a root of which is still found e.g. in the Amharic version: የወይን፡ጠጅና፡የሚያሰክር፡መጠጥ፡አይጠጣም።

24 E. Littmann and M. Höfner, *Wörterbuch der Tigrē-Sprache* (Wiesbaden, 1962), 80.

25 For example, it is not documented in Sabaean and Qatabanian. Gə'əz ከተበ – kataba in this sense with derivations like ከታብ "book" (/kətāb/ <*/kitāb/!) etc. as well as the phonetic variants ከተፕ – kətəp are borrowed from Arabic. The actual word in Classical Ethiopian for writing, such as ◊Ψ舟 – ṣḥf in Sabaean and Qatabanian, is ጸሐፈ – ṣaḥafa–which was in turn borrowed into Arabic, and will be picked up on later in this article. Akkadian ṣêpum "to write down," ṣê'pum "a sealed letter (Old Babylonian)" (von Soden, AHw 1091) is related to the South Semitic term.

26 See for example in Lane's *Dictionary*, Vol. VII, p. 2589f. This meaning is also productive in modern Arabic, cf. e.g. كتيبة – katība "regiment, conscription" etc.

27 Here I would suggest that حراء – Ḥirā' the cave in which according to later tradition "Muḥammad" received his first revelation, and whose precise location is contested, actually refers to this Christian Arab city.

28 The reference here must be to a pseudo-epigraphical work such as "The Testament of Abraham." I am of the opinion that some version of this text must be the

source for much of the Qur'ānic information on this Patriarch. On the history of this figure see the classic works J. Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, 1975); Th. L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives* (Berlin, 1974).

29 These forms could very well have been pronounced like resp. Arabic ṣaḥīfa (sg.), ṣuḥuf (pl.).

30   This root is also active in the modern Semitic languages of Ethiopia, for instance Amharic ጸሐፊ – ṣəḥafi "writer," የጽሕፈት:መኪና – yaṣəḥəfit makinā (<Italian macchina da scrivere) "typewriter" and as the verb ጸፊ – ṣāfi.

31 This root is used in Modern Standard Arabic with reference to news reporting. It is possible that the original meaning of the Arabic root can be seen in nouns such as صحفة – ṣaḥfa "bowl," صحيفة – ṣaḥīfa "sheet."

32 "Reading" is normally formed with the causative (IV) stem of the root √nbb: አንበበ – 'anbaba in Gəʿəz as well as other modern Ethio-Semitic languages like Amharic and Tigré. This root is well attested in Semitic languages, as for example in Arabic "bleat in sexual excitement (billy goat)" (Lane, s.v.). This weak root is possibly related to the root √nbʾ in Semitic. The Arabic word نبى – nabī "prophet" <ܢܒܝܐ – nəbiyā, originated from this root, which itself stems from < נְבִיא – nābīʾ. The precondition is of course the concept of the prophecy as a means of communication. For the origins of this phenomenon see D. Flemming, "Nabu and munabbiatu: Two new Syrian religious personnel," *JAOS* 113 (1993): 175–183.

33 ܩܪܝܢܐ – qrinā translates מִקְרָא – miqrāʾ in the Peshitta in Nehemiah 8:8, interestingly enough.

34 Cf. the authorities cited by as-Suyūṭī (الإتقان في علوم القرآن – *Al-itqān fī ʿulūm al-qurʾān* 319–321), and the sources given in Jeffery, op. cit. 170ff.

35 Also in the description of the scribes (γραμματεύς) in Matthew 9:3 of the Peshitta! This lexeme was also borrowed by Armenian: սովեր – sover; but pace Jeffery, op. cit. 171, Ethiopian ሳፊራ – safira shows no Aramaic influence.

36 From the sense of "teaching, instruction," Syriac ܣܦܪܐ – sep̄rā doubt took on the meaning of "Holy Scripture." The Akkadian root also has another semantic domain with reference to "work," e.g. šiprum, probably in turn borrowed from Sabaean 𐩪𐩰𐩧 – s²fr "labour-force, corvée" (partly because they had to provide forced labour for the Mesopotamia?). Hebrew forms, like סֵפֶר – sēp̄är "book," סֹפֵר – sōp̄ēr "scribe" etc., are deliberately disregarded here.

37 Here שְׂטַר – śəṭar "side" is disregarded (e.g. Daniel 7:5 "And behold, another beast, a second one, like a bear. It was raised up on one side (וְלִשְׂטַר־חַד). It had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was told, 'Arise, devour much flesh.'"), = šṭr3 in J. Hoftijzer and K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscriptions* (Leyden, 1995), 1124f.

38 With reference to 57:22 ما أصاب من مصيبة في الأرض ولا في أنفسكم إلا في كتاب من قبل أن نبرأها إن ذلك على الله يسير – *mā ʾaṣāba min muṣībatin fī l-ʾarḍi wa-lā fī ʾanfusikum ʾillā fī kitābin min qabliʾan nabraʾahā ʾinna ḏālika ʿalā llāhi yasīrun.*

39 Period E. "During the second half of the fourth century the pagan formulas disappear from the texts (one single pagan text is later). Taking their place appear monotheistic formulas invoking the 'Lord of Heaven' (or … 'of Heaven and

Earth') and the 'Merciful' (Raḥmānān). Christianity and Judaism using the same terminology had supplanted paganism"— J. Ryckmans, "The Old South Arabian Religion," in W. Daum (ed.), *Yemen: 3000 Years of Art and Civilization in Arabia Felix* (1987), 110; cf. as well Chr. Robin, "Le judaïsme de Himyar," *Arabia* 1 (2003): 97–172, and idem, "Himyar au IVème siècle de l'ère chrétienne. Analyse des données chronologiques et essai de mise en ordre," *ABADY* 10 (2005):133–151.

40 From the same root as Akkadian lētum (<*laḫtum), Ugaritic lḥ "jaw, cheek."

41 The verb ለሐ – leha "writing" is found in Amharic as well as ሉህ – luk (with the variation ሉሀ – luh) "blank sheet of paper" which must have come from ለወሐ – lawaḫa, although an Arabic source cannot be ruled out. This root is not attested in Old Northern Arabian or Old South Arabian, to the best of my knowledge.

42 I.e. the "folding tablets" (πίναξ πτυκτός) used to write the Bellerophontic letter in the Iliad 6:169.

43 Other versions use the transcription ܛܝܛܠܘܣ – ṭiṭlos as a loan-word.

44 Here I do not deal in great detail with تَوراة – tawrāt "Torah" and إنجيل – inğīl "Gospel" (yet cf. §7.2.9) as both clearly must have been borrowed. The first term was likely adopted from the Jews, though not from Hebrew per se (the Hebrew word was probably borrowed from the Akkadian tî/êrtum [from older tā'ertum "instruction"]). The Syriac lexeme ܐܘܪܝܬܐ – oraytā "Pentateuch, Old Testament" (>Gəʿəz ኦሪት – 'orit "Octateuch") is formed from the same root. The latter of course ultimately stems from the Greek εὐαγγέλιον. Whether it was borrowed from the Aramaic ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ – ewangeliyon or Old Ethiopian ወንጌል – wangel (because of the long vowels and missing Greek ending), is not important for the purposes of this article. In Syriac, the Greek loan word is roughly as common as its indigenous Aramaic synonym ܣܒܪܬܐ – sbarṯā, a form originating by way of metathesis. The root b-š-r can mean "to bring a message" >"to praise a deity" among other things, like Akkadian bussurum (D-stem; >bussurtum, mubassirum [Mari], tabsertum etc.), Ugaritic bšr (D-stem), and Hebrew בִּשֵּׂר – biśśêr "to exhibit." Here the semantic development appears to have been "to communicate a message" >"to communicate a good message," such as >Sabaean rGb – bs2r, Old Ethiopian አብሠረ – abśara "to announce good news." The Arabic root بشر – b-š-r with the meaning "to be glad" must have been derived from this. Aramaic appears to have followed its own semantic path, for example ܣܒܪ – sbar "putavit, speravit, expectavit." I suspect this was borrowed by Arabic possibly from Gəʿəz (perhaps also ܣܒܪܬܐ – sbarṯā), because this root was already common in this language in an "evangelical" sense, such as ብሥራት – bəśrāt "good news, Gospel," ብሥራታዊ – bəśrātāwi "bearer of good news, evangelist," በዓል፡ብሥራት – baʿāla bəśrāt the "Annunciation of Mary" etc., which we also find in non-Qur'ānic (i.e. Christian) Arabic: بشارة – bišāra "good news, Gospel," بشير – bašīr "bearer of good news, evangelist," تبشير – tabšīr, literally "the Spreading of Good News"–Christian missionary work, مبشر – mubaššir "missionary," عيد البشارة – ʿīd al-bišāra etc.

45 R. M. Kerr, *Latino-Punic Epigraphy. A descriptive Study of the Inscriptions* (Tübingen, 2010), 81f.

46 Interestingly enough, this is also the situation in Indo-European. The head of the Greek pantheon Ζεύς, (genitive Διός; <*diēus) seemingly the only Olympian deity with an Indo-European name, is cognate with Latin deus "god" and Jupiter (<*dyeu[s]-ph₂tēr "Sky-Father"~Ζεύς πατὴρ [ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε]). The latter is of

course the archaic Vedic sky god द्यौष्पितृ – *dyauṣpitṛ* attested a handful of times in the Rig-Veda.

47 See already Tell Fakhariyeh 5: *ʾlh rḥmn zy tṣlwth ṭbh* "merciful god whose prayer is beneficial."

48 On the Syriac origins of *Allāh* see also M. Gross, "Neue Wege der Koranforschung aus vergleichender sprach- und kulturwissenschaftlicher Sicht" in K.-H. Ohlig (ed.), *Der frühe Islam* (Berlin, 2007), 457–640, esp. 597 ff.

49 For example 90:24ff.: ወከነ፡ኮነ፡ቅድመ፡እምከዋከብት፡ወተኮነኑ፡ወኮኑ፡ኀጥኣነ፡ወሐሩ፡መካነ፡ኮነነ፡ ወወደይዎሙ፡ውስተ፡ዕሙቅ፡ወምሉእ፡እሳተ፡ወይልሁብ፡ወምሉእ፡ዐምደ፡እሳተ። ወእልኩ፡፸ኖላውያን፡ ተኮነኑ፡ወኮኑ፡ኀጥኣነ፡ወተወድዩ፡እሙንቱ፡   ውስተ፡ዝኩ፡ማዕምቅ፡እሳት። ወርኢኩ፡በውእቱ፡ጊዜ፡ከመ፡ ተርኅወ፡፩ማዕምቅ፡ከማሁ፡በማእከለ፡ምድር፡ዘምሉዕ፡እሳተ፡ወአምጽእዎሙ፡ለእልኩ፡አባግዕ፡ጽሉላን። ወተኮነኑ፡ኩሎሙ፡ወኮኑ፡ኀጥኣነ፡ወተወድዩ፡ውስተ፡ዝኩ፡ዕመቅ፡እሳት፡ወወዐዩ፡ወዝንቱ፡ማዕምቅ፡ኮነ፡ በየማኑ፡ለዝኩ፡ቤት።ወርኢክዎሙ፡ለእልኩ፡አባግዕ፡እንዘ፡ይውዐዩ፡ወአዕፅምቲሆሙ፡ይውዒ። "And the judgement was held first over the stars, and they were judged and found guilty, and went to the place of condemnation, and they were cast into an abyss, full of fire and flaming, and full of pillars of fire. And those seventy shepherds were judged and found guilty, and they were cast into that fiery abyss. And I saw at that time how a like abyss was opened in the midst of the earth, full of fire, and they brought those blinded sheep, and they were all judged and found guilty and cast into this fiery abyss, and they burned; now this abyss was to the right of that house."

50 A possible relict of the older view of the after-life in the Qur'ān may be مالك – *mālik* the angel who guards hell in 43:77. This could be equated with the Bronze Age deified royal ancestors attested in texts from Syro-Palestinian Ugarit.

51 It is unclear whether the verbal forms of this root in Hebrew and Aramaic are original or later denominal derivations.

52 In the Peshitta, ܚܛܝܢܐ – *ḥeṭyānā* renders Hebrew שִׂטְנָה – *śiṭnāh* "accusation" in Ezra 4:6.

53 For a relevant discussion on this matter see now E. Muehlberger, *Angels in Late Ancient Christianity* (Oxford, 2013).

54 The verbal root is not attested in Hebrew, but compare this to Ugaritic *lʾk*, Gəʿəz ለአከ – *laʾaka* etc. For this word see also Luxenberg, op. cit. 59ff.

55 The angel Raphael, who plays a role in the biblical book of Tobit and in the Book of Enoch, seems to find no continuation here.

56 Such transcribed loans are not uncommon in Arabic. So for example تاريخ – *tārīḫ* "date, time; history; annals" (and the denominal factitive verb أرخ – *ʾarraḫa* "to date, to write the date") would seem to come from a root √'rk.

57 The name is in any case pre-Hebrew and already documented in the Bronze Age, e.g. Egyptian 𓇌𓊃𓄿𓂋 – /ysʾr/, cf. K. A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical*, IV, (Oxford, 1969), 19.7.

58 As we shall see (§7.2.9), the identification of the Arabs as Ishmaelites predates Islam. It is an ideological term used by Christian historiography and is not originally an ethnonym or a self-designation.

59 The name is pre-Hebrew and documented with theophoric elements in the Bronze Age, for instance at Ugarit. The actual meaning of the root √'qb here must have

been similar to the Gəʿəz *ዐቀበ* – aqaba "to guard, to protect"– cf. Amharic *ጠባቂ* – ṭabāqi "minder."

60 The fact that this name is of Egyptian origin is, however, not a confirmation of the historicity of the story of Joseph. This name is only attested in the Late Period (664–332bc) and not during the Bronze Age, when Joseph supposedly lived, if one were to take the chronological data of the Bible literally.

61 Vs the secular legal usage of this root e.g. in Official Aramaic and at Palymra: šhd, verb "to testify" (scil. "on someone's behalf" + lh); noun "witness."

62 In Jewish Aramaic "to be sure, to be present, to testify" etc., although not in the sense of martyrdom. The Arabic usage matches Syriac more closely. Late Sabaic *ᚼᛯᚷ* – šhd "testimony" is borrowed from Aramaic.

63 Cf. neo-Assyrian and Late Babylonian ṣullûm "to pray," an Aramaic borrowing, similar to Sabaic *х1ж* – ṣlt and Gəʿəz *ጸለየ* – ṣalaya "to pray" (*ጸሎት* – ṣalot "prayer").

64 *ركعا* – rukkaʿan from the root *ركع* – rakaʿa "to bow" has an Aramaic cognate in Christian Palestinian Aramaic: *ܠܐ ܡܟܪܟ* (see A. Smith Lewis, "Apostolic Myth and Homily Fragments" in idem (ed.), *Codex Climaci Rescriptus [Horae Semiticae VIII]* (Cambridge, 1909), 190ff.). We will, however, due to constraints of space, not further discuss this lexeme here.

65 Note *ܣܓܕ ܠܫܡܫܐ* – sāg̱eḏ l-šemšā lit. "sun worshipper," the genus Heliotropium.

66 See for example Genesis 18:2 *ወሰበ፡ኣልዐለ፡ኣዐይንቲሁ፡ወ፪ረ፡ወ፫ሁ፡ሠለስቱ፡ ዕደው፡ይቀውሙ፡ መልዕልቱ፡[ወርኣየ፡ወፂ፡ለተቀብሎቶም፡ኣምኖጎተ፡ይመት፡]ወሰገደ* (wa-sagada)*፡ወስተ፡ምድር* ።። wa-sagada rendering Greek προσκυνέω "to fall down and worship (at someone's feet)."

67 I.e the God of Israel together with one his female consorts, which shows that "Judaism" in Achaemenid Egypt was considerably different than today.

68 See H. and M. Weippert, "Der betende Mensch. Eine Außenansicht" in A. Grund et al. (eds.) *Ich will Dir danken unter den Völkern. Studien zur israelitischen und altorientalischen Gebetsliteratur: Festschrift für Bernd Janowski zum 70. Geburtstag* (Gütersloh, 2013), 435–490. See esp. 437f.: "Besonders auffallend ist freilich eine teilweise Parallelität zwischen den muslimischen und den ägyptischen Gruß- bzw. Gebetsgebärden, wie sie auf Bildwerkenseit dem Neuen Reich dargestellt sind."

69 Note 2 Samuel 15:4 "Absalom said moreover, 'Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!'"(AV) the final clause "and I would do him justice" וְהִצְדַּקְתִּיו – wi-hiṣiddạqittiw is rendered with forms of the root √zky, just discussed, in the Targum (ואיזכיניה) and the Peshitta (ܡܙܟܐ ܗܘܝܬ ܠܗ).

70 Jastrow, *Dictionary* 1263. Note in addition the Targum of Esther 1 9:22 לשדרא דורון אינש לחבריה ומעין דצדקתא מתנן לחשוכי "each person to send a gift to his comrade and charitable coins as gifts to the needy" (B. Grossfeld, *The First Targum to Esther According to the MS Paris Hebrew 110 of the Bibliothèque Nationale* [New York, 1983]).

71 See T. Podella, *Ṣôm-Fasten: kollektive Trauer um den verborgenen Gott im Alten Testament* (Kevelaer, 1989).

72 In Old Ethiopic, the word came to mean hardship in a more general sense, e.g. Leviticus 25: 43 *ወኢ[ታ]ጠውቆ ፡በጻማ* (ba-ṣoma) *፡ወፍራህ፡እግዚኣብሔር፡ኣምላክከ*። rendering Greek μόχθος "labour, hardship." The original Ethiopic form of the root seems to have been *θመመ* – ṭamama.

73 So for example in the Talmud (BT Hag 10b(9)) אכלו ושתו וחוגו חגא קמאי "eat, drink, and celebrate the holiday before me"; Lamentations Rabbah (EchR[1]54 (9)) דמטי חגא ולא הוה ליה להההוא גברא כלום "for the holiday is coming, and I (lit. that man) have nothing." In *Galilaean Aramaic, in the Pesikta de Rav Kahana* (ed. B. Mandelbaum; New York, 1962) 68.8 it refers to Succoth: מן פסחה לחגא "from Passover to Succoth."

74 M. Albert (ed.), *Jacques de Saroug. Homélies contre les Juifs* [*Patrologia Orientalis* 38/1 No 174] (Turnhout, 1976), 112–35.

75 ‌حَجّ – ḥagg "peregrinatio Moslemorum" is of course a later term re-borrowed from Arabic. Possibly the meaning "pilgrimage" for ḥg is already attested in Nabataean, although this is uncertain. It certainly could be used in pagan contexts as is clear from ܚܓܬܐ – ḥeggṯā "the shrine or fans of an idol," i.e. ‌ܟܕ ܥܒܕܝܢ ܚܓܐ ܒܚܓܐ – kaḏ ʿibḏīn ḥeggē b-ḥeggē "when they make feasts in the temples of idols" (J. Payne Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, 126).

76 The fact that the Arabic root has dual the meanings "to devote, consecrate" (in the ivth, causative stem) and the nuance of "forbidden," i.e. حرام – ḥarām (i.e. one of the الأحكام الخمسة – al-aḥkām al-ḫāmsah) unequivocally shows that the Islamic semantics of this root were borrowed from Syro-Aramaic, in which the verb can also mean "to excommunicate, anathematise," e.g. ܠܐ ܗܟܝܠ ܡܚܪܡܝܢ ܚܢܢ . "we anathematise, then–not those who confess the characteristics of the natures ... but rather ..." (W. Wright, *The Homilies of Aphrates, The Persian Sage*. Vol. 1: *The Syriac Text* (London–Edinburgh, 1869), 7.143:17). Furthermore, the notion something ḥrm being a sanctuary or a holy site, e.g. the Mosque at Mecca, the مسجد الحرام – masǧid al-ḥarām the "sacred mosque" (not necessarily the structure mentioned e.g. in 17:1, 2:144), or the Kaaba, the بيت الحرام – bayt al-ḥarām "the sacred house" is also Aramaic and most definitely pre-Islamic as the usage of ḥrm in Nabataean with the meaning "sanctuary" clearly demonstrates.

77 Literally, "He who owns the Day of Judgement."

78 A. Jeffery, "A variant text of the Fātiḥa," *The Muslim World* 29 (1939): 158–162.

79 This can be seen by viewing the tafsīr literature. For example, in 2 الحمد لله رب العالمين – *Al-ḥamdu li-llāhi rabbi l-ʿālamīn* the definite article appended to the first word was correctly seen as problematic by aṭ-Ṭabarī (a.l. instead of *حَمْدًا لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ), and received a somewhat forced explanation. Similarly Tafsīr Jalalayn a.l. جملة خبرية قصد بها الثناء على الله بمضمونها من أنه تعالى : مالك لجميع الحمد من الخلق أو مستحق لأن يحمدوه، والله علم على المعبود بحق ..." is a predicate of a nominal clause, the content of which is intended to extol God [by stating that]: He possesses the praise of all creatures, or that He [alone] deserves their praise. God is a proper noun for the One truly worthy of worship."

80 The biblical tradition is not unanimous as to when the God of Israel reveals himself by name to his elect. The account of the Jahwist in the Hexateuch pre-sumes that it is known that the Deity's name is Yahweh from its beginning (Genesis 2:4b). According to the Priestly source, a critic of J, the Lord only reveals himself as Yahweh to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:4ff.). Nonetheless, it should be noted that the notion of Abraham as the patriarch of the Israelites is a

late (post-)exilic literary production that presumes events originally related to Nabonidus.

81 For the later Jewish tradition cf. e.g. in the Talmud Qiddushin 71a: זה זכרי אמר ר"ת ת"ף דל"י ונקרא באל"ד ה"ה לֹא כשאני נכתב אני נקרא נכתב אני ביו"הקב "I am not referred to as it [scil. my name] is written. My name is written yod-hé-vav-hé and it is pronounced 'Adonai.'" Already in the Mishna (Seder Nezikin, tractate Sanhedrin 10.1), according to Rabbi Shaul those who pronounce the proper name of God will have no place in the world to come: אבא שאול אומר אף ההוגה את השם באותותיו.

82 See e.g. St Jerome, *Epistola* xxv "De decem nominibus dei" to Marcella (d.d. 384; *Migne, PL* Vol. 22, p. 428f.): "Septimum adonai, quem nos Dominum generaliter appellamus. Octavum ia, quod in Deo tantum ponitur : et in alleluia extrema quoque syllaba sonat. Nonum τετράγραμμον, quod ἀνεκφώνητον, id est ineffabile putaverunt, quod his litteris scribitur, jod, he, vav, he. Quod quidam non intelligentes propter elementorum similitudinem, cum in Graecis libris repererint, πιπι legere consueverunt."

83 See B. D. Eerdmans, "The Name Jahu," *OTS* 5 (1948): 1–29.

84 See for example in the Decalogue (Exodus 20:2): אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עֲבָדִים – 'ānōkī yhwh 'ĕlōhäkā … "I am Y. your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" in e.g. the Septuagint ἐγώ εἰμι κύριος ὁ θεός …, the Syriac Peshitta: ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܡܪܝܐ ܐܠܗܟ – 'ănā 'ănā māryā ălāhāk … and in the Classical Ethiopic Bible አነ፡ውእቱ፡እግዚ፡እግዚአብሔር፦ – 'ana wə'ətu 'əgzi' 'əgzi'abḥer … This is of course what is also found in Arabic translations of this passage: … انَا الرَّبُّ الهُكَ

85 While the pointing of the Tetragrammaton as 'ădōnay is certainly of Jewish origin–based on an ancient Canaanite custom of using an epithet to avoid using the proper name of the deity, re. 'Adūn for Eshmun at Sidon, Melqart for an unknown deity at Tyre etc.–although in Jewish tradition this was later restricted to usage in prayer and God was then addressed by other terms such as הַשֵּׁם – haš-šēm "the Name" (cf. already Leviticus 24:11) or הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא – haq-qādōš bārūk hū' "The Holy One, blessed be He" (abbrev. HKBH). Thus the Qur'ān follows Christian tradition and seems entirely ignorant of Jewish custom here.

86 While the mufassirūn such as aṭ-Ṭabari understood the meaning of the word (فَإِنَّ الرَّبَّ فِي كَلَام الْعَرَب مُنَصَرِّف عَلَى مَعَانٍ : فَالسَّيِّد الْمُطَاع فِيهَا يُدْعَى رَبَّا), he did not understand the roots of the term as discussed here.

87 From which is derived عالم – 'ālim "scholar," pl. علماء – 'ulamā' – experts in Islamic law.

88 I.e. τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου.

89 And note e.g. bēt 'ālmā as a term for "sepulcher, grave, tomb" in later Aramaic dialects: Palmyra (PAT 24:1.1) 'ksdr' dnh bt 'lm' dy bgw m'rt' m'lyk mn bb' 'l ymyn' "this arcade, the sepulcher within the burial cave on the right of the doorway as you enter"; Qumran (4Q549 1.6) פטר לבית עלמה. Cf. also Syriac ܥܠܡܝܘܬܐ 'ālmāyūṯā "this world" e.g. Ephesians 2:2 ܗܠܝܢ ܕܡܢ ܩܕܝܡ ܗܠܟܬܘܢ ܒܗܝܢ ܐܝܟ ܥܠܡܝܘܬܗ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܗܢܐ – "wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world …"

90 Such as e.g. the prayer fragment CIH 538:

    1 *[...]' ykfrn ḥb-hmw w-yqbln qrbn-hm[w ...]*
       [...]may (the God) forgive their sins and may He accept their offering [...]

2 *[...]' w-b-'lmn b'dn w-qrbn w-s²ym 'l[...]*
  [...] and in the future and present world the patron of [...]
3 *[...]n w-bs²rn w-bn s²rk l-mr'm [...](s1)m[...]*
  [...]and the people and due to the wicked arrangement with the Lord(?)
4 *[...] w-mrḍym l-s1m Rḥmnn ḏ-Kl'n[...]*
  [...] and the gratification in the name of Rḥmnn of Kl'n (?) [...]
5 *[...]Rḥmnn rḍw 'mr'-hmw 'mlkn [...]*
  [...] Rḥmnn goodwill of their Lord, the kings of [...]
6 *[...]w-'w(s1m) w-ḍllm w-mḥlm w-tm[...]*
  [...] and epidemic, disease, drought, and [...]

In older Sabaean ꟙꟓꟳ – 'gm has judicial semantics, such as "signature, document."

91 In Classical Ethiopic, which also borrowed this term from Aramaic, we find the same semantic development as in Arabic including the usage of the plural and plural i.a. in the sense of "tempus remotissimum, sive præteritum sive futurum; tempus perpetuum, sæcula, æternitas" (Dillmann, *Lexicon* 951), e.g. ንጉሠ፡ዓለም፡ – nəguśa 'ālam (Vulgate:) "rex sæculorum" (Tobit 13:6), and similar to the plural Qur'ānic usage discussed here Enoch 81:10 ወቦአኩ፡ኀበ፡ሰብአየ፡እዝዝ፡እገብኡ፡ለእግዚአ፡ ዓለማት፡ "And I returned to my fellow men, blessing the Lord of Eternity" (la-'əgzi'a 'ālamāt).

92 Or is this a reference to the Jewish terms העולם הזה – hā-'ōlām ḥaz-zäh "this world" and העולם הבא – hā-'ōlām ḥab-bā' "the coming world"?

93 The usage of the lexeme in the plural perplexed the mufassirūn who clearly had no idea what was meant. Ṭabarī took the word here to mean "generation":

وَالْعَالَم اِسْم لِأَصْنَافِ الْأُمَم , وَكُلّ صِنْف مِنْهَا عَالَم , وَأَهْل كُلّ قَرْن مِنْ كُلّ

صِنْف مِنْهَا عَالَم ذَلِكَ الْقَرْن وَذَلِكَ الزَّمَان , فَالْإِنْس عَالَم وَكُلّ أَهْل زَمَان مِنْهُمْ

عَالَم ذَلِكَ الزَّمَان . وَالْجِنّ عَالَم وَكَذَلِكَ سَائِر أَجْنَاس الْخَلْق , كُلّ جِنْس

مِنْهَا عَالَم زَمَانه . وَلِذَلِكَ جُمِعَ فَقِيلَ " عَالَمُونَ وَوَاحِده جَمْع لِكَوْنِ عَالَم

كُلّ زَمَان مِنْ ذَلِكَ عَالَم ذَلِكَ الزَّمَان . وَمِنْ ذَلِكَ قَوْل الْعَجَّاج فَخِنْدِفُ هَامَةُ

هَذَا الْعَالَم فَجَعَلَهُمْ عَالَم زَمَانه

"'alām is the name for various groups–each type is an 'alām. The members of each generation of each kind are the 'alām of that generation and that time: humanity is an 'alām and all the people of a given time are the 'alām of that time. The genies are also an 'alām etc. with other created beings. Each species is the 'alām of its own time."

Aṭ-Ṭabarī then quotes Ibn 'Abbās رَبّ الْعَالَمِينَ : الْجِنّ وَالْإِنْس – *rabb l-'ālamīn: al-ǧinn wal-'nās* "rabb l-'ālamīn means genies and people" (although one would then expect a dual!); similarly Tafsīr al-Ǧalālayn:

أي مالك جميع الخلق من الإنس والجن والملائكة والدواب وغيرهم، وكل

منها يُطلق عليه عالم، يقال عالم الإنس وعالم الجن إلى غير ذلك، وغلب في

جمعه بالياء والنون أولي العلم على غيرهم، وهو من العلامة لأنه علامة على

موجده

"That is the One Who owns all of creation: humans, genies, angels, animals and others as well, each of which may be referred to as a 'world'; one says 'the world of men,' or 'world of the jinn' etc. This plural form with the yā' and the nūn [scil. ʻālamīn] is used to denote, predominantly, cognizant beings (ūlū ʻilm). The expression [ʻālamīn] relates to [the term] 'sign' (ʻalāma), since it is an indication of the One that created it."

Here, aṭ-Ṭabarī implicitly presumes an additional meaning of ʻālam that took place in Syriac, namely the meaning "nation, people" (Brockelmann 527b "homines"), e.g. Acts 17:26: ܘܡܢ ܚܕ ܕܡ ܥܒܕ ܟܠܗ ܥܡܡܐ ܕܒܢܝܢܫܐ؛ ܕܢܗܘܘܢ ܥܡܪܝܢ ܥܠ ܐܦܝ ܐܪܥܐ ܟܠܗ. – wə-men ḥaḏ dem ʻḇaḏ ʻālmā kulleh d-barnāšā d-nehwūn ʻamrīn ʻal 'appayyé 'arʻā kulleh "And he hath made of one blood all nations of men (πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων) for to dwell on all the face of the earth." The problems with the translation "worlds" becomes clear e.g. in 45:16:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُم مِّنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ

عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ

walaqad ātaynā banī isrā'īla l-kitāba wal-ḥukma wal-nubuwata wa-razaqnā-hum mina l-ṭayibāti wafaḍḍalnā-hum ʻalā l-ʻālamīna

"And verily we gave the Children of Israel the Scripture and the Command and the Prophethood, and provided them with good things and favoured them above (all) peoples" (Pickthall)

In the various translations, we find, following the commentators, the last lexeme also rendered as "worlds." The translation "eternity" would of course make the most sense here as elsewhere (e.g. 2:131).

94   As the title of a goddess. For the profane use cf. Judges 5:30 "They must be dividing the captured plunder–with a woman or two (רַחַם רַחֲמָתַיִם לְרֹאשׁ גֶּבֶר – raḥam raḥămāṯayīm lə-rōʾš gäḇär) for every man. There will be colourful robes for Sisera, and colourful, on both sides." In Akkadian, the verbal realisation of this root, rêmum, means "to love," a meaning also found for this root in Aramaic (cf. e.g. in Official Aramaic TAD D.1 2.13 אנה אשכב עמה רחם אנה להי שגיא "I shall lie with her; I love her greatly") with numerous derivations (cf. in Syriac, often for calques of Greek terms, e.g. ܪܚܡܬ ܐܢܫܘܬܐ, ܪܚܡܬ ܐܢܫܐ "philanthropy").

95   Akkadian version 6f.: ilu rēmēnû šá si-pu-šú ṭābu …

96   Reference to Deuteronomy 13:18. For more instances, cf. Jastrow, Dict. 1468.

97   See also J. Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic* (Jerusalem, 1978) 42.4: עמלה מן דרחמנה ומן "from his from the Merciful One and from his own acquisitions."

98   Cf. J. Texidor, *The Pantheon of Palmyra* (Leyden, 1979), 62ff. Also found as a feminine epithet for a goddess, rḥmnytʾ.

99   J. C. Greenfield, "From 'lh rḥmn to al-raḥmān: The source of a divine epithet," in B. H. Hary, J. L. Hayes and F. Astren (eds.), *Judaism and Islam: Boundaries, Communication and Interaction—Essays in Honor of William M. Brinner* (Leyden, 2000), 381–292, here 385f. Note also A. Rippin, "RḤMNN and the Ḥanīfs" in W. B. Hallaq and D. P. Little (eds.), *Islamic Studies Presented to Charles J. Adams* (Leyden, 1991), 153–168.

100 Cf. ܡܪܚܡܢܘܬܐ – *mraḥmānuṭā* as a title of Byzantine kings, ܡܪܚܡܢܘܬܟ – *mraḥ-mānuṭāḵ* "Your mercy." Whether or not the Christian-Syriac usage stems originally from Judaism, which could well be the case, is irrelevant here.

101 Although the Bismillah (بسم الله – bismi-llāhi) is certainly also a borrowed term, in my opinion it is used in a general sense here, but it would be well worthwhile to study it diachronically in detail, especially in the collocation بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم – *bismi-llāhi r-raḥmāni r-raḥīm*. Note also the Christian Trinitarian variant بِاسْمِ الآبِ وَالاِبْنِ وَالرُّوحِ الْقُدُسِ – *bismi l-ābi wa-l-ibni wa-r-rūḥi l-qudus* "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." In passing, it is worth noting that after Odo of Châteauroux' arrival in the Holy Land in 1250, when he prohibited Crusader coin issues with Islamic inscriptions and Innocent IV's confirmation and explication of this prohibition ("nomen Machometi atque annorum a nativitate ipsius (sic) numerus sculpebantur"; cf. E. Berger, *Les registres d'Innocent IV*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1897), n° 6336) after 1253, the Shahada is replaced with the Bismillah (Damascus imitative types v and vi)—besides a "Christianised" Shahada لااله الا الله مخايل رسول الله "There is no God but God and Michael is the Messenger of God" or a stress on the oneness of the Trinity, e.g. الاب والابن والروخ القدس الله واحد – *al-ʾāb wal-ibn war-rūḥ al-qudus ilāh wāḥid* "The Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit: One God" (see M. Bates and I. F. Preston in: A. G. Malloy, I. F. Preston, A. J. Seltman et al., *Coins of the Crusader States 1098–1291* [New York, 1994], 129–140).

102 This expression is important for understanding the manifestations of Christianity that would later lead to Islam. The "Anointed One" (i.e. the Messiah, or the Christ) is not described as the Son of God here, cf. 5:75: ما المسيح ابن مريم إلا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل وأمه صديقة كانا يأكلان الطعام انظر كيف نبين لهم الآيات ثم انظر أنى يؤفكون – *mā l-masīḥu bnu maryama ʾillā rasūlun qad ḫalat min qablihi r-rusulu wa-ʾummuhū ṣiddīqatun kānā yaʾkulāni ṭ-ṭaʿāma nẓur kayfa nubayyinu lahumu l-ʾāyāti ṯumma nẓur ʾannā yuʾfakūna* as well as 3:45; 4:157, 172; 5: 17, 72; 9: 31, but rather as "his anointed one!"

103 A discussion of the Christian roots of Qur'ānic apocalyptic thinking would exceed the limits of the current discussion and the capabilities of the author. For a general of the subject see i.a. F. Hahn, *Frühjüdische und urchristliche Apokalyptik. Eine Einführung* (Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1998); and especially the various articles found in D. Hellholm (ed.), *Apocalypticism in the Mediterranean World and the Near East. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Apocalypticism*. Uppsala, August 12–17, 1979 (Tübingen 1983); also H. Gese, "Anfang und Ende der Apokalyptik, dargestellt am Sacharjabuch," in idem, *Vom Sinai zum Zion* (Munich, 1974), 202–230. In passing, it should be noted that Islamic eschatological views presuppose Christianity (and not Judaism or indigenous ideas), for example the "False

Messiah" (المسيح الدجّال – al-masīḥ ad-daǧǧāl) who will pretend to be the Messiah on the Day of Resurrection (يوم القيامة – yawm al-qiyāma) was borrowed from Syriac ܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܕܓܠܘܬܐ – mšīḥe d-daggālūṯā "pseudo-Christs, false Messiahs" along with the notions conveyed (cf. also e.g. Bar Hebraeus, *Menaret Qudshe* 7.1.3.1 ܢܒܝܐ ܕܓܠܐ "the false prophets").

104 Cf. e.g. Hebrews 12:23 ܕܝܢܐ ܕܟܠ ܐܠܗܐ (<καὶ κριτῇ θεῷ πάντων) "and to God the judge of all."

105 Cf. C. A. Ciancaglini, *Iranian Loanwords in Syriac* (Wiesbaden, 2008), 152. The term would seem to be an Indo-European cognate with ध्यान – dhyāna, a technical term for forms of meditation in Hinduism and Buddhism (in the latter, a state of समाधि; cf. 禪 vulgo "Zen").

106 Cf. also in the Talmud עבד דנורא – ʿaḇd d-nūrā "fire worshipper, servant of fire" (מסכת נדרים פרק ט), i.e. belonging to the personnel of a Zoroastrian fire temple; see for this term M. Macuch, *JSAI* 26 (2002): 109ff. Note also ʿbdn, ʿbdn "ritual practitioner" used on Babylonian magic bowls. In Syriac, this root can also be used in the technical theological sense for the "Creator," "Creation," e.g. ܥܒܘܕܐ ܗܘ "one who says that it took part in the Creation" (R. M. Tonneau (ed.), *Sancti Ephraem Syri in Genesim et in Exodum* [CSCO 152, Scriptores Syri 71] (Louvain, 1955) ad Ex 11:24).

107 Note also the Syriac expression ܡܗܘܕ ܚܒܪ (Brockelmann, *Lexicon*, 299b) <ἰουδαΐσαι "to judaise."

108 Also spelt سراط – sirāṭ in the text of Ibn ʿAbbās (cf. A. Jeffery, *Materials for the History of the Text of the Qurʾān* [Leyden, 1937], 195), which corresponds to the Aramaic form (the uncertainty between /ṣ/ and /s/ is also a certain indicator of a loan-word here). Note also M. Cook, *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2000), 40. Another, albeit impossible, derivation is given by Chr. Luxenberg, op. cit. 18.

109 The mufassirūn are quite perplexed as to what this expression might have meant. Aṭ-Ṭabarī a.l.:

وَذَلِكَ هُوَ الصِّرَاط الْمُسْتَقِيم , لِأَنَّ مَنْ وُفِّقَ لِمَا وُفِّقَ لَهُ مَنْ أَنْعَمَ اللَّه

عَلَيْهِ مِنْ النَّبِيِّينَ وَالصِّدِّيقِينَ وَالشُّهَدَاء , فَقَدْ وُفِّقَ لِلْإِسْلَام , وَتَصْدِيق

الرُّسُل , وَالتَّمَسُّك بِالْكِتَابِ , وَالْعَمَل بِمَا أَمَرَ اللَّه بِهِ , وَالِانْزِجَار عَمَّا

زَجَرَهُ عَنْهُ , وَاتِّبَاع مَنْهَج النَّبِيّ صَلَّى اللَّه عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ , وَمِنْهَاج أَبِي بَكْر

وَعُمَر وَعُثْمَان وَعَلِيّ , وَكُلّ عَبْد لِلَّهِ صَالِح . وَكُلّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ الصِّرَاط

الْمُسْتَقِيم. وَقَدْ اِخْتَلَفَتْ تَرَاجِمَة الْقُرْآن فِي الْمَعْنِيّ بِالصِّرَاطِ الْمُسْتَقِيم ,

يَشْمَل مَعَانِي جَمِيعهمْ فِي ذَلِكَ مَا اِخْتَرْنَا مِنْ التَّأْوِيل فِيهِ

"This is the 'straight path,' because he who succeeds the prophets, the righteous and the martyrs, upon whom God has bestowed favour, have succeeded, succeeds in Islam, in believing in the prophets, in adhering to the Book, in doing what God commands, and in restraining himself from what He abhors, in following the course the Prophet took, the way of Abū Bakr,

'Umar, 'Uthmān and 'Alī, and of every devout servant of God. All this is the 'straight path.' The interpreters differed about the meaning of the 'straight path,' but all their interpretations are contained in the interpretation we have proffered here" …

And citing 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās:

<div dir="rtl">

وَالصِّرَاط الْمُسْتَقِيم كِتَاب اللَّه

</div>

"The 'straight path' is the Book of God" … citing Jābir b. 'Abd Allāh:

<div dir="rtl">

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاط الْمُسْتَقِيم قَالَ : الْإِسْلَام , قَالَ : هُوَ أَوْسَع مِمَّا بَيْن

السَّمَاء وَالْأَرْض

</div>

"Guide us in the 'straight path' [means] Islam, which is wider than heaven and earth" … citing Abū-'l-'Āliya [and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī]:

<div dir="rtl">

هُوَ رَسُول اللَّه صَلَّى اللَّه عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَصَاحِبَاهُ مِنْ بَعْده : أَبُو بَكْر وَعُمَر

</div>

the 'straight path' "is the messenger of God, and his two Companions after him Abū Bakr and 'Umar." It is clear that aṭ-Ṭabarī c.s. have no idea what is meant here, nor of the relevant historical details.

110 Cf. E. Repo, *'Der Weg' als Selbstbezeichnung des Urchristentums* (Helsinki, 1964).

111 Cf. Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* iv.8: "Nazaræus vocari habebat secundum prophetiam Christus creatoris. Unde et ipso nomine nos Iudæi Nazarenos appellant per eum. Nam et sumus de quibus scriptum est: Nazaræi exalbati sunt super nivem, qui scilicet retro luridati delinquentiæ maculis et nigrati ignorantiæ tenebris. Christo autem appellatio Nazaræi in extraneum Iesu post tibi transtulit, sed addidit Iunius quæro an scribendum fuerit eum se confirmavit competitura erat ex infantiæ latebris, ad quasi apud Nazareth descendit, vitando Archelaum filium Herodis"; also Pliny, *Naturalis Historia* v.81: "Cœle habet Apameam Marsya amne divisam a Nazerinorum tetrarchia."

112 R. A. Pritz, *Nazarene Jewish Christianity* (Leyden-Jerusalem, 1988), 11–47. See also J. Gnilka, *Die Nazarener und der Koran: Eine Spurensuche* (Freiburg, 2007). Gnilka notes striking parallels between Sura 19 and the Protoevangelium of James (sive Liber Iacobi de nativitate Mariæ). Note also S. C. Mimouni, "Les Nazoréens: recherche étymologique et historique," *Revue Biblique* 105 (1998): 208–262; idem, *Le judéo-christianisme ancien: essais historiques* (Paris, 1998). For a somewhat different view see F. C. de Blois, "Naṣrānī (Ναζωραῖος) and ḥanīf (ἐθνικός): Studies on the Religious Vocabulary of Christianity and of Islam," *BSOAS* 65 (2002): 1–30.

113 As every reader of the New Testament knows, Jesus was not from Nazareth, but from the Galilee. In Antiquity, he and his teaching were known as Galilean—cf. e.g. Julian's famous last words according to Theodoret Γαλιλαῖενε νενίκηκας! A similar usage is also found in his refutation of Christianity Contra Galilæos (e.g. Bk. 1: Καλῶς ἔχειν ἔμοιγε φαίνεται τὰς αἰτίας ἐκθέσθαι πᾶσιν ἀνθώποις, ὑφ' ὧν ἐπείσθην ὅτι τῶν Γαλιλαίων ἡ σκευωρία πλάσμα ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπὸ κακουργίας

συντεθέν; yet in his letter to Phontinus "Diodorus autem Nazaræi magus" … "et ilium novum eius deum Galilæum").

114   Isaiah 11:1–10 has a long story of messianic exegesis, also in early Judaism. The rendition of the Targum makes this clear: וְיִפּוֹק מַלְכָּא מִבְּנוֹהִי דְיִשַׁי וּמְשִׁיחָא מִבְּנֵי בְּנוֹהִי יִתְרַבֵּי – *wə-yippōq malḵā mi-bənōhī ḏ-yišaʾ ū-mšīḥā mi-bənēy bnōhī yitṟaḇēy* "A king will arise from the sons of Jesse, and a Messiah from the sons of his sons." Cf. in the NT Acts 13:22–23, Romans 15:12, Revelation 5:5, and possibly 1 Corinthians 1:23, 2:2. This verse by Isaiah is probably what Matthew 2:22–23 alludes to: καὶ ἐλθὼν κατῴκησεν εἰς πόλιν λεγομένην Ναζαρὲτ, ὅπως πληρωθῇ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν, ὅτι Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται. The Coptic Gospel of the Egyptians iii.64:9ff. may preserve some memory of such, as well as similarly Zostrianos 47:5: ⲉⲍⲉⲛ]ⲡⲛⲁ [ⲛ]ⲉ ⲛ̅ⲛⲁⲧⲙⲟⲩ·ⲓⲉⲥⲥⲉⲩⲥ [ⲙ]ⲁⲍⲁⲣⲉⲩ[ⲥ] ⲓ̅ⲉ̅[ⲥ]ⲥⲉⲇⲉⲕⲉⲩⲥ [Ce sont des] esprits immortels, Yessée [M]azar[ée] Yé[s]sédékée" (see C. Barry, W.-P. Funk, P.-H. Poirier and J. D. Turner, Zostrien (NH viii, 1) [Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section « Textes » 24] (Québec–Louvain, 2000), 328f.; A. Böhlig, F. Wisse and P. Labib (eds.), *Nag Hammadi Codices iii,2 and iv,2. The Gospel of the Egyptians (The Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit)* (Leyden, 1975), 148). On נֵצֶר – nēṣär "shoot"cf. e.g. Syriac ܢܨܪܬܐ – نَصَرتا – nāṣartā "surculus."

115   Cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion* 28:1: Ναζωραῖοι καθεξῆς τούτοις ἕπονται, ἅμα τε αὐτοῖς ὄντες ἢ καὶ πρὸ αὐτῶν ἢ σὺν αὐτοῖς ἢ μετʼ αὐτούς, ὅμως σύγχρονοι· οὐ γὰρ ἀκριβέστερον δύναμαι ἐξειπεῖν τίνες τίνας διεδέξαντο. Καθὰ γὰρ ἔφην, σύγχρονοι ἦσαν ἀλλήλοις καὶ ὅμοια ἀλλήλοις κέκτηνται τὰ φρονήματα. Οὗτοι γὰρ ἑαυτοῖς ὄνομα ἐπέθεντο οὐχὶ Χριστοῦ οὔτε αὐτὸ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ Ναζωραίων. Πάντες δὲ Χριστιανοὶ Ναζωραῖοι τότε ὡσαύτως ἐκαλοῦντο· γέγονε δὲ ἐπʼ ὀλίγῳ χρόνῳ καλεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς καὶ Ἰεσσαίους, πρὶν ἢ ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀντιοχείας ἀρχὴν λάβωσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ καλεῖσθαι Χριστιανοί. Ἐκαλοῦντο δὲ Ἰεσσαῖοι διὰ τὸν Ἰεσσαί, οἶμαι, ἐπειδήπερ ὁ Δαυὶδ ἐξ Ἰεσσαί, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ Δαυὶδ κατὰ διαδοχὴν σπέρματος ἡ Μαρία, πληρουμένης τῆς θείας γραφῆς, κατὰ τὴν παλαιὰν διαθήκην τοῦ κυρίου λέγοντος πρὸς τὸν Δαυίδ, ἐκ καρποῦ τῆς κοιλίας σου θήσομαι ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον σου᾽. Further idem, 3–9.

116   Cf. Acts 11:26: χρηματίσαι τε πρώτως ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τοὺς μαθητὰς Χριστιανούς. The historicity of this passage is not at issue here. The relevance is the awareness that "Christianity" was not the original lexeme used to describe what later became the new religion.

117   Cf. also Syriac ܢܨܪܝܘܬܐ – نَصرَيوتا – nāṣrāyūṯā; Gəʿəz ነዘራዊ – *nazarāwi* (probably from Greek) along with ክርስቲያን – *kərəsətiyān* as in Amharic etc. Something which Tertullian was well aware of op. cit. (n111) "nomine nos Iudæi Nazarenos appellant."

118   According to John (19:19), citing the previously mentioned INRI-inscription, the only NT attestation which renders Pilate's supposed text as ἰησοῦς ὁ ναζωραῖος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν ἰουδαίων, it cannot be translated as "Jesus of Nazareth," as this would be Ναζαρηνός or Ναζαρέτ (re. the Greek spelling in Matthew 2:23). The Greek word is morphologically the same here as in the expression used by Tertullus in Acts 24:5 (τῶν Ναζωραίων), "Jesus the Nazarene, the King of the Jews." Although the rendition of the Semitic phoneme /ṣ/ with ζ in Greek might appear odd, and could cast doubt on the derivation proposed here, e.g. the rendition ܕܢܨܪܝܐ – d-nāṣrāyā etc. in the Syriac NT make it clear that this etymology is correct and it should not be derived from an alleged root <*√nzr (this spelling, ܢܙܪܘܝ – nzrwy "Nazarene" found in Christian Palestinian Aramaic is

probably calqued from Greek; cf. also Gə'əz ነጽራዊ in the previous note). In Modern Hebrew (Ivrit), the term נוצרי – nōṣrī (sg.) is the common word for Christian (whereas another group uses משיחי – mašīḥī "Messianic Jews" as a self-description; cf. Arabic مسيحيّ – masīḥī, ألمسيحية – al-masīḥiyyah "Christianity"); note also Mandaic naṣuraia. The root √nṣr is unsurprisingly productive for things Christian in Arabic, e.g. منصر – munaṣṣir "missionary," تنصير – tanṣīr "to become Christian," "to be baptised." A derivation of this root, borrowed ultimately from Syriac, is used in Malayalam to denote the St Thomas Christians of Kerala, the മാര് തോമാ നസ്രാണികള് – *mar toma nasrani*.

119 I have discussed this term at length in a forthcoming essay ("Annus Hegiræ vel Annus (H)Agarorum? Etymologische und vergleichende Anmerkungen zum Anfang der islamischen Jahreszählung" in: K.-H. Ohlig and M. Gross (eds.), *Inârah 7* [Berlin–Tübingen, 2014]). Briefly, the traditional account of "Muḥam-mad's" life tells us that in June of 622, upon getting wind of an assassination plot against him at Mecca, he escaped with some of his loyal followers and eventually made his way to Yathrib/Medina. The traditionally accepted reference for this event is in Sura 9: 100 (cited above). In Islam, this event is viewed as so significant a turning-point that the Islamic calendar commences with the "year of the exile" (sanat or ʿam al-hiǧra, not referred to in the Qur'ān). Traditionally, the مهاجرون – *muhaǧirūn* (from a supposed root √hǧr "to emigrate, go into exile") are interpreted as the "émigrés" who left with "Muḥammad." However, several problems arise from this traditional interpretation. First, the Qur'ānic quotation is vague at best. Second, as the Qur'ān is by all accounts the first book in Arabic, we lack internal comparative evidence for the meanings of key words as this essay demonstrates. The root *haǧara* is only attested in South Semitic in the meaning of "city(-dweller)" and in Hebrew and Aramaic as the name of Abraham's concubine, Hagar. This datum, the lack of comparative Semitic support, is cause for suspicion. We know about the Islamic dating system, which begins with the "year of the exile," from contemporary evidence in Arabic, Syriac, Greek and even Chinese sources. The Syriac and Greek sources usually refer to a "year of the Arabs." We further know that in Late Antique literatures, one of the many synonyms for Arabs is "Hagarite" (along with Ishmaelite and Saracen, for example), and that in Syriac we find a derivation ܡܗܓܪ̈ܝܐ – *mhaggrāyā* (also borrowed into Greek as μαγαροί). An Greek inscription of the Caliph Muʿawiyah from Hammat Gader, dated in Classical fashion, includes the year of the colony, the indiction years for taxation (indicating that there still was some association with Constantinople, imagined or real) and the year of the local Metropolitan. In addition, it is dated "year 42 κατὰ Ἄραβας" which, based on the other dating systems, denotes the year 664. Arabic sources, such as an inscription of Muʿawiyah from Taif (modern Saudi Arabia), as well as Chinese sources, mention only the year, without reference to the dating system employed. Indeed, Muʿawiyah's inscriptions have no Islamic content whatsoever, posing additional serious questions about the traditional narrative. From the comparative evidence we have briefly touched upon here, it seems clear that the المهاجرون – *al-muhāǧirūn* are Arabs (ܡܗܓܪ̈ܝܐ – *mhaggrāyā*) and not otherwise unknown 'émigrés.'

What then are the origins of the Islamic year (هجرة – *hiğra*)? For one answer, we know that Easter 622 was when the Romano-Byzantine Emperor Heraclius initiated a "Holy War." Led by an icon of Christ said to have come into existence miraculously (ἀχειροποίητα), that is, as if led by Christ himself, Heraclius' goal was to re-conquer lost Syro-Palestinian possessions and then ultimately destroy the Sassanid Empire. These are the events that led to the formation of the Umayyad Caliphate, a Byzantine shadow-empire in which the Arabs and not the Romans were to rule the region. They marked the birth of an Arab dynasty – not an Islamic one – that would rule much of the former Roman and Sassanid Empires. This is what was meant by "the year of the Arabs." The hiğra from Mecca to Medina described in Islamic sources has no historical underpinnings.

120 Cf. in the Sabaean dictionary by Beeston et al., op. cit. p. 100 "aide, appui, soutien, secours."

121 Well-attested in Aramaic dialects, in Syriac also with the further semantic development >"observance," for example nāṭōrūṯā cf. e.g. JECan 3:8 ܢܛܘܪܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܝܐ "Jewish observances."

122 Cf. J. Tropper, *Ugaritische Grammatik* (Münster, 2000), 94f. et passim.

123 Note e.g. the etymology of the (Gnostic) Gospel of Philip: ⲛⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϩⲓ ⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲉϩⲏ ⲧⲉⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛⲉⲩⲙⲟⲩ ⲧⲉ ϫⲉ ⲓ̄ⲏ̄ⲥ ⲡⲛⲁⲍⲱⲣⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲙⲉⲥⲥⲓⲁⲥ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙⲉⲥⲥⲓⲁⲥ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲡⲁⲉⲓ ⲡⲉ ⲓ̄ⲏ̄ⲥ ⲡⲛⲁⲍⲁⲣⲁⲓⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲭ̄ⲥ̄ ... ⲛⲁⲍⲁⲣⲁ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲗⲏⲑⲉⲓⲁ ⲡⲛⲁ ⲍⲁⲣⲏⲛⲟⲥ ϭⲉ ⲧⲉ ⲧⲁⲗⲏⲑⲉⲓⲁ "The apostles who have gone before us called [him] Jesus the Nazarene, the Messiah, that is Jesus the Nazarene Christ ("the Anointed One") . . . Nazara means "truth," thus the (Nazarene) is the "true one" (Text according to W. Till (ed.), *Das Evangelium nach Philippos* (Berlin, 1963), 62; translation by the author); cf. however also 114.12f.: ⲡⲛⲁⲍⲁⲣⲏⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲟⲛϩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲡⲉ ⲙ̄ⲡⲡⲉⲑⲏⲡ "the revealed Nazarene is the secret," interpreted as Jesus' second name, without any linguistic basis. Nevertheless, such exegesis points out the problems regarding the interpretation of Ναζωραῖος already in Antiquity.

124 The usage of this term, currently in vogue in anti-Islamic religious cultural polemics in the West, has its origins with the Irish freethinker John Toland (1670–1722), who coined it in his work on the Jewish origins of Christianity: Nazarenus: or Jewish, Gentile and Mahometan Christianity, containing the history of the ancient gospel of Barnabas... Also the Original Plan of Christianity explained in the history of the Nazarens.... with... a summary of ancient Irish Christianity... (London, 1718). He formulated in detail, largely basing himself on the 'Gospel of Barnabas,' the Jewish Christian origins of Islam, presupposing by over a century and a half Nöldeke's view of Islam being an Arab manifestation of Christianity; from his conclusion: "You perceive by this time … that what the Mahometans believe concerning Christ and his doctrine, were neither the inventions of Mahomet, nor yet of those Monks who are said to have assisted him in the framing of his Alcoran; but that they are as old as the time of the Apostles, having been the sentiments of whole Sects or Churches: and that tho the Gospel of the Hebrews be in all probability lost, yet some of those things are founded on another Gospel anciently known, and still in some manner existing, attributed to Barnabas. If in the history of this Gospel I have satisfy'd your curiosity, I shall think my time well spent; but infinitely better, if you agree, that, on this occasion, I have set The Original Plan of Christianity in its due light, as far as I propos'd to do" (84f.). Toland's book gained notoriety, especially on the Continent through

Johann Lorenz von Mosheim's (1693–1755) rebuttal, *Vindiciæ antiquæ chris-tianiorum disciplinæ adversus . . . Johannis Tolandi, . . . Nazarenum* (Kiel, 11722; Hamburg, ²1722) – which went to great lengths to rebut Toland's views on Chris-tian origins. Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792–1860) of the Tübingen School would later pursue the former's line of thought in a Hegelian fashion of second century Christianity being the synthesis of two opposing theses: Jewish (Petrine) Chris-tianity vs Gentile (Pauline) Christianity. Baur assumed, indirectly following To-land, that the Christianity represented by the Ebionites (apud Epiphanius), which as has been mentioned saw Paul (=Simon Magus, cf. Acts 8:9–24, according to Baur) as a heretic, represented 'original' Christianity, i.e. that of the Twelve Disciples.

125   On their name, cf. e.g. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* iii.27.6 … ὅθεν παρὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἐγ-χείρησιν τῆς τοιᾶσδε λελόγχασι προσηγορίας, τοῦ Ἐβιωναίων [i.e. אביונים – 'eḇyōnīm ~ πτωχοί] ὀνόματος τὴν τῆς διανοίας πτωχείαν αὐτῶν ὑποφαίνοντος· ταύτῃ γὰρ ἐπίκλην ὁ πτωχὸς παρ᾽ Ἑβραίοις ὀνομάζεται; cf. 1: Ἐβιωναίους τούτους οἰκείως ἐπεφήμιζον οἱ πρῶτοι, πτωχῶς. On their Judaicising teaching, e.g. … καὶ τὸ μὲν σάββατον καὶ τὴν ἄλλην Ἰουδαϊκὴν ἀγωγὴν ὁμοίως ἐκείνοις παρε-φύλαττον, ταῖς δ᾽ αὖ κυριακαῖς ἡμέραις ἡμῖν τὰ παραπλήσια εἰς μνήμην τῆς σωτη-ρίου ἀναστάσεως ἐπετέλουν· ὅθεν παρὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ἐγχείρησιν τῆς τοιᾶσδε λελόγχασι προσηγορίας. That the name is derived from Hebrew אביון meaning 'poor' and was used by Jewish Christians is also noted by Origen, Contra Celsum ii.1: Ἐβίων τε γὰρ ὁ πτωχὸς παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις καλεῖται, καὶ Ἐβιωναῖοι χρηματίζουσιν οἱ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὡς Χριστὸν παραδεξάμενοι.

126   Cf. e.g. St Jerome who presumes that the document was well-known and kept e.g. in the library at Caesarea, Dialogus Adversus Pelagianos 3.2 (*Migne, PL* Vol. 23, 597): "In evangelio juxta Hebræos, quaod Chaldaico quidem Syrioque sermone, sed Hebraicis litteris scriptum est, quo utuntur usque hodie Nazareni, secundum Apostolos, sive, ut plerique autumant, juxta Mathæum, quod et in Cæsariensi habetur bibliotheca …"; idem, De viris illustribus liber ad dextrum Book 3 (op. cit. 643–644): "Mattæus, qui et Levi, ex publicano apostolus (Matth. ix, 9 ; Marc. ii, 14 ; Luc. v, 27), primus in Judæa propter eos qui ex circumcisione crediderant, Evangelium Christi Hebraicis litteris verbisque composuit : quod quis postea in Græcum transtulerit, non satis certum est. Porro ipsum Hebraicum habetur usque hodie in Cæsariensi bibliotheca, quam Pamphilus martyr studiosissime confecit. Mihi quoque a Nazaræis, qui in Berœ urbe Syriæ hoc volumine utuntur, describendi facultas fuit. In quo animadvertendum, quod ubicunque evangelista, sive ex persona sua, sive ex persona Domini Salvatoris, veteris Scricptu ræ testiminiis abutitur, non sequatur Septuaginta translatorum auctoritatem, sed Hebraicam, …"; and idem, In Michæam 7 "… credideritque Evangelio, quod secundum Hebræos editum nuper transtulimus (in quo ex persona Salvatoris dicitur: Modo tulit me mater mea, sanctus Spiritus in uno capillorum meorum (Matth. x)." Eusebius, *Historia ecclesiastica* iii.24.6: Ματθαῖός τε γὰρ πρότερον Ἑβραίοις κηρύξας, ὡς ἤμελλεν καὶ ἐφ᾽ ἑτέρους ἰέναι, πατρίῳ γλώττῃ γραφῇ παραδοὺς τὸ κατ᾽ αὐτὸν εὐαγγέλιον, τὸ λεῖπον τῇ αὐτοῦ παρουσίᾳ τούτοις ἀφ᾽ ὧν ἐστέλλετο; iii.25.5: ἤδη δ᾽ ἐν τούτοις τινὲς καὶ τὸ καθ᾽ Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον

κατέλεξαν, ᾧ μάλιστα Ἑβραίων οἱ τὸν Χριστὸν παραδεξάμενοι χαίρουσιν, i.e. ταῦτα δὲ πάντα τῶν ἀντιλεγομένων ἂν εἴη; citing Papias (14: Καὶ ἄλλας δὲ τῇ ἰδίᾳ γραφῇ παραδίδωσιν Ἀριστίωνος τοῦ πρόσθεν δεδηλωμένου τῶν τοῦ κυρίου λόγων διηγήσεις καὶ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου Ἰωάννου παραδόσεις) iii.39.16: περὶ δὲ τοῦ Ματθαίου ταῦτ᾽ εἴρηται· ‘Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραΐδι διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνε-τάξατο, ἡρμήνευσεν δ᾽ αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος’; v.8.2: ὁ μὲν δὴ Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τῇ ἰδίᾳ αὐτῶν διαλέκτῳ καὶ γραφὴν ἐξήνεγκεν εὐαγγελίου; found in ‘India’ by Pantænus, v.10.3: ὧν εἷς γενόμενος καὶ ὁ Πάνταινος, καὶ εἰς Ἰνδοὺς ἐλθεῖν λέγεται, ἔνθα λόγος εὑρεῖν αὐτὸν προφθάσαν τὴν αὐτοῦ παρουσίαν τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον παρά τισιν αὐτόθι τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπεγνωκόσιν, οἷς Βαρθολομαῖον τῶν ἀποστόλων ἕνα κηρῦξαι αὐτοῖς τε Ἑβραίων γράμμασι τὴν τοῦ Ματθαίου καταλεῖψαι γραφήν, ἣν καὶ σῴζεσθαι εἰς τὸν δηλούμενον χρόνον; vi.25.2: ἐν παραδόσει μαθὼν περὶ τῶν τεσσάρων εὐαγγελίων, ἃ καὶ μόνα ἀναντίρρητά ἐστιν ἐν τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι πρῶτον μὲν γέγραπται τὸ κατὰ τόν ποτε τελώνην, ὕστερον δὲ ἀπόστολον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ Ματθαῖον, ἐκδεδωκότα αὐτὸ τοῖς ἀπὸ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ πιστεύσασιν, γράμμασιν Ἑβ-ραϊκοῖς συντεταγμένον; cf. also Clement, *Stromateis* ii.9.

127   See e.g. J. Frey, “Die Fragmente des Hebräerevangeliums” in: Ch. Markschies and J. Schröter (eds.), *Antike christliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung: I. Band – Evangelien und Verwandtes* (Tübingen, 72012), 593–606. In English see for example W. C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel Accor-ding to S. Matthew* (Edinburgh, ³1965), lxxix–lxxxv; M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1955), 1–10; B. Ehrman and Z. Pleše, *The Apocryphal Gospels: Texts and Translations* (Oxford, 2011), 216–221. We deliberately avoid here taking a stance on the nature of these works as discussed in recent literature on Early Christianity. For an overview of the debate see D. Lührmann, *Die apokryph gewordenen Evangelien: Studien zu neuen Texten und zu neuen Fragen* (Leyden, 2004); in English e.g., F. Lapham, *An Introduction to the New Testament Apocrypha* (London, 2003); B. D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities* (Oxford, 2005); O. Skarsaune and R. Hvalvik (eds.), *Jewish Believers in Jesus: the Early Centuries* (Peabody, 2007); M. Jackson-McCabe (ed.), *Jewish-Christianity Reconsidered: Rethinking Ancient Groups and Texts* (Minneapolis, 2007).

128   See e.g. J. Frey, op. cit. (prev. note) 623–648 and his “Synopse zur Zuordnung der Fragmente zum Hebräer- und Nazoräerevangelium,” 649–654.

129   Frey, op. cit. 607–622. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* iii.27.4 … εὐαγγελίῳ δὲ μόνῳ τῷ καθ᾽ Ἑβραίους λεγομένῳ χρώμενοι, τῶν λοιπῶν σμικρὸν ἐποιοῦντο λόγον.

130   For a detailed discussion of this subject see, Th. Hainthaler, *Christliche Araber vor dem Islam. Verbreitung und konfessionelle Zugehörigkeit: eine Hinführung* (Louvain, 2007).

131   Named after Cerinthus, cf. Ch. Markschies, Kerinth: “Wer war er und was lehrte er?” *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 41 (1998): 48–76. St Augustine, *De hæresibus VIII*: “mundum ab angelis factum esse dicentes, et carne circumcidi oportere, atque alia hujusmodi legis præcepta servari. Iesum hominem tantum-modo fuisse, nec resurrexisse, sed resurrecturum asseverantes.”

132   In his proem 2:4 he says about his working methods: τῶν δὲ ὑφ᾽ ἡμῶν μελλόντων εἰς γνῶσιν τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ἥκειν <περὶ> αἱρέσεών τε καὶ σχισμάτων τὰ μὲν ἐκ φιλομαθίας ἴσμεν, τὰ δὲ ἐξ ἀκοῆς κατειλήφαμεν, τοῖς δέ τισιν ἰδίοις ὠσὶ καὶ ὀφθαλ-

μοῖς παρετύχομεν· καὶ τῶν μὲν τὰς ῥίζας καὶ τὰ διδάγματα ἐξ ἀκριβοῦς ἀπαγγε-
λίας ἀποδοῦναι πεπιστεύκαμεν, τῶν δὲ μέρος τι τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς γινομένων. Ἐξ ὧν
τοῦτο μὲν διὰ συνταγμάτων παλαιῶν συγγραφέων, τοῦτο δὲ δι' ἀκοῆς ἀνθρώπων
ἀκριβῶς πιστωσαμένων τὴν ἡμῶν ἔννοιαν ἔγνωμεν.

133   Τὰ πάντα δέ εἰσιν Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐδὲν ἕτερον. χρῶνται δὲ οὗτοι οὐ μόνον νέᾳ
διαθήκῃ, ἀλλὰ καὶ παλαιᾷ διαθήκῃ, καθάπερ καὶ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. Οὐ γὰρ ἀπηγόρευται
παρ' αὐτοῖς νομοθεσία καὶ προφῆται καὶ γραφεῖα τὰ καλούμενα παρὰ Ἰουδαίοις
βιβλία, ὥσπερ παρὰ τοῖς προειρημένοις· οὐδέ τι ἕτερον οὗτοι φρονοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ
κατὰ τὸ κήρυγμα τοῦ νόμου καὶ ὡς οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι πάντα καλῶς ὁμολογοῦσι χωρὶς
τοῦ εἰς Χριστὸν δῆθεν πεπιστευκέναι. Παρ' αὐτοῖς γὰρ καὶ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασις
ὁμολογεῖται καὶ ἐκ θεοῦ τὰ πάντα γεγενῆσθαι, ἕνα δὲ θεὸν καταγγέλλουσι καὶ τὸν
τούτου παῖδα Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν–28:6. See also St Augustine, *De Hæresibus IX*:
"Nazoræi, cum Dei Filium confiteantur esse Christum, omnia tamen veteris legis
observant, quæ Christiani per apostolicam traditionem non observare carnaliter,
sed spiritaliter intellegere didicerunt."

134   Τουτέστιν τοῦ Ἰωσήφ, τὸν Χριστὸν γεγεννῆσθαι ἔλεγεν· ὡς καὶ ἤδη ἡμῖν
προείρηται ὅτι τὰ ἴσα τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐν ἅπασι φρονῶν ἐν τούτῳ μόνῳ διεφέρετο, ἐν
τῷ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ προσανέχειν κατὰ σαββατισμὸν καὶ κατὰ τὴν περι-
τομὴν καὶ κατὰ τὰ ἄλλα πάντα, ὅσαπερ παρὰ Ἰουδαίοι καὶ Σαμαρείταις ἐπι-
τελεῖται. Ἔτι δὲ πλείω οὗτος παρὰ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ὁμοίως τοῖς Σαμαρείταις δια-
πράττεται. Προσέθετο γὰρ τὸ παρατηρεῖσθαι ἅπτεσθαί τινος τῶν ἀλλοεθνῶν,
καθ' ἑκάστην δὲ ἡμέραν, εἴ ποτε γυναικὶ συναφθείη καὶ ἢ ἀπ' αὐτῆς, βαπτίζεσθαι ἐν
τοῖς ὕδασιν, εἴ που δᾶν εὐποροίη ἢ θαλάσσης ἢ ἄλλων ὑδάτων. Ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰ
συναντήσειέν τινι ἀνιὼν ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν ὑδάτων καταδύσεως καὶ βαπτισμοῦ,
ὡσαύτως πάλιν ἀνατρέχει βαπτίζεσθαι, πολλάκις καὶ σὺν τοῖς ἱματίοις. Τὰ νῦν δὲ
ἀπηγόρευται παντάπασι παρ' αὐτοῖς παρθενία τε καὶ ἐγκράτεια, ὡς καὶ παρὰ ταῖς
ἄλλαις ταῖς ὁμοίαις ταύτῃ αἱρέσεσι. Ποτὲ γὰρ παρθενίαν ἐσεμνύνοντο, δῆθεν διὰ
τὸν Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου· <διὸ> καὶ τὰ αὐτῶν συγγράμματα πρεσ-
βυτέροις καὶ παρθένοις γράφουσι. As noted by Eusebius, Hist. eccl. iii.27.2: καὶ
ταπεινῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ δοξάζοντας. Λιτὸν μὲν γὰρ αὐτὸν καὶ κοινὸν
ἡγοῦντο, κατὰ προκοπὴν ἤθους αὐτὸ μόνον ἄνθρωπον δεδικαιωμένον ἐξ ἀνδρός
τε κοινωνίας καὶ τῆς Μαρίας γεγεννημένον; whilst according to him (3): ἄλλοι δὲ
παρὰ τούτους τῆς αὐτῆς ὄντες προσηγορίας, τὴν μὲν τῶν εἰρημένων ἔκτοπον
διεδίδρασκον ἀτοπίαν who adhered to an archaic pre-Nicene Christology, roughly
compatible with that of Islam: ἐκ παρθένου καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος μὴ ἀρνούμενοι
γεγονέναι τὸν κύριον, οὐ μὴν ἔθ' ὁμοίως καὶ οὗτοι προϋπάρχειν αὐτὸν θεὸν λόγον
ὄντα καὶ σοφίαν ὁμολογοῦντες, τῇ τῶν προτέρων περιετρέποντο δυσσεβείᾳ,
μάλιστα ὅτε καὶ τὴν σωματικὴν περὶ τὸν νόμον λατρείαν ὁμοίως ἐκείνοις περι-
έπειν ἐσπούδαζον. Origen, Contra Celsum v.61 also refers to the two differing
views of Jesus' nature among the Ebionites: … ἔτι δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὸν Ἰουδαίων νόμον
ὡς τὰ Ἰουδαίων πλήθη βιοῦν ἐθέλοντες οὗτοι δ᾽ εἰσὶν οἱ διττοὶ Ἐβιωναῖοι, ἤτοι ἐκ
παρθένου ὁμολογοῦντες ὁμοίως ἡμῖν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἢ οὐχ οὕτω γεγεννῆσθαι ἀλλὰ
ὡς τοὺς λοποὺς ἀνθρώπους … In both cases, the heresy consists of denying the
divinity of Jesus Christ, whereby the former view, in which parthenogenesis is

advocated, corresponds with the Islamic view as for example found in Surah 4:171–172 (also quoted on 'Abd el-Malik's inscription on the Dome of the Rock):

<div dir="rtl">

يا أهل الكتاب لا تغلوا في دينكم ولا تقولوا على الله إلا الحق إنما المسيح

عيسى ابن مريم رسول الله وكلمته ألقاها إلى مريم وروح منه فآمنوا بالله

ورسله ولا تقولوا ثلاثة انتهوا خيرا لكم إنما الله إله واحد سبحانه أن يكون

له ولد له ما في السماوات وما في الأرض وكفى بالله وكيلا لن يستنكف

المسيح أن يكون عبدا لله ولا الملائكة المقربون ومن يستنكف عن عبادته

ويستكبر فسيحشرهم إليه جميعا

</div>

yā ahla l-kitābi lā taġlū fī dīni-kum wa-lā taqūlū ʿalā llāhi illā l-ḥaqqa inna-mā l-masīḥu ʿĪsā bnu Maryama rasūlu llāhi wa-kalimatu-hu alqā-hā ilā Maryama wa-rūhun min-hu fa-āminū bi-llāhi wa-rusuli-hi wa-lā taqūlū ṯalāṯatun ʾintahū ḫairan la-kum innamā llāhu ilāhun wāḥidun subḥāna-hu an yakūna la-hu waladun la-hu mā fī s-samawāti wa-mā fī l-arḍi wa-kafā bi-llāhi wakīlan lan yastankifa l-masīḥū an yakūna ʿabdan li-llāhi wa-lā l-malāʾikatu l-muqarrabūn wa-man yastankif ʿan ʿibādati-hi wa-yastakbir fa-sa-yaḥšuru-hum ilai-hi ǧamīʿan

"O People of the Scripture! Do not exaggerate in your religion nor utter aught concerning Allāh save the truth. The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, was only a messenger of Allāh, and His word which He conveyed unto Mary, and a spirit from Him. So believe in Allāh and His messengers, and say not 'Three'–Cease! (it is) better for you! – Allāh is only One Allāh. Far is it removed from His Transcendent Majesty that He should have a son. His is all that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth. And Allāh is sufficient as Defender. The Messiah will never scorn to be a slave unto Allāh, nor will the favoured angels. Whoso scorns His service and is proud, all such will He assemble unto Him." (Pickthall)

19:34–35.

<div dir="rtl">

ذلك عيسى ابن مريم قول الحق الذي فيه يمترون ما كان لله أن يتخذ من ولد

سبحانه إذا قضى أمرا فإنما يقول له كن فيكون

</div>

ḏālika ʿĪsā bnu Maryama qaulu l-ḥaqqi llaḏī fī-hi yamtarūna[82] mā kāna li-llāhi an yattaḥiḏa min waladin subḥāna-hu iḏā qaḍā amran fa-inna-mā yaqūlu la-hu kun fa-yakūn

"Such was Jesus, son of Mary: (this is) a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt. It befits not (the Majesty of) Allāh that He should take unto Himself a son. Glory be to Him! When He decrees a thing, He saith unto it only: Be! and it is." (Pickthall)

Note also St Augustine, *De Hær. X*: "Hebionitæi Christum etiam ipsi tantummodo hominem dicunt. Mandata carnalia legis observant, circumcisionem scilicet carnis, et cætera, a quorum oneribus per Novum Testamentum liberati sumus."

135 See note 137 and note A. McGowan, *Ascetic Eucharists: Food and Drink in Early Christian Ritual Meals* (Oxford, 1999).

136 Cf. also Eusebius, Hist. eccl. iii.27.4: οὗτοι δὲ τοῦ μὲν ἀποστόλου πάμπαν τὰς ἐπιστολὰς ἀρνητέας ἡγοῦντο εἶναι δεῖν, ἀποστάτην ἀποκαλοῦντες αὐτὸν τοῦ νόμου …. Cf. also the following note iii.15 "Ebionæos perstringit, qui Pauli auctoritatem elevabant."

137 Described using only the Gospel of Matthew, rejecting Paul, following Jewish custom and venerating Jerusalem as the House of God i.26.2: "Qui autem dicuntur Ebionæi, consentiunt quidum mundum a Deo factum; ea autem quæ sunt erga Dominum, son similiter, ut Cerinthus et Caprocrates opinantur. Solo autem eo quod est secundum Matthæum, Evangelio utuntur, et apostolum Paulum recusant, apostatum cum legis dicentes. Quæ autem sunt prophetica, curiosus exponere nituntur ; et circumciduntur, ac perseverant in his consuetudinibus, quæ sunt secundum legem, et Judaico charactere vitæ, uti et Hierosolyman adorent, quasi domus sit Dei" (cf. also idem In Is. Ad 8:14). On only using the Gospel of Matthew iii.7: "Ebioneitenim eo Evangelio, quod es secundum Matthæum, solo utentes." On rejecting Paul iii.15: "Ebionæos perstringit, qui Pauli auctoritatem elevabant, hancque confirmat ex Lucæ scriptis …" "Eadem autem dicimus iterum et his, qui Paulum apostolum non cognoscunt, quoniam aut reliquis verbis Evangelii, quæ per solum Lucam in nostram venerunt agnitionem, renuntiare debent, et non uti eis …"; The Ebionites following Theodotian the Ephesian and Aquila of Pontus, both of whom were Jewish proselytes, reject the virgin birth of Jesus iii.21.1: "Deus igitur homo factus est, et ipse Dominus salvabit nos, ipsi dans Virginis signum. Non ergo vera est quorumdam interpretatio, qui ita ardent interpretari Scripturam: 'Ecce adolescentia in ventre habebit, et pariet filium' ; quemadmodum Theodotion Ephesius est interpretatus, et Aquila Ponticus, utrique Judæi proselyti ; quos sectati, ex Joseph generatum eum dicunt …"; Ebionites rejecting the divinity of Christ iv.33.4: "Judicabit autem et Ebionitas : quomodo possunt salvari, nisi Deus est qui salutem illorum super terram operatus est ? Et quomodo homo transiet in Deum, si non Deus in hominem ? Quemadmodum autem relinquet mortis generationem, si non in novam generationem mire et inopinate a Deo, in signum autem salutis, datam, quæ est ex virgine per fidem, regenerationem ?"; Further rejection of the divinity of Christ and seemingly also abstaining from alcohol (cf. also cf. Epiphanius, Pan. 30.16, Acts of Peter and Simon, Clement, Strom. i) 96,v.1.3: "Vani autem ei Ebionæi, unitionem Dei et hominis per fidem non recipientes in suam animam, sed in veteri generationis perseverantes fermento ; neque intelligere volentes, quoniam Spiritus sanctus advenit in Mariam, et virtus Altissimi obumbravit eam ; quapropter et quod generatum est, sanctum est, et filius Altissimi Dei Patris omnium, qui operatus est incarnationem eius, et novam ostendit generationem ; uti quemadmodum per priorem generationem mortem hæreditavimus, sic per generationem hanc hæreditaremus vitam."

138 Πάντων καλούντων τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς τότε τούτῳ τῷ ὀνόματι διὰ Ναζαρὲτ τὴν πόλιν, ἄλλης μὴ οὔσης χρήσεως τῷ ὀνόματι πρὸς τὸν καιρόν, ὥστε τοὺς ἀνθρώπους <Ναζωραίους> καλεῖν τοὺς τῷ Χριστῷ πεπιστευκότας, περὶ οὗ καὶ

γέγραπται «ὅτι Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται». Καὶ γὰρ καὶ νῦν ὁμωνύμως οἱ ἄνθρωποι πάσας τὰς αἱρέσεις, Μανιχαίους τέ φημι καὶ Μαρκιωνιστὰς Γνωστικούς τε καὶ ἄλλους, Χριστιανοὺς τοὺς μὴ ὄντας Χριστιανοὺς καλοῦσι καὶ ὅμως ἑκάστη αἵρεσις, καίπερ ἄλλως λεγομένη, καταδέχεται τοῦτο χαίρουσα, ὅτι διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος κοσμεῖται· δοκοῦσι γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ σεμνύνεσθαι ὀνόματι, οὐ μὴν τῇ πίστει καὶ τοῖς ἔργοις–28.6. Also 30:2, where he refers to a certain overlap or exchangeability: συναφθεὶς γὰρ οὗτος ἐκείνοις καὶ ἐκεῖνοι τούτῳ, ἑκάτερος ἀπὸ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ μοχθηρίας τῷ ἑτέρῳ μετέδωκε. Καὶ διαφέρονται μὲν ἕτερος πρὸς τὸν ἕτερον κατά τι, ἐν δὲ τῇ κακονοίᾳ ἀλλήλους ἀπεμάξαντο. Note also Eusebius, Hist. eccl. iii.27.2: ἄλλοι δὲ παρὰ τούτους τῆς αὐτῆς ὄντες προσηγορίας, τὴν μὲν τῶν εἰρημένων ἔκτοπον διεδίδρασκον ἀτοπίαν.

139   In 29:9 the emphasis appears to be on "Hebrew letters," which here probably refers to the square script: ἔχουσι δὲ τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον πληρέστατον Ἑβραϊστί. παρ' αὐτοῖς γὰρ σαφῶς τοῦτο, καθὼς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐγράφη, Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν ἔτι σῴζεται. In 30:13, he appears somehow not to be impressed by the Hebrew: ἐν τῷ γοῦν παρ' αὐτοῖς εὐαγγελίῳ κατὰ Ματθαῖον ὀνομαζομένῳ, οὐχ ὅλῳ δὲ πληρεστάτῳ, ἀλλὰ νενοθευμένῳ καὶ ἠκρωτηριασμένῳ (Ἑβραϊκὸν δὲ τοῦτο καλοῦσιν). It was common for Greek writers of this period to use "Hebrew" (Ἑβραῖος, Ἑβραϊστί) pars pro toto for any Semitic language, which in most cases was probably Aramaic; "Hebrew" here appears to be used in the sense of "Jewish."

140   Quoting Tatian (46), mention is made in this regard of the (Syriac) Diatessaron ὅπερ κατὰ Ἑβραίους τινὲς καλοῦσι. Here, Epiphanius follows an established tradition, which is also attested by Eusebius and Theodoret, among others. *Panarion* 30:3 speaks of other Semitic translations such as the Gospel of John and Acts: ἤδη δέ πού καί τινες πάλιν ἔφασαν καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς διαλέκτου τὸ κατὰ Ἰωάννην μεταληφθὲν εἰς Ἑβραΐδα ἐμφέρεσθαι ἐν τοῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων γαζο-φυλακίοις, φημὶ δὲ τοῖς ἐν Τιβεριάδι, καὶ ἐναποκεῖσθαι ἐν ἀποκρύφοις, ὥς τινες τῶν ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων πεπιστευκότων ὑφηγήσαντο ἡμῖν κατὰ λεπτότητα· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν Πράξεων τῶν ἀποστόλων τὴν βίβλον ὡσαύτως ἀπὸ Ἑλλάδος γλώσσης εἰς Ἑβραΐδα μεταληφθεῖσαν λόγος ἔχει ἐκεῖσε κεῖσθαι ἐν τοῖς γαζο-φυλακίοις, ὡς καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου τοὺς ἀναγνόντας Ἰουδαίους τοὺς ἡμῖν ὑφηγησα-μένους εἰς Χριστὸν πεπιστευκέναι; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* iii.38.2 (also vi.14.2 f.) on Paul allegedly writing the Epistle to the Hebrews "in his native tongue" which was supposedly translated by Luke: Ἑβραίοις γὰρ διὰ τῆς πατρίου γλώττης ἐγγράφως ὡμιληκότος τοῦ Παύλου, οἳ μὲν τὸν εὐαγγελιστὴν Λουκᾶν, οἳ δὲ τὸν Κλήμεντα τοῦτον αὐτὸν ἑρμηνεῦσαι λέγουσι τὴν γραφήν.

141   Καὶ δέχονται μὲν καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ κατὰ Ματθαῖον εὐαγγέλιον. Τούτῳ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοί, ὡς καὶ οἱ κατὰ Κήρινθον καὶ Μήρινθον χρῶνται μόνῳ. Καλοῦσι δὲ αὐτὸ κατὰ Ἑβραίους, ὡς τὰ ἀληθῆ ἔστιν εἰπεῖν, ὅτι Ματθαῖος μόνος Ἑβραϊστὶ καὶ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν ἐν τῇ καινῇ διαθήκῃ ἐποιήσατο τὴν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἔκθεσίν τε καὶ κήρυγμα–30:3.

142   As suggested e.g. by C. Gilliot, "Zur Herkunft der Gewährsmänner des Propheten," in K.-H. Ohlig and G.-R. Puin (eds.), *Die dunklen Anfänge* (Berlin/ Tübingen, 2005), p. 165. I have my doubts about the validity of this suggestion in light of the testimonies for a Hebrew Gospel discussed in the preceding. The Dia-tessaron (<διὰ τεσσάρων ~ secunda quarta, scil. Evangelia) is usually well dis-tinguished in literature, although it had been the standard Gospel text for some divisions of the Syriac Church for several centuries previously–but by the period

in question was seemingly already out of circulation–and where it is known variously as the ܐ̈ܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܕܡܚܠܛܐ – *'ewangeliyōn d-mhalltē* "Gospel of the mixed" or ܐܘܢܓܠܝܘܢ ܕܡܦܪܫܐ – *'ewangeliyōn d-mep̄arrešē* "Gospel of the separated," but translated literally into Arabic, الإنجيل الرباعي.

143 E.g. 29:7: ἔστιν δὲ αὕτη ἡ αἵρεσις ἡ Ναζωραίων ἐν τῇ Βεροιαίων περὶ τὴν Κοίλην Συρίαν καὶ ἐν τῇ Δεκαπόλει περὶ τὰ τῆς Πέλλης μέρη καὶ ἐν τῇ Βασανίτιδι ἐν τῇ λεγομένη Κωκάβῃ, Χωχάβῃ δὲ Ἑβραϊστὶ λεγομένῃ. Ἐκεῖθεν γὰρ ἡ ἀρχὴ γέγονε, μετὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων μετάστασιν πάντων τῶν μαθητῶν ἐν Πέλλῃ ᾠκηκότων, Χριστοῦ φήσαντος καταλεῖψαι τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ἀναχωρῆσαι δι' ἣν ἤμελλε πάσχειν πολιορκίαν. Καὶ ἐκ τῆς τοιαύτης ὑποθέσεως τὴν Περαίαν οἰκήσαντες ἐκεῖσε, ὡς ἔφην, διέτριβον. Ἐντεῦθεν ἡ κατὰ τοὺς Ναζωραίους αἵρεσις ἔσχεν τὴν ἀρχήν.

144 E.g. 30:2: γέγονε δὲ ἡ ἀρχὴ τούτων μετὰ τὴν τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων ἅλωσιν. Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ πάντες οἱ εἰς Χριστὸν πεπιστευκότες τὴν Περαίαν κατ' ἐκεῖνο καιροῦ κατῴκησαν τὸ πλεῖστον, ἐν Πέλλῃ τινὶ πόλει καλουμένῃ τῆς Δεκαπόλεως τῆς ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ γεγραμ ένης πλησίον τῆς Βαταναίας καὶ Βασανίτιδος χώρας, τὸ τηνικαῦτα ἐκεῖ μεταναστάντων καὶ ἐκεῖσε διατριβόντων αὐτῶν, γέγονεν ἐκ τούτου πρόφασις τῷ Ἐβίωνι. Καὶ ἄρχεται μὲν τὴν κατοίκησιν ἔχειν ἐν Κωκάβῃ τινὶ κώμῃ ἐπὶ τὰ μέρη τῆς Καρναὶμ τῆς καὶ Ἀσταρὼς ἐν τῇ Βασανίτιδι χώρᾳ, ὡς ἡ ἐλθοῦσα εἰς ἡμᾶς γνῶσις περιέχει. Ἔνθεν ἄρχεται τῆς κακῆς αὐτοῦ διδασκαλίας, ὅθεν δῆθεν καὶ οἱ Ναζωραῖοι, οἳ ἄνω μοι προδεδήλωνται … ἤδη δέ μοι καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις λόγοις καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἄλλας αἱρέσεις περὶ τῆς τοποθεσίας Κωκάβων καὶ τῆς Ἀραβίας διὰ πλάτους εἴρηται.

145 Cf. the chapter "Christian Judaizing Syria. Barnabas, the Didache, and Pseudo-Clementine Literature" in M. Murray, *Playing a Jewish Game. Gentile Christian Judaizing in the First and Second Centuries CE* (Waterloo, 2004), 29–42.

146 T. Andrae, *Mahomet, sa vie et sa doctrine* (Paris, 1945), 99.

147 ناموس – namūs <Syriac ܢܡܘܣܐ – nāmōsā (also נימוס – nīmos) <Greek νόμος "law, custom." Cf. e.g. Peshitta ad Genesis 26.5, ܥܠ ܕܫܡܥ ܐܒܪܗܡ ܒܩܠܝ ܘܢܛܪ, ܢܛܘܪܬܝ ܘܦܘܩܕܢܝ ܘܩܝܡܝ ܘܢܡܘܣܝ – *ḥulap̄ d- šma' 'aḇrāhām bə-qāli wə-nṭar nṭūrāṭi wə-puqdāni wə-qyāmi wə-nāmōsi* "because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." Note in casu ܬܢܝܢܢܡܘܣܐ – tenyānnāmōsā <Hebrew משנה תורה – "Mishne Torah," i.e. Deuteronomy; cf. Ishodad of Merv: ܢܬܩܪܐ ܗܢܐ ܣܦܪܐ ܕܬܢܝܢܢܡܘܣܐ ܩܕܡ ܥܡܐ ܒܟܠ ܫܢܐ ܒܥܐܕܐ ܕܡܛܠܠܬܐ – *sep̄rā hānā d-tenyānnāmōsā qḏām 'ammā bə-kul šnā 'aḏ'ēḏā d-mṭalləṭā* "this book of the Second Law should be read before the people every year on the Festival [> عيد – 'īd] of Booths" (C. van den Eynde, (ed.), *Commentaire d'Išo'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament: V. Jérémie, Ézéchiel, Daniel* [CSCO 328; Scriptores Syri 146] Louvain, 1972, 44).

148 See in detail i.a. on this matter, especially whether Waraqah might have been an Ebionite, the work of E.-M. Gallez, *Le messie et son prophète: aux origines de l'Islam*, Vol. I: *De Qumran à Muhammad*, Vol. II: *Du Muhammad des Califes au Muhammad de l'histoire* (Paris, 2005), and Vol. III: *Histoire et légendologie* (Versailles, 22010). Note also J. Azzi, *Le prêtre et le prophète: aux sources du Coran* (Paris, 2001), 85f.

149   Cf. Pritz, op. cit. 71–82. Some contemporary authors, such as St Augustine writing in distant North Africa, necessarily also relied on secondary information (in De hær. X – cf. n134 supra – he cites Epiphanius; note also Jerome's Letter 79 to Augustine). See also the following note ad finem.

150   For further discussion see A. Schlatter, "Die Entwicklung des jüdischen Christentums zum Islam," *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin*, n.F. 62 (1918): 251–264; H.-J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen, 1949). The classic explanation of their disappearance cf. A. von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Leipzig, [4]1924), 48–79 et passim: "Der größere Teil derselben [scil. the Jewish Christians] ist im folgenden Jahrhundert gräzisiert worden und in die große Christenheit übergegangen" 633, Jewish Christianity due to its Hellenisation "hob sich damit selbst auf" 69. For a modern reflection on von Harnack and his relationship with Judaism and Judaeo-Christianity cf. Murray, op.cit. 129–133. This view is still current among some, e.g. G. Stemberger, *Jews and Christians in the Holy Land: Palestine in the Fourth Century* (Edinburgh, 1999), 80: "no significant Jewish-Christians communities were left in Palestine itself" [scil. by the fourth century]. In a forthcoming study, Peter von Sivers convincingly argues for active Monarchian/Adoptionist congregations in the region of the northern Fertile Crescent after 325 and into the 600s, decisively contradicting the prevailing view that the clerical establishments of the Chalcedonian, Monophysite, and Nestorian Churches had succeeded by the mid-400s in eradicating Judeo-Christianity from the Middle East (P. von Sivers, "Christology and Prophetology in the Umayyad Arab Empire" in K.-H. Ohlig and M. Gross (eds.), *Inârah 7* [Berlin–Tübingen, 2014]). It should be noted in passing that Jewish-Christian sects such as the Passagians (or Circumcisi) are attested in the Lombardy—also mentioned by Bonacursus and Gregorius of Bergamo; note also the "Nazarenes" mentioned by Humbert de Moyenmoutier and in Constantine ix's bull of excommunication (1054).

151   A reference to Revelation 7:3ff., 14:1ff.

152   Note, however, in von Harnack's *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* ([Tübingen, [4]1909], Vol. II, 529–538) he notes the importance of Judaeo-Christian theology for nascent Islam. Schoeps, *Theologie*, would later pursue this aspect.

153   Not ενέργεια in the Aristotelian sense but rather in the sense of actus, i.e. that Christ had but one active force (i.e. God's energeia is one, as he has but one nature of the three Persons). Supposedly, this was a formulation which the Chalcedonians could interpret to mean all are the actions of one subject though either divine or human according to the nature from which they are elicited whilst the Monophysites could read their theandric interpretation into this, i.e. all actions, human and divine, of the incarnate Son are to be referred to one agent, who is the God-man and that consequently His actions, both the human and the Divine must proceed from a single theandric energeia. That is the nature of Christ's humanity and divinity and their interrelationship was avoided in favour of agreeing that whatever the latter, the Godhead had only one active force.

154   E.g. the phrase וכל הנוצרים כרגע יאבדו – *wə-ḵōl ḥan-noṣrīm kə-rägaʿ yăʾăḇdū* "And may all the Noṣrim pass in a moment." Cf. for this the discussion and the works cited in Pritz, op. cit. 95–107.

155 E.g. *Panarion* 29:9: πάνυ δὲ οὗτοι ἐχθροὶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὑπάρχουσιν. Οὐ μόνον γὰρ οἱ τῶν Ἰουδαίων παῖδες πρὸς τούτους κέκτηνται μῖσος, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνιστάμενοι ἕωθεν καὶ μέσης ἡμέρας καὶ περὶ τὴν ἑσπέραν, τρὶς τῆς ἡμέρας ὅτε εὐχὰς ἐπιτελοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ἐπαρῶνται αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀναθεματίζουσι, τρὶς τῆς ἡμέρας φάσκοντες ὅτι «ἐπικαταράσαι ὁ θεὸς τοὺς Ναζωραίους». Δῆθεν γὰρ τούτοις περισσότερον ἐνέχουσι, διὰ τὸ ἀπὸ Ἰουδαίων αὐτοὺς ὄντας Ἰησοῦν κηρύσσειν εἶναι <τὸν> Χριστόν, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἐναντίον πρὸς τοὺς ἔτι Ἰουδαίους, τοὺς τὸν Ἰησοῦν μὴ δεξαμένους.

156 Also ܢܘܼܚܵܡܵܐ – nūḥāmā, e.g. John 11:25.

157 James Barr's criticism of the difference between etymology and semantics, especially with regard to biblical philology are also especially relevant for Qurʾānic philology (James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* [Oxford, 1961]). Etymology "is not, and does not profess to be, a guide to the semantic value of words in their current usage, and such value has to be determined from the current usage and not from derivation" (107), and that "… there is a normative strain in the thought of many people about language, and they feel that in some sense the 'original,' the 'etymological meaning,' should be a guide to the usage of words, that the words are used 'properly' when they coincide in sense with the sense of the earliest known form which their derivation can be traced; and that when a word becomes in some way difficult or ambiguous an appeal to etymology will lead to a 'proper meaning' from which at any rate to begin" (109). To use an example of Barr's, it is indeed irrelevant for English semantics that the adjective 'nice' <Latin nescio "I don't know." Such criticism does indeed apply to much of the past research on alleged loan-words in the Qurʾān.

158 One of the few English words with a Welsh etymology is probably "Dad," "father" <tad (pl. tadau).

159 So for example *bylaw* < bylög "village law"; "dirt" <drit "merda"; "husband" < husbondi "master of the house"; "slaughter" < slahtr "butchering"; "thrift" < þrift "prosperity" etc.

160 Such as "bow" <boeg; "buoy" <boei; "deck" <dek; "freight" <vracht; "keel"<kiel; "mast"<mast; "skipper" <schipper; "yacht" <jacht etc.

161 Which is why Americans eat 'cookies' (<koekje, diminutive) with their coffee and not biscuits with their tea. With the Dutch colonial presence in the New World are also the roots of 'Santa Claus' <Sinterklaas "Saint Nicholas."

162 For example 'avatar' < अवतार avatāra "descent"; 'Blighty' < विलायती – vilāyatī "foreign" (ولایتی) "provincial, regional," cf. French Wilaya); 'bottle' < بوتل – botul "rigid container"; 'bungalow' < बंगला – baṅglā "Bengali"(-style) (<Gujarati બંગલો – baṅgalo); 'candy' < கண்டு – kaṇṭu; 'cash' < காசு – kācu; 'cot' < खाट – khāṭ (Urdu کھاٹ); 'pyjamas' < पैजामा – paijāmā (<پای + جامه); 'shampoo' < चाँपो – chāmpo (Sanskrit चपयति – capayati "kneading"?); 'thug' < ठग – thag (<Sanskrit स्थग – sthaga "scoundrel"?) etc.

163 It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss Arabic as a Semitic language. It should be noted, that its morphology indicates that it is most closely related to the North-West Semitic phylum of Semitic languages—aerially it may be best plotted in the Syro-Palestinian dialect continuum somewhere between Phoenician and

Hebrew on the one axis and Ancient North Arabic on the other; it displays no close affinities with the South Semitic branch. Furthermore, Arabic is by no means archaic–this thesis, often found in older works on Semitic languages, is no longer valid. With the decipherment of third millennium Semitic languages such as Eblaite and Old Akkadian, we now have a much better idea of ancient Semitic (cf. e.g. R. Hasselbach, *Sargonic Akkadian: A Historical and Comparative Study of the Syllabic Texts* [Wiesbaden, 2005]). Breviter, that Classical Arabic seemingly preserves more of the original Semitic consonantal inventory makes it no more archaic than English, one of the few Germanic languages which preserves the sound þ, i.e. /ṯ/. Arabic is far removed from proto-Semitic, as one would logically expect.

164   This can be seen especially in pivotal loans such as ሃይማኖት – *hāymānot <* ܗܝܡܢܘܬܐ – *haymānūṯā* "faith, religion" (i.e. Christianity); Dillmann, *Lexicon* 14: "perigrinæ formationis, ab Aramæis petitum, ab Æthiopibus frequentissime usisatum…" According to tradition, Ethiopia became Christian with the conversion of King Ezānā (ዔዛና) by the Syriac monk St Frumentius (ፍሬምናጦስ; †383) in the fourth century; cf. G. Lusini, 'Naufragio e conservazione di testi cristiani antichi: il contributo della tradizione etiopica,' Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale" annali 69 (2009): 69–84 with literature.

165   Indeed the origins of rabbinic Judaism are largely the result of the polemic with Christianity in the fourth century, cf. e.g. D. Boyarin, "Rethinking Jewish-Christianity: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 99 (2009): 7–36.

166   The doctrine of the parthenogenesis of Jesus Christ, also found in the Qur'ān (cf. supra n134), presupposes the Greek Bible translation and in no way the Hebrew understanding from Isaiah 7:14! Indeed all of the alleged 'prophecies' of Jesus Christ in the Hebrew Bible are exegetical anachronisms.

167   See above n134.

168   "Die älteste Missionsgeschichte ist unter Legenden begraben oder vielmehr durch eine tendenziöse Geschichte ersetzt worden, die sich in wenigen Jahrzehnten in allen Länder des Erdkreises abgespielt haben soll. In dieser Geschichte ist mehr als tausend Jahre hindurch gearbeitet worden–denn die Legendenbildung in bezug auf die apostolische Mission beginnt schon im ersten Jahrhundert und hat noch im Mittelalter, ja bis in die Neuzeit hinein geblüht; ihre Wertlosigkeit ist jetzt allgemein anerkannt."

169   See the comprehensive study: J. Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (Winona Lake, 1997).

170   Interestingly, historical criticism of the Bible has been noticed in the Islamic world. For example, the impressive synthesis by the Indian scholar Rahmatullah Kairanawi (1818–1891) إظهار الحق – *Al-'iẓhār al-ḥaqq* "Testimony of Truth" (6 Vols., 1864), uses the first fruits of critical biblical scholarship to demonstrate the 'corruption' of the Bible and Christianity—in contrast to Islam—(cf. C. Schirrmacher, "The Influence of German Biblical Criticism on Muslim Apologetics in the 19th Century" in A. Sanlin (ed.), *A Comprehensive Faith: An International Festschrift for Rousas John Rushdoony* [1997]).

Part 3

Apocrypha, Jewish Christianity, and the Koran