

THIRD PART VOLUME I: WHAT IS ISLAM?

Short historical review of the set QUR.HAD.SIR. and SHAR.FIQ.MAD. 1)

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* Here we pass from henotheism to monolatry.

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ODE FOR THE HIGH-KNOWERS.

Half of Mankind's woe comes from the fact that, several thousand years ago, somewhere in the Middle East, peoples through their language conceived spirituality OR MYSTICISM....

-Not as a quest for meaning, hope or liberation with the concepts that go with it (distinction opposition or difference between matter and spirit, ethics, personal discipline, philanthropy, life after life, meditation, quest for the grail, practices...).

-But as a gigantic and protean law (DIN) that should govern the daily life of men with all that it implies. Obligations or prohibitions that everyone must respect day and night.

Violations or contraventions of this multitude of prohibitions when they are not followed literally.

Judgments when one or more of these laws are violated.

Convictions for the guilty.

Dismissals or acquittals for the innocent. CALLED RIGHTEOUS PERSONS.

THIS CONFUSION BETWEEN THE NUMINOUS AND THE RELIGIOUS, THEN BETWEEN THE SACREDNESS AND THE SECULAR, MAKES OUR LIFE A MISERY FOR 4000 YEARS VIA ISRAEL AND ESPECIALLY THE NEW ISRAEL THAT CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM WANT TO BE.

The principle of our Ollotouta was given us, long time ago already, by our master to all in the domain; the great Gaelic bard, founder of the modern Free-thought, who is usually evoked under the anglicized name of John Toland. There cannot be, by definition, things contrary to Reason in Holy Scriptures really emanating from the divine one.

If there are, then it is, either error, or lies!

Either there is no mystery, or then it is in any way a divine revelation!

There is no happy medium...

We do not admit other orthodoxy that only the one of Truth because, wherever it can be in the world, must also stand, we are completely convinced of it, God's Church, and not that one of such or such a human faction ... We are consequently for showing no mercy to the error on any pretext that can be, each time we will have the possibility or occasion to expound it in its true colors.

1696. Christianity not mysterious.

1702. Vindicius Liberus. Response of John Toland to the detractors of his "Christianity not mysterious."

1704. Letters to Serena containing the origin of idolatry and reasons of heathenism, the history of the soul's immortality doctrine among the heathens, etc. (Version Baron d'Holbach, a German philosopher).

1705. The true Socinianism * as an example of fair debate on matters of theology *.To which is prefixed Indifference in disputes, recommended by a pantheist to an orthodox friend.

1709. Adeisdaemon or the man without superstition. Jewish origins.

1712. Letter against popery, and particularly against admitting the authority of the Fathers or Councils in religious controversies, by Sophia Charlotte of Prussia.

1714. Defense of the Jews, victims of the anti-Semite prejudices, and a plea for their naturalization.

1718. The destiny of Rome, of the popes, and the famous prophecy of St Malachy, archbishop of Armagh, in the thirteenth century.

Nazarenus or the Jewish, gentile, and Mahometan Christianity (version Baron d'Holbach), containing:

I. The history of the ancient gospel of Barnabas, and the modern apocryphal gospel of the Mahometans, attributed to the same apostle.

II. The original plan of Christianity occasionally explained in the history of the Nazarenes, solving at the same time various controversies about this divine (but so highly perverted) institution.

III. The relation of an Irish manuscript of the four gospels as likewise a summary of the ancient Irish Christianity and what the reality of the keldees (an order half-lay, half-religious) was, against the last two bishops of Worcester.

1720. Pantheisticon, sive formula celebrandae sodalitatis socraticae.

Tetradymus.

I. Hodegus. The pillar of cloud and fire that guided the Israelites in the wilderness was not miraculous but, as faithfully related in Exodus, a practice equally known by other nations, and in those countries, not only useful, but even necessary.

II. Clidophorus.

III. Hypatia or the history of the most beautiful, most virtuous, and most accomplished lady, who was stoned to death by the clergy of Alexandria, to gratify the pride, the emulation and even the cruelty, of Archbishop Cyril, commonly, but very undeservedly, styled Saint Cyril.

1726. Critical history of the Celtic religion, containing an account of the druids, or the priests and judges, of the vates, or the diviners and physicians, and finally of the bards, or the poets; of the ancient Britons, Irish or Scots. In plus with the story of Abaris the Hyperborean, priest of the sun. A specimen of the Armorican language (Breton, Irish, Latin, dictionary).

1726. An account of Jordano Bruno's book, about the infinity of the universe and the innumerable worlds, translated from the Italian editing.

1751. The Pantheisticon or the form of celebrating the Socratic-society. London S. Paterson. Translation of the book published in 1720.

"Druidism" is an independent review (independent of any religious or political association) and which has only one purpose: theoretical or fundamental research about what is neo-paganism. The double question, to which this review of theoretical studies tries to answer, could be summarized as follows: "What could be or what should be a current neo-druidism, modern and contemporary?"

"Druidism" is a neo-pagan review, strictly neo-pagan, and heir to all genuine (that is to say non-Christian) movements which have succeeded one another for 2000 years, the indirect heir, but the heir, nevertheless!

Regarding our reference tradition or our intellectual connection, let us underline that if the "poets" of Domnall mac Muirchertach Ua Néill still had imbas forosnai, teimn laegda and dichetal do chennaib 1) in their repertory (cf. the conclusion of the tale of the plunder of the castle of Maelmilsothach, of Urard Mac Coise, a poet who died in the 11th century), they may have been Christians for several generations. It is true that these practices (imbas forosnai, teimn ...) were formally forbidden by the Church, but who knows, there may have been accommodations similar to those of astrologers or alchemists in the Middle Ages.

Anyway our "Druidism" is also a will; the will to get closer, at the maximum, to ancient druidism, such as it was (scientifically speaking). The will also to modernize this druidism, a total return to ancient druidism being excluded (it would be anyway impossible).

Examples of modernization of this pagan druidism.

— Giving up to lay associations of the cultural side (medicine, poetry, mathematics, etc.). Principle of separation of Church and State.

— Specialization on the contrary, in Celtic, or pagan in general, spirituality history of religion, philosophy and metapsychics (known today as parapsychology).

— Use in some cases of the current vocabulary (Church, religion, baptism, and so on).

A golden mean, of course, is to be found between a total return to ancient druidism (fundamentalism) and a too revolutionary radical modernization (no longer sagum).

The Celtic PAA (pantheistic agnostic atheist) having agreed to be the defense lawyer of ancient Celtic paganism and to sign jointly this small library *, of which he is only the collector, druid Hesunertus (Peter DeLaCrau), does not consider himself as the author of this collective work. But as the spokesperson for the team which composed it. For other sources of this essay on druidism, see the thanks in the bibliography.

* Socinians, since that's how they were named later, wished more than all to restore the true Christianity that teaches the Bible. They considered that the Reformation had made disappear only a part of corruption and formalism, present in the Churches, while leaving intact the bad substance: non-biblical teachings (that is very questionable in fact).

** This little camminus is nevertheless important for young people ... from 7 to 77 years old! Mantalon siron esi.

1) Do ratath tra do Mael Milsothach iartain cech ni dobrethaigsid suide sin etir ecaide 7 fileda 7 brithemna la taeb ogaisic a crech 7 is amlaidsin ro ordaigset do tabairt a cach ollamain ina einech 7 ina sa[ru]gadh acht cotissad de imus forosnad [di]chetal do chollaib cend 7 tenm laida .i. comenclainn fri rig Temrach do acht co ti de intreide sin FINIT.

PREFACE OF THE KITAB AL ASNAM BY NABIH AMIN FARIS.

According to the traditionalists who were then in full control of the intellectual life of the Muslim community, Muhammad once would have said, "Islam abolishes all that preceded it" (Muslim Sahih Iman: 53). By saying this Muhammad undoubtedly, had in mind this the pagan religions of his country; but his followers, in their zeal to establish the new faith, set out to also eradicate everything which had its roots in the old order. Consequently, the historians (akhbariyun), whose work was to record the past and preserve its glories, were without honor in the Muslim community, particularly during the early period of Islam. The great Arab historians flourished during a later period. But these, too, placed their emphasis on the Muslim era, and treated the pre-Islamic days in a cursory manner. What is more, the word historian (akhbari) acquired a bad meaning and became an epithet of near-contempt. It was applied to ibn-al-Kalbi as well as to any person who dared dwell upon Arab history before the 'Am al-Fil (year of the elephant). But no historian was attacked more virulently than ibn-al-Kalbi, probably because he addressed himself to the study of those things which Islam was determined to obliterate, namely the pagan religions and practices of Arabia.

Abu-al-Mundhir Hisham ibn-Muhammad ibn-al-Sa'ib ibn-Bishr al-Kalbi, better known as ibn-al-Kalbi (d. 821-822), was a member of a distinguished family of scholars residing in al-Kufah, then one of the two intellectual capitals of the Muslim world. Like his father, abu-al-Nadr Muhammad, he addressed himself almost exclusively to historical and philosophical research in an age where the hadith was the science par excellence.

Al-Baghdadi preserves a saying current among the students of the hadith concerning ibn-al-Kalbi's alleged lack of veracity. To them he was but an amateur genealogist and a storyteller whose word no one would either accept or quote. Al-Isfahani, too, despite his dependence upon ibn-al-Kalbi, attacks him in at least two places, and asserts that everything which he had quoted in his authority was false. Al-Sam'ani is still more outspoken. In his *Ansab* he makes short work of ibn-al-Kalbi with the following sentence, "He ... used to relate odd or strange things, and events none of which had any foundation." Another Muslim writer who disparages ibn-al-Kalbi is al-Dhahabi. Besides calling him a Rafidi (Shiite), he says, "He was not reliable ... but merely a storyteller (akhbari)". Ahmad ibn-Hanbal even deemed it necessary to say of him, "I do not think anyone would quote him as an authority."

All these attacks were undoubtedly motivated by fanaticism from the traditionalists and the Quran readers. For his part, ibn-al-Kalbi had little respect for them and for their studies, and did not commit the Quran to memory except under the pressure of criticism.

But ibn-al-Kalbi was not without his stout champions. Foremost among those were al-Mas'udi and Yaqut. The former lists him among the best authorities and acknowledges his indebtedness to him. The latter actually defends him against the vilification of the traditionalists. Discussing a controversial point in which ibn-al-Kalbi was pitted against the other authorities, Yaqut accepts his report and says, "This, therefore, confirms the statement of abu-al-Mundhir Hisham ibn-Muhammad al-Kalbi. Bless his soul! Never have the learned men disagreed on any point without finding his word the final authority. Yet despite all that, he is unjustly treated and greatly maligned."

His vindication has come from modern scientific research and archeology, which have confirmed the greater part of his statements and supported him against the criticism of his co-religionists. The *Kitab al-Asnam* has come down to us in a unique manuscript in the *Khizanah al-Zakiyah*, the private library of Ahmad Zaki Pasha (1867-1934) in Cairo.

A German translation was made by Rosa K. Rosenberger, Leipzig, 1941 and a partial translation, in French, by Father Augustus Sebastianus Marmardji, O.P., published in the *Biblical Review*, vol. xxxv, 1926, pp. 397-420. It was based on the first (1914) edition of Ahmad Zaki Pasha. In it Marmardji rearranges the gods of the Arab paganism into groups according to their importance and rank.

Editor's note. It goes without saying that Peter DeLaCrau does not claim that ibn Kalbi is never wrong when he goes back too far for him, in time, and especially in his genealogies or as for his mad biblism (Abraham, etc.).

THE ARABIA OF JAHILIYYA TIME. A PROUD AND FREE PEOPLE ENAMORED OF POETRY AND OPEN TO THE WORLD.

Regarding religion, precautions against Muslim sources must be extreme. There is usually confusion between the name of the deity and that of the sanctuary or of the statue that represents it. Traditional religion refuses to distinguish the divine power, the place, the betylus, the divine name, the altar, the sanctuary. The traditional pagan Arabic religion has produced no written document long enough to give a sufficient idea. The investigation must therefore use foreign texts or, worse, Muslim texts, often casting slanderous glances on the previous system. They are not alone besides! Many Christian or deist seekers have always had a condescending look at what they regard as a depraved mentality, simplistic rituals, or repugnant idols. See for example the case of the Anglican William Montgomery Watt, member of the Eaglais Easbaigeach na h-Alba. It is obvious that Islam, despite its imperfections, appeared to him as a moral and spiritual progress.

We must, of course, vigorously reject such prejudices. These men and women were capable of a religiosity, certainly different, but worthy of respect or interest, too.

As the literary production of Islam has been considerable, it is possible to reconstruct entire sections of the early Arab religion, through criticism, comment, or its survivals, including in Islam itself. It is thus necessary to pay tribute to the exceptional work of Ibn Kalbi. This eighth-century author has collected a large amount of information and has shown remarkable open-mindedness, of the consequences of which he later suffered besides. The subject remains nevertheless taboo in the Muslim world, but the Tolandian "high-knowers" that we are, can only be interested in the religious system that practiced Muhammad during most of his existence (to sack then).

Note from Peter DeLaCrau inserted in this place by his children about hadiths and Ibn Kalbi.

IT IS SURE THAT THE HADITHS ARE NOT DOCUMENTS FROM MUHAMMAD HIMSELF OR IMMEDIATELY CONTEMPORARY OF HIS TIME. A DOUBT CAN THEREFORE AND MUST THEREFORE SUBSIST. HADITHS OR TEXTS OF IBN KALBI DO NOT FORM SACRED DOGMAS OR DIVINE WORDS IN ANY CASE. THE FACT REMAINS THAT ALL THESE HADITHS ARE VERY PRECIOUS REVEALING CLUES OF THE MENTALITY OF THE TIME OR OF THAT WHICH IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED; AND AS SUCH THAT THEY DESERVE TO BE RIDDLED IN ORDER TO SEPARATE THE WHEAT OF TRUTH OR PLAUSIBLE ; FROM THE CHAFF OF MISTAKES OR LIE.

Racist Muslims (there are some of them) sometimes even speak of the "darkness of paganism": "Dhulumat al Jahilyia."

Equated with "associators" and "idolaters," these "ignorant" by definition pagans have seen over centuries to be added to their ranks atheists or agnostics ... also known as "blind" or "ignorant of the truth"; but as it will be seen in the pages that follow, the most ignorant may not be where one would think.

Muslims present therefore the period previous to Islam, the Jahiliyya, as a time marked by terror and superstition. But finally, by observing how the Muslim clerics have considered, diverted, or despised, the other religions, it is on Islam that we learn the most ... The revealed religions have all developed, especially the last one, a speech tending to refuse purely and simply the religiosity of the other.

According to them, since the pagan had no true spirituality, it was indispensable to provide him with one.

Editor's note. It is necessary nevertheless to distinguish the Arabs belonging to clans who had settled down (by settling in caravan towns, in the ports or in the fertile crescent of the south of Arabia); from those who were wandering tribes (nomads), in other words, Bedouins.

This chapter intends only to prove a thing: that the Arab populations fought, lived and prospered before Hegira (before Islam). The period called Jahiliya in Arabic (Ignorance or Barbary) was neither barbaric nor ignorant. It was a simply different period, with different standards, and on the whole much more favorable to the individual and to the human being, but few Muslims are able to understand it; and few of our contemporaries can admit it.

Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddima 4, 6.

" The ancient nations had mosques which they venerated in what they thought to be a spirit of religious devotion. There were the fire temples of the Persians and the temples of the Greeks and the houses of the Arabs in the Hejaz, which the Prophet ordered destroyed on his raids. Al-MasUdi mentioned some of them. We have no occasion whatever to mention them. They are not sanctioned by a religious law. They have nothing to do with religion. No attention is paid to them or to their history".

It is time to reject this racist idea with strength, and to maintain the contrary, with the support of relevant documents. In studies dealing with the question of the birth of Islam, there is generally no mention of the general conditions in which this movement appeared. The authors pretend that this religion was born from the sands of the desert already armed, such Athena emerging from the thigh of Jupiter, incomparable and perfect, and from the outset universal. This is not serious. On the contrary, it is important to insist on the context and the theater in which Islam has become established, all the more so since the documentary sources are numerous to provide solid information.

It is therefore useful first, to understand the way in which the Muslim empire was formed, to have an idea of the peoples who surrounded the nascent Islam. The core is made up of Semites, a complex human group that can be addressed by languages, because they keep track of the original ethnic groups.

Beyond that, Islam was established in Spain, populated by Celtiberians, in Turkey, inhabited at the time by Greeks, Armenians, descendants of Hittites and Kurds, and in Persia, all members of the Indo-European linguistic family; far away not only from the Arabs, but also from ancient Berbers and Egyptians.

Arabia in the time of Muhammad was therefore pagan in its idea of cosmos and tribal in its social structure.

The opposition between monotheism and polytheism is not generally enough to describe a pagan religion. Indeed, this one naturally combines the idea of a multitude (poly) of deities populating the universe and the omnipotence of a local deity (hena), designed as supreme and sufficient in the remit of her sanctuary, by the surrounding population. In such a group, since the beginning, appears also a tendency to favor a divine power over others and this concurrently with the rise of monarchical institutions. The starting point is simple: a king, a god. Political centralization corresponds to a certain religious unification. But that does not make for all that the crowd of other deities disappear. It simply means that you believe in a dominant god. This will be the case of the primitive Arab religion.

Pushing to the extreme such a design of the divine one can obviously lead to the idea of a national (ist) god, of a character first protective, then more aggressive, what we will see both among the Assyrians than among the Hebrews. The god of Muhammad will therefore be only the distant and brutal result of this evolution.

With the emergence of the first imperialist powers, the Middle East will be endowed with deities who, from protectors of the people that they were at the beginning, will soon become the supporters and guides of conquering armies. It will then be like a war of the gods, the strongest, male, aerial, bearded and brutal, submitting the others.

The Babylonian Enuma Elish.

" They erected for him a princely throne.

Facing his fathers, he sat down, presiding.

"You are the most honored of the great gods,

Your decree is unrivaled, your command is Anu.

You, Marduk, are the most honored of the great gods.....

To raise or bring low--these shall be in your hand.....

No one among the gods shall transgress your bounds....

The inscription of Esarhaddon king of Assyria from -680 to - 669.

This outstanding inscription names six archaic Arab gods. It shows that from this time (- seventh century), the idea of a god who imposes himself on others is already widespread. The Assyrians are polytheistic, but are not hostile to the gods of their enemies, they prefer to conciliate them. Same attitude in the Roman world with the ritual of the evocatio and during the legendary landing, in Ireland, of the Milesians, alleged ancestors of the Gaels.

" I refurbished the gods Atar-Samayin, Daya, Nuḥaya, Ruldawu, Abirillu, (and) Atar-Quruma, the gods of the Arabs, and I inscribed the might of the god Assur, my lord, and (an inscription) written in my name on them and gave (them) back to him. "

Arabia is not known for its green meadows, its brooks and its flat hills, a universe found only in the Heaven according to the Quran. Her universe is the arid desert where camels sometimes travel vast distances without being able to feed themselves. Wells are so rare that men or animals can die of thirst. This hostile environment, the inhabitants of this region, the Arabs, fear it all the more because they think that evil spirits (the jinns) hide there a little everywhere; so they are particularly superstitious. The pagan Arabs worship these protective powers in "protected" or sanctified places (haram). They sacrifice camels to conciliate them. For these desert men, the "deities" who protect must be powerful. Magic was present everywhere and men dreaded the evil eye or the evil spell against which they protected themselves with amulets.

The establishment of Islam has left little chance of survival to this ancient world. Of the time before it remained only involuntary vestiges, too long habits, or secret objects of admiration and respect. John Damascenus (676-749), on heresies, 101.

These used to be idolaters and worshiped the morning star and Aphrodite, whom in their own language they called Khabar, which means "great." And so down to the time of Heraclius they were very great idolaters.

But in reality in this system of thought, the idol is only the "mirror" of the deity, and not the god himself. The refusal to make this distinction leads necessarily to a complete lack of understanding between the two systems.

The Persian geographer Abu Zayd al-Balkhi (850 - 934) is one of the few Muslims who tried to understand . At a time when scholars subjected to Islam were trying to apprehend the world in which they lived, at the cost of great intellectual efforts, and taking great risks, some have dared to observe foreign systems. Doctrines are distorted, either to correspond to Islamic ideas, or out of ignorance, or in order to increase their ridicule. We may learn more about Islam and its prejudices than about paganism, because they are in no way objective analyzes. But the fact remains that these are valuable testimonies on what was the religion of pre-Islamic Arabs.

Ibn Qayyim himself admits (page 718 Zad al Ma'ad, Provisions of the afterlife, ruling concerning the jizya) : "Since he [Muhammad] did not impose the jizya [special tax] upon Arab polytheists, Ash Shaafi'ee and Ahmad have said: the jizya is only imposed upon the Jews, Christians, and Magians [Zoroastrians].

The Magians [Zoroastrians] are polytheists without a book, so the fact that the jizya was imposed upon them proves that it could be imposed upon all polytheists.

However.....the disbelief of the Magians was of greater magnitude than the disbelief of the idolaters. In fact, the idolaters acknowledged the lordship of God. They were also aware that he is the only creator, but they worshiped other deities upon the pretense that they brought them closer to God.

Nevertheless, they did not believe that one creator is the source of good while another creator is the source of evil as the Magians believe.... In fact, they maintained some aspects of the religion of Abraham."

Abu Zaid al-Balkhi, Refutation of idolaters.

It is obvious that this piece of carved wood is not, concretely, the creator of heaven and earth, plants and animals, and the pieces of evidence cannot be discussed by endowed with reason beings. But idolatry is a religion which, as the present verse indicates, has continued to this day, it is professed by most of the inhabitants of the earth. It is necessary therefore that this religion took a form whose error was not obvious; otherwise, it would never have lasted so long in most parts of the world.

1 Idolatry is only a consequence of the doctrine that God is a localized physical being.

2 The servants of the stars, like the stars themselves, are servants of the higher god.

3 Men attributed good or bad events to the stars.

4 When good men died, the people set up statues in their image.

5 When a king or a great person died, a statue was made in his image to remind of him.

6 Those for whom God is a physical being ... imagine that the god is in the idol in question.

7 Perhaps they also took these idols as mihrab [niche indicating the direction in which it is necessary to pray] and their worship was then addressed to God.

Editor's note. The author, of course, wants to attack the foundations of paganism, but he displays a remarkable quality, because it is rare in a Muslim intellectual, the sincere desire to understand the Other.

Abul Hasan Ali al-Mas'udi (897 - 957): Meadows of gold and mines of gems (Muruj adh dhahab wa ma'adin al-jawahir). Volume 3 chapter 47. Translation Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris 1864).

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE DIFFERENT BELIEFS AND OPINIONS OF THE ARABS BEFORE THE ISLAM; THEIR DISPERSION. THE HISTORY OF THE ELEPHANT, AND THE INVASION OF THE ABYSSINIANS, ABDUL MOTALLIB &C.

The Arabs, in the ages of ignorance, were divided in their religious opinions. Some proclaimed unity of God, affirmed the existence of a Creator, believed in the resurrection, and held for certain that one day the Judge supreme would reward the faithful and punish the prevaricators. Already in this book and in others of us we have spoken of those who Other, among the Arabs, confessed the Creator, affirmed the creation and maintained that on the day of the resurrection the men would be brought back to another life but they denied the mission of the prophets and showed themselves attached to the worship of idols. These are the very ones whom God said: "We worship them only to be our intermediaries with God" (Quran, 39,3). They were also the ones who visited the idols on pilgrimage

and undertook journeys for that purpose, who slaughtered victims in their honor, sacrificed them and established canonical prescriptions in their name (taking ihram or retreat; ihlal end of retreat). Others leaned to Judaism or Christianity. There were some who, following no path other than that of hubris, let themselves go to all the energy of their passions. Among the Arabs, there was a sect that worshiped the angels it pretended to be daughters of God, and which worshiped them to get their intercession with the supreme judge. These are the ones whose God speaks in the verse: "They give daughters to divinity. Good Lord ! They will have what they desire. "(Quran, 16, 57).

And, on the other hand, He also says: "Have you seen Lat, Uzza, and Manat, this third deity? Would be the male your share , and the female that of God? Certainly here is a very iniquitous distribution! "(Quran, 53, 19).

Still others believed in the Creator; but, calling lies the mission of the prophets as well as the resurrection, they let themselves go to the aberrations of the men of this low world. They are those to whose impiety God is referring, and

whose infidelity he points out when he says: "We do not know, they claim, any other life than that of this low world;

we die and we live, and only time steals or life. (Quran, 45, 24.)

It seems indeed to have existed among the pre-Islamic Arabs a strong sense or very philosophical skepticism, regarding the Judaeo-Christian eschatological themes, especially that of the resurrection of the dead.

Faced with this materialism or these reactions of the kind of those of the Christian St. Thomas, Muhammad will have to redouble his verbal violence, in order to instill doubt and fear, to an audience that is not very focused on mysticism. In a way, the Arab state of mind was the least adapted to the true cultural revolution that Islam was.

The main argument developed by Islam against polytheism was, not the inexistence of gods from a philosophical point of view, but the uselessness of the statues out of wood or stone.

The process is not new.

Psalms 115, 4-8.

But their idols are silver and gold,
made by human hands.

They have mouths, but cannot speak,
eyes, but cannot see.

They have ears, but cannot hear,
noses, but cannot smell.

They have hands, but cannot feel,
feet, but cannot walk,

nor can they utter a sound with their throats.

Those who make them will be like them,

What gives us in the Quran.

Chapter 7 verses 191-192.

Attribute they as partners [to God] those who created nothing, but are themselves created, and cannot give them help, nor can they help themselves ?

Chapter 25 verse 3.

They choose beside Him [God] other gods who create nothing but are themselves created, and possess not hurt nor profit for themselves, and possess not death nor life, nor power to raise the dead.

Ladies first now! Let's start by saying a few words about the status of the Arab woman of that time.

Part of the Muslim literature, and some inscriptions, make the historian able to observe with a fresh eye the social structures of before Islam. The place of women, by many indications and in the most diverse situations, seems important, and polygamy, if it exists, remains particularly discreet. It even seems that polyandry signs can be detected here and there. All this, of course, has never been scrutinized in detail.

It seems from Muslim and non-Muslim sources that women have enjoyed wide freedom of action, especially in southern Arabia. We remember Arab queens, since the Assyrian chronicles, of the Queen of Sheba, of Zenobia, sometimes even true "chiefs" of tribes, or simply women with strong temperament. In her become classic article, Nabia Abbot lists no less than twenty-four queens, empresses and Arab princesses. It is certain that there have been many more, but it is not the Muslim sources that will be useful in this field.

But they are also found in combat, as female soothsayers, priestesses, prophetesses, female politicians managing the affairs of the city, poets or referees in poetry competitions. The poems of the conquerors were hung to the wall of the Kaaba: it is in this way that they have survived in the

memories, and in a collection remained famous, the mu'allaqat. It will be necessary to remind of that when the reader of the Quran approaches the chapter entitled "Women," which, before resolving their lot in detail, begins simply with these revealing words: "O Men! "

Faithful and priestesses.

In the polytheistic religions, women have much more place and importance than those which claim to go back to Abraham. They are necessarily concerned by the fecundity / fertility rites, and are also very much concerned by the obsession with purity or impurity, which is largely found in Judaism and Islam. These primitive prejudices explain the inferiority of their real condition.

Women in fights.

The Bedouins, especially during the fighting against Islam, do not hesitate to be accompanied by their wives en masse. These seem particularly hostile to the new religious order (in case of defeat, they constitute the herd of captives designed with their children to become the slaves of Muslims). Arab women accompanied the troops, waved the tribal banner, and sometimes received the prestigious title of "Lady of Victory."

Women at the battle of Uhud 625.

At Uhud Ikrimah was accompanied by his wife, Umm Hakim. She and other women stood behind the battle lines beating their drums, urging the Quraysh on to battle and upbraiding any horseman who felt inclined to flee.

Bedouins and their wives at the battle of Hunayn 630.

Abu Dawud, 14, hadith 2495.

On the day of Hunayn.....a horseman came and said: Apostle of God, I went before you and climbed a certain mountain where I saw Hawazin all together with their women, cattle, and sheep, having gathered at Hunayn.

The Apostle of God smiled and said: That will be the booty of the Muslims tomorrow if God wills.....

Marriage and divorce.

Marriage is a commercial exchange, but precisely this mercantile aspect makes it an advantage for women, who become stakes. Their survival, their authority over children, their constant presence in the home, the remarriages and temporary marriages, allow the most skilled to have a solid place in society, even if it is excessive to speak of an equal status with men .

The words of the Arab historian-geographer Ali al-Masudi seek to denigrate and devalue it, but what he gives us, involuntarily, as information, about the situation of women before Islam is of the greatest interest. He teaches us that before the advent of Islam, there existed in the Arab peninsula fifteen forms of matrimonial union; through which women could choose the spouse (s), decide on the duration of the union and choose its form. Men acceded to the desires of women, because the unions contracted with them were to serve only as a means to pay a ransom, to feed a family, to increase a part of inheritance, to vary the pleasures ... At that time, the union between the man and woman was simply based on fertility and pleasure.

The non-exception Khadija.

The first wife of Muhammad remains emblematic of the last state of women in Arabia. Muhammad will not take any other wife during his lifetime. She is the one who runs the household and the business, which raises children from two different beds, and who takes his virginity from Muhammad.

The life of Khadija before Muhammad.

Her name was Khadija bint Khuwaylid ibn Assad. Before anyone married her, she was betrothed to Waraqa ibn Nawfal, but there was no marriage. Then she married Abu Hala [...] Her father was noble. He settled in the city of Mecca and formed an alliance with Banu Abdul Dar ibn Qussay. Khadija gave Abu Hala a son named Hind, and another named Hada. After Abu Hala, she married Atiq ibn Abid of the Makhzum tribe and gave him a daughter named Hind.

Khadija business woman.

Tabari....Khadijah was of the kinship of Muhammad, of the tribe of Quraysh: she was the daughter of Khuwaylid, son of Asad, ibn Abdul Uzza, ibn Qussay. She had lost her husband, who had left her a considerable fortune, and she was trading.

Ibn Sa'd....Waqidi, Tabaqat Al-Kubra, Volume 1, Parts 1.35.1.

"Khadijah sent me (Nafisah) secretly to Muhammad, after his return with the caravan from Syria. I said: O Muhammad ! what prevents you from marriage?

He said: I have no means to marry.

I said: If you get enough means, and you get a proposal from (a lady of) beauty, wealth, dignity and equal status, will you accept?

He said: who is she?

I said: Khadijah.

He said: How will it be possible?

I said: I shall arrange that."

If God, through the intermediary of his last prophet, improved the condition of women, it was therefore, ON AVERAGE, and only in relation to the region of Mecca, but not at all IN WHAT CONCERNS THE WORLD. At that time, God set a goal that was far too modest [to make the average situation of women in the region of MECCA more favorable. And so that means it made it decrease everywhere in the world where it was better. Was well what God wanted? Let the barbarian druid of the West, in the John Toland way, idolater and polytheist, or worse, that I am, doubt.

THE ART OF LIVING OF BEDOUINS.

The fight and the way about which man boasts are part, equally, of the art of living of the Bedouins; it is the main activity and the social justification of the aristocrats. Between vengeance and looting raids, there are many opportunities to prove one's value. But fights often make more noise than victims, ransoms are common, and massacres rare. In a word, war is a robbery more than a murder, a speech as much as an act, and the more they speak of it, by bragging and bravado, the less they do it. For the Bedouin, life is difficult therefore precious and it is better not to risk it in uncontrolled massacres or endless vengeance. When we read the documents well, we realize that there are indeed multiple modes of attenuation of this violence. It is this attitude besides that has often been considered cowardice by foreign observers.

The invention of the offensive jihad by Muslim jurists will therefore mark a break in this field and almost everything will therefore change with the institution, by Muhammad, of this new form of war, which provides a material advantage to the one who practices it. It can even be said that the military success of Muslims is fundamentally due to a radically different idea of war. Whatever remains among them of the ancient way of making war will be nothing more than the lure of loot. It is important to remember, come at this point in our presentation that the purpose of the pagan plundering was to rob, not to kill, as will be seen later. When the Muslim warriors will launch attacks shouting, "Kill, Kill! Then a page will be turned.

The morality that emerges from the mu'allaqat is quite similar to that advocated by the Irish Teagasc an Riogh. This chivalrous and noble idea of generosity, or liberality rather, is a sign of nobility, it must apply with ostentation and even exuberance, while observing a strict ideal of justice. It will be replaced by the institution of legal alms of Muslims (zakat), with a fixed percentage, which is no longer the same thing.

Chiefs, nobles, must show generosity. Wealth serves to peacefully conquer the honor and not to enjoy it selfishly as in the liberal or capitalist society accepted by our elites today (journalists, politicians .).

The attitude is normal in a harsh and aristocratic environment.

Editor's Note. We are here at odds with what is happening today where journalists and intellectuals or politicians no longer know "share" value and know only stock values.

Quran chapter 17 verse 26.

Squander not (thy wealth) in wantonness. Lo! the squanderers were ever brothers of the devils....

The ancient and aristocratic idea of generosity is replaced by another, very different in its aims: alms, ultimately less "free."

Muhammad in the Quran repeats for his followers many heavenly promises that correspond to what could be expected by the Arab audience of his time: wine, banquet, virgin for life women or young boys, endless jesting. In life or in death, as in spite of himself and with emphasis, carried away by delirium, he leaves us thus, finally, a rather complete picture of the aspirations, altogether peaceful and comprehensible, very human, of these populations before Islam. Wine does not grow in central Arabia, it is a luxury product and a means of the assertion of his nobility, so it is fashionable to consume its wine without counting, to speak of it with talent, and to share its benefits.

Chapter 83 verses 22-27.

Lo! the righteous verily are in delight, on couches....

They are given to drink of a pure wine, sealed, whose seal is musk - for this let (all) those strive who strive for bliss and mixed with water of Tasnim,

Chapter 16 verse 69.

There cometh forth from their bellies a drink divers of hues, wherein is healing for mankind. Lo! herein is indeed a portent for people who reflect.

The destiny of the soul / mind after death. The elegiac genre is to have been flourishing among the Arabs before Islam. There are some remains.

Traces of particular designs and appropriate rituals are rare: we can just spot among these peoples a form of worship of ancestors and dead, as in many other societies.

In pre-Islamic times, the religious background of Arabs was fundamentally animist. The dead were supposed to survive in the form of ghosts. Offerings and steles were made to them, stone cairns were erected on their graves. The ideas of ancient Arabs on this subject make room for the theme of reincarnation, wandering, vengeance (accomplished by ghosts). We can guess their existence from the terrifying and morbid rhetoric that Mahomet develops and the prohibitions he passes against the ancient funeral customs. Muhammad, in fact, uses anxiety as an instrument of conversion, rejects the traditions relating to graves, imposes designs of death largely inspired by Christianity; and insists on a

new notion, which will replace that of survival in the desert: the death in action as ideal. "Last life" instead of "present life."

Masudi gives a detailed account of the various ideas concerning the existence of the soul / mind, in life and in death. The picture he paints shows a complex reality and also, from the author, a real ethnological interest for these populations.

Meadows of gold and mines of gems (Muruj adh dhahab wa ma'adin al-jawahir). Volume 3 chapter 48. Translation Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris 1864).

CHAPTER XLVIII.

ARAB OPINIONS ON THE SOUL, THAT THEY BELIEVE LOOKING LIKE AN OWL OR BARN OWL, AND OTHER SUBJECTS.

In the centuries of ignorance, the Arabs had on their souls and on their nature contradictory systems and opinions. Some claimed that the soul (en-nefs) was nothing but blood, and that the spirit (er-ruh) was the air that circulates in the interior of the human body and produces the breath (en-nefes) of breathing. From this comes the epithet of nefsa which they gave to the woman because of the blood coming out of her body. Hence the use of nefes in the discussions of the jurists of the different countries on the question of whether a body whose blood (nefs) flows defiles or doesn't defile the water into which it falls.

According to an opinion prevailing among some Arabs, the soul would be a bird which unfolds its flight in the body of man. If man comes to perish, either from a natural death or from a violent death, the soul does not cease to fly around the deceased in the form of a bird that utters plaintive cries on his tomb. The name they give to this funereal bird is el-ham, whose singular is hameh. Islamism (sic) found the Arabs infatuated with this superstition, until the Prophet had declared that there was neither ham nor safar (owl, barn owl?) They claimed that this bird, at first very small, grew until it became as tall as a species of owl. Always fleeing the joy, always uttering plaintive groans, it was found only in the desert places and in the neighborhood of the graves, where lay the remains of those who had died of violent death, and where the dead rested, they still said that the owl (el-hameh) did not cease to appear before the children of the deceased and visit them, to give him news of what was happening after him and to report them to him. Hence it is that es-Salt, the son of Omayyah, said to his sons: My soul, in the form of an owl, will let me know all that you may have to fear; above all, cast aside shameful actions and those which inspire aversion.

In the time of Islamism (again-sic), Tawbah, speaking of Layla al-Akhialyah, said in the same sense: If ever Layla el-Akhialyah sent a salute for me, even if the funeral monument and the sepulchral stones were erected on me, certainly I will return to her a greeting full of joy; or, flying towards her, from my grave, an owl (sada) would greet her with its cries.

According to others, these verses are not of Taubah and apply to another than Layla. Whatever it be, allusions to this belief are frequently found in the poems of Arabs, in their works written in prose or in rhythmic style, in their public addresses and in their allegories. Arabs, as well as other peoples, among the ancient or more modern races, have many traditions relating to the transmigration of souls /minds. The destiny of the body after death.

There Muhammad will lead his followers to an area that will disturb them a lot: the destiny of the corpse after the funeral. In other words, the Judaeo-Christian theme of the resurrection of the dead.

On the part of Meccan interlocutors, skepticism and irony dominate.

Chapter 11 verse 7.

Lo! you will be raised again after death! those who disbelieve will surely say: This is nothing but mere magic.

Chapter 37 verse 16.

When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then, forsooth, be raised (again) ?

Mourning.

Here again inversion of values: Arabs want to express their sadness at the time of the funeral. For the sake of consistency, and as in the case of the early Christians, Muhammad will disapprove of them.

The most deserving dead, according to him, go directly to Heaven and therefore there is reason here to be delighted with that in this case, on the contrary.

Bukhari, Book 59 Hadit 316.

The dead person is punished in the grave because of the crying and lamentation of his family [...] The dead person is punished for his crimes and sins while his family cry over him then.

Dawud, Book 20 hadith 3216.

The prophet said: There is no slaughtering at the grave in Islam.

But the dead can still hear. At least always according to Muhammad (we do not know what the pagan Arabs really thought).

Tabari, History Volume 7. Battle of Badr.

When the Messenger of God ordered the dead to be thrown into the well, all were thrown into it..... the Messenger of God stood over them and said, "O people of the well, have you found what your Lord promised you to be true? For I have found what my lord promised me to be true." His companions said to him, "O Messenger of God, are you speaking to dead people?" He replied, "They know (laqad ' alimu) that what I promised them is the truth...You hear what I say no better than they, but they cannot answer me."

Tabari, History Volume 7.

The Messenger of God asked to whom the drying floor belonged, and Mu'adh b. 'Afra' told him, "It belongs to two orphans under my guardianship, whom I will compensate for it." The Messenger of God ordered that a mosque should be built there, and stayed with Abu Ayyub until the mosque and his living quarters had been completed..... The site of the mosque of the Prophet belonged to Banu al-Najjar and contained palm trees, cultivated land and pre-Islamic graves...The Messenger of God then gave orders concerning the site; the palm trees were cut down, the cultivated land leveled, and the graves dug up.

Commentary by the abbreviated Persian version (Herman Zotenberg, Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland ,volume 2, page 461,Paris 1869).

Mo'hammad ibn Jarir (Tabari) reports a fact that is hardly credible that cannot be and you must not believe such a thing from the prophet. Although these dead were infidels, a place of worship nevertheless is not important enough, so that dead are taken from their graves and a cultivated field destroyed. Intelligent men reject such an allegation.

Commentary by Peter DeLaCrau.

For the first time in the world so perhaps.

Non-religious and private apartments (those of Muhammad and his wives) adjoin directly to a public place of worship.

A still active cemetery is razed to make room for these private apartments and place of worship of a new religion.

Ibn Hisham, the life of Muhammad, Translation Alfred Guillaume page 387.

....The apostle went out seeking Hamza and found him at the bottom of the valley with his belly ripped up and his liver missing, and his nose and ears cut off] The apostle said [....] If God gives me victory over Quraysh in the future, I will mutilate 30 of their men. When the Muslims saw the apostle's grief and anger against those who had thus treated his uncle, they said, 'By God, if God gives us victory over them in the future we will mutilate them as no Arab has ever mutilated anyone.'

THE BEDOUINS IN THE QURAN.

Muhammad as a member of the tribe of the Couraïchites (ex-nomads become settled people for 150 years) was a city dweller and not a Bedouin. Like all Couraïchites, he was suspicious of them and therefore had little respect for them. There are many traces of that in the Quran.

Bedouins at home.

33/ 20.

These people hope that the factions have not left and if the factions come, they would like to retreat to the desert with the Bedouins .

Bedouins and their tribe.

48/11.

Those of the Bedouins who stayed behind will tell you: -Our property and our families have worried us and prevented us from following you. Forgive us!

The military value of the Bedouin.

48/16.

Say to those Bedouin who stayed behind: You are called against a people full of fearsome valor. Either you fight them or they will convert to Islam.

If you obey, God will give you a handsome recompense, but if you turn your back to Him, as you did before, He will inflict on you a cruel torment.

Bukhari, Sahih 61/2, 2.

Abu Masud reports, taking the tradition back to the Prophet, that the Prophet said:

-From there will come trouble - and, in saying this, he was pointing to the East - (i.e.) the perversity and hardness of heart among the nomadic bawlers who will arrive at the tails of their camels and cattle in the tribes of Rabia and Mudar.

Finally, there are the terrible verses of Sura 9 concerning the Bedouins.

In his Elementary Dictionary of Islam Tahar Gayd (1929-2019) develops or summarizes the Quran's view of the Bedouins in this way.

BEDOUIN

Many tribes had embraced Islam and made themselves available to the Prophet. Within these tribes, three categories of men were distinguished:

-Those who had converted sincerely: "Some Bedouins believe in God and the Last Day. They consider what they spend for good as an obligation offered to God and a way to benefit from the prayers of the Prophet. Isn't it an offering that will be counted to them? God will soon bring them into His Mercy. God is he who forgives, he is merciful" (9/99).

-Those whose faith was only apparent: "Many Bedouins consider their expenses for good as an onerous burden; they watch for your setbacks. May misfortune fall upon them! -God is he who hears and knows-" (9/98).

-Finally, those who openly opposed Islam, calling the Envoy of God a liar.

The members of the second group swore their attachment to Islam as if their conversion was a service to the Prophet: "The Bedouins remind you of their submission as if it were a favor from them. Say: do not remind me of your submission as a favor: on the contrary, it is God who has granted you the grace to be led to faith, if you are sincere" (49/17). They were reluctant to engage in the struggle in the name of God. On the eve of the hostilities, they presented themselves to the Prophet and justified their non-participation by making false excuses: "Those Bedouins who alleged an apology came to ask to be dispensed from the fight" (9/90).

These Bedouins were opportunists. In their conversion, they considered only the political aspect. They attached little importance to the Prophet and the belief in one God. Therefore, they did not hesitate to use excuses that kept them away from the battlefield whenever their own interests were not at stake. They explained their defection by alleged family duties and the need to take care of their affairs that needed to be fructified at this time of the year: "Those of the Bedouins who stayed behind will tell you: our wealth and our families have taken over us; ask forgiveness for us! They speak with their tongues what is not in their works" (48/11).

This last verse refers to a specific case. Bedouin tribes in the vicinity of Madinah had signed a pact of mutual aid with the Prophet. They pledged to perform the Meccan pilgrimage alongside other Muslims. They then considered it more prudent not to undertake this journey, fearing that a conflict might arise between the believers and the pagans.

The Quran castigates their ambiguous attitude: "It is not for the inhabitants of Madinah or the Bedouins around them to remain behind the Prophet of God or to prefer their own lives to his" (9/120).

These Bedouins had certainly submitted, but faith had not penetrated their hearts: "The Bedouins say, 'We believe!' Say: 'You do not believe, but rather say: 'We submit.. ... Faith hasn't entered your heart! If you obey God and his Prophet, God will not make you lose any of your good deeds - God is the forgiving, merciful one" (49/14).

As for the third group, its members were, of course, indifferent to the course of events because they saw no immediate benefit. These Bedouins did not even bother to travel to Madinah to explain their refusal to join the army of the Prophet: "Those who accused God and his Prophet of lying have stayed at home" (9/90).

The Bedouin's reluctance to fight is often mentioned in the Quran, a reluctance that manifested itself whenever they found that they did not derive any material benefit from their participation. Their reluctance to put their lives in danger was even greater when it came to confronting forces equal to or greater than their own.

The holy book alludes to these wars that Islam planned to wage, after the conquest of Mekka, against tribes that were powerful in number and military experience, such as the tribes of the Hawazin, Ghatafan and Thaqif. The seemingly Islamic Bedouins had no enthusiasm for attacking the battle-hardened men who, on the eve of hostilities, camped around Hunayn and Ta'if: "Tell those Bedouins who remained behind: you will soon be called to fight against a people endowed with a formidable force. You will fight them, or they will submit to God. If you obey, God will give you a great reward. If you turn your back - as you did before - He will punish you with a painful chastisement" (48/16).

These warnings were justified because of those Bedouin tribes who had repeatedly shown treachery and engaged in a double-dealing. Generally, the Quran is very severe towards the Bedouins. The Bedouins were characterized by verbal violence, misplaced pride, rough manners, refusal of any discipline, and resistance to all social and religious orders. In religious matters, they were hypocrites because deep down they did not believe in the Resurrection, in the Last Judgment: "The Bedouins are the most violent in terms of disbelief and hypocrisy and the most inclined to disregard the laws contained in the Book that God has sent down on his Prophet - God knows and is just" (9/98).

The Bedouins were also allergic to the payment of taxes. This was certainly the fundamental reason for their hostility to Islam. They considered this levy on their fortunes as an unnecessary burden on their property. Hubristic and convinced of the rightness of their convictions, they did not fail to wish the Muslims defeat, a defeat which, in their opinion, would justify their behavior: "Many Bedouins consider their expenses for the good as an onerous burden; they watch for your setbacks. May misfortune fall on them! -God is he who hears and knows-" (9/98).

This taxation on wealth made them suspicious of the new religion. However, they did not lose sight of their interests. They were willing to fight in the path of God, as long as they found an appreciable material profit in these battles. This lust for gain led them to display their faith publicly, on the one hand, and to deny it inwardly on the other. The Quran classified them among the group of hypocrites who concealed their disbelief and thus deceived the Prophet: "Among the Bedouins around you and among the inhabitants of Madinah, there are stubborn hypocrites. You do not know them, we will punish them twice, and then they will be given a terrible punishment" (9/101).

The hypocrisy and opportunism of the Bedouins were revealed at the death of the Prophet. It was an opportunity for them to openly proclaim their disbelief. They took action by refusing to pay the Zakkat.

Note by Peter DeLaCrau. This was what the communicators of Islam called the war of apostasy. But in reality there was no apostasy, for these tribes were in fact and in the depths of their hearts still pagan or even more or less Christian.

It is, of course, very difficult to determine the degree of penetration of Christianity in each Arab tribe at the beginning of Islam. If we cross-check all the scattered information we have, we could say that in northern Arabia, the Kalbites and the Banu Judham were predominantly Christian, the Tayyi were only partly Christian. In central Arabia, the inhabitants of Yamama and Banu Hanifa were under Christian influence and, to a lesser extent, the Tamim and Abd 'al-Qays. The people of Bahrain and Oman had flourishing churches, as well as in southern Arabia the tribes Banu Al-

Harith and Kindah. not forgetting the inhabitants of the island of Socotra (a French naval expedition will meet again some of them in 1737).

As soon as Mohammed's death was known, they felt liberated from the agreements they had made with him. This uprising was mercilessly suppressed by the first caliph, Abu Bakr.

THE JAHILIYYA'S RELIGIONS.

The purpose of this chapter is not to make an encyclopedia of the religions in the whole world before the advent of Islam but to introduce our study of Islam by a few words of the religions WHICH COULD HAVE INFLUENCED IN A WAY OR ANOTHER INCIPIENT ISLAM. Which therefore limits us geographically to the Near and Middle East (Arab peninsula Jordan Syria Iraq Iran). And chronologically to earliest or latest antiquity, in other words, from - 3000 to + 600.

The notion or name of Allah (Divinity) was present everywhere, and almost anonymously. It was the god that one hoped to bend without knowing his identity, or the divine in general. The hierarchical order existing in the pantheon is clearly perceptible in the rites. Each tribe had its own god (s), but admitted that the gods of other tribes also existed (case of the first Hebrews).

As we shall see, Muhammad himself will undoubtedly also remain for a very long time henotheist, implicitly admitting the existence of the other gods, and making himself only the champion or herald of the god of the Kaaba, to the detriment of the other divine powers. During a famous altercation with Abu Sufyan, he only extolled the power of Allah compared to that of Hubal. In other words, he admits the existence of the latter ...

The current Muslim dogma rejects the idea of a religious system based on the pre-eminence of a divine power in relation to others, but which would not make them disappear (a tolerance of a divine essence, in a way).

Yet this is what our sources indicate of the religious situation in all ancient Arabia, from Palmyra to Yemen. Such an idea of the divine one, which is called henotheism, is therefore and has been therefore, possible. Formerly, and for centuries, an innumerable quantity of divine powers have been venerated in Arabia, without provoking any disturbance, without generating any catastrophe, as much for Arabia as for the neighboring regions. They did not exhort the war, and no head was ever cut off in their names, or by the care of their followers. It is central Arabia, that of desert stretches, which has especially aroused such a crowd. The Bedouins, confronted with loneliness and immensity, needed to populate their everyday world. The 360 statues which were piled up around the Meccan Kaaba give an idea of the size of this unknown pantheon. But it is in the North and the South, within more organized or materially more advanced Arab societies, that this world of gods has left us traces of its exuberance; the urban gods of Palmyra and Petra, the monumental sanctuaries of Saba and Himyar. This religious henotheism structured the lives of human beings for centuries, and consequently gave them hope and morale, until the radical destruction effected by Muhammad.

The documentary sources allowing reconstructing whole sections of the Arab pantheon are at the same time numerous and varied, but neglected.

There are first the shrines, better and better known, which reveal that the famous Meccan Kaaba was not an isolated case, that there were many other sacred places of this type. It is useless to add that these searches are particularly delicate to carry out, because the authorities supervise them with a redoubled suspicion: for the case when we will discover one day an idol called God ...

Then there are the inscriptions. From graffiti on the rocks, written by the clumsy hands of herdsmen, to the immense South-Arabic texts, with such a spectacular alphabet. Not forgetting the Quran.

Finally, there are the Muslim texts themselves, who venture to mention the gods of paganism in the course of their scholarly work, to denigrate them, to ridicule the worships, to despise the faithful. But this literature of controversial essence paradoxically made possible the survival of gods in memories and in science. It is not excluded that the authors (and their audiences) felt a shameful attraction towards these disappeared deities, which had been removed from them. This is particularly the case of Ibn Al Kalbi, whose capital work entitled "Kitab al-Asnam" was only rediscovered in the middle of the 20th century.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam Introduction 5.

Among these devotional practices were [...] the veneration of the House and its circumambulation, the pilgrimage, the visitation or the lesser (al-umrah), the vigil (al-wuqul) on 'Arafah and [al-] Muzdalifah sacrificing she-camels, and raising acclamation of the name of the deity (tahlil) age and the visitation, introducing there into Thus whenever the Nizar raised their voice the tahlil, they were wont to say:

"Here we are O Lord! Here we are! Here we are!

You have no associate save one who is your

You have dominion over him and over what he possesses. "

They would thus declare His unity through the talbiyah and at the same tune associate their gods with Him placing their affairs in His hands. [.....] In other words, they would not declare His unity (through the knowledge of His rightful dues), without associating with Him some of His own creatures.

The talbiyah of the Akk, whenever they set out on a pilgrimage, was as follows: They would place at the head of the caravan two of their black slaves who would lead the procession and say, "We are the two ravens of the 'Akk!"

Thereupon the Akk would say in response, "The Akk humble themselves before you; Your Yamanite servants are we.

[We are come] to perform another pilgrimage."

Whenever the Rahi'ah performed the pilgrimage, observed the sacred rites and ceremonies, and carried out the vigils at the appointed places, they were wont to start back with the first returning group and not wait until the al tashriq.

The first to [.....] set up images for worship, institute the practices of the sa'ibah, the wasilah, the bairah, the hamiyah, was [.....] the father of the Khuz'ah [tribe]. etc.etc.

The ancient Arab system is therefore also clearly polytheistic: a multitude of powers surround and assist the human being in his daily life and in the great moments of his existence. Muslim sources, including the Quran itself, bear an indelible trace of it besides. Quran chapter 43 verse 15. And they allot to God a portion of His bondmen! Lo! man is verily a mere ingrate.

The moon was the chief deity of almost all the kingdoms in ancient Southern Arabia, and the horns of the mountain sheep of ibex walia type symbolized it. In this region, the soft and relaxing light of the moon, compared with that of the sun, blinding, and compared with the smothering heat of the day, was particularly liked in this region. Unlike many religions, but like the Germans, the moon god was male - the Arabic word for the moon (qamar) is masculine- and the sun god or his substitutes, feminine (shama). The moon was a god and the sun a goddess. The moon is more important for the nomads, and the sun is more important for the settled people. "The first pre-Islamic inscription was discovered in Dhofar Province, Oman, this bronze plaque, deciphered by Dr. Albert Jamme, dates from about the second century before our era and gives the name of the Hadramaut moon god Sin and the name Sumharam, a long-lost city...." (Qataban and Sheba, Wendell Phillips, 1955, p. 227).

In addition to the sun and the moon, the Arabs worshiped the planets Venus (Al-Zuhara), Saturn, Mercury, and Jupiter, the stars Sirius and Canopus, as well as the constellations of Orion, the great and the little bear, and the seven Pleiades. The sun, the moon, and the five planets had been equated with living beings, gods or goddesses, each with its own special qualities. Some stars or planets had very anthropomorphic characters. According to the legends of that time, for example, Aldebaran, one of the stars of the group of Hyades, would have fallen in love one day with Al-Thurayya, the most seductive star of the Pleiades, and with the agreement of the moon, would have asked for her hand. What does not lack poetry.

The interpretatio graeca of Arab gods. Herodotus III, 8.

They believe in no other gods except Dionysus and the Heavenly Aphrodite; and they say that they wear their hair as Dionysus does his, cutting it round the head and shaving the temples. They call Dionysus, Orotalt; and Aphrodite, Alilat.

Arrian, Anabasis, 7, 20, 1.

The common report is that he heard that the Arabs venerated only two gods, Uranus and Dionysus; the former because he is visible and contains in himself the heavenly luminaries, especially the sun, from which emanates the greatest and most evident benefit to all things human; and the latter on account of the fame he acquired by his expedition into India.

It has often been thought that the Arab gods were all the result of a more or less advanced deification of the stars. This is an excessive view; but the place of the stars in this pantheon is nevertheless remarkable.

John of Damascus, Heresies, 99.

They worshiped the morning star and Aphrodite, whom in their own language they called Khabar, which means great.

Jerome, Life of St. Hilarion 25.

He reached Elusa, as it happened on the day when the annual festival had brought all the people together to the temple of Venus. This, goddess is worshiped on account of the morning star to whom the Saracen nation is devoted.

The ultimate proof lies in the Quran, where in the first chapters follow in chronological order, numerous astral invocations. Especially in the short chapters of the beginning of the preaching. It is indeed remarkable that Muhammad resorted to this very peculiar character of Arab religions, to address his deity.

Chapter 91 verses 1-6.

By the sun and his brightness,

And the moon when she follows him,

And the day when it reveals him,
And the night when it enshrouds him,
And the heaven and Him Who built it,
And the earth and Him Who spread it,
Editor's note. It sounds a bit like the druidic oath formula (page 135 Françoise Le Roux and Christian-J. Guyonvarc'h).

Chapter 37 verses 6-7.

Lo! We have adorned the lowest heaven with an ornament, the planets; with security from every forward devil.

Chapter 53 verse 1.

By the Star when it sets !

Chapter 81 verses 15-18.

I call to witness the planets,

The stars which rise and set,

And the close of night,

And the breath of morning

Chapter 85 verse 1.

By the heaven, holding mansions of the stars.

Chapter 86 verse 1.

By the heaven and the Morning Star.

And finally the very mysterious:

RABB ASH SHIRA.

Chapter 53 verse 49.

And that He it is Who is the Lord of Sirius;

and

RABB al FALAQI.

Chapter 113 verses 1-5.

I seek refuge in the Lord of the Daybreak from the evil of that which He created; from the evil of the darkness when it is intense, and from the evil of malignant witchcraft ????? and from the evil of the envier when he envies.

This lord of the daybreak (rabb al falaqi) is a deity of the astral type, recovered by Muhammad. His presence in a very early and magical chapter of the Quran therefore campaigns for the existence, in the minds of the contemporaries of Muhammad at least, of this deity.

Man could also come into contact with the divine through wells, trees, caves, springs, and other places of this kind inhabited by spirits.

"Ar baí cretím in óenDé oc Cormac . ar ro ráidseom na aidérad clocha ná crunnu acht no adérad intí dosroni & ropo chomsid ar cul na uli dúla" (Senchas na relec inso).

"Cormac believed in one God. He said that he adored neither the stones nor the trees, but he adored only the one who had made them and who is the guardian of all the elements" (The history of burial places).

The worship of trees is very understandable in a desert environment, the presence of a tree is still considered as the evidence of a near-miracle. Popular piety considers the tree as the home par excellence of the saints, and it follows in this a very old Eastern tradition, that of the Tree of Life. Ribbons of fabric are still attached to it as ex-voto.

Ibn Hishaq, the life of Muhammad, translated by Alfred Guillaume, page 568.

The heathen Quraysh and other Arabs had a great green tree called Dhatu Anwat to which they used to come every year and hang their weapons on it and sacrifice beside it and devote themselves to it for a day.

Dhatu Anwat is the name of the tree dedicated to the goddess Al Uzza, support of many ex-voto: it is "the one which supports the baskets." But in Southern Arabia, there is squarely a goddess of the same name.

Tabari, History, volume 5, page 198.

At that period, the people of Najran followed the religion of the Arabs, worshiping a lofty date palm in their midst. Every year they had a festival, when they hung on that tree every fine garment they could find and also women's ornaments. Then they went forth and devoted themselves to worship of it for the whole day.

Muhammad will also be very sensitive to the supernatural power of certain trees, either to recover it or to destroy it.

One of the most famous of these sacred trees endowed with mysterious powers is the Tree of Hudaybiyya, known thanks to an episode of the conquest of Mecca, in 628. Muhammad will indeed stop at this place and will take over the rites once done in this place, to benefit from its magical power. Quran chapter 48 verse 18.

God was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree. He sent down peace of reassurance on them, and hath rewarded them with a near victory.

The divine power in question is called shakina in Arabic, shekinah in Hebrew. The images combined with the Shekina are the light, the divine glory, the manifestation of God. The Rabbis define the Sakina [another spelling of this word, which has many of them] as the "glory of God" or "the Spirit of God." In the Latin Bible shekinah is translated by: Gloria in excelsis Deo [glory to God at the highest] to designate the divine presence in man and in terra Pax hominibus bonae voluntatis [peace on earth to men of good will] to designate the presence of God [his glory] in the world, understood as creation. It is therefore a mystical state.

Ibn Saad, Tabaqat.

The Thaqif asked the Apostle of God, may God bless him, to declare Wajj a "haram" (inviolable place of sanctity). Thereupon he wrote to them: This is an epistle from Muhammad, the Apostle of God, to the believers: the (cutting of) hawthorne, the bushes of Wajj, and hunting therein are prohibited. He who does it will be arrested and presented before the Prophet. This is the order of the Prophet Muhammad, the Apostle of God.

On the other hand, the latter made the tree in Nakhla cut down, which was dedicated to the goddess Al Uzza.

Ibn Kalbi 21.

In the year of the victory, the Prophet summoned Khalid ibn-al-Walid and said unto him, "Go unto the tree in the valley of Nakhlah and cut it down." Khalid went thereto, captured Dubayyah, who was the custodian of al-Uzza, and killed him.

Not forgetting the famous zaqqum, the last trace of a more or less magical tree, whose memory has been preserved by the infernal topography of the Quran.

Chapter 37 verse 62.

Is this better as a welcome, or the tree of Zaqqum ?

Lo! it is a tree that springs in the heart of hell.

Its crop is as it were the heads of devils

Chapter 44 verse 43.

Lo! the tree of Zaqqum, the food of the sinner!

Chapter 56 verse 52.

You verily will eat of a tree called Zaqqum ; and will fill your bellies therewith.

Litholatri or worship of stones. Throughout the ancient Middle East, the favored manifestation of the sacredness lies in stones or rocks, of extraordinary appearance or origin, such as meteorites: the betylus, "houses of God," or more often ansab, in Arabic. In the oldest texts of this immense corpus, we can find survivals of this worship, also attested among Hebrews. Many historians report that these stones were rectangular or more or less anthropomorphic. They were not worshiped for themselves as the classic definition of idolatry since the triumph of Judaeo-Christianity would have been, but as the home of a personal (god or spirit) or impersonal (a force, a power) being. Editor's note: a little bit like the Celts therefore!

"Ar baí cretim in óenDé oc Cormac . ar ro ráidseom na aidérad clocha ná crunnu acht no adérad intí dosroni & ropo chomsid ar cul na uli dúla" (Senchas na relec inso).

"Cormac believed in one God. He said that he adored neither the stones nor the trees, but he adored only the one who had made them and who is the guardian of all the elements" (The history of burial places).

These stones were considered as manifestations or symbols (charged with force) of the deity. The White Stone symbolized the original deity and the black stone represented his son. It was probably a basaltic rock - and not a meteorite as it is often read – which is abundant in this region of extinct volcanism. The color of these black stones clearly differentiates them from the desert environment, and they have always been much sought after by the inhabitants of these arid regions who attribute to them miraculous properties.

Judges 6 : 21-22.

"The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And Gideon did so. Then the angel of the Lord touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the Lord disappeared."

Genesis 35: 14.

Then God went up from him at the place where he had talked with him. Jacob set up a stone pillar at the place where God had talked with him, and he poured out a drink offering on it; he also poured oil on it. Jacob called the place where God had talked with him, Bethel.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam. Al Uzza 28 .

The person who was unable to build himself a temple or adopt a statue would erect a stone in front of the Sacred House or in front of any other temple which he might prefer, and then circumambulate it in the same manner in which he would circumambulate the Sacred House. The Arabs called these stones betylus (ansab). Whenever these stones resembled a living form, they called them asnam or awthan. The act of circumambulating them they called dawar.

Whenever a traveler stopped at a place or station in order to rest or spend the night, he would select for himself four stones, pick out the finest among them and adopt it as his god, and use the remaining three as supports for his cooking pot. On his departure he would leave them behind, and would do the same on his other stops.

The Arabs were wont to offer sacrifices before all these statues, betylus, and stones.

The black stone of Emesus. This is the current city of Homs in Syria (Herodian, History of the Roman Empire, Book V, Heliogabalus)

They were priests of the god, whom their countrymen worship under the Phoenician name Elagabal. A huge temple was erected to this god, lavishly decorated with gold, silver, and costly gems. Not only is this god worshiped by the natives, but all the neighboring rulers and kings send generous and expensive gifts to him each year. No statue made by man in the likeness of the god stands in this temple, as in Greek and Roman temples. The temple does, however, contain a huge black stone with a pointed end and round base in the shape of a cone. The natives solemnly maintain that this stone came down from the sky; pointing out certain small figures in relief, they assert that it is an unwrought image of the sun, for naturally this is what they wish to see.

The present "Black Stone" of Mecca is the residual witness of this litholatry, particularly developed among Arabs. It gave birth to many legends - all ignored from the Quran - like the one which sees in it originally a white stone descended from heaven, but that the sins of men would have blackened. This worship of the black stone is not unlike the black aerolites related to the worship of the god Elagabal above mentioned or of the goddess Cybele in Pessinus.

There is in fact a whole range between the natural betylus and the anthropomorphic statue. One of our sources even mentions the presence in the Kaaba of a representation of the three cranes, which still surprises us a lot (the trigaranos of the Galatians of Asia Minor up to there and in the middle of the sixth century?)

Technically speaking, the Kaaba is only the frame where is encased the "Black Stone" ; it is a 15 m high almost cubic mass , with two 12 m long walls and two others 10 m long, rebuilt many times. This black stone set in the walls of the temple immediately to the left of the door aroused various fears more or less superstitious and was considered eminently sacred. To give him a kiss remains, as in the days of Arab paganism, an essential rite of pilgrimage in this city.

To make this black stone an altar erected by Abraham and his son Ishmael is scientifically (historically) speaking, indefensible.

This relentlessness worthy of the worst of self-suggestion methods to want at all costs to be recognized as a legitimate and direct heir to the Jewish religion and to Abraham; whereas it is obvious that only certain details of the Islamic veneer are so, and that the background is pagan (the notion of god-man in Christianity, the role of the kaaba in Islam, etc.). IS PATHETIC. It is at the same time the timeless manifestation of an incredible racism towards other religions coupled with an equally incredible inferiority complex. Not to mention a crass ignorance of historical science and of the discoveries of archeology (the beginning of the Bible up to the episode of the Tower of Babel is borrowed from Sumerian myths, Abraham is a legend, Moses did not exist, neither did slavery in Egypt, etc.).

Note that in the corner opposite the Black Stone lies a reddish stone, called the stone of Felicity.

Unlike the "Black Stone" that is touched and kissed by pilgrims, this stone is only touched.

The black stone of the Kaaba seen by a Christian.

John of Damascus, Heresies, 101.

They furthermore accuse us of being idolaters, because we venerate the Cross, which they abominate.

And we answer them: 'How is it, then, that you rub yourselves against a stone in your Ka'ba and kiss and embrace it?' Then some of them say that Abraham had relations with Agar upon it, but others say that he tied the camel to it, when he was going to sacrifice Isaac.

And we answer them: 'Since Scripture says that the mountain was wooded and had trees from which Abraham cut wood for the holocaust and laid it upon Isaac, and then he left the asses behind with the two young men, why talk nonsense?

And they are embarrassed but they still assert that the stone is Abraham's.

Then we say: 'Let it be Abraham's, as you so foolishly say. Then, just because Abraham had relations with a woman on it or tied a camel to it, you are not ashamed to kiss it, yet you blame us for venerating the Cross of Christ by which the power of the demons and the deceit of the Devil was destroyed.'

This stone that they talk about is a head of that Aphrodite whom they used to worship and whom they called Khabar. Even to the present day, traces of the carving are visible on it to careful observers.

As has been related, this Mohammed wrote many ridiculous books, to each one of which he set a title. For example, there is the surah, etc.

Ibn Battuta. Travels. Chapter IV Mecca.

The Black Stone. As for the Stone, its height above the ground is six spans *, so that a tall man has to bend down in order to kiss it and a small man has to stretch himself up to reach it. It is set in the angle which points to the east, two thirds of a span broad and a span in length, and is soldered in. No one knows the dimension of that side of it which is enclosed in the angle. It includes four fragments stuck together; the [usual] story is that the Qarmati ** (God curse him) broke it. The edges of the stone are bound by a rim of silver, whose whiteness gleams against the black mass of the holy stone, so that all eyes see in it an overpowering beauty. The kissing of the stone gives a [sensation of] pleasure which is peculiarly agreeable to the mouth and as one places his lips against it he would fain not withdraw them from its embrace, by virtue of a special quality reposed in it and a divine favor accorded to it.

In the unbroken portion of the black stone, near the edge of it which is to the right as one kisses it, is a small and glittering

White spot, as if it were a mole on that glorious surface. You can see the pilgrims, as they make their circuits of the Ka'ba, falling one upon the other in the press to kiss it, and it is seldom that one succeeds in doing so except after vigorous jostling. They do just the same when they are entering the Holy House. It is from beside the Black Stone that the beginning of the circuit is made and it is the first of the angle that the circuiter comes to. When he kisses the Stone, he steps back from it a little way, keeps the illustrious Ka'ba on his left side, and proceeds on his circuit. He comes next, after the Stone, to the Iraqi angle, which faces to the north; then he comes to the Syrian angle; which faces to the west; then to the Yamanite angle which faces to the south; and so returns to the Black Stone; which faces to the east.

In front of the obscene litholatry or idolatry of this rite, Umar himself began by recoiling or hesitating. Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 2, Book 26, Hadith 679.

"I saw Umar bin Al-Khattab kissing the Black Stone and he then said (to it) 'Had I not seen God's Apostle kissing you (stone) I would not have kissed you.' "

Jami at-Tirmidhi, Vol. 2, Book 4, Hadith 860.

"I saw Umar bin Al-Khattab kissing the (Black) Stone and saying: 'I am kissing you while I know that you are just a stone, and if I had not seen the Messenger of God kissing you, I would not kiss you.' Sunan Ibn Majah ,Vol. 4, Book 25, Hadith 2943.

"I saw the bald forehead of Umar bin Khattab when he kissed the Black Stone and said: 'I am kissing you, although I know that you are only a stone and you can neither cause harm nor bring benefit. Had I not seen the Messenger of God kissing you, I would not have kissed you.'"

But "Ar baí cretim in óenDé oc Cormac . ar ro ráidseom na aidérad clocha ná crunnu acht no adérad intí dosroni & ropo chomsid ar cul na uli dúla" (Senchas na relec inso).

"Cormac believed in one God. He said that he adored neither the stones nor the trees, but he adored only the one who had made them and who is the guardian of all the elements" (The history of burial places).

As in the case of other ancient religions, traditional pagan worship consisted of honoring objects in human form, representing or evoking gods or goddesses, and containing some of their power. But Muslim rhetoric against them takes over Jewish and Christian themes. In the Quran, statues are neither more nor less than a "defilement"; their uselessness, inefficiency or strictly human origin is emphasized; what, besides, demonstrates the full extent of the misunderstanding about them because, let us repeat it; the statues are not the deity itself, but a representation or a symbol of the deity, containing a part of its force (called mana in Polynesia).

* The span is an old unit of length. It is based on the width of an open hand, from the tip of the thumb to the end of the little finger, about 20 cm.

** The Qarmatians are Ismaili Shiites who were active especially in the tenth century in Iraq, Syria, Palestine and the Bahraini region, where they founded a state (903-1077) with egalitarian pretensions. In 890, they stole the black stone.

THE PANTHEON.

The pagans of Mecca called their religion, *Din al-Aba'i-ka* or "Faith of the Forefathers." The purpose of this chapter is not to make an exhaustive study of the pantheon (s) of the Semitic-speaking countries of the end of the late antiquity (Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Jordan) before the advent of Islam but to introduce our study of Islam by a few words of the worship religions pantheons or rites WHICH COULD HAVE INFLUENCED IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER INCIPIENT ISLAM. Our pantheon will therefore be limited to a few names without more. We will say nothing of the innumerable gods or demons of the various pantheons in the region, Petra, Palmyra, despite their immense interest (nothing which is human is foreign to us).

"*Natio est omnis admodum dedita religionibus*," writes Caesar about the barbarian druids in the far west. Well, it was exactly the same for the Arabs before Islam. Each extended family had its protective gods, a little bit like the fairies of the *matres* type or the fairies of the *matronae*-type.

Ibn Kalbi *Kitab al-Asnam* 28.

Every family in Mecca had at home a statuette which they worshiped. Whenever one of them purposed to set out on a journey his last act before leaving the house would be to touch the statue in hope of an auspicious journey; and on his return, the first thing he would do was to touch it again in gratitude for a propitious return

Maqrizi, *Universal History. Al-khabar an al-bashar*. Translation Michael Lecker, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Translation by Michael Lecker of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Published in the issue 106 of the journal *The Museon* printed by Peeters Publishers of Leuven, pages 332 to 346.

Every clan of the Aws and the Khazraj [...] had an idol in a room (*bayt*) belonging to the whole clan which they honored and venerated and to which they sacrificed [...] Every nobleman had one of these idols. In the house of Amr b. al-Jamuh there was an idol called Saf.

Of course, this open (before the expression was invented) tolerance or secularism was considered as *taghut* (not good) by Muhammad. The meaning of this word is rather uncertain: the *taghut*, it would be the deities taken globally or as a whole. The term is mentioned eight times by the Quran, but the word *taghut* does not mean anything specific in Arabic and it may be of foreign origin. In the vocabulary of contemporary Islam, the term *taghut* means anything that is evil, dangerous, innovative or seducing. HUBAL or HOBAL.

One of the deities who, according to Muslim tradition, was venerated in Mecca during pre-Islamic times was Hobal or Hubal. This Meccan deity is attested in an inscription discovered on the border between Syria and Arabia.

Hobal seems to have been the great god rival of Allah in the city of Mecca.

Ibn Hisham, *Life of Muhammad*, Alfred Guillaume. Page 100.

Am I to worship one lord or a thousand ?

If there are as many as you claim,

I renounce Allat and al Uzza both of them

As any strong-minded person would.

I will not worship al Uzza and her two daughters,

Nor will I visit the two images of the Banu Amr.

I will not worship Hubal though he was our lord

In the days when I had little sense.

The statue of Hubal was erected above the dry well of the Kaaba, in which offerings were thrown. His place next to the Black Stone, which was also already there, suggests that the people of the time had established a link between the two ... But which one? This god so important to Mecca is strangely absent from the Quran, what is quite intriguing.

Ibn Hisham, *Life of Muhammad*, Alfred Guillaume. Page 37.

Quraysh had a statue by a well in the middle of the Ka'ba called Hubal.

Ibn Kalbi, *Kitab al-Asnam* 23.

The Quraysh also had several statues in and around the Ka'bah. The greatest of these was Hubal. It was, as I was told, of red agate, in the form of a man with the right hand broken off. It came into the possession of the Quraysh in this condition, and they, therefore, made for it a hand of gold. The first to set it up [for worship] was Khuzaymah ibn-Mudrikah ibn-al-Ya's' ibn-Mudar. Consequently it used to be called Khuzaymah's Hubal.

It stood inside the Ka'bah. In front of it were seven divination arrows (sing. *qidh*, pl. *qidah* or *aqduh*).

On one of these arrows was written "pure," and on another "consociated alien." Whenever the lineage of a newborn was doubted, they would offer a sacrifice to him and then shuffle the arrows and throw

them. If the arrows showed the word "pure," the child would be declared legitimate and the tribe would accept him. If, however, the arrows showed the words "consociated alien," the child would be declared illegitimate and the tribe would reject him. The third arrow was for divination concerning the dead, while the fourth was for divination concerning marriage. The purpose of the three remaining arrows has not been explained.

Whenever they disagreed concerning something, or purposed to embark upon a journey, or undertake some project, they would proceed to Hubal's statue and shuffle the divination arrows before it. Whatever result they obtained they would do accordingly.

It was before Hubal that Abd-al-Muttalib shuffled the divination arrows [in order to find out which of his ten children he should sacrifice in fulfillment of a vow he had sworn], and the arrows pointed to his son Abdullah, the father of the Prophet. Hubal was also the same god whom abu-Sufyan ibn-Harb addressed when he emerged victorious after the battle of Uhud, saying:

"Hubal, be you exalted" (i.e., may your religion triumph)!

To which the Prophet replied: "God is more exalted and more majestic."

The documents indicate therefore that Hubal had the greatest statue in the sanctuary. It is almost certain that the statue of Abraham, mentioned in the sources as that which was installed in the Kaaba, was in fact that of Hubal, holding the divining arrows. It is not known whether Hobal is to be brought closer to Allah, el ilah (God) if he is different from the beginning; or if there was later distinction because of the unrest of Muhammad, taking sides with Allah against Hubal; or if it corresponds to the rabb (lord) of the sanctuary mentioned by other sources.

These sources indicate in any case that his statue overlooked the sanctuary of Mecca. Hubal possessed a sharper tribal character, he could concretize the grouping of the Quraysh and Kinana tribes in Mecca. This Hubal / Hobal was associated with the Semitic god Baal as well as with Adonis and Tammuz, the gods of spring, fertility, agriculture, and abundance ... This deity was honored by consecrating offerings or animal sacrifices, sometimes even human sacrifices.

Some accounts of the sira (biography) of Muhammad show us pagans in Mecca praying God standing beside the statue of Hubal. In association with the black stone, the representation of the god Hobal thus played a major role in the imagination of the pagan Arabs in Mecca at that time; and its location at that time, at the exact location of the current Kaaba, suggests a key role in the conceptual elaboration of the god of Muslims: God.

The German exegete Julius Wellhausen points out that in the Quran, Allah is called "Lord of the territory of Mecca" or "Lord of the Kaaba." The latter qualifying being blatantly obvious, Wellhausen deduced that Hubal and Allah were one; and that the ease with which the pagan Arabs of the region converted to Islam is due precisely to this original confusion between the two.

QURAN, CHAPTER 71 VERSE 23.

Forsake not your gods. Forsake not Wadd, nor Suwa, nor Yaghuth and Yauq and Nasr.

Yaghut had the shape of a lion, Yauq the shape of a horse and Nasr the shape of an eagle or a vulture.

Sahih Bukhari, Volume 60, Book 6, Hadith 442.

All the deities who were worshiped by the people of Noah were worshiped by the Arabs later on. As for the Wadd's statue, it was worshiped by the tribe of Kalb at Dumat-al-Jandal; that of Suwa among the tribe of Murad and then by Ban, Ghutaif at Al-Jurf near Saba; Yauq was the deity of Hamdan, and Nasr was the deity of Himyar.

WADD.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 49.

I then requested Malik ibn-Harithah saying, "Describe to me Wadd in such a way which would make it appear vividly before me." Malik replied, "It was the statue of a huge man, as big as the largest of human beings, covered with two robes, clothed with the one and cloaked with the other, carrying a sword on his waist and a bow on his shoulder, and holding in [one] and a spear to which was attached a standard, and [in the other] a quiver full of arrows...."

I also saw it after Khalid ibn-al-Walid had destroyed it and smashed it into pieces. For the Apostle of God had, after the battle of Tabuk, sent Khalid ibn-al-Walid to destroy it. But the banu-Abd-Wadd and the banu-Amir al-Ajdar resisted Khalid and attempted to protect the statue. Khalid, therefore, fought and defeated them, and then destroyed [the shrine] and broke the statue.

SUWA.

This deity was very widespread in the Arab populations around Mecca: Wadi Naman, Wadi Ruhayl, the tribe of Sulaym, Hudhayl, etc. She was represented in the form of a woman. She was the protector of herds, and lost animals.

Ibn al Kalbi.

The Hudhayl adopted Suwa [as their goddess] and placed it in Ruhat in the vicinity of Yanbu, one of the villages of Medina. The custodians [of its temple] were the banu-Lihyan. However, I have not heard any mention of it in the poems of the Hudhalites. I did, however, hear of it in a poem by a certain man from Yemen.

ISAF and NA'ILA.

Ibn al Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 8.

Isaf was courting Na'ilah in the land of Yemen. They set out to perform the pilgrimage. Upon their arrival in Mecca, they entered the Ka'bah. Taking advantage of the absence of anyone else and of the privacy of the Sacred House, Isaf committed adultery with her in the sanctuary. Thereupon they were transformed into stone, becoming two miskhs (metamorphosed by God). They were then taken out and placed in their respective places. Later on, the Khuza'ah and the Quraysh, as well as everyone who came on pilgrimage to the Sacred House, worshiped them.

Ibn al Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 24.

Among their deities, the Quraysh also had Isaf and Na'ilah. On being transformed into petrified form, they were placed by the Ka'bah in order that people might see them and be warned. Finally, as their origin became remote and, therefore, forgotten, and idol worship came into vogue, they were worshiped with the other idols. One of them stood close to the Ka'bah while the other was placed by Zamzam's well. Later, the Quraysh moved the one which stood close to the Ka'bah to the side of the other by Zamzam where they sacrificed to both.

Of them abu-Talib said, swearing by them when the Quraysh united against the banu-Hashim in connection with the rise of the Prophet:

"Unto the house [of God] I brought my men and my kin,
And held fast to the veils of its curtains;
Yea, where the banu-al-Ash'ar halt I brought them all,
Where the valleys meet and Isaf and Na'ilah stand."

Bishr ibn-Khazim al-Asadi, speaking of Isaf, says:

Full of awe, they do not draw nigh unto it,
But stand afar off like the menstruating women before Isaf.

Editor's note. The presence in the sanctuary of two suggestive sacred rocks has probably given birth to this etiological myth, around a story both salacious and moralizing. We also find here the Euhemerist theories that reassure Muslim compilers.

BUWANA.

The statue and site of a sanctuary of the Quraysh near Yanbu, on the coast.

Ibn Sad, Tabaqat al-kabir, Volume 1, Parts 1.40.18

Buwanah was an idol to whom the Quraysh went on pilgrimage and showed respect. They used to perform sacrifices, shave their heads and passed one night in a year near it. Abu Talib [Muhammad's uncle] also used to make pilgrimage to it with his people; he asked the Apostle of God, may God bless him, to attend this festival with his people, but the Apostle of God, may God bless him, refused.

Thereupon I saw Abu Talib getting angry and his aunts also getting angry....

AL-FALS.

Ibn al Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 51.

The Tayyi had a statue called al-Fals. It was a red [rock], in the form of a man, projecting in the center of their mountain, Aja which was black. They were wont to worship this deity, present their offerings unto it, and slaughter their sacrifices before its [ascent]. No man who was afraid and was seeking refuge would come to it without finding safety, and no stray beast would enter its confines without finding protection. The beast would also become the property of the god, sacred and taboo.

Its custody was in the hands of banu-Bawlan.....The last of the banu-Bawlan to hold its custody was one called Sayfi.....

Adi ibn-Hatim had, at that same day, offered a sacrifice before al-Fals, and saw what Malik had done. As he sat with a few companions discussing the incident, he trembled with fear and said, "Watch what will befall Malik this day." But several days passed and nothing happened to Malik. Consequently Adi renounced the worship of al-Fals as well as that of the other gods and embraced Christianity.....

Adi was, therefore, the first to violate the taboo of al-Fals. Henceforth whenever the custodian took in a stray beast [he was not allowed to keep it as the property of the god]; on the contrary, it was taken away from him. Al-Fals continued to be worshiped until the advent of the Prophet, at which time Ali ibn-abi-Talib was dispatched to destroy his statue. Ali destroyed the idol and carried away therefrom two swords called Mikhdham and Rasub (the same two swords which Alqamah ibn-Abadah had mentioned in his poetry), which al-Harith ibn-abi-Shamir, king of Ghassan, had presented al-Fals. Ali brought them to the Prophet who wore one of them and gave it back to him. It was the sword which 'Ali was always wont to wear. Here ends The Book of Idols.

CONCLUSION BY MICHAEL LECKER.

1. It appears that three different types of idols are to be discerned in the short passages preserved for us by Maqrizi.

a. Clan deities worshiped by the whole clan and probably used in public cult. They were kept in rooms presumably dedicated to their worship (which is possibly true for the deities of the other categories as well).

b. Deities held by each nobleman of the Aws and the Khazraj.

The case of the Salima (above, section 3.2) suggests that the clan deities are a subgroup of the deities held by the noblemen: their clan deity Isaf is presumably identical with that of Amr b. al-Jamuh: Saf/Manaf. The nobleman in charge of the clan deity must have been the recognized leader of the whole clan.

c. Lesser deities of the domestic family cult which were presumably part of every household in Medina. The deities of the former categories had names while those of this (domestic) category were perhaps anonymous. "The statues of Banu. so-and-so" reportedly destroyed by certain Companions were above all these domestic deities.

2. The association of the clan deity with the clan's majlis on one hand (see the end of section 3.3) and with the clan leader on the other (the Salima) suggests that the majlis was near the leader's house. When the leadership shifted to another, the majlis shifted with it.

3. One thing is certain: the Arabs of Medina on the eve of the Hijra were immersed in various deities worship. The extent of this is surprising indeed because the Jewish inhabitants of Medina are believed to have had an immense spiritual influence on their Arab neighbors.

4. Unsurprisingly, deities figure in the stereotypical stories of conversion to Islam which have a recurrent pattern: the destruction of the statue by the former pagan (or by his friend) signifies a break with past and symbolizes loyalty to the new faith.

5. Since the worship of these deities was closely connected with the tribal leadership, the destruction of deities (especially clan deities) defied the old leadership and undermined its authority. In other words, in the historical context of the Muhammad's struggle against many of the leaders of Medina the destruction of statues was a political act.

6. The destroyers (or alleged destroyers) of idols unmistakably belonged to the front line of the Prophet's supporters among the Ansar. A few of them were deputies at the great Aqaba-meeting and some were rewarded for their loyalty with important offices in the emerging Islamic state.

THE THREE GHARANIQ (the triad of goddesses).

AL UZZA.

Her name (Al-Ozza, Aloza) means "all-powerful, very high." A kind of Arab Brigindo / Bridget somehow. She was also known by the Quraysh in Mecca. She was thought to be a goddess of love and she was worshiped with Venus. She was likened to the goddess Aphrodite among the Greeks. She was offered human sacrifices. She represents the forces of fecundity / fertility, especially for the Quraysh, who have made the success of her worship for several centuries. The temple dedicated to the goddess Al Uzza was located in the Nakhla Valley, on the eastern road that nowadays leads to Bahrain and the Persian Gulf.

Ibn Kalbi . Kitab al-Asnam. 16-29.

They then took al-Uzza as their goddess. She is, in point of time, more recent than either Allat or Manah, since I have heard that the Arabs named their children after the latter two deities before they named them after al-Uzza....Abd-al-Uzza ibn-Ka'b is among the earliest compounded names used in conjunction with al-Uzza.

Her statue was situated in a valley in Nakhlat al-Sha'miyah[9] called Hurad alongside al-Ghumayr to the right of the road from Mecca to Iraq, above Dhat-Irq and nine miles from al-Bustin. Over her [Zalim] built a house called Buss in which the people used to receive oracular communications. The Arabs as well as the Quraysh were wont to name their children Abd-al-Uzza. Al-Uzza was the greatest deity among the Quraysh. They used to journey to her shrine, offer gifts unto her, and seek her favors through sacrifices.

We have been told that the Apostle of God once would have mentioned al-Uzza saying, "I have offered a white sheep to al-Uzza, while I was a follower of the religion of my people."

The Quraysh were wont to circumambulate the Ka'bah and say:

"By Allat and al-Uzza,

And Manah, the third goddess.

Verily they are the most exalted goddesses

Whose intercession is to be sought."

These were also called "the Daughters of Allah," and were supposed to intercede before Him.

Editor's note. A little bit like Mary in Christianity, or Muhammad, at the Last Judgment.

When the Apostle of God was sent, God revealed unto him [concerning them] the following:

Have you seen Allat and al-Uzza, and Manah the third deity ?

What? Shall you have male progeny and God female?

This indeed were an unfair partition!

These are mere names: you and your fathers named them thus:

God hath not sent down any warranty in their regard."

The Quraysh had dedicated to it, in the valley of Hurad, a ravine (shi'b) called Suqam and were wont to vie there with the Sacred Territory of the Ka'bah.

She also had a place of sacrifice called al-Ghabghab where they brought their oblations. Hudhali speaks of it in a satire which he composed against a certain man who had married a beautiful woman whose name was Asmi.

"Asmi was married to the jawbone of a little cow

Which one of the banu-Ghanm had offered for sacrifice.

As he led it to the Ghabghab of al-Uzza,

He noticed some defects in its eyes;

And when the cow was offered upon the altar,

And its flesh divided, his portion was foul."

It was customary to divide the meat resulting from the sacrifice among those who had offered it and among those present at the ceremony.

Qays ibn-Munqidh ibn-Ubayd.... speaking of it, said:

"We swore first by the House of God,

And failing that, by the betylus

Which in al-Ghabghab stand."

The Quraysh were wont to venerate her above all other deities. For this reason Zayd ibn-Amr ibn-Nufayl....said:

"I have renounced both Allat and al-Uzza,

For thus would the robust and the brave do.

No more do I worship al-Uzza and her two daughters,
Or visit the two statues of the Banu-Ghanm;
Nor do I journey to Hubal's statue and adore him,
Although it was our lord when I was young."

The custody of al-Uzza was in the hands of the banu-Shayban ibn-Jabir ibn-Murrah....The last of them to hold its custody was Dubayyah ibn-Harami al-Sulami.

Al-Uzza continued to be venerated until God sent His Prophet who ridiculed her together with the other deities forbade her worship. At the same time, a revelation concerning her came down in the Quran. This proved very hard upon the Quraysh. Then abu-Uhayhah.... was taken sick by what proved to be his last and fatal sickness. As he lay on his deathbed, abu-Lahab came to visit and found him weeping. Abu-Lahab asked, "What makes you weep O abu-Uhayhah? Is it death which is inevitable?" Abu-Uhayhah replied, "No. But I fear that al-Uzza will not be worshiped after I depart." Abu-Lahab answered, "By God....her worship will not be discontinued after you depart because of your death." Abu-Uhayhah then said, "Now I know that I have a successor," and was well pleased with abu-Lahab's intense loyalty to al-Uzza.

In the year of the victory (am al-fath), the Prophet summoned Khalid ibn-al-Walid and said unto him, "Go unto the tree in the valley of Nakhlah and cut it down." Khalid went thereto, captured Dubayyah, who was the custodian of al-Uzza, and killed him. Abu-Khirash al-Hudhali composed the following elegy about him:

"What is wrong with Dubayyah? For days I have not seen him
Amid the wine connoisseurs; he did not draw nigh, he did not appear.
If he were living, I would have come with a cup
Of the banu-Hatif make, filled with Bacchus blood.
Noble and generous is he; no sooner are his wine cups filled
Than they become empty, like an old tank full of holes in the midst of winter.
Suqam has become desolate, deserted by all of its friends,
Except the wild beasts and the wind which
blows through its empty chambers."

.....On the authority of abu-Salih ibn-Abbas said: Al-Uzza was a she-devil who used to haunt three trees in the valley of Nakhlah. When the Prophet captured Mecca, he dispatched Khalid ibn-al-Walid saying, "Go to the valley of Nakhlah; there you will find three trees. Cut down the first one." Khalid went and cut it down. On his return to report, the Prophet asked him saying, "Have you seen anything there?" Khalid replied and said, "No." The Prophet ordered him to return and cut down the second tree. Therefore Khalid went and cut it down. On his return to report the Prophet asked him a second time, "Have you seen anything there?" Khalid answered, "No." Thereupon the Prophet ordered him to go back and cut down the third tree. When Khalid arrived on the scene, he found an Abyssinian slave with disheveled hair and her hands placed on her shoulder[s], gnashing and grating her teeth. Behind her stood Dubayyah al-Sulami who was then the custodian of al-Uzza. When Dubayyah saw Khalid approaching, he said:

"O you al-Uzza! Remove your veil and tuck up your sleeves;
Summon up thy strength and deal Khalid an unmistakable blow.
For unless you kill him this very day,
You shall be doomed to ignominy and shame."

Thereupon Khalid replied:

"O al-Uzza! May thou be blasphemed, not exalted!
Verily I see that God hath abased thee."

Turning to the woman, he dealt her a blow which severed her head in twain, and lo, she crumbled into ashes. He then cut down the tree and killed Dubayyah the custodian, after which he returned to the Prophet and reported to him his exploit. Thereupon the Prophet said, "That was al-Uzza. But she is no more. The Arabs shall have none after her. Verily she shall never be worshiped again." Consequently abu-Khirash composed the preceding verses in making the elegy of Dubayyah.

Editor's note. From this umpteenth demonstration of medieval obscurantism can be deduced the 3 things following.

Muhammad believed in the real existence of Al-Uzza.

But Islam makes her a demon (any new religion that triumphs turns into demons the gods of the religion it supplants).

This demonstration of intolerance is very similar to the episode when St Martin cuts down a sacred pine in the 4th century.

"Martin stood without a fear and just as it was falling, about to crush him, he meets it with the sign of salvation, when it draws itself back, upright, and topples down on the opposite side, so that the crowd there, who thought themselves out of harm's way, had a narrow escape.

Being desirous to pull down a temple in the village of Leprosum (Loroux) which was defiled with every kind of pagan superstition, a crowd of gentiles opposed himthen two angels appeared to him, armed with lance and buckler, as soldiers etc.etc ." (History of France by G.H. Smith, FGS).

It is generally forgotten to mention that since Christian religion having long been the only official religion in the country, the forces of law and order (some Roman Legionaries) assisted him, which, as in the case of St. Khalid, is to explain many things in these alleged miracles. End of the Editor's note.

Abu-al-Mundhir: The Quraysh as well as the other Arabs who inhabited Mecca did not offer to any of the deities anything similar to their veneration of al-Uzza. The next in order of veneration was Allat and then Manah. Al-Uzza, however, received from the Quraysh the exclusive honor of visitation and sacrifice. This, I believe, was because of her close proximity. The Thaqif, on the other hand, were wont to offer Manah the exclusive honor [of visitation and sacrifice], in the same way the Quraysh offered it to al-Uzza, while the Aws and the Khazraj favored Manah therewith. All of them, though, venerated al-Uzza. They did not, however, hold the same regard, or anything approaching it, for the five deities which were introduced by Amr ibn-Luhayy. These are the five deities which God mentioned in the glorious Quran when He declared , "Noah's enemies said: Forsake not Wadd nor Suwa, nor Yaghuth and YaUs and Nasr." This, I believe, was because of their distance from them.

The Quraysh were wont to venerate al-Uzza. The Ghani and the Bihilah, too, joined the Quraysh in her worship. The Prophet, therefore, dispatched Khalid ibn-al-Walid, who cut down the trees, destroyed the house, and demolished the statue.

When God sent His Prophet, who came preaching the Unity of God and calling for His worship alone without any associate, the Arabs said, "Makes he the god to be but a single god? A strange thing forsooth is this." They had in mind the goddess.

ALLAT.

Herodotus Book I chapter 131: 3.

They learned later to sacrifice to the "heavenly" Aphrodite from the Assyrians and Arabians. She is called by the Assyrians Mylitta, by the Persians Mitra (?????) by the Arabians Alilat.

In Palmyra in the Baalshamin Temple (destroyed by the Islamic State in 2015), she was represented with a palm branch and in the company of a lion. Allat is a female deity also attested in the temple of the Wadi Rum, Jordan.

This Alilat, whom Herodotus likens to Urania, probably matched the mother -goddess of the gods, the Astarte of the Semites in the North. She was a goddess of fertility as well as agriculture (the sun?) She was symbolized by a white stone to which various ornaments had been suspended. As God simply means "God," Al-Lat is to mean something like "the goddess." She was often portrayed as Venus, the morning star, the shepherd's star, although the Hellenized Arabs brought her closer to Athena. It was a great pan-Arab deity, protector of herds and caravans, that is to say, of economic and social life, venerated in Mecca and Palmyra. Under the pen, or let us say more precisely under the reed pen of the Muslim commentators, she will become al-Latt, a millstone to grind the grains, belonging to an old Jew. The soul / mind of this one goes into the stone and decides the population to adore it. It is, of course, as fanciful as contemptuous or anti-Semitic, and it shows little understanding. We uns, Tolandian "high knowers" are men, only men, but as a man precisely, nothing that is human should be foreign to us. And just like the unknown philosopher met by Lucian of Samosata in the region of Marseille, we say: "To the Greeks let us speak Greek, to the Arabs let us speak Arabic! "

Ibn Kalbi. Kitab al-Asnam 14-15.

Allat stood in al-Ta'if and was more recent than Manah. She was a cubic rock 1) beside which a certain Jew used to prepare his barley porridge (sawiq). Her custody was in the hands of the Banu-Attab ibn-Malik of the Thaqif, who had built an edifice over her. The Quraysh, as well as all the Arabs, were wont to venerate Allat. They also used to name their children after her, calling them Zayd-Allat and Taym-Allat.

She stood in the place of the left-hand side minaret of the present-day mosque of al-Ta'if. She is the deity which God mentioned when He said, "Have you seen Allat and al-Uzza?" It was this same Allat which Amr ibn-al-Ju'ayd had in mind when he said:

"In forswearing wine I am like him who has abjured Allat,

Although he had been at one time her devotee."

Likewise it was the same deity to which al-Mutalammis alluded in his satire of Amr ibn-al-Mundhirt when he said:

"Thou hast banished me for fear of lampoons and satire.

No! By Allat and all the sacred betylus (ansab),

You shall not escape."

Allat continued to be venerated until the Thaqif embraced Islam, when the Apostle of God dispatched al-Mughirah ibn-Shu'bah, who destroyed her and burned her temple to the ground.

And in this connection, when Allat was destroyed and burned to the ground, Shaddid ibn-Arid al-Jusami said warning the Thaqif not to return to her worship nor attempt to avenge her destruction:

"Come not to Allat, for God has doomed her to destruction;

How can you stand by one which doth not triumph?

That which, when set on fire, did not resist the flames,

Nor saved her stones, is inglorious and worthless.

Hence when the Apostle in your place shall arrive

And then leave, not one of her followers shall be left."

In central Arabia, Ta'if was her main veneration place and a square rock attracted the attention of pilgrims who came to see "The Lady" (ar Rabbah).

Tabari, History (he refers to al-Lat as "Taghiyyah").

"The Messenger of God dispatched Abu Sufyan b. Harb and al-Mughirah b. Shu'bah to demolish al-Taghiyyah. The two traveled with the deputation until they approached al-Ta'if, at which point Mughirah asked Abu Sufyan to precede him. Abu Sufyan refused, saying "Go to your kinsfolk yourself," and stayed at his estate in Dhu al-Harm. When al-Mughirah b. Shubah entered [al Taif] he mounted the stone and struck it with a pickaxe while his folk, the Banu Mu'attib stood by him, fearing that he might be shot at or struck as Urwah had been. The women of Thaqif came out with their heads uncovered and said, lamenting the [loss of the] goddess [i.e., the idol]: "Oh, shed tears for the protector! Ignoble ones have forsaken her, those not competent in wielding swords".

While al-Mughirah was striking the idol with the axe, Abu Sufyan was saying, "Alas for you, alas! "

When Al-Mughirah had demolished it, he took its treasure and ornamentation and sent [it] to Abu Sufyan. Its ornamentation was made up of various items, while its treasure consisted of gold and onyx. The Messenger of God had previously instructed Abu Sufyan to pay the debts of Urwah and al-Aswad, the sons of Masud, from the property of al-Lat, so he discharged their debts. [Tabari, Volume 9, The last Years of the Prophet 45-46].

The stone was later embedded in the mosque built on the site of the shrine [Editor4s note. Like Notre Dame in Paris, which was built on a druidic sanctuary dedicated to the great Hornunnos] to inflict an additional and quite useless symbolic humiliation for the followers of this goddess.

There were shrines dedicated to the goddess Allat in Nakhla, Ukaz and Mecca therefore.

1) That is to say a stone altar on which was engraved in low relief as in Petra or Palmyra a representation of the goddess.

MANAT.

Manat 1) is a female deity attested in Palmyra, in today's Syria, in Petra, in present-day Jordan, and in north-western Saudi Arabia.

In the vicinity of Mecca was also a temple on the coast, dedicated to the goddess Manat, the goddess of destiny, Fortune, and even "Lady of Peace." The etymology of her name is close to the idea of

counting, sharing. It corresponds to the Tykhe of the Greeks. She also chairs the tribal group of the Qays Aylan. In the form Manaf, she is honored by the Quraysh and the Khuzaa. Although known in Mecca, she was especially revered in the neighboring tribes. Many sources also report that Manat was the most revered deity in Yathrib / Medina before the arrival of Muhammad. She shares this glory with the Rahman, or the Yahweh, of the Jewish tribes of the city (Hubal? God?)

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 12-14.

The most ancient of all these deities was Manah. The Arabs used to name their children Abd-Manah and Zayd-Manah. Manah was erected on the seashore in the vicinity of al-Mushalla[4] in Qudayd, between Medina and Mecca. All the Arabs used to venerate her and sacrifice before her. [In particular]

the Aws and the Khazraj, as well as the inhabitants of Medina and Mecca and their vicinities, used to venerate Manah, sacrifice before her, and bring unto her their offerings [...].

The Aws and the Khazraj, as well as those Arabs among the people of Yathrib/Medina and other places who took to their way of life, were wont to go on pilgrimage and observe the vigil at all the appointed places, but not shave their heads. At the end of the pilgrimage, however, when they were about to return home, they would set out to the place

where Manah stood, shave their heads, and stay there for a while. They did not consider their pilgrimage completed until they visited Manah. Because of this veneration of Manah by the Awa and the Khazraj, 'Abd-al-Uzza ibn-Wadi'ah al-Muzani, or some other Arab, said:

"An oath, truthful and just, I swore

By Manah, at the sacred place of the Khazraj."

This Manah is the deity that which God mentioned when He said, "And Manah, the third." She was the [goddess] of the Hudhayl and the Khuza'ah.

The Quraysh as well as the rest of the Arabs continued to venerate Manah until the Apostle of God set out from Medina in the eighth year of the Hijrah, the year in which God accorded him the victory. When he was at a distance of four or five nights from Medina, he dispatched 'Ali to destroy her. Ali demolished her, took away all her treasures, and carried them back to the Prophet. Among the treasures which Ali carried away were two swords which had been presented to [Manah] by al-Harith ibn-abi-Shamir al-Ghassani, the king of Ghassan. The one sword was called Mikhdham and the other Rasub.

The Prophet gave these two swords to Ali. It is, therefore, said that dhu-al-Faqar, the sword of 'Ali, was one of them.

It is also said that Ali found these two swords in the temple of al-Fals, the divinity of the Tayyi', whither the Prophet had sent him, and which he also destroyed.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 27.

Abu-al-Mundhir: The Quraysh had another statue called Manaf. They were wont to call their children Abd-Manaf, after it. I do not, however, know where it stood, or who erected it. The menstruating women were not allowed to come near the idols or to touch them. Rather, they stood far off.

".....stay away as the menstruating women stand afar off from Manaf."

CONCLUSION.

These three goddesses were called Allat, Manat, and Al Uzza. But they were not just names, as the author of the Quranic text will say later. The Arabs regarded Al-Uzza, Allat, and Manat as female hypostases (vyuha) of the rain-giving higher good (Hubal ??? God ???). These deities were known by all Arabs, and have been honored by many generations for centuries, in the most diverse regions, peacefully. In Mecca they were regarded as daughters of Allah ... and their intercession to him, on the behalf of their faithful, was very much sought after.

1) Manat Manah and Manaf are probably variants.

THE JINNS.

According to Ibn Kalbi jinns were also worshiped.

The banu-Mulayh of the Khuza'ah tribe (they are the kindred of Talhat a-Talahat or al-Talhat]) were wont to worship the jinn. In reference to them, the following verse was revealed: "Truly they worship you call on besides God, are, like yourselves, his servants."

In literary Arabic, jinn is the plural of jinni whose feminine is jinniyya. The jinn are Quranic data, but they existed before Islam. Tradition has it that every poet of the pre-Islamic period was possessed by a jinni or shaytan (satan) who gave him his inspiration. There are several layers superimposed in the mass of beliefs and practices that reign in Muslim countries about jinn: there are those who, dating from the old Arab paganism, perpetuate vestiges of it; there are those added by the new religion; others lastly, in the countries in which it has spread, originate from beliefs and practices peculiar to these countries and previous to this new religion.

The literature concerning them is very vast but complicated and unclear, which does not make us able to give an exact definition of their nature, as far as it is possible.

In pre-Islamic Arabian mythology, the Jinn are supernatural beings who personify minor natural phenomena: spirits of the wilderness and the inhospitable forces of nature who were recognized by the pagan Arabs as divinities of inferior rank to the gods (alihak) and the angels (mala'ikah). The jinn are nature spirits that are believed to inhabit stones; trees; the earth; space; the air; fire; the sky, and bodies of water, and are thought to be fond of remote and desolate places such as the desert wilderness. The jinn played an important role in the beliefs of the pagan Arabs as they were seen as spirits of the land mediators between mankind and the gods.

The cult of the jinn as guardian or nature deities was popular across the whole of pre-Islamic Arabia during ancient times; to the extent that certain tribes such as the Banu Mulayh of the Hijaz and the Banu Hanifa of Najd worshiped the jinn exclusively and sought intercession from no other deities except them. The jinn had the ability to appear as wild animals, and sacred animals played a role as totems of particular tribes. The Bedouin believed that the gods (alihak) were related to the jinn, and the jinn to the wild animals: thus the jinn ultimately personified the merciless and hostile side of nature that was to be respected, worshiped and feared.

The pagan Arabs believed the sound of the desert winds to be music or voices of the jinn, which was known to them by the name of azif al jinn. The pre-Islamic Bedouin Arabs considered the oases and springs of the desert to be guarded by some jinn and so they would offer a small sacrifice to placate them and persuade them not to visit their wrath upon the people or animals.

Jinn may be either good or bad, and there is no clear demarcation between types of jinn.

Jinn is a classification of a number of different types of supernatural beings. The book "The Evolution of the Concept of the Jinn from pre-Islam to Islam" by Amira El-Zein describes how they could appear as pure spiritual beings or angels or demons, as indicated by Ibn Manzur, in Lisan al-Arab: "The people of the Jahiliyyah called angels – peace be upon them – jinn because they were invisible from sight ..."

But they could also be tangible creatures, particularly with animal-like characteristics, as stated by The Encyclopedia of Religion of James Hastings: "... were not pure spirits, for they were often represented as hairy and often as having the form of an ostrich or a snake."

The jinn could also haunt especially the ruins of ancient cities according to Amira El-Zein. Or imaginary cities like Abqar a wadi in ancient Arabia known as a den of jinn. In the Thousand and One Nights, the jinn live in the pink city of Shadukiam.

The book mentions 4 specific types of Jinn in the pre-Islamic world.

1. Ghul. The ghouls were desert demons believed to violate graves and devour corpses.
2. Si'lah: The difference between this and the former is not clear. They seem to be more sneaky and clever.
3. Shiqq: this was a man with only half of a body (only one hand one eye one leg) who beated a human to death if encountered. Cf. the Irish Fomorians like Cicolluis.
4. Shaytan: They were noted for being cunning, powerful and generally rebellious.

PRE-ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY.

Some verses of the Quran clearly show that the Pagans in Mecca believed in God but that they did not make him only existing God, that they believed in the existence of other gods beside him or subordinates.

-First verse clearly henotheistic in the Quran, verse 91 of chapter 23. "God hath not chosen any son, nor is there any god along with Him; else would each god have assuredly championed that which he created, and some of them would assuredly have overcome others. Glorified be God above all that they allege.

-Second clearly henotheistic verse of the Quran, verse 3 of chapter 39: "Surely pure religion is for Allah only. And those who choose protecting friends beside Him (say): We worship them only that they may bring us near unto God! "

-Third verse clearly henotheistic Quran, verse 38 of chapter 39. And verily, if you should ask them: Who created the heavens and the earth ? they will say: Allah. Say....if Allah willed some hurt for me, could they remove from me His hurt; or if He willed some mercy for me, could they restrain His mercy ?

-Fourth verse clearly henotheistic of the Quran, verse 136 of chapter 6. "They assign unto God, of the crops and cattle which He created, a portion, and they say: "This is God's".... "and this is for (His) partners in regard to us." Thus that which (they assign) unto His partners in them reaches not God and that which (they assign) unto God goes to their (so-called) partners."

For the record, to truly believe that there is only one God should have made say.....

-“Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way because I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I accept it. I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend, is in me, and I am also a friend to him” (Bhagavad Gita 9: 23-29, dialogue between the god Krishna/Vishnu and prince Arjuna).

-Fifth verse of the Quran, which looks strangely enough as a henotheistic, verse 108 of chapter 6: "Revile not those unto whom they pray beside God lest they wrongfully revile God through ignorance." And finally the famous verses 1 to 6 of chapter 109, UNFORTUNATELY ABROGATED.

- " Say: O disbelievers! I do not worship that which you worship; Nor worship you that which I worship..... Unto you your religion, and unto me my religion.

Allah's problem is that this name is not a proper noun at first but a common noun meaning something like "the divine one, the divinity." We will never know for sure whether this is another designation of Hubal, supreme god of the Meccan pantheon before Islam, or another god, like Yaweh or Ahura Mazda, for example. What is strange and disturbing, to say the least, is that Hubal is never mentioned in the Quran, while other idols are mentioned. But it is not up to us barbarian druids of the far West to decide between Muslims and Christians on this subject. Our knowledge of Irish legends has made us very wary in this area.

Ethne Aitencaithrech is an Irish name meaning "gorse-colored hair." This Ethne Aitencaithrech can only be another name of Mugain, the wife of Cunocavaros / Conchobar.

Ethne Inguba can only be another name of Aemer the wife (the legitimate wife and not a mistress as translated by Eugene O'Curry, deceived by the name difference) of the Hesus Cuchulainn whose most famous name appears in the second part of the story, a second part having probably formed a separate episode originally, before being united under the same heading by some unknown bard or copyist monk. What matters are the outline of the story, not the details. That King Cunocavaros / Conchobar and his nephew, our legendary hero, the Hesus Cuchulainn, had mistresses, is not a mortal sin among us, at most a fault, even if the rest of the story shows us that it is better perhaps to be able to avoid such "faults" precisely, because in this story 1), it must be admitted, the Hesus Cuchulainn was rather pathetic.

Anyway, such a variation of names is less serious than those affecting the name of God in the Bible or his different names in the Quran.

We find indeed in the Bible, in alphabetical order, because chronologically appears first the plural Elohim: Adonai, El, Eloah, El Elyon, El Shaddai, El Olam, El Hai, El Roi, El Elohe Israel, El Gibbor, Sabaoth, Yah, Yhwh.

All these differences in names signify a plurality of different gods or ideas of God, later synthesized or merged into a single name, the tetragrammaton; what can't help but give birth to a god with a multiple personality, quite composite, even contradictory.

AS FOR ISLAM IT IS STILL SIMPLER, there is an official list of 99 names of God, most, of course, being only attributes, but others arouse more problems because they seem to designate an entity significantly different from God.

Originally, the Rabb is the lord of a place: the power that lives in a place and makes it a sanctuary.

This name is also given to priests in southern Arabia, what confirms the anthropomorphic origin of the expression. Or rabb is the word used by Muhammad at the beginning of the Quran, much more than the "God" of the future developments. Hence the series of "raab" below.

Rabba hadhal bayt: lord of the house.

Rabb al Ka 'ba: Lord of the Kaaba.

Rabb al falaq: Lord of the dawn.

Rabb al alamin: Lord of the worlds.

Etc., etc.

And finally the Rahman worshiped by another prophet, competitor of Muhammad, Musaylima, who died in obscure conditions (he gave up the fortress where he was safe to take refuge in his kaaba to himself, the hadiqa ar-Rahman). He defended with conviction a kind of warlike Monophysite

Christianity throughout central Arabia (Najd).

1) The wasting sickness of Cuchulainn and the only jealousy of Emer. Gaelic Serglige Con Culainn ocus Óenet Emire. In this legend two female angels come as a birds contact the semi-god Cuchulainn on the behalf of the goddess Wanda / Fand. This adultery will end badly!

ARAB MYTHOLOGY.

Traces of this mythology are still visible thanks to the survival of a very long epic poem, the legend of Antar (Antar is the character of the most famous romance of Arab chivalry, he concentrates in his person all the qualities that must possess an individual during the pre-Islamic period); and the resumption of myths about strictly Arab sages and prophets in the Quran: Shu'ayb, Saleh, Hud, and Luqman, which are like some ruins of ancient Arab mythology.

Luqman's wisdom. Quran chapter 31.

The Quran mentions a legendary Arab figure, a composite figure whose traits can be found throughout the Near East, in the Greek world, the Bible and even in Armenian texts. This sage (he is not a prophet) is especially known for his longevity. He even gives his name to chapter 31, where, through this fiction, he becomes, thanks to Muhammad, a spokesman for Muslim monotheism.

Saleh and the she-camel of the Thamud. Quran chapter 26 verses 141-159.

Muhammad quotes several times a character almost unknown, Salih, who is presented as a very ancient Arab prophet, badly received by the Thamud. He does not appear, at any time, in the Abrahamic tradition: it is a borrowing from the mythical - or epic - collection of the Arab populations. Despite its uncertain origin, the parodic dealing with the subject and the evanescence of the character, Salih became a popular saint for Muslims, from Yemen to Lebanon.

Shu'ayb among the Midianites. Quran chapter 11 verses 84-98.

This other Arabic "warner" would have been sent, according to the author of the Quran, to the people of Midian, or to the "people of the wood" Aayka), unknown otherwise. This is exactly the same case as previously. Muslim tradition has vainly tried to bring him closer to biblical characters.

Hud. Quran chapter 11 verse 50.

This legendary prophet is almost unknown. But he will arouse strong popular piety in the Muslim world, which presses in order to venerate him as a saint, around his known burials.

In the vestiges of "pagan" poetry, fragments of a traditional and secular wisdom could also be recognized, of which traces are also revealed in Muslim sources; in it there may be evidence of high idealism within the tribe. In these texts, Man is constantly the measure of everything in his greatness as in his misery. He has a haughty tone, his anguish is still present, and in all his complexity or subtlety, he presents to posterity a look absolutely contrary to what Islam, particularly in the Quran, wanted to show about him.

Here below an example. This is a poem of the Kaaba Mu'allaqat ascribed to Zohair bin Rabia. (First translation in European language by the Orientalist William Jones in 1799).....

47. He, indeed, who rejects the blunt end of the lance, which is presented as a token of peace, must yield to the sharpness of the point, with which every tall javelin is armed.

48. He who keeps his promise escapes blame; and he who directs his heart to the calm resting place of integrity will never stammer nor quake in the assemblies of his nation.

49. He who trembles at all possible causes of death falls in their way: even though he desires to mount the skies on a scaling ladder.

50. He who possesses wealth or talents, and withholds them from his countrymen, alienates their love, and exposes himself to their obloquy.

52. He who sojourns in foreign countries mistakes his enemy for his friend; and him, who exalts not his own soul, the nation will not exalt.

53. He who does not drive invaders from his cistern with strong arms will see it demolished; and he who abstains ever so much from injuring others will often himself be injured.

54. He who does not conciliate the hearts of men in a variety of transactions will be bitten by their sharp teeth, and trampled on by their pasterns.

55. He who shields his reputation by generous deeds will augment it; and he who does not guard himself from censure will be censured.

56. I am weary of the hard burdens which life imposes; and every man who, like me, has lived fourscore years will assuredly be no less weary.

57. I have seen Death herself stumble like a dim-sighted camel; but he whom she strikes falls; and he whom she misses grows old, even to decrepitude.

58. Whenever a man has a peculiar cast in his nature, although he supposes it concealed, it will soon be known.

59. Experience has taught me the events of this day and yesterday; but as to the events of to-morrow, I confess my blindness.

60. Half of man is his tongue, and the other half is his heart: the rest is only an image composed of blood and flesh.

61. He who confers benefits on persons unworthy of them changes his praise to blame, and his joy to repentance.

62. How many men dost thou see whose abundant merit is admired, when they are silent, but whose failings are discovered, as soon as they open their lips!

63. An old man never grows wise after his folly; but when a youth has acted foolishly, he may attain wisdom.

64. We asked, and you gave; we repeated our requests, and your gift was also repeated but whoever frequently solicits will at length meet with a refusal.

LITURGY AND RITUALS.

Ritual is a gesture that has a special meaning, which is performed for the purpose of expected efficiency. It is immutable, repeated, regular, accurate. It can be combined with others and make the individual who performs them different from what he is in normal life, and different from others. Traditional religion is essentially ritualistic: it emphasizes acts more than beliefs, collective manifestations more than mystical behaviors, tradition rather than doctrine. The Muslim religion will thus integrate most of these rituals, collective or individual: pilgrimage, circumambulations (tawaf), prayers and sacrifices, but giving them other meanings.

Most Islamic rites come from pagan rites, what makes their study easier. The new meaning that Muslims wanted to give them does not change something. For most practitioners, in all religions, it is the gesture which is important, and more, the gesture performed in front of others. It is through the rite that Muhammad managed to ensure the submission of the faithful: the daily compulsion which results from it leads the practice and freezes the reflection.

Ritual is a gesture that is performed in order to get some benefits. The following account confirms the absence of a break in this respect between before and after Islam.

Bukhari Volume 2, Book 24, Hadith number 517.

Narrated by Hakim bin Hizam

I said to God's Apostle, "Before embracing Islam I used to do good deeds like giving in charity, slave-manumitting, and the keeping of good relations with kith and kin. Shall I be rewarded for those deeds?" The Prophet replied, "You became Muslim with all those good deeds (without losing their reward)."

Tabari, History, volume 5, page 169.

Tubba' said, "What then do you advise me to do when I get to the temple?" [the ka'bah].

They replied, "When you get there, do as its devotees do: circumambulate it, venerate and honor it, shave your head in its presence and behave with humility until you leave its precincts."

The different ways of honoring a deity.

The system known as "polytheistic" is especially non-dogmatic: there is no absolute rule governing the relations between the power and its faithful. Each sanctuary has its tradition. These pagan rituals were largely taken over by the Muslim system, which, as we shall see, relies heavily on the rite, even before the elaboration of its doctrine. The sources try to guess who was able to institute this or that gesture. In fact, it is impossible to know, and this is justly that which is the strength of tradition.

According to the very well researched and very objective website wathanism.blogspot.com the white quartz statue of Dhu'l-Khalasah was decorated with a crown and beautiful necklaces, and was offered gifts of barley; wheat; milk and ostrich eggs.

Pagan prayers are characterized by a large variety of composition: it is the individual or the group who takes the lead in pronouncing a sacred word intended for a deity. Muhammad will completely innovate in this respect, by instituting a rigid and strict framework for this purpose. But he will let remain, nevertheless, a type of private, informal and individual prayer, close to the popular superstition or magic formula, the doa or dua.

The propitiatory prayer: the case of the rain.

A large number of Arab or Semitic gods are just male gods of rain, like God.

Some cases have been preserved, all of which concern Muhammad himself, called to practice this archaic type of prayer. Muhammad gave way to it gracefully and his uncle too.

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 2, Book 17, Hadith 123.

Narrated Anas: Whenever drought threatened them, `Umar bin Al-Khattab, used to ask Al-Abbas bin `Abdul Muttalib to invoke God for rain. He used to say, "O God! We used to ask our Prophet to invoke You for rain, and You would bless us with rain, and now we ask his uncle to invoke You also for rain. O God ! Bless us with rain." And so it would rain.

Al-Suyuti mentions the context of this event in his *Tarikh al-Khulafa'* (Beirut, 1992 Ahmad Fares ed. p. 140).

"In the year 17 `Umar enlarged the Prophetic mosque. That year there was a drought in the Hijaz.....Umar prayed for rain for the people by means of al-`Abbas. Ibn Sa`d narrated....that when Umar came out to pray for rain, he came out wearing the cloak (burd) of the Messenger of God and....Ibn Awn narrated that `Umar took al-`Abbas's hand and raised it, saying, 'O God, we

seek a means with the uncle of Your Prophet to ask that You drive away from us the drought and water us with rain'...."

Archaic Prayers of Contractual Type.

Here below is a remnant of the former system, inadvertently preserved in the Muslim tradition.

Ibn Ishaq, The Life of Muhammad, page 300 (battle of Badr).

God's apostle returned to the hut and entered it, and none was with him there but Abu Bakr. The apostle was beseeching his Lord for the help which He had promised to him, and among his words were these:

'O God, if this band perish today You will be worshiped no more.' But Abu Bakr said, 'O prophet of God, your constant entreaty will annoy thy Lord, for surely God will fulfill His promise to you.

Funeral invocations.

We know almost nothing about these words spoken at the funeral.

Bukhari Volume 2, Book 23, Number 382.

The Prophet said, "He who slaps his cheeks, tears his clothes and follows the ways and traditions of the Days of Ignorance is not one of us."

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam. 29.

The Arabs were wont to offer sacrifices before all these idols, betylus, and stones. Nevertheless they were aware of the excellence and superiority of the Ka'bah, to which they went on pilgrimage and visitation. What they did on their travels was a perpetuation of what they did at the Ka'bah, because of their devotion to it.

The sheep which they offered and slaughtered before their statues and betylus were called oblations (ata'ir, sing. atirah); the place on which they slaughtered and offered the sacrifice was called an altar (itr). In this connection Zuhayr ibn-abi-Sulma[said:

"He moved therefrom and reached a mountain top,
Like a high altar sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice."

Offerings and dedications.

These rites and objects were to concretize the state of the contractual relations between men and deities. Do ut des. Men give to receive, men give because they have received. One inflicts to oneself a symbolic loss hoping to receive much more in return.

Drink offerings.

It is the pouring a little liquid: it is the simplest and the most economical sacrifice.

Strabo XVI, 26.

The Nabateans worship the sun, building an altar on the top of the house, and pouring drink offering on it daily and burning frankincense.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 48.

I was told by Malik ibn-Harithah al-Ajdari that he himself had seen Wadd, and that his father was wont to send him to it with some milk saying, "Offer it unto your god to drink." Malik added, "I used to drink the milk myself.'

Dedications.

These are offerings made on the occasion of an inauguration and which are evoked by a brief inscription intended for the god or the participants, their number is considerable, as in any other people of antiquity.

The consecrations.

To receive a benefit, or to thank for a benefit, it is customary to offer a good, animal or object, to the god, as ex-voto. For the Arabs, they are mostly camels or swords.

Consecration of weapons.

Ibn al Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 51.

Al-Fals continued to be worshiped until the advent of the Prophet, at which time Ali ibn-abi-Talib was dispatched to destroy his statue. Ali destroyed the idol and carried away therefrom two swords called Mikhdham and Rasub (the same two swords which Alqamah ibn-Abadah had mentioned in his poetry), which al-Harith ibn-abi-Shamir, king of Ghassan, had presented al-Fals. Ali brought them to the Prophet who wore one of them and gave it back to him. It was the sword which 'Ali was always wont to wear.

Consecration of food.

Quran chapter 28 verse 57.

- Have We not established for them a sure sanctuary, whereunto the produce of all things is brought ?

Consecration of various objects.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 5, Book 58, Number 187.

Ibn Abbas said] He who wants to perform the Tawaf around the Ka'ba should go behind Al-Hijr and do not call it Al-Hatim, for in the pre-Islamic period of ignorance if any man took an oath, he used to throw his whip, shoes or bow in it.

The offering of the hair.

To sanctify the truce concluded with the Meccans, Muhammad will take the initiative to perform traditional rites in a pagan sanctuary. It is a very old (universal) ritual that remains in the shaving of the head at the end of the pilgrimage in Mecca. Our texts show the perplexity of his troops in front of the thing.

6th year of the Hegira, the month of Dhulqada 628.

After signing the treaty and making peace, the Messenger of God called out to the Companions, "Stand up, sacrifice your animals and have haircuts."

However, despite the endless respect and love of the Companions towards the Prophet, nobody moved. The Prophet had to repeat his order for the second time: "Stand up, sacrifice your animals and then have haircuts!"

However, the Companions acted as if they had not heard.

The Messenger of God repeated his order for the third time: "Stand up, sacrifice your animals and then have haircuts!"

The Companions did not move.

When the Messenger of God saw that nobody from the Companions moved though he repeated his order three times, he went to Umm Salama, one of his wives and said,

"O Umm Salama! What is the matter with them? I said to them repeatedly, 'Sacrifice your animals and have haircuts but they do not fulfill my order!'"

Umm Salama, who was exceptionally intelligent and virtuous said, "O Messenger of God! Do you want to do it? Then, go out and do not say even one word to the Companions until you slaughter your animal and your barber gives you a haircut. If you slaughter your animal and have your hair cut, they will do so, too."

Thereupon, the Prophet went out. He removed his ihram under his right armpit and put it on his left shoulder; he sacrificed his camel and called his barber, Khirash b. Umayya; Umayya cut his hair.

Thereupon, the Companions started to sacrifice their camels and have their hair cut.

Umm Salama narrates,

"They ran towards the animals to be sacrificed so fast that they nearly ran over one another."

They probably thought the articles of the peace treaty were too harsh and expected that the treaty would be annulled by revelation; they expected that the Messenger of God would annul his order. They thought they would be allowed to enter Mecca so that they would complete their umrah.

when they saw that no revelation was sent down regarding the issue, that the Messenger of God sacrificed his camel and that he had his hair cut, they started to sacrifice their camels quickly and had their hair cut so as not to oppose the Messenger of God » (Website Questions Islam).

[19]Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *ibid*, Vol. 4, p. 326; Bukhari, *Sahih*, Vol. 3, p. 182.

[20]Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *ibid*, Vol. 4, p. 326; Bukhari, *Sahih*, Vol. 3, p. 182.

[21]Waqidi, *Maghazi*, Vol. 2, p. 613.

[22]Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, *ibid*, Vol. 4, p. 326; Bukhari, *ibid*, Vol. 3, p. 182.

[23]Ibn Hisham, *ibid*, Vol. 3, p. 333.

[24]Waqidi, *ibid*, Vol. 2, p. 613.

Circumambulation (tawaf in Arabic, deisil in Ireland) is a universal ritual, it is carried out in various ways; around the statue representing the deity, inside the sanctuary or inside a whole territory (tromeie in Armorica), then always performing the same circuit.

The word hajj comes from a Semitic root evoking the verb "to turn."

Ethnology offers several functions to this rite: appropriation of a territory, protection of the sacred center, psychological conditioning, submission to an aberrant, collective, massive and rhythmic compulsion, reproduction of movement around a cosmic axis. This is the most spectacular ritual, often described, before and after Islam, and which has survived without any real transformation.

The circumambulation (tawaf).

The case of the Hums seems to indicate that initially there was only the circumambulation around the Kaaba and not even around Safa and Marwa. As for the ascent of Mount Arafat located 20 km away do not even talk about it, it was an only Bedouin pilgrimage.

Ibn Ishaq, The life of Muhammad by Alfred Guillaume page 87. THE HUMS.

"They gave up the halt at Arafat and the departure from it, while they recognized that these were institutions of the pilgrimage and the religion of Abraham. They considered that other Arabs should halt there and depart from the place; but they said, 'We are the people of the sanctuary, so it is not fitting that we should go out from the sacred territory and honor other places as we, the Hums, honor that; for the Hums are the people of the sanctuary.' They then proceeded to deal in the same way with Arabs who were born within and without the sacred territory. Kinana and Khuza'a joined with them in this.

The Hums went on to introduce innovations for which they had no warrant. They thought it wrong that they should eat cheese made of sour milk or clarify butter while they were in a state of ritual taboo. They would not enter tents of camel-hair or seek shelter from the sun except in leather tents while they were in this state of ritual purity. They went further and refused to allow those outside the haram to bring food in with them when they came on the great or little pilgrimage. Nor could they circumambulate the [sacred] house except in the garments of the Hums. If they had no such garments, they had to go round naked. If any man or woman felt scruples when they had no Hums garments, then they could go round in their ordinary clothes; but they had to throw them away afterwards so that neither they nor anyone else could make use of them.

The Arabs called these clothes 'the castoff.' They imposed all these restrictions on the Arabs, who accepted them and

halted at Arafat, hastened from it, and circumambulated the sacred house naked. The men at least were naked while the women laid aside all their clothes except a shift wide open back or front. An Arab woman who was going round the house thus said:

Today some or all of it can be seen,

But what can be seen I do not make common property!

Those who went round in the clothes in which they came from outside threw them away so that neither they nor anyone else could make use of them. An Arab mentioning some clothes which he had discarded and could not get again and yet wanted, said:

It's grief enough that I should return to her

As though she were a tabooed castoff in front of the pilgrims.

i.e., she could not be touched."

The Hums' characteristic willingness to limit circumambulation to Kaaba alone is therefore obvious, but confining cult rituals to the Haram of Mecca was only one aspect of Hums observance. There were also dietary and domestic taboos and a great deal of emphasis upon the clothes connected with the ritual.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 36.

The Arabs also had relic stones [which they obtained from ancient ruins] and erected. They went to circumambulate them and offer sacrifices before them. These stones were called betylus (ansab), and the circumambulation thereof was called dawar.

Amir ibn-a Tufayl (who had, one day, come upon the Ghani ibn-A'sur circumambulating some of their betylus, and seeing some of their maidens in the procession, was impressed by their beauty) would have said;

"O that my mother's kin, the Ghani,

Would circumrotate their betylus every evening!"

Al-Fazari, having done something which incurred the wrath of the Quraysh, who consequently forbade him to enter Mecca, said:

"I lead my she-camels and carry my betylus behind me;

Would that I have my people's god beside me!"

Sahih al-Bukhari Volume 6, Book 60, Hadith 23.

We used to consider going around them a custom of the (Pre-islamic) period of Ignorance, so when Islam came, we gave up going around them. Then God revealed" "Verily, Safa and Marwa are among the symbols of God. So it is not harmful of those who perform the pilgrimage of the House (of God) or perform the Umra to ambulate (Tawaf) between them." (2:158)

The pilgrims of Yathrib / Medina.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 12.

All the Arabs used to venerate her [Manah] and sacrifice before her. [In particular] the Aws and the Khazraj, as well as the inhabitants of Medina and Mecca and their vicinities.... the Aws and the Khazraj, as well as those Arabs among the people of Yathrib and other places who took to their way of life, were wont to go on pilgrimage and observe the vigil at all the appointed places, but not shave their heads. At the end of the pilgrimage, however, when they were about to return home, they would set out to the place where [the statue of] Manah stood, shave their heads, and stay there for a while. They did not consider their pilgrimage completed until they visited Manah [Manah's statue].

The pilgrimage of the Hawazin Bedouins.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 42.

The Quda'ah, the Lakhm, and the Judham, as well as the people of Syria, had an idol called al-Uqaysir to which they were wont to go on pilgrimage and at the [shrine] of which they use to shave their heads. Whenever one of them shaved his head, he would mix the hair with wheat, for every single hair a handful of wheat. During this time the Hawazin were wont to frequent the place, and, if they arrived before the pilgrim had mixed the wheat with the hair, they would say, 'Give it unto us, we are poor men from the Hawazin.'" But if they should arrive too late, they would take the whole thing, wheat, hair, and lice, [knead it into dough], bake and eat it.

Bukhari Volume 5, Book 58, Number 179.

The pagans used not to leave Jam' (i.e., Muzdalifa) till the sun had risen on Thabir mountain. The Prophet contradicted them by leaving (Muzdalifa) before the sun rose.

Sacrifice is the primordial and fundamental rite in all religions. It is also a way to kill animals and consume them, in communion with the group. Sacrifice is the means of keeping contact with divine power, of symbolically giving up a good while hoping to receive another, of gathering men and women, and of ensuring a regular supply of meat. It's a central ritual, here as elsewhere. The blood of the sacrifice of the animals brought by the pilgrims was offered to the deities, but there were also sometimes human sacrifices (the father of Muhammad, Abdallah, was almost a victim of it).

We know very precisely the gestures practiced, especially by Muhammad himself. These gestures have been reproduced by mimicry for hundreds of years. Butchery has become part of religion. The pre-Islamic sacrifice allowed the consumption of meat, as long as the blood of the victim was consecrated to the deity, for example by pouring it on the ground. This is the origin of the ritual slaughter known as "hallal" among Muslims. The Arab religion was chthonian in nature, linked to the powers of the ground and the underground especially. Most of the pre-Islamic ritual has remained intact with Islam. Only its etiology has changed, sometimes with the choice of animals or some details of the ritual. Particular attention is paid to the choice of victims: the species, sex, color, age. It is also necessary that the beast is without defects, and appetizing ... It is decorated or enhanced to be worthy of the gods. The ritual is an opportunity to eat meat, to unite the community, to integrate, to exclude, and to show the hierarchical order in the group (by the choice of the pieces, like among Celts).

You can sacrifice everywhere, especially in your home. But sanctuaries are the most suitable places. In fact, a place where one practices this rite becomes sacred itself, and consequently becomes a sanctuary.

To note. The royal sacrifice par excellence seems to have been that of camels, that of sheep became widespread only after the expansion of Islam. Hence the somewhat surprising character of the following hadith. Which in no case dates back to the pagan period of Muhammad.

Sahih Muslim Book 022 hadith Number 4845

God's messenger commanded that a ram with black legs, black belly and black circles round the eyes should be brought to him, so that he should sacrifice it. He said to Aisha: Give me the large knife, and then said: Sharpen it on a stone. She did that. He then took the knife and then the ram; he placed it on the ground and then sacrificed it, saying: "O God, accept [this sacrifice] on behalf of Muhammad and the family of Muhammad and the Community of Muhammad").

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 29.

The Arabs were wont to offer sacrifices before all these statues, betylus, and stones. Nevertheless they were aware of the excellence and superiority of the Ka'bah.....

The altar and the ritual pit (bothros).

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 18.

Al-Uzza also had a place of sacrifice called al-Ghabghab where they offered their oblations. Hudhali speaks of it in a satire which he composedIt was customary to divide the meat among those who had offered it and among those present at the ceremony.

The sacrifices of sheep.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 29.

The sheep which they offered and slaughtered before their statues and betylus were called oblations (ata'ir, sing. atirah); the place on which they slaughtered and offered the sacrifice was called an altar ('itr).

Muslim, Book 010, Number 3616.

The people of pre-Islamic days used to sell the meat of the slaughtered camel up to habal al-habala. And habal al-habala implies that a she-camel should give birth and then the (born one should grow young) and become pregnant. God's Messenger forbade them that (this transaction).

The question of human sacrifices.

To emphasize the presence in another religion of human sacrifices is an easy way of discrediting it. We could see it about human sacrifices made by Celtic druids (because denying that there were any is out of the question). In the case of the Arabs, the elimination of daughters from birth seems to be proved, in some tribes at least (the atrocious custom seems far from being generalized), but this without any assured relationship with religion. It was a Malthusian practice, but which was already fought, and Muhammad was not the first to speak out against it, he only repeated old prohibitions on the subject.

The inscription of Qutra 1 (ancient Matirat) in Yemen. Second century before our era.

....May it be forbidden to expel from the city of Matiratum any hsm without the order and the authorization of Ibn Sukhaym and forbidden to wed one of the daughters of the city of Matiratum in any place and city other than the city of Matiratum; and forbidden to kill one's daughter.

Like all ancient religions, those of Arabia were made not of dogmas, but of institutions and practices. We must therefore study the structures and rites of this religious world outside the divine powers themselves, since many of its elements have been taken up in nascent Islam; although it is with a very different type of explanation (some references to the characters of the Bible). The absence of dogma leads to the constitution of a system where gesture, group and tradition take precedence over consciousness or subjectivity. Between the two systems, the dogmatic and the non-dogmatic, the gap is total. Disagreement over the very definition of the term "religion" is proof of this. But in the field of the ritual, the re-use of old gestures are very numerous.

The calendar.

The pagan calendar was a lunisolar calendar which used lunar months, but was also synchronized with the seasons by the insertion of an additional, intercalary month, when required, as in the case of the famous druidic calendar of Coligny.

Whether the intercalary month (nasi) was added in the spring like that of the Hebrew calendar or in autumn is debated. It is assumed that the intercalary month was added between the twelfth month (the month of the Pagan Hajj) and the first month (Muharram) of the (Pagan) year.

There were four months of truce during which all hostilities, blood feuds, raids and all acts of warfare and aggression were forbidden or suspended so that the tribes can dedicate themselves to their gods by making sacrifices, going on pilgrimage to holy sites, trading as well as sporting events both physical and poetical.

These months were dhu al Qa'dah, dhu al Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab being represented by the 11th, 12th, 1st and 2nd months, of the year. The first three were especially dedicated for religious purposes and the last for trading and secular activities.

Muhammad therefore had no choice but to take over these pagan months as the most important months of his new calendar, but with an additional whim: the suppression of the intercalary month (God was against)!

The sacred truces.

In a world without national laws, the tribes had instituted sacred periods, during which men cattle and goods had to be respected. These truces of God were in a way temporary and bodiless sanctuaries, but with precise limits.

Prerequisites for any commercial gathering (fairs), trade of goods and people, and also gatherings for the worship of the gods, these high points were strictly regulated, any breach of the ritual was punishable. It will be seen later with the beginnings of Islam.

The month of Rajab.

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad. By Alfred Guillaume. Page 286.

EXPEDITION OF ABDULLAH B. JAHSH AND THE COMING DOWN OF 'THEY WILL ASK YOU ABOUT THE SACRED MONTH'

The apostle sent 'Abdullah b. Jahsh b. Ri'ab alAsadi in Rajab on his return from the first Badr. He sent with him eight emigrants, without any of the Ansar. He wrote for him a letter, and ordered him not to look at it until he had journeyed for two days, and to do what he was ordered to do, but not to put pressure on any of his companions.....Back in Yahthib/Medina when they came to the apostle, he said, 'I did not order you to fight in the sacred month,' and he held the caravan and the two prisoners in suspense and refused to take anything from them. When the apostle said that, the companions were in despair and thought that they were doomed to Hell. Their Muslim brethren reproached them for what they had done, and the Quraysh said, 'Muhammad and his companions have violated the sacred month, shed blood therein, taken booty, and captured men.' The Muslims in Mecca who opposed them said that they had done it in Sha'ban. The Jews turned this raid into an omen against the apostle.... but God turned this against them, not for them, and when there was much talk about it, God sent down to his apostle: 'They will ask you about the sacred month, and war in it. Say, war therein is a serious matter, but keeping people from the way of God and disbelieving in Him and in the sacred mosque and driving out His people therefrom is more serious with God.' i.e., if you have killed in the sacred month, they have kept you back from the way of God with their unbelief in Him, and from the sacred mosque, and have driven you from it when you were its people. This is a more serious matter with God.....

When the Quran came down about that and God relieved the Muslims of their anxiety in the matter, the apostle took the caravan and the prisoners. Quraysh sent to him to redeem Uthman and al Hakam, and the apostle said, 'We will not let you redeem them until our two companions come,' meaning Sa'd and 'Utba, 'for we fear for them on your account.

If you kill them, we will kill your two friends.' So when Sa'd and 'Utba turned up the apostle let them redeem them.

Non-religious holidays. The fair in Ukaz (a few kilometers south Mecca).

An annual fair of twenty-one days, which was held between at-Ta'if and Nakhlah. It was opened on the first day of the month of Zu 'l-Qa'dah, at the commencement of the three sacred months. It was the most famous fair. It was an opportunity for diplomatic, religious and cultural meetings. Little Muhammad who went there during his childhood was to be marked by all these mixed influences.

Stanley Lane Poole (Selections from the Koran).

"There was one place where, above all others, the Qasidahs (odes) of the ancient Arabs were recited: this was Okadh ('Ukaz), the Olympia of Arabia, where there was held a great annual fair, to which not merely the merchants of Mekka and the south, but the poet heroes of all the land resorted. The Fair of 'Okdadh was held during the sacred months,—a sort of 'God's Truce,' when blood could not be shed without a violation of the ancient customs and faiths of the Bedouins. Thither went the poets of rival clans, who had as often locked spears as hurled rhythmical curses. There was little fear of a bloody ending to the poetic contest, for those heroes who, might meet there with enemies or blood avengers are said to have worn masks as veils, and their poems were recited by a public orator at their dictation. That these precautions and the sacredness of the time could not always prevent the ill- feeling evoked by the pointed personalities (of rival poets) leading to a fray and bloodshed is proved by recorded instances; but such results were uncommon, and as a rule the customs of the time and place were respected. In spite of occasional broils on the spot, and the lasting feuds which these poetic contests must have excited, the Fair of Okadh was a grand institution. It served as a Locus for the literature of all Arabia: everyone with any pretensions to poetic power came, and if he could not himself gain the applause of the assembled people; at least he could form one of the critical audiences on whose verdict rested the fame or the shame of every poet. The Fair of Okadh was a literary congress, without formal judges, but with unbounded influence. It was here that the polished heroes of the desert determined points of grammar and prosody; here the seven Golden poems [mu'allaqat] were recited, although (alas for the legend!) they were not afterwards suspended on the Kaabah; and here a magical language, the language of the Hijaz, was built out of the dialects of Arabia, and was made ready to the skillful hand of Mohammad, that he might conquer the world with his Quran.

The Fair of Okadh was not merely a center of emulation for Arab poets: it was also an annual review of Bedouins virtues. It was there that the Arab nation once-a-year inspected itself, so to say, and brought forth and criticized its ideals of the noble and the beautiful in life and in poetry. For it was in poetry that the Arab – and for that matter each man all the world over — expressed his highest thoughts, and it was at Okadh that these thoughts were measured by the standard of the Bedouins ideal. The Fair not only maintained the highest standard of poetry that the Arabic language has ever reached: it also upheld the noblest idea of life and duty that the Arab nation has yet set forth and obeyed. Okadh was at the same time the press, the stage, the pulpit, the Parliament, and the Academie Francaise * of the Arab people; and when, in his fear of the infidel poets (whom Imru' al-Qais was to usher to hell), Mohammad abolished the Fair, he destroyed by the way the Arab nation."

* Stanley Lane Poole did not know the France of today, which certainly has been a great nation but who

Religious holidays.

The holiday is a consecrated period, during which the usual rules of life are not respected; they are replaced and sometimes even reversed. At this moment, communication with the supernatural powers seems possible.

The meeting around the sanctuaries.

Nonnosus. History. See the Photius' Library. A collection of 280 notes devoted to ancient and early Christian writers, of whom he quotes excerpts or gives summaries.

"Read the History of Nonnosus, containing a description of his embassy to the Aethiopians, Amerites (Hymiarites), and Saracens, then a most powerful nation, as well as to other Eastern peoples.... most of the Saracens, those who live in Phoenicon as well as beyond it and the Taurenian mountains, have a sacred meeting place consecrated to one of the gods, where they assemble twice a year. One of these meetings lasts a whole month, almost to the middle of spring, when the sun enters Taurus; the other lasts two months, and is held after the summer solstice. During these meetings complete peace prevails, not only among themselves, but also with all the natives; even the animals are at peace both with themselves and with human beings."

The religious prohibitions of these holidays.

Anonymous Pilgrim of Piacenza. Itinerarium . XXXVIII. Sinai and Horeb, and the Festival of the Saracens.

At one place upon the mountain, the Saracens have placed a marble statue of their own, as white as snow. There, also, dwells a priest of theirs, dressed in a dalmatic and pallium of linen. When the time of their festival arrives, as soon as the moon is up (before its rays have departed from the festival) that marble begins to change color ; as soon as the moon's rays have entered in, when they begin to worship the statue, the marble becomes black as pitch. When the time of the feast is over, it returns to its original color, an object of wonder to us all.And because the days of festival of the Saracens were now drawing to a close, a proclamation was made that no one should remain in the desert through which we had come. Some returned to the Holy City through Egypt, and some through Arabia.

The months of the year.

Mas'udi (897 - 957): Meadows of gold and mines of gems (Muruj adh dhahab wa ma'adin al-jawahir). Volume 3 chapter 59. Translation Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris 1864).

CHAPTER LIX. YEARS AND MONTHS OF ARABS; NAMES THAT THEY GAVE TO DAYS AND AT NIGHTS.

This year consists of three hundred and fifty-four days, let eleven days and a quarter of a day less than the Syriac year, what makes a difference of one year after thirty-three years. The Arab year ends without (the New Year) being celebrated by a Nowruz. Before Islam, the Arabs inserted an extra month every three years; that's what they called nasi or delay.

God blamed this custom in the verse of the Quran: "The nasi is only an increase of infidelity. (Chapter IX,37) The Arabs had established a regular order in their months. They started from Moharram, which is the first month of the year; it was so named because throughout its duration war and plunder were forbidden (haram) etc.

SANCTUARIES 1) AND RIGHT TO ASYLUM.

There are many texts and inscriptions concerning this institution: the protection of everything in a sacred area (right of asylum or asyilia).

The territory of the Ta'if shrine. Already mentioned above but it is not useless arrived at this point of our brief paper on the ecological spirituality before the word is invented of the Arabs of the time of the Jahiliyya to give the proof of it.

Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, translation Alfred Guillaume page 617.

Text of the document : 'In the name of God the Compassionate the Merciful. From Muhammad the prophet, the apostle of God, to the believers: The acacia trees of Wajj and its game are not to be injured. Anyone found doing this will be scourged and his garments confiscated. If he repeats the offense, he will be seized and brought to the prophet Muhammad. This is the order of the prophet Muhammad, the apostle of God,' Khalid b. Sa'id has written.

Editor's note. The letter of Muhammad therefore allows the inhabitants to preserve the sacredness of their territory, after having eliminated from the places the previous deity; the legal specifications make it possible to find ancient usages. God simply replaces Allat.

Tabari, *History*, volume 9 page 89.

The deputation of Jurash returned to the Messenger of God and embraced Islam, and he declared the environs of their city to be a sanctuary with well-known marks for horses, mounts, and plowing oxen . Anyone who pastured his cattle elsewhere (other than in the sanctuary), then his cattle could be seized and destroyed with impunity.

The sanctuary is the place where worship takes place, whatever its appearance, name or dimensions. In this sense, any space can be considered as a sanctuary in Arabia and, according to the religious ideas of the Arabs of that time, a geographical place did not need to be set up to become a sanctuary. Safa and Marwa were for example two sacred places near the Kaaba of Mecca. It was small reliefs that had been more or less sanctified before Muhammad. They have become obligatory stages of the Muslim pilgrimage, but most of them have had to remain in their natural state, and will therefore never be known by historians.

There were some sacred territories, bounded by stone columns or tumuli, entirely devoted to the divine; where no living being could be killed (with the exception of snakes or some pest insects) and where even no trees or shrubs could be cut. The haram or "forbidden" (herem in the Torah or Jewish Bible). This term for example means the sacred perimeter of Mecca, and, by extension, any place likely to include a sacred part.

It is forbidden to lie, to swear ... The tribes who lived near these enclaves undertook to defend and respect them. The guardians of these sanctuaries were engaged in paid activities; the custody of the keys of the temple, the collection of the tax destined to the purchase of food for the persons going to the annual pilgrimage in these sacred places, the supply of water to their animals. The temple also received offerings not without interest. The ancient Arabic worships performed in these shrines often combined the gods in pairs (syzygies like the moon god and the sun god for example, Hubal and Sham), but in this case the goddess was often bigger than the god. Such worships were widespread in ancient times, including in the West.

Some places are emerging, however, because of their central location and of the devotion they receive. Some shrines were the subject of pilgrimages (hajj) during which different rituals were performed, including circumambulations (tawaf) around sacred objects. The circumambulation around the temple of the Kaaba by the pagans in Mecca was perhaps a symbolic reference to the movement of celestial bodies in space; for the Kaaba was probably at first a temple dedicated to the sun, the moon, and the planets. Some prohibitions characterized these rituals, including in many cases sexual abstinence.

A small or large sanctuary is always the offering of the group or an individual. Numerous engraved dedications make it possible to locate or identify sanctuaries built in honor of the gods.

Diodorus of Sicily, *Book III*, 45,2.

Then comes a circular gulf guarded on every side by great promontories, and midway on a line drawn across it rises a trapezium-shaped hill on which three temples, remarkable for their height, have been erected to gods, which indeed are unknown to the Greeks, but are accorded unusual honor by the natives.

Diodorus of Sicily, *book III*, 42, 4 (description of the shores of the Arabian Gulf).

Moreover, an altar is there built of hard stone and very old in years, bearing an inscription in ancient letters of an unknown tongue. The oversight of the sacred precinct is in the care of a man and a woman who hold the sacred office for life..... In the above-mentioned Palm-grove a festival was celebrated every four years, to which the neighboring peoples thronged from all sides, both to sacrifice

to the gods of the sacred precinct hecatombs of well-fed camels and also to carry back to their native lands some of the water of this place, since the tradition prevailed that this drink gave health to such as partook of it... [Editor's note. Could not it be Mecca?].

The Kaaba of Mecca.

The kaaba was for the ancient pagan Arabs an inviolable sanctuary, an asylum, even for criminals who could find refuge there ... and it was especially at the center of an extremely important business hub. During the pre-Islamic period, the building housed 360 statues or representations of gods and became the center of important pagan worship. Why 360? ... Now simply because since the earliest antiquity, even since the time of the civilizations of Mesopotamia, the solar year had AROUND 360 days!

It should be noted, however, the presence of other Kaaba, competing with that in Mecca.

Archeological excavations in Yemen have provided important information about pre-Islamic shrines, especially by unearthing Kaaba-type buildings.

The sanctuary of Hudaybiya

Already mentioned above about the sacrifice of the hair but let's now give the floor to Ibn Ishaq about it. Ibn Hishaq, the life of Muhammad by Alfred Guillaume. Page 505.

The apostle was encamped in the profane country, and he used to pray in the sacred area. When the peace was concluded, he slaughtered his victims and sat down and shaved his head. I have heard that it was Khirash b. Umayya who shaved him then. When the men saw what the apostle had done, they leaped up and did the same....

The apostle said, 'May God have mercy on the shavers.' They said, 'The cutters, too, O God's apostle?' Three times they had to put this question until finally he added, 'and the cutters.' When they asked him why he had repeatedly confined the invocation of God's mercy to the shavers he replied, 'Because they did not doubt'....'God was pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance under the tree and He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down the Sakina upon them.'

As for the sakina see above. The rabbis define the Sakina [another spelling of this word, which has many of them] as the "glory of God" or "the Spirit of God." In the Latin Bible shekinah is translated by: Gloria in excelsis Deo [glory to God at the highest] to designate the divine presence in man and in terra Pax hominibus bonae voluntatis [peace on earth to men of good will] to designate the presence of God [his glory] in the world, understood as creation. It is therefore a mystical state. But that we have already said it.

The Kaaba of Ta'if.

Tabari, History. Volume 5 page 223.

Mas'ud b. Mu'attib came out with the men of Tha'qif, and addressed Abrahah: "O king, we are your servants, obedient and submissive to you, and you will not find us offering any resistance to you. This house of ours (they meant [the house of] Allat) is not the House which you seek. You want the House which is at Mecca (they meant the Ka'bah)....

As Mas'ud b. Mu'attib says here, the shrine of the pre-Islamic goddess Allat was located at al-Ta'if, and the popularity of its cult made it a considerable rival to that of Allah (?) in the Ka'bah of Mecca during pre-Islamic times, until the shrine was despoiled and destroyed at the surrender of al-Ta'if in 630.

Sanctuaries in South Arabia.

They are becoming better known thanks to archeological excavations and recent epigraphic discoveries. This is also where we find the most impressive ruins.

The sanctuary of Suqam.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 16.

The Quraysh had dedicated to her [al-Uzza] in the valley of Hurad, a ravine (shi'b) called Suqam and were wont to vie there with the Sacred Territory of the Ka'bah.

The Kaaba of Najran.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 39.

The banu-al-Harith ibn-Ka'b had in Najran a Ka'bah which they venerated. It is the one which al-A'sha mentions

in one of his odes. It has been claimed that it was not a Ka'bah for worship *, but merely a hall for those people whom the poet mentioned. In my opinion, this is very likely the case, since I have not heard of the banu-al-Harith ever mentioning it in their poetry.

The Kaaba of Yemen.

Muslim Book 031 hadith 6052

Jabir reported that there was in pre-Islamic days a temple called Dhu'l-Khalasah and it was called the Yemenite Ka'ba or the northern Ka'ba. God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said unto me: Will

you rid me of Dhu'l-Khalasah and so I went forth at the head of 350 horsemen of the tribe of Ahmas and we destroyed it and killed whomsoever we found there.

Editor's note. According to Ibn Kalbi (kitab al asnam 29) Dhu'l-Khasalah was a deity represented by a carved piece of white quartz with something in the form of a crown upon its head. It stood in Tahalah, between Mecca and San'a, at a distance of seven nights' journey from Mecca. Its custody was in the hands of the banu-Umamah of the Bahilah ihn-A'sur. The Khath'am, the Bajilah and the Azd of al-Sarah as well as those Arab subtribes of the Hawazin who lived in their vicinity and those Arabs residing in Tabalah, were wont to venerate it and come to it with a sacrifice.

The Kaaba of Sindad.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 39.

The Lyid had another Ka'bah in Sindad, located in a region between al-Kufah and al-Basrah. It is the one which al-Aswad ibn-Ya'fur mentions in one of his odes. I have, however, heard that this house was not a place of worship *. Rather it was a celebrated edifice; consequently al-Aswad mentioned it.

* Editor's note. The expressions " It has been claimed that it was not a Ka'bah for worship ..." or " I have heard that this house was not a place of worship ..." are, of course, a proof of the embarrassment of the author in the face of such facts. The subject remains taboo in Muslim historiography, and that since Ibn Kalbi, because it challenges the dogma of the oneness of the sanctuary in Mecca.

1) The sanctuary staff is well known to us, but it is not strictly speaking priests who have to take charge of the ritual. Indeed, rites can be practiced by everyone, especially if he has animals to sacrifice. On the other hand, there are many people in charge of facilitating, supervising, or enhancing offerings. The priests have, in this system, only an office of supervision or assistance: help to the sacrifice, police in the place, reception of the pilgrims, taxes.

ORACLES AND SOOTHSAYERS.

There are in this universe outstanding characters who are able to guess the future or to enlist supernatural forces. They prophesy, that is to say, speak before, before the events that occur.

The Arabs seem to have been well known in the ancient world for their divination faculties.

The oracle is simply the expression of the divine word, desired, favored, expected by the faithful. It is one of the strongest pillars of the old religion, it meets basic human expectations, and Muhammad will also focus his attacks on the oracular deities (by belomancy) as Hubal (the great rival of Allah ?) N.B. The augurs are a special category of diviners, those who are inspired by the observation of natural signs, such as the behavior of horses or the flight of birds.

Cicero, On Divination 1, 42.

The Arabians, Phrygians, and Cilicians, being chiefly engaged in the rearing of cattle, are constantly wandering over the plains and mountains in winter and summer and, on that account, have found it quite easy to study the songs and flights of birds.

Philostratus, Life of Apollonius of Tyana 1, 20.

For he learned this on his way through these Arab tribes, who best understand and practice it. For it is quite common for the Arabs to listen to the birds prophesying like any oracles, but they acquire this faculty of understanding them by feeding themselves....

Ibn Ishaq, The life of Muhammad, by Alfred Guillaume, page 372.

The apostle went his way until he passed through the stud farm of the B. Haritha and a horse swished its tail and it caught the pommel of a sword so that it came out of its sheath. The apostle, who liked auguries, though he did not observe the flight of birds, said to the owner of the sword, 'Sheath your sword, for I can see that swords will be drawn today.'

Shooting Stars.

Muslim, Book 26, hadith 5538.

" Ibn Abbas narratedone night they witnessed a shooting star. The Prophet asked them, "What did you say during the days of ignorance concerning a shooting star like that?" [...] We used to say that on that night an important person was born or an important person had died."

During his youth and the beginning of his preaching, Muhammad was often confronted (and confused) with diviners, who were his direct competitors. He was also constantly accused of being a diviner himself by his adversaries; some clues go in this direction as well as several passages of the Quran.

Chapter 73.

O thou wrapped up in thy raiment!

Keep vigil the night long, save a little -

A half thereof, or abate a little thereof

Or add (a little) thereto -

And chant the recitation in measure.

Chapter 74.

O thou enveloped in thy cloak,

Arise and warn!

Chapter 85.

By the heaven, holding mansions of the stars,

And by the Promised Day.

And by the witness and that whereunto he bears testimony.

Chapter 89.

By the Dawn

And ten nights,

And the Even and the Odd,

And the night when it departs,

This was a sensitive question for Muhammad since he was accused of being one of these soothsayers, but he is not averse, while cursing them, to practicing various extra-canonical practices, very clearly attested. This attraction for the control of mysterious fields or powers is a constant in the Bedouin and Arab world in general, including even today.

Sahih Muslim Volume 1, Book 4, Hadith 1094.

Messenger of God. I was till recently a pagan, but God has brought Islam to us; among us there are men who have recourse to soothsayers. He said,....

- Do not have recourse to them.

-There are men who take omens.

-That is something which they find in their breasts, but let it not turn their way (from freedom of action).

- Among us there are men who draw lines.

-There was a prophet [Jesus?] who drew lines, so if they do it as they did, that is allowable. Sahih Bukhari Volume 9, Book 93, Hadith 650.

Aisha: Some people asked the Prophet regarding the soothsayers. He said....

- "They are nothing."

-They said, "O God's Apostle! Some of their talks come true."

- "That word which happens to be true is what a jinn snatches away by stealth and pours it in the ears of his friend (the foreteller) with a sound like the cackling of a hen. The soothsayers then mix with that word, one hundred lies."

Editor's note. All this irresistibly makes one think of the opinions of the Christian Tertullian in this matter. See his apologetics].

Divination through arrows (belomancy).

It was a procedure practiced by nomadic and bow peoples, with special arrows, loosed on a target, drawn from the quiver or thrown to the ground. The rite would have been practiced in Mecca, in the Kaaba. See above.

Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhamad translation Alfred Guillaume page 66. ABDU'L-MUTTALIB'S VOW.

" It is alleged that when 'Abdu'l-Muttalib encountered the opposition of Quraysh when he was digging Zamzam, he vowed that if he should have ten sons, he would sacrifice one of them to God at the Ka'ba. Afterwards when he had ten sons who could protect him he gathered them together and told them about his vow and called on them to keep faith with God. They agreed to obey him and asked what they were to do.

He said that each one of them must get an arrow, write his name on it, and bring it to him: this they did and he took them before (the statue of) Hubal in the middle of the Ka'ba, Hubal being the greatest (or, most revered) of the idols of Quraysh in Mecca. It stood by a well there. It was that well in which offerings made to the Ka'ba were stored.

Now beside Hubal there were seven arrows, each of them containing some words. One was marked 'bloodwit'. When they disputed about who should pay the bloodwit they cast lots with the seven arrows and he on whom the lot fell had to pay the money. Another was marked 'yes,' and another 'no,' and they acted accordingly on the matter on which the oracle had been invoked. Another was marked 'of you'; another mulsaq (stranger) another 'not of you'; and the last was marked 'water.' If they wanted to dig for water, they cast lots containing this arrow and wherever it came forth they set to work. If they wanted to circumcise a boy, or make a marriage, or bury a body, or doubted someone's genealogy, they took him to Hubal with a hundred dirhams and a slaughter camel and gave them to the man who cast the lots; then they brought near the man with whom they were concerned saying, ' this is A the son of B with whom we intend to do so-and-so; so show the right course concerning him.' Then they would say to the man who cast the arrows 'Cast!' and if there came out 'of you' then he was a true member of their tribe; and if there came out 'not of you' he was an ally; and if there came out mulsaq he had no blood relation to them and was not an ally. Where 'yes' came out in other matters, they acted accordingly; and if the answer was 'no' they deferred the matter for a year until they could bring it up again.....

Abdu'l-Muttalib said to the man with the arrows, 'Cast the lots for my sons with these arrows,' and he told him of the vow which he had made. Each man gave him the arrow on which his name was written.... Abdullah was Abdu'l-Muttalib's favorite son, and his father thought that if the arrow missed him he would be spared. (He was the father of the apostle of God.)

When the man took the arrows to cast lots with them, Abdu'l-Muttalib stood by Hubal praying to God. Then the man cast lots and Abdullah's arrow came out. His father led him by the hand and took a large knife; then he brought him up to Isaf and Na'ila (two idols of Quraysh at which they slaughtered their sacrifices) to sacrifice him."

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 23.

Hubal's statue stood inside the Ka'bah. In front of it were seven divination arrows. On one of these arrows was written "pure" , and on another "consociated alien" . Whenever the lineage of a newborn was doubted, they would offer a sacrifice to it [Hubal] and then shuffle the arrows and throw them. If the arrows showed the word "pure," the child would be declared legitimate and the tribe would accept him. If, however, the arrows showed the words "consociated alien," the child would be declared illegitimate and the tribe would reject him. The third arrow was for divination concerning the dead, while the fourth was for divination concerning marriage. The purpose of the three remaining arrows has not been explained.

Whenever they disagreed concerning something, or purposed to embark upon a journey, or undertake some project, they would proceed to Hubal's statue and shuffle the divination arrows before it.

Whatever result they obtained they would follow and do accordingly.

Less known.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asham 41.

When Imru'-al-Qays ibn-Hujr set out to raid the banu-Asad he passed by dhul-al-Khalash (This was a deity whose statue stood in Tabalah and which all the Arabs venerated). It had three divination arrows: "the enjoiner" , "the forbidding" , and "the vigilant." As Imru'-al-Qays stood before the idol, he shuffled the arrows three times and three times he drew "the forbidden." Thereupon he broke the arrows and hurled them at the face of the statue exclaiming [suppressed]

These processes were, of course, vehemently condemned by Muhammad, as they could undermine his authority.

Muhammad, Quran 5: 3.

And forbidden is it that you swear by the divining arrows. This is an abomination.

Muhammad, Quran 5: 90.

O you who believe! Strong drink and games of chance and standing stones and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork. Leave it aside !

The oneiromancy.

Another mantic category which is sometimes practiced by Muhammad. Large indeed is the place of dreams in his adventure.

Muslim Book 029, Number 5613.

I heard God's Messenger as saying: A good vision comes from God and a (bad) dream from the devil. So when one of you see a bad dream which he does not like, he should spit on his left side thrice and seek refuge with God from its evil; then it will not harm him.

Muslim, Book 029, Number 5647.

Anas b. Malik reported God's Messenger as saying: I saw during the night that which a person sees during the sleep as if we are in the house of Uqba b. Rafi that there was brought to us the fresh dates of Ibn Tab. I interpreted it as the sublimity for us in the world and good ending in the Hereafter and that our religion is good.....

By Jove! Is that all?

MECCA.

Jacqueline Chabbi.

-The Lord of the tribes. The Islam of Mohammed (1997).

-The Quran Decoded: biblical figures in Arabia (2008).

-The Quran and Historical Anthropology (2016).

Esteems that we let ourselves "a little too much to be taken in by medieval texts much later than the beginning of Islam." It goes without saying that Mecca was not founded by Adam and Eve, Abraham or Ishmael.

Asserting that the Kaaba was built by Adam and Eve or Abraham or Ishmael has a lot a lot but so a lot to do with faith, and little but so very little to do with reason. All that you in the Bible about Abraham coming under the legend, overdoing this first historical imposture is consequently some squared imposture. This relentlessness worthy of the worst of self-suggestion methods to want at all costs to be recognized as a legitimate and direct heir to the Jewish religion and to Abraham; whereas it is obvious that only certain details of the Islamic veneer are so, and that the background is pagan (the notion of god-man in Christianity, the role of the kaaba in Islam, etc.). IS PATHETIC. It is at the same time the timeless manifestation of an incredible racism towards other religions coupled with an equally incredible inferiority complex. Not to mention a crass ignorance of historical science and of the discoveries of archeology (the beginning of the Bible up to the episode of the Tower of Babel is borrowed from Sumerian myths, Abraham is a legend, Moses did not exist, neither did slavery in Egypt, etc.). But that we have already said it.

We will not discuss here therefore the anti-historical postulate of the early monotheism of the first peoples nor of its Abrahamic nature. The reference to Abraham to Adam in short to the traditional biblical history is not original, and came to be overadded only belatedly, in order to legitimize the pilgrimage in Mecca. Hence this zealous respect for the rituals and obligations of the practitioner. Let us not forget also that all these early books of the Bible have no historical foundation. These are only myths or propaganda in the service of the kingdom of Judah; why in which case add lies or untruths to other lies or untruths?

At the origins of every religion, there are myths. Islam does not present any originality in that. So it is with the fictional genealogy which, in some Muslim circles - unfortunately relayed by a number of popularization studies in Western languages - makes Muhammad a direct descendant of the biblical patriarch, even supposing that this one has existed, which is very doubtful. Abraham is certainly a mythical story hero. But that does not make him a historical figure, even if one thinks he can visit his tomb in Hebron.

The Abrahamic allegations concerning the Meccan site and the person of Muhammad himself are therefore of the order of the belief or of those kinds of fictitious and wonderful stories that we like to tell ourselves, to found an origin in an absolute time which escapes all reasoned perception (metahistory like the battle of Mag Tuired or Hyperborea in Irish legends). Such allegations - even if they are Quranic - of course have nothing to do with a historical analysis. They cannot, however, compel in any way the approach of the historian. (Jacqueline Chabbi, At the origins of Mecca, the look of the historian).

The religion of the Arabs of Mecca in the 7th century was, of course, an Arab paganism, here and there influenced by Judaism or certain forms of Judaeo-Christianity even of Christian Gnosticism. This is evidenced by the historical fact that there were at the same time in Arabia attempts similar that of Muhammad, that is, some religious syncretisms including a variable dose of Jewish or Christian theological elements. Various other mystics had in fact at that time thrown themselves everywhere in the same adventure as Muhammad, for the greater glory of God; and particularly a man named Asswad al Ansi whose movement rivaled for a time that of Islam in Yemen; as well as a man called Tulayha in the tribes Assad and Ghatafan. Not to mention the seer and poetess Sajah of the Tamim tribe. This aspect of things is evident in the case of the tribal confederation of the Banu Hanifa, led by Musaylima, in the region of Al Yamama, in the center of Arabia; which groups together more anciently monotheistic than Islam, tribes, worshiping a God whom they call Al Rahman, the Merciful (the Hanifa, some pre-Nicene Monophysite Christian groups? They will be mercilessly crushed by the first caliph in the months following the death of Muhammad).

Throughout the ancient Near East, the favored demonstrations of the sacredness laid in stones or rocks, of extraordinary appearance or origin, such as meteorites: betylus, "houses of the god," or more often ansab, in Arabic. In the oldest texts of this huge corpus, we can find survivals of this worship, also attested among Hebrews or Celts or pre-Celtic peoples. Many historians report that these stones were rectangular or more or less anthropomorphic. They were not worshiped for themselves as the classic definition of idolatry since Abraham and Moses would have been, but as the

home of a personal (god or spirit) or impersonal (a force, a power) being. Editor's note: a little bit like the Celts therefore!

The mother of the gods, Cybele, was worshipped in Phrygia (Asia Minor). She was a goddess of the Earth, mistress of the beasts. One of the most famous black stones of antiquity was that of her temple located in Pessinus.

A city taken by the Gauls of Asia Minor in -238, who saw in her a hunt goddess of the Arduinna type. Pausanias. Attica. Book I. Chapter IV.

5. The greater number of the Gauls crossed over to Asia by ship and plundered its coasts. Some time after, the inhabitants of Pergamus, that was called of old Teuthrania, drove the Gauls into it from the sea. Now this people occupied the country on the farther side of the river Sangarius capturing Ancyra, a city of the Phrygians, which Midas son of Gordius had founded in former time. And the anchor, which Midas found, was even as late as my time in the sanctuary of Zeus, as well as a spring called the Spring of Midas, water from which they say Midas mixed with wine to capture Silenus. Well then, the Pergamene took Ancyra and Pessinus which lies under Mount Agdistis, where they say that Attis lies buried.

The capture of these cities took place after the victory won over them by Attalus I near the springs of the Caicus River in -238, because this victory of the king of Pergamon was far from destroying them or erasing them from the map.

The natural simulacrum of the Phrygian goddess was a small, rough, irregularly shaped black stone which, in the midst of these irregularities, had the appearance of a mouth (or more certainly of a female sex); it was therefore one of those small black stones with angular or uneven edges, in the middle of which is a well-marked furrow, and which naturalists have called hysteroliths.

The artificial simulacrum of the goddess represented her as a middle-aged, sturdy and powerful woman, seating, her head crowned with towers, holding in one hand, either ears of millet, or heads of poppies, and in the other a drum. She was dressed in different colors and ornamented with flowers. Her chariot was dragged by lions. A young man, Atys, was added to this simulacrum. A Phrygian-style pointed cap and a double belt on the dress; flutes and timbals, a sort of instrument he held in one hand; a crook or crosier he wore in the other, were his clothes, ornaments and attributes. Usually a pine tree was placed next to the statue of Atys.

The goddess and her black stone were installed in Rome in -204 according to Titus Livius.

"At that time religious scruples had suddenly assailed the citizens because in the Sibylline books, which were consulted on account of the frequent showers of stones that year, an oracle was found that, if ever a foreign foe should invade the land of Italy, he could be driven out of Italy and defeated if the Idaean Mother should be brought from Pessinus to Rome (foe = Hannibal, Idaean Mother = another name for Cybele).....So, that they might the sooner be in possession of the victory which foreshadowed itself in oracles, forecasts and responses, they planned and discussed what should be the method of transporting the goddess to Rome" (Titus Livius XXIX, 10).

What troubled the Romans the most was that in this equation the unknown "foreign foe" was easy to identify since the temple of Pessinus had been in the hands of the Gauls of Asia Minor since -237, and more particularly of the tribe of the Tolistoboians.

In the case of the Kaaba these stones were considered as manifestations or symbols (charged with force) of the deity. The White Stone symbolized the original deity and the black stone represented his son. It was probably a basaltic rock - and not a meteorite like it is often read - as it is abundant in this region of extinct volcanism. The color of these black stones clearly differentiates them from the desert environment, and they have always been much sought after by the inhabitants of these arid regions who attributed to them miraculous properties.

There is in the facts a whole range between the natural betylus and the anthropomorphic idol. One of our sources even mentions the presence in the Kaaba of a representation of the three cranes, which still surprises us a lot (the trigaranos from the Galatians of Asia Minor up to there and in the middle of the sixth century?)

As in the case of other ancient religions, traditional pagan worship consisted of honoring human-shaped objects, representing or evoking gods or goddesses, and containing some of their power. Muslim rhetoric against them takes over Jewish and Christian themes. In the Quran, statues of god or goddess are neither more nor less than a "defilement"; their uselessness, inefficiency or strictly human origin is emphasized; which, moreover, demonstrates the full extent of the misunderstanding of the mass religions about them or their contempt for others because, let us repeat it again; the statues are not the deity itself, but a representation or symbol of divinity, containing a part of its force (called mana in Polynesia).

And on this subject the "old druid" that I am, does not resist the pleasure of quoting the answer that King Cormac made in this field. "Ar baí cretí in óenDé oc Cormac. ar ro ráidseom na aidérad clocha ná crunnu acht no adérad intí dosroni & ropo chomsid ar cul na uli dúla "(Senchas na relec inso). "Cormac believed in one God. He said that he adored neither the stones nor the trees, but he adored only the one who had made them and who is the guardian of all the elements" (The history of burial places).

It is therefore never the stone, the tree, and so on, that men adore, but the divinity, the power that one day has manifested itself in this stone. In every hierophany, therefore, three elements must be recognized.

- The natural object (stone, tree ...) that continues to be in its normal context.
- The invisible reality that gives another nature to the object, support of theophany.
- The mediator who is the natural object wearing the new dimensions of sacredness.

Jesus (Yehoshua bar Yosef) was apparently a man like the others; however, for Christians, he was the son of God (or of the Demiurge).

In the same way the created Quran is apparently, at first glance, a book like the others. However, for Muslims, it reveals a supernatural reality (God or the Demiurge).

The pilgrimage to Mekka by Gaudet-Demonbynes 1923.

"Mekkan region is an arid country, burned, bare, with inhospitable coastlines: which did not seem prepared by nature

to become, in the first half of the seventh century, the core of a great religious organization. Then, as today, islands of sedentary men are lost among nomads who ransom them and eat each other; no lasting trial of political groupings; farmers, some tradesmen, herdsmen especially, with violent and short imagination, with ardent and fragile will, more dexterous than intelligent, more skillful than valorous, but trained to noble attitudes by the hubris of the race and an intensive education of vanity. These men, however, were not as isolated from the outside world as the nature of the Arabian Peninsula would suggest it; some tribes had entered the orbit of the Roman world; others guarded against the first ones, the borders of the Sassanid Empire, which had for a moment ran over Yemen. In this complex set, Mekka played a role which, not to be as majestic as certain traditions show, was none the less important. It was, in a relatively fertile region of Arabia, a hub of routes towards the Petraean Arabia, the Syria and the Roman march, to Yemen, to the Red Sea and to Abyssinia, also to the inland and from Medina to the Persian Gulf, and beliefs like men intermingled there.

A sanctuary, the Ka'ba, assembled very well know deities; stones were the object of a primitive worship; they were touched, rubbed, men turned around them in a kind of sacred dance. Servants of the temple transmitted oracles directly or through arrows without heads [azlam, aqdah) that were drawn 1). Standing stones, heaps of stones (jamra, rajam) 2), marked the divine precincts (haram, hima) and were used as stages by the faithful."

1) Cf. The prinni loudi in Coligny or the crann-chur in Ireland.

2) Cf. Cairns.

THE QUESTION OF MECCA.

The problem with Mecca is that we find no sure trace of the existence of this city in the 6th century OUTSIDE LATER MUSLIM SOURCES.

And yet at this time.....

-The urban phenomenon already existed for a long time.

-Writing has existed for a long time.

-The big cities were known and localized.

-There was a network of trade routes between them.

-When one thinks that even a big village like Jerusalem is mentioned in the 14th century before our era (Amarna's letter), this lack of mention of Mecca is strange.

Even worse, the first NON MUSLIM documents mentioning Muhammad make him a Medinan.

There is only one explanation for this quirk: The site of Mecca was really not much at the time (a stopping place of nomads settled around a well?)

Ptolemy, an Alexandrian Greek geographer of the second century, knows the city perhaps as Macoraba. This name, of Semitic origin probably means the "place of the sanctuary" and indicates that there was, as elsewhere in Arabia, a sacred space, subject of various "prohibitions," in other words, a haram.

"From the general prohibition of cutting the plants that grow in the haram, ancient hadiths except the idhkhir 1) but the authors discuss the value of this exceptionThe idhkhir, a fragrant plant with a thin stem and twigs, to which the terroir would be particularly favorable, enjoys a special esteem indeed : the ancient Mekkans used it to fit the roofs of their houses, from one beam to another; it was with this plant that they blocked the interstices of the bricks which closed the tombs; it was used in jewelry making. But these domestic uses do not seem sufficient to explain that it was exempted from the taboo. Texts show that it was advisable to use it to compose the garlands of the victims, which will be discussed later; this indication might suggest that idhkhir was the plant consecrated to the main deity of the Ka'ba, perhaps to Hubal, and one would understand the particular favor with which it is the subject ."

For some authors, Macoraba would be a transcription of the name of the temple in Arabic, Mikrab. Because of its etymology which refers by inversion to the word baraka, the name reported by Ptolemy suggests that this sacred place was combined with the presence of perennial water, preserved during periods of drought, in one or more wells. The baraka combines the notion of blessing with that of the presence of rainwater, an essential condition for survival for the people in these arid zones.

1) Lemongrass.

THE KAABA.

"Muslim mythology asserts that the kaaba was built in heaven two thousand years before the creation of the world, and that it was worshiped by angels, ... Ten thousand angels were charged with keeping the building from any accident but it appears from the history of the holy building that they have often neglected to fulfill their duty."

Then it was Abraham, or Adam following other traditions, who, by God's command, built the "inviolable dwelling," that is to say the famous Kaaba. Thus speaks the Quran (chapter 3, verses 96-97, chapter 2 verse 127).

Of course, this was not the case, and this is a purely gratuitous statement to which the People of this Book have long accustomed us. The point of view of history has nothing to do with this frenzied Biblism, Medinan in this case, which makes the Abrahamic figure move more than a thousand kilometers from the territories in which we see it usually traveling in the biblical stories. History, the true one, those of the men of 12 books and not of one; On the contrary, it obliges us to see the origin of Mecca and of the Meccan sacredness in a purely local substratum, in the rites and beliefs present on the spot and previous to Islam, or without any connection with it. History, in fact, is not reversible. Islam can be explained by what is previous to it and by what surrounds it. But under no circumstance what is previous to it could be explained by it. In other words, no surreptitious biblism should mingle with the pre-Muslim history of the city. The original Abrahamism that the Quran ascribes to Mecca is a mere invention of the Medinan period. The Meccan period of revelation knows nothing of this later narrative development, a direct result of the political or even ideological conflict that will oppose Muhammad to the Medinan Jews.

The rock has always been sensed as the place where is standing the supernatural protective power whose confinement seems to maximize the efficiency for the human group that it protects, and which dwells itself in its immediate vicinity, on the same territory. As regards the nomads, it happened that these sacred rocks were transported by them during their displacements as if they walked on eggshells. Thus they could believe that the Protector was traveling at the same time as his proteges, wherever they go [a little like the Ark of the Covenant among the Hebrews].

There was no need for that in Mecca, a caravan city, which was used as a fixed base for departure and return for its inhabitants. It was enough for them to seek the support of their protector before their departure, probably by sacrificing some camelids, and then to give thanks in the same way, at the end of a happy journey. The Kaaba therefore would not be in fact the temple that is said, by abusive equating with sacred buildings completely different in their layout and functioning, but simply a set of betylus.

The pagan character of this set is sufficiently proved by the fact that before passing under the control of Muhammad, it housed 360 divine representations, one per day of the year, almost, and this, according to the confession of Islam scribes. To want to make it a foundation of Abraham at all costs is an attitude having everything but now everything to do with faith and nothing but then nothing to do with reason. This fanatical Abrahamism is only the proof of a formidable BUT USELESS AND UNJUSTIFIED inferiority complex, of the nascent Islam, with regard to Judaism and Christianity, an inferiority complex which has evolved into resentment, or jealousy and which still pushes too many Muslims to define themselves IN RELATION TO JUDAISM AND IN RELATION TO CHRISTIANISM. Inside or outside this building, there were therefore many divine representations. In addition to Hubal's, there was another statue, that of a deity named Shams (the sun), placed on the roof. Each tribe had its deity ... Material and style of these divine representations were in agreement with the tastes of the faithful.

Sacred precincts are a very old and very general religious practice. In Ancient Greece, already, Olympia was an inviolable holy place, a temenos for the whole duration of the Olympic holidays, that even in time of war. The Ka'ba of Mecca, originally a simple stone enclosure and sacred space, takes on great importance for all the tribes during the pre-Islamic period, with its circumambulation around the monument that housed the divine representations. The Kitab al-asnam by Ibn Kalbi mentions even other kaaba like that of Najran and Sindad, pilgrimages being common to several tribes, accompanied by trade fairs, gatherings with sacred character: during the haram months, the tribes were forbidden (it is the meaning of hrm) to fight and attack convoys of pilgrims and merchandise.

The sacred Meccan space was therefore only an Arab sacred space among others and was not an exception. It was by no means the religious focal point to which all the tribes of the immense peninsula would converge. It is Islam, in its subsequent earthly success, which has, in fact, promoted Mecca as a sacred place par excellence, in its Arab context and then on the scale of the Muslim empire.

The god honored in Petra, Dhu'l Shara [the one of Shara or Dusares], had a ka'bu, a Greek word that can be brought back with that of Kaaba of course.

The Meccan Kaaba was built at an indefinite time, perhaps towards the end of the Roman period. It was probably at first a simple dried stone enclosure, built in the immediate vicinity of the saving water point, at the bottom of a dry and non tree-filled valley. This sacred enclosure, which was certainly the object of a pilgrimage ritual ending in sacrifice, stood, as it still is today, at the lowest point of the city. Its building in this unusual place clearly signaled already a cultic intention and confirmed its character of sacred space. Pointing by its angles towards the cardinal points, the early sacred enclosure, sketch of the current cube, would have had the office of being used as fixed support to sacred rocks. It was probably for preventing them from being carried away by the waters during floods. According to the well-known rate of low of the wadis, this sand bank that the ancient texts significantly called the "belly" of Mecca, was temporarily and periodically floodable; before recent major works of channeling, put the site away from this inconvenience definitely. This was not the case originally, however, because the overflowing water supplied the local wells and ensured the sustainable abundance of their precious liquid. The submerging flow was to be considered rather a blessing.

The most famous of these wells is Zamzam. Located east of the Kaaba, it had the reputation of never being dry. Contemporary pilgrims will always drink there. The water had long been sold by specialized local merchants. The Saudi government, which sees pilgrims as "hosts of God," has put an end to this ancestral traffic. Zamzam water is now free. Like the water from Lourdes, it is supposed to have healing powers. A recent incident has somewhat undermined this widely shared belief in the Muslim community. Brought back from Arabia by Muslim pilgrims, water from Zamzam, probably badly conditioned, was at the origin of a cholera epidemic that caused several serious illnesses.

The Kaaba is often referred to as a temple. It's actually an unsuitable term. The building doesn't resemble, not at all, ancient places of worship in the Middle East, Greece or Rome, or Indian or Far Eastern temples. The Kaaba is designated in Arabic by a precise word, that of bayt, literally "place where to spend the night," and therefore dwelling.

This word applies to the Bedouin tent or the modest earth house in the oases. But it applies equally to the "home" of a supernatural male or female protector of the tribe, somehow a god or goddess of ancient local beliefs. In the latter case, the bayt is what is customarily called a betylus, that is, a sacred rock. This is then considered a "dwelling," Arabic Bayt Hebrew Beth, "of God," el, in most Semitic languages, which will produce Al-lah, "the God" with proper noun value in Arabic.

Mecca's main activity was his famous pilgrimage around the Kaaba. It was a kind of Arab pagan Lourdes. Everything in the city was to be focused on the religion.

HISTORY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PLANT.

The Arab historian Abu al-Walid Muhammad al-Azraqi, a native of Mecca (died circa 837) wrote down in his *Kitab Akhbar Makka* the memories of his grandfather on the history of Mecca, before and after the appearance of Islam. Professor Roberto Tottoli of the University of Naples has made of it a remarkable translation.

Azraqi. *Akhbar Makka*. Fourth part. The Building of the Ka'ba by the Quraysh.

Some men from Quraysh sat in the sanctuary ... and were remembering the building of the Ka'ba and they described to me how it was before that time. It was built of dried [unmortared] stones and not with clay. Its door was on ground level and it had no roof or ceiling. The curtain (kiswa) was hung on its wall on one side and was tied to the top of the center of the wall. On the right as one entered the Ka'ba there was a pit where gifts of money and goods for the Ka'ba were deposited..... The horns of the ram that Abraham, the God's friend, had sacrificed were hanging on the wall facing the entrance. There were ornaments hanging in it which had been given as offerings."

Abraham or not, the rough and crude character, made of odds and ends, of the first kaaba, is likely.

Not only because it is located in the bottom of a wadi and therefore in a flood zone but also, if according to the Muslim tradition itself, because the locals did not even have a carpenter (since they had to use the services of a foreigner for this work, a Coptic Christian from Ethiopia named Pachomius).

"But for all that, it was a temple and had all the primary characteristics of such: a quadrangular cella oriented to the cardinal compass points, a sacred rock and sacred spring, a characteristic haram with the usual privileges of the right of asylum pertaining to it , and so on" (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

The reason for his first (re) adjustment would have been that the treasure that his offering well contained was stolen and that the Quraysh wanted to heighten his original dried stone wall that was hardly higher than a man.

Because the initial kaaba, let us point it out, does not seem to have been the "house" of a god as in other ancient civilizations but rather a square or quadrangular tent (see the Kiswa) while the tents of the nomads were rather round, hiding from the eyes of non-religious persons an offering pit or bothros and weighted by laid out all around stones, some of which being sacred.

Gaudefroy-Demonbynes *Pilgrimage to Mecca* 1923.

If we stick to the letter of the tradition, the Ka'ba was rebuilt, we do not know how, and it underwent a second destruction for the same causes as before. Only a detail is different: a woman practicing the incense rite of the Holy House set fire to the dried fabrics that were accumulated there; the fire reached the woods that has been used for the construction of the walls, which were cracked (Tottoli: *i muri furono rovinati, incrinandosi su tutti i lati*).

These events would be contemporaneous with the youth of the Prophet, since we see him intervening in the reconstruction work. But the account of this intervention, which is indicated below, is too clearly apologetic for it to be possible to attribute to it a serious confidence.

What it be the Ka'ba was in rubble, and it was urgent to rebuild it. But the Quraysh were stopped by the religious fear that forbids men from touching holy things, and probably also by lack of materials and by technical incapacity.

A fortuitous event, which took on the aspect of a divine intervention, came to facilitate the projected reconstruction. A "Greek" ship, which belonged to a man named Pachomius and was crossing the Red Sea to carry wood in Abyssinia, was wrecked at a point on the coast which was then the port of the Hijaz, and that the traditions generally confuse with Jeddah. The Quraysh were immediately informed of the accident: at all times, this coast of the Red Sea, bristling with pitfalls, has been rich in shipwrecks, and the surrounding populations have a solid reputation as wreckers. They took possession of the cargo and took with them to Mekka Captain Pachomius, who happened to be also a mason and a carpenter.

The texts which record the taking possession of the woods of the ship of Pachomius, whether it is a cargo or the ship herself, give two different versions of this fact. According to one, the Quraysh took it as a godsend, according to the other, they bought it, and even they took with them up to Mekka the passengers who were able to sell their goods in it, without paying the tithe "which was

demanded from the Byzantine traders as the Byzantine demanded it from the Mekkans who came into to their country " (Azraqi. Akhbar Makka. Fourth part. The Building of the Ka'ba by the Quraysh).

These strangers thus simply enter the Mekkan haram: the hajj itself was then open to everybody probably with the same ihram rites as later.

The first version seems to be the right one: the ship was a wreck. But the Muslim law, based on Hadiths, requires that any expenditure made for a mosque come from a lawful source, and I do not think that the "wreck" can be considered as such, for a ship having still her crew. To ensure this lawful character, they have therefore introduced into the tradition a sale. Walid ibn al-Mughira recommends that the Quraysh use for the construction of the Ka'ba only money acquired by lawful means, and it is with this money that he goes to Jeddah (sic) to buy the ship of Pachomius (Qutb ad din p 49 and following ones).

This is the first clear example of the use of materials foreign to the haram, and even later foreign to the Muslim land, for work on the Ka'ba.

Now reconstruction was possible, but who would dare to touch the Holy House and the objects it contained, the "money" and saber ornaments (hilya) which, offered as gifts, were locked in a pit topped by the statue of Hubal, the two horns of the Abraham's ram ?

Editor's note. Yaqubi I. 286.....has shown the generality and importance of the rite according to which the skin and the head of the victim are offered to the god; he sees in it the affirmation of the social bond which unites the god, the sacrificer and the victim. Alfred Loisy (sacrifice, p. 205 ff.) pointed out the rites of the hunters, paying special attention to the heads of their prey. - Anyway, at the Ka'ba, metal gazelles are perhaps a permanent offering, representation of the living victims, and the horns of Abraham's ram play the same symbolic role. The skins of the victims with which Ka'bas walls were covered and which are the cause of the present Kiswa are the special offering to the deity.

When they wanted to approach the Ka'ba, they met the dragon which in all the countries of the world is the guardian of the treasure, a black-backed serpent with a white belly, with a kid's head, whose sight pushed back the boldest. But God, who had once charged it with defending the treasure against the Jurhum, had pity on his worshipers, piously anxious to rebuild his house, and sent a great white-faced eagle, with a black belly, with yellow paws, which seized the dragon in his claws and carried itbut, tradition says, the resources were not sufficient to build on all its extent, the modest edifice, stone foundation then wooden foundation, which was consecrated to God; they must renounce raising the wall on a distance of six cubits and on span, to the north of the holy house, and they contented themselves with surround it with a low wall; the hijr or hatim. It is in this very natural shape, which dispenses from an explanation and which does not make it possible to attempt a serious hypothesis, that is reported a fact of which it would be useful to know the true cause

Pachomius proposed to build a domed roof (mukabbas); the Quraysh preferred a terrace. The interior and the beams on which are placed some immagini di profeti, piante e angeli.....l'immagine di Gesu e Maria:some images of prophets, plants and angels the image of Jesus and Mary .

This last kaaba would have looked like a church and the Hijr would have been a sacrarium or an apse beginning.

The well of Zamzam.

Close by the Ka'ba is a well from whose depths water can be drawn for the benefit of the pilgrims who cherish the well-attested blessings that come to those who drink it. If pilgrims are drawn to it, so too are historians, who see in the source called Zamzam a plausible explanation of why there was a sanctuary in the wadi of Mecca in the first place. In the nineteenth century Julius Wellhausen pronounced the Zamzam "the only spring of Mecca and so likely therefore the origin of the holy place as well as the city," and other authorities have generally been inclined to agree. There are problems, however. Other wells quenched Mecca, as Ibn Ishaq reveals when speaking of the Zamzam.

Zamzam utterly eclipsed the other wells from which the pilgrims used to get their water, and the people went to it because it was in the sacred enclosure and because its water was superior to any other..... (Ibn Ishaq The life of Muhammad translation Alfred Guillaume page 65)

The Zamzam was not, then, unique; it was simply superior.....The Zamzam was said to have been hidden by the pagan Jurhum..... and it remained unknown unused down to the days of

Abd al-Muttalib, Muhammad's grandfather. Abd al-Muttalib was a descendant of Abd Manaf, the son to whom Qusayy, that founder of Quraysh-and Meccan-fortunes, handed on as a hereditary trust the office of siqaya, the privilege of supplying water to the Meccan pilgrims.

On the face of it, this possibly lucrative honor therefore could have had nothing to do with the Zamzam, because the well was unknown to Qusayy and every member of Abd Manaf down to Abd al-Muttalib. Did the Zamzam replace the other wells of Mecca at some point, perhaps at some very late date in the history of the city, when the Abrahamic story began to circulate? There are grounds for thinking so, not the least of which is the lack of any essential connection between the Zamzam and its water and the pre- or post-Islamic Haji "(F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

"One aspect of the worship of the pre-Islamic Arabs that always attracted the attention not only of Greek and Latin authors who came in contact with Arab society but also of later Muslim authorities on the Age of Barbarism was a cult of stones. For both sets of observers, it seemed odd to venerate stones, whether they were unshaped or fashioned into some kind of rudimentary statue. It was not, of course, the stones themselves that were being worshiped but a spirit within them. The practice is testified to among settled Arabs like the Nabateans of Petra and the priestly Arabs of Emessa (Homs) in Syria, who had enshrined one such stone within their temple-which their high priest Elagabalus carried off to Rome with him when he became emperor -as well as among the nomads who carried stones enclosed in portable shrines into battle with them" (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

The Black Stone.

Built into the south-east corner of the Ka'ba, about four feet from the ground, is the Black Stone. Was the Black Stone yes or no part of the construction of the Ka'ba from the beginning? The sources are obviously uncertain on the question, and so too are we, though the probability seems high that it was. On one account, the gathering of local idols into the Meccan sanctuary goes back to the time of the pre-Quraysh ruler Amr ibn Luhayy; and as a sacred stone from Abu Qubays, the Black Stone too would have been part of Amr's religious synoikism. But if, as seems equally likely, the stone was originally one of the portable betylus of the early settlers at Mecca, its incorporation into the structure of the Ka'ba..... would signal the decision of nomads to make a fixed settlement....

According to Muslim tradition, this had been a part, though not a structural part, of the building from the beginning....But the tradition also remembered that the stone had come from Abu Qubays, a mountain overlooking Mecca." The two strands of tradition were harmonized in an account whereby the stone was concealed on Abu Qubays during the era of the Flood, when Adam's original Ka'ba was destroyed, and then restored to Abraham for inclusion in his version of the Ka'ba.

The harmonization was not perfect. Other traditions recollected that the Black Stone, or at least its inclusion in the Ka'ba, was of much more recent origin. Ibn Sa'd says that the Quraysh brought it down from Abu Qubays only four years before Muhammad's first revelation. In another account, from al-Fakihi, it is traced back to the Quraysh's first reconstruction of the building, possibly at the time of Qusayy" (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

The Maqam Ibrahim.

"The Black Stone was not the only venerated stone in the Meccan sanctuary. In Islamic times visitors were also shown one bearing the footprint of Abraham himself * and called the "station" of Abraham (maqam Ibrahim). The latter expression occurs twice in the Quran. The mention at 3:97 is connected with a place called Bakka **, apparently the site of the House 37 and the place in which are God's manifest signs, including the Station of Abraham, an allusion that suggests a place within the Haram. In 2:125 the believers are urged to "take the maqam Ibrahim as a place of prayer (musalla)," or, more literally, "take some place from the maqam Ibrahim as a place of prayer," a mode of expression that suggested to some commentators that the "station of Abraham" might refer to the entire sanctuary or even the entire area of the pilgrimage. But in the end, however, the consensus settled upon the free-standing stone also located within the sanctuary.

Whatever was being referred to in the Quranic verse, there was a stone in the Haram at Mecca, measuring roughly two feet by three feet; and as we shall see, it had a history.....here was writing on the stone.....there was a very good witness present, the subsequent historian of the city, al-Fakihi, who recorded the events in his Chronicle of Mecca.

When the stone *** was brought on the 1st of I Rabi (of the year 870 of our era) to the governor house ... people examined it closely. And I looked on with them....." (F. E. Peters, The Hajj, 1994).

* In Belgium they call footprints of Gargantua or of the horse Bayard or of St. Martin this type of rock.

** Bakka makes us think of a place name quoted in the Bible Psalm 84, 6 (the mulberry-tree Valley ???), but that cannot be the case of course (a borrowing from the Rabbis of Medina?)

*** A re-use stone from another temple?

The Hijr

"Opposite the north-western face of the Ka'ba is an area of special sanctity defined by a low semicircular wall (hatim). The area is called the hijr, and Muslim tradition identifies it as the burial place of Ishmael and Hagar.¹⁰ Not much is said of it in pre-Islamic times. The area first becomes prominent when Ibn al-Zubayr, a seventh-century Muslim governor of Mecca, incorporated it into the Ka'ba by connecting the hatim to the building. His work was shortly undone, and the hatim was left a free-standing wall, as it is today. There are few plausible explanations of why there should be a wall there. It has been suggested that a low wall once surrounded the Ka'ba on all sides and marked the area within which the gods were venerated through sacrifice, or, more enticingly but less convincingly, that the hatim represents the remains of the apse of a Christian church oriented towards Jerusalem, which, it will be seen, was the direction in which once Muhammad prayed while he was still at Mecca.

The word hijr itself means "inviolable" or "taboo," and it occurs once in that sense in the Quran (6:137-139), in reference not to the area near the Ka'ba but to animals and crops earmarked as belonging to the gods, a sense that supports the assumption that the hijr, whatever its original extent, may have served as a pen for the animals destined for sacrifice to the deities of the Ka'ba. Whether it was so used in Muhammad's own lifetime seems doubtful, however, at least on the evidence of the Muslim authorities. As the hijr is portrayed in Muhammad's day, it was a place of common assembly where political matters were discussed, or people prayed, or, as it appears, slept.

The sleepers in the hijr are generally dreamers, and their dreams have a divine purport: Abd al-Muttalib was inspired to discover the Zamzam while sleeping there, the mother of the Prophet had a vision of her son's greatness, and Muhammad was visited by Gabriel there before beginning his celebrated Night journey all commonplace examples of inspiration in the course of an incubation, that is, sleeping in a sacred place" (F. E. Peters, The Hajj, 1994).

HUBAL

"Among the gods worshiped by the Quraysh, the greatest was Hubal, this on the testimony of Ibn al-Kalbi (kitab al isnam):

The Quraysh had several statues in and around the Ka'ba. The greatest of these was Hubal's. It was made, as I was told, of red agate, in the form of a man with the right hand broken off. It came into the possession of the Quraysh in this condition, and they therefore made for it a hand of gold.... It stood inside the Ka'ba, and in front of it were seven divinatory arrows. On one of these was written the word "Pure," and on another "associated alien." Whenever the lineage of a newborn was doubted, they would offer a sacrifice to Hubal and then shuffle the arrows and throw them. If the arrows showed the word "Pure," the child would be declared legitimate and the tribe would accept him. If, however, the arrows showed "associated alien," the child would be declared illegitimate and would reject him. The third arrow had to do with divination concerning the dead, while the fourth was for divination about marriage.

The purpose of the three remaining arrows has not been explained. Whenever they disagreed concerning something, or proposed to embark upon a journey, or undertake some other project, they would proceed to Hubal and shuffle the divinatory arrows before it. Whatever result they obtained they would follow and do accordingly. (Ibn al-Kalbi, Book of Idols 1952: 23-24)

Some additional details on this cleromantic deity, the most powerful of the pagan deities of Mecca, is supplied by the Meccan historian Azraqi..... Amr ibn Luhayy brought (to Mecca) an idol called Hubal from the land of Hit in Mesopotamia.....he set it up at the well inside the Ka'ba and ordered the people to worship it. Thus a man coming back from a journey would visit it and circumambulate the House before going to his family, and he would shave his hair before it.

Muhammad ibn Ishaq said that Hubal was (made of) cornelian pearl in the shape of a human. His right hand was broken off and the Quraysh made a gold hand for it. It had a vault for the sacrifice,

and there were seven arrows cast (On issues relating to) a dead person, virginity and marriage. Its offering was a hundred camels. It is also said that it was veiled (Azraqi Akhbar Makkah, third part page 38: velato).

Finally, among the pictures that decorated the interior of the Ka'ba in pre-Islamic days, there was one, as Azraqi says, "of Abraham as an old man." But because the figure was shown performing divination by arrows, it seems likely that it was Hubal. The suspicion is strengthened by the fact that when Muhammad took over the sanctuary, he permitted the picture of Jesus to remain * but had that of Abraham removed" (F. E. Peters, The Hajj, 1994).

Azraqi (Akhbar Makkah). Fourth part page 56. Translation Roberto Tottoli. "The prophet entered within the Ka'bah the day of the conquest and found in it the depictions of angels and other subjects. Seeing the image of Abraham *, he exclaimed: "God curse them, they made him an old man dedicated to the use of (divinatory?) arrows." Then he saw the depiction of Mary, placed his hand on it and ordered: "Make the depictions that are there disappear, except this of Mary."

There is perhaps indeed in Mecca during the time of Muhammad, that is to say the Jahiliya, besides Manicheans, Judaeo-Christians and Christians, Magians or Zoroastrians, simply Arab pagans. In other words, some polytheists whose main god is the moon god Hubal or Hobal (even Allah?) and who manage the temple of the Kaaba. A cubic structure subject to various pilgrimages during certain months of the year (the sacred months). The Kaaba of Mecca housed different works of art, a little bit like the Bamyán Buddhas or the temples in Palmyra, and an idol of raw stone always present, besides, the black stone; but attached today to the legendary figure of Abraham. This idol of black stone will be indeed the only one to escape the destructive fury of Muhammad when he seizes the city.

The Spanish website <http://religion.antropo.es/estudios/origenes/index.html> (Documents on the origins of Islam) reminds us in this regard that the beginning of Muhammad's apostolate does not contain any attack against idols; it is a moment when the new prophet can hope for a compromise solution with the aristocracy of the Quraysh .

In practice, idols, rough stones and altars are mixed, both in appearance and in their ritual functions.

The absolute rejection of these practices will consecrate the break. Muhammad takes up an old biblical theme, a little easy, moreover, and idolatry will thus become an absolute evil in his mouth. But in reality for the highest spirits like the high king of Ireland Cormac the idol is not the god himself but a mirror of the divinity, a symbol.

"Ar baí cretím in óenDé oc Cormac . ar ro ráidseom na aidérad clocha ná crunnu acht no adérad intí dosroni & ropo chomsid ar cul na uli dúla" (Senchas na relec inso).

"Cormac believed in one god. He said that he did not worship stones or trees, but only the one who made them and who is the protector of all the elements" (History of burial places).

The distinction was, however, too subtle for some individuals and led to endless caricatures of this way of seeing things. According to various passages of the Quran, some Meccans seem to have been educated enough, philosophers or atheists enough to mock the dogma of the resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment (cf. Mehdi Azaiez The Quranic counterspeech. De Gruyter) and An Nader al Harith refused to believe in the miracle of the moon split in two.

According to Muqatil (Tafsir al Quran 3, 226) it was this writer who was the originator of the frontal criticism of the Quran mentioned in chapter 25 verses 4 and 5.

"The unbelievers say: 'All this is a lie that he (Muhammad) invented, and where other people helped him'. But this is an injustice and a lie. They say, 'He is writing tales of the ancients! They are dictated to him morn and evening ».

In short, whether through agnosticism or commercial opportunism, the leaders of Mecca demonstrated the greatest practical and philosophical tolerance, as long as their religious liberties and economic interests were not threatened.

"In most ancient temples, in obvious contrast to later synagogues, churches, and mosques, whatever ritual was required was practiced outside the building, generally in the form of sacrifice upon an altar. The inner parts of the building might be entered; but because they were regarded as the domicile of the god, entry was denied to the profane, those who stood "before the shrine." Although it is true that the primary liturgy connected with the Mecca building, the ritual circumambulation, was performed outside, there is almost no trace, either before or under Islam, of the notion that the interior of the Ka'ba was in any way more sacred than the surrounding Haram. Access to it was controlled, as we shall have many occasions to see, but exclusively, it

would appear, on the grounds of political privilege. People, including Muhammad himself, prayed both inside and outside the Ka'ba and visited it whenever the privilege was granted to them. The Ka'ba was not, then, a more sacred haram within the larger Haram that surrounded it" (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

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* At least according to these Muslim traditions but Azraqi has perhaps "Judaized" or Christianized pagan idols: his Abraham playing with arrows must be a Hubal practicing divination, and Mary, a female goddess ...

The kaaba was not a church therefore but a building of religious syncretism, an assembly of all the traditions that the Quraysh could have brought back from their journeys.

HISTORY OF THE PILGRIMAGES.

Preliminary semantic clarifications.

The omra is currently an individual visit to Mecca made at any time of the year and can be repeated several times.

The Hajj is a once-in-a-lifetime event and is performed at a specific time of the year. Hence its collective and even massive character.

As for the rituals, the differences between the two are quite minimal.

But this has not always been the case.

Translated with www.DeepL.com/Translator (free version) Quran chapter 106. "For the covenants of security of the Quraysh, The covenants (covering) the journey of winter and of summer, Let them worship the Lord of this House, Who provides them with food against hunger and security against fear."

This is the current translation/interpretation of the sura, which might be paraphrased as:

"Because the Lord granted (or perhaps guaranteed) the treaties enjoyed by the Quraysh, treaties which have made possible their annual commercial journeys, let the Quraysh recognize this and worship the Lord of the Ka'ba, who has, through these treaties and their consequences, provided the Quraysh with both sustenance and security."

Thus translated this is intelligible, but the Arabic of the sura has posed serious linguistic and syntactical problems that have bothered commentators from the beginning. And not everyone read the celebrated "two journeys" of Sura 106 as an expanded opportunity for trade.

The commentator al-Razi (d. 1209) for one thought that the "journey of winter and of summer" referred to the travel of pilgrims to Mecca, the one referring to the Umra of the month Rajab and the other to the Hajj of the month Dhu al-Hijja.

If it was a supposition, it may have been an inspired one. Muslim commentators, who lived in an era and a society without intercalation and so with-out seasonal festivals, would have had difficulty imagining the seasonal pilgrimages, as all such were in pre-Islamic days. Such pilgrimages would surely have been "eased" if they took place under the authority and protection of the now saintly Quraysh. Thus, on this reading of Sura 106, every year therefore, twice a year during the sacred months, pilgrims were drawn to Mecca on pilgrimage, and their fee of homage was the supply of provisions on which the Quraysh and the other Meccans lived. Trade enters nowhere in this equation, particularly not the long-distance trade read by some of the commentators into the second verse of the sura.

Trade may have been a background issue, however, or rather the Quraysh's participation in it. Some members of Muhammad's audience appear to have opposed it, or such seems to be the sense of the sura 2:198: "It is no fault for you if you seek the bounty of the Lord." Detailed prescriptions regarding the pilgrimage "in the well-known months" immediately precede and follow that verse. Muslim historians had a good deal of information on the circumstances and places where the "Lord's bounty" was reaped by interested parties, namely, the holy-day fairs (mawasim). That trade should be tied to the pilgrimage was natural to most of the participants, save perhaps to the puritanical Hums, who, as we shall see, had a fierce and exclusive devotion to the ka'bah. Peoples who for reason of danger or distance did not normally associate came together under the protection of the truce of God to worship and, it seems clear, to trade. Azraqi.

The Hajj was in the month of Dhu al-Hijja. People went out with their goods and they ended up in Ukaz on the day of the new moon of Dhu al-Qa'da. They stayed there twenty nights during which they set up in Ukaz their market of all colors and all goods in small houses. The leaders and foremen of each tribe oversaw the selling and buying.....

After twenty days they leave for Majanna, and they spend ten days in its market, and when they see the new moon of Dhu al-Hijja they leave for Dhu al-Majaz, where they spend eight days and nights in its markets. They leave Dhu al-Majaz on the "day of tawarih, " so called because they depart from Dhu al-Majaz for Urfa after they have taken water (for their camels) from Dhu al-Majaz. They do this because there is no drinking water in Urfa, nor in Muzdalifa.

The "day of tawarih" was the last day of their markets. The people who were present at the markets of Ukaz and Majanna and Dhu al-Majaz were merchants, and those who wanted to trade, and even those who had nothing to sell and buy because they can go out with their families. The

non-merchants from Mecca left Mecca on the "day of tawarih. " (F.E. Peters. Muhammad and the origins of Islam 1994).

It is not easy to make sense of this description, particularly in its relationship to the pilgrimage. Although the actual location of the markets is uncertain, all the places mentioned seem to be close to Mecca-though, significantly, not in Mecca-and to be connected to the Hajj. And the sequence seems carefully arranged, possibly by the Quraysh, so that no two occasions coincided: from the first to the twentieth of Dhu al-Qa'da was the fair of Ukaz; from the twenty-first to the twenty-ninth, that of Majanna; from the first to the eighth of Dhu al-Hijja, that of Dhu al Majaz; on the ninth and tenth, the Hajj took place; and finally, from the eleventh to the thirteenth, the fair of Mina."

Pilgrims on the pre-Islamic Hajj thus traded at various locations in the vicinity of the Hajj sites and, it seems likely, at Mina and Arafat as well, before performing their rituals, a practice that did not extend, as we shall see, to Mecca. Thus the wealth of the pre-Islamic Quraysh had nothing to do, as it certainly did, on the other hand, in the Islamic era, with trading with pilgrims at Mecca during the Hajj season. If Meccans traded, they did so elsewhere, at the fairs outside of Mecca-fairs they did not control-or else as a function of the regional trading network set up as a result of arrangements with the Bedouin and the Quraysh's own status as a holy tribe, a condition that had been formally institutionalized not long before Muhammad's birth by the sodality known as Hums. The pilgrimage to Mecca by Gaudefroy-Demonbynes 1923.

Twice a year, in spring and autumn, groups of tribes gathered in Mekka and the surrounding area to celebrate propitiatory ceremonies, which paved the way for two dominant hopes, the fertilizing rain and the prosperity of the herds; on the one hand, the umra of the month of Rajab, on the other hand, the hajj or mawsin according to its former name. They consisted of processions, stations (wuquf) before the god, represented by a stone or a mountain; in hastening; finally, in sacrifices; also in rites of circumambulation around the sanctuaries.

Returned to lay life after the completion of the ceremonies, the pilgrims gathered in assemblies where the rejoicings were combined with the affairs; the Mekkans brought these fairs to their city and to Mina.

Even before the seventh century, Christian communities and Jewish groups had active religious life in Arabia, and journeys mingled idolatrous Arabs with the people in Syria and Chaldea. It was from a general religious crisis that rose the preaching of Muhammad, who, wholly pervaded by the customs of his childhood, wanted to join the rites of it to a religion which would have renewed and united Judaism and Christianity and which would have been the true religion of Abraham, ancestor of the Arabs.

It will be seen that the former pre-Islamic rites were dressed one after the other in the fashion of the patriarch. In this borrowed garment, the pilgrimage remains a distinctly pre-Islamic ceremony: we will seek here to clarify this well-known fact, and to show the adaptation of its rites to the worship of the single god

"The best known pagan ritual at Mecca was the pilgrimage. The Quran did not qualify it as pagan, of course-it was affirmed as a genuine remnant of Abrahamic practice-but beyond question it was performed, in one form or another, by both Meccans and visitors to their shrine city before Muhammad received the revelations that were to incorporate it into nascent Islam. Only at a relatively late date, when the triumph of Islam was assured, were pagans prevented from making pilgrimage (Quran 9:17-18).

The pre-Islamic pilgrimage was not a single act but a complex of rituals joined in a manner, and for reasons, we cannot easily discern. The later Muslim tradition "harmonized" the pre-Islamic version of the complex by identifying each of its elements with some incident in the Abraham legend, which was itself enriched by association with otherwise inexplicable practices in the Hajj ritual....But their association with Abraham appears to have occurred well after the Hajj had been embraced as a meritorious way for a Muslim to worship God (Quran 2:197; 3:97).

Without the unifying Abrahamic motif, the Hajj of Muhammad's Mecca disintegrates into an obscure series of acts centering not on Mecca but on the mountain called Arafat, eleven miles east of the city. The Hajj, it has been maintained (cf. Jacqueline Chabbi) , originally had nothing to do with Mecca, as even the Islamic version of the ritual testifies; the climax of the Muslim Hajj was and is the "standing" at Arafat, followed by a procession to Mina and sacrifice there, after which the pilgrim was free to remove the ritual vestments." More, it was common knowledge that not the Quraysh but the Sufa, and later the Tamim, held the religious offices, the so-called

permission (ijaza), at Arafat and Mina. And not only was Mecca not part of the original Hajj; there may have been no trading in the city in connection with its own rituals. Such, at any rate, one might conclude from the fact that the famous pilgrimage fairs-and Mecca is never numbered among them-are associated with Arafat and Mina and that the Quraysh seem to play no major role in them. 14 Thus the Meccan ritual was at some point joined to the Hajj, probably by Muhammad himself.

The Quran brings up also the question of whether Muslims, who focused their religious orientation towards Mecca and were not accustomed to linking commerce with rituals, were permitted to indulge in trade at that moment, as did the Hajj habitués of Arafat and Mina. In this context the revelation preserved in Quran 2:198 was made public: "It is no fault for you if you seek the bounty of the Lord." There is little doubt that these verses refer to the pilgrimage season. Someone apparently had objected to mixing commerce and the pilgrimage ritual, a practice for which Muhammad then announced God's explicit permission. We obviously do not know everything behind the objection, but what does seem reasonably clear is that previously pilgrimage trading had been then restricted to the fairs, of which Mecca apparently was not one. After the revelation of this verse at Medina, Mecca was sanctioned as a pilgrimage trading center, even though the Muslims could not take full advantage of the divine permission until the capture of Mecca shortly before Muhammad's death.

If the Hajj was not Meccan, the Quraysh had their own holy days, including the spring festival called umra and celebrated in the month of Rajab . In Islamic times the Umra lost its seasonal aspect (with the ban on intercalation), and some of its distinctive character its sacrifices, for example disappeared in its combination with the Hajj. But it preserved its special, and peculiarly Meccan, identity well into Islamic times, as we shall see.

The Muslims later made a careful distinction between umra -a word whose exact meaning is unclear -and hajj or pilgrimage properly so-called, but it may not always have been thus. On the model of the two Jewish spring and fall haggim, of Passover and Sukkoth, to which both Arab festivals appear to be closely related, the Umra and (Muslims') Hajj were both originally hajj. It may well have been Muhammad himself who determined that the Arafat ritual was the "Great Hajj" and the Umra the "Lesser," a distinction nowhere apparent in pre-Islamic times.

The distinction between Umra and Hajj is already present in the Quran (2:197), but the latter ritual, which became an obligation for every Muslim, may be a composite of several different cult activities some at Mecca, some at shrines outside the city, woven, whether by Muhammad or by someone earlier, into a single liturgical act. The "running" between Safa and Marwa, for example, originally belonged to neither the Umra nor the Hajj, and some Muslims in fact protested its inclusion in either, objections that were silenced by the revelation of Quran 2:158.

There is no evidence that Muhammad substantially altered any of the basic rituals of the Meccan pilgrimages, whereas he did modify the chaotic "overflowing" (ifada) from Arafat and the time of the departure from Muzdalifa for Mina." So we may assume that the donning of special clothing and the entering into a taboo state was practiced in pre-Islamic Mecca as it was elsewhere in the Semitic world. The ritual in the Haram chiefly had to do with a circumambulation of the Ka'ba, which in Islamic days included the "greeting of the Black Stone," a gesture of touching, pressing, or kissing with abundant precedents in pre-Islamic practice, though of a very different import, as we shall see. Outside the Haram, ritual required the devotee to run back and forth, another type of "circumambulation," between the two bumps of Safa and Marwa, the sites of the statues of Asaf and Na'ila in pre-Islamic days. This latter ritual ended with the offering of sacrifices at Marwa." (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

The Hums

The Meccan historian Azraqi provides a succinct definition of the pre-Islamic religious sodality that the Muslims later remembered as Hums.

"We are the people of the Haram. We do not leave the Haram. We are Hums, and the Quraysh become Hums and all who are born to the Quraysh. Hums and the tribes that became Humsis with them were so called because they were strict fundamentalists in their religion and so an ahmasi (singular of Hums) is a man who is religiously scrupulous" ((Azraqi, *Akhbar Makkah*, Part 4 page 59).

Ibn Sa'd (*Kitab al-tabaqat al-kabir*, volume 1, first part).

Muhammad Ibn Umar informed us on the authority of Abd Allah Ibn Ja'far, he on the authority of Ya'qub.....

"The Hums (this word signifies people who are emotional, and pay attention to etiquette) were the Quraysh, the Kinanah and the Khuza'ah and all those Arabs who had descended from the Quraysh. Muhammad Ibn Umar added, without giving this chain of narrators: or some allies of the Quraysh. The word Al-Tahammus (Tahannuth?) relates to certain practices which they introduced in their religion and were strict in observing them, to wit: They did not go out of the haram when they had performed the tawaf and thus they fell short of performing the rite which God had enjoined on Abraham, and that was to stay at Arafah which is outside the haram. They abstained cooking in fat, and did not live in tents of hair (of camels?) but they lived under red canopies of leather. They permitted the pilgrims to circumambulate round the Ka'bah in their clothes if they had not gone to the Arafat. When they returned from the Arafah they did not circumambulate round the Ka'bah, known as tawaf al-ifadah, but naked or in two ahmasi (a kind of coarse cloth woven by the Banu Ahmas, a branch of the Banu Dubay'ah) clothes. In case one circumambulated in his own clothes it was not lawful for him to wear them again."

Ibn Ishaq adds many more historical and ritualistic nuances to the portrait: *The Life of Mohammed* by Alfred Guillaume page 87. HUMS.

I do not know if it was before or after the year of the elephant that the Couraïchites invented this idea of Houms and put it

in practice. They said in any case: 'We are the sons of Abraham, the people of the sacred enclave, the guardians of the temple and the citizens of Mecca. No other Arab has rights similar to ours or a position like ours.

The Arabs do not recognize any rank like ours, so do not attach the same importance to the surrounding country as to the sanctuary, because if you do, the Arabs will despise the taboo at home and say, "They granted the same importance to the outer secular earth as to the sacred territory.

So they gave up the halt to Arafah and left again, recognizing that they were institutions of the pilgrimage and the religion of Abraham. They considered that the other Arabs should stop there and leave, but said: "We are the people of the sanctuary, so it is not appropriate that we leave the sacred territory and honor other places like us, the Hums, we do it because the Hums are the people of the sanctuary. They then proceeded in the same way with the Arabs born from within their borders but having no sacred territory. Kinana and Khouza'a joined them in this area. The Hums were, therefore, fellow tribesmen of the Quraysh, the Kinana, the Khuza'a, and the Amir ibn Sa'sa'a. They had embraced, or perhaps had even newly embraced, what is called "the religion of Abraham," which the members closely identified with the cult of the Ka'ba in Mecca, even to the exclusion of the other pilgrimage rituals, chiefly the Hajj, which was focused on places like Mina and Arafat." On this view, and we have no reason to doubt it, the original Hajj had nothing to do with the "religion of Abraham," and the Quraysh as Hums did not recognize the Hajj because some of its rituals took place outside the Haram. This passage from Ibn Ishaq seems therefore to draw the Hums' definition of the Haram somewhat short of Arafat.

The Hums used to say, 'Do not respect anything profane and do not go outside the sacred area during the hajj' so they cut short the rites of the pilgrimage and the halt at 'Arafah, it being in the profane area, and would not halt at it or go forth from it. They made their stopping place at the extreme end of the sacred territory at Namira at the open space of al Ma'ziman, stopping there the night of 'Arafah and sheltering by day in the trees of Namira and starting from it to al Muzdalifa. When the sun turbaned the tops of the mountains, they set forth. They were called Hums because of their strictness in their religion. (Ibn Ishaq 1955: 89)

These limited cult excursions outside of Mecca may have been by way of a concession to some of the Bedouin members of the sodality or to newcomers who found it difficult to break old habits. Other reports stress the Hums' narrower definition of their sacred zone as the area immediately around the Ka'ba, as in this from Muqatil ibn Sulayman: The Hums-they were Quraysh, Kinana, Khuza'a and Amir ibn Sa'sa'a-said: "Safa and the Marwa do not belong to the sacred sites ." In the Age of Barbarism, there was therefore on the Safa an idol named Na'ila and on the Marwa an idol named Asaf. They [the Hums] said: "It is improper for us to make a turning (tawaf) between them," and therefore they did not make a turning between them (Muqatil, Tafsir, ms. 1.25b9). If we are to believe this, the Hums attempted therefore, perhaps not entirely successfully, to exclude even Safa and Marwa, within a stone's throw from the Ka'ba, from their own particular rites. Or perhaps not. Muslim commentators continuously sought to supply the historical background for the Quran's great number of verses without context. One such verse directly

addresses Safa and Marwa and what appears to be a group of Meccans who hesitated to accept the cult there: Safa and Marwa are among the indications. It is therefore no sin for him who is on pilgrimage to the House of God, to go round them. (Quran 2:158)

This is a classic example of a Quranic answer without the question. We, and Muqatil ibn Sulayman, must therefore supply it: "Is it a sin to perform the tawaf around Safa and Marwa?" And its two possible implications: Is it or is it not permissible in your new religious system to continue the current practice of performing the "turning" between Safa and Marwa? Or, as a member of the Hums might ask: Must we discontinue our present "Abrahamic" practice and revert to the old pagan custom of running between Safa and Marwa? Muqatil's report neatly supplies the context of the Quran's unasked question: Muhammad was breaking with the Hums' characteristic limitation of the ritual to the Ka'ba alone.

Confining cult rituals to the Haram of Mecca was only one aspect of Hums observance. There were also dietary and domestic taboos and a great deal of emphasis upon the clothes connected with the ritual" (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

In reference to their prohibition in the temple enclosure of food and clothing brought from outside the sacred territory God therefore revealed: "O son of Adam, wear your usual clothes in each of our mosques and eat and drink and do not waste, because he [God] does not like prodigals. Say, who has forbidden the garments which God has given to his servants, and the good things which he has put at their disposal? Say: the day of the resurrection they will only be for those who have been believers during the present life. This is how we explain the signs to the people who know." God has thus removed the restrictions brought by the Hums and the innovations of the Couraichites contrary to the interests of men by sending his apostle preaching Islam. Jacqueline Chabbi too, distinguishes two pilgrimages at the origin of the current Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

The first, the umra, consisting of levorotary circumambulations around Kaaba's betylus within Mecca itself (ritual of rain demand around the betyl of the Kaaba). And a walk still within Mecca itself between the two small rising grounds that are Safa and Marwa, located a little obliquely on the east side of the Ka'ba, with a sacrifice at Marwa.

Its configuration of "baetylus" type makes the Kaaba a sacred space closed on itself. The circumambulation ritual consists in circumventing the building without ever entering it. Pilgrims must turn seven times - a symbolic and magical figure in Semitic civilizations as in many others - around the Kaaba, counter-clockwise, starting from the south-east corner. They try in passing to approach the black stone to touch or kiss it. At the very least, they wave to her from afar as if they want to be recognized. Then they go on to the north.

The Stone of Felicity (Hajar as Sa'adah) stuck in the south-west corner, called Yemenite, is also to be saluted. But the devotion it arouses among pilgrims is less frenetic than that of the Black Stone. The pilgrims - who do not suspect it anymore - follow in a way a circuit having an antisolar direction, what is rare.

As we have had the opportunity to see, in Mecca, pre-Muslim pilgrims already wore a ritual garment provided by the Hums and shaved their head to be in sacralization state.

The case of the Hums seems to indicate that initially there was only a circumambulation around the Kaaba and not even around Safa and Marwa. As for the ascent of Mount Arafat located 20 km do not even talk about it, it was a pilgrimage only Bedouin.

In short, to conclude, the oldest pilgrimage, the Meccan pilgrimage, certainly took place entirely within the city itself, close to the Kaaba. And until now besides two sacred rocks remain included in its walls, the famous black stone and the other, built in the Yemeni angle.

Safa and Marwa.

"Indeed, Safa and Marwa are among the indications of God. So for those who make the Hajj to the House or the Umra, there is no sin in circumambulating them. (Quran 2:158)

This is as much as the Quran says. But the Muslim tradition offers two explanations for the practice, one "pagan" and one "Abrahamic." As we have already seen, the latter simply identifies Hagar's frantic search for water for the infant (Ishmael) with the ritual running between the hills before her providential discovery of the Zamzam. What is obviously an older and more primitive explanation has to do with two humans named Asaf and Na'ila, members of the Jurhum:

Quraysh had a statue by a well in the middle of the Ka'ba called Hubal. And they adopted Isaf (or Asaf) and Na'ila by the place of Zamzam, sacrificing beside them. They were a man and a woman of Jurhum—Isaf and Na'ila—who were guilty of sexual relations in the Ka'ba and so God

transformed them into two stones. We always heard that Isaf and Na'ila were a man and a woman of Jurhum who copulated in the Ka'ba so God transformed them into two stones. But God alone knows if this is the truth" (Ibn Ishaq 1955: page 37).

Despite Ibn Ishaq's explicit misgivings, the colorful story became current in the Muslim authors and has been the point of departure for a wide variety of attempts to explain the reality, if any, behind the story and its connection with the "running" ritual. The names which appear to be Aramaic rather than Arabic and so have suggested foreign origins. What were transparently sacred stones, or perhaps stone statues - the Jurhum story may reflect an etiological myth or be a distant echo of some form of sacred prostitution at the Ka'ba or nearby - were originally worshiped atop the "high places" of Safa and Marwa and then brought down somewhere in the vicinity of the Ka'ba by Qusayy himself. The circumambulation ritual continued to be performed at the two hills, but thereafter sacrifices were offered at the new sites of the statues" (F. E. Peters, *The Hajj*, 1994).

The circumambulations around the Kaaba were therefore followed by a ritual race between two small elevations, Safa and Marwa, located a little obliquely on the east side of the Ka'ba. The back and forth between the two rising grounds that are Safa and Marwa, was to be performed originally on a rocky track, open air, which was probably slightly upward from south to north. This rapid march which still appears today among the rites of the Muslim pilgrimage is probably also very old. It is, in any case, largely pre-Islamic and would have had at the time the seven journeys still made today by pilgrims, with departures from Safa in the south and arrivals of the seventh journey to Marwa in the north.

It is probably this arrival that was to be used as a final moment for the former pilgrimage which certainly took place entirely with the Meccan City itself, in the immediate vicinity of the Ka'ba. Significantly, it ended with a sacrifice likely of camelids on the rock of Marwa, which would have been called "carrion-eaters feeder." This name is unambiguous in relation to its purpose and function. It should be known that in this type of worship, the sacrifice is always the concluding act of the ritual.

Ibn Kathir, Tafsir surah 2 verse 158.

"As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of God. So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or `Umrah (pilgrimage) by performing Tawaf between them. And whoever does good voluntarily, then verily, God is All-Recognizer and All-Knower."

.....

The verse was revealed regarding the Ansar, who before Islam, used to assume Ihlal (or Ihram for Hajj) in the area of Mushallal for their goddess called Manat..... they used to hesitate to perform Tawaf between As-Safa and Al-Marwah. So they (during the Islamic era) they asked God's Messenger about it, saying, 'O Messenger of God! During the time of Jahiliyyah, we used to hesitate to perform Tawaf between As-Safa and Al-Marwah.....

God then revealed: As-Safa and Al-Marwah are of the symbols of God.....So it is not a sin on him who performs Hajj or `Umrah by performing the going (Tawaf) between them "....

However, I heard learned men saying that all the people, except those whom `A'ishah mentioned, said, 'Our Tawaf between these two hills is a practice of Jahiliyyah.' Some others among the Ansar said, 'We were commanded to perform Tawaf of the Ka`bah, but not between As-Safa and Al-Marwah.' So God revealed, etc.

It seems that this verse was revealed concerning the two groups....

Ash-Sha`bi said, "Isaf was on As-Safa while Na'ilah was on Al-Marwah, and they used to touch (or kiss) them. After Islam came, they were hesitant about performing Tawaf between them....

Imam Ahmad reported that Habibah bint Abu Tajrah said, "I saw God's Messenger performing Tawaf between As-Safa and Al-Marwah.....

This Hadith was used as a proof for the fact that Sa`i is an obligatory act of the Hajj etc.etc.

Question now. At what time of the year did the proper Meccan ritual take place? It is possible that it was a spring ritual that corresponded to the offering of the first fruits to the gods, the first agricultural or pastoral production of the year, a practice well known in the more northern regions of the Near East. Some textual clues suggest it.

It can be seen from the very text of verse 97 of chapter 5 that pilgrims wore garlands 1) and also their animals when they went and returned from the pilgrimage: "God has made the Ka'bah, the Sacred House, an asylum of security and Hajj and 'Umrah (pilgrimage) for mankind, and also the

Sacred Month and the animals of offerings and the garlanded (people or animals, etc. marked with the garlands 1) around their necks made from the outer part of the stem of the Makkah trees for their security), that you may know that God has knowledge of all, etc.

During the time of Jahiliyyah , the people used to garland themselves with animal hair and pelts when they left their areas in months other than the Sacred Months. The idolaters of the Sacred House Area used to garland themselves with the tree stems of the Sacred Area, so that they were granted safe passage.'

This statement was collected by Ibn Abi Hatim, who also recorded that Ibn Abbas said, "There are two verses in this surah (Al-Ma'idah) that were abrogated, the verse about the garlands 5:2, and [verse] 5:42.

THE BEDOUIN HAJJ.

Other rites seem to have also taken place during the pre-Islamic period on the plateau of Mount Arafat, whose ceremonial details and precise function are unknown: the pagan Arabs probably honored here many deities in order to get favors or divinatory responses, sometimes sacrificing animals. But neither the plain of Arafat, nor the valley of Mina, were formerly part of the Mecca site. These were territories outside the city that fell under the obedience of the Bedouins wandering around. There was therefore, before Islam, two distinct pilgrimages, that of the Meccans around the Kaaba and that of the nomads outside, starting from Mount Arafat, located at about twenty kilometers from Mecca and ending at Mina at 5 km from Mecca. After a stop at Muzdalifa. This second pilgrimage was originally a pure Bedouin gathering concluded by the symbolic stoning of three stone stelae in Mina and a sacrifice.

This Bedouin ritual, that the current Muslim pilgrimage has incorporated and which takes place outside the Meccan site itself, was probably taking place in the autumn, at the end of the great heat. It was indeed and without a doubt a ritual of demand for rain. But other hypotheses have been put forward (lithomancy, stoning of the sun demon opposed to the moon god, ritual of the alliance, etc.)

The Muslim practice has, of course, erased all these seasonal references. The practice of the intercalary month, which stabilized the lunar year every three years, was abolished by a Quranic revelation dating from the extreme end of the Medinan period (chapter 9 verse 37). It was, on the behalf of Muhammad, a measure aimed at dispossessing the Bedouin tribes of their control over time and the sacredness; since Muhammad, at the head of the Medinan tribal confederation, had won, from the political and military point of view, in western Arabia. It was indeed these nomadic tribes, and not the townspeople of the region, who decided to insert, or not, the additional month in question. Just as it was they who directed the autumnal pilgrimage outside Mecca.

This state of affairs lasted until God sent Muhammad and revealed to him when He gave him the laws of His religion as well as the customs of the pilgrimage: "Then hasten onward from the place whence the multitude hastens onward, and ask forgiveness of God. Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful (2:199). These words were addressed to the Quraysh and the "multitude" were the Arabs. The rule of the hajj therefore had it that people hurried to go to Arafat, ordered to halt there and then to hasten onward from it.

1) As a plant or tree for the making of these garlands Gaudefroy-Demonbynes quotes the lemongrass (idhkhir) and Al-Azraqi the acacia (samurah).

SACRIFICES.

The archetypal subject of the sacrifice was at the time the camel. Besides, where would they have been to look for a sheep, an animal so little present in the desert? It is well known that sheep breeders live on the periphery of desert areas, that is, far from Mecca and Yathrib / Medina.

Like their Semitic and Arab fellow countrymen elsewhere in the Near East, the Arabs of the Hijaz used sacrifice as a primary way of forging and maintaining a relationship with the realm of the divine. "And for every nation," the Quran says " have We appointed a ritual that they may mention the name of God over the beast of cattle that He has given them for food" (22:34). This is said in a clearly approving way, but immediately before these verses there is a much more obscure passage, though apparently dealing with the same subject:

"Whoever magnifies the offerings consecrated to God, it surely is from devotion of the hearts. Therein are benefits for you for an appointed term; and afterwards they are brought for sacrifice unto the ancient House" (Quran 22:32-33).

More precise instructions follow about the blessing and the consuming of the animal sacrifice, again reflecting what seems to have been the current practice: "And the camels! We have appointed them among the ceremonies of God. Therein you have much good. So mention the name of God over them when they are drawn up in lines (for the sacrifice?) Then when their flanks fall (dead), eat thereof and feed the beggar and the suppliant????? Thus have We made them subject unto you, that haply you may give thanks" (Quran 22:36)

The animal sacrifices which disappeared out of the Mecca Haram in Islamic times but continued to be practiced at Mina during the Hajj, " was but one form of sacrifice known to the Arabs. The Arab authorities tell us of animals simply consecrated to the gods and kept within their sacred precincts without being sacrificed, and the Quran seems to refer to the practice of animal offerings as part of its repertoire of the pagan ritual practices that it condemns: "God hath not appointed anything in the nature of a Bahirah or a Sa'ibah or a Wasilah or a Hami "(Quran 5:103)

Each devotee offered his own victim. Although animals sacrificed in the desert might sometimes be simply left behind, as they often were at Mina throughout Islamic times, in town the animal was usually cooked and eaten as part of a common meal, a practice that created problems for Muslims as it had earlier for Christians. Among the things forbidden to the believer by the Quran is indeed "the animal which has been sacrificed upon a stone (nusub)" (5:3). Such stones (ansab) are described as "abominations" and the "work of Satan" (5:90). These are familiar objects indeed, already known from the story of Jacob's betylus * in Genesis (35:14). Stones on which one poured out the blood of the sacrifice were widely used among the ancient Arabs *, not only as here in the vicinity of the Ka'ba, but even as tomb-stones and boundary markers for sacred enclosures. With the coming of Islam, their use constituted a form of idolatry, and the believer might not share in the meat.

Editor's note. St. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians (chapter 8) threw down like litter this stupidity.

* See also dolmens and standing stones in Western Europe (such as the famous standing stone in Muirthemne on which the Irish semi-god Cuchulainn was like crucified, etc.).

THE PROBLEM.

The Syriac and Byzantine chronicles never evoke Muhammad as a Meccan by origin but as a native of Yathrib / Medina which is only half false because his mother seems to have originated there.

According to Theophilus of Edessa, Muhammad was born and lived in Yathrib.

There are also the Zuqnin Chronicle ascribed to Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, born towards the end of the eighth century. He was the patriarch of the Syriac Jacobite Church.

" These had as their first king one of them named Mohammed, whom they called the Prophet, because he had diverted them from various religions, had taught the existence of one God, Creator of the Universe and given them laws, when they were addicted to the worship of demons and the worship of idols, especially trees. Because he taught them the unity of God, under his leadership they triumphed over the Romans, and as he gave them laws according to their desires, they called him Prophet and Messenger of God also. The people were very sensual and carnal. They despised and rejected any legislation that did not aim at the satisfaction of their desires that they had been given by either Mohammad or any other God-fearing man, but they received ones that were to the satisfaction of their will and their desires, even when it was imposed upon them by the vilest of them. They said: "It has been established by the Prophet and Messenger of God," and even "So God commanded him. " Mohammed governed them for seven years.

As we have seen above, there is therefore only one possible explanation for this "mistake " of the Greek or Byzantine sources. The site of the Ka'ba in Mecca was really not much at that time (a stopping place of nomads having settled around a well?)

PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIC LITERATURE.

Poetry was the par excellence mode of expression of Arabs: it contained their sciences, their history, their wisdom. It was an object of rivalry for Arab leaders. These stopped at the fair of Ukkaz to recite their poems. Everyone came to submit his best piece to the judgment of major authorities or connoisseurs in the field. They thus came, through emulation, to suspend their poems at the corners of the sacred temple, place of their pilgrimage [the ka'ba] But you could claim that honor only if you had the support of your group, of your clan, and you enjoyed a high position. This is what emerges from the explanations given as to why these poems were called mu'allaqat.

In approaching this period of Arab literary history, we must nevertheless be aware that it is only known to us through the eyes of the lettered of the following centuries, who participated in its idealization. If the Jahiliyya was first for theologians the period of ignorance and darkness previous the revelation of Islam, scholars began to identify it, from the end of the seventh century, with a golden age of the Arabic language, cradle of its purest and original form. All the works of this period have come to us through scholars and poets who systematically collected from the 8th century traditions, stories and verses transmitted mainly orally. It is known that many of these collectors, the most famous being Hammad the Transmitter, invented, "improved" or "fixed" verses and akhbar. As a result, some of this literature is considered apocryphal, although it is often impossible today to unravel genuine works from false ones. Similarly, there is hardly a pre-Islamic poet whose biography is not colored with legends. The Egyptian writer Taha Hussein published in 1927 a remarkable book on pre-Islamic poetry. Poetry, the main mode of expression of ancient Arabia, makes it possible to understand the imagination and morals of the Arabs of that time, the values they respected or distinguished them. This literary genre is indeed characterized by an absolute freedom of tone. These values, rarely highlighted later, were a standard and ideal of life. The compliance of the individual to this high ideal formed what was called honor or pride. All this will be replaced by isma (the imitation, in all, of Muhammad).

In all the pre-Islamic literature that has come down to us, the best represented and the most emblematic genre is, by far, poetry, with as a model the monometer and monorhyme qasida, and for flowers the Mu'allaqat. The grammarians, philologists, and lexicographers of the following centuries regarded poetry as literary art par excellence, and Jahili poetry as the most authentic expression of Arabic linguistic genius. Nevertheless, the prose was not left out, with different genres that bring us back to a largely lost history, as evidenced by the rhymed prose of the kahana (pagan oracles) or the stories of battles and wars.

The Arabic language in the sixth century

In antiquity, the Arab peninsula has a great linguistic variety, which has evolved over time. On the northern borderlands are Aramaic, Ugaritic, Hebrew and Phoenician; on the southern borderlands are the Ethiopian languages. In the peninsula itself, there are the South-Arabic languages (Sabaeen, Minaean, Qatabanian, Hadramawtian etc.) and North-Arabic languages. The North Arabic languages refer to varieties that are both very close to each other and show closeness with Quranic Arabic, which allows researchers to speak of Arabic.

The oldest testimonies of the Arabic language date from the second century before our era but the language will evolve a long time. From the third to the sixth century, the ancient Arabic develops and adopts its own alphabet, derived from the Phoenician via the Nabatean (or, less probably, Syriac) variant of the Aramaic alphabet.

In the classical tradition, the first literate Arabs were the Christian poet Adi Ibn Zayd and his father (second half of the sixth century). The language incorporates during this period hundreds of Aramaic, South-Arabic and, to a lesser extent, Persian, Greek and Latin words - these especially through Aramaic besides.

The poetic koine.

Some contemporary critics have argued that 6th century Arabs were fluent in the poetic language and that it was easy for them to produce poems: it was enough to learn to rhythm and rhyme one's everyday language. This idea has been completely dismissed today, and the great majority of Western and Eastern scholars agree that in the sixth century, the poetic language was an exclusively literary dialect, archaic in terms of both its lexicon and its syntax. This literary language is commonly called "Arabic poetic koinè."

We know nothing of the steps taken by Arabic poetry before it reaches the level of development that was its in the sixth century. We have no poem illustrating the first stages of its development. The oldest specimens available to us (believed to date back to the 500s) already present this mature and developed poetry, with its sophisticated techniques regarding meter and rhyme, with its conventional themes and favorite subjects, styles and models. This technical and artistic maturity conceals from our examination "the childhood and the growth of this poetry."

The ancient poets quoted in traditional sources are a little over a hundred.

The semi-legendary poet Al-Muhalhil (d. around 530), maternal uncle of the Kindite prince Imru' al Qays, is traditionally considered the inventor of qasida 1). His nephew, Imru' Al Qays, evokes in one of his poems a named Ibn Khidham (of whom we know nothing besides, who is the first to have sung the remains of the abandoned camp, the opening theme par excellence of pre-Islamic qasida. Louis Shaykho (Kitab Shu'ara' al-Nasraniyah, 1890) thinks that Imru too was a Christian.

The sa'alik (sing su'luk) were famous brigand- poets. The word su'luk, which meant "one who follows the road', or highwayman, vagabond," was then used to designate the highway robbers and looters in the desert. They ranged in the north of Yemen, and in the Sarawat mountains between Yathrib and Mecca, and attacked the caravans of merchants and pilgrims.

There are three types of sa'alik: the outlaws, rejected by their tribe because of the numerous crimes of which they are guilty (such Hajiz al-Azda, or Qays bin al-Haddadiyya); the children of Ethiopian slaves, nicknamed "Ravens of the Arabs," disowned by their fathers for the infamy of their birth (such Sulayk son of Sulaka, Ta'abbata Sharran, or Shanfara); and finally, individuals who were neither outlawed nor slave bastards, but who had to make robbery their trade-sometimes whole tribes, like the Hudhayl and the Fahm (who were nomads in the vicinity of Mecca and Yathrib) .

Their poetry, perhaps apocryphal, is distinguished by a style characterized by the very rare use of the first person of the plural ("us") - exceptional fact in a Jahiliyya where the poet is especially the voice of his tribe -, and by the recurrence of the themes of hunger, poverty and revolt against the rich and the scrooges. In these pieces of fakhr (boasting), the brigand- poets sing their exploits, taunt death and portray themselves as brave, courageous in battle, of exceptional endurance, able to walk for days or even to overtake a horse in the race. They were often nicknamed "The Runners," and their speed in the race had become proverbial: it was said for example "Mr so-and-so is faster than Shanfara." They were also considered as excellent riders to the point that their horses are known by their proper nouns: Sulayk rode Nahham, Shanfara had a horse called Yahmum.

The most famous poem of the sa'alik is the Lamiyyat al-Arab, "The L-Poem of the Arabs," by Shanfara. Collected in the 8th century by the great transmitters of Kufa, the Lamiyya was the subject of many comments over the centuries. The philologists of Basra questioned its authenticity, but modern studies incline towards it.

One calls saj' (rhymed prose) the style of a prose discourse which rhymes in segments. Unlike poetry, the sentences or segments of sentences that rhyme with each other are not constituted on the basis of meters, but form rhythmic units of four to eight syllables terminated by a rhymed clausula. The rhymes are varied and can alternate, unlike the monorhyme model of the qasida. The mechanisms, practices and rules governing the use of the saj' are still largely unknown. Originally, rhymed prose is characteristic of the discourses of the diviner (kahin). Each tribe had a diviner, who held religious offices and was consulted on the opportunity of a raid, the outcome of a battle, etc. He delivered his opinions in saj'.

It is said that at the fair of Ukkaz, a commercial and literary rendezvous near Mecca, the poets of the various tribes recited their verses publicly, and that to the most worthy of them was reserved the reward of seeing his composition written in gold letters and suspended with gold nails at the venerated doors of the Ka'ba. Hence the fact that the seven poems most in vogue before Islam are called "Mudhahabat" ("the golden verses") or more often "Mu'allaqat" ("The suspended odes"). The desert Arabs excelled especially in poetry. The language had always been kept purer and more correct in their tents; often a mother inflicted a painful beating on her child guilty of some grammatical mistake. The poetry of the Mu'allaqat is a written vestige of this oral poetry of the Bedouins; it is very personal in inspiration, of hedonistic nature, and prone to excesses. Inspiration is exacerbated by the anxieties and hungers caused by existence, twists of fate, and death. The overview is finally reassuring and sympathetic: these ancient Arabs are free and eager to live, enjoying life, an existence of which they want to be proud and that they sing. There are few examples in human literature of such an unbridled exaltation of life. Raised in the school of the desert, independent, unruly to endure any yoke, brave, generous, but proud and vindictive, always on the track of an enemy to avenge some offense or in the footsteps of a beautiful nomad, skeptics and epicureans, these poets were not the first to follow Muhammad. And yet, despite the anathema cast against them and against their rhymes, the "Mu'allaqat" did not cease to charm the Arabs by the originality of the ideas and the richness of the expressions.

Poets, in particular, watched over this deposit of the flowered language and of the distinguished manners. This language and these manners had still among them the same character of unalterable nobility, while everywhere in the cities they were vitiated: A poetry of an extreme refinement, a language which surpasses in subtlety the most developed idioms ... this is what was in the desert, a hundred years before Muhammad.

1). Al-Muhalhil b. Raba al-Taglibi was the first to compose a long poem on the death of his brother Kulayb (Ala al-Din Ahmad Husayn. Doctor of Philosophy at the University of St. Andrews 1983).

EXAMPLES OF PRE-ISLAMIC POEMS.

Honor to whom honor is due, let us begin with the prince of poets, Imru' al-Qays.
(First translation in European language by the Orientalist William Jones in 1799.)

THE POEM OF AMRIOLKAIS (circa 501-550).

STAY!-Let us weep at the remembrance of our beloved, at the sight of the station where her tent was raised, by the edge of yon bending sands between Dahul and Haumel,

2. "Tudam and Mikra; a station, the marks of which are not wholly effaced, though the south wind and the north have woven the twisted sand."

3. Thus I spoke, when my companions stopped their coursers by my side, and said: "Perish not through despair: only be patient."

4. "A profusion of tears," answered I, "is my sole relief but what avails it to shed them over the remains of a deserted mansion?"

5. "Your condition," they replied, "is not more painful than when you left Howaira, before your present passion, and her neighbor Rebaba, on the hills of Masel."

6. "Yes," I rejoined, "when those two damsels departed, musk was diffused from their robes, as the eastern gale sheds the scent of clove-gillyflowers:

7. "Then gushed the tears from my eyes and flowed down my neck, till my sword belt was drenched in the stream."

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8. "Yet have you spent many days in sweet converse with the fair: but none so sweet as the day which you spentest by the pool of Daratjulul."

9. On that day I killed my camel, to give the virgins a feast; and, oh! how strange was it that they should carry his trappings and furniture!

10. The damsels continued till evening helping one another to the roasted flesh, and to the delicate fat, like the fringe of white silk finely woven.

11. On that happy day I entered the palanquin, the palanquin of Onaiza, who said: "Wo to you! you will compel me to travel on foot."

12. She added (while the palanquin was bent aside with our weight), "O Amriolkais, descend, or my beast also be fall!"

13. I answered: "Proceed, and loosen his rein; nor withhold from me the fruits of thy love....

.....
66. I sit gazing at it, while my companions stand between Daaridge and Odhaib; but far distant is the cloud on which my eyes are fixed.

67. Its right side seems to pour its rain on the hills of Katan, and its left on the mountains of Sitaar and Yadbul.

68. It continues to discharge its waters over Cotaifa till the rushing torrent lays prostrate the groves of canahbel-trees.

69. It passes over mount Kanaan, which it deluges in its course, and forces the wild goats to descend from every cliff.

70. On mount Taima it does not leave one trunk of a palm tree, nor a single edifice, which is not built with well-cemented stone.

71. Mount Tebeir stands in the heights of the flood, like a venerable chief wrapped in a striped mantle.

72. The summit of Mogaimir, covered with the rubbish which the torrent has rolled down, looks in the morning like the top of a spindle encircled with wool.

73. The cloud unloads its freight on the desert of Ghabeit, like a merchant of Yemen alighting with his bales of rich apparel.

74. The small birds of the valley warble at daybreak, as if they had taken their early draft of generous wine mixed with spice.

75. The beasts of the wood, drowned in the floods of night, float, like the roots of wild onions, in the middle of the lake.

THE POEM OF LEBEID NOW (560-661).

75. The guest and the stranger, admitted to my board, seem to have alighted in the sweet vale of Tebaala, luxuriant with vernal blossoms.

76. To the cords of my tent approaches every needy matron, worn with fatigue, like a camel doomed to die at her master's tomb, whose vesture is both scanty and ragged.

77. There they crown with meat, while the wintry winds contend with fierce blasts, a dish flowing like a rivulet, into which the famished orphans eagerly plunge.
78. When the nations are assembled, some hero of our tribe, firm in debate, never fails by superior powers to surmount the greatest difficulty.
79. He distributes equal shares; he dispenses justice to the tribes; he is indignant when their right is diminished; and, to establish their right, often relinquishes his own.
80. He acts with greatness of mind and with nobleness of heart: he sheds the dew of his liberality on those who need his assistance;—he scatters around his own gains and precious spoils, the prizes of his valor.
81. He belongs to a tribe whose ancestors have left them a perfect model; and every tribe that descends from us will have patterns of excellence, and objects of imitation.
82. If their succour be asked, they instantly brace on their helmets, while their lances and breastplate glitter like stars.
83. Their actions are not sullied by the rust of time, or tarnished by disgrace; for their virtues are unshaken by any base desires.
85. Be content, therefore, with the dispensations of the Supreme Ruler; for He, who best knows our nature, has dispensed justice among us.
86. When peace has been established by our tribe, we keep it inviolate; and He, who makes it, renders our prosperity complete.
87. Noble are the exertions of our heroes, when the tribe struggle with hardships: they are our leaders in war, and in peace the deciders of our claims:
88. They are an enlivening spring to their indigent neighbors, and to the disconsolate widows, whose year passes heavily away:
89. They are an illustrious race; although their enviers may be slow in commending them, and the malevolent censurer may incline to their foe.

AMRU (d.584).

Amr ibn Kulthum Ibn Malik Ibn A`tab Abu Al-Aswad al-Taghlibi a chief of the Taghlib tribe.

He has only four poems that have come down to us, including this one that begins like this.

HOLLA!—Awake, sweet damsel, and bring our morning draft in thy capacious goblet; nor suffer the rich wines of Enderein to be longer hoarded:

2. Bring the well-tempered wine, that seems to be tintured with saffron, and, when it is diluted with water, overflows the cup.

3. This is the liquor which diverts the anxious lover from his passion; and, as soon as he tastes it, he is perfectly composed:

4. Hence you see the penurious churl, when the circling bowl passes him, grow regardless of his pelf:

5. When its potent flames have seized the most discreet of our youths, you would imagine him to be in a frenzy.

6. You turn the goblet from us, O mother of Amru; for the true course of the goblet is to the right hand:

7. He is not the least amiable of thy three companions, O mother of Amru, to whom you have not presented the morning bowl.

8. How many a cup have I purchased in Balbec! how many more in Damascus and Kasirein!

9. Surely our allotted hour of fate will overtake us; since we are destined to death, and death to us.

10. O stay a while, before we separate, you lovely rider.....

TARAF (543-569).

52. Thus I drink old wine, without ceasing, and enjoy the delights of life; selling and dissipating my property, both newly acquired and inherited;

53. Until the whole clan reject me, and leave me solitary, like a diseased camel smeared with pitch:

54. Yet even now I perceive that the sons of earth (the most indigent men) acknowledge my bounty, and the rich inhabitants of yon extended camp confess my glory.

63. A man of my generous spirit drinks his full draft to-day, and to-morrow, when we are dead, it will be known which of us has not quenched his thirst.

64. I see no difference between the tomb of an anxious miser, gasping over his hoard, and the tomb of the libertine, lost in the maze of voluptuousness.

65. You behold their sepulchres both raised in two heaps of earth, on which are elevated two broad piles of solid marble among the tombs closely connected.

66. Death, I observe, selects the noblest heroes for her victims, and reserves as her property the choicest possessions of the sordid hoarder.

ANTARA (525-608).

38. I quaff; when the noontide heat is abated, old wine, purchased with bright and well-stamped coin;

39. I quaff it in a goblet of yellow glass variegated with white streaks, whose companion is a glittering
flagon, well secured by its lid.

40. When I drink it, my wealth is dissipated, but my fame remains abundant and unimpaired;

41. And when I return to sobriety, the dew of my liberality continues as fresh as before: give due honor,
therefore, to those qualities which you know me to possess.

EPILOG.

Muhammad , Quran 71: 22.

And they have plotted a mighty plot, and they have said: Forsake not your gods. Forsake not Wadd, nor Suwa', nor Yaghuth and Ya'uq and Nasr !

Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhammad, page 36.

Ka'b b. Malik al Ansari said: We forsook al Lat and al Uzza and Wadd. We stripped off their necklaces and earrings.

The brutal and destructive cultural revolution that was the movement initiated by Abu Qasim left nothing but the ruins of this ancient art of living, and then everything went very fast.

Note that the discourse against philosophical and thoughtful paganism is almost absent. The theme is too abstract. Anti-idolatrous speeches are easier to hold. Let us also note that these anti-idolatrous discourses are not worth the facts of the same nature: the material victims of this rage are innumerable and rare protests against the destruction of the sacred of others: the temples and their statues.

The Koranic text is full of allusions to the disappearance of ancient peoples, and threatens its contemporaries, with the same destiny, or even incites the realization of these sinister intentions. It will suffice to note that Muhammad never had a monument built, and never supported any artistic, poetic, or literary achievement. He did not encourage economic activity, and was content to parasitize trade or agriculture in the oases. He has not created any real political institution, content to impose its will, oh how changeable on certain points! And even if his action and preaching led to the birth of a new civilization, a few years later, founding a new civilization was never his goal, as we will see in the next few pages. An effort of reconstitution and rehabilitation is therefore urgently needed.

We know the consequences of this decision, in the field of art, and in the conception of the world or of humankind in general. Rejection of human, animal and living representations, and beyond, deficiency or absence of conception of the autonomous and creative human being of the type "Man is the measure of all things." Ironically, an observer may note that the isma or adoration of the character Abu Qasim, known as Muhammad, son of Amina over more than a thousand years, is nevertheless also similar to another idolatry, which often falls into the grotesque (Documents on the origins of Islam, on the Spanish website <http://religion.antropo.es/estudios/origenes/index.html>.)

It is not (yet) forbidden to think that the Mohammedan work was, fundamentally, an attempt to destroy Arab civilization as a superior expression of human existence in societies living in harmony with Nature.

Early Islam not only expressed itself as anti-humanism, wanting to subject the human being, his greatness, originality and freedom, to an all-powerful demiurge God; but it also denied the traditions, monuments, art, literature, legendary background, morals, social organization, of the time of the Jahiliya, in short, everything that constituted the identity of the previous populations.

This destructive obscurantism was only in the germ at the beginning, the proud Arab conquerors of the first generations having remained deeply hedonistic in their souls (the transfer of their capital to Damascus then Baghdad is the symbol of it), but the end of Moutazilism left the field open to a new type of Muslims, convinced this time, traditionalists like Hanbal, who burned or crucified Sufi or Manichean heretical zindiqs and then slammed the doors of Ijtihad or even of any bidah. Human rights, the measure of all things by definition, then gave way to the rights of God (Hukuk Allah) and the nihilism in germ in early Islam was then able to give its full measure (which was not what Protagoras had thought of, alas!)

It cannot be emphasized enough how the closing of the gates of Moutazilite Ijtihad has brought about an unprecedented intellectual decline for Mankind. A "credo quia absurdum" or "extra ecclesiam nulla salus" to the 10th power!

As Science, History, and Archaeology show us, all three of them, that animism or polytheism were the first true beliefs of Mankind, and this, during millennia, without contest (*anima naturaliter pagana*) it was thus a question, for the Muslim religion of the beginnings, of demonstrating that monotheism was the first religious system of human beings, and that it was only changed into an adoration of gods or goddesses through the fault of men. We can't totally rule out, of course.

- a) That Abraham really existed.
- b) That he passed through Mecca at a given time of his existence.
- c) That he built there the kaaba.
- d) That he spread from there the purest philosophical and thoughtful monotheism.

e) That there was then a fall in the religious level such that all kinds of paganism can be considered to have succeeded this original Hanifism.

The simplest and most consistent with Occam's razor's principle is still to suppose that the original religion of mankind is more similar to paganism (animism polytheism henotheism, etc.) than to monotheism renamed if we can say "Hanifism."

This relentlessness worthy of the worst of self-suggestion methods to want at all costs to be recognized as a legitimate and direct heir to the Jewish religion and to Abraham; whereas it is obvious that only certain details of the Islamic veneer are so, and that the background is pagan (the notion of god-man in Christianity, the role of the kaaba in Islam, etc.). IS PATHETIC. It is at the same time the timeless manifestation of an incredible racism towards other religions coupled with an equally incredible inferiority complex. Not to mention a crass ignorance of historical science and of the discoveries of archeology (the beginning of the Bible up to the episode of the Tower of Babel is borrowed from Sumerian myths, Abraham is a legend, Moses did not exist, neither did slavery in Egypt, etc.). But that we have already said it.

The favorite explanation was of the Euhemerist type: the gods are human beings of old. For the rest, rather than directly asserting the pure and simple nonexistence, Quran and hadiths develop criticisms based on the ineffectiveness of these deities. The use of Muslim sources in the study of older religions is useful and indispensable, but is to be accompanied by large cautions. The Muslim tradition insists, for example, on the responsibility of a certain Amir ibn Luhayy in the process. He is doomed by it to the worst destiny in the hereafter. But this man is pilloried only because he was a king of the Khuzaa, the early tribe of Mecca, having opened his kingdom to the Hellenistic civilization, around the year 200. This character concentrates on his own all the sin of this misdeed, totally imaginary as it happens, and remains known in the Muslim phantasmagoria for the atrocious punishment he would have received in hell.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 6.

The first to change the religion of Ishmael, set up images for worship, institute the practices of the sa'ibah, the wasilah, the bairah, the hamiyah [animals dedicated to gods], was Amr ibn-Rabi'ah, that is to say Luhayy ibn-Harithah ibn-Amr ibn-Amir al-Azdi, the father of the Khuz'ah tribe..... It was al-Harith who used to be the custodian of the Ka'bah. But when Amr ibn-Luhayy came [to Mecca], he disputed his right to its custody, and with the aid of the children of Ishmael, fought the Jurhumites, defeated them, and cleared them out of the Ka'bah; he then drove them out of Mecca, and took over the custody of the Sacred House (al Bayt) after them.....

He then became very sick, and was told, "There is a hot spring in Balqa, in Syria (al-Sha'm); if you would go there, you would be cured." So he went to the hot spring, bathed therein, and was cured. During his stay there, he noticed that the inhabitants of the place worshiped statues. He, therefore, queried them saying, "What are these things?" To which they replied, "To them we pray for rain, and from them we seek victory over the enemy." Thereupon he asked them to give him [a few of those idols], and they did. He took them back with him to Mecca and erected them around the Ka'bah.

Sahih al-Bukhari Volume 4, Book 56, Hadith 723

Abu Huraira: "The Prophet said, 'I saw Amr bin 'Amir bin Luhayy Al-Khuzai dragging his intestines in the (Hell) Fire, for he was the first man who started the custom of releasing animals (for the sake of false gods).'".....

Note that the discourse against the philosophical and well thought out paganism is almost absent. The theme is too abstract. Anti-idolatrous speeches are easier to hold. Let us also note that these anti-idolatrous speeches are not worth the facts of the same nature: the material victims of this rage are innumerable and rare the petitions against the destruction of the sacredness of the others: the temples and their statues.

The Quranic text abounds with allusions to the disappearances of ancient peoples, and threatens its contemporaries with the same destiny, even incites even the realization of these sinister aims. It will be enough to remark that Muhammad never built a monument, and never supported an artistic, poetic or literary realization. He did not encourage economic activity, and contented himself with parasitizing the trade or agriculture in the oases. He did not create any real political institution, contenting himself with imposing his will, oh so much changeable on certain points! And even though his action and preaching led to the birth of a new civilization, a few years later, to found a new civilization was never his goal, as we will see in the next few pages. A reconstruction and redemption effort is therefore urgently needed.

We know the consequences of this decision, in the field of art, and of the idea of the world or of the human in general. Rejection of human, animal, living, representations and beyond, deficiency or absence of the idea of human being as an autonomous and creative creature of the type "man is the

measure of all things”.. Ironically, an observer will note that the isma or worship of the character Abu Qassim known as Muhammad son of Amina, over more than a thousand years, is nevertheless also similar to an idolatry, which often sinks into the grotesque ((Documents on the origins of Islam, Spanish website <http://religion.antropo.es/estudios/origenes/index.html>).

PROHIBITIONS BY ISLAM.

It is useful to proceed here to a review of all the ritual prohibitions present in the Quranic text. It is also a way to see, by contrast, what the gestures of the previous religious system were, and to realize thus the brutality of the cultural revolution that was Islam. It should be noted that a great many rituals have nevertheless been preserved, when they have been integrated, without much damage, into the Mohammedan doctrine, and especially those concerning the slaughter of sheep goats camels or even cattle in honor of the idea of God called God (by millions for sheep now that there are two billion Muslims) on the tenth day of the month of dhu al hijja. On this day indeed, Muslim families sacrifice an animal (the sheep that is six months old or the goat or the cattle that is two years old or the camel that is five years old). Name of the holiday: Eid al-Adha or Eid al-Kebir.

The verses dedicated to the prohibition of other sacrifices of pagan origin, those who did not find favor with Muhammad, date mainly from the arrival at Yathrib / Medina and are due to the influence that was then exerted on the nascent Islam of Muhammad. They mainly concern the rituals practiced by the breeders, and finally, rather secondary acts.

Thanks to the Mohammedan bans, we know therefore very well the old customs.

ABOLISHED ELEMENTS.

Muhammad, Quran 5: 90.

O you who believe! Strong drink and games of chance and standing stones and divining arrows are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork. Leave it aside!

Sunan Abi Dawud Book 27, Hadith 3791.

The people of pre-Islamic times used to eat some things and leave others alone, considering them unclean. Then God sent His Prophet and sent down His Book, marking some things lawful and others, unlawful.

Fara and atira.

Narrated Abu Huraira: The Prophet Said, "Neither Fara nor Atira is permissible." Al-Fara was the first offspring (they got of camels or sheep) which they used to offer (as a sacrifice) to their gods. Atira was (a sheep which used to be slaughtered) during the month of Rajab.

Muhammad, Quran 5: 103.

God hath not appointed anything in the nature of a Bahirah or a Sa'ibah or a Wasilah or a Hami.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 6, Book 60, Number 147.

Bahira is a she-camel whose milk is kept for the idols and nobody is allowed to milk it; Sa'iba was the she-camel which they used to set free for their gods and nothing was allowed to be carried on it.

Wasila is the she-camel which gives birth to a she-camel as its first delivery, and then gives birth to another she-camel as its second delivery. People (in the periods of ignorance) used to let that she camel loose for their gods if it gave birth to two she-camels successively without giving birth to a male camel in between. Ham' was the male camel which was used for copulation. When it had finished the number of copulations assigned for it, they would let it loose for their idols and excuse it from burdens.

Muhammad, Quran 8 :35.

And their worship at the (holy) House is nothing but whistling (ululations ?) and hand-clapping.

A strange taboo perhaps due to the pre-Islamic friary of Hums: the one which has it that a man who began his pilgrimage was not allowed to return home through the normal door. If he needed anything, he had to climb the back wall to come back in it. Hence this reaction of Muhammad for once!

Azraqi (Akhbar Makkah). Third part page 41. Translation Roberto Tottoli.

When God brought Islam and destroyed the situation of Jahiliyya, it was revealed: "The piety [al-bir] does not consist in returning home from the rear, but true piety lies in fear of God" (Chapter 2, verse 189).

Shaving of the head and other rites.

Lucian of Samosata. The Syrian goddess, 55.

I will speak, too, about those who come to these sacred meetings and of what they do. As soon as a man comes to Hierapolis, he shaves his head and his eyebrows; afterwards he sacrifices a sheep and cuts up its flesh and eats it; he then lays the fleece on the ground, places his knee on it, but puts the feet and head of the animal on his own head and at the same time he prays that the gods may vouchsafe to receive him, and he promises a greater victim hereafter.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 33.

Zuhayr ibn-abi-Sulma says: "I swore by the standing stones of al-Uqaybir a solemn oath, where the foreparts of the heads and the lice are shaved."

Ritual nakedness.

The Muslim texts were particularly inclined to describe this aspect of the former worship, not without a certain and unhealthy hypocrisy.

Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhammad by Alfred Guillaume page 619.

No unbeliever shall enter Paradise, and no polytheist shall make pilgrimage after this year, and no naked person shall circumambulate the temple (?)

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 2, Book 26, Hadith 726.

During the pre-Islamic period of Ignorance, the people used to perform Tawaf of the Ka`ba naked except the Hums and the Hums were Quraish and their offspring. The Hums used to give clothes to the men who would perform the Tawaf wearing them; and women (of the Hums) used to give clothes to the women who would perform the Tawaf wearing them. Those to whom the Hums did not give clothes would perform Tawaf round the Ka`ba naked.

At-Tabari 12:37.

Those who did not have a new garment, or were not given one by the Hums, then they would perform Tawaf while naked. Even women would go around in Tawaf while naked, and one of them would cover her sexual organ with something and proclaim, "Today, a part or all of it will appear, but whatever appears from it I do not allow it." Women used to perform Tawaf while naked usually at night. This was a practice that the pagans invented on their own, following only their forefathers in this regard. They claimed that what their forefathers did was in fact following the order and legislation of Good.

MONOLATRY IN ARABIA IN THE 6TH CENTURY.

We will say nothing here about the Muslim notion of Hanif or Hanifiyya or primitive monotheism of Mankind revealed to Adam and Eve which are only fanciful myths falling under a simplistic theology having nothing historic but we will say a few words, on the other hand, about the Jews Judaeo-Christians or Christians living at that time in the country.

JUDAISM.

We are fairly well documented about the history of Judaism in southern Arabia, in Yemen, we will talk about it again; much less about its establishment in the north, where we are reduced to Jewish legends, even to the Muslim documentation (to handle with care because largely later to the facts it claims to relate); case of the great German historian Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891), to whom we will gladly to give the floor in this field. In the meantime, let's point out that there are no families that are more ancient or older than the others, but only FAMILIES KNOWN FOR LONGER TIME, because for the rest we have all as ancestors, not Adam and Eve, but Homo sapiens sapiens (sapiens twice, what hubris!)

We have had the opportunity above, to approach the hypothesis of Hagarism (by Patricia Crone and Michael Cook), which is based on the presence in this region of the world of strong Jewish Orthodox or Christian communities, or even of Judaizing Arab tribes.

According to the Sira of Ibn Hisham, and as we will see in a few moments, Muhammad would have massacred or eliminated three Jewish tribes in Yathrib / Medina, the Quraysa, the Banu Nadir and the Qaynuqa.

These three "Jewish" tribes are mentioned in the History of Tabari, written 250 years after the fact, in the biography of Ibn Hisham, more than 200 years later (Ibn Hisham borrows this information from Ibn Ishaq); and in the "Kitab al-Tarikh wa al-Maghazi ("Book of Campaigns") by Waqidi, 180 years later. But there is no non-Muslim, literary, archeological, or epigraphic, source, that records these three tribes, and the Jewish documents of the time detailing Jewish settlements in the Middle East never mention Yathrib / Medina.

The doctor in law Malik calls Ibn Ishaq a "liar" and "impostor" for referring to the murders in question. He also cites other traditions that contradict these massacres. The chronicle of Sebeos is dated 40 years after the facts, and all these documents are independent of the power of the caliphs. The documents that lead to doubt the existence of these tribes are therefore older than those which affirm their existence.

It remains to know whether these tribes existed, but were not massacred; or if they were not massacred because they did not exist.

If we admit that indeed there were "Jews" in Yathrib / Medina, but that the rabbis did not recognize them as such, perhaps we must conclude that they were not true Jews in the strict sense of the word? For the rabbis indeed, to be a Judaizer was not enough to make a Jew.

The chronicle of the Armenian Bishop Sebeos is however categorical: it makes no allusion to the sometimes bloody eviction of the Jewish tribes and speaks of the inhabitants of Yathrib / Medina as having all the same religion.

The history of Heraclius, chapter XXX, tells us that in 625 or 627, some Jews of Edessa, driven out by the aforementioned Heraclius, tried to take refuge in Arabia, where they thought to find other Jews. " Twelve peoples [representing] all the tribes of the Jews assembled at the city of Edessa. When they saw that the Persian troops had departed and left the city in peace, they closed the gates and fortified themselves. They refused entry to troops of the Roman lordship. Thus Heraclius, emperor of the Byzantines, gave the order to besiege it. When [the Jews] realized that they could not militarily resist him, they promised to make peace. Opening the city gates, they went before him, and [Heraclius] ordered that they should go and stay in their own place. So they departed, taking the road through the desert to Arabia ? to the sons of Ishmael. [The Jews] called [the Arabs] to their aid and familiarized them with the relationship they had through the books of the [Old] Testament. Although [the Arabs] were convinced of their close relationship, they were unable to get a consensus from their multitude, for they were divided from each other by religion.

The inhabitants of Yathrib / Medina therefore had a religion different from that of the Jews in Edessa. Not very attentive observers had confused it with traditional Judaism, and gave misinformation to the Jews of Edessa, which led them to seek refuge in Yathrib / Medina. But the "Jews" of this city-oasis were not members of the Jewish ethnos group, because they were Ishmaelites, that is to say, Arabs. It was probably a group of Arabs converted to Judaeo-Christianity. As Judaeo-Christians "judaized" by definition, the confusion was possible.

The Yathrib / Medina Charter, the oldest known Islamic document, contains no mention of the three Jewish tribes mentioned by Ibn Hisham and Graetz: the Quraysa, the Banu Nadir and the Qaynuqa. If they had existed, the charter would have mentioned them since it concerned all the inhabitants of the city. The "Jews" mentioned in the Constitution, who are members of the alliance, do not form a united community. They are distributed among several Arab tribes of which they are the proteges. This oddity remains unexplained in the official Muslim tradition, and remains a mystery to current commentators.

The names of the "Jews" of Yathrib / Medina are Arabic, as well as their genealogy. Mixed marriages between these "Jews" and "Arabs" were common, and the poems in Arabic language attributed to "Jewish" poets of Yathrib / Medina are identical in form and content with the poems of the desert Arabs. These "Jews" were perhaps simply converted Arabs, who continued to be members of their original tribe.

The question of whether they had converted to Judaism or Judaeo-Christianity remains open. Since these Jews have essentially Arabic names, it may be thought that they are probably not groups from Israeli tribes, but rather, as in Yemen, Judaized natives.

It is not up to us, barbarian druids of the West in John Toland's way, to decide such a debate; but as for the rest of this opusculum, we will nevertheless adopt the more traditional thesis of the existence, in Yathrib / Medina, of three tribes that can more or less be considered as Jewish. For want of something better, and without making it an article of faith.

N.B. The most serious, anyway, if these Jewish tribes did not exist, it is that there were nevertheless Muslims to justify or to present in a positive way their assassination. Same problem with the pseudo-massacres committed by the Hebrews of Joshua during the conquest of the Promised Land. They may not have happened, but the appalling thing is that there have been commentators to justify them, put them into perspective, and even ignore them.

Below are some lines about these Jewish tribes from Hirsh Graetz's work, without prejudice. Graetz indeed has a bit too much tendency to develop a rather nationalist idea of Biblical or Jewish history. HEINRICH GRAETZ POPULAR HISTORY OF THE JEWS 1919 VOLUME 2 CHAPTER X. THE JEWS OF ARABIA AND MOHAMMED (500-640).

The legend has it that Israelites whom Joshua had sent to combat the Amalekites had taken up their abode in Yathrib (later Medina) in the land of Khaibar, and another that a Jewish colony had come to northern Arabia under King David. It is possible that seafaring Israelites, under the mighty kings of Judah, who steered across the Red Sea to the golden Land of Ophir had established trade centers for the traffic with India in southern Arabia (Yemen), in the important market places of Hariba and Sanaa, and had founded a Jewish colony. The later Arabian Jews held to the tradition that Jewish fugitives had fled to northern Arabia after the destruction of the first Temple by Nebuchadnezzar.

There is not, however, the least doubt that the wars between the Jews and the Romans brought a Jewish population to the Arabian peninsula. The scattered bands of death-defying zealots who had fled to Egypt and Cyrene after the destruction of the second Temple, in order to continue their desperate resistance to Roman servitude, had reached Arabia also. Fugitives from the Hadrianic wars also probably found refuge in Arabia. The Jewish Arabic tribes, the Banu-Nadhir, the Banu-Kuraiza and the Banu-Nachdal were descendants of those fugitives, the former two claiming priestly descent and styling themselves therefore Kohanim (Al-Kahinani). Another Jewish tribe, the Banu-Kainuka, differing in their habits of life from the Nadhir and Kuraiza, had their domicile in northern Arabia. These tribes, including another one of slight importance, had their center in the city of Yathrib, in the territory of Hijaz, a region productive of palms and rice plants, and watered by small brooks. As the Jewish tribes were often annoyed by Bedouins, they erected in the city and its environs towers and castles upon high places, and thus safeguarded their independence. Though at first the sole masters of that region, the Jewish tribes afterwards had to share their territory with the Arabic tribes of Banu-Aus and Khazraj (both together designated Kaila) with whom the Jewish tribes stood now in friendly now in hostile relations.

North of Yathrib was the territory of Khaibar altogether occupied by Jews who formed an independent commonwealth, and who possessed a series of fortresses or castles similar to those of the Christian knights. Their strongest fortress was Kamus, situated on a hill which was difficult of access.

These castles protected them from the attacks of the warlike Bedouins, and enabled them to offer asylum to victims of oppression. Wadi-al-Kura (valley of villages), a fertile valley a day's journey from Khaibar was likewise inhabited by Jews.

On the other hand, Mecca, where the sanctuary of the Arabians was located, contained but few Jews. In southern Arabia (Yemen, Himyara), the land of which its inhabitants boasted that "its dust was gold, that it produces a heroic race, and that its women bear without pain." The Jews were represented in large numbers. But the Jews of Arabia

Felix, unlike those of Hijaz, had no tribal or somewhat political coherence, but were scattered among the Arabs. Nevertheless, they attained in the course of time such an influence over the tribes and kings of Yemen that they were able to hinder the spread of Christianity in that region. Only at the end of the fifth or at the beginning of the sixth century did the Christian missionaries succeed in converting to Christianity an Arabian chieftain with his tribe whose residence was in the commercial city of Najran. By virtue of their Semitic descent, the Arabian Jews had many points of contact with the natives of the country. Their language was akin to the Arabic, and their customs, excepting those of a religious origin,

did not differ much from those of the sons of Arabia. The Jews identified themselves so thoroughly with Arabic life that they were distinguished from the other Arabians only by their religion. Inter-marriage promoted the assimilation of the character of the two nationalities. The Jews of southern Arabia, like the people of Yemen in general, were given more to the international commerce between India, Byzantium and Persia, while the north Arabian Jews followed rather the life of the Bedouins, and devoted themselves to agriculture, to the raising of cattle, to the internal caravan trade, to dealing in arms, and on occasions possibly also to marauding expeditions.

The Arabic Jews lived under the patriarchal system, by which several families were united under one chieftain (sheikh) who, in times of peace settled disputes and acted as judges, and, in times of war, led the warriors in battle and formed alliances with neighboring tribes. Like the Arabians, the Jews observed the laws of hospitality towards anyone who entered their tents, and of inviolable loyalty to their allies; but they also shared the vices of the natives, avenged the blood of one of their members with inexorable sternness, and lay in ambush in order to kill their enemies. It sometimes happened that a Jewish tribe in a league with an Arabic tribe became the sworn enemy of a brother tribe that belonged to a different confederacy. But though Jewish tribes made incursions upon one another, their native virtue tempered the cruelty of the Bedouins, who gave the enemy no quarter. They redeemed the captives of a brother tribe with whom they had just been at war from the hands of their confederates, and did not permit them to fall into the power of heathens as slaves, because, as they said, "The redemption of one's co-religionists is a religious duty." As the Jews equaled the Arabs in valor, they vied with them also for the palm of poetry, the art of which alongside of manliness and courage constituted an essential element in the accomplishment of an Arabic nobleman.

The religious knowledge which the Arabic Jews brought when they fled from Judea and which was afterwards supplemented by the academies, gave them a superiority over the pagan tribes that made the former almost the intellectual masters of the latter. While, up to the seventh century, but few Arabians were familiar with the art of writing, it was common among the Jews, for which reason the Arabs styled them "the people of the book."

Judaism, in its traditional forms and with its Talmudic imprint, was held in extreme veneration by the Arabic Jews. They adhered strictly to the dietary laws, observed the festivals, and the fast day on the Day of Atonement. They kept the Sabbath so strictly that they would not draw their swords from the scabbard on that day, despite their love of warlike adventures. Though they regarded and loved this hospitable country as their fatherland, they yearned for the return to the Holy Land; awaited the coming of the Messiah daily, and therefore, like all their co-religionists, they turned their faces towards Jerusalem in prayer. They stood in communication with the Jews of Palestine and acknowledged the authority of the scholars of Tiberias even after the fall of the patriarchate. Yathrib was the seat of Jewish learning where teachers (akhbar) in an academy (Midras) interpreted the Scriptures. But the Biblical knowledge of the Arabic Jews was not considerable. They knew the Bible only through the spectacles of the Haggadic interpretation, which they learned in the course of their travels and which was imparted to them by transient coreligionists.

The glorious history of the past became among them so interfused with legendary accretions that they were unable to separate the gold from the dross.

Endowed with poetic imagination, the Arabic Jews embellished the historic events of the Bible with inventions of their own which were then circulated as real facts. As the Jews of Arabia enjoyed a full measure of liberty, they were in a position to impart their religious views to their Arabic neighbors. The sensitive soul of the Arabs was favorably impressed with the half childlike, half sublime poetic and religious content of the scriptures and the legends woven around them, and certain Jewish ideas and religious concepts gradually spread among the Arabs long before Mohammed. The Arabs who counted time by the lunar months, and whose calendar was in a chaotic state because it failed to provide for the difference between the lunar and the solar year, adopted the nineteen-year cycle of the Jews with its seven intercalary months.It was of the utmost advantage to the Jews to be regarded and acknowledged by the Arabs as kindred. Mecca, the holy city in the center of the country, built around an ancient temple (Kaaba) or rather around a black stone, was an asylum for all Arabs where the sword rested. The five fairs of which the largest was at Okaz, could be held only in the four holy months of the year in which a holy peace prevailed. Only those who could prove their kinship with the Arabs were entitled to the peace and the security conferred by those sacred days; strangers were excluded from those privileges. Fortunately, the Arabic Jews recalled the genealogy of the Arabs as contained in Genesis, and they became convinced that they were thereby related to the Arabs through Yoktan and through Ishmael. This information they imparted to the Arabs who accepted it, and the two chief Arabic tribes retraced their genealogy and became convinced that the southern Arabs were descendants of Yoktan (Kahtan) and the northern Arabs of Ishmael. In this way, the Jews convinced the Arabs of their mutual kinship; and the Arabs, glad of the possibility of pointing their derivation back

to the Jewish patriarchs, since their own reminiscences were but of yesterday, sought for no further proof of this kinship. The southern Arabs styled themselves Kahtanites, and the northern Arabs Ishmaelites, and willingly admitted the Jews to an equality of tribal rights and privileges. As a result of the intimate intercourse between Jews and Arabs, and of the superior religious content of the former, it was inevitable that some Arabic chiefs could show an inclination towards Judaism, and to embrace it in the end. Inasmuch as circumcision was practiced by the Arabs even as pagans, their acceptance of Judaism was all the easier. Under the patriarchal system, the conversion of a chief, as the wisest of the tribe, involved likewise the conversion of his entire following. The Banu-Kinanah, a warlike tribe, related to the highly respected Koraishites of Mecca, several families of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj of Yathrib, and finally a Ghassan tribe, which produced the celebrated Jewish-Arabic poet Samuel ben Adiyah, embraced Judaism.

The acceptance of Judaism by one of the mighty kings of Yemen proved an epoch-making event in Arabic history. Abu-Karib Asad-Toban, one of the princes or kings of Yemen who bore the general title of Toban, was a man of penetration, poetic endowments and great valor, and led an expedition against King Cavad of Persia (about 500) and against the Arabian provinces of the Byzantine kingdom. In the course of his campaign he captured Yathrib, the capital of Hijaz, and appointed his son governor: but Abu-Karib had hardly left the city when its inhabitants rose and put his son to death. Abu-Karib laid siege to Yathrib with his numerous cavalry, and ordered the destruction of the palm trees which supplied the inhabitants with their chief article of food. The Jews vied with the Arabs in their opposition to Abu-Karib and wearied his army. The king fell critically ill, and could obtain no fresh water with which to quench his burning thirst.

Two Jewish sages of Yathrib, Kaab and Asad, took advantage of the king's exhaustion to enter his tent and to persuade him to pardon the people of Yathrib and to raise the siege. The Arabs embellished this interview with many marvelous legends: it is certain only that the Jewish sages found an opportunity to discuss Judaism with Abu-Karib, and to arouse his interest in it. Thereupon, he determined to accept Judaism and induced his army to do likewise.

Upon his request, the two Jewish sages of Yathrib accompanied him to Yemen to help in the conversion of his people. This, however, was not an easy task; a people does not easily change, upon request, its habits of life and thought. The Pagans outnumbered the converts. Even the king's Judaism was only superficial, without penetrating deeply into his habits of life. A chieftain of the noble tribe of the Kendites, Harith ibn Amru, a nephew of the king of Yemen, who had accepted Judaism, and had induced a part of his tribe to follow his example, was appointed by Abu-Karib viceroy over the Maaddites on the Red Sea, and governor of Yathrib and Mecca. The news of the rise of a Jewish kingdom in the most beautiful and most fertile region of Arabia was spread by the many foreign merchants who visited the country and reached the Jews of the most distant countries.

Abu-Karib's younger son or grandson Zurah Dhu-Nuwas (520-530) was the first of the newly converted kings of Yemen to take his adopted religion seriously, and assumed the Hebrew name of Yusuf (Joseph) in addition to his Arabic name.

But his zeal for Judaism led him into serious complications. Learning of the many indignities to which his co-religionists of the Byzantine Empire were subjected he determined to force the Byzantine emperor to deal justly with the Jews. On one occasion he ordered therefore the seizure and the execution of Roman (Byzantine) merchants who traveled through Himyara on business. This retaliation spread terror among the Christian merchants who were engaged in the export of spices, and the Indian-Arabic traffic came to a standstill. As a result, Dhu-Nuwas found himself involved in a serious war. His Christian vassals rose in rebellion. Dhu-Nuwas besieged the city of Najran which was inhabited by Christians, captured it, and certainly did not treat the conquered with special consideration. Rumor spread the events of Najran, exaggerated the number of victims, stamped the punishment of the rebels as a persecution of Christians on the part of a Jewish king, and invented a tearful martyrology. A Syrian bishop Simeon of Betarsham who happened to be on a journey in northern Arabia, and who believed the exaggerated rumors, wrote a stirring appeal to another bishop in the proximity of Arabia, and urged upon him to inflame the Christians, and especially the king of Ethiopia to make war upon the Jewish king.

He also suggested that the Jewish leaders of Tiberias be seized and compelled to petition Dhu-Nuwas to cease his persecutions of the Christians for their sake. The Byzantine emperor Justin I, was also urged to take vengeance on the Jewish-Arabic king. But this aged king whose army was then involved in a war with Persia declined to be drawn into a new war, but brought his influence to bear upon the king of Ethiopia to send troops to Himyara.

Elezbaa, king of Ethiopia, a zealous Christian, who looked with ill favor upon the Jewish king and kingdom, hardly needed all this urging to induce him to attack the hated Dhu-Nuwas: He equipped a considerable fleet, augmented by Egyptian ships sent by the Byzantine emperor, or rather by his co-

regent Justinian, and crossed the narrow straits of the Red Sea to Yemen. This large army was reinforced by the Christians of Arabia who were filled with vengeance. Dhu-Nuwas failed in his efforts to induce the other Arabian chiefs to come to his assistance, and he had to depend solely upon his loyal cavalry and upon his courage. The battle that ensued proved disastrous for Dhu-Nuwas. His capital Zafora, with the queen and the treasures, fell into the hands of the enemy. The warriors of Himyara lost courage. When all was lost, Yusuf Dhu-Nuwas died, kinglike, by precipitating himself and his horse from a lofty rock into the sea that carried his body away (530). The victorious Ethiopians raged in Himyara with fire and sword, and vented their fury particularly on the Jews who fell by the thousands as an atonement for the doubtful Christian martyrs of Najran. Such was the end of the Jewish-Himyaritic kingdom.

At about the same time, violent quarrels broke out between the Jews of Yathrib and their Arabic neighbors. The Jewish tribes, by virtue of their closer relation to the Jewish king, the liege lord of this region, had gained the hegemony over their pagan-Arabic tribes, and a Jewish chieftain, Alghitigun, held the reins of power. But the Arabs of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj bore their subjection to the Jews with ill favor; and when they realized that their masters could no longer expect support from Himyara, they determined to shake off the Jewish yoke. Harith ibn Abi-Shamir, an adventurous chieftain of the tribe of Ghassan, related by blood to the Arabic tribes of Yathrib, who stood in the service of the Byzantine court was invited to come to Yathrib with his warlike bands, and accepted the invitation readily. To avert the suspicion of the Jews, he extended a friendly invitation to the Jewish chiefs to come to his camp near Yathrib, and several of them appeared in the expectation of receiving gifts at the hands of the generous prince, as was the custom. But they no sooner entered the tent of the prince of Ghassan than they were attacked and murdered one by one. Thereupon Harith ibn Abi-Shamir addressed the Arabs of Yathrib: "I have rid you of the majority of your enemies, and it should be easy for you to overcome the remainder if you possess strength and courage," and he departed. Still the Arabic tribes did not dare attack the Jews in the open, but resorted to stratagem and trickery, and massacred all the Jewish chieftains in the course of a banquet *. Bereft of their leaders, the Jews of Yathrib were easily vanquished by the Arabs. For a while the Jews could not forget the loss of their supremacy and the feeling of humiliation. But the uncertainty of their existence taught them not to yield to feelings of hatred. More and more they placed themselves under the protection of the one or the other tribe, and became confederates of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj.

Harith ibn Abi-Shamir, the prince of Ghassan who had enfeebled the Jewish tribes, was engaged in a feud also with a Jewish poet and gained extraordinary fame among the Arabs as a consequence. This poet was Samuel ibn-Adiya, (about 500-560), the possessor of the castle of Al-Ablak (so named after its variegated colors) which his father Adiya had built in the region of Taima, eight days' journey south of Yathrib. Samuel, the chieftain of a small tribe, was so highly respected because of his knightly character that weak Arabic tribes placed themselves under his protection. The persecuted and oppressed found an asylum in Al-Ablak and its owner was prepared to answer for their security with his life. When the adventurous Kendite prince Amru al-Kais, the Arabic warrior poet, surrounded by secret and open enemies could find no refuge anywhere, he sought shelter in Al-Ablak. The Jewish poet and lord of the castle, proud of the opportunity of offering asylum to the celebrated poet of Arabia whose fame and adventures rang throughout the entire peninsula, received Amru al-Kais, his daughter and his retinue in Al-Ablak, and harbored them for some time. As the Kendite prince had no prospects of obtaining help from the Arabic tribes which would enable him to avenge his father's murder and repossess himself of his inheritance, he determined to seek the support of the Byzantine emperor, Justinian.

Before his departure he placed five costly coats of mail and other weapons in Samuel's charge, and the latter promised to protect the persons and valuables entrusted to him at all hazards. But Samuel's loyalty brought down misfortune upon him.

Harith, the prince of Ghassan, the internecine enemy of the fugitive prince, approached Al-Ablak and demanded the surrender of Amru-al-Kais weapons. Upon Samuel's refusal, Harith laid siege to Al-Ablak. Finding the fortress invulnerable, he managed one day to capture a son of Samuel's whose nurse had ventured beyond the fortress, and threatened to kill him if his father refused to accede to his demands. The unhappy father hesitated but one moment between his duty as a host and his love for his son, when he replied, that his son had brothers, but that his honor once lost could not be recovered. The monster, unmoved at such nobility, murdered the son in the sight of his father, but had to raise the siege without gaining his object. Samuel's loyalty became proverbial in Arabia, and when Arabs wish to exaggerate the supreme degree of loyalty they say, "more loyal than Samuel."

Samuel's son Shuraih followed in his father's footsteps. When the celebrated Arabic poet Maimun Asha, who made many enemies because of his unbridled tongue, was once brought as a prisoner, unrecognized among other captives to

Shuraih's fortress at Taima, he sang his way to liberty by his eulogy on Samuel..... Schoraïch reconnut le poète et le fit remettre en liberté (the poem is given in French language in the translation of the German text made by Lazarus Wogue and Moses Bloch. A. Levy, 1888, Volume 3, pp. 279-296). But towards the end of the sixth century, the Jews of Yathrib had almost completely recovered from the hard blows which the Arabic tribes had inflicted upon them. Their masters, the tribes of Aus and Khazraj, had exhausted themselves in bloody feuds which continued for twenty years, while the Jews under their vassalage had suffered much less. As a result of a second war between the same tribes, the Jews again arose into prominence in Yathrib.

* Same thing with the Saxon chief Hengistus who made 300 Breton lords slaughtered (Eu nimet saxas) during the banquet he organized at Ambrius near Salisbury in 472 (see the famous night of the long knives).

JUDEO-CHRISTIANITY.

By Judaeo-Christians we will designate in this chapter the Jews who recognized in Jesus the messiah announced by the scriptures in the Old Testament, but without going so far as to make him a divine person (the second member of the Holy Trinity, the third person being the Holy Spirit). The nuance is of importance since it is perhaps they who appear under the name of Nassara (Nazarene) in the Quran. AND WHO EXPECT THE RETURN OF JESUS AS A WINNER AND WARRIOR MESSIAH THIS TIME IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE KINGDOM OF GOD ... ON EARTH (= Parousia among the Reformist Catholic Orthodox Trinitarian Christians, etc.).

We have had the opportunity to see many times that the Byzantine Empire was not tender with the Jews.

In such a context, the Pagan Persians were sometimes considered as liberators. This will not prevent the Emperor Heraclius in launching a great offensive against them in 622, that is to say the first year of the Muslim calendar.

Ebionites and Nazarenes.

The Roman empire was not tender either (litotes in the way of Heinrich Graetz) with what it considered to be some heresies. If being a Rabbinic Jew or a Monophysite Christian was not easy at the time in Byzantine land, what about those who were neither Jews nor Christians, i.e., Nazarenes? These Judeo-Christians who were descendants of the Ebionites had no choice but to take refuge further south, namely in the north of Arabia where they found perhaps Jewish Jews already settled on the spot.

Nazarenism cannot be understood if one does not know that Judaism was very diverse before the first century. Indeed, Pharisaism will not give birth to Rabbinic Judaism before the second century, and its supremacy will not be established before the seventh century. In this interval there was an intense abundance of ideas, each one making more or fewer followers.

This Messianic doctrine, goes chronologically speaking from the second century before our era (crisis of the Temple priesthood) in the seventh century. The doctrine of Judeo-Nazarenism appears in the opposition from some priests to the Temple worship in the second century before our era. This worship seems impure in their eyes. The "Teacher of Righteousness" will be besides persecuted by the Temple for having opposed it.

.....Note by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau. One page is missing here apparently

The Quran and the Arabic language refer to Christians as Nasara today. Why this word? We know that "nazorene" was one of the first qualifiers of this new religion, very soon replaced by that of "chrestiano" according to its gradual acculturation to Hellenistic paganism, especially in Antioch, around the year 50 of our era.

And first of all, from where does the name "Nazarene" come?

The Nazorene (?????) should not be confused with the Nazarites, that is to say, those who took vows of Nazirate, although Jesus and James were both Nazorene and Nazir.

It seems indeed well established that Jesus himself was initially considered Nazorene (or Nazarene).

This was not due to a hypothetical village of Nazareth (because it was only much later, in the third century, that Nazareth really began to exist) but to its links with a Messianic marginal religious movement that was mostly established in the north of the country, that is, Galilee, Decapolis, and Perea. It was among the Nazorenes of the North that the expression "Son of Man" was used, which Jesus took over for him. This sect was in a way the counterpart of the Essenes in Judea. The family of Jesus, and especially his brother James, were also sympathizers of this movement. This is why the first Judaeo-Christians, led by this James, were long assimilated to Nazorenes. The Judaism of the second century besides called the first Christians Nozrim.

Jesus then strongly distinguished himself from the Nazorenes (even if the name remained attached to him). He ate meat and drank wine, while many Nazorenes were vegetarians (hence his characterization as an eater and drinker). This is why he was not understood at first by his brothers. As for the city of Nazareth, it is possible that it was simply at the time a community of Nazorenes (as Qumran, but much simpler) called Nazara (see Luke 4: 16-30). Jesus would have been trained there 1).

If the Pagan-Christian tradition to which the canonical gospels testify, maintains that the kingdom of Christ "is not of this world" and, as a result, is only spiritual; that it must be put in place by a change of personal behavior; the same Gospels also testify that some "Christians," in line with the Nazarene tradition and referring to the Gospel of Matthew 2), could believe in a very political and earthly coming kingdom, headed by Jesus. Thus emerged a marked opposition, between the idea of an individual salvation, on the one hand, and that of a collective salvation, on the other, in the first Judeo-Christian circles.

Jesus then during one time moved closer to the Baptist movement before leaving it to found his own movement. His preaching led some of the Jews to recognize in him the expected Messiah. Around James, bishop of Jerusalem, "brother of the Lord," and leader of the Judeo-Christians attached to the continuation of the Jewish rite read again in light of his teaching, was formed a diverse community awaiting his glorious return which was to drive away definitively the Roman occupier and finally found the expected Kingdom, kingdom of perfection and justice announced by Isaiah.

The persecution of the Judaeo-Christians, then the Jewish revolt and the destruction of the Temple, dispersed the Christians who had left Jerusalem shortly before the disaster (year 70).

Some Judaeo-Christians, having taken refuge in Pella on the other side of the Jordan, refused to come back to Jerusalem occupied by pagans or Jews. Becoming radical, venerating the memory of James, the bishop of Jerusalem (as evidenced by several Apocrypha in the apocalyptic spirit of the time), they decided to isolate themselves, to "take refuge in the desert," in the purest Jewish tradition, while waiting for better days. They called themselves "poor" (Ebionites) or Nazarenes. These Jewish-Nazarenes saw in the events in question the signs of the end of time and of the imminence of the glorious return of Christ (parousy).

The Nazarene movement is difficult to define, because many of his writings are simply considered "Christians," to the extent that they speak of Jesus; however, many authors have noted that this Christianity aimed for a strict Judaic observance (even if they refused the sacrifices and worship of the Temple), rejecting other Christians now turned towards the pagan world, and as such considered by them as renegades. Nazarenism, refusing to see in Jesus a god, is therefore defined both against the pagan-Christians (because of their attachment to the idea of continuity with the old covenant and their faith in Jesus as a prophet only as opposed to Paul and his idea of salvation); against Judaism now unified around rabbinism, and finally against the Roman occupier soon became Christian, but considered pagan.

Long confused with Judeo-Christianity, or misinterpreted as Ebionism by the Fathers of the Church, who accused the doctrine of "wanting to be Jewish and Christian, but to be neither one nor the other, Judeo-Nazarenism is now rediscovered, especially in the role it played in the rise of Proto-Islam.

The ideas of these sects indeed went over the centuries evolving gradually, and have generated many spiritual descendants, forming a kind of bush with multiple ramified branches.

A division that appeared in the first century formed two groups of beliefs.

The first, individualistic and peaceful, gave up totally the idea of political or warlike Messiah, while keeping many ideas from the Judaeo-Christian common core. These are the beliefs known as Gnostic. The second, less individualistic and more warlike, produced the central role to the Messiah, while also preserving many other Judaeo-Christian ideas: it was the Messianists.

Messianisms were later split into two, the political laymen and the religious men.

The present opuscle is not intended to study the history and development of branches that have become secular.

The other branch of messianism is formed by the set of branches that have kept the religious component. In this set, the branch that interests us is that of Judaeo-Christians.

This religious movement is indeed a true mass of the ideas of the Palestinian sects. It is found episodically since a little before the beginning of our era, until the end of the seventh century (eighty years after the birth of Islam).

For several centuries, Nazarenism fueled therefore a spirit of messianic and apocalyptic revolt. Paul of Samosata, counselor to Queen Zenobia, who revolted against Rome, was perhaps a Judeo-Nazarene who had indoctrinated the Queen. This messianic spirit remained very present in the region until the seventh century.

The study of Judeo-Nazarism led to a new look at the question of the origins of Islam. Various specialists propose today this explanation of it (rejected by the pious Muslims of course).

Archeology in Syria testifies to the presence of these communities in Arab lands; the names of places rooted in the term "nasara," very frequent, betray the presence of these groups whose ideology, varying in time and space, was never unified: we must therefore speak of a movement rather than of sect in the strict sense of the term.

Muhammad himself married a named Khadija, sometimes called Jewish or Christian but who is more probably Judeo-Nazarene insofar as his uncle, Waraqa, is said to be a "Christian" (in fact a "nasrani"), converted (to politico-religious ideas of Ebionites?) and very versed in the Hebrew Scriptures. A hadith reports even that when Waraqa died, the Revelation made to Muhammad was interrupted for a time.

This fact, together with many others, leads to the conclusion that Waraqa was perhaps one of the main vectors of Judaeo-Nazarenism to Arabs and Muhammad, to whom he transmitted his doctrine of a "Jesus-Messiah" (expression we find besides in the Quran) being to return at the end of time.

Note that although other sources, more traditional, make Waraqa a Nestorian Christian, the Messiah he professes has however little to do with that of Christians in the usual and more modern meaning of the word. For Nazarenism as for Islam, Jesus is only a King-Messiah expected to establish on earth a perfect kingdom by reigning for forty years. Judaeo-Nazarenism apparently united around its ideas, several tribes or parts of Arab tribes, thus constituting a formidable armed force, of which we find an ultimate echo in the various episodes of the (civil) war that followed the death of Muhammad (see in particular the prophetess Sajah and the competitor of Muhammad who was at the head of the confederation of the Banu Hanifa: Musaylima).

In short, what seems certain is that there was, in this part of the world, at the time.....

- Jewish messianists in the strict sense of the term (the Messiah is indeed one of the basic beliefs of Jewish religious ideology).

- Judeo-Christian messianists (Christians waiting for the imminent return of Christ coming to liberate the Righteous and to judge the world).

For all these sects, Christ is a great prophet, but not a God. After escaping the crucifixion, he would have returned to Heaven, waiting to come back in order to lead a world war of conquest (cf. the Revelation?) aiming to establish a perfect society, where the righteous would be rewarded; while the non-righteous, the non-Jews, or the pagan nations, would become servants in the service of the aforementioned righteous.

The most important idea of these sects unites the Jewish element which saw in the Messiah a warrior coming to restore by force the political independence of Palestine; and the Christian idea that saw in this Messiah a spiritual savior of the whole world.

The Judeo-Christian sects of the messianist type synthesized these ideas by imagining that Christ would return to take the head of the Army of the Righteous; and would impose his ideal society on the whole earth by force of arms, what would produce the kingdom being to last a thousand years.

The idea of world conquest indeed seems to have been present marginally among some fighters of the Jewish wars. These Judaeo-Christian sects brought it to the fore.

After the righteous have conquered the whole earth and subjected all men to their doctrine, by the combined use of strength and preaching; the righteous will live in peace, abundance and happiness, in a society finally made ideal by a rigorous application of the theory. As for the unrighteous, those who will never accept the power of the first, as well as the application of their religious theory to society, they will either be put to death, or changed into subordinate elements, servants or slaves of the righteous. After their death, they will be doomed to hell, while the righteous will go to heaven.

In most versions, this earthly paradise must last a thousand years, hence the name of millenarianism. In some variants, less frequent, it will last four hundred years, or until the end of the world.

The heavenly paradise where the righteous were to go after their death tended to be described as a continuation of the earthly kingdom of the righteous. There were in it especially good food and pleasures of the flesh.

Millenarianism has always been linked to messianism, because the fighting of the Messianic wars caused many deaths and sufferings in the Army of the Righteous. The notion of a kingdom being to last a thousand years was therefore used to convince them to accept the sufferings and death that would surely strike many of them. An immense happiness, on the other hand, was promised to the survivors, who would enter the kingdom; besides, they would have the moral satisfaction of having brought the whole humankind to this same happiness.

While for Arabic-speaking Christians, the name of Jesus is normally Yeshua, these Judeo-Christian of the messianist type called Christ Issa as Muslims. Indeed, in Islam, Christ bears the name of Issa, without any explanation being given as to the meaning of this term.

We can therefore presume that it belongs to a tradition that was present in Islam, but in a more or less residual form. Now it seems that the warrior and community branch of Judaeo-Christian messianism, gathered in a tendency that gave to Christ the name of Issa.

As we have had already the opportunity to see in our 3 essays devoted to Christianity, this movement began in fact in the second century before our era and its theology evolved in the centuries that followed, by incorporating the character Jesus Christ. Judaeo-Christians of Messianist type considered Jesus to be the Messiah, a great prophet, but not the Son of God. They maintained Christ had escaped crucifixion that a man like him had been crucified in his place, that God had put Christ in reserve in Heaven; and that he would return one day to take the head of the Army of the Righteous in order to subdue the earth to his will.

Judeo-Christians of the messianist type, were "judaizers" that is, practiced a number of the 613 Jewish observances (mitzvot). These Judeo-Christians practiced circumcision, polygamy limited to four wives, imagined a paradise where the elected would find delicious food, pleasant drinks, wine and women, all ideas present in Islam.

This movement has gradually developed over the centuries, starting from a Jewish base, then modified by Christian contributions. Its theology was formed in the midst of the profusion of doctrines and movements which, during the first three centuries of our era, strove to combine Judaism and Christianity; as well as the popular ideas of Jews and Christians, often very different from those of their elites.

They taught that when they will have all migrated to the desert, succeeded in conquering Jerusalem and rebuilding the Temple, Christ would come back from heaven to lead the army of the righteous and conquer the world.

The pieces of evidence of this continuity are scattered in many texts. They have been found today because of the scope of the means of research implemented in our time, in all fields; especially those concerning Islam and the movements that were previous to it in the same region. History, exegesis, archeology ... have been used.....

Another isolated text on the same subject and found by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau.

The initial project of Judaeo-Christian of the messianist type was to liberate Jewish Palestine from foreign occupation. From the beginning, nevertheless, some of them dreamed of a world conquest rather than of only the liberation of Israel. These globalists became majority after a while, difficult to specify (two or three centuries?)

Judaeo-Christian ideas of messianist type were formed not only after many debates of ideas, but also through many wars caused by their attempts to implement these theological prescriptions. These wars, and their results, ended in separating the Judaeo-Christianity of messianist type from Judaism and Christianity.

Quite quickly, therefore, a part of the followers considered that the Army of the Righteous should not be limited to liberating Palestine, but should also conquer the world; and that every human should either become a Righteous by supporting this theology, or a slave in the service of the righteous.

After the fall of Jerusalem in 70 and the destruction of the Temple, the Judeo-Christians of messianist type added to their objectives its reconstruction as soon as the city will be liberated.

Theology changed: it was no longer the Messiah who was to lead the exodus, then the conquest of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Temple, but a warrior precursor. Messiah would appear only when these steps would have been previously accomplished. The reason for this change is perhaps that the claim of many of these leaders to be the Messiah had led their followers to bloody disasters.

The historical texts that have come down to us describe the battles, the names of the participants, the dates of their victories or of their fall. They are almost always silent on the convictions and religious ideology of the fighters. As the authors of the time did not differentiate between the various currents of Judaism, the texts do not indicate the role of each.

What is known is that Judeo-Christians of Messianist-type considered themselves Jews, and that their theology led them to wage such wars. That is why it is likely that they participated, personally carrying arms, but probably also as inspirers.

This deduction is supported by texts showing that at least two religious wars were inspired by Judeo-Christianity of the Messianic type.

Theudas. This is what Flavius Josephus wrote about this man.

" It came to pass, while Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea, that a certain charlatan, whose name was Theudas, persuaded a great part of the people to take their effects with them, and follow him to the Jordan River; for he told them he was a prophet, and that he would, by his own command, divide the river, and afford them an easy passage over it. Many were deluded by his words. However, Fadus did not permit them to make any advantage of his wild attempt, but sent a troop of horsemen out against them. After falling upon them unexpectedly, they slew many of them, and took many of them alive. They also took Theudas alive, cut off his head, and carried it to Jerusalem" (Jewish Antiquities 20.97-98)

Hippolytus of Rome also says a few words about him in his commentary on Daniel.

"There was one who governed the church there (in Syria ????)...having not considered these things..... persuaded many of the brothers, with their wives and children, to go out into the desert in order to meet with Christ."

Hippolytus, who was a Christian, notes that they are "brothers," and specifies that Theudas governed a Church.

Flavius Josephus writes that the followers of Theudas formed "a large part of the Jewish people." Cuspius Fadus was procurator of Judea from 42 to 46, so Theudas's attempt intervened after the crucifixion of Jesus.

At that time, Christians still considered themselves Jews. They are therefore both Jews and Christians, but they are peculiar both as Jews and as Christians. As Jews, they do not belong to the traditional stream, since they recognized Christ and thought they were going to meet him. And as Christians they

did not belong either to the mainstream that produced the Christianity we know today. The supporters of Theudas are both Jews and Christians without being really Jewish or truly Christian: they are Judaeo-Christians of the messianist type.

Theudas presents himself as a new Moses, and also a new John the Baptist, since he was the herald of Christ. He was convinced that Christ would come to take the head of his army, and thus played his life on this conviction, because without this help, he had no chance against the Roman legions. He thus reproduced the behavior of Yose ben Yo'ezer in Sereda, with the same consequence.

We generally ignore all the motivations of these Jews, because it is not the vanquished who write history. But the usual silence of the sources on the convictions of the fighters does not mean that they did not have theological motivation.

Let us say that the partisans of Theudas had an idea of the return of Christ different from that of today Christians (the parousia).

The Judaeo-Christian ideology of the messianist type was widespread at that time: Flavius

Josephus wrote that it had rallied "a large part of the people." Its faithful were massively present not only inside Palestine, but also in the neighboring regions, since Theudas came from a "Church there"; and that Syria and the Roman provinces of Arabia, Armenia, and Persia joined without fighting to Zenobia and Paul of Samosata, what may lead us to suppose that their ideas were probably the same. An identical conclusion can be drawn from the fact that, thanks to their support, Paul of Samosata was able to defy three councils for seven years.

Most of the Kufic Arabic graffiti in the Negev, brought to light, studied, presented by Yehuda Nevo and Judith Koren, is frankly Islamic. But a number of them are previous to or contemporaneous with, the very beginnings of Islam. These are the ones that drew the attention of Ibn Warraq (What the Quran really says).

"These are inscriptions from the mid-sixth century. The texts of this group exhibit a characteristic language and content, and many of them were inscribed by, or on behalf of, a small number of individuals whose names recur. They may contain references to Moses and Jesus, but nothing at all that is definable as Muslim. There is one recognizable subclass distinguished by their reference to God as "Lord of Moses and Jesus" (rabb Musa wa-Isa) in their opening phrase, and/or by a certain set of phrases and allusions in the text itself, such as hayyan wa-mayyitan, and gayr halik wa-la mafqud. Though some phrases and formulas are found in the Quran, these texts do not seem to me Quranic; rather, they appear to belong to a certain body of sectarian literature which developed Judaeo-Christian conceptions in a particular literary style. The resulting creed, basically indeterminate monotheism with the addition of Judaeo-Christian variables, is scarcely identifiable as that of a defined sect, but rather is the expression of belief of one group of indeterminate monotheists among many." The authors of these inscriptions are therefore Arabs, by language and onomastics, but they pray Jesus, what brings them closer to Christians; they refer to Moses and the Bible, what places them in the Jewish movement. These are indications that they may be Judaeo-Christians of the Messianist type; but there is more, a categorical proof: in these inscriptions, the name of Jesus is indeed transcribed in the form Issa.

As we have seen, for the Arabic-speaking Christians, the name of Jesus is said Yeshu. Therefore they were not Christians like the others.

As they are Arabs, it implies that a certain number of Arabs, living in the north of Arabia, had become Judaeo-Christian of the messianist type at the time. Around 560, fifty years before the beginning of Islam, there was therefore a Judaeo-Christian Arab community of Messianist type in this region of the world.

This community participated in the rise of Islam, because a number of expressions present in these inscriptions are found in the Quran, almost a century later.

Another statement shows that Judaeo-Christians still existed eighty years after the beginning of Islam. The author of the Questions to Antiochus dux around the end of the seventh century (the pseudo-Athanasius of Alexandria) answers what is following to question number 38: "Thus we know clearly that all who are circumcised are alien to Christ, whether faithful or unfaithful, whether Jews or pagans, as though glorifying in the Mosaic law, and are not followers of Christ."

We can therefore infer from it by contrast that there existed at the time circumcised non-Jews, glorifying the Law of Moses, and claiming to be followers of Christ.

At that time and in this place, only Judaeo-Christians were both Judaizers without being Jewish, and sworn followers of Christ without being recognized as such by Christians.

The Judaeo-Christian movement of the messianist type therefore participated in the rise of Islam, and some Judaeo-Christians of the messianist type remained at least eighty years after the birth of Islam. Basic ideology of the Judaeo-Christians of the messianist type: the armed conquest of the whole world, wanted by God.

This thesis is so completely passed in Islam that a metaphor was very widespread among the first Muslims. To express that it was for their good that the infidels were constrained by force to join Islam, the Muslims said "that they would bring the infidels chained to heaven."

In the Judo-Christianity of messianic type, when the Army of the Righteous has conquered the earth and imposed its view of the world and the schema of society of its theology, the earth will become a paradise, but for the righteous only.

The lower status foreseen by the Judeo-Christians of the messianist type for the non-righteous who refuse to convert, is passed into Islam. Judeo-Christian of the messianist type have never won one of their many messianic wars, and therefore did not have to discover the effect of applying their religious views to an entire society. Islam, on the other hand, has won many wars, and has established its domination in many countries. In all states where the official religion is Islam, non-Muslims are therefore dhimmis, at best second-class citizens. They are practically deprived from all political rights and from a large part of their civil rights.

The backwardness of Muslim states is due, according to the Islamists, to the imperfect application of the sharia law. The universality as well as the establishment depth of this belief are undoubtedly one of the major reasons of the backwardness of the Moslem countries 4). The millenarian idea of the Judeo-Christian of the messianist type, the heaven on earth after the victory of the righteous, is completely passed in Islam.

We find among the Judeo-Christians (and the Gnostics also) the idea that God is a cunning being who deceives his people.

John Toland. Nazarenus or Jewish and Mahometan Christianity. Chapter VI. « Photius nous avertit qu'il avoit lu un livre intitulé Les voyages des Apotres, rapportant les actions de Pierre, de Jean, d'André, de Thomas, et de Paul ; et parmi les choses qui y etoient contenues voici une, que le Christ n'avoit pas été crucifié mais un autre en sa place ; et que pour cela il se mocquoit de ceux, qui pensoit l'avoir crucifié.....Combien grande (soit dit en passant) est l'ignorance de ceux, qui font passer ceci pour l'invention originaire des Turcs ! car les Basilidiens au premier commencement du Christianisme 5) nioient que le Christ eut souffert mais que Simon le Cyrenien avoit été crucifié en sa place. Les Cerinthiens avant eux , et les Carpocratians apres (pour ne pas nommer davantage de ceux, qui affirmoient que Christ n'avoit été qu'un simple homme) croyoient la meme chose ; assavoir, que ce n'etoit pas lui, mais un de ses disciples qui lui ressembloit fort, qui avoit été crucifié.... »

What, translated in our language to us today (because John Toland wrote that in 18th century French) gives us almost this: "Photius tells us that he read a book entitled The journeys of the Apostles, relating the acts of Peter, John, Andrew, Thomas and Paul; and among other things contained in the same this was one: that Christ was not crucified, but another in his stead; and that therefore he laughed at those who thought they crucified him.... How great (by the way) is the ignorance of those who make this an original invention of the Turks ! For the Basilidians, in the very beginning of Christianity 5), denied that Christ himself suffered, but that Simon of Cyrene was crucified in his place. The Cerinthians before them, and the Carpocratians next (to name no more of those, who affirmed Jesus to have been a mere man) did believe the same thing; that it was not himself , but one of his followers very like him, that was crucified....."

Christ, therefore, voluntarily changed his form: during his crucifixion, he took the look of Simon, and it was this Simon of Cyrene who was crucified in his place, thus deceiving all those who had wanted to use cunning in order to capture him.

The Quran takes over literally this Judeo-Christian or Gnostic formulation 6): " They schemed [against Jesus] and God schemed (against them): God is the best of schemers."

See also 7): " And because of their saying: We slew the Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, God's messenger - they slew him not nor crucified him, but it appeared so unto them."

If you do not know the Gnostic or Judeo-Christian texts, it is difficult to understand what this sentence means: "It appeared so unto them." On the other hand, everything becomes clear as soon as you know the Judeo-Christian or Gnostic theology which inspired it.

The childhood of Mary. This is what a text of the Judaeo-Christian movement of the Messianic type (the proto-Evangeium of James, 1, 4) writes. " Anna (Mary's mother) said: As the Lord my God lives, if I beget either male or female, I will bring it as a gift to the Lord my God and it shall minister to Him all the days of its life."

And this is what the Quran 8) says: " The wife of 'Imran said: My Lord! I have vowed unto You that which is in my belly as a consecrated (offering). Accept it from me.... when she was delivered, she said: My Lord! Lo! I am delivered of a female - God knew best of what she was delivered - the male is not as the female; and lo! I have named her Mary."

The same text is found in the Gospel of the Hebrews, which was one of the main sacred books of the Judeo-Christians.

Another Judeo-Christian legend of this movement says that Mary had been established in the Temple of Jerusalem, and that she was miraculously nourished by the angels 9). " Mary was in the temple of the Lord as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an angel." Here is the transcript of it in the Quran 10): " Whenever Zachariah went into the sanctuary where she was, he found that she had food. He said: O Mary! Whence cometh unto thee this (food) ? She answered: It is from God."

A Judeo-Christian text (the Gospel of pseudo-Matthew) mention a palm tree that leans itself to feed Mary and Jesus as a child 11)..

"Chapter 20. And it came to pass on the third day of their journey, while they were walking, that the blessed Mary was fatigued by the excessive heat of the sun in the desert and seeing a palm tree, she said to Joseph: Let me rest a little under the shade of this tree. Joseph therefore made haste, and led her to the palm, and made her come down from her beast. And as the blessed Mary was sitting there, she looked up to the foliage of the palm, and saw it full of fruit, and said to Joseph: I wish it were possible to get some of the fruit of this palm. And Joseph said to her: I wonder that you say this, when you see how high the palm tree is; and that you think of eating of its fruit. I am thinking more of the want of water, because the skins are now empty, and we have none wherewith to refresh ourselves and our cattle.

Then the child Jesus, with a joyful countenance, reposing in the bosom of His mother, said to the palm: O tree, bend your branches, and refresh my mother with your fruit. And immediately at these words the palm bent its top down to the very feet of the blessed Mary; and they gathered from it fruit, with which they were all refreshed. And after they had gathered all its fruit, it remained bent down, waiting the order to rise from Him who had commanded it to stoop. Then Jesus said to it: Raise yourself, O palm tree, and be strong, and be the companion of my trees, which are in the paradise of my Father and open from your roots a vein of water which has been hidden in the earth, and let the waters flow, so that we may be satisfied from you. And it rose up immediately, and at its root there began to come forth a spring of water exceedingly clear and cool and sparkling. And when they saw the spring of water, they rejoiced with great joy, and were satisfied, themselves and all their cattle and their beasts. Wherefore they gave thanks to God."

The Quran places this story at the birth of Jesus. The palm tree in question should also be known to the listeners, because the text does not say "of a palm tree," but "of the palm tree" 12): " And the pangs of childbirth drove her unto the trunk of the palm tree. She said: Oh, would that I had died ere this and had become a thing of nothing, forgotten! Then (one) cried unto her from below her, saying: Grieve not!and shake the trunk of the palm tree towards you, you will cause ripe dates to fall upon you."

The transposition is not direct, but, considering the previous, almost literal, it is conceivable that the first text inspired the second.

The miracle of the birds. The passage below comes from an apocryphal gospel called " The childhood deeds of Jesus's Childhood." Some exegetes once called it "Infancy Gospel of Thomas," by mistake, following an unidentified interpolation. This Gospel is considered Judeo-Christian or Gnostic because it declares that Jesus was replaced by another on the cross. Here it is.

" This little child Jesus when he was five years old was playing at the ford of a brook: and he gathered together the waters that flowed there into (settling ?) pools, and made them straightway clean, and commanded them by his word alone. And having made soft clay, he fashioned thereof twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when he did these things (or made them). And there were also many other little children playing with him.

And a certain Jew when he saw what Jesus did, playing upon the Sabbath Day, departed straightway and told his father Joseph: Lo, thy child is at the brook, and he hath taken clay and fashioned twelve little birds, and hath polluted the Sabbath Day. And Joseph came to the place and saw: and cried out to him, saying: Wherefore do you these things on the Sabbath, which it is not lawful to do? But Jesus clapped his hands together and cried out to the clay sparrows and said to them: Go! and the sparrows took their flight and went away chirping. And when the Jews saw it they were amazed, and departed and told their chief men that which they had seen."

Below the echoes of this beautiful story in the Quran 13): " Lo! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, and I breathe into it and it is a bird, by God's leave."

See also 14): " You (Jesus) did shape of clay as it were the likeness of a bird by My permission, and did blow upon it and it was a bird by My permission,

It remains to know why this part of Judeo-Christian theology was subsequently overshadowed, or what events gave to the passing of the Judeo-Christian ideas in Islam its particular characteristics. A number of elements have passed into Islam, while others have been excluded from it, although they have been initially present in it.

- 1) As this name of Nazorene was inconvenient or meant no longer many things, the pagan-Christians imagined, from the community of Nazara, the city of Nazareth, and changed Nazorene into "from Nazareth."
- 2) Many believe that the current Mandeans in Iraq are distant descendants of these Nazorenes who joined the Baptist movement. They style themselves as such. They honor John the Baptist and reject Jesus.
- 3) The first gospel seems to be addressed primarily to Jews and rabbis, to demonstrate to them through the Scriptures, the Old Testament, that Jesus is really the Son of God and the Immanuel, God with us from the beginning, son of David, heir to all the kings of Israel, therefore the Messiah they were expecting.
4. None of the 57 countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference respect human rights.
5. Cf. Irenaeus, Against heresies, Epiphanes, Panarion.
6. Chapter 3 verse 54.
7. Chapter 4, verse 157. This is the Docetic thesis.
8. Chapter 3, verses 35 and 36.
9. Protevangelium of James, 8, 1.
10. Chapter 3, verse 37.
11. Book of the birth of the Blessed Mary and the infancy of the Savior, Gospel of the pseudo-Matthew chapter 20.
12. Chapter 19, verses 23-25.
13. Chapter 3, verse 49.
14. Chapter 5, verse 110.

**DOCUMENT: JEWS AND CHRISTIANS ACCORDING TO THE HOLY QURAN
CHAPTER 9 VERSE 30.**

“The Jews say: Ezra is the son of God, and the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of God. That is their saying with their mouths. They imitate the saying of those who disbelieved of old. God (Himself) fights against them. How yufakuna are they!
Semantic specifications.

Ezra. It is the current translators or Muslims who transcribe the Arabic name Uzayr, Esdras. There is no evidence that he is the secretary for Jewish affairs of the Persian empire mentioned in the book of the Bible bearing his name.

If this is the case, it must be remembered here that the Jews never made him a son of God. The Bible does not even make him a prophet. He is a pious Jew sent to Jerusalem in -458 with a first group of volunteers to reorganize the Jewish state with Jerusalem as its capital. Then he disappeared, to reappear in -448. on the occasion of a first reading of the new Jewish law (different from that of the Samaritans remained on the spot).

Only a few speculative Jewish currents make it a new Moses.

Regarding the Arabic word "yufakuna" which essentializes or characterizes therefore Jews and Christians according to Surah 9 verse 30 in the Quran and which is often conveyed in translations as something like "Jews and Christians understand nothing ." They are...

-Beguiled.

-Perverted.

-Perverse.

-Deluded.

-Turned away.

It is a derivative of the word afaka, at least according to the volume 1 of the book by Muhammad Mohar Ali entitled "Word for word translation of the Qur'an."

But the word yufakuna does not imply a simple ignorance, it rather suggests a misguided intelligence, or that one prevents from functioning normally.

And the "one" in question is to be taken in the strongest sense: it can be God as well as the devil.

Being an atheist, however, we will reject this hypothesis and we will opt for a more natural impediment.

"Jews and Christians are naturally unable to see, to know, to understand! "

As verse 171 of Chapter 2 says, "they are like cattle that hear the sounds and cries of the animals only in confusion and are deaf, dumb and blind and are unable to understand their meaning.

Philosophically speaking, "Jews and Christians' faith...has nothing to do with Reason! "

More bluntly "Jews and Christians.....are morons."

In short in summary "Jews and Christians ... are persons with Down's syndrome." Or alienated.

CHRISTIANITY.

The commonly used Arabic word for Christians is "NASARA." This obviously corresponds to "Nazarenes." However, we had the opportunity to see in our previous notebooks how ambiguous this appellation could be (low Christology or high Christology).

The context must be used therefore to determine the Christology, high or low, of the Christians mentioned in the Quran.

In this case, and in the verse quoted above, they are Christians in the sense in which it is understood today since Muhammad reproaches them for considering Jesus as the Son of God.

So there were also Christians of this type in Arabia or in neighboring countries in the 7th century.

Christians not very Kosher, not very Orthodox, and not yet Reformists, but Christians in the classic sense of the term nevertheless in the East (Nestorians, Monophysites, Melkites, Jacobites, etc.)

Christianity as such is therefore established in Central Arabia, but more in the North and South, more favored and more advanced regions; around big urban centers such as Hira (capital of the Lakhmids in Iraq) or Najran on the border of Yemen and Saudi Arabia. According to the Christian documents, the conversion of the Arabs was not difficult: it had great successes. It is even said that the first converted king was Arab: Abgar of Osroene (Edessa), at the beginning of the third century. Later, regions (Syria), whole tribes, passed to Christianity, like the Ghassanids (Syria-Jordan) and the Lakhmids (Southwest of Iraq). On a strictly demographic level, the Arabs were probably predominantly Christian in the sixth century.

In a sense, we may say that the whole Arabia was surrounded or crossed by Christian elements. It is a Christianity influenced by Byzantium, or in its Nestorian and Monophysite form, very popular in the East. His ideas circulate throughout the East. But from Montanism to the most obscure Arab heresies, Christianity was broken up into a multitude of more or less durable communities. With a step backwards, this deluge can be considered positively: a sign of vitality, but also a factor of cultural enrichment. Christianity was split primarily on doctrine questions and according to political ambitions, as in the case of Islam. Note for example that for John of Damascus, Islam is a Christian heresy pushed to the extreme.

In the East, there were three main tendencies that it is difficult to call "heresies" so much they were important, through popular or political support they got, and by their influence on orthodox Christianity or even Islam. Most Christians understand nothing in these quarrels and Muslims, even less, which does not prevent them from expressing themselves about the subject. The Muslim texts reveal a form of admiration for the luxury, prestige and appearance of their dignitaries, and in a very different field, for the austerity or solitude of their hermits.

If the presence of Jewish communities in Arabia, in Yemen, is well attested; that of Christianity, the religion of the Rum (Roman-Byzantine) empire, is even more so among the Arabs of the Syrian borders frequented by the traders from Mecca. The north-west of Arabia (Egypt, Palestine, Syria) was obviously massively Christian for a long time at the time of Muhammad, there is no debate on this point. Preached in the neighboring province of Palestine, whose territory extended also to Perea in the east of the Jordan River, and of the Dead Sea; a region frequented, according to the Gospel account, by John the Baptist and Jesus (Gospel of John 1: 28; 10: 40-42); Christianity began to penetrate these regions in the first century of the Christian era. The first Christian communities in Arabia accommodated various groups which are mentioned by the ecclesiastical authors of the fourth and fifth centuries. Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, the Panarion. "19. Osseans. After this sect in turn, comes another one which is closely connected with them, the one called the sect of the Ossaeans. These are Jews like the others, hypocritical in their behavior and horrid in their way of thinking. I have been told that they originally came from Nabatea, Ituraea, Moabitis and Arielis, the lands beyond the basin of what sacred scripture calls the "Salt Sea." This is the one which is called today the "Dead Sea.".....The man called Elxai joined them later, in the reign of the emperor Trajan.....Elxai was connected with the sect I have mentioned, the one called the Ossaeans. Even today there are still remnants of it in Nabatea, which is also called Peraea near Moabitis; this people is now known as the Sampsean."

Many Arabs converted therefore to Christianity and a community was even organized in Bosra (south of Damascus in Syria) around Bishop Beryllus. The historian Eusebius of Caesarea writes that the most famous Christian theologian at the time, Origen, was invited there by the governor of the province. Origen was called upon a second time to solve a doctrinal question which was discussed with this bishop, whom Eusebius considered to be of "noble mind," and whom St. Jerome ranked among "illustrious men." He returned there a third time to participate in a council on doctrine and give an opinion. At the time of the emperor Aurelian, Maximus, another theologian bishop of Bosra, even

participated actively in the ecclesiastical councils which were held in 263/264 and in 268. The first village entirely Christian in the province is mentioned by Eusebius at the beginning of the fourth century in the territory of Madaba: Coraiatha, today Al-Qurayyat in Jordan. With regard to the spread of Christianity among the people, Eusebius contented himself with general affirmations while commenting on Psalm 60: 9-10. Those who cross the Arab region will see the fulfillment of these prophecies by seeing the Moabites and Ammonites converted in large numbers, to the point of filling the Church of God ...

The bishops of the province of Arabia - Nicomachus of Bostra, Sopater Beretaneus ? Severus of Dionysias, Cyrion of Philadelphia (today Amman in Jordan), Gennadius of Esbus - participated in the Council of Nicaea summoned by the Emperor Constantine in 325.

The first specifically Arab bishop who participated in a council is apparently a named Theotimus who attended the synod of Antioch in 363, but he can be given as a precursor the bishop of the Tayenoi, Pamphilus, who also participated in the First Council of Nicaea in 325, if this word (tayenoi) refers well to Arab federates as Ifan Shahid thinks (Byzantium and the Arabs in the 4th century, Georgetown University, Dumbarton, 1984).

Arabia, which was part of the diocese of Orient, was reduced in the south with the creation of the province of Palestina Salutaris, or Palestine Third, which extended up to the Arnon Valley, current Wadi Mujib. From the point of view of the Church, the situation was fixed at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which created the Patriarchate of Jerusalem (Aelia Capitolina, Ilya in Arabic language). The Metropolitan of Bosra, and his bishops, remained dependent on the Patriarchate of Antioch in northern Syria. The high number of bishops made some slander, they shared the opinion of Sozomen: "There are many cities in Scythia, and yet all have but one bishop, whereas in other nations a bishop serves as a priest even over a village, as I have myself observed in Arabia and in Cyprus..."

Among the theologian bishops of Bostra who contributed to the renown of the metropolitan or archiepiscopal see, it is necessary to mention, in the time of Julian, Archbishop Titus; whom the emperor considered a dangerous agitator and wanted to drive out of the city, as well as Archbishop Antipater, who was held in high esteem by his contemporaries, civil and ecclesiastical. He is rated among the authoritative ecclesiastical writers by the Fathers of the Seventh General Council (787). The work of Antipater was looked on as a masterly composition, and, as late as 540 was read in the churches of the East as an antidote to the spread of the Origenistic heresies. He also wrote a treatise against the Apollinarists, known only in brief fragments, and several homilies, two of which have reached us in their entirety.

From the fifth to the sixth century, there were therefore massive conversions of Ghassanids Lakhmids, Kindite people or members of the Arab tribes of Mesopotamian Syria. Millions of Arabs were catechized (according to the Christianity of the time). They had integrated the Christian ideas of that time, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, help to missionaries. A monk called Maruta (565-649) following the example of St. Paul, had even already encouraged the wearing of the veil among women, especially in public places. The accounts we have from this period show that many people went to certain places on pilgrimage, so that it aroused huge crowds, as in 566 in the vicinity of Aleppo, so much that some monks were looking for new desert places to gather and dig wells. An Arab Christian preacher named Ahudemme of Tikrit, who died in 575, went and evangelized many peoples living in tents (therefore nomadic) between the Tigris and the Euphrates. He broke idols and taught by many speeches. He even founded congregations. But these Christians settled in northern Arabia were mostly Judeo-Christians with "low" Christology, especially Monophysite Christians. This doctrine, declared a heretic by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, recognized only one nature to Jesus Christ, the human nature, and did not see him as God embodied.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION.

GHASSANIDS. Capital Jabiyah in the Golan (220–638). Syria Jordan North-West Saudi Arabia and North-West Iraq.

The Ghassanids (Arabic al-Ghasasinah, or Banu Ghassan "Sons of Ghassan") were an Arab tribe of which the first wave from Yemen was arrived in the region in the early 3rd century. Some merged with local Hellenized Christian communities, converting to Christianity while others may have already been Christians before emigrating north afterwards (in order to escape anti-Christian religious persecution in Yemen???)

After settling in the Levant, the Ghassanids formed a client state to the Eastern Roman Empire and fought alongside them against the Persian Sassanids and their Arab vassals, the Lakhmids. The kingdoms of the Ghassanids also acted as a buffer zone protecting lands that had been annexed by the Romans against raids by Bedouin tribes.

The date of the arrival into the Levant is not obvious but they are believed to have arrived in Syria between 250-300 of our era but with later waves circa 400. Their earliest appearance in records is dated to 473 when their chief signed a treaty with the Eastern Roman Empire acknowledging their status as foederati controlling parts of Palestine. He apparently became Chalcedonian Christian at this time. By the year 510 in any case, the Ghassanids were no longer Monophysite, but Chalcedonian. They became the leading tribe among the Arab foederati, such as Banu Amela and Banu Judham. After settling in the Levant, the Ghassanids became therefore a client state to the Eastern Roman Empire. The Romans found a powerful ally in the Ghassanids who acted as a buffer zone against the Lakhmids allied of the Persians. In addition, as kings of their own people, they were also phylarchs, native rulers of client frontier states. The capital was at Jabiyah in the Golan Heights. Geographically speaking, their kingdom occupied much of the eastern Levant, and its authority extended via various alliances with other tribes all the way to the northern Hijaz as far south as Yathrib (Medina).

Sahih Muslim Book 009, Hadith Number 3511.

"I had a companion from the Ansar and, we used to remain in the company of the Messenger (may peace be upon him) turn by turn... we discussed that the Ghassanids were shoeing the horses in order to attack us. My companion once attended the Apostle and then came to me at night and knocked at my door and called me, and I came out to him, and he said: A matter of great importance has happened. I said: What is that? Have the Ghassanids come? He said: No, but even more serious and more significant than that: the Holy Prophet (may peace be upon him) has divorced his wives. I said: Hafsa has failed and has incurred loss and I feared that it would happen.... In short, Omar goes out and visits his daughter in tears to ask her what happened and then visits Muhammad who had withdrawn in his chamber and wants no longer see somebody, etc."

St. Sergius and St. Bacchus were two secretly Christian officers in the Roman army. After persisting in their refusal to worship the Roman gods, they were tortured and then put to death on the orders of Emperor Maximian; in a place called Resafa, in the Syrian desert, not far from the Euphrates (southwest of Raqqa on the road to Damascus).

Editor's note. On the reality of anti-Christian persecutions see our essay on, or more exactly against, Christianity.

The nomadic Arabs regarded this Serge as their particular patron saint. Many churches were placed under his protection. The great shrine put under the protection of the Ghassanid clan, founded between 491 and 518, probably before the settling of the Taghlibites, quickly became an essential step between the fertile crescent and the desert. Procopius, in his *De Aedificatione*, informs us that Justinian took it upon himself to finance the repair and fortification of it, in order, he tells us, "to better protect the treasures stored by the nomads."

The place was later renamed Sergiopolis and became one of the largest pilgrim centers in the ancient East. The great ceremony in honor of the Arab martyr took place on the 15th day of the month of Hatur (November), and coincided with the return of the summer transhumance in the plains of northern Jezireh (present northeastern Syria or north-west Iraq, or Upper Mesopotamia).

The shrine of Resafa / Sergiopolis received offerings from both the Lakhmid king and the Ghassanid monarch who built a newly discovered courtroom in this place.

The Eastern Roman Empire was focused more on the East and a long war with the Persians was always their main concern. The Ghassanids maintained their rule as the guardian of trade routes, policed Lakhmid tribes and was a source of troops useful for the Roman army.

The Ghassanid king al-Harith ibn Jabalah (reigned 529–569) supported actively the Byzantines against Sassanid Persia and therefore was given in 529 by the emperor Justinian I, the highest imperial title that was ever bestowed upon a foreign ruler; the status of patricians. In addition to that, al-

Harith ibn Jabalah was given the rule over all the Arab allies of the (Byzantine) Empire. Al-Harith was a Miaphysite Christian; therefore he helped to revive the Syrian Miaphysite (Jacobite) Church and supported its development despite the Orthodox Byzantium of the emperors regarding it as heretical. Later Byzantine mistrust and persecution of this non-orthodox religion besides brought down his successors, al-Mundhir (reigned 569-582) and Nu'man.

Historians have seen in this break-up of the alliance concluded between the Romans and the confederation of Banu Ghassan, the main cause of the dramatic weakening of the security of the Byzantine province of Arabia; who thus lost his Arab shield on the borders. That would be why, in the interval of 22 years, the Empire suffered a double defeat: in 614, from the Persians who invaded Syria and Palestine to Jerusalem where they set fire to the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher; and in 636 from the Muslim Arabs on the Yarmouk.

The Ghassanids, who had successfully opposed the Persian allied Lakhmids of al-Hirah (South-West of modern-day Iraq), prospered economically and therefore engaged in much religious and public building; they also generously patronized the arts and at one time entertained even the Arabian poets Nabighah adh-Dhubyani and Hassan ibn Thabit.

These Christian Arabs therefore played their part perfectly well as defenders of the Byzantine Empire on its eastern border, at the level of Syria and Palestine, and yielded to Islam only after 632. They incurred besides the hatred of the first Muslims and Muhammad, because of this obstruction. Few Ghassanids became Muslim immediately after the Islamic Conquest; most Ghassanids remained Christian and joined Melkite and Syriac communities within what is now Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Syria and Lebanon.

THE LAKHMIDS.

Capital Al-Hirah. 18 km south of An-Najaf upon the Euphrates. Established c. 300 annexed by Sasanian Empire 602. Roughly the South-West of modern Iraq.

The Lakhmids or Banu Lakhm formed a kingdom with al-Hirah as their capital, from about 300 to 602 of our era. They were generally but intermittently the allies and clients of the Sasanian Empire, and participant in the Roman–Persian wars.

The Kingdom was founded by the Lakhum tribe come from Yemen in the second century and ruled by the Banu Lakhm, hence the name given it. The founder of the dynasty was a named Amr, whose son Imru' al-Qais (not to be confused with the poet Imru' al-Qais who lived in the sixth century) would have converted to Christianity.

Imru' al-Qais dreamed of a great unified and independent Arab kingdom and, following that dream therefore, he seized many cities in the Arabian Peninsula. He then formed a large army and developed the Kingdom as a naval power, which consisted of a whole fleet operating along the Bahraini coast in the broader sense. From this position he attacked the coastal cities of Sasanian Empire - which at that time was in civil war, due to a dispute as to the succession - even raiding the birth region of the Sasanian kings, Fars Province.

In 325, the Persians, led by Shapur II, began a campaign against the Arab kingdoms. When Imru' al-Qais realised that a mighty Persian army composed of 60,000 warriors was approaching his kingdom, he asked for the assistance of the Byzantine Empire. Constantius II promised to assist him but was unable to provide that help when it was needed. The Persians advanced towards Hira and a series of vicious battles took place around and in Hira and the surrounding cities.

Shapur II's army defeated the Lakhmid army and captured Hira. The young Shapur II slaughtered all the men of the city and took the women and children as slaves. He then installed Aws ibn Qallam and retreated his army.

Imru' al-Qais escaped to Bahrain, taking his dream of a unified Arab nation with him, and then to Syria seeking the promised assistance from Constantius II (which never materialized). He stayed there until he died. When he died he was entombed at al-Namarah in the south of Syria.

Imru' al-Qais' funerary inscription is written in a type of script extremely difficult to read. Recently there has been a revival of interest in the inscription, and controversy has arisen over its implications. It is now certain that Imru' al-Qais claimed the title "King of all the Arabs" and that the inscription claims he has campaigned successfully over the entire north and center of the peninsula, as far as the border of Najran.

Two years after his death, in 330, a revolt took place in Hira, Aws ibn Qallam was killed and succeeded by the son of Imru' al-Qais, Amr. To be noted: the Sasanian emperor Bahram V lived in Hira and was educated at the court of al-Mundhir I, whose support helped him gain the throne after the assassination of his father. Thereafter, the Lakhmids' main rivals were the Ghassanids, who were vassals of the Sasanians' arch-enemy, the Byzantine Empire.

The military of the Sasanian Empire, along with al-Mundhir III himself and his army, defeated the famed Byzantine general Belisarius at the Battle of Callinicum in 531.

The Lakhmid kingdom has been a major center of the Church of the East, which was nurtured by the Sasanians, as it opposed the Eastern Orthodox Church of the Byzantines. The city has also been an important center for the propagation of Manichaeism.

Literature.

Al-Hirah became the cradle of the Arabic alphabet. Poets born in the Kingdom included: al-Nabigha, Laqete ibn Ya'amur al-Ayadi, 'Alqama ibn 'Abada and Adi ibn Zayd.

These poets described al-Hira as paradise on earth; an Arab poet described the city's climate and beauty thus: "One day in al-Hirah is better than a year of treatment."

The Lakhmids remained influential throughout the sixth century but in 602, the last Lakhmid king, al-Nu'man III ibn al-Mundhir, was put to death by the Sasanian emperor Khosrow II because of a false suspicion of treason, and the Lakhmid kingdom was annexed. It is now widely believed that the annexation of the Lakhmid kingdom was one of the main factors behind the fall of the Sasanian Empire and the Muslim conquest of Persia.

After its capture in 633 by the Muslims of the famous Khalid, the city quickly crumbled into ruins. The remains of the city have much impressed Muslim travelers, torn between the pride of seeing a Christian city in this state and the nostalgia that inevitably hits refined minds at the sight of such a spectacle. The ruins of al-Hirah are located 3 kilometers south of Kufa on the west bank of the Euphrates.

THE BANU TAGHLIB.

The Banu Taghlib, also known as Taghlib ibn Wa'il, were an Arab tribe that originated in Najd, but inhabited Upper Mesopotamia (Jezireh) from the late 6th century onward. The Taghlib were among the most powerful nomadic tribes of the pre-Islamic era and were known for their bitter wars with their kinsmen from the Banu Bakr, as well as their struggles with the Lakhmid kings of al-Hira in Iraq. The tribe embraced Monophysite Christianity and remained largely Christian long after the advent of Islam in the mid-7th century.

After early opposition to the Muslims, the Taghlib allied with the Umayyads and engaged in numerous battles with the rebellious Qaysi tribes in the late 7th century.

By the mid-9th century, much of the Taghlib converted to Islam, as a result of the persuasion of the Taghlibi governor of Diyar Rabi'a and founder of al-Rahba, Malik ibn Tawk.

The Banu Taghlib were originally a Bedouin (nomadic Arab) tribe that inhabited the Najd (Central Arabia). The tribe was named after its progenitor Taghlib ibn Wa'il, also known as Dithar ibn Wa'il. The tribe belonged to the Rabi'ah confederation.

The Taghlib were among the strongest and largest Bedouin tribes in Arabia. Their high degree of tribal solidarity was reflected in the large formations they organized during battles. As early as the 4th century of our era, the Taghlib were within the sphere of influence of the Persian Sasanian Empire and their Arab clients, the Lakhmid kings of al-Hira.

In the late 5th century, the Taghlibi chieftain Kulayb ibn Rabi'a was murdered by his brother-in-law, Jassas ibn Murra al-Shaybani of the Banu Bakr. This precipitated a long conflict, known as the Basus War, between the Taghlib and Banu Bakr. Kulayb's brother Muhalhil assumed leadership of the Taghlib, but quit his position after the battle of Yawm al-Tahaluq, after which the bulk of the Taghlib fled Najd for the Lower Euphrates region. A section of the Taghlib apparently lived there already.

Concurrent with the Basus War was the rise of the Kindite Kingdom in central and northern Arabia. Both the Taghlib and the Bakr became subjects of the kingdom during the reign of al-Harith ibn Amr ibn Hujr (early 6th century). The Basus War ended in the mid-6th century when the Taghlib and Bakr signed a peace treaty at the Dhu al-Majaz fair near Mecca.

The Taghlib then migrated further north along the Euphrates to Upper Mesopotamia (Jezireh) after their chieftain Amr ibn Kulthum assassinated the Lakhmid king 'Amr ibn al-Hind in 568. In 605, the Taghlib and Bakr fought on opposing sides in the Battle of Dhi Qar, with the Taghlib backing the Sasanians against the Lakhmids.

The completion of the evangelization of the Taghlibites probably took place between the apostolate of the first metropolitan of Tikrit, Ahudemme (died in 575) and that of his successor Maruta (died in 649). Ahudemme came from a Nestorian Assyrian family. In his youth he received religious education from the Nestorians and was even elevated to the bishop rank within their Church. Ahudemme later converted to Monophysitism, breaking off ties with his family and began to criticize Nestorianism. According to Bar Hebraeus, Ahudemme was consecrated Bishop of Beth Arbaye (of Arab countries) by the Armenian Catholicos Christopher I in 540. He preached among the nomadic Arab tribes of Beth Arbaye and converted many to Monophysitism. He also built a church dedicated to St. Sergius in the heart of Beth Arbaye known as Aynqenia, so that the Arabs did not have to travel to Byzantine territory to pray him. However, the monastery was destroyed by Nestorians not long after.

During this period, Monophysites were subject to a great deal of persecution from the Sassanians, under suspicion that as they obeyed a spiritual head residing in Byzantine territory, they were therefore inclined to support the Byzantines. Khosrau I decided to hold a debate between the Monophysites and the Nestorians at his court,[4] to see the most convincing of the two.

The Nestorian group was led by the Catholicos of the East, Joseph and the Monophysite group was led by Ahudemme. John of Ephesus claims that Khosrau I saw that the Monophysites were superior and consequently gave them freedom to build places of worship throughout the empire. John also states that the result of the conference encouraged Jacob Baradaeus to consecrate Ahudemme as Metropolitan of the East in 559.

As metropolitan, Ahudemme rebuilt Aynqenia and also founded the Monastery of Ga'tani near Tikrit. Here, in 573 he baptized a son of Khosrau I, who was then forced to flee to the Byzantine territory. Khosrau I, outraged, ordered Ahudemme's arrest and he was brought to Ctesiphon where he was imprisoned. He remained in prison until he was executed on 2 August 575.

The monasteries frequented by Christian Arabs founded by Ahudemme, Mar Matta, Mar Sarkis, are located, one 40 km north of Mosul, the other 20 km northeast of Tall Afar (Qasr Serij). We are in uncertainty for others.

Some Syrian Orthodox sources associate the name of Ahudemme with the see of Tikrit. Thus an eighth or ninth century list of the bishops of Tagrit, discovered by I. Rahmani, begins with the name of Ahudemme I. However, it is not clear whether he had ever occupied the see of Tikrit. John of Ephesus refers to him as "chief of the orthodoxes", Michel the Syrian as "bishop in the land of the Persians" and Bar Hebraeus as "Metropolitan of the East." His biography in French (published by R. Graffin and F. Nau, does not associate his name with Tagrit, but simply says: "« Il fut consacré évêque du Beit 'Arbaïê et nommé métropolitain d'Orient par Jacques Baradée en 559 .»" It is therefore not clear whether he was ordained bishop directly for the Beit Arabaye. However, he had played an important role in the reorganization of the Syrian Orthodox communities in Persia.

In Persia, all the Christian millets (millet = community) were under the jurisdiction of the Nestorian patriarch, whether they acknowledged his authority or not. Nestorianism was therefore the only official form of Christianity in Persia. During the reign of Chosroes II (589-629), the Syrian Orthodox Church made attempts to assert itself. It was because the royal physician Gabriel of Sinjar and the Queen Shirin were non-chalcedonians.

The Nestorians therefore feared that the royal physician and queen Shirin were manoeuvring the Shah to appoint a non-chalcedonian patriarch. The Nestorian bishops met and a delegation was sent to the court. The Shah ordered a religious debate between the two groups. The debate was inconclusive, (probably because the Shah intended to keep it that way). However, after the debate, it had become obvious to the Persian court that the Christians in the country were no longer one unified millet, but two.

At Beit Lapat, the Shah had built a monastery in honor of St. Sergius (Sargis or Sarkis) to please his queen Shirin. Since the queen was originally Nestorian (before her conversion to Jacobite Christianity), the monastery remained in Nestorian hands. Gabriel demanded to hand it over to the non-Chalcedonians. When he came to take it, an angry crowd of Nestorians prevented him. Gabriel complained to the Shah that the Nestorians were trying to kill him. He denounced the Nestorian leader Giwergis the monk as an apostate from Zoroastrianism. He was therefore and he admitted his conversion. Giwergis was crucified in 615 in the suburbs of Seleucia-Ctesiphon. The non-Chalcedonians realized that the Shah was not very much in favor of the election of a new patriarch and did not press their demand. The Nestorians feared even the outbreak of a persecution and waited patiently for the rest of the events..... a Syrian Orthodox metropolitan Samuel (614-624) was consecrated at Seleucia-Ctesiphon. The Syrian Orthodox Church was thenceforward practically organized as a distinct community or millet. Up to then the bishop of Tagrit, Qam Ishu (578-609), had been acting as the leader of the Syrian Orthodox Christians in Persia. He ordained bishops, notably one named Tubana of the Monastery of Mar Matta. His successor Maruta was consecrated in 629.

The first decades of the seventh century were comparatively peaceful time for the Syrian Orthodox Church in Persia. The royal physician Gabriel and the queen Shirin were effective protectors. Chosroes II tolerated his non-Chalcedonian subjects (who, on the other hand, were persecuted in the Roman empire). In 602, the Roman emperor Maurice was murdered by Phocas. Chosroes II, under the pretext of taking revenge for the murder of his friend invaded the Roman territory. He could conquer Dara (604), then Edessa (609), Caesarea in Cappadocia (611), Damascus (613), Jerusalem (614) and even Alexandria. But in 610, Heraclius succeeded the inefficient Phocas and reconquered

lost territories and entered the Tigris Valley and in 627/8 occupied Adiabene and Beit Garmai on the left bank of Tigris and finally Dastagerd, near Baghdad favorite residence of Chosroes II.

It was during this time that Maruta, the future bishop of Tikrit and the head of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Persia entered the scene. He was from Surzaq, near Balad (in the vicinity of Nineveh). He had his education in the monastery of Mar Samuel Turaya and later became a monk of the monastery of Mardas. Taking advantage of the peace that existed at the time of Chosroes II and the Emperor Maurice, Maruta spent a few years in the Roman territory to continue his studies. Around the year 605, he returned to Persia and took up his residence in the monastery of Mar Matta and taught there for some time. He reorganized the life of the monastic community. We can rightly assume that he had prepared the background for the reunion of the monks of Mar Matta with the Syrian Orthodox patriarchate of Antioch which took place in 629. About the year 615 (?), Maruta took over the charge of the monastery in Seleucia-Ctesiphion founded by the queen Shirin. In fact, she had founded it for the Nestorians about the year 598. But when she was converted to the Syrian Orthodox Church, under the influence of the physician Gabriel, the monastery in question was taken away from the Nestorians. However, the Nestorians, probably with the knowledge of the Syrian Orthodox bishop Samuel (614-24) continued to receive communion in the monastery. Maruta put an end to this situation. Samuel wished to make him bishop of Tikrit, but he refused. However, it may be noted that Maruta was a (non-Chalcedonian) very active monk in Persia and this explains why he was appointed the primate ('metropolitan of Tagrit and the East') of the Syrian Orthodox in Persia and why the monastery of Mar Matta accepted his primacy.

Taghlibites settlement area at the time of the Muslim conquest therefore, the region located in Iraq between Sinjar, Mosul and Tikrit (Takrit, Tekrit) on the one hand, the Middle Euphrates and its affluent the Khabur River in Syria, on the other hand. North-East of the Upper Khabur was the episcopal see of Dara (Modern Turkey, south of Mardin), which according to the Syriac authors, was at the head of the diocese formed by the villages of this river. But there are also Taghlibites north of Tikrit (about 100 km south of Mosul) in the Makhoul mountains. The Taghlibites also reside at that time on the Tharthar, an intermittent river, parallel to the Tigris at about 40 km, and which flows into the Umm Rahal, this vast natural reservoir at the entrance of Iraqi Mesopotamia. At the confluence of the Khabur and the Euphrates was Circesium (now Al-Busayrah) which was a suffragan bishopric dependent on Edessa.

During the Ridda Wars (632–633) between the Muslims and the rebellious Arab tribes, the Taghlib fought alongside the latter. Some Taghlib also fought the Muslim armies in Iraq and Upper Mesopotamia during the conquest of the Sasanian Empire. The Byzantine forces seem to have (re) occupied the area between the Khabur River and the middle Tigris River west of Dahuk Mosul and Tikrit.

During the Muslim invasion of the region, the Banu Taghlib led a coalition of "Arabs of the Jezireh" (Upper Mesopotamia) grouping Rabia and Lyad. The front was constituted by means of an alliance of different chiefs of clans summoned to a sada (a majlis? A assembly) By a "king" named in our sources Shah-al-Ryad ben Quraybun. Perhaps the Sasanian governor of the Anbar region, whom our authors liken to a "king" (shah). His troops were placed under the command of a man named Nawfil ben Mazin. The latter, in his exhortations, insists on the land they have to defend, and which is theirs: "the Sham [the South of Syria] and its strongholds." He insists that the invaders must be pushed back, because they will not stop until they have "established their Din." The first meaning of this term, as in the formula "Din Ibrahim wa Ishaq wa Musa," is that of Sacred Law, that is to say also of political and military obedience.

Some traditions, mainly taken up by Tabari, show us the Taghlibites, as well as the Namir of Anbar and the Lyad of Tikrit; all united behind General Antiochus (al-Antaq), to defend the capital of Lower Jezireh (Tikrit), but also their final submission to the religion of the invaders. Walter E. Kaegi. Professor of History, University of Chicago. ...Byzantium and the early Islamic conquests 1995. Page 154. "The Byzantine commander at Tikrit was allegedly named Antaq, very probably his original name was Antiochos. He had come with inhabitants of Mosul to Tikri. This commander had with him, apart from his Byzantine contingent, some tribesmen from the Lyad, Taghlib, and Namir tribes, as well as some local dignitaries. He has not been otherwise identified. Antaq and the rest of his Byzantine forces at Tikrit perished after a forty-day siege. Many of the above Arab tribesmen switched allegiances; some served as spies for the Muslims, who received additional help

from Maruta, the Monophysite Metropolitan of Tikrit. Mar Emmeh, the Nestorian bishop, reportedly also betrayed the city and citadel of Mosul to the Muslims. Other Byzantine forces, again mostly Arabs from upper Mesopotamia whom Heraclius had dispatched, were defeated after they unsuccessfully defended Hit" (North-West Ramadi, Upon the Euphrates River).

The Muslims will continue their offensive on the pastures around the main villages of the Khabur River, and a local chief, named Nawafil, first winner, will take advantage of his captives, to impress the conquerors. But then, isolated in combats where he appears associated with Armenian and Roman armies in the stronghold of Ras al Ayn on the Upper Khabur, he would have surrendered. The history of the battle of Ras Al Ayn by Waqidi, specifies that there were among the Taghlibites submitted (Muslims) and unbelievers (kafir) which shows that a number of Taghlibites had had to rally very early to the Muslim camp; and that in the sources consulted by this author, the Christians of the Arab tribes could very well be considered as submitted (Muslim) although still Christian.

Small numbers of Taghlibi tribesmen converted to Islam during the Umayyad era (668–750) and early Abbasid era (8th century), including the small Taghlibi community of Kufa, some tribesmen in Qinnasrin and noted individuals, such as the Umayyad court poets Ka'b ibn Ju'ayl and Umayr ibn Shiyaym. The vast majority remained Christian during this period. Apparently, the mass conversion of the Taghlib to Islam occurred in the second half of the 9th century during the reign of al-Mu'tasim (833–842).

The Taghlibites have remained in the memory of the first two centuries of Islam as the very type of the Christian Arab tribe. It was indeed one of the last to convert, but asked the caliph Umar that the tax that they had to pay as dhimmi was called sadaqa and not jizya. What the Caliph Umar accepted, but while doubling its amount, after an attempted escape of the Taghlibites, beyond the mountains Madran and Taurus, in the "Ard al-Rum" in other words in Byzantine territory.

Shafi and Ibn Hanbal will come back to the legal traditions concerning the Taghlibite sadaqa; and at the same time, the hadith concerning the marriage and the consumption of the Taghlibite cattle will also be used in the tafsir, as a jurisprudential case potentially extensible to all the people of the Book. It seems well that among the three groups that classical Arab historiography associates as being "Jezireh Arabs" (Upper Mesopotamia, present northeastern Syria north-western Iraq), we may therefore try the following area of distribution. The Taghlibites are mainly settled on the Khabur River in Syria and on the Middle Euphrates, the Lyads in the intermediate zone between Tikrit and Anbar, and finally the Namirs, obviously faithful vassals of the Taghlibites, rather settled around Anbar; where would be their bishop, mentioned among the Jacobite suffragans of Takrit, in the 650s.

Editor's note. The question of Christian Arabs in the Middle East is not to be reduced to the Taghlibites alone; indeed, the case of the Nadjranites, this group of Yemenis settled on the banks of the Euphrates following the Muslim conquest; or that of the Tanukhs, between Aleppo and Raqqa, and of the Ghassanids in the southern Sham (in Syria); are so many obvious cases of persistence of Christianity.

THE KINDA .

From 450 to more or less 600, a powerful confederation had been set up in the center of Arabia, in the Najd, around the Kinda tribe. The kingdom controlled much of the center and north of the Arabian Peninsula in the fourth and fifth centuries, long before the arrival of Islam. Its capital was located in Qaryat Al Faw, now Saudi Arabia.

Quite beyond their political influence, which remained very fluctuating, this attempt at Arab unification by the Kinda is a little a prefiguration of what Mohammed will succeed on the religious level. But the Kinda do not consolidate their power by using a particular, vigorous and rigorous belief. They are only more or less Christian, in contact with Hira, but also reveal themselves on the cultural level. The most famous Arab poet, Imru' al Qays, comes from their ranks. They will be Islamized by force and will furiously attempt to regain their independence, especially under Osman.

THE CHRISTIANS IN NAJLAN.

This large city, located south of Mecca, on the border with Yemen, is an important stage of caravan trade. It is especially distinguished by its Christian population. Its inhabitants seem to be in constant contact with nascent Islam, and for Muhamad, they are apparently the closest Christians. They succeed in making their status respected in exchange of a status equivalent to a kind of protectorate, at least before their final expulsion by Umar in 640.

THE YEMEN.

As we saw earlier in this study, a Yemeni king named Dhu-Nuwas or Joseph had converted to Judaism in 520.

We will not revisit the history of the persecutions, they are attested, only their extent (how many Christian martyrs in Najran? To speak bluntly) was discussed.

The Christian king of Ethiopia, Kaleb having organized retaliation, he gathers seventy ships and, after Pentecost 525, crosses the Red Sea. The Ethiopian fleet arrives at the entrance of the harbor of Sheikh Said, lands, defeats King Joseph. Then Kaleb seizes the whole Yemen, imposes Christianity, founds churches everywhere, creates an ecclesiastical hierarchy, and withdraws into Ethiopia where he became a monk. A Christian Himyarite king is enthroned, soon overthrown by the Ethiopian general Abraha and his elephants, as we have already seen. To assert its power, Abraha builds around 550 a beautiful cathedral, called al-Qalis - a name that derives from Greek Ekklesia - by Muslims historians in Arabic. The building was about a hundred and fifty cubits by around forty. The walls were built of various colored stones and topped with a frieze of alabaster blocks. The copper door looked out on a nave of eighty cubits by forty, the ceiling of which was supported by columns of wood decorated with gold and silver studs. From thence you passed into a room forty cubits to the right, and as much to the left, decorated with mosaics having vegetable motifs, and with gold stars; lastly, the ebony and ivory pulpit was reached under a thirty cubits by thirty cupolas, covered with gold, silver, and mosaics representing crosses. This same Abraha, author of the last restoration of the Marib dam, in 558, reigns until around 560. Two of his sons succeed him. But Yemen bears with more and more difficulty the Ethiopian tutelage. Jewish princes call on the Persians who occupy the country around 570. Since then Christianity will remain limited to the periphery of Yemen, the oasis of Najran, Marib, Hadramaw, the coastline facing Ethiopia and the island of Socotra, where it was still long-lasting at the arrival of the Portuguese in the early sixteenth century.

CONCLUSION BY SHAHRASTANI, KITAB AL-MILAL WA AL-NIHAL, BOOK OF RELIGIOUS SECTS.

"The Christians. (They are) the community (umma) of the Christ, Jesus, son of Mary (peace upon him). He it is who was truly sent (as a prophet; mab'uth) after Moses (peace upon him), and who was announced in the Torah. To him were granted manifest signs and noticeable evidence, such as the reviving of the dead and the curing of the blind and the leper. His very nature and innate disposition (fitra) are a perfect sign of his truthfulness; that is, his coming without previous seed and his speaking without prior teaching. For all the (other) prophets the arrival of their revelation was at the age of forty years, but revelation came to him when he was made to speak in the cradle, and revelation came to him when he conveyed (the divine message) at (the age of) thirty. The duration of his (prophetic) mission (da'wa) was three years and three months and three days.....

They affirmed that God has three hypostases (aqanim). They said that the Creator (may he be exalted) is one substance (jawhar), meaning by this what is self-subsistent (al-qa'im bi-n-nafs), not (what is characterized by) spatial location and physical magnitude; and therefore he is one in substantiality, three in persons (uqnumiyya). By the persons they mean the attributes (sifat), such as existence, life and knowledge, and the father, the son and the holy spirit (ruh al-qudus)). The (person of) knowledge clothes itself and was incarnated, but not the other persons....

-The Melkites (Al-Malkaniyyah). The Melkites originated from Rome. They are the religious rite of all Christian kings and their people of all Christendom except those of Ethiopia and Nubia. All Christians of Africa, Sicily, Andalus and Syria belong to this group. Their belief is that God means three things: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. All of them are eternal. Mary gives birth to the eternal god who is both the divine and the human. Hence Jesus (Isa) is truly god and truly man. Their belief is that the Word of God has united with Jesus's body and his divinity like an amalgamation of milk and water. It was the human in him that was crucified and killed and nothing happened to the divine in him. Members of this sect also have their own perspectives on Judgment Day. They believe that on Judgment Day, man would arise but only with his soul and not with the body. The punishment for wickedness is abject misery whereas for the good is happiness and joy. They also repudiate the activity of eating, drinking and marriage in heaven.

-The Nestorians (Al-Nastuiyyah). They are named after Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople. They interpret the Gospel using their minds. Their belief is that God is one and consists of three substances. These three substances are "existence," "knowledge" and "life." The Word of God has incarnated in Jesus's body, but neither as an amalgamation as claimed by the Melkites, nor conspicuousness as asserted by the Jacobites. Rather, it united with his body like the rays of sun that shine on and illuminate crystal glass.

Members of the sect also maintain that God begot the deity but He did not beget the man. This deity then incarnated with Isa's body when he was born. Hence, Isa is a possessor of both deity and human nature. His body is formed of two elements which are the eternal and temporal substance. He is the true god and the true man and both the characteristics are one in his body. They also differ from the Melkites and Jacobites on the issue of his crucifixion. They say that Jesus was crucified in his human nature and not in his divine nature, for he is a deity and a deity does not feel pain.

Some among them also opine that God is one. Jesus comes from the Virgin Mary. He was a pious and mortal man.

Due to his obedience, God granted him His grace and appointed him as His son. Hence, he is appointed as the Son of God, not through birthright or incarnation, but due to his obedience to God. The Nestorians also have their own view on religious practices. They said that should a man endeavors

to worship God, avoids eating meat and refuses to have sexual contacts, his essence will be purified. He will then ascend to heaven and see God with his naked eye. All the secrets of the earth and heaven will be revealed before him. Aside from this, there is also a report saying that some of the Nestorians refuse to believe in the allegorical expression and they agree upon the divine decree as understood by the Qadarites. The group is mostly found in Syria, Iraq and Iran of today.

-The Jacobites (Al-Ya'qubiyyah). They are named after Ya'qub al-Bardha'ani, (Jacob Baradaeus), a bishop in Constantinople. They maintain that Jesus himself was especially God and that God died when He was crucified and killed. After this assassination, the whole universe was without its Provider and Maintainer for three days. Then God rose up and returned to His place. God then became originated and the originated became eternal. It was God who was conceived and carried in Mary's womb ?????????? Hence, Jesus is truly God whose appearance are of divine nature and human

nature. Due to this combination, he, thus, possesses one element, which makes him the true god and the true man ????????

This process happens neither by means of the incarnation nor by part of it. He is God, he is man and both of them are one according to their belief. They live mostly in Ethiopia, Sudan and part of Egypt.

1) Basus was the she owner of a she camel who had gone to join the herd of a breeder of the Banu Taghlib tribe.

**HIJAZ AND QURAYSH (MUHAMMAD'S
TRIBE)
IN THE 6TH CENTURY.**

THE SITUATION IN MUHAMMAD'S HOMELAND.

The north-west coast of the peninsula, inhospitable, entered the history only very late. The Hijaz, the region of origin of Islam, is a desert plateau of western Arabia. Arab Bedouins live a nomadic life there, except for some settled groups in the oases.

The life of the pre-Islamic Arabs, especially in the Hijaz, depended on trade and it had important consequences in their religion. Especially because it put them in contact with other religions than theirs.

In the time of Muhammad, the Hijaz was at the crossroads of major trade routes between Yemen (= the Indian ocean) and Syria (= the Mediterranean Sea), but also between Arabia and Christian Abyssinia (present-day Ethiopia).

The oasis of Mecca and that of Yathrib / Medina, its great rival in the North (400 kilometers) control the caravan route between Yemen and Syria or Iraq. They are therefore not totally cut off from monolatrous religions, but are not subject either to the political authority of the Byzantine or Sassanid empires.

On the political level, this region is on the influence border of the two powers of the time: Christian Byzantium, and Sasanian Persia, which practices the religion of Zoroaster. Regarding religion, the proximity of the Sinai of Moses and of the Jerusalem of Jesus is concretized by the presence of Nestorian or Coptic Christians and Jewish tribes or even of Manichaeans (at Hira in Iraq).

Arab herders, on the other hand, practice a kind of tribal-based polytheism. One of their most famous sanctuaries is precisely in Mecca or its surroundings (Mount Arafat).

In the time of Muhammad, there were only three cities in the Hejaz: Yathrib / Medina, Taif and Mecca. Jews are concentrated mostly in the cities (Yathrib is a city two thirds Jewish) and support the trade.

At that time, if there were Christian influences in northern, central, or southern Arabia, there were also in the Hijaz.

Ta'if was a shrine city dedicated to the worship of the goddess Al-Lat and Mecca a shrine city first dedicated to the worship of Hubal (or God, but as a main god with many hypostases, called by Islam) .

The Valley of Mecca (Arabic Mekka) is in reality a gorge in a mountain range, in a desert world of 300 000 km² where men are rare and the conditions of existence perilous; was not as rich in water as its great rival from the North, Yathrib / Medina, and could not be so agricultural. All that remained was trading. Mecca, close to the Red Sea, midway between South Arabia (present-day Yemen) and Byzantine Palestine, was then one of the few cities of the peninsula; though very modest if compared with the metropolises of the time, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch or Ctesiphon / Madain, capital of the Persian empire of the Sassanid dynasty. 3,000 permanent inhabitants. Hence its absence in the list of cities of the time.

Originally, the city is only a settled tribe, with, in the neighborhood, its vassals; but the Mecca of the time of Muhammad is already a great caravan stage, surrounded by tribes who raise especially camels for the transport of men and goods. It is well located, 80 km away from the sea. Through its history and position, it was distinguished, already as a trade center and as a sanctuary.

Place of warehouses and transfer of goods, Mecca had begun, at the end of the fifth century, to charter itself caravans; caravans that, through multiple tribe territories, over nearly 2,000 km, traveled from one end to the other the ancient road of incense. This evolution seems to have been at the origin of accelerated social and economic changes that certain sections of the tribe were able to control, while others, in fact excluded from the great caravan traffic, were marginalized. Case of the Hashemite clan of which Muhammad was a member.

Well defended and unavoidable, Mecca is a place of passage, therefore a privileged step. On the way from Yemen to Palestine, from Ethiopia to the Persian Gulf, the city sees passing the caravans and their precious cargoes: spices, incense, silks, precious woods, weapons, pearls, ivory and slaves. It speculates on treasures that travel from China, Sudan, India, and up to the Mediterranean, where they are widely used and where they will be fiercely renegotiated. We can imagine the fever, the fortunes invested, the impatience, but also the networks of relations and exchanges engendered by these activities. Although there was not yet a complete translation of the Bible into Arabic at the time, stories of the Old and New Testaments were circulating, as well as Talmudic fables and legends from apocryphal Christian writings.

Mecca before Islam is already a place of veneration, a sanctuary, where Jews and Christians Pagans, Mazdeans, Manicheans, meet ... Christianity and Judaism of this century are far from showing the beautiful unanimity of today. Sects abound in every religion, they know each other, make war, recognize each other, compare themselves, borrow some ideas in passing and when needed. This plural expresses hardly the abundance of beliefs. The pagans are not left out and syncretism is at

work: the religious home improvements in full swing. Mecca is a fair for things and a fairy for doctrines. A haven of peace where several times a year, truce made all the material benefits and all the religious controversies, possible.

At the fair of Ukaz which is not far from Mecca, the speakers and the poets clash, through their eloquence. Verbal sparring refines propaganda: one's tribe is praised in the rhyme chosen by the adversary, and he is to be overcome by the riposte, the loftiness of feelings, the eloquence.

In Mecca, the religious and ethnic overview, the search for the existence sense, the abundance of answers, invite to compare all these spiritualities, and if not convinced by one to adopt several of them or none. The traveler had the choice between 360 divine representations. Some strangely remind of the gods of classical antiquity (the three gharaniq or cranes are reminiscent of the Galatian trigaranos), others the Persian deities ... one was called Allat, the other Allah (literally, God) the other Hubal. For there is not only one God in Mecca, nor one sanctuary: there are multiple places of worship that are grouped, overlapping, competing.

The Kaaba.

The word means "cube." The religious building is 10 x 12 meters and 15 meters high, it is covered with a veil. The Kaaba of today probably has nothing of the original, after twenty centuries of changes. But the current building is neither the original nor the one that was repaired by the Coptic Christian carpenter Pachomius (Baqum) in the year 600. The kaaba of that time was only a temple of unbaked earth and wood, with stone foundations, of a model that is known elsewhere in Arabia. Its corners correspond, as often in the case of religious buildings, to the cardinal points but shifted.

Islam wants to see there the first temple of Mankind, a center of the world, frequented by Adam, Abraham and so on. This is, of course, completely wrong! It is simply the house of a very anthropomorphic god: the "Bayt Hubal" (or "Bayt Allah" ???). Unless Allah is not a proper noun but a common noun for the divinity of the gods in general.

The older a shrine is, the more venerable it is; the less his rituals are understood, the more they are respected. The purpose of all the stories is then to trace back the foundation of the sanctuary as far as possible in the time, despite common sense. For Mecca, certain Muslim traditions go back to the mythical Adam and Eve. Can we do better? (Yes, dating it back to the aliens as in the case of Stonehenge.)

To maintain that Mecca was once frequented by Adam and Eve and his family has a lot a lot but really a lot to do with faith, and very little, very little, but very little, with reason.

Alternative Muslim traditions, perhaps in order to try to convince the rabbis of Yathrib / Medina, mention Abraham instead of Adam. In both cases, this has nothing to do with historical reality, this falls under the myth in the wrong sense of the word.

To say that the Kaaba of Mecca was once built by Adam or Abraham is to show much ignorance (crass ignorance would say John Toland) voluntary or involuntary of other civilizations in the world (as the Chinese civilization for example, that of the Indus Valley, or Sumer, even Egypt).

Repetere = ars docendi. Anima naturaliter pagana.

We can't totally rule out, of course.

- a) That Abraham really existed.
- b) That he passed through Mecca at a given time of his existence.
- c) That he built there the kaaba.
- d) That he spread from there the purest philosophical and thoughtful monotheism.
- e) That there was then a fall in the religious level such that all kinds of paganism can be considered to have succeeded this original Hanifism.

The simplest and most consistent with Occam's razor's principle is still to suppose that the original religion of mankind is more similar to paganism (animism polytheism henotheism etc...) than to monotheism renamed if we can say "Hanifism".

This relentlessness worthy of the worst of self-suggestion methods to want at all costs to be recognized as a legitimate and direct heir to the Jewish religion and to Abraham; whereas it is obvious that only certain details of the Islamic veneer are so, and that the background is pagan (the notion of god-man in Christianity, the role of the kaaba in Islam, etc.) IS PATHETIC. It is at the same time the timeless manifestation of an incredible racism towards other religions coupled with an equally incredible inferiority complex. Not to mention a crass ignorance of historical science and of the discoveries of archaeology (the beginning of the Bible up to the episode of the Tower of Babel is borrowed from Sumerian myths, Abraham is a legend, Moses did not exist, neither did slavery in Egypt, etc.). But that we have already said it.

The history of this building is actually very poorly known by both Muslims and non-Muslims: the first whose belief obscures the judgment and the second stunned by the blind faith of the first ones. The origin of the building and its decoration are a particularly disturbing subject for all. Some considered

that the evidence was important enough to conclude that the building had been a church. A middle way is to consider it as a syncretic building, an assembly of all the traditions that the Quraysh have brought back from their journeys. It is also likely that the sources, including Azraqi (Akhbar Makka), have "Judaized" or Christianized pagan idols: thus, his Abraham playing with arrows, must be a Hubal practicing divination, and Mary, a female goddess ...

Let's first look at the building itself. Even if he has nothing spectacular, nor even monumental. The literature which has been devoted to it remains incommensurate with its true appearance.

Especially if one compares it to the huge South Arabian temples like that of Awwam or Mahram Bilqis near Marib, Sirwah, etc. the Kaaba of Mecca is really a lower-ranking building, crude and fragile. Repairs are constant.

The exterior decoration is well known: a canopy, reminiscent of the Bedouin tent. Al-Walid ibn al-Mughira, the father of the one who will become the greatest Muslim warrior (Khalid) was nicknamed the peerless unique "al-Wahid"; because once he dressed the Kaaba by changing the canopy around it, so rich he was. The following year all the Quraysh felt obliged to do the same. Al Walid was the richest and most prestigious of the inhabitants of the city, he owned important goods, camels, horses, herds of sheep, and fields between Mecca and Ta'if.

The interior offers more surprises. It has been widely described, but - it is almost surprising - no echo of these descriptions has reached the contemporary literature.

The temple was decorated according to the syncretic considerations of the Meccans of the time, and of what they brought as cultural influences, of their journeys. We will not be surprised to discover Christian frescoes, other objects reminiscent of Christian worship, and statues (see Azraqi, Akhbar Makka, quoted in the first part of this opusculé).

As we have already said, this Abraham practicing belomancy (drawing lots with arrows) is more than suspect, it should rather be the Hubal mentioned by other documents. The historian being dependent on original sources, we will probably never know with certainty what the furniture or decoration of the building was.

MUHAMMAD'S TRIBE: A RELIGIOUS (AND MERCHANT) ARISTOCRACY.

WARNING TO READERS: WE ARE ENTERING WITH THIS CHAPTER THE FIELD OF SIMPLE WORKING HYPOTHESES AND STILL NOT IN THAT OF CERTAINTY. MUHAMMAD'S FAMILY IS KNOWN TO US THROUGH THE QURAN THE SIRA OF IBN ISHAQ THEN OF IBN HISHAM, AND FINALLY CERTAIN HADITHS ... IN OTHER WORDS, VERY DISPUTABLE DOCUMENTS.

The sources, both Muslim and non-Muslim, indicate that the Quraysh tribe played a fundamental role in the life of Muhammad. To understand the context in which the latter could act, it is necessary to know what this tribe was, what it did, where it lived.

According to traditional Muslim history, the Quraysh tribe was based in Mecca, and Muhammad was one of them. This tribe lived on trade. Most of the Quraysh violently opposed Muhammad, and then joined him when his success was proved.

Muslim sources also provide indications that, although not diametrically opposed to traditional Muslim history, nevertheless do not tend to confirm it.

Father Édouard-Marie Gallez summed them up in his thesis entitled "The Messiah and His Prophet," published in 2005. The few notes that follow summarize only his working hypothesis. Hoping that we understood it well because we admit willingly not to master the language of Moliere and Voltaire as well as we would have wished (misspellings, ponderousness, etc.).

The Arabs are a very old people in the Near and Middle East. Divided into many nomadic or settled tribes, they were already a component of the Persian empire of Darius I at the end of the fifth century before our era. The texts speak of it as rich merchants trading aromatics, gold and precious stones, or nomadic shepherds living on robbery. Raid made them able to complete their everyday fare through the appropriation of various goods and slaves. They peopled the borders of Mesopotamia, along the Euphrates, and east of Syria.

These nomads had become partially settled. In the fourth century, a first tribe, that of the Saracens (Saraceni) 1), under the direction of "queen" Mauvia (Mawiyya) will try to shake the tutelage of Rome: after defeating the troops of the Arian emperor Valens (373), she finally gets along with the Romans. It was from this date that the Arabs began to become aware of their military strength: in the sixth century, they put themselves, as mercenaries, in the service of the two great empires who fought for supremacy in the Middle East, Byzantium and the Persians. The Ghassanids will be vassals of Byzantium, the Lakhmids of Persia and will form from the end of the third century, two kingdoms, that of the Lakhmids around Hira (in Mesopotamia, on the Euphrates), and that of the Ghassanids with three places of residence on the borders of the Syrian Desert and in the Golan 2). Because of their mobility and their warlike abilities, the Ghassan were for Byzantium indispensable allies that he had to spare. So they played, like the Lakhmids their enemies on the Persian side, an important role on the political exchequer.

But among the different Arab tribes, there is another that will take on considerable importance in history, that of the Quraysh, from which Muhammad was born. "Long before the time of the Prophet, the Kuraishites were mixed with the Christians, and about 485 a well-known Syrian writer, Narsai, the founder of the University of Nisibis mentions the terrible raids that the forefathers of Muhammad were wont to make in the district of Beith Arabaye, in Western Assyria 3) : "The raid of the sons of Hagar was more cruel even than famine, and the blow that they gave was sorer than disease ; the wound of the sons of Abram is like the venom of a serpent, and perhaps there is a remedy for the poison of reptiles, but not for theirs... Let us therefore blame the foul inclination of the sons of Hagar, and specially the people (the tribe) of Kuraish who are like animals."

It seems that in the sixth century, they converted themselves into trade, perhaps because of Christianization, at least superficial 4).

Cf. the Covenant of the Quraysh (chapter 106). This sura is very allusive and has a relatively obscure meaning.

"Because of the covenant of the Couraichites, their covenant about the winter and summer caravan; May they worship the lord of this house, He has fed them, He has preserved them from famine, He has delivered them from fear."

This mysterious fragment in the Quran is all that remains of a prayer of Thanksgiving after the safe passage of a caravan. It belongs to the first Meccan period. Some authors and some Muslim exegetes have considered this sura and the previous one as one. Alfred-Louis de Premare excludes this hypothesis.

For Esma Hind Tengour, this sura is part of the oldest Quranic substratum (in contradiction with the order mostly accepted by Muslim commentators) which is addressed, in a succinct and homogeneous style, to the men of the tribe of Muhammad (the Quraysh) who are asked to submit to Rabb al-Bayt. They were the "Lord of the Mecca House" where they had settled some one hundred and fifty years before the revelation and which provided them with food and protection, functions characteristic of the Rabb(s) in the old local tribal societies.

For William Dye, the unique expression in the Quran "the lord of this temple" is present in northern Arabia in pre-Islamic times.

Alfred-Louis de Premare points out that it is a typical expression of the pre-Islamic period, particularly of Petra, Hegra and Northern Arabia. This expression from Sura 106 should be read in this context, "even if this survival of ancient Arab henotheism was later assumed by Islamic tradition in the name of a unique divinity, as was assumed the betylus of the sanctuary represented by the ka'ba, the black stone that was there."

In the framework of his research on the inconsistencies between oral and written language in the Quran, Jacques Langhade mentions the case of Sura 106 as an example of a word read in a certain way in contradiction with the rasm. The rasm is the primitive Arabic script without the diacritical signs invented later on that avoid many errors or ambiguities. Some editions have added a smaller letter or a letter in red to the rasm, as an artifice to present this distortion. "The example of Sura 106 puts the idea of absolute respect for the rasm into perspective. »

But back to the Quraysh. Many place names bear their name in Syria, and not in the Hijaz, as one might expect. The geographer Rene Dussaud⁵) has noticed the name of a river that bears their name (nar al quraysiy) which crosses the ruins of a village of semi-nomadic Arabs (a caravanserai, trading center and stopping place for caravans) called Khan el-Qourashiye, located 30 kilometers northeast of Latakia. Other traditions mentioned by this same researcher locate around Gaza the place of the commercial activity of Muhammad and the grave of his great-grandfather⁶). According to Idris Imad al din, he died after falling ill on a journey returning from a business tour to Syria in Gaza, Palestine in 497. According to tradition, Hashim's tomb is located beneath the dome of Sayed al-Hashim Mosque in the Al-Daraj neighborhood of Gaza which is named in his honor.

As we have seen, the position of the Hijaz, on the route of caravans, from India to the West by Aden and the desert, would make Mecca able to develop. The locality was for a long time under the domination of the tribe Jurhum then of that of the Khuzaa then before becoming the stronghold of Quraysh. The Quraysh were thus named after their more or less legendary or mythical founder, a man named Quraysh. The sources indicate that the Quraysh tribe is getting more and more importance in the management of Mecca, with its clans, to the detriment of other tribes, during the sixth century. It founded its power on the monopolizing of priestly privileges in the sanctuary of the city (the kaaba), thus gradually ensuring control of the entire city, to the detriment of the Khuzaa. The "Little Sharks" (q-r-sh, totemic name possible) then have the monopoly of trade along the Red Sea and therefore form a caravan aristocracy.

At the beginning of the seventh century, the Abd Shams clan dominates that of the Hashim.

This period will be marked in Arabia, as we have seen, by terrible rivalries between Christians and Jews: in 523, for example, Jewish tribes seized the kingdom of Yemen. Dhu Nuwas (King Joseph) ascends the throne and persecutes the Christians so hard that the Abyssinians intervene at the request of the Byzantine emperor. The leader of the Abyssinian Expeditionary Force, Abraha, proclaims himself king. Christianity becomes the official religion of Yemen. Around the year 560, Abraha decided to build a cathedral in Sanaa, the capital. The doors are in gold and precious stones are inlaid in it. Beautiful icons are painted inside. Conversions of Bedouins are expected. Pilgrims flock everywhere to admire it. It's prosperity for the city.

The problem of the opposition of the Quraysh to nascent Islam.

This opposition is traditional in the official Muslim history, but rather paradoxical: almost all the leaders and most famous generals of the nascent Islam were Quraysh, such Abou Sufiyan, his son Yazid, Khalid ibn Walid or Amr ibn al-As. Abu Sufyan, a man supposed to have been a radical opponent, was indeed not only a general of the Muslim army, but also a leader of such prestige that his son became a caliph.

According to the official Muslim tradition, Abu Sufyan was a polytheist, like all before Islam Meccans. But Muhammad b. Habib (Kitab al-muḥabbar, Hyderabad, 1942, p. 161) contradicts this assertion because he places him in a list of "Manichaeans –Zindiq- of the tribe of the Quraysh." As Abu Sufyan was one of the chief Quraysh leaders, and that his son Muawiyah subsequently became caliph, that other members of the tribe were also Manichaeans; it is therefore not impossible that Manichaeism played a certain role in the development of Islam.

In short, this almost exclusive domination of the initial Islam by the Quraysh designates them as founding fathers rather than as enemies. Moreover, the charter of Medina does not mention them as enemies in the version of Abu Ubayda ; and only once in that of Ibn Ishaq, uncertain, because written on the order and under the control of the caliph, more than two hundred years after the facts (according to Alfred-Louis de Premare, it is an interpolation). If the Quraysh had been the fierce enemies described in the official Muslim history, they should often be mentioned in a document that organizes the defense of early Muslims. We will come back on the subject in another chapter. In summary. Islam was born in a cultural breeding-ground that embraced polytheism and henotheism, Judaism and Christianity, but also Zoroastrianism, even Manichaeism . In this rugged community landscape, a tribe more powerful than the others controls, by cunning and force, Mecca. It makes money out of the safety of travelers and of the "calm" of neighboring tribes. This tribe is that of the Quraysh, whose privileges are numerous, and to which Mahomet belongs by a modest paternal lineage.

- 1).St. Jerome states that these tribes "living under tents" wandered in the desert of Syria, and Ammianus Marcellinus adds, the Sinai. It is in reality a synonym, rather vague besides, of Arabs.
- 2) The most important of these centers was Jabiyah in the Golan, Jilliq, about a dozen kilometers south-east of Damascus, probably for the encampment of troops, and Dumayr 30 kilometers north-east of Damascus, towards Palmyra.
- 3) Alphonse Mingana, *Leaves from the Ancient Quran Possibly Pre-Othmanic*, Cambridge University Press, 1914, p. XIII.
- 4) In the Byzantine Empire, from 380 (Edict of Theodosius), Christianity became a state religion. This did not prevent the Nestorian and Monophysite churches from flourishing with or without the protection of the emperor.
- 5) Rene Dussaud, *Topographie historique de la Syrie antique et medievale*, Paris, Geuthner, 1927..
- 6) A-L De Premare, *The Foundations of Islam*, 2002.

THE MECCA OF THE TIME OF MUHAMMAD'S CHILDHOOD. END OF THE 6TH CENTURY.

Tradition, whose earliest written testimonies appear in Iraq in the second half of the eighth century, situates the birth of Muhammad in 570, in the city of Mecca.

Let us point out nevertheless that the Syriac and Byzantine chronicles never evoke Muhammad as a Meccan but as a native of Yathrib / Medina which is only half false because his mother seems to have originated in it.

According to Theophilus of Edessa, Muhammad was born and lived in Yathrib.

There is also the Zuqin Chronicle ascribed to Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, born around the end of the eighth century. He was the patriarch of the Syriac Jacobite Church.

" These had as their first king one of them named Muhammad, whom they called the Prophet, because he had diverted them from various religions, had taught the existence of one God, Creator of the Universe and given them laws, when they were addicted to the worship of demons and the worship of idols, especially trees. Because he taught them the unity of God, under his leadership they triumphed over the Romans, and as he gave them laws according to their desires, they called him Prophet and Messenger of God also. The people were very sensual and carnal. They despised and rejected any legislation that did not aim at the satisfaction of their desires that they had been given by either Muhammad or any other God-fearing man, but they received ones that were to the satisfaction of their will and their desires, even when it was imposed upon them by the vilest of them. They said: "It has been established by the Prophet and Messenger of God," and even "So God commanded him. " Muhammad governed them for seven years.

The real problem of the "high knowers" is the absence of sources concerning Mecca before the end of the seventh century, contrary to the other cities in Arabia, such as Medina. Neither the Quraysh nor the trade hub of Mecca is mentioned in Greek and Latin literature at the time.

The sources concerning the history of Mecca are therefore entirely dependent on the Islamic material and are late. Without sufficient external data, and for lack of considering the ones which exist, many researchers limit themselves to traditional Islamic material as it stands. They are forced to play the game of Muslim clerics of old; who selected and compiled the elements according to the idea that they wanted to give of the origins of their community and of the life of their prophet.

Dan Gibson, in *The Sacred City*, argues that the Mecca of the time of Muhammad would be Petra in Jordan.....He bases his thesis on the archeological observation that the first mosques built have their prayer direction (qibla) oriented towards Petra and not towards Mecca (the change of qibla, towards modern Mecca is later than the death of Muhammad). Dan Gibson further observes that the descriptions of Mecca in Muslim literature do not match the present Mecca. The hadiths of Bukhari, Muslim or even Tabari, describe Mecca as an ancient city (mother of all cities) whereas no archeological traces are previous to the 9th and 10th centuries, as an agricultural land (presence of silt, trees and plants absent from the current Mecca) etc.

R.Simon, in his study heading "The RY 506 inscription and the prehistory of Mecca," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, Volume 20, No. 3, 1967, pages 325-337, thinks that at the time of the [Abraha's] campaign in 570, Mecca was still an insignificant urban area controlled by the Lakhmids. For him, Mecca did not have an independent trade and was under the tutelage of the merchants in Hira. The importance as well as the commercial and economic influence of the city at that time have been reduced since the work of Patricia Crone. This historian has shown the limitation in resources and the relative modesty of the size of this city, of which we do not find, for this period, any attestation in non-Muslim literature.

According to Sura 105 (al-Fil , "The Elephant") some individuals called "the Elephant Companions" (*Aṣḥāb al-Fīl*

) "would have attempted an expedition which would have failed against the Kaaba. God punished them by sending birds against them to bomb them with clay stones.

For Michel Cuypers, this sura is one of the many legendary or semi-legendary stories preserved in the collective Arab memory, that the Quran uses for various purposes.

Apart from the fact that Mecca was a site of no strategic interest at the time, Alfred-Louis de Premare points out that there is nothing in the text to indicate that it is a reference to the Ethiopian general Abraha, that there is nothing to prove that there were elephants in the actual expeditions led by this general, and that this interpretation may simply come from the writings of later Muslim exegetes. For him this text is a form of midrash on the legend of the elephants of Ptolemy.IV of Egypt reported by the third book of Maccabees 6,17 (about the Jews of Alexandria), which explains a number of details. The

"horde of birds of prey" could evoke angels, especially cherubs, according to the text of this book, which indeed mentions the intervention of two angels.

The Muslim tradition, however, sees things differently and makes the year corresponding to this sura the year (570) of the birth of Muhammad, according to them, and interprets it in two different ways. According to the first, the Meccans having tried to destroy by fire the new cathedral of Sana'a that risked ruining their trade interests, Abraha who governs Yemen, marches on Mecca with war elephants. After a long journey, he enters the city. The crowd runs to see his elephants. Swallows attracted by the dung of the pachyderms fly and twirl. There is like a festive air. Abraha's elephant kneels in front of the Kaaba, the viceroy goes down and enters the temple to pray before the effigy of the Virgin (an icon kept in this sanctuary). Then immediately, he returns with his army, practically without giving battle, to Sana'a. The Meccans are humiliated.

According to the second version, the attackers indeed made their way to Mecca, preceded by their elephantine phalanx, but the big elephant which was the leader of the whole herd suddenly stopped. Forcing it to walk towards the Kaaba was vain, it did not move. As soon as it was diverted from the sanctuary, it got up ... Faced with this setback, Abraha ordered to move forward without the elephants. It was then that the weather took a turn for the worse, the sky took was charged with clouds and a flock of birds appeared in the sky. These birds bombed the assailants with thousands of small hot stones and so defeated Abraha's troops !!

Conclusion.

Yemeni epigraphy has shown that at an unknown date, during the sixth century, an army perhaps reinforced by some elephants, led by Abraha, governor of Yemen under the orders of the Negus (the Emperor of Abyssinia) ; led an expedition to northern Yemen.

Official Muslim history claims that Abraha's army then would have attacked Mecca, that the grandfather of the little Muhammad would have led in it a heroic and victorious defense ; and that Muhammad, or his father following the traditions, would be born that year.

But Abraha's expedition seems to have remained very south of Mecca.

Its date has been fixed circa 580, to give a likely age to Muhammad, but in fact, nothing is known about the real date of this incursion.

Muhammad's birth date is therefore conjectural.

It is perhaps only a childhood memory of Muhammad in fact. A beautiful story told by his grandfather Abd al-Muttalib and his uncle about it. God (if he exists) cannot have ordered to recite such an enormity, as big as a house (or an elephant rather in this case). Let us remember from this tall tale recorded in the Quran that a Yemeni Coptic Christian raid on Mecca may have taken place that year, and that it failed or ended only in a victory without a future. Despite the presence of elephants in its ranks, perhaps because of different climatic phenomena (very violent storms ??)

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN MECCA DURING MUHAMMAD'S CHILDHOOD.

The conspicuously absent is, of course, the philosophical and well thought out monotheism.

"Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way because I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I accept it. I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend, is in me, and I am also a friend to him" (Bhagavad Gita 9: 23-29, dialogue between the god Krishna/Vishnu and prince Arjuna the latter hesitating to start a great fratricidal battle).

The hierarchized polytheism or for some, henotheism, called shirk by Muslim theology.

On the other hand, we have in Mecca a situation of hierarchized polytheism that is to say a divine universe composed of spheres of influence (fields of expertise) where different deities reign. In addition to the more important deities, we find gods linked to natural phenomena and many secondary deities such as angels, genies (jinnns) etc.

It is often considered that there is no choice but between polytheism (belief in many gods) and monotheism (belief in a single god). A third approach is possible, although less known: henotheism. Henotheism is a particular form of polytheism, where a god plays a predominant role in relation to others, which gives him a preferential worship. But unlike monolatry, which is a special case, henotheism does not necessarily exclude the veneration of other gods.

Henotheism does not deny the existence of several gods, but proposes humans to attach to only one of them. In the henotheistic approach, there is no idea that this god alone is superior or better than the others, but the idea that this god was chosen by his believers from all existing gods. Henotheism

therefore implicitly admits that each people chooses its god in the pantheon, that each people can thus have a different god, without anyone having a supremacy over the others.

Let us add that there is another proposition than these three solutions that are polytheism, monotheism and henotheism, and which has proved to be representative of the so-called polytheistic religions (in addition to those of Greco-Roman civilizations). Druidism having been forgotten for a long time, the discovery of Hinduism in the West was necessary to understand that the plurality of what we think are some gods is in fact only the multiple expression of the divine unity; the expression of its many attributes. This unity finally is more absolute than that which was belatedly proposed by the monolatrous doctrine of Judeo-Christian traditions, which separates the divine from the tangible world, giving rise to a duality separating "God" from his creation.

The Quran is still our most certain testimony to the religious life in Mecca before the appearance of Islam. Muhammad in the beginning was concerned not with regulating the life of a community of believers, as he later was in Medina, but rather with reforming the beliefs and practices of his fellow Meccans.

It is said there were 360 statues of deities in or around the Kaaba, almost one per day of the year; including Hubal of course, the greatest god of Mecca, and the couple Nayla and Isaf outside.

Even though their principal shrines lay north and east of Mecca, al-Lat, al-Uzza, and Manat were also worshiped by the Quraysh of Mecca, and at least al-Uzza numbered no less than Muhammad himself among her worshipers according to some hadiths (see our chapter heading "MUHAMMAD'S

RELIGIOUS PRACTICE BEFORE HIS 610 ? FIRST REVELATION (TANZIL) ." The same three goddesses appear and then disappear, in a much curious and much discussed passage in chapter 53 of the Quran. The exact context is unknown, but Muhammad was apparently still at Mecca in that time. The Satanic verse case.

Tabari volume 6 page 108: "When the messenger of God saw how his tribe turned their backs on him and was grieved to see them shunning the message he had brought to them from God, he longed in his soul that something would come to him from God which would reconcile him with his tribe. With his love for his tribe and his eagerness for their welfare, it would have delighted him if some of the difficulties which they made for him could have been smoothed out, and he debated with himself and fervently desired such an outcome.

Then God revealed: "By the Star when it sets, your comrade does not err, nor is he deceived; nor does he speak out of (his own) desire...(Quran 53: 1-3) and when he came to the words: Have you thought upon al-Lat and al-Uzza and Manat, the third, the other?

Satan cast on his tongue, because of his inner debates and what he desired to bring to his people, the words "These are the high-flying cranes; verily their intercession is accepted with approval.

The Quraysh left delighted by the mention of their gods and they listened to him, while the Muslims, having complete trust in their Prophet with respect of the message which he brought from God, did not suspect him of errors, illusions or mistakes. When he came to the prostration, having completed the Sura, Muhammad prostrated himself and the Muslims did likewise.... The polytheists of the Quraysh and others who were in the mosque [that is, the Meccan Kaaba] likewise prostrated themselves because of the reference to their gods which they heard, so that there was no one in the mosque, believer or unbeliever, who did not prostrate himself ... Then they all dispersed from the Kaaba.

This is the indubitably authentic story 1) -it is difficult to imagine a Muslim inventing such a story--of the famous "Satanic verses." It has had profound implications for Muslim theology and jurisprudence, but what is important here is what it reveals of the contemporary regard for the three goddesses. What was first granted and then rescinded by God or Muhammad was permission to honor the three goddesses as intercessors with God. It was a critical moment in Muhammad's theological ideas: the distinction between God as simply a "high god," the head of the Meccan or Arabian pantheon, distinction within which the lesser gods and goddesses might be invoked as go-betweens 2), and the notion that eventually prevailed: Allah is the unique God, without associates, companions, or "daughters." The goddesses were, as the revision (Quran 53:23) put it, "nothing but names," invented by the Quraysh and their ancestors.

And what precisely are we to understand by "exalted cranes"? The Muslim authorities were uncertain about the meaning of the word gharaniq, as are we. But what they did know was that this was the

refrain that the Quraysh used to chant as they circumambulated the Ka'ba: "Al-Lat, and al-Uzza and Manat, the third, the other; are some gharaniq al ula, let us hope for their intercession." 3).

1) Same case with the crucifixion of the great Nazarene rabbi Jesus.

2) Same case with Jesus or the Virgin Mary.

3) The cranes are in fact high-flying birds, what is very symbolic: they are closer to the sun.

HANIFI AND HANIFIYA.

Repetere = ars docendi. Anima naturaliter pagana.

We can't totally rule out, of course.

- a) That Abraham really existed.
- b) That he passed through Mecca at a given time of his existence.
- c) That he built there the kaaba.
- d) That he spread from there the purest philosophical and thoughtful monotheism.
- e) That there was then a fall in the religious level such that all kinds of paganism can be considered to have succeeded this original Hanifism.

The simplest and most consistent with Occam's razor's principle is still to suppose that the original religion of mankind is more similar to paganism (animism polytheism henotheism, etc.) than to monotheism."

This relentlessness worthy of the worst of self-suggestion methods to want at all costs to be recognized as a legitimate and direct heir to the Jewish religion and to Abraham; whereas it is obvious that only certain details of the Islamic veneer are so, and that the background is pagan (the notion of god-man in Christianity, the role of the kaaba in Islam, etc.). IS PATHETIC. It is at the same time the timeless manifestation of an incredible racism towards other religions coupled with an equally incredible inferiority complex. Not to mention a crass ignorance of historical science and of the discoveries of archaeology (the beginning of the Bible up to the episode of the Tower of Babel is borrowed from Sumerian myths, Abraham is a legend, Moses did not exist, neither did slavery in Egypt, etc.). But that we have already said it.

Muslim theologians, on the other hand, use the word hanif and its derived noun hanifiya in two senses.

- A kind of "natural" monotheism of which Abraham would have been the main practitioner.

- As a synonym of the historical Islam, the religion revealed to Muhammad and practiced by Muslims.

The "religion of Abraham," to use a notion that Muhammad will only begin to invoke later in Yathrib / Medina, in his controversies with the Jews living there, was not to be an unknown concept in Mecca.

The Muslim tradition emphasizes the presence in Mecca, before the visions and revelations of Muhammad, of characters already practicing a form of monotheism; while trying to hide their belonging to the Judeo-Christian movement.

Ibn Ishaq presents them thus, in what is, of course, a biased or extremely tendentious framework, even containing a lot of untruths.

FOUR MEN WHO BROKE WITH POLYTHEISM

"One day when the Quraysh had assembled on a feast day to venerate and circumambulate the statue before which they offered sacrifices, this being a feast which they held annually, four men drew apart secretly.... They were Waraqa b. Naufal ...Ubaydullah b. Jahsh.....Uthman b. al Huwayrith....and Zayd b.Amr.....

They were of the opinion that their people had corrupted the religion of Abraham, and that the stone they went round was of no account; it could neither hear, nor see, nor hurt, nor help. 'Find for yourselves a religion,' they said; 'for by God you have none.'

So they went their several ways in the lands, seeking the Hanifiya, the religion of Abraham.

-Waraqa attached himself to Christianity and studied its scriptures until he had thoroughly mastered them.

-Ubaydullah went on searching until Islam came; then he migrated with the Muslims to Abyssinia taking with him his wife who was a Muslim, Umm Habiba, d. Abu Sufyan. When he arrived there he adopted Christianity, parted from Islam, and died a Christian in Abyssinia.....

-Uthman b. al Huwayrith went to the Byzantine emperor and became a Christian. He was given a high office there.

-Zayd b. Amr stayed as he was: he accepted neither Judaism nor Christianity. He abandoned the religion of his people

and abstained from idols, animals that had died, blood, and things offered to idols. He forbade the killing of infant

daughters, saying that he worshiped the God of Abraham, and he publicly rebuked his people for their practices (Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhammad, translation Alfred Guillaume 1955, pages 98-99).

Remarks by Peter DeLaCrau on this purple passage by Ibn Ishaq.

- a) By cons sacrificing his son (Isaac) is good (if we understand well).

b) Regarding the meat sacrificed to idols we turn back: St. Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians (chapter 8) threw down like litter this stupidity. Which could suggest that Ibn Amr was then more Judeo-Christian than Christian.

c) Other traditions, however, see him also ending his days in Byzantium. For those who know what Ibn Ishaq means.

Hadiths dating back two centuries after the events, let us recall, recall in detail the career of each of these precursors, as well as their doctrinal wanderings.

The only problem is that, as we will see, all these hanifi mentioned by Ibn Ishaq and the Muslim tradition seem to have had acquaintances with Christianity.

This and other similar narratives staging "natural" monotheists have hardly been accepted by modern historians. Some are undoubtedly kinds of special pleadings, for example, the stories about Waraqa ibn Nawfal, cousin of Khadija, which make him a little a kind of John the Baptist witness of Muhammad's first visions/revelations.

But others sound quite right, especially when they are people known to have opposed Muhammad until the end.

Here we have evidence of the existence in Mecca of what Johann Fuck calls an Arab national monotheism.

The same B. Amr (or another it is difficult to say) was perhaps also a prominent Aws leader in Yathrib/Medina, perhaps behind the mysterious affair - mysterious to us, though no doubt well known to the listeners of the early Quran – known as "schismatic mosque " (a church?) built in Yathrib/Medina" as an outpost for those who warred against God and His messenger aforesaid" (Quran 9:107) . According to Ibn Ishaq, b. Amir, because he practiced tahannuth was called al-rahib, which makes one think of a kind of Christian asceticism. Other testimonies, it is true, relate rather his hanifiya to Jewish beliefs or practices.

What brought these hanifs and Muhammad together in any case was their refusal to associate with God any other entity (these hanifs were perhaps more Judeo-Christian than Trinitarian Christians) but this which divided them was perhaps the attitude to have concerning the Quraysh and the Kaaba. The hanifs were indifferent with them while Muhammad was visibly obsessed with the kaaba and his love / hatred for the Quraysh.

What is blindingly obvious in all these stories is that these four hanifs had all links with Christianity.

SOME CERTAIN ARAB HANIFI BEFORE ISLAM.

Banu Hanifa were an ancient Arab tribe inhabiting the area of al-Yamama in the central region of modern-day Saudi Arabia. The tribe belonged to the great Rabi'ah branch of North Arabian tribes, which also included Abdul Qays, Bakr, and Taghlib. Though counted by the traditional Arab genealogists as a Christian branch of Bani Bakr, they led an independent existence.

The tribe's members appear to have been mostly sedentary farmers, living in small settlements along the wadis of eastern Najd (known back then as al-Yamama), particularly the valley of Al-'Irdh, which later came to bear their name (see Wadi Hanifa). Sources such as Yaqut's 13th-century encyclopedia credit them with the founding of the towns of Hajr (modern Riyadh) and Manfuha, and being responsible for the granaries of Al-Kharj. According to legend, the tribe had moved to al-Yamamah from the Hijaz after the region's original inhabitants, the people of Tasm and Jadis were decimated by war.

Before even Muhammad's death, the Banu Hanifa tribe were involved in armed conflict with Muslims in July, 627. A platoon of thirty Muslims was dispatched on a mission. It headed for the habitation of Banu Bakr sept. The Muslims attacked that sept and dispersed them in all directions. Plenty of spoils were captured and the Muslims returned with the chief of the tribe of Banu Hanifa, called Thumamah bin Uthal Al-Hanifi.

Muhammad's Companions tied him to the pole of a Mosque. To a question asked by Muhammad, Thumamah used to say: "If you were to kill someone, then you would have to choose a lord of noble descent, if you were to be gracious, then let it be to a grateful man and if you were to ask for money, you would have to ask for it from a generous man." He repeated that three times on three different occasions. On the third time, Muhammad ordered that he should be released and later he converted to Islam (as everybody).

Due to their role in the Ridda wars, members of Banu Hanifa were initially banned from participating in the early conquests by the first caliph, Abu Bakr. The ban was lifted by Abu Bakr's successor Umar, and members of Bani Hanifa subsequently joined Muslim forces in Iraq, with some settling in garrison towns such as al-Kufa.

Tribesmen from Banu Hanifa also supplied the ranks of rebellious movements such as the Kharijites what shows well the depth of the implantation of the monolatry or of the Judeo-Christianity of the warrior messiah type in their traditions. One member of the tribe by the name of Najdah ibn Amir, even founded a (short-lived it is true) Kharijite state in al-Yamama during the Umayyad era.

MUSAYLIMAH.

Musaylimah's true name was Maslamah bin Habib (the name was distorted by Muslims to Musaylimah, which means Mini-Maslamah), which indicates therefore that he was the son of Habib, of the tribe Banu Hanifa.

Maslamah bin Ḥabīb was one of a series of Arabs who claimed prophethood in this region of the world in the 7th century. He is, of course, considered by Muslims to be a false prophet, and was by them always referred to as "The Great Liar" (Arabic al-Kadhab).

His teachings were lost but a neutral review of them does exist in the Dabistan-i Mazahib, an anonymous book written in Persian language in the 17th century. Maslama prohibited pork and wine, taught three daily prayers, facing whatever side, Lent fasting at night, and no circumcision.

Maslama, who is reported as having been a skilled magician, dazzled the crowd with "miracles." He could put an egg in a bottle; he could cut off the feathers of a bird and then stick them on so the bird would fly again and he used this skill to persuade the people that he was divinely gifted.

Maslama shared verses assuring them to have been revelations from God and called Him Rahman.

Most of these verses also extolled the superiority of his tribe, the Bani Hanifa, over the Quraysh.

In 631 he wrote to Muhammad the following letter: "From Maslama, Messenger of God, to Muhammad, Messenger of God. Salutations to you. Half the earth belongs to us and half to the Quraish."

Muhammad immediately replied: "From Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to Maslama Musaylimah, the arch-liar. Peace be upon him who follows God's guidance. The earth belongs to God, who bequeaths it to whom He will among his servants." Muhammad died shortly afterwards, and the Banu Hanifa renounced their alliance project.

The Muslims of Medina were only able to overcome Banu Hanifa on the third attempt: defeating Maslama in the battle of Aqraba, some 30 km north of modern Riyadh, and the rest of Banu Hanifa converted to Islam.

SAJAH.

Sajah bint al-Harith ibn Suayd from the tribe of Banu Tamim was Arab Christian protected first by her tribe then cause a split within Banu Tamim and finally allied with Banu Hanifa. Her father, Al-Haris,

belonged to the Bani Yarbu section of the Bani Tamim tribe. Her mother belonged to the Banu Taghlib a Christian tribe of Iraq. See above. She declared that she also was a prophetess and 4,000 people gathered around her to go and help the Banu Hanifa to oppose the threat against them of Khalid had defeated Tulayha al-Asadi (another prophet). Khalid crushed the rebellious elements around Sajah who then converted to Islam.[citation needed].

WARAKA.

Considering the importance of the character, one of my Parisian pen-friends asks me to talk a little more about him, what I gladly do given the role played by this character in the rising of Islam: the one of a John Baptist.

Waraka (or Waraqah) ibn Nawfal ibn Asad ibn Abd-al-Uzza ibn Qusayy Al-Qurashi was the paternal first cousin of Khadija, the first wife Muhammad.

Waraka was a Nestorian priest and is known in Muslim tradition for being one of the first hanifs to believe in the prophethood of Muhammad.

Waraka would have studied the Bible under Jews and Christians. He also "wrote the New Testament in Arabic," but it is not clear whether this means that he translated it from the Greek or merely wrote out someone else's translation so that he would have his own copy.

Hadiths.

Aisha : "The Prophet returned to Khadija while his heart was beating rapidly [he had just had his first hallucination vision or revelation]. She took him to Waraqa bin Naufal who was a Christian convert and used to read the Gospel in Arabic. Waraqa asked : "What do you see?" When he told him, Waraqa said: "That is the angel whom God sent to Moses. Should I live till you receive the Divine Message, I will support you strongly."

As Muhammad grew in age, Waraka's knowledge of the scriptures increased. Several years later, when told of Muhammad's first revelation (God is great, he created the man, who disobeyed him and therefore will be punished, Waraka acknowledged it as authentic. Muslim tradition recounts Waraka saying: "There has come to him the greatest Law that came to Moses; surely he is the prophet intended for this people."

A variant of Aisha's hadith gives the following details:

Khadija then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqa bin Naufal bin Asad bin 'Abdul 'Uzza, who, during the pre-Islamic Period became a Christian and used to write the writing with Hebrew letters. He would write from the Gospel composed in Hebrew as much as God wished him to write. He was an old man and had lost his eyesight. Khadija said to Waraqa, "Listen to the story of your nephew, O my cousin!"

Waraqa asked, "O my nephew! What have you seen?"

God's Apostle described whatever he had seen.

Waraqa said, "This was the one who keeps the secrets whom God had sent to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out."

God's Apostle asked, "Will they drive me out?"

Waraqa replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly." But after a few days, Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while.[13][14]

ZAYD IBN AMR.

Zayd ibn Amr He was the son of Amr bin Nufayl, a member of the Adi clan of the Quraysh tribe. Zayd's mother had previously been married to his grandfather, Nufayl bin Abduluzza, so her son from this marriage, al-Khattab ibn Nufayl, was at the same time Zayd's maternal half-brother and paternal half-uncle.

Zayd married Fatima bint Baaja from the Khuza'a tribe, and their son was Sa'id ibn Zayd. A subsequent wife, Umm Kurz Safiya bint al-Hadrami, bore his daughter Atiqa.

Zayd became disillusioned with the traditional religion of Arabs, for the stone that the people worshiped "could neither hear nor see nor hurt nor help" and "the worship of stone or hewn wood is nothing." He pledged therefore with three friends that they would seek the true religion of Abraham, which they called al-Hanafiya. But the other three men eventually converted to Christianity.

Zayd traveled to Syria to question both Jews and Christians about their beliefs, but he was not happy with the answers of either group. According to later Muslim historians, "he had the religion of Abraham, following the natural form" and "worshiped God alone with no partner."

He would have even composed this poem:

"Am I to worship one lord or a thousand

If there are as many as you claim?

I renounce al-Lat and al-Uzza, both of them,

as any strong-minded person would.

I will not worship al-Uzza and her two daughters ...

I will not worship Hubal, though he was our lord

in the days when I had little sense.”

In 605 Zayd was returning from a journey to Syria. Before he reached Mecca, he was murdered.

Waraka ibn Nawfal is said to have composed an elegy for him.

“You were altogether on the right path, Ibn Amr;

You have escaped Hell’s burning oven

By serving the one and only God

And abandoning vain idols ...

For the mercy of God reaches men

Though they be seventy valleys deep below the earth.”

Some historians have likened this character to another man known by a very close name: Abu Amir ar-Rahib

What is certain is that he too was a hanif.

ABU AMIR AR-RAHIB.

Abu Amir ar-Rahib was a Hanif stood closer to Christianity than Judaism. He wanted to uphold the Medinan status quo, which allowed him to practice his religion freely. He also joined the Quraysh in the Battle of Uhud in 625. The Majority of Muslim historians affirm that Abu Amir would have asked the emperor of the Byzantine for help against Muhammad. In any case Abu Amir died in 630 or 631 in the court of Heraclius.

The case of the mosque of discord (Quran chapter 9 verses 107-108) in fact a church since Abu Amir was a Christian that Muhammad made immediately raze.

Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Baladhuri explains that this edifice was built by some men who refused to pray in the mosque of Quba because it was built in a place where a donkey was tied up ????

When Muhammad was returning from Tabuk where he had gone to confront a ghostly Byzantine army, the Muslims halted at Dhu Awan. Some men constructed a building ??? claiming it was for the sick and needy, but because of Muhammad's belief that it was an opposition mosque, he sent Muslim fighters to burn it down. The men entered the mosque and set fire to it with its people inside.

Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab at-Tamimi used this event to justify his idea that burning down places of sin is permissible in Islam.

UTHMAN IBN AI-HUWAYRITH.

Uthman ibn al-Huwayrith was born into the clan of Asad ibn Abd-al-Uzza who belonged to the Quraysh tribe of Mecca. He converted to hanifya while he was young – during a religious feast.

In 590, he would have sought intervention from the Byzantine Empire in an attempt to have himself installed as king of Mecca and to bring its inhabitants under the Christian religions. In his plea to the emperor, he would have attempted to convince the latter that, with Byzantine support, he would help suppress the advance of the Sasanian Empire, with whom the Byzantines were at war. The emperor would have accepted his request, and bestowed upon him the title of al-Bitriq (patrician), an Arabic designation which is reserved for those with military prowess. Uthman would have converted to Christianity while in the emperor’s court.

Although his plan was initially met with success, Uthman’s ascension came to a sudden halt after the Meccans decided finally to reject his proposition.

Muhammad ibn Habib, a 9th-century Muslim historian, lists Uthman as one of the only two practicing Christians in Mecca during the lifetime of Muhammad. Another 9th-century historian, Ya’qubi, compiled a list to the same effect several years later. Uthman's son was a polytheist who joined the Quraysh tribe in their campaign against the Muslims in the Battle of Badr in 624.

UBAYD-ALLAH IBN JAHSH.

Ubayd-Allah ibn Jahsh (c.588-627) was the son of Jahsh ibn Riyab and Umama bint Abdulmuttalib (hence a brother of Abd-Allah ibn Jahsh, Zaynab bint Jahsh, Abu Ahmad ibn Jahsh, Habiba bint Jahsh and Hammanah bint Jahsh) he was a first cousin of Muhammad and Ali, and a nephew of Hamza ibn ‘Abd al-Muttalib. He married Ramlah bint Abi Sufyan (who was also known as Umm Habiba), and they had one daughter, Habibah bint Ubayd-Allah.

He and his wife became Muslims and they emigrated to Abyssinia. At Axum, capital of the Aksumite Empire the very Christian king, Aṣḥama ibn Abjar, gave sanctuary to the Muslims. But there Ubayd-God eventually converted to Christianity and testified his new faith to the other Muslim migrants.

Due to his conversion, her wife separated from him and he died in Abyssinia in 627. Later on Muhammad married his widow, Ramlah. Muhammad also married Ubayd-Allah's sister,Zaynab.

THE HUMS.

In Mecca, during the youth of Muhammad, there was a religious brotherhood called Hums (singular Ahmasi), characterized by its intransigence and exclusive worship of the Kaaba. See what we have already said before.

We will only remind here of this already mentioned statement of the Muslim historian Ibn Sa'd (Kitab al-tabaqat al-kabir, volume 1, first part).

« Muhammad Ibn Umar informed us on the authority of Abd Allah Ibn Ja'far, he on the authority of Ya'qub.....

The Hums (this word signifies people who are emotional, and pay attention to etiquette) were the Quraysh, the Kinanah and the Khuza'ah and all those Arabs who had descended from the Quraysh. Muhammad Ibn Umar added, without giving this chain of narrators: Or allies of the Quraysh. The word Al-Tahammus (Tahannuth?) relates to certain practices which they introduced in their religion and were strict in observing them, to wit: They did not go out of the haram when they had performed the tawaf and thus they fell short of performing the rite which God had enjoined on Abraham, and that was to stay at Arafah which is outside the haram. They abstained cooking in fat, and did not live in tents of hair (of camels?) but they lived under red canopies of leather. They permitted the pilgrims to circumambulate round the Ka'bah in their clothes if they had not gone to the Arafat. When they returned from the Arafah they did not circumambulate round the Ka'bah, known as tawaf al-ifadah, but naked or in two ahmasi (a kind of coarse cloth woven by the Banu Ahmas, a branch of the Banu Dubay'ah) clothes. In case one circumambulated in his own clothes it was not lawful for him to wear them again."

Yet Muhammad seems to have been a member of this religious brotherhood according to F.E. Peters (Muhammad and the Origins of Islam page 97).

"The year of Hudaibiyya the Prophet was entering his house. One of the Ansar (from Medina) was with him and he stopped at the door, explaining that he was an ahmasi. The Apostle said, "I am an ahmasi too. My religion and yours are the same," so the Ansar went into the house by the door as he saw the Apostle do."

Azraqi (Akhbar Makkah). Translation Roberto Tottoli. The pilgrimage of the pagans in the time of the Jahiliyya (page 59).

It was established in their religion that the Hums, once taken the sacral state, could enter a house or go home only from the rearThey were forbidden indeed to cross the entrance passing under the lintel of the door. If they needed something to eat or something else, they would climb their houses from the rear until they were on the roof, and then went down inside.

The only problem is that in the example given by Peters the ansar in question was not Meccan but from Yathrib/Medina.

THE PROBLEM OF THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OF MUHAMMAD BEFORE HIS 610 ? FIRST REVELATION (TANZIL).

Let's start to decide the question by giving the floor to the Quran which speaks of Muhammad.
Chapter 4 verse 113.

God reveals unto you the Scripture and wisdom, and teaches you that WHICH YOU DID NOT KNOW.
The grace of God towards you has been infinite.

Chapter 42 verse 52.

You did not know what the Scripture was, nor what the Faith.

Chapter 93 verse 7.

Did He not find you wandering and direct (you) ?

Some texts of the Muslim tradition relate that, on various opportunities, Muhammad more or less skillfully refused any contact with traditional religious life, or social life period, if elements seemed contrary to the future Muslim doctrine. At other times, miracles, or tricks would have protected him from this impure environment.

These childish processes, signs of great embarrassment, cannot prevent us from thinking that for forty years Muhammad lived fully among his people. It could not have been otherwise, in an environment as structured as that of the Arab tribes, with such strong personal relations.

Muhammad, before his first of the mystical experiences that he will end up a long time after in ascribing to angel Gabriel cannot logically be a Muslim. Nor is he considered to have been a hanif (a proto-Muslim) by our sources.

The examination of the sources in question makes it possible to distinguish: - either real proofs of his participation including in the worship of pagan deities - or the change by Muslim tradition of pagan rituals - or rituals performed as such, but with a different intention.

Texts that have escaped censorship are rare and hard to get (millions of hadiths). The Quran, however, recognizes this evidence, despite the isma of his hero. The question of the conformity or adequacy of this man with his environment - which is without importance on the theological level in reality - continues to bother the pious Muslim scholars. And yet, all the religious activism of Muhammad will tend to confirm and strengthen the domination of the Meccan sanctuary on other Arab sanctuaries.
Tabari, Tafsir 93, 7.

"Did He not find you an orphan and gave you a refuge ?" This refers to the fact that his father died while his mother was still pregnant with him, and his mother died when he was only six years old. After this he was under the guardianship of his grandfather, Abdul-Muttalib, until he died when he was eight years old. Then his uncle, Abu Talib took responsibility for him and continued to protect him, assist him, elevate his status, honor him, and even restrain his people from harming him when he was forty years of age and God commissioned him with the prophethood. Even with this, Abu Talib continued to follow the religion of his people, worshiping idols.

Ibn al Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 17.

We have been told that the Apostle of God once mentioned al-Uzza saying.

-I have offered a white sheep to al-Uzza, while I was a follower of the religion of my tribe.

This exceptional testimony brought to its author great difficulties, since it contradicted all the doctrine. It is followed by another, which mixes two traditions.

The consumption of impure meat.

These very important extracts show Muhammad again in full practice of the religion of his tribe. He also shows that he is absolutely not a Hanif, a precursor of the monotheistic religion, at that time.

Alfred Guillaume, Islam [Penguin Books, reprinted 1990], pp. 26-27.

Remarks by Alfred Guillaume: the only authentic story of Muhammad's early years is contained in an unpublished manuscript of his first biographer Ibn Ishaq. It reads as follows according to the essay published in 1960 by Alfred Guillaume in the Journal of Semitic Studies (Manchester University Press) on the Yunus ibn Bukayr version of the life of Muhammad according to Ibn Ishaq.

"I was told that the apostle of God said, as he was talking about Zayd son of 'Amr son of Nufayl, 'He was the first to upbraid me for idolatry and forbade me to worship idols. I had come from al-Ta'if along with Zayd son of Haritha when we passed Zayd son of 'Amr who was in the highland of Mecca.

Quraysh had made a public example of him for abandoning their religion, so that he went out from their midst. I sat down with him. I had a bag containing meat which we had sacrificed to our gods - Zayd b. Haritha was carrying it - and I offered it to Zayd b. Amr - I was but a lad at the time - and I said, "Eat some of this food, my uncle." He replied, "Surely it is part of those sacrifices of theirs which they

offer to their gods?" When I said that it was, he said, "Nephew mine, if you were to ask the daughters of 'Abd al-Muttalib they would tell you that I never eat of these sacrifices, and I have no desire to do so." Then he upbraided me for idolatry and spoke disparagingly of those who worship idols and sacrifice to them, and said, "These gods are worthless: they can neither harm nor profit anyone," or words to that effect.' The apostle added, 'after that I never knowingly stroked one of their idols nor did I sacrifice to them until God honored me with his apostleship.

This tradition clearly shows how the boy Muhammad was influenced by a monotheist of whom we know but little. The prohibition against the eating of meat offered to gods is, of course, originally Jewish, but as it was taken over into Christianity it is impossible to say whether Zayd was a Jewish or Christian proselyte. Arabic tradition represents him as a man dissatisfied with both Judaism and Christianity and utterly hostile to heathenism.

Additionally, Alfred Guillaume writes (*New Light on the Life of Muhammad*, Manchester University Press): this tradition has been expunged from Ibn Hisham's recension altogether, but there are traces of it in S. (p. 146) and Bukhari (K. p. 63, bab 24) where there is an imposing isnad going back to Abdullah ibn Umar to the effect that the prophet met Zayd in the lower part of Baldah before his apostleship. « A bag was brought to the prophet or the prophet brought it to him and he refused it saying « I never eat what you sacrifice before your idols. I eat only that over which the name of God has been mentioned. He blamed Quraysh for their sacrifices, etc...

Suhayli discusses the question as to how it could be thought that God allowed Zayd to give up meat offered to idols when the apostle had the better right to such a privilege.

He says that the hadith does not say that the apostle actually ate of it ; merely that Zayd refused to do so. Secondly Zayd was simply following his own opinion, and not obeying an earlier law, for the law of Abraham forbade the eating of the flesh of animals that had died, not the flesh of animals that had been sacrificed to idols. Before Islam came to forbid the practice, there was nothing against it, so that if the apostle did eat of such meat he did what was permissible, and if he did not, there is no difficulty. The truth is that it was neither expressly permitted nor forbidden.

I.K. (p.239) also retains part of the original tradition which our MS. He says 'Zayd ibn Amr came to the apostle who was with Zayd ibn Haritha as they were eating from a bag they had with them. When they invited him to eat with them he said « O nephew, I never eat from what has been offered to idols » (Ibid., pp. 27-28.)

Editor's note. The preceding is based on a manuscript, in the Qarawiyun mosque library at Fez in Morocco, containing a report of Ibn Ishaq's lectures on the life of Muhammad. It also contains over 200 traditions (hadiths) from other sources. A Muslim who listened to Ibn Ishaq's lectures wrote the document. It is for the main part the same material as Ibn Hisham, but it also includes information that Ibn Hisham expunged. Thus, here is a tradition reported by Ibn Ishaq which was omitted by Ibn Hisham in his version of the *Sira*!

As for the hadith reported by Bukhari here it is.

Sahih Bukhari, Volume 5, Book 58 Number 169.

"The Prophet met Zaid bin 'Amr bin Nufail in the bottom of (the valley of) Baldah before any Divine Inspiration came to the Prophet. A meal was presented to the Prophet but he refused to eat from it. Then it was presented to Zaid who said, "I do not eat anything which you slaughter in the name of your idols. I eat none but those things on which God's Name has been mentioned at the time of slaughtering." Zaid bin 'Amr used to criticize the way Quraysh used to slaughter their animals, and used to say.....".

In this hadith the reason why Muhammad did not serve himself first is unknown. For politeness perhaps simply. In any case what is certain is that.....

First it was meat sacrificed to the gods.

Secondly, the first if it is not the one to have motivated his refusal to take from it for religious reasons will be Zayd.

The circumambulation (tawaf) around the Kaaba.

When Muhammad returns from his mystical retreats (tahannuth) in the cave of Hira, he does not give up the traditional and collective religion: in other words, he also turns with others around the Kaaba. Ibn Ishaq, *The Life of Muhammad*, Alfred Guillaume page 105.

"The apostle would pray in seclusion on Hira every year for a month to practice tahannuth as was the custom of Quraysh in heathen days. Tahannuth is religious devotion....The apostle would pray in seclusion and give food to the poor that came to him. And when he completed the tahannuth month and returned from his seclusion, first of all, before entering his house he would go to the Ka'ba and walk round it seven times or as often as it pleased God; then he would go back to his house until in

the year when God sent him.....The apostle set forth to Hira as was his wont, and his family with him."

Muhammad with his people praying at the Kaaba.

This account is important: it shows that Muhammad always practiced collective rituals in the common sanctuary, although he had already begun to have mystical crises. The consequences of these had to be slow to be materialized at the level of the ritual and of the social behavior. For the audience of the faithful in the sanctuary, nothing therefore was to differentiate these faithful pilgrims [Muhammad and his family] from others.

Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhammad A. Guillaume page 113.

"When I was a merchant I came to al Abbas during the days of pilgrimage; and while we were together a man came out to pray and stood facing the Ka'ba; then a woman came out and stood praying with him; then a young man came out and stood praying with him. I said to Abbas, "What is their religion ? It is something new to me."

He said, "This is Muhammad b. Abdullah who alleges that God has sent him with it and that the treasures of Chosroes and Caesar will be opened to him. The woman is his wife Khadija who believes in him, and this young man is his nephew 'Ali who believes in him."

As we have had the opportunity to say, but *repetere ars docendi*, these childish processes, signs of great embarrassment, cannot prevent us from thinking that for forty years Muhammad lived fully among his own. It could not have been otherwise, in an environment as structured as that of the Arab tribes, with such strong personal relations.

Before the gap year of his apparitions, the behavior of Muhammad was therefore strictly pagan. The author of the Quran lived the first forty years of his life by accepting the norms of the spirituality known as "pagan" (circumambulation, *tahannuth* and so on...) system, in which he drew the elements of his initial doctrine, he did not stand against him until a few years later .

It is for these reasons that we find in his Quran the main part of the previous beliefs and rituals, modified in such a minimal way that we easily recognize in it the bases of the previous system. The thing is indisputable as to the rites. But you must have the courage to affirm it, or to admit it also about the designs of the divineness.

To esteem that Islam, such Muhammad has formed it from Mecca and even in Yathrib/Medina, is from the outset monotheism, is to show a herd mentality without courage. Many abhorred deities as in the Jewish Bible are quoted in the Quran, and it is obvious that the whole effort of Muhammad will then consist in melting them under the same name and in the traditional figure kept by him as a last resort to synthesize them: Allah. This effort of uniqueness is reflected in the long enumeration of attributes or epicleses, the delegation of power to other entities (the angels the jins the demons), the details of its material appearance; even to end the long hesitation, which will probably last several years, between the names of Allah, Rabb or Rahman.

Muhammad, Quran 17:110. Say (unto mankind): Cry unto Allah, or cry unto the Beneficent (Rahman), unto whichsoever you cry (it is the same). His are the most beautiful names.

The attempt to create an exclusive monotheism, abstract or purely theoretical, is always quickly daunting, as much for the mind as for the senses. The furious reaffirmation of the dogma of oneness never prevents an inevitable fragmentation of the idea of the divine; and the temptation to distinguish different attributes of God still remains powerful in the minds. The preaching of Muhammad keeps track of it.

Quran 59, 22-24.

He is the Knower of the Invisible and the Visible. He is the Beneficent, Merciful. He isthe Sovereign Lord, the Holy One, Peace, the Keeper of Faith, the Guardian, the Majestic, the Compeller, the Superb. His are the most beautiful names.

The best example is the very rapid sacralization of the series of "Hundred Names" or "Beautiful Names" of God. These names of God then had a very great success: they will be recited almost automatically. They are laudatory adjectives, attributes, epicleses, or words used in former worship. Of course, the study of this subject will remain a taboo. The first two beautiful Names, the most popular, Rahman and Rahim, are indeed those of pagan gods perfectly testified. Here below, therefore, is the list of names of God that will be preserved by Muhammad.

- 2 Al Rahman (The Beneficent).
- 3 Ar Rahim (The Merciful)
- 4 Al Malik (The Sovereign of the World, The Overlord).
- 5 Al Quddus (The Most Holy One, Holiness).
- 6 As Salam (The Pacific).
- 7 Al Mu'min (The Faithful, The Confident).
- 8 Al Muhaymin (The Peaceful, The Witness).
- 9 Al Aziz (the Almighty).

Etc., etc. The hundredth is considered by Islam as unknown, what makes it possible to feed all speculations; cf. the secret name of the god of the Old Testament. The secret about this is the rest of an old practice aiming to protect a name from the curses of enemies.

Note by Krzysztof Koscielniak, Jagiellonian University in Krakow.

Some authors argue that the epithet Rahman ("the Merciful") has any connection to Arab Paganism – especially any connection to a lunar deity. They maintain that Rahman is only Jewish-Christian in origins and usage.

It is the standard Muslim explanation but it does not seem to be relevant.

The first known example of the name Rahman (rhmn) is the bilingual inscription written in Akkadian and Aramaic which was found in the Tell el Fakhariya in northeast Syria. This inscription was dedicated to the Aramean god Hadad and was containing the following sentence: 'lh. rhmn zy. tšlwth. ṭbh "merciful God to whom prayer is sweet."

In the Akkadian version Adad is called remenu (epithet for god Marduk).

Muhammad probably borrowed this name from three sources, which could observe in his milieu.

RHMNN – Ar-Rahman, was understood by Jews and Christians as "Lord, the Merciful, Master of Heaven" but RHMNN in South Arabia also signified the moon god, whom Muhammad occasionally confused with or used as a substitute for 'God.'

They are some evidence of presence of Rahmanan in pre-Islamic religions in Arabia and this term was used in the three different religious spheres: old Arabic paganism, Judaism and Christianity.

It is possible that Muhammad borrowed the name Rahmanan directly from Jews or Christians but we cannot forget that in the same time among other gods the people of Yemen worshiped a deity whose name was in Sabaeen (Hymiarite) Rahmanan.

Andrew Vargo believes that Muhammad most likely thought that the use of ar-Rahman, as a name for God, was "a good idea." Taking the name ar-Rahman he could attract both the Jews and some Pagans. The epithet RHMNN is well confirmed in inscriptions particularly from so-called Late Sabaeen Period (after 380) which were associated with monotheism.

In this time Judaism and Christianity indeed attempted to replace the traditional South Arabian religion. In this context the term RHMNN was therefore used at the same time by polytheistic Arabs, Jews and Christians.

In order to explain the appearance of the name al-Rahman in the Quran, we must therefore carefully examine the use of the derivation rhmn in South Arabic inscriptions.

As it was mentioned, a highly developed polytheistic religion prevailed in South Arabia. The various kingdoms that succeeded each other and the tribal groups had different gods and goddesses.

According to Ryckmans, during the second half of the 4th century the pagan formulas disappear from the South Arabic texts (only one single pagan text is remaining). Taking their place, we have monotheistic invocation formulas with the terms: "Lord of Heaven" or "Lord of Heaven and Earth" and the "Merciful" (Rahmanane). In this way, Christianity and Judaism (using the same terminology) had supplanted paganism.

This process of the monotheizing cult of the "Merciful One" (rhmn) became an important aspect of the latest phase of pre-Islamic religion.

The best-known Christian Sabaeen inscriptions are two texts from the time of Abraha (died around 553, also spelled Abreha), a Christian viceroy in southern Arabia for the Kingdom of Aksum.

Abraha's Murayghan Inscription (Ry 506).

"By the power of the Merciful One and His Messiah, the king Abraha ... So Abraha returned from Haliban by the power of the Merciful One."

Abraha's Inscription found on The Ma'arib Dam (CIH 541).

1. By the power and favor
2. of the Merciful and His Mes-
3. -siah and the Holy Spirit. They have
4. written the inscription....

The Quran mentions Ar-Rahman occasionally, for example in chapter 43: 19, which most translators have renamed as God or God, since they, as Muhammad, found no difference.

WHAT WE CAN THEREFORE REASONABLY PUT FORWARD.

It goes without saying that to make Muhammad a direct descendant of Adam through Abraham is a fanciful legend having a lot but a lot but then really a lot, to do with faith, and very little but then very little with reason.

Note from the children of Peter DeLaCrau. "Some bullshit," told us our father about the end of his life.

All that can be said with certainty of Muhammad or young man is this.

He was born at the end of the 6th century (around 570) in the Arab tribe of the Quraysh whose political or economic religious center was the Kaaba and the urban area around: Mecca.

In a poor and secondary clan of this powerful tribe: the Hashemites.

Without Father or fatherless very early.

His mother Amina assumes alone his education until she also dies relatively early (around 577).

The paternal grandfather (Abd al-Muttalib) then takes care of the child.

Then his uncle Abu Talib who makes him work as a camel shepherd.

Muhammad therefore would have been a trader, and in his travels in Palestine he would have met various people with whom he would have discussed some religious issues.

Then enters the service of a rich widow named Khadija as caravan head.

A rich widow who then marries him, around 595, despite the age difference (she is 15 years older than him).

No doubt then formed with Khadija a standard Arab family of the time

Then seems to have been faithful to her until his death probably occurred in 619 (for fear of losing everything in case of separation at the initiative of Khadija).

Muhammad also loses the same year (619) his uncle Abu Talib, remained pagan all his life.

.....

He was not completely illiterate.

At least knew how to read and count or even sign his name.

The Ummi epithet sometimes used to describe Muhammad does not indeed mean "who doesn't know how to read" but "who his not a member of the people of the Book".

He was perhaps a member of the mysterious religious brotherhood of the Hums mentioned by Ibn Ishaq and some others.

The rest is only guesswork.

Note from the children of Peter DeLaCrau: "even baloney" our father added at the end of his life.

Let us first notice that the name of Muhammad is only mentioned four times in the Quran: chapter 3 verse 144, chapter 33 verse 40, chapter 47 verse 2, chapter 48 verse 3, 9 1 (plus perhaps perhaps Ahmad chapter 61 verse 6). Modern exegesis shows that these four mentions are additions after the first draft, based on the texts collected by order of the caliphs. The Muslim tradition compensates for this absence by stating that the words prophet, harbinger, warner, apostle, etc., present 405 times in the Quran, are indirect mentions of Muhammad.

The most quoted characters in the Quran are: Zechariah 12 times, Adam 16, Solomon 22, Aaron 26, Lot 27, Mary 32, Noah, 44, Abraham 60. Christ is mentioned 12 times in the Quranic form Issa, 13 times in the form Issa, son of Mary, 2 times Messiah, Issa, son of Mary. Moreover, he is mentioned 3 times under the name Messiah, 5 times Messiah, son of Mary, once as newborn, 4 times as child, 7 times as prophet, 2 times as Word, in total 49 times. Of these characters, only Zechariah and Mary are not declared prophets. None of these persons can be the one referred to by the alleged 405 non-specific mentions of Muhammad, because there are no differences between them such that an uninformed listener can understand without hesitation who is concerned.

He remains a character who, in the Quran, stands out from all others: Moses. Not only is he mentioned 170 times, but he is also called a prophet ten times, first of the believers, confidant of God, beloved of God, chosen among all men, endowed with wisdom and knowledge. It is not impossible that a greater or lesser part of the 405 words "harbinger, apostle, messenger" etc. are in fact attributable to this same Moses who stands out so clearly; and not to Muhammad, whose name had to be added later.

The affirmation that the terms prophet, harbinger, warner, apostle, etc., present 405 times in the Quran, are indirect mentions of Muhammad, therefore seems most improbable. He who is designated 405 times in the Quran without mentioning his name is also to be designated by name multiple times, as it is done in this kind of situation. Suetonius, in the History of the Twelve Emperors, in each of the twelve chapters, for instance, writes sometimes the emperor, sometimes designates him by his name.

Muhammad cannot be therefore the man to whom the words prophet, harbinger, harbinger, apostle, etc., refer. The four mentions of his name are all later additions. Muhammad himself was therefore totally absent from the early Quran, the Ahmad form being part of a controversial prophecy 1).

There are, however, some non-specific mentions attributable to Muhammad according to the context. They are those concerning the booty share which is his, the right to take as a wife the wife of his adopted son, his trouble with his harem. Modern exegesis shows that many of these verses are later additions, and that there are serious presumptions for others to be so.

According to Joseph Azzi, the other three mentions of Muhammad in the Quran are also interpolations of this nature.

These interpolations that introduce the name of Muhammad in the Quran are proof that the Quran was composed in successive strata, a first stratum where his name was absent from the Quran, and a second where interpolations introduce Muhammad. They adapt to a new framework texts that originally expressed a partially similar theology.

These late additions are later than 686, since before that date Muhammad was not yet considered a prophet, and could not be the transmitter of the divine Word.

1) Editor's note. This statement may be nuanced. But again, it is not up to us, barbarian druids of the West, to do it.

THE CONJECTURES OF MUSLIM TRADITIONS.

Muhammad , Mohammed, or Mahomet, "the praised," "the one who is praised"; son of Abdallah, son of Abd al-Muttalib, son of Hashim, son of ... (the genealogy can of course go back to Adam, and Eve, via Abraham and Ishmael as we have seen); and son of Amina (his mother) daughter of Wabih ... was born in Mecca within the Banu Hashim clan, of the tribe of the Quraysh. A community of settled Arabs whose influence began to be felt throughout the peninsula and who sought to extend it to the maximum of territories inhabited by Arabs.

The exact date of Muhammad's birth is in reality unknown to us with certainty. The range for his birth goes from 567 to 572.

Many experts lean towards 570, "The Year of the Elephant" when the city was attacked (and taken?) by the Yemeni Ethiopian Christian General named Abraha (m). But this year of the elephant (570, or 571) is only a possibility, or if you will, a hypothesis. What is certain is that this famous year served as a landmark for the Muslim tradition: there would have been synchronism between an Ethiopian attack against the city and the birth of Muhammad.

Historians, of course, dispute this bringing together. But the almost "miraculous" protection of the Kaaba sanctuary from the Ethiopian attack provided a seductive symbolic context. The event left a deep impression on the spirits. We know the matter in a great wealth of details, through heroic, comical and fantastic developments. It makes it possible to show the Quraysh in the position of defenders of the Kaaba, against the Christian Yemenis. The elephant, in the service of a Christian king, submits to the god of the Kaaba, in a striking scene: it thus accomplishes, it, the Christian elephant, by kneeling, the rites that make it.....the first Muslims ... It is nevertheless allowed to doubt the real presence of such an animal during the event.

Chapter 43 "Al Zukhruf" (The Ornament) verse 31. " If only this Quran had been revealed to some great man of the two towns".

We agree with Muslims , this proves nothing about the family of Muhammad, these are just the words of his opponents. Their objectivity remains to be demonstrated. What is certain, however, is that the Banu Hashim, the clan of Muhammad, at the time of his birth, were far from being as important in Mecca as the Makhzum or the Banu Ummaya. The tribe of Muhammad as such was influential since it had about ten clans, but his family was very modest.

The father of Muhammad himself is a personality difficult to define, his name, Abdallah servant of Allah) is perhaps simply the change or the subsequent rewriting of another more pagan name (Abd Hubal??). The grandfather of Muhammad apparently is called Shayba or Abd al-Muttalib. Two different names therefore according to Muslim sources, what does not fail to intrigue. The relationship between the Banu Shayba and the Muttalib family is unclear. The explanation given by the pious Muslims to this strange duality is nevertheless possible: "The man was called Shayba at the time of his birth, but was then given the nickname (kunya) of Abd al-Muttalib. As this nickname (kunya) was more frequently used, it would have ended up overcoming the name. "

For the record Kunya is a nickname consisting of two parts as follows: Abu + first name or qualifier for a man, Umm + first name or qualifier for a woman. Abu means "father of" and Umm "mother of."

Generally, kunya refers to the eldest son of the person in question.

For example, if Abdallah has a son named Umar his kunya will be Abu Umar, father of Umar. If Abdallah has a son named Amir, his kunya will be Abu Amir. Father of Amir.

Muhammad himself having often been called Amin in his youth, for some researchers this would tend to prove that it was perhaps there initially his real name (see that of his mother, Amina); and that Muhammad was only an epithet or nickname given during his life. The word muhammad in this case is for the grammarian a past participle in the sense of adjective: "praised."

Some have wondered whether it would not be a nickname or an expression, a ritual formula, used in Aramaic for example, that is to say in the Christian world. The name of Muhammad would be an epithet that would have made forgot the real name of the conquering leader. The name was quite rare in the Arab world, before Islam: some formulas in inscriptions; some cases quite before in the tradition and another, contemporary. It is a past participle, which appears only in the last chapters.

His father having died prematurely, therefore it was the grandfather who began to look after the child and his mother. On the seventh day after his birth, he gives a name to his grandson. As the name intrigues, since it is not really a name, Muslim sources will explain it, in stories beautifully invented.

The consecration of Muhammad's father.

Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhamad translation Alfred Guillaume page 66. ABDU'L-MUTTALIB'S VOW.

"It is alleged that when 'Abdu'l-Muttalib encountered the opposition of Quraysh when he was digging Zamzam, he vowed that if he should have ten sons, he would sacrifice one of them to God at the Ka'ba. Afterwards when he had ten sons who could protect him he gathered them together and told them about his vow and called on them to keep faith with God. They agreed to obey him and asked what they were to do."

He said that each one of them must get an arrow, write his name on it, and bring it to him: this they did and he took them before (the statue of) Hubal in the middle of the Ka'ba, Hubal being the greatest (or, most revered) of the idols of Quraysh in Mecca. It stood by a well there. It was that well in which offerings made to the Ka'ba were stored.

Now beside Hubal there were seven arrows, each of them containing some words. One was marked 'bloodwit'. When

they disputed about who should pay the bloodwit they cast lots with the seven arrows and he on whom the lot fell had to pay the money. Another was marked 'yes,' and another 'no,' and they acted accordingly on the matter on which the oracle had been invoked. Another was marked 'of you'; another mulsaq (stranger) another 'not of you'; and the last was marked 'water.' If they wanted to dig for water, they cast lots containing this arrow and wherever it came forth they set to work. If they wanted to circumcise a boy, or make a marriage, or bury a body, or doubted someone's genealogy, they took him to Hubal with a hundred dirhams and a slaughter camel and gave them to the man who cast the lots; then they brought near the man with whom they were concerned saying, 'this is A the son of B with whom we intend to do so-and-so; so show the right course concerning him.' Then they would say to the man who cast the arrows 'Cast!' and if there came out 'of you' then he was a true member of their tribe; and if there came out 'not of you' he was an ally; and if there came out mulsaq he had no blood relation to them and was not an ally. Where 'yes' came out in other matters, they acted accordingly; and if the answer was 'no' they deferred the matter for a year until they could bring it up again.....

Abdu'l-Muttalib said to the man with the arrows, 'Cast the lots for my sons with these arrows,' and he told him of the

vow which he had made. Each man gave him the arrow on which his name was written.... Abdullah was Abdu'l-Muttalib's favorite son, and his father thought that if the arrow missed him he would be spared. (He was the father of the apostle of God.)

When the man took the arrows to cast lots with them, Abdu'l-Muttalib stood by Hubal praying to God. Then the man

cast lots and Abdullah's arrow came out. His father led him by the hand and took a large knife; then he brought him up to Isaf and Na'ila (two idols of Quraysh at which they slaughtered their sacrifices) to sacrifice him; but Quraysh came out of their assemblies and asked what he was intending to do. When he said that he was going to sacrifice him; they and his sons said, 'By God! you shall never sacrifice him until you offer the greatest expiatory sacrifice for him. If you do a thing like this (sacrificing him), there will be no stopping men from coming to sacrifice their sons, and what will become of the people then?'.....Quraysh and his sons said that he must not do it, but take him to the Hijaz for there was a sorceress who had a familiar spirit, and he must consult her. Then he would have liberty of action. If she told him to sacrifice him, he would be no worse off; and if she gave him a favorable response, he could accept it. So they went off as far as Medina and found that she was in Khaybar, so they allege. So they rode on until they got to her, and when Abdu'l-Muttalib acquainted her with the facts she told them to go away until her familiar spirit visited her and she could ask him.

When they had left her Abdu'l-Muttalib prayed to God, and when they visited her the next day she said, 'Word has come to me. How much is the blood money among you?' They told her that it was ten camels. She told Abdu'l-Muttalib then to go back to his country and take the young man and ten camels. Then cast lots for them and for him; if the lot falls against your son, add more camels, until your lord is satisfied. If the lot falls against the camels then sacrifice them in his stead, for your lord will be satisfied and your son escape death.

So they returned to Mecca, and when they had agreed to carry out their instructions, Abdu'l-Muttalib was praying to God. Then they came back [in the ka'aba therefore] with Abdullah and ten camels. Abdu'l-Muttalib stood by Hubal's statue praying to God. Then they cast lots and the arrow fell against Abdullah. They added ten more camels and the lot fell against Abdullah, and so they went on adding ten camels at a time, until there were one hundred camels, when finally the lot fell against them. Quraysh and those who were present said, 'At last your lord is satisfied Abdu'l-Muttalib.'

'No, by God,' he answered (so they say), 'not until I cast lots three times.'

This they did and each time the arrow fell against the camels. They were duly slaughtered and left there and no man was kept back or hindered from eating them.

The birth of any important figure in history generally gives rise to an abundant mythical tradition, more or less naive, and sometimes childish, in accordance with the Christian example, then everywhere present in the minds of the people in that time. The tradition fills the silence of the Quran on this subject, and addresses the female Muslim audience, inventing beautiful, edifying, and placatory stories.

The consecration of Muhammad.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad translation A. Guillaume page 70.

After his birth his mother sent to tell his grandfather 'Abdu'l-Muttalib that she had given birth to a boy and asked him to come and look at him.

When he came she told him what she had seen when she conceived him and what was said to her and what she was ordered to call him. It is alleged that Abdu'l-Muttalib took him (before Hubal's statue) in the middle of the Ka'ba, where he prayed to God thanking him for this gift.

Then he brought him out and delivered him to his mother, and he tried to find foster mothers for him.

The sources are stingier with details about this episode but it is still the same problem Hubal or Allah.?

N.B. These pagan rites are not considered embarrassing by Muslim tradition.

An Ethiopian slave of his father named Baraka (or Umm Ayman) takes care of him. His mother Amina being no longer able to breast-feed him, first entrusted him to Thuweiba, a slave of his uncle, then to the named Halima of the Saadite Bedouin tribe (the Banu Saad) who takes with her the infant (in the desert) .

According to Muslim tradition, a first miracle would have occurred when he was two or three years old : the shaqq al-sadr.

Halima and her husband Harith ibnu Abdul once found Muhammad lying on the ground, his body covered with sweat, his eyes rolled upwards, his clothes torn. The child will explain to them that two tall and sturdy men had come and forced him to fight against them; that, in spite of the weakness of his age, he had fought for a long time, but that at last they had struck him down and opened his breast. In this connection, two opposing theories clash.

a) This episode is the development of a verse from the Quran.

b) The verse of the Quran was invented to justify this legend.

Development of the hypothesis a).

The anecdote is only a later story intended to literally illustrate the first verse of chapter 94 (the opening forth) and which states, "have we not opened your heart? "

Pious Muslims have had to take this literally and invent this incredible story to illustrate it.

The point of view of pious Muslims (the adult Muslims whose faith has nothing to do but nothing to do with the goddess Reason because it moves mountains).

"This miracle is an extraordinary fact that does not obey the laws of nature, as so many others that God has caused in the life of the prophets to serve his purpose. Is not the same thing alleged about the Immaculate Conception (sura 3)? Are not the conditions of his childhood and all his life a miracle, when he came into the world without being conceived by a parent and that from his cradle *, he spoke to men? In the same way, the life of Moses was peppered with extraordinary events. As many acts and events in the life of the prophets that the natural sciences ignore, because they do not fall within the realm of materialist and positivist thought."

Indeed indeed !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

* Editor's note Jesus speaking to men from his cradle is a very beautiful idea certainly, but in no way a historical fact for two reasons.

The first is that everything about the life of Jesus is more than doubtful or controversial. See the Christian authors themselves about it.

The second is that there is no mention of such an episode in the oldest texts relating to the life of Jesus.

It will be necessary to wait for the seventh or the eighth century with the Quran to see this anecdote appear. Can we argue that Muslims know Jesus's life better than Christians themselves? After all why not ?

Development of hypothesis b).

This episode, largely taken up by tradition, has been variously analyzed. It is to be compared to the very strange later narrative showing Muhammad ascending to Heaven, on a winged horse called Burak, from Jerusalem, and entitled: the celestial journey (miraj, sura 17). A story whose historicity is more than doubtful: it is impossible and only the pious but then very pious Muslims believe in it! It is only a mirage!

As in the case of the previous pseudo-miracle which is only a mirage, the legend of the opening of the chest or heart of Muhammad is only the popular development of a verse from the Quran, probably

from a legendary Christian background. It is for the Islamic tradition a very convenient way of getting rid of the embarrassing notion of original sin; thus justifying the Muslim dogma of the isma or impeccability of the prophet. The little Muslims must have been strongly impressed by this episode, probably invented for them.

Anyway, the milk mother Halima is anxious to give Muhammad back to his mother, who dies three years later. He is just six years old. We do not know much about his life for the next ten years or so. His paternal grandfather Abd Al Muttalib took him first with him. Two years later he will charge Abu Talib, the eldest of his children, Abdallah's brother and Ali's father, to look after him.

Muhammad therefore lived at first very poorly. According to the Muslim tradition, his uncle Abou Talib would have employed him to keep the herds, a task then despised. As we have said, his uncle had a son named Ali. The two young children sympathized

Ibn Sad tells us that the Meccans had an annual holiday at that time, in which everyone was taking part. Muhammad having refused to go there, his aunts forced him to do so. Muhammad accompanied them, constrained and forced, but, in the full festival, he returned under the tent of his parents, all white and trembling, but saying that he had seen strange characters, who forbade him to attend the holiday. The years that followed, Abu Talib and the aunts no longer forced him to participate in such ceremonies. Waqidi completes the story by the testimony of Umm Ayman, the black slave who had also raised Muhammad, but specifies that it was the festival of Buwana; that during this feast, their heads were shaved and animals sacrificed.

Ibn Sad. Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir. Volume 1, Parts 1.40.18.

“Umm Ayman related to me: Buwanah was a statue to whom the Quraysh went on pilgrimage and showed respect. They used to perform sacrifices, shave their heads and spent one night in a year near it. Abu Talib also used to make pilgrimage to it with his people; one day he asked therefore the Apostle of God, may God bless him, to attend this festival with his people, but the Apostle of God, may God bless him, refused. Thereupon I saw Abu Talib getting angry and his aunts also getting angry.....The Apostle of God disappeared then he returned to us terribly frightened. His aunts said: What frightened you? He said: I am afraid I am insane.What did you see? As soon as I went close to the statue, a person of white complexion and high stature appeared before me crying behind me: O Muhammad! Do not touch it. She (Umm Ayman) said: He did not go to their festival.”

But let's return to the facts that ensue from History, and not to tall tales for children justly.

Imam Ibn Sayyid an-Nas, The Light of Sight.

“When he was twelve years, two months and ten days – he set out with his uncle Abu Talib to the Levant. When they reached Bosra in Roman Syria, the monk Bahira saw him and recognized him by his attributes and distinguishing marks. Bahira came to him, held his hand and said: “This is the Messenger of the Lord of all worlds, whom God will send forth as mercy to the worlds.”

Let us not dwell on the alleged trips to Syria that he allegedly made when he was a child with his uncle Abu Talib, and later in the service of his future wife Khadija; the purpose of these stories being simply to show that Christian monks had announced that Muhammad would be a great prophet.

Christians like Ahudemeh from Tikrit (died 575) who preached to nomadic Arabs settled where they could meet, that is, near the caravanserais or near water resources. These water points were known gathering places, many caravans came to fetch water, and conditions to perform a baptism were gathered in them (because do not forget, at the time, the baptism was made by a complete immersion). Notes of Peter DeLaCrau found by his heirs and inserted by them at this place.

Bosra was located in Roman-Byzantine territory (south of modern Syria) and the caravan of Abu Talib was said to have halted near a Nestorian Christian monastery (monastery with which contacts had probably been taken for a long time by members of the tribe). The journey of Muhammad child to Syria, in Bosra, with his uncle Abou Talib, during which his encounter with the Christian monk named Bahira or Sergius occurred, is a common theme for Christian and Muslim propaganda, some to show that Islam is a heresy of Christianity (John of Damascus), others to corroborate the authenticity of the apostolate of Muhammad.

It is perhaps also only a tall tale forged after his death by Muslims eager to improve the image of their "prophet" among Eastern Christians and taken over by the Damascene.

The life of Muhammad, from that time until he was twenty-five years old, as well as his actions, are unknown, even by doctors of Islam. We can assume that he was interested in religions from Palestine: he learns bits of biblical history that his memory will retain more or less well, by rubbing shoulders with the Christian minorities of Mecca, who are poor; as well as the Jewish minorities, who are more numerous and have scholars.

Imam Ibn Sayyid an-Nas, The Light of Sight.

“The Prophet set out a second time to the Levant in the company of Maysarah, a slave of Khadijah, representing her business, before he married her. When he reached the Levant, he sat under a tree

close to a monastery. The monk (a named Nastura ?) said: 'None, except a prophet has ever sat under this tree.'

Maysarah used to say: 'During the journey, when the sun was very hot, I saw two angels descend from the sky giving him shade.'

This hermit, through his discussions with the young Muhammad, would (the conditional is required) contributed to the formation of the idea "Muslim." It is this strange cloud, accompanying Muhammad everywhere he went to protect him from the sun, which would have aroused the curiosity of the monk. Legend, of course! And maybe just a duplicate of the episode with the monk named Bahira.

On his return in any case, Muhammad will definitely enter the direct service of Khadija, whom he will marry soon after (in 596).

Khadija is the major and dominant, so to speak, maternal figure of the second half of Muhammad's life. She was his first and only wife for about fifteen years. She is remarkably representative of the status of women in pre-Islamic Arabia, infinitely more favorable to women than it will be seen later.

This great lady of the tribe of the Quraysh, manageress of a caravan business, a widow much older than himself, provides to Muhammad a protection, a standard of living and an indispensable social position, but which does not reduce his social inferiority. In addition, his position as an employee in the service of a woman is not enviable in an Arab environment fundamentally marked by virile values, and willingly sarcastic towards those who cannot have children.

Experienced, responsible, energetic, it is not only in business that she proves to be enterprising. She lived much and well, before Muhammad, taking advantage of all opportunities (some widowhood, do not be afraid of words), not as a free woman, but at least as an autonomous woman. She has managed to accumulate wealth and to get real economic power. Muslim sources, though very unfavorable to women, cannot hide it.

Other stories are fun to embroider on the subject, with a frivolity that we will not see again soon in the life of Muhammad. It is undoubtedly also a way, paradoxically, to disguise the brutal reality of the episode: the union of a penniless young man with an old bourgeois who was loaded. After that there will be no more joking with the subject.

Ibn Sad dares for example to develop the circumstances of the marriage, which does not make the official biography: he presents in a comical way the ruses of Khadija to achieve her aims.

Ibn Sad, *Tabaqat*, Volume 1, Parts 1.35.

ACCOUNT OF THE MARRIAGE OF THE APOSTLE OF GOD (MAY GOD BLESS HIM), WITH KHADIJAH BINT KHUWAYLID

"Khadijah Bint Khuwaylid Ibn Asad Ibn 'Abd al-'Uzza Ibn Qusayyi was a prudent and forbearing woman who was destined to get what God willed. She was of the noblest descent, highest in dignity and the wealthiest of the Quraysh. Every member of her tribe desired to take her into marriage. They had made proposals and spent money for this purpose....."

Khadijah sent me (Nafisah) secretly to Muhammad, after his return with the caravan from Syria.

I said: O Muhammad ! what prevents you from marriage? He said: I have no means to marry.

I said: If you get enough means, and you get a proposal from (a lady of) beauty, wealth, dignity and noble status, will you accept?

Who is she?

I said: Khadijah.

He said: How will it be possible?

I said: I shall arrange that.

He said: I agree. I went and informed her (Khadijah).

Then she sent for him at such and such a time and called her uncle Amr Ibn Asad to give her in marriage. He came in and the Apostle of God, may God bless him, arrived with his uncles, one of whom married him to her. The Apostle of God, may God bless him, as twenty-five years old, and Khadijah was forty years old, as she was born fifteen years before the year of Elephant."

Around 600, an important event occurred at Mecca: a day when the Kaaba was perfumed with incense; a spark set on fire the rich fabrics that had dressed the animals brought to the sacrifice and their dried hides preciousy preserved in the shrine and the whole building burned. [Editor's Note: Some historians think it was after an attack against the city].

A short time later, heavy rains also caused a catastrophic flood, and the building, already weakened by fire, could not resist. As it was the rainy season, there was also a storm; and a Roman-Byzantine ship, carrying building materials from Egypt to Yemen, in order to build a church there, failed on the coast. The Meccans took the survivors in, and took advantage of them to buy a certain quantity of marble, iron, or wood. One of the shipwrecked, Pachomius (Baquum) a Coptic carpenter, even decided

to settle in Mecca. The assembled materials being not sufficient to erect a building similar to that of before, it was decided to cover only a part and to leave another roofless. It was also decided to increase the height and to place the front door in such a way that the access required a "ladder," which would bring money back to the person who would hold the key of the door. In the part without a roof, the access was left free, and it will be used then to take an oath or to perform other rituals of this kind. When the walls began to be high enough and when came the time to lay the famous black stone (al hajr al aswad) representing Manat, the goddess of Destiny, a subject of great veneration, in one of the corners of the building ; all the clans of the Quraysh tribe solicited this honor. Some even went so far as to bring back a container full of blood, and to drink it while swearing never to yield. The work then stopped until an old public figure suggests relying on fate, saying: "Leave It to God the care of choosing, and let us accept as arbitrator the first person who will come here." This was, of course, Muhamad. He was also working on the repair of the temple, but he had been away a few hours earlier. He returns, is taken for an arbitrator, makes the black stone put on a mantle (his own) of which a member of each tribe must hold the end, and lay with his own hands in the south-east corner of the building.

At least, this is the legend and once again nothing proves that the anecdote is true. This history of Muhammad's role in rebuilding the Kaaba should be given only a limited confidence.

The Frenchman Jean-Louis Castillon, in his famous "Essay on Errors and Superstitions," thinks that Muhammad was simply informed of this quarrel by friends; and that he took the opportunity to try his luck by trying to make himself known. "He made the black stone put on a rich carpet, which he afterwards made lifted by two Arabs of each tribe & he placed it himself, to the sound of the applause of all the inhabitants of Mecca; too delighted with the nobility of this action, to guess the hubris that had been its motivation "(Jean L. Castillon, Essay on Errors and Superstitions).It is up to everyone to make up his own mind!

When the building was completed (around 601 or 605), it was decorated with statues and frescoes, both inside and out. On its walls were painted icons representing angels, prophets, saints, Abraham (El Khalil or the friend of God represented with divinatory arrows) and even the Virgin Mary holding Jesus in her arms according to Al Azraqi (Akhbar Makkah). In fact, of course, Hubal and a mother-goddess.

Mahomet thus becomes finally a notable. He was already replacing his grandfather Abu Talib at the Kaaba, and his marriage with Khadija, one of the city's biggest and most influential fortunes, also earned him a place in the city council.

In short, this new status finally makes Muhammad a personality who means in the tribal environment.

But he lacks a male heir, what a serious handicap is in this kind of society: for other Meccans, it is therefore an impotent (surah 108, verse 3:abtár). It was besides probably also this heir that Khadija was expecting, to pass on to him his business.

For lack of anything better, the pious Muslims details her female offspring and her contrasting destiny: some daughters will disappear very quickly after their arranged marriages, others will have a greater reputation, like Fatima. But none will be a great figure. Little Aisha would not have accepted it! As for the sons, they hardly appear, and their number remains uncertain. But only one will suffice to provide the Meccans the kunya of Muhammad, Qasim, in 598.

The kunya is a nickname generally composed of Abu (father of) or Umm (mother of). As soon as you have a child, you become an Abu something or an Umm something. Muhammad will therefore receive the name of Abu Qasim, at the birth of the son thus named by him, but died at an early age. This "kunya" will remain attached to him nevertheless, and several times, especially during negotiations with his opponents, this nickname will reappear.

The full name of Muhammad would be in this case and since the birth of the first son in 598, Abu al-Qassim Muhammad bin Abdullah ibn Abd al-Muttalib ibn Hashim. The proper name preceded by the kunya marking the paternity (Abu al-Qassim = father of al-Qassim), and followed by the nasab indicating the relationship to his ascendants (son of Abdallah, grandson of Abd al-Muttalib, great-grandson of Hashim).

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 3, Book 41, Hadith 595.

While God's Messenger was sitting, a Jew came and said, "O Abul Qasim! One of your companions has slapped me on my face."

The Prophet asked who that was. He replied that he was one of the Ansar.

The Prophet sent for him, and on his arrival, he asked him whether he had beaten the Jew.

He replied in the affirmative and said, "I heard him taking an oath in the market saying, 'By Him Who gave Moses superiority over all the human beings.' I said, 'O wicked man! even over Muhammad? I became furious and slapped him over his face.'"

In any case, what is certain is that in his lifetime Muhammad is almost never called by his kunya, it seems: only the opponents call him so.

Having become a rich merchant, Muhammad in turn will organize caravans to Syria and perhaps he will go there himself again. He will thus again have many opportunities to dialogue with the Jews and Christians of the regions crossed, in addition to those passing through Mecca or settled in Mecca; which will give him some additional biblical notions (about Judaism and Christianity). He frees one of his slaves, Zayd ben Haritha, and makes the young man his adopted son.

MUHAMMAD'S VOCATION: THE METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEM.

In 610 (all these dates are approximate) Muhammad is about forty years old. The figure of a little under forty is the subject of a near consensus, if only by its symbolic meaning. Some sources, however, put the figure of thirty years forward, but they are very much in minority.

The historical approach of the person and the action of Muhammad always comes up against a very great difficulty, that of the treatment of available sources. The problem that is aroused by the stories on this subject is the following: what was the triggering event of Muhammad's religious career, incidentally what was the chapter of the Quran that "descended" from Heaven first ?

As the Quran says nothing of it, there were several propositions. At least three. By adding the option of some ones for the: "We do not know," so there are four possibilities.

First series of versions: everything happens in Khadija's house in the form of dreams or nightmares.

Second series of versions: Muhammad hears nothing but has two visions (see the Quran chapter of the star, chapter 53 verses 1 to 8).

Third series of versions: the angel Gabriel gives Muhammad the order to recite part of the divine book (the first 5 verses of chapter 96).

Some modern writers have brought together these three versions of the first experience of Muhammad with great ingenuity, adapting each detail to a single and coherent story. This is the method known as Concordism, it works on the assumption that every different detail of each story has really taken place as a separate event.

But if we admit that the story has been changed or transformed by the witnesses, it is more likely that they are in fact all describing the same event, but in different terms.

Some authors make chapters 73 and 74 of the Quran the first revelations made to Muhammad but a version ended up dominating in the opinion sanctioned by Sunni orthodoxy: the first chapter descended from Heaven would have been chapter 96 or, at least, say the most cautious, the first five verses of this chapter. Thus, for these verses, was found a framework narrative which was attributed to Muhammad himself, and his transmission was attributed to one of his wives, Aisha. This is the consecrated account of Hira Cave, so well known that it has even taken place in some French textbooks. Sometimes the date of 610 is even given.

But although it is in principle attributed to Muhammad himself through one of his wives, Aisha, this story was in reality composed long after the event; and even long after the death of Muhammad, so there is already a huge time gap. In addition, it is a narrative of synthesis, a literary composition made from disparate elements. In different corpora of traditions, we find each of these elements, disjointed and isolated, without sometimes even being told by Aisha as an informer. Or we have their echo in narratives of synthesis arranged differently, but which do not agree with the one attributed to Aisha. The cave of Hira is not there and it is not chapter 96 that is concerned, but another.

Finally, we can notice that this frame narrative is directly inspired by a passage from the biblical book of Isaiah (40: 6): A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?"

This become canonical narrative is therefore the product of a combined composition. Inspired by the biblical model, it was from a selection made in disparate data that it was organized into a catechetical knowledge based on consensus, which became a "dogma." One would have hoped, to be clear, that an information or an allusion to the cave of Hira, is given in the Quran, at least in chapter 96 itself. It is not so, and no more in the rest of the Quranic corpus.

It is therefore a narrative of the literary genre of "Revelation Circumstances" (*asbab al-nuzul*), based on "hearsay" (hadiths) of the eighth and ninth centuries, excluding other "hearsay." Nothing remains of it even in the oldest Quranic commentary we have in full.

That of Muqatil ibn Sulayman (died in 767), for the first five verses of chapter 96, provides quite different "circumstances," in a polemic staging an uncle of the prophet refractory to the preaching of his nephew. Whenever the pagan uncle objects something, a verse descends to contradict him.

The commentary of the Quran by Muqatil is one of the oldest tafsirs that have come down to us in its entirety or almost. He is a very much criticized historian, but John Wansbrough (1928-2002) speaks highly of him in his book entitled "Quranic Studies."

The details therefore differ therefore according to the traditional stories. Some stories say that this happened during his sleep (and so it was a dream or a nightmare. This is also what some Christians say, who are almost contemporaries.

JOHN OF DAMASCUS OR DAMASCENE. On Heresies 100, 3.

Let us remind here that, although a Christian, John of Damascus (676-749) was an Arab, THEREFORE SPOKE ARABIC, "There are many other extraordinary and quite ridiculous things in this book [the Quran] which he boasts was sent down to him from God. But when we ask:

-‘And who is there to testify that God gave him the book? And which of the prophets foretold that such a prophet would rise up?’—they are at a loss.

And we remark that Moses received the Law on Mount Sinai, with God appearing in the sight of all the people in cloud, and fire, and darkness, and storm. And we say that all the Prophets from Moses on down foretold the coming of Christ and how Christ God (and incarnate Son of God) was to come and to be crucified and die and rise again, and how He was to be the judge of the living and dead.

Then, when we say:

-‘How is it that this prophet of yours did not come in the same way, with others bearing witness to him? And how is it that God did not in your presence present this man with the book to which you refer, even as He gave the Law to Moses, with the people looking on and the mountain smoking, so that you, too, might have certainty?’

—They answer that God does as He pleases. ‘This,’ we say, ‘We know, but we are asking how the book came down to your prophet.’ Then they reply that the book came down to him while he was asleep.

Then we jokingly say to them that, as long as he received the book in his sleep and did not actually sense the operation, then the popular adage applies to him which runs.....

When we ask again:

-‘How is it that when he enjoined us in this book of yours not to do anything or receive anything without witnesses, you did not ask him: “First do you show us by witnesses that you are a prophet and that you have come from God, and show us just what Scriptures there are that testify about you”’

—They are ashamed and remain silent. [Then we continue:]

-‘Although you may not marry a wife without witnesses, or buy, or acquire property; although you neither receive an ass nor possess a beast of burden unwitnessed; and although you do possess both wives and property and asses and so on through witnesses, yet it is only your faith and your scriptures that you hold unsubstantiated by witnesses. For he who handed this down to you has no warranty from any source, nor is there anyone known who testified about him before he came. On the contrary, he received it while he was asleep.’”

If we understand well, St. John Mansur known as the Damascene, the Quran would have been revealed to Muhammad during one or more dreams ...

To this testimony may be added some of those concerning the precursory signs which then affected Muhammad according to the Muslim tradition itself, of which it is difficult to see what separates them from the rest, and particularly those concerning the premonitory dreams, that the scholars of Islam call "true dreams" (ru'ya sadiqa). True dreams are one of the forty-six parts of Prophethood (al-Bukhari, 6472; Muslim, 4201). Everything that Muhammed saw in a dream was then realized or explained with clearness similar to that of dawn.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 9, Book 87, Number 111.

Narrated by Aisha. The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to God's Apostle was in the form of good righteous (true) dreams in his sleep. He never had a dream but that it came true like bright day light....”

And it is presumed that this had taken place in his home at Mecca.

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad. Guillaume. Page 107.

A freedman of the family of al Zubayr, told me on Khadija's authority that she said to the apostle of God, 'O son of my uncle, are you able to tell me about your visitant, when he comes to you ?' ...

When Gabriel came to him, as he was wont, the apostle said to Khadija, 'This is Gabriel who has just come to me.' 'Get up, O son of my uncle,' she said, 'and sit by my left thigh.' The apostle did so, and she said, 'Can you see him?' 'Yes,' he said.

She said, 'Then turn round and sit on my right thigh.' He did so, and she said, 'Can you see him?'

When he said that he could she asked him to move and sit in her lap. When he had done this, she again asked if he could see him, and when he said yes, she disclosed her form and cast aside her veil while the apostle was sitting in her lap. Then she said, 'Can you see him still ?' 'No.' She said, 'O son of my uncle, rejoice and be of good heart, by God he is an angel and not a satan.'

Gap in the manuscript.....
.....

Below is therefore what emerges from the mass of Muslim traditions in this area and that we may reasonably affirm given what happened next.

1) Muhammad had always been interested in philosophical religious questions, he sometimes thought about it, often discussed it. Not like everyone but like a lot. Until then nothing really nonstandard.

2) Ideas came to him about it. As it can happen to everyone.

3) He sometimes dreamed about it.

THE WHOLE IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A BEHAVIOR ALL IN ALL NORMAL.

IN THE FRAMEWORK OF A NONSTANDARD BEHAVIOR....

4) He sometimes had trances, but not always, many being young, less towards the end of his life (or then he simulated?) during which he ...

- babbled incoherently according to his opponents

- repeated divine words according to faithful believing his words a).

NB. Difference with the case of the famous Pythia of Delphi: in the case of Muhammad this kind of trance could occur anywhere while for Pythia it was always in the same place, the adyton of the temple, sitting on a tripod arranged above a geological fault from which toxic gases emerged b).

IN THE FRAMEWORK OF EXCEPTIONAL BEHAVIOR.

5) He even had spectacular visions or hallucinations, the first of which started his public preaching.

NOTES REGARDING THE CASE WHERE THERE WAS NO SIMULATION.

a) Let's precise two things nevertheless.

First point: the verses of the Quran having such an origin are a tiny minority. We may quote the verses 53, 1-18, 17-1, and some others. These verses correspond well to visions or hallucinations that had Muhammad, especially the first (for the *isra* and the *miraj*, the lightning trip to Jerusalem and the ascension it is perhaps on the other hand simple dreams of Muhammad, misunderstood, distorted or amplified by his entourage and by their posterity: the hadiths). The *miraj* seems to have been a mirage, a Christian-type ascension, borrowed from Christianity, which was therefore considered corporeally or physically impossible by some early Muslims and in which therefore they refused to believe if not in an allegorical meaning.

The vast majority of the Quran came to Muhammad's mind quite normally (reminiscence, inspiration or idea suddenly springing up but after a long unconscious reflection etc ... nothing but very banal until then).

Only the subsequent reworking or manipulations of the Quran, sometimes because of Muhammad himself, have complicated the situation.

Second point: these revelations, surprise surprise (for those who know what I mean), all went very opportunely, in the direction of personal Muhammad's interests. As in the case of hypnotic phenomena. For, contrary to the idea popularized by certain Hollywood films, you cannot make a hypnotized subject do things that deeply hurts his conscience or his interests.

Milton Erickson has done many experiments to study the question. For example, he placed a woman who smoked a lot in hypnosis, after arranging for her to be in a state of cravings. He had also arranged for a friend of the subject, also a smoker, to "forget" her bag just next to the smoker, and suggested that she takes a cigarette from her friend's bag, telling her that her friend would have willingly given her one of them, that she could without problem take a cigarette and give back an entire packet, and other arguments of the same kind. But nothing could persuade the smoker in question ...

This is rather general. When an act is "immoral" in the value system of the subject, even if this immorality is very relative, or when it would harm the subject, it is impossible to get it done under hypnosis, or, on waking by a post hypnotic suggestion.

We have an example of it by contrast with the famous case of the satanic verses.

Tabari volume 6 page 108: "When the messenger of God saw how his tribe turned their backs on him and was grieved to see them shunning the message he had brought to them from God, he longed in his soul that something would come to him from God which would reconcile him with his tribe. With his love for his tribe and his eagerness for their welfare it would have delighted him if some of the difficulties which they made for him could have been smoothed out, and he debated with himself and fervently desired such an outcome.

Then God revealed: "By the Star when it sets, your comrade does not err, nor is he deceived; nor does he speak out of (his own) desire...(Quran 53: 1-3) and when he came to the words: Have you thought upon al-Lat and al-Uzza and Manat, the third, the other?"

Satan cast on his tongue, because of his inner debates and what he desired to bring to his people, the words:

"These are the high-flying cranes; verily their intercession is accepted with approval.

b) Then the problem of the interpretation of these divine words was to arise.

-First scenario: there were no witnesses. It is obvious then that the interpretation of these revelations could only be made by Muhammad himself and according to what he remembered from the aforementioned revelation.

-Second scenario: there were witnesses (let us exclude compulsory the very unlikely case where they had at hand at that time what to note in writing). The interpretation of these words should then be performed by the aforementioned witnesses together with Muhammad of course. In the case of the Pythia of Delphi, her oracles were incomprehensible to ordinary mortals, and had to be interpreted by qualified priests who were present during the session and who then gave the consultant a written answer.

-Third case: in case of immediate disagreement or after a certain time, or difficulty in the application, another revelation of this kind could very well come to repeal the one that arose a problem, as in the case of the famous satanic verses about the goddesses Al Lat Al Uzza and Manat -verses 53,19-20- what brings us back to the second point above.

Gap in the manuscript.....

The first "true" visions of Muhammad therefore took place at home, this is what Aysha calls true dreams or ru'ya sadiqa.

Bukhari Volume 1 Book 1 Number 3.

Narrated Aisha (the mother of the faithful believers): The beginning of the Divine Inspiration to God's Apostle was in the form of good dreams which came true like bright day light, then the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him.

Bukhari Volume 4 Book 54 Number 429 .

Narrated Malik bin Sasaa: The Prophet said, "While I was at the House in a state midway between sleep and wakefulness (an angel recognized me) as the man lying between two men. A golden tray full of wisdom and belief was brought to me and my body was cut open from the throat to the lower part of the abdomen and then my abdomen was washed with Zam-Zam water and (my heart was) filled with wisdom and belief. Al-Buraq, a white animal, smaller than a mule and bigger than a donkey was brought to me and I set out with Gabriel....." (Cf Surah 17).

Bukhari Volume 1 Book 8 Number 450.

Narrated Abu Huraira":The Prophet said, "Last night an afreet from the jinns came to me and wanted to interrupt my prayers but God enabled me to overpower him. I wanted to fasten him to one of the pillars of the mosque so that all of you could see him in the morning but I remembered the statement of my brother Solomon (as stated in Quran): My Lord! Forgive me and bestow on me a kingdom such as shall not belong to anybody after me (38.35)." The sub narrator Rauh said: " The demon was dismissed humiliated."

Bukhari Volume 1 Book 1 Number 2.

Narrated Aisha (the mother of the faithful believers): Al-Harith bin Hisham asked God's Messenger, "O God's Messenger how is the Divine Inspiration revealed to you?" God's Messenger replied, "Sometimes it is (revealed) like the ringing of a bell, this form of Inspiration is the hardest of all and then this state passes off after I have grasped what is inspired. Sometimes the Angel comes in the form of a man and talks to me and I grasp whatever he says." 'Aisha added: I saw the Prophet being inspired divinely on a very cold day and noticed the sweat dropping from his forehead."

Sahih Muslim Volume 5 Book 26 Number 5395.

A'isha reported that Sauda went out (in the fields) in order to answer the call of nature even after the time when veil had been prescribed for women. She had been a bulky lady, significant in height among the women, and she could not conceal herself from him who had known her.

Umar b. Khattab saw her and said: Sauda, by God, you cannot conceal from us. Therefore, be careful when you go out. She (A'isha) said: She turned back. God's Messenger was at that time in my house having his evening meal and there was a bone in his hand. She (Sauda) came and said: God's Messenger. I went out and Umar said to me so-and-so. She (A'isha) reported: There came the revelation to him and then it was over; the bone was then in his hand and he had not thrown it and he said:" Permission has been granted to you that you may go out for your needs."

Editor's note. After an eclipse of a few years, this mode of revelation (the dream) will become again dominant. In the last years of his life, the revelations will be supposed to be made in the simplest way: during his sleep.

Ibn Ishaq. The Life of Muhammad, translation A. Guillaume page 496.

'Then the apostle came in to me. My parents and a woman of the Ansar were with me and both of us were weeping. He

sat down and after praising God he said, "A'isha, you know what people say about you. Fear God and if you have done

wrong as men say then repent towards God, for He accepts repentance from His slaves." As he said this, my tears ceased

and I could not feel them. I waited for my parents to answer the apostle but they said nothing. By God I thought myself

too insignificant for God to send down concerning me Quranic verses which could be read in the mosques and used in prayer, BUT I WAS HOPING THAT THE APOSTLE WOULD SEE SOMETHING IN A DREAM BY WHICH GOD would clear away the lie from me, because He knew my innocence, or that there would be some communication. As for a Quranic revelation coming down about me, by God I thought far too little of myself for that. When I saw that my parents would not speak I asked them why, and they replied that they did not know what to answer.....

The apostle had not moved from where he was sitting when there came over him from God what used to come over him (when he received a revelation).

He was wrapped in his garment and a leather cushion was put under his head. As for me, when I saw this I felt no fear or alarm, for I knew that I was innocent and that God would not treat me unjustly. As for my parents, I thought that they would die from fear that confirmation would come from God of what men had said. Then the apostle recovered and sat up and there fell from him as it were drops of water on a winter day, and he began to wipe the sweat from his brow, saying, "Good news, A'isha! God has sent down (revelation) about your innocence." [Editor's note. The verse 4 in chapter 24].

THE VISIONS.

The most likely is that Muhammad had lived a very traumatic experience that day, that he has had hallucinations; and that it was then suggested to him to recite some words or some sentences heard here and there, which began to ring in his head. Of this vision, which was passably doubtless terrifying for him, there are echoes in the Quran itself, expressed with great poetic force.

Chapter 53, verses 1-18.

"By the Star when it setS, your comrade errs not, nor is deceived;

Nor does he speak of (his own) desire. It is nothing save an inspiration that is inspired, which one of mighty powers has taught him, one vigorous and he grew clear to view when he was on the uppermost horizon. Then he drew nigh and came down till he was (distant) two bows' length or even nearer, and He revealed unto His slave that which he revealed. The heart did not lie (in seeing) what it saw. Will you then dispute with him concerning what he sees ?

And verily he saw him yet another time by the lote tree of the utmost boundary, nigh unto which is the Garden of Abode. When that which shrouds did enshroud the lote-tree, the eye did not turn aside nor yet was overbold.

Verily he saw one of the greater revelations of his Lord. Have you thought upon Al-Lat and Al-Uzza and Manat, the third, the other ?

If we understand correctly, Muhammad, on that day, had the vision of four different supernatural entities: al-Lat, al-Uzza, Manat, and another, unknown and not named by the text (God, The Archangel Gabriel ??) The "lote tree of the boundary also called the "Lote-tree of the extremity" (sidrat al-muntaha) is an expression that can refer to the Seventh Heaven. It looks like the navigation of St. Brendan or other Irish aislingi /visions of this kind! Especially given this story of "satanic" goddesses. Muhammad, Quran 81, 15-23.

Oh, but I call to witness the planets [...]

Your comrade is not mad.

Surely he beheld Him on the clear horizon. And he is not avid of the Unseen. Nor is this the utterance of a devil worthy to be stoned. Whither then go you ? This is nothing else than a reminder unto creation, Unto whomsoever of you will to walk straight. And you will not, unless (it be) that God will, the Lord of Creation.

All agree that Muhammad felt then a great feeling of anguish and loneliness.

As we have had the opportunity to say, the Muslim tradition makes this "revelation" precede by a great variety of signs, inside Muhammad's awareness or clearly outside, even fabulous. These details come from popular traditions and magic, but have been widely accepted. Muhammad sometimes heard a strange voice coming from rocks or trees, who called him by his name: he turned his head on all sides but, seeing no one, was frightened. The voice of the Unseen gradually became more frequent, and made sense.

According to Muhammad himself, or at least some hadiths, the unknown creature appeared to him in different forms according to the opportunities: sometimes as a man, sometimes as a being flying (with wings), and sometimes in other forms .

According to some authors, Muhammad one day would have an aisling or vision even more strange and frightening: the creature was sitting in the air. He was left on the spot dumbstruck until the people dispatched by his wife who was present with him that day come to bring him home.

We cannot help but bring the account above, which looks a little a third class terror movie, together with the first epileptic attack that one day floored Muhammad infant, while he was at his nurse Halima.

But the question is: who speaks, who appears? The Muslim tradition mention archangel Gabriel, but nothing is less certain! Gabriel's name appears only in very late chapters of the Quran (since Medinan). Chapter 2, 97-98. " Who is an enemy to Gabriel! For he it is who hath revealed (this Scripture) to thy heart by God's leave, confirming that which was (revealed) before it....Who is an enemy to God, and His angels and His messengers, and Gabriel and Michael! "

This is a Medinan chapter, so not dating from the beginning, chronologically speaking.

Quran 66, 4. " Io! God is his Protecting Friend, and Gabriel and the righteous among the believers."

But this is also a Medinan chapter and therefore not dating back to the beginnings of Islam.

Editor's note. The accumulation of references to the name of Gabriel in the LATER Muslim tradition is perhaps there only to convince us better (the autosuggestion method of Dr. Coue in a way).

HUMS AND TAHANNUTH.

A third series of traditions or hadiths gives as the frame to the visions of Muhammad a cave in the Jabal Al Nur, Hira, located 5 km from Mecca.

In the company of members of his family (his wife Khadija for example), and following in this respect a custom well established among his compatriots (Arabic tahannut); he also withdrew in this place as certain Christian hermits, on the heights overlooking the city.

The Muslims if they willingly speak of these visions having for frame this cave called Hira, do not insist, however, on the eminently pagan (or Christian?) nature of these retreats of the Tahannut type.

Ibn Sa'd, Kitab al-tabaqat al-kabir, volume 1, first part.

The Hums (the word Hums means the people who are emotional, and pay attention to etiquette) were the Quraysh, the Kinanah and the Khuza'ah and all those Arabs who had descended from the Quraysh. Muhammad Ibn Umar added, without giving this chain of narrators: Or allies of the Quraysh. Muhammad Ibn Umar said: the Tahannuth (Tahannuth?) relates to certain rites which they introduced in their religion and were strict in observing them, to wit: They did not go out of the haram when they had performed the pilgrimage and thus they fell short of performing the rite which God had enjoined on Abraham, and that was to stay at Arafah which is outside the haram. They abstained cooking in fat, and did not live in tents of hair; they lived under red canopies of leather. They commenced to permit the pilgrims to circumambulate round the Ka'bah in their clothes if they had not gone to the 'Arafah. When they returned from the Arafah they did not circumambulate round the Ka'bah, known as tawaf al-ifadah, but naked or in two ahmasi (a kind of coarse cloth woven by the Banu Ahmas, a branch of the Banu Dubay'ah) clothes. In case one circumambulated in his own clothes it was not lawful for him to wear them again."

Bukhari Volume 1 Book 1 Number 3.

He used to go in seclusion in the cave of Hira where he used to worship continuously for many days before his desire to see his family. He used to take with him the journey food for the stay and then come back to Khadija to take his food likewise again till suddenly the Truth descended upon him while he was in the cave of Hira. The angel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet replied, "I do not know how to read. The Prophet added, "The angel caught me (forcefully) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it anymore. He then released me and again asked me to read and I replied, 'I do not know how to read.' Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it anymore. He then released me and again asked me to read but again I replied, 'I do not know how to read (or what shall I read)?' Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said, 'Read in the name of your Lord, who has created (all that exists) has created man from a clot. Read! Your Lord is the Most Generous.'" (surah 96, verses 1,2,3)
Editor's note. It will be noted that the third time Muhammad no longer claims not to be able to read but only asks WHAT TO READ.

Then God's Apostle returned with the divine Inspiration and with his heart beating severely. His muscles between his neck and shoulders were trembling [detail omitted by some versions]. Then he went to Khadija bint Khuwailid and said, "Cover me! Cover me!" They covered him [with a blanket] till his fear was over and after that he told her everything that had happened and said, "I fear that something may happen to me."

[Khadija then accompanied him to her cousin Waraqa bin Naufal bin Asad bin Abdul Uzza, who,....recognized Angel Gabriel) the Muslim tradition adds. Specialists note that the name of Gabriel appears only rarely and late in the Quran, and therefore that the creature that initially appeared to Muhammad remains to be determined (a jinn?)]

And then God revealed the following Holy Verses (Quran 74: 1-5): 'O you wrapped up in a coat! Arise and warn....and desert the idols.'

After this the revelation started coming strongly, frequently and regularly as long as Waraqa was alive (after his death there was a pause (fatrah) of several years according to some testimonies.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 9, Book 87, Number 111.

Narrated by Aisha. "The commencement of the Divine Inspiration to God's Apostle was in the form of good righteous (true) dreams in his sleep. He never had a dream but that it came true like bright day light. He used to go in seclusion (the cave of) Hira where he used to worship (God) continuously for many (days) nights. He used to take with him the journey food for that (stay) and then come back to (his wife) Khadija to take his food likewise again for another period to stay, till suddenly the Truth descended upon him

Then God's Apostle returned, his neck muscles twitching with terror till he entered upon Khadija and said, "Cover me! Cover me!" They covered him till his fear was over and then he said, "O Khadija, what is wrong with me?" Then he told her everything that had happened.....

I'm afraid of becoming a possessed (majnun).

Why ? she asked him.

Because I have all the symptoms of the majnun (possessed), I hear voices coming from every stone of every hill; and at night I see in a dream a huge being of light that appears to me, a creature whose head touches the summit of heaven and feet, the earth; I do not know what it is, but that comes to me every time.

(According to Muhammad , this spirit appeared to him in different forms according to occasions: sometimes as a man, sometimes as a celestial being with wings, and sometimes still in other more or less strange forms.....)

But after a few days, Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while (fatrah) and the Prophet became so sad as we have heard that he intended several times to throw himself from the tops of high mountains".....

Traditions mentioning Gabriel as the transmitter of the divine message are suspect, since his name will not appear in the Qur'an until much later, in the Medinan chapters; but in this second set of versions, it is he who gives the order to Muhammad to recite part of the Divine Book.

THE LEGEND OF THE NIGHT OF FATE (LAYLAT AL QADR).

Located a few kilometers away from the site of Khadija's house, Mount Nur has a very singular appearance; it is seen from far away among the many mountains that surround it. The cave of Hira is built with piled-up rocks, which form three sides of it as well as the vault. It is high enough to make a man able to remain standing, without his head touching the vault and it is quite elongated so that he can lie down there. The rock of the soil is quite flat, and a man can easily lie down to sleep. The entrance to the cave consists of a small opening placed high enough, which requires to climb several steps, made of rocks, before entering. It is not clear why this summit is called Mount Light (Nur). It is located near the road that goes from Mecca to the esplanade of Mina, where pilgrims will spend several days. It is possible that a fire was once kindled on this mountain, to guide the travelers during the night; a widespread practice at this time in the region, as we have seen from John Toland's study about the pillar of fire that guided the Hebrews through the desert.

Point of view of pious Muslims about the vocation of Muhammad.

"No one has proof that Muhammad was practicing these exercises (tahannuth) before he was sent on a mission to restore the true religion (hanifiya). For this is not a matter of training or personal ability, but a grace and wisdom that God gives to whom he pleases. By claiming that the Prophet's reflection has been made progressively, it is suggested that the ideas of Muhammad are only the psychic result of meditations that ended in ecstatic states. Let us remind those ignorant people who show very little true wisdom or even scientific mind that the Revelation phenomenon is a wonder, a miracle unrelated to inspiration, introspection, or any kind of psychological preparation. Revelation came to Muhammad from the outside: he was a mere "receiver," not involved in the development or formulation of ideas. Even if it doesn't please the pious Muslim we just mentioned the mystical states are often the result of distance, loneliness, hunger, fatigue: trances and hallucinations are then favored, Modern Fenians think nevertheless that Muhammad has had these visions because he was engaged in the practices or techniques then used by the soothsayers (tahannuth). What gives them this impression are the verses of chapter No. 73 and those of chapter No. 74: these are rules of behavior for Muhammad, yet they are reminiscent of the soothsayers or kahins of the time.

"O you wrapped up in your raiment!

Keep vigil the night long,

save a little -

A half thereof,

or abate a little thereof

Or add (a little) thereto -

and chant the Quran in measure,

For we shall charge you with a word of weight.

Lo! the vigil of the night

is (a time) when impression is more keen

and speech more certain."

The Arabic word al-muzzamil and al-muddathir are usually translated as "wrapped up," but we must not forget that it was then one of the characteristics of the soothsayers possessed by the jinn, the majnun (literally the in-jinned). The word "majnun" comes from "jinn" (spirit), the word means "possessed by a jinn" and not insane, because "insane" in Arabic language is said "mabul." The majnun fainted, sweated, or even writhed, when at last they recovered, they were able to make declamations in verse or prose, to predict, even to bring out a jinn (or a spirit) from the body, etc. Many traditions maintain that the event would have occurred not at Muhammad's home in Mecca, but on Mount Hira, outside of Mecca. Muhammad would have been accustomed to go there a month a year, to devote himself to the Arab pagan practice called tahannuth; that is to say, to engage in the practice of divine worship for a certain number of consecutive nights, without going home. Following the example of a number of Meccans of the time, and perhaps even of his uncle Abu Talib himself, or of certain Christian hermits; Muhammad withdrew therefore given in the cave of Hira, to meditate on God, and also on his personal life or the socio-religious situation of his people. His experience with Christian monks could also have taught him to love prayer and loneliness.

The text by Ibn Ishaq seems to exclude the practice of fasting since it specifies that he withdrew with his wife Khadija, so they provided themselves with provisions. When she was not with him, she made someone bring supplies to him, or he would go back home and look for what was missing. Or again, she came to see him from time to time and bring him some. Unless it is an interpolation intended to erase the voluntarily sought character of these visions.

In short, according to this version of the facts, the month of Ramadan of the year 610 comes, and (apparently for the fifth time) Muhammad went to the cave of Hira. Several days passed without

incident; then, the night before the 27th of that month, a night that the Muslim tradition calls the night of the fate or decree (Laylat al qadrr) , while lying down, absorbed in dreams or meditations; a creature dressed in white and all haloed with light, appeared to Muhammad then spoke to him. Ibn Ishaq The Life of Muhammad translation Alfred Guillaume page 106.

"The apostle set forth to Hira as was his wont, and his family with him. When it was the night on which God honored him with his mission and showed mercy on His servants thereby, Gabriel brought him the command of God. 'He came to me,' said the apostle of God, 'while I was asleep, with a coverlet of brocade whereon was some writing, and said, "Read!" I said, "What shall I read?"

Then he pressed me with it so tightly that I thought it was death; then he let me go and said, "Read!" I said, "What shall I read?"

Then he pressed me with it again so that I thought it was death; then he let me go and said, "Read!" I said, "What shall I read?"

He pressed me with it the third time so that I thought it was death and said, "Read!" I said, "What then shall I read?".....

"Read in the name of thy Lord who created,
Who created man of blood coagulated.
Read! Thy Lord is the most beneficent,
who taught by the reed pen,
Taught that which they knew not unto men."
So I read it, and he departed from me.

And I awoke from my sleep, and it was as though these words were written on my heart. T. Now none of God's creatures was more hateful to me than an (ecstatic) poet or a man possessed: I could not even look at them. I thought, Woe is me poet or possessed—Never shall Quraysh say this of me! I will go to the top of the mountain and throw myself down that I may kill myself and gain rest.

So I went forth to do so and then when I was midway on the mountain, I heard a voice from heaven saying, "O Muhammad! you are the apostle of God and I am Gabriel."

I raised my head towards heaven to see (who was speaking), and lo, Gabriel in the form of a man with feet

astride the horizon, saying, "O Muhammad! thou art the apostle of God and I am Gabriel."

I stood gazing at him (T. And that turned me from my purpose) moving neither forward nor backward; then I began to turn my face away from him, but towards whatever region of the sky I looked, I saw him as before.

And I continued standing there, neither advancing nor turning back, until Khadija sent her messengers in search of me and they gained the high ground above Mecca and returned to her while I was standing in the same place; then he parted from me and I from him, returning to my family.

And I came to Khadija and sat by her thigh and drew close to her.

Khadija said, "O Abu'lQasim, where hast thou been ? By God, I sent my messengers in search of you, and they reached the high ground above Mecca and returned to me."

(I said to her, "Woe is me poet or possessed." She said, "I take refuge in God from that O Abu'l Qasim. God would not treat you thus since he knows your truthfulness, your great trustworthiness, your fine character, and your kindness. This cannot be, my dear. Perhaps you did see something." "Yes, I did," I said.)

Then I told her of what I had seen; and she said, "Rejoice O son of my uncle, and be of good heart. Verily, by Him in whose hand is Khadija's soul, I have hope that thou wilt be the prophet of this people."

Then she rose and gathered her garments about her and set forth to her cousin Waraqa b. Naufal b. Asad b. 'Abdu'l'Uzza b. Qusayy, who had become a Christian and read the scriptures and learned from those that follow the Torah and the Gospel. And when she related to him what the apostle of God told her he had seen and heard, Waraqa cried, 'Holy! Holy! Verily by Him in whose hand is Waraqa's soul, if thou hast spoken to me the truth, O Khadija, there hath come unto him the greatest Namus who came to Moses afore time, and lo, he is the prophet of this people. Bid him be of good heart.' So Khadija returned to the apostle of God and told him what Waraqa had said. (T. and that calmed his fears somewhat.) And when the apostle of God had finished his period of seclusion and returned (to Mecca), in the first place he performed the circumambulation of the Ka'ba, as was his wont. While he was doing it,

Waraqa met him and said, 'O son of my brother, tell me.....etc...etc.."

Notes on loose sheets found by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau and inserted by them at this place.

The text itself (what shall I read?) asserts that Muhammad could or knew how read, since the angel Gabriel commanded Muhammad to read the verses he showed him. For the Muslim, it is simply a miracle: before each meeting with Archangel Gabriel, Muhammad could not read, and after each

meeting, he could not read anymore. Reasoning in the manner of Jehovah's Witnesses (the miracle of Gibeon, the wife of Abraham and the Pharaoh, etc.).

The question that arises from reading these rather surprising verses of the Quran and hadith nevertheless is the following: was Muhammad in his daily life illiterate or could he read?

If non-Muslim writings are examined, there is no doubt about the answer. Sebeos, an Armenian bishop wrote about 660 a History of Heraclius, thirty years after the facts therefore, and not more than two hundred, as the Muslim texts that report the illiteracy of their prophet; and this history contains the following phrase: "

"At that time a certain man from among those same sons of Ismael, whose name was Mahmet [i.e., Muhammad], a merchant, as if by God's command appeared to them as a preacher [and] the path of truth. He taught them to recognize the God of Abraham, especially because he was learned and informed in the history of Moses."

But a man can hardly be illiterate when he is very well educated and familiar with the story of Moses, that is, the Torah. This idea is defensible only for Muslims who limit themselves to a self-referential background. As soon as we leave this background, it becomes clear that the illiteracy of Muhammad at the time is a late idea, invented in imitation of Christians by various commentators, to give credibility to the Quran. It is just another additional aberration in traditional Muslim history 1).

Other troubling Quranic verses. Chapter 44, verses 1-5.

"H. M. By the Scripture that makes plain, lo! We revealed it on a blessed night "

This chapter begins with two letters apparently meaningless, the letter H (a) and the letter M (im), which are probably not part of the supposed recitation; but involve an already written text (letters written on a leaf to be used to classify it?)

The epithet ummi, attributed to Muhammad in the Quran (verse 157 of chapter 7, Al Araf): "The ummi prophet whom they find mentioned among them in the Torah and the Gospel"; does not mean "who cannot read," but "who is not one of the people of the Book." As a trader, Muhammad had to know how to read and write, at least a few words, and sign. Ummi prophet therefore simply means "Prophet sent to the Ummiyin" (plural of "Ummmi") that is to say to the Arabs who do not know the Scriptures. From there, the tradition embroidered (this reaction can be understood).

Still in shock, Muhammad would have returned home trembling, and should have been wrapped in a blanket with the help of his wife, before being able to calm down, then tell him everything. Khadija calmed Muhammad and then led him - according to Baladhuri, sent him with Abu Bakr - to Waraqa ibn Nawfal ibn Asad bin Abd Al-Uzza. This man, who was Khadija's paternal cousin, could write and even translated into Arabic passages from the Bible. So it was probably a Christian (Nestorian?) bishop. At that time, he had become blind because already very old: "O Cousin, Khadija would have told him, listen to what your nephew will tell you ." And Muhammad would have told him everything. Waraqa would have said...

Sahih Bukhari volume 1 book 1 hadith 3.

"This is the same Namus who keeps the secrets whom God had sent to Moses. I wish I were young and could live up to the time when your people would turn you out." God's Apostle asked, "Will they drive me out?" Waraqa replied in the affirmative and said, "Anyone who came with something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility; and if I should remain alive till the day when you will be turned out then I would support you strongly." But after a few days, Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused (sic?) for a while etc.etc."

The Arabic word "namus" is generally taken as meaning Gabriel, among pious Muslims, but the word comes from the Greek nomos, which means "law," and thus refers to the Law of Moses or the Torah without more. Once again, let's repeat it, the name of Gabriel will appear only much later (in two Medinan chapters, 2: 97 and 66: 4).

As we have had the opportunity to say, some clues make think of a Nestorian or Manichean bishop Waraqa. There were indeed Manichaeans in Mecca at that time. According to the official Muslim tradition, for instance, one of the main opponents of the nascent Islam, Abu Sufyan would have been polytheistic, like all pre-Islamic Mecca.

But Ibn Habib (Kitab al Muhabbar) contradicts this assertion because he places him in a list of "zindiq (=Manichaeans) of the tribe of the Quraysh." As Abu Sufyan was one of the chief Quraysh leaders, and that his son Muawiya later became caliph, that other members of the tribe were also Manichaeans; it is not impossible that Manicheism played a certain role in the development of Islam.

Luckily for the new doctrine, the character of Waraqa disappears very quickly from the tradition, to the point that we may wonder about its reality. Tradition has done everything to hide him quickly and nowadays few Muslims know Waraqa. According to these legends, he was nevertheless a "prodromos," a scout, like John the Baptist in the birth of Christianity.

All that can be learned from this set of legends as simplistic and confused as the text by Ibn Ishaq is that there were therefore probably Christians in Muhammad's own family by marriage. And that the discoverer of the last prophet of God was his wife, since it is she who first identified, with certainty, the supernatural being appeared to her husband, as being Archangel Gabriel; (at least according to the apocryphal, again let's repeat it, Muslim tradition). Since she had Judeo-Christian parents, she was quickly convinced that the creature was an angel and not a jinn, as Muhammad himself considered at first. If Khadija had not been more or less Christian, then Muhammad would have been just another Arab diviner, a kahin follower of the jinn worship, and in no way a new prophet of the God of Abraham, of Isaac and Jacob.

1) This epithet (ummi) is the exact equivalent of the Goyim or "Gentiles" of the Bible, the ummiyun it is not the people who cannot read but the people who do not have sacred texts, devoid of Scriptures and who, like the druids of old, feared to fix in writing and for eternity their religious tradition because (they said) "The spirit gives life but the letter kills."

AN ATTEMPT AT RATIONAL ANALYSIS BY A FENIAN WHO HAS READ SEVERAL BOOKS AND NOT ONE.

We will never insist indeed enough on our will not to be men of one book, but of at least of twelve books like the Fenians from Ireland, for obvious reasons of open-mindedness, truth being our only religion. We will therefore allow ourselves here to mention others of them.

Muhammad apparently knows what a majnun or "injinned" is. He has probably already had the opportunity to see some of them? and he knows their characteristics. That's why he thinks to see a jinn similar to those of the thousand and one nights. Of course this was unthinkable for his wife, the respectable Khadija, and she will do everything to make this situation evolve in another direction; by repeating everywhere, to neighbors, to relatives and, of course, to Muhammad himself, that it could only be the Archangel Gabriel sent by the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Hence this chapter of the future Quran, probably due to her influence, chapter 68: " Nun. By the pen and that which they write (therewith), you are not, for your Lord's favor unto you, a madman! "

In short, in summary: Muhammad thinks he is majnun, injinned or possessed, and everyone or almost except Khadija, think the same thing in Mecca (chapter 68 verse 51: " Lo! he is indeed mad!")

It is important in this respect to emphasize that, according to Tabari also, Muhammad was so destabilized, even traumatized, by these first visions, that he climbed several times on rocks to try to commit suicide; but each time, the apparition prevented him from doing so, and repeated his message. This reassured him somewhat, and he would resume his daily activities. He sometimes slept in the courtyard of the Kaaba, and when he was pointed out, not without insistence, that his familiar spirit seemed to have abandoned him 1) , the mysterious supernatural power seems to have made a new attempt with another message.

"By the morning hours

And by the night when it is stillest,

Your Lord has not forsaken you nor does

He hate you."

(Quran 93, 1-4).

Some time passed, however, without the creature of light manifesting himself again, and Muhammad restarted his withdrawals at Hira. But the mysterious creature appeared to him again, and another revelation burst forth in his consciousness.

"O you enveloped in your cloak,

Arise and warn!

Your Lord magnify,

Your raiment purify,

Pollution shun!

And do not show favor, seeking worldly gain!

For the sake of thy Lord, be patient! "

(Quran chapter 74 verses 1-7.)

No longer able to bear this new vision than the first, Mahomet rushed a second time to his wife, shivering with cold or fever and asked for a blanket.

When he had come to his senses, and in accordance with what the voice asked him, at least according to him (God knows that we have always respected many these pathological cases in the manner of Joan of Arc, but that we are allowed nevertheless to doubt the divinity of the origin of these voices and of these aisingi or visions, which were perhaps only due, according to some today druids to epileptic attacks, as in the case of the majnun possessed by the jinns); he will begin to tell his visions to relatives.

In short, to conclude and in summary. The chroniclers of the Mohammedan legend therefore point out a momentary interruption (fatrah) of the revelation, after the first, or the first messages; and for a time there would have been only five Muslims. The family circle (Khadija his wife, Ali ben Abu Talib, his cousin, the future fourth caliph, his right-arm Zayd ben Haritha, a Christian slave from Ethiopia whom he had freed, and Khadija's cousin knowing the Jewish or Christian scriptures called Waraqa Ibn Nawfal as we have seen). At this point, Islam was still a family affair (Ali, the cousin and adopted son of Muhammad, was ten years old at the time) and his message was essentially mystical (the visions of Muhammad) or theological (discussions about God with the Christians of his wife's family).

For in the oldest Quranic chapters , there is no indication of who speaks, nor what the origin of these revelations is. The question that arises is: who speaks when Muhammad hears this voice ringing in him? (same dilemma with Abraham or Joan of Arc.)

The figure of the angel Gabriel, the messenger of the revelation, so present in the Muslim tradition, is indeed almost absent from the Quran where he is the subject of only three mentions, in late passages (chapter 2, verses 97-98, chapter 66, 4, chapter 81, verses 19 to 21).

But after discussions with his wife, Muhammad will nevertheless present himself afterwards an envoy of the God [of Abraham, Isaac, etc.]

1) Sahih Bukhari Vol. 6, Book 60, Hadith 475. Narrated Jundub bin Sufyan: Once God's Messenger became sick and could not offer his night prayer (Tahajjud) for two or three nights. Then a lady (the wife of Abu Lahab) came and said, "O Muhammad! I think that your Satan has forsaken you, for I have not seen him with you for two or three nights!" On that God revealed: 'By the forenoon, and by the night when it darkens, your Lord (O Muhammad) has neither forsaken you, nor hated you.' (93.1-3). In order to prove that the apparition in question was undoubtedly angel Gabriel and not a demon Muslim tradition resorts to the following puerile and childish or pornographic proof that we have already mentioned above.

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad. Guillaume. Page 107.

A freedman of the family of al Zubayr, told me on Khadija's authority that she said to the apostle of God, 'O son of my uncle, are you able to tell me about your visitant, when he comes to you?' ...

When Gabriel came to him, as he was wont, the apostle said to Khadija, 'This is Gabriel who has just come to me.' 'Get up, O son of my uncle,' she said, 'and sit by my left thigh.' The apostle did so, and she said, 'Can you see him?' 'Yes,' he said.

She said, 'Then turn round and sit on my right thigh.' He did so, and she said, 'Can you see him?'

When he said that he could she asked him to move and sit in her lap. When he had done this, she again asked if he could see him, and when he said yes, she disclosed her form and cast aside her veil while the apostle was sitting in her lap. Then she said, 'Can you see him still?' 'No.' She said, 'O son of my uncle, rejoice and be of good heart, by God he is an angel and not a satan.'

ATTEMPT AT RATIONALIZATION BY ALI SINA OF THE FFI.

The Physical Effects of Muhammad's Ecstatic Experiences:

Here is how Muhammad described his mystical experiences:

"The Revelation is always brought to me by an angel: sometimes it is delivered to me as the beating sound of the bell—and this is the hardest experience for me; but sometimes the angel appears to me in the shape of a human and speaks to me."

During the first revelation, there was no one with Muhammad, but later, when the same facts were repeated, there were witnesses; and during the twenty-three years that followed, a greater or less number of his faithful could observe him at that moment.

Sometimes he would stay motionless as if some terribly heavy load was pressed on him and, even in the coldest day, drops of sweat would fall from his forehead. At other times he would move his lips. Ibn Sa'd says, "at the moment of inspiration, anxiety pressed upon the Prophet, and his countenance was troubled" [1]

"He fell to the ground like one intoxicated or overcome by sleep; and in the coldest day his forehead would be bedewed with large drops of perspiration. Inspiration descended unexpectedly, and without any previous warning." [2]

"Then God's Apostle returned, the muscles between his neck and shoulders were trembling till he came upon Khadija (his wife) and said, "Cover me!" (They covered him) and when the state of fear was over" [3] and [4].

All these are symptoms of Temporal Lobe Epilepsy. The following is a partial list of the Temporal Lobe Seizure Symptoms & Signs.

Illusions or hallucinations: hearing voices when no one has spoken, seeing luminous patterns, lights, beings or objects that aren't there.

Muscle contractions. Muscle cramps are involuntary and often painful contractions of the muscles which produce a hard, bulging muscle.

Abdominal pain or discomfort.

Sudden, intense emotion such as fear.

Abnormal mouth behaviors.

Abnormal head movements

Sweating.

Flushed face.

Rapid heart rate and pulse.

Changes in vision, speech, thought, awareness, personality.

Loss of memory (amnesia) regarding events around the seizure.

All the above symptoms were present in Muhammad during the moments that he was allegedly receiving revelations.

He had visions (hallucinations) of seeing an angel or a light and of hearing voices.

He experienced bodily spasms and excruciating abdominal pain and discomfort.

He was overwhelmed by sudden emotions of anxiety and fear

He had twitching in his neck muscles.

He had uncontrollable lip movement

He sweated even during cold days.

His face flushed.

He had rapid heart palpitation.

He had loss of memory.

It is also interesting to note that Muhammad's hallucination was not limited to seeing the Angel Gabriel but he also claimed to see jinns and even on one occasion while praying in the mosque he started struggling with an imaginary person and later said, "Last night an afreet from the jinns came to me and wanted to interrupt my prayers but God enabled me to overpower him. I wanted to fasten him to one of the pillars of the mosque so that all of you could see him in the morning but I remembered the statement of my brother Solomon (as stated in Quran): My Lord! Forgive me and bestow on me a kingdom such as shall not belong to anybody after me (38.35)." The sub narrator Rauh said: "The demon was dismissed humiliated." (Bukhari Volume 1 Book 8 Number 450).

Muhammad's belief in Satan was such that he seemed to think that not even he is immune from his whisperings.

Case known as Satanic verses.

One of the most embarrassing events in Muhammad's prophetic career occurred indeed when Satan put words in his mouth.

Tabari volume 6 page 108: "When the messenger of God saw how his tribe turned their backs on him and was grieved to see them shunning the message he had brought to them from God, he longed in his soul that something would come to him from God which would reconcile him with his tribe. With his love for his tribe and his eagerness for their welfare, it would have delighted him if some of the difficulties which they made for him could have been smoothed out, and he debated with himself and fervently desired such an outcome.

Then God revealed: "By the Star when it sets, your comrade does not err, nor is he deceived; nor does he speak out of (his own) desire...(Quran 53: 1-3) and when he came to the words: Have you thought upon al-Lat and al-Uzza and Manat, the third, the other?

Satan cast on his tongue, because of his inner debates and what he desired to bring to his people, the words:

"These are the high-flying cranes; verily their intercession is accepted with approval.

The Quraysh left delighted by the mention of their gods. Amity was restored and the news of that reached the followers of Muhammad who at his behest had migrated to Abyssinia and some of them returned. Muhammad realizing the consequence of this is giving up on his monopoly on God and the contradiction that it entails, claimed those verses and his God consoled him saying, "Never did We send a messenger or a prophet before thee, but, when he framed a desire, Satan threw some vanity into his desire: but God will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in, and God will confirm His Signs: for God is full of Knowledge and Wisdom": 22:52.

In the Quran there are several mentions of jinns. Surah 72 narrates a conversation between jinns where they comment about the Quran, call it "a wonderful Recital" and convert to Islam. Their role is described as prying into the secrets of heaven and eavesdropping to the conversation of the exalted assembly. Which since the apparition of Muhammad, they found it filled with stern guards and flaming fires. "We used, indeed, to sit there in (hidden) stations, to steal a hearing"; Quran quotes one jinn saying to others, "but any who listen now will find a flaming fire watching him in ambush. And we do not understand whether ill is intended to those on earth, or whether their Lord (really) intends to guide them to right conduct."

It is therefore not difficult to see that Muhammad suffered from Temporal Lobe Epilepsy. In fact, this TLE was just one of his ailments. Mahomet suffered from other mental disorders and physical complications. I will speak about them in next future. The real miracle is in the fact that a billion people still follow a sick man for so long.

[1] Kitab al Waqidi p. 37. See also Bukhari 1: 1: 2.

[2] Bukhari 7, 71, 660.

[3] Bukhari 6, 60, 478.

[4] Bukhari 9,78.111.

[5] See also Bukhari 2, 22, 301.

[6] Tabari volume 6, page 107

[7] This is a little reminiscent of both the Elohim surrounding the highest father god, El, and the cherubs (kerubim) guarding the Garden of Eden.

ALLAH'S ASSUMPTION.

As for Allah there are only two possible solutions, and a third combining more or less the previous two as always.

Of course we exclude automatically at Mecca at that time an organized worship of the god of Abraham Isaac and Jacob.

In Yathrib / Medina perhaps, in Mecca no!

First solution or hypothesis C: there existed in Mecca a divine entity of this name or known by another name but corresponding well to this concept.

The problem now: the most famous deity in Mecca at the time seems to have been the moon god Hubal.

And she had what Islam quite disdainfully calls "some associates."

This notion of sharing the divinity, the worship or even a sanctuary was quite widespread, since it is also mentioned about Allah, unless, of course, it is an interpolation (the name of Hubal replaced by that of Allah?)

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam Introduction 5.

Among these devotional practices were [...] the veneration of the House and its circumambulation, the pilgrimage, the visitation or the lesser (al-umrah), the vigil (al-wuqul) on 'Arafah and [al-] Muzdalifah sacrificing she-camels, and raising acclamation of the name of the deity (tahlil) and the visitation, introducing there intoThus whenever the Nizar raised their voice the tahlil, they were wont to say:

"Here we are O Lord! Here we are! Here we are!

You have no associate save one who is yours

You have dominion over him and over what he possesses. "

They would thus declare His unity through the talbiyah and at the same tune associate their gods with Him placing their affairs in His hands. [.....] In other words, they would not declare His unity (through the knowledge of His rightful dues), without associating with Him some of His own creatures. It is at least an incontestable tendency to henotheism.

Allah would have been therefore a very secondary god, present everywhere but inferior, lost among the 360 idols of the kaaba, hypothesis B.

And just such a god exists. What is generally not known is that Allah is (also) a god of seamen, because Mecca is close to the sea (Jeddah is its port), its inhabitants can sail as much as they ride their camels. Seafarers, because of the dangers they incur, often constitute a population very subject to expectations of a religious nature. Outside their city, they are detached from their usual deities, and more inclined to have such ideas. Muhammad therefore uses appropriate images.

Muhammad, Quran 29: 65.

And when they mount upon the ships they pray to Allah, making their faith pure for Him only (but when He brings them safe to land, behold! they ascribe partners unto Him).

Muhammad, Quran 17: 66-67.

Your Lord is He Who drives for you the ship upon the sea that you may seek of His bounty....

And when harm touches you upon the sea, all unto whom you cry (for succor) fail save Him (alone), but when He brings you safe to land, you turn away, for man was ever thankless.

The Quran nevertheless presents, in several verses, seldom mentioned, another idea of Allah : a traditional god, linked to the atmospheric elements, common to the whole of the Near East.

Ibn Ishaq The life of Muhammad Alfred Guillaume page 36.

Khawlan had a god called Ammanas.....They used to divide their cattle between him and Allah. If any of Allah's portion which they had earmarked for him came into Ammanas's portions, they left it to him; but if any of Ammanas's portion was in Allah's portion they returned it to him.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 38.

They were a clan of the Khawlan called..... Concerning them the following verse was revealed.

"They set apart a portion of the cattle which God hath produced, and say, 'This for God' and these for our associates. But that which was for these associates of theirs, comes not to God; yet that which was for God comes to their associates."

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 37.

They were wont to set apart a portion of their livestock property and give one part to this idol and the other to Allah. Whatever portion of the part allotted to Ammanas made its way to the part set aside for Allah they would restore to the idol; but whatever portion of the part consecrated to God made its way to the part allotted to the idol they would leave to the idol.

For the record here below what true philosophical and thought out monotheism inspires. "Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way because I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I accept it. I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend, is in me, and I am also a friend to him" (Bhagavad Gita 9: 23-29, dialogue between the god Krishna/Vishnu and prince Arjuna).....

IN SUMMARY ALLAH WAS A DEITY KNOWN BY THESE TRIBES BUT HE WAS NOT THEIR MAIN GOD. THE ASSOCIATE, IT WAS ALLAH.

This would place Muhammad unknowingly in the footsteps of St. Paul and the Agnostos Theos in Athens.

Acts of the Apostles 17: 22-31.

" Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god. So you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

"The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. From one man he made all the nations that they should inhabit the whole earth and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being. As some of your own poets have said, 'We are his offspring, etc. etc.'"

If Allah was originally only a very minor and almost anonymous god of the Meccan pantheon, this explains the vast movement of rejection hostile to his elevation as a god above all the other gods. SEE THE PLACE OF ALL OTHER GODS, from the fellow tribesmen of Islam's prophet.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al-Asnam 28.

When God sent His Prophet, who came preaching the Unity of God and calling for His worship alone without any associate, the Arabs said, "Makes he the god to be but one God? A strange thing forsooth is this." They had in mind the deities they used to associate with God.

Second solution hypothesis A: it is a synthesis deity gradually elaborated by Muhammad following his personal reflections or his borrowing from other pagan or Judeo-Christian, worships.

Let's not forget that the Arabic name for "God" is the word "Al-ilah." It was a generic title for whatever god was considered the highest god. Different Arab tribes used the word "Allah" to refer to their personal high god.

Allah therefore does not seem to be a proper noun at first, but a common name meaning "what is divine, the divinity, the nature common to all the gods."

THE ATTEMPT AT SYNTHESIS A (LIKE ALLAH).

To fully understand the true character of this deity, it is necessary to resort to a geographical census of the occurrences of this common noun out of any Islamic context, thus having nothing to do with the preaching of Muhammad.

Possibly the oldest attestation for the name Allah is found at Qaryat al-Faw (the capital of Kinda) in the inscription of Igl (dating to the 1st century).

"Igl son of Haf'am constructed for his brother Rabibil son of Haf'am the tomb: both for him and for his child and his wife, and his children and their children's children and womenfolk, free members of the folk Ghalwan. And he has placed it under the protection of (the gods) Kahl and Lah and 'Athtar al-Shariq from anyone strong or weak, and anyone who would attempt to sell or pledge it, for all time without any derogation, so long as the sky produces rain or the earth herbage."

When Muhammad addressed his opponents using the name of Allah, he did so simply because Allah also meant something, and something important to them. If this had not been the case, no dialogue, even a confrontational one, would have been possible between them, and their attention would not have been drawn to Muhammad's ideas on the question.

Let us keep still in mind that when Muhammad began to use the name of Allah; there were immediate heated debates among the inhabitants of Mecca on this subject. The use of this term by Muhammad provoked many stormy quarrels about the nature of this god, between the prophet of Islam and unbelieving or non-believing infidels (kuffar), as can be seen fully in the Quran itself.

It is for these reasons that we find in his Quran the most important things of the previous beliefs and rituals, changed in such a minimal way that we easily recognize the bases of the previous system. The thing is indisputable as to the rites. But we must have the courage to affirm it, or to admit it also about the ideas of the divine.

As we have already had the opportunity to see it, but considering the importance of the thing we will never repeat it enough; before the gap year of his apparitions, the behavior of Muhammad was therefore strictly pagan. The author of the Quran lived the first forty years of his life by accepting the norms of the spirituality known as "pagan" from which he drew the elements of his initial doctrine, he did not stand against him until a few years later.

As we have also seen in our first books (the Irish legend of the semi-god hesus Cuchulainn, the dodecahedron, etc.) the pagans hypostatized (hypostatized and not apostatized) the attributes of the divinity by customizing them. This has been very well recognized (in his own way) by Tabari in commenting on verse 180 of chapter 7. (Tabari, Tafsir 7/180.) "Their blasphemy, with regard to the names of God, consisted in diverting them from the use that was theirs and applying them to a deity and their idols while adding or removing something from it. So they gave to one of them the name of al-Lat that they did come from the name of Allah (reserved for God); to another the name of Uzza, which they made come from this other name of God, which is al-Aziz.

As for the relations of the Oneness and the Multiplicity, the natural movement of the pagan soul was therefore descending and centrifugal, starting from the unity or the center to go towards the multiplicity of the manifestations of being. What was running in their intellectual constructions were the personal gods, the particularisms.

Muhammad will try to do the opposite, without succeeding fully nevertheless. See the different designs of tawhid among the Mutazili theologians: oneness of lordship oneness of worship oneness in the names and attributes (which do not all go automatically and necessarily very well together by definition: for example there can be oneness of lordship without oneness in names and attributes, without oneness in worship, etc.).

Now what are the consequences or implications of the fact that the name Allah, not only was known to both parties (Muhammad as well as the Meccans who did not share his ideas), but that it was also used by them in their mutual polemics? The mere fact that the name Allah was common to both pagan Arabs and Muslims, and that this frequently gave rise to many controversies about the idea of this god that could be made; seems to suggest that there was initially a common interpretation grid making possible, although not very easy, a minimum of dialogue between the two parties. Otherwise there could have been no debate or discussion about it.

In pre-Islamic times, each tribe had its god, but the list of divine beings, and especially the importance they could have, varied greatly from one tribe to another. The most important of them should be known everywhere in the peninsula.

The worship of a deity simply designated by a term meaning "the god" (al-ilah) was widespread from southern Syria to northern Arabia in pre-Islamic times. The Islamic shahada (there is no god but God) proves it indirectly.

The name Allah comes from al-ilah, a term that has become the generic title of any god considered locally superior. El Illah is everywhere present, in many sanctuaries, as local god, or generic and almost anonymous term designating the divinity.

We find equivalents of the god Allah in the various Semitic polytheisms, Il among the Assyrian-Babylonians, El among the Phoenicians and Canaanites, Elohim or Eloah among the Hebrews. This makes it possible to reconstruct a common Semitic god, L, probably worshiped over 5,000 years ago. The relationship between this name, which in Babylon and Assyria became a generic name simply meaning "god"; and the Arabic word ilah, which became more familiar to us in the form Allah, made of the definite article "al" and of ilah, through elision of the vowel "i"; are not clear. Some scholars bring this name from the illah of southern Arabia, a title of the moon god, but it is an archeological point of view subject to caution. What is clear is that in some Nabatean or other, inscriptions, Allah simply means "God."

He is a god known by all the tribes, who consider him each time as specific and particular, familiar and daily. In very diverse regions, unified by an Arab settlement and often language, it is the "topical" god who is honored: that of the shrine, the village, the place, or the one that you like to find there. But he is also commonly associated with other deities. Every Arab tribe also used this term to describe their god. This is why Hubal /Hobal was also referred to as the title of Allah in the city of Mecca.

This aspect of the idea of the Divine among the Arabs is not disputed by Muhammad in his first "revelations." He deals only much later with the question of the divine oneness, under the influence of the Jewish and Christian doctrines, and to establish theologically his message.

Now since it is a god of the Kaaba in Mecca (Hubal, Allah?) that Muhammad worships in the manner of the hierarchized polytheism or henotheism, at the beginning of his preaching, let us examine a little longer his divine attributes, epithets or epicleses. The subsequent importance of Allah in the Muslim design of the divine imposes on us a detailed treatment of the subject.

It is not difficult to follow the Quran to find all the characteristics of the deity once worshiped by the Meccans. Muhammad's speech is based on the common knowledge: first, to remind the Meccans of their traditional belief, to make it after that evolve to his advantage and almost behind their back. We thus have a very complete picture of the ancestral Meccan deity and his various remits. Rabb is the word used by Muhammad at the beginning of his preaching, much more than the term "Allah" afterwards. For a Meccan, this word actually evoked the idea of supernatural power better than that of Allah, too abstract or general. Originally, the Rabb is the lord of a place: the power that dominates a place and makes it a sanctuary. MUHAMMAD'S GOD IS THEREFORE...

RABB HAZILHIL BALADAT.

"The lord of the city": the poliadiic deity of ancient Mecca.

Muhammad, Quran 27: 91.

"I am commanded only to serve the Lord of this city which He has hallowed."

RABB al HADHAL BAYT.

"The Lord of the House": this topical title is undoubtedly the closest to the religious reality of the time of Muhammad. We can find its confirmation in the chapter 106 : 3 known of the Quraysh.

" So let them worship the Lord of this House, Who has fed them against hunger and hath made them safe from fear."

RABB al KAABA.

The documents prove that the god of Kaaba will still be honored by the Arabs under his original name, long after the beginning of the preaching of Muhammad.

RABB AL ALAMINA.

"The lord of the worlds." Lord of the worldS and not Lord of the world.

Muhammad Quran 26 : 77.

"Lo! they are (all) an enemy unto me, save the Lord of the Worlds,

Muhammad, Quran 44: 7.

"There is no God save Him.

He quickens and gives death;

your Lord (rabb) and Lord (rabb) of your forefathers"

The whole ideological effort of Muhammad will therefore consist in merging under one and the same banner, under one and the same name, vague at will (in the beginning, Allah is the simple contraction of El illah: the divinity; in the Semitic languages, "the one to whom worship is paid," especially so that the rain falls, in these arid environments) the multiple deities of the hierarchized polytheism in Mecca. The verses 39 and 40 of the chapter on the pilgrimage (the chapter 22) are, moreover, explicit on this subject; they show us the equating that Muhammad makes between the god lord of the Kaaba (rabb al

kaaba) and the superior deity in general (God). " Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and God is indeed able to give them victory; Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they said: Our Lord is God."

Answer of the pious Muslims. "Islam has never been influenced by its environment of origin since it is a religion of which God himself has determined the rules to reform the human status, set principles, dogma and goals" .

Answer from the Fenians or men of twelve books and not of one.

1.The most important thing is not to believe that God is One, but the idea we have of His nature.

2.Is the Quranic idea of God the continuation of the pre-Islamic Arab idea, or does it represent a complete break with the past? Are there essential or fundamental , not simply accidental, links, between the two divine designs evoked by the same name, or is God simply a common noun evoking different things?

3.To esteem that Islam, as Muhammad has established it, was from the outset a monotheism, is to show a dismaying blind conformity which is a real insult to human intelligence.....

Many execrated deities as in the Jewish Bible are quoted in the Quran, and it is obvious that the whole effort of Muhammad will then consist in melting them into the name and the traditional figure kept by him as a last resort.

As we have had already the opportunity to say, but repeating is the strongest of the figures of speech, this effort of oneness appears through the long enumeration of attributes or epicleses, the delegation of power to other entities, the details of its material appearance; even to finish the long hesitation, which will probably last several years, between the names of Allah, Rabb or Rahman.

1 Rabb: the lord. The Lord of the House, in other words, the Kaaba. This topical title is undoubtedly the closest to the cultic reality of that time. The lord is the god with whom the believer maintains a favored, if not mystical, relationship. This is not at this time a demonstration of philosophical and thought out monotheism: in the traditional henotheistic system, it is normal that some choose to favor this or that power.

2 The Rahman.

The Merciful is the traditional name of Yahweh for the Jews in south Arabia. It is therefore not popular in Mecca. One of the chapters of the Quran shows that Muhammad has not yet definitively chosen between the two gods at the time. Quran 17: 110. Cry unto Allah, or cry unto the Beneficent (Rahman), unto whichsoever you cry (it is the same). His are the most beautiful names.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MOVEMENT.

The following part will deal with the beginning of the preaching of Muhammad, within his small homeland, Mecca, within his tribe and his clan. His religious activity will gradually lead to the formation of a sect in the etymological sense of the term. The documents show that his apostolate is then strictly limited to the borders of his city; the universal ambition inspired from the figure of Abraham came only much later, thanks to a combination of factors: his meeting with the Jews of Yathrib / Medina.

PORTRAIT OF SOME CONVERTS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING AND THEREFORE NOT OF THE KIND ABU SUFYAN FATHER OF THE 5TH CALIPH MU'AWIYA 1ST .

Let us remember for the record that the hero of the initiatory romance heading Gospel the Nazarene high Rabbi Jesus, as far as he is concerned, failed to convince a single member of his family (even his brother James of Jerusalem believed only half) and that he is presented to us directly beginning his public preaching (in Capernaum in Galilee around the year 30) which will end about 2 years later in Jerusalem.

It is also important to begin to remember that the beginning of the apostolate of Muhammad contains no attack against idols; it is a period of his life when the new prophet may still hope for a compromise solution with the aristocracy of the Quraysh.

In addition to his wife Khadija and his cousin Ali it goes without saying that we can quote Hamza.

This paternal uncle of Muhammad himself is already a personality well known in Mecca for his courage, his skill and his excessive taste for wine: he is a character quite in the spirit of the Jahiliya. He will then place his choleric temperament in the service of Muhammad of whom he carries the protection out, by tribal solidarity and spirit of adventure. He is the most famous shahid of Islam: his death at the battle of Uhud will make him a true hero for all Muslim generations to come. The spiciest is that he is not really Muslim, and it is only by his heroic death finally that he will become a little bit Muslim, and for real. If he had not been as effective on the military level, no doubt he would eventually swell the ranks of the "hypocrites," the opponents of Muhammad). In a word, a heroic character, stupid, but sympathetic, of the kind that is useful to all causes, good or bad, and that plunges into it completely, without thinking.

Abu Bakr, two years older than Muhammad. He will be nicknamed as-siddiq (the very sincere). His daughter Aisha will become the favorite wife of Muhammad. He will succeed him as the first caliph. The wealth of Abu Bakr, which is also immense, will often be very useful to Muhammad (it is for example on a camel belonging to him that he will be able to take refuge in Yathrib / Medina). What would become Islam without the financial means of Abu Bakr, no one knows?

Conversion followed by a few dozen others, including his future successors to the caliphate, Osman ben Affan, grandson of Abd el Muttalib, also father-in-law of Muhammad (who married his daughter Hafsa).

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas: another relative of Muhammad. He was a very early Muslim (perhaps even the third if he joined really at the same time as Abu Bakr). His mother threatened to eat nothing until he returned to the religion of his ancestors, which he had just apostatized, but vainly.

I saw myself third in Islam; no one accepted Islam before me, and for seven days I was one third of Islam. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas was the first to shoot an arrow during a jihad (Bukhari, Muslim). It will be he who will command the Muslim troops during the battle that will take place a few years later in Cadesia against the Sasanian Persian Empire in 637.

Zayd.

He is a slave of Khadija, of the Christian tribe of the Banu Kalb. Khadija had offered him to Muhammad. At the very beginning of the preaching, he converts and is then freed, then adopted. He will remain, however, his servant and his secretary: dealing as well with the transcription of the Quranic revelations as the distribution of the booty, functions that he will fulfill until the caliphate. His character was ridiculed by the French Toland, Voltaire, in his "Mahomet": he made him the very type of the fanatical and narrow-minded servant. Hence the French term seide.

Bilal.

There will also be the Christian Bilal Ibn Rabah, better known as Bilal Al-Habashi (from Abyssinia). A black slave from Ethiopia who will become the first muezzin of Islam. Curious character besides that Bilal. Is not muezzin indeed who wants! Second personality of the Muslim priesthood, the muezzin is always chosen for his great knowledge in worship; that is why he can at any time replace the imam to direct prayer. If Bilal really occupied this function, especially during the first years of Islam, it is, no doubt, because he was more educated and more literate than other companions and future successors of Muhammad. The ways of God are perhaps mysterious, but they cannot explain by themselves by what miracle a slave may have acquired such an instruction! His father Rabah was a slave in the Banu Jumuh clan. His mother, Hamamah, was a high-ranking Christian Ethiopian captive. Therefore Rabah was not anyone. He distinguished himself from others by his high morality, his

irreproachable behavior, and his unequalled integrity. So he had been entrusted with the supervision of the property of the tribe. He was probably also a Christian and more or less literate.

Bilal was bought by Abu Bakr, who had freed him at the time of his conversion. He becomes then the personal servant of Muhammad. Because of his origins, he will never get any position of responsibility, despite his intimacy with the prophet.

Abd al Rahman ibn Awf. Before his conversion, his name was Abdu Amru. He was among the first eight people to convert to Islam. When he too arrived at Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad gave him as a brother in religion Saad Ibn al Rabi, who offered him half of his property; and one of his wives (yes, at that time women were something that they found natural to give or to exchange). But Abd al Rahman declined the offer (the woman in question was perhaps not very attractive) and he simply asked where the market of the city was. He went there and settled there. In a short time, he became the richest storekeeper in Yathrib / Medina. When he died, he left 1,000 camels, 1,000 horses, and 3,000 goats. To each of the survivors of the Battle of Badr still alive, he gave 400 dinars.

Abu Ubaydah ibn Al Jarrah: the ninth to follow Mohammed. His father had remained pagan, but God "guided" his mother. He emigrated twice, to Abyssinia then to Yathrib / Medina, and participated personally in all the expeditions commanded by Muhammad. During the battle of Badr in 624, he fought against his own father. He lost two of his incisors by trying to remove the helmet of Muhammad wounded with a sword.

When Umar appointed him to replace Khalid ibn Walid, he told the Syrians, "Here is the guardian of the Ummah"; perhaps referring to the words of Muhammad related by Anas: ""In every community there exists a man worthy of all trust and the trustworthy of this community is Abu 'Ubaidah"(Muslim). Under the reign of the first two caliphs, he commanded the Muslim armies of Syria, Iraq, and Palestine. These first individual conversions, peaceful and private, do not cause any problem to the inhabitants of Mecca, but everything will change in 612.

PUBLIC PREACHING (612-613).

The year 612 or 613 is a crucial year in the development of Islam, a real turning point.

All these ideas that he borrowed from Jews and Christians or even from Manicheans or Magi of Zoroastrianism Muhammad will now to bring them out or regurgitate them by proclaiming himself publicly and without hiding, sent from God! After three years of semi-secrecy, three long years of secret meetings or secret initiatives, the revelations are resuming and following each other from now on (while nevertheless resembling each other strongly, a classic phenomenon of repetition). The whole over at least twenty years.

About thirty faithful attend meetings held in the house of one of them, Al-Argam, to listen to or comment on the visions of Muhammad, or to pray. Adoration was, from the beginning indeed, a distinctive trait of the Muslim community. See the various orders addressed in the oldest passages of the Quran to Muhammad, especially the second ("Your Lord magnify, Your raiment purify!" 74: 3-4) or to Mankind (87:15). The Muslims even stayed up during a part of the night for this purpose at first (Chapter 73: 1-4). These more or less secret meetings were based on word of mouth, with a few exceptions, of course.

In 612 therefore a revelation orders Muhammad to "warn your tribe of near kindred" (Quran 26: 214). Finally, at least according to the doctors of the Muslim faith themselves, let's repeat it!

Muhammad would then have gathered all the members of his clan, and invited them to recognize him as a messenger of God. But Abou Lahab, one of his uncles, would have cut him off by shouting at him: "Is that why you made us come?". And the meeting would have ended immediately.

Editor's note. There has been very little study of the case of opponents of Muhammad. It is to be said that those who did not submit to him often ended badly.

Two characters will stand out nevertheless in this crowd from the beginning:

- Abu Lahab, "the father of the flame," who became the leader of the Hashim clan on the death of Abu Talib, who has the honor of being cursed by Muhammad even in the Quranic text.

- Amr ibn Hisham nicknamed Abu Jahl, "the father of the Ignorance," who heads the Quraysh clan of Makhzum (he will be killed at the Battle of Badr in 624).

N.B. One may doubt the real existence in the flesh of such individuals, and especially Abu Jahl, whose nickname is a little too good to be true (Jahiliyya= Ignorance).

In 613 Muhammad has a new hallucination: "So proclaim that which thou art commanded, and withdraw from the idolaters" (Quran 15, 94). He therefore decides to make proclaim everywhere in the city by these early Muslims (30 or 40 people) the content of the aforementioned revelations. (See later, beyond the centuries, the 95 theses of Luther, in 1517.)

At this level of his preaching, as we have written, the invoked deity is not "God" in the monotheistic sense of the term; there is no proclamation of oneness, no rejection of other gods, no universalism either.

On the contrary, the mentions of the "Lord" and of Mecca, lead to the most obvious statement, which must be repeated endlessly: at this stage of the revelation it can be, only the Lord of the Kaaba in Mecca.

Chapter 28 shows clearly that Muhammad, at least in the beginning, felt to be sent only to the Arabs. "And you were not beside the Mount [Sinai, with Moses] when We did call; but (the knowledge of it is) a mercy from your Lord that you may warn a folk unto whom no warner came before you, that haply they may give heed?"

As we have already had the opportunity to see, but considering the importance of the fact, we will repeat it; the epithet *ummi*, attributed to Muhammad in the Quran (verse 157 of chapter 7, Al Araf: "Those who follow the *ummi* messenger, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel which are) with them") does not mean "who can neither read nor write"; but "who is not one of the people of the Book". As a trader, Muhammad still had to know how to read and write, at least a few words. *Ummi* therefore simply means "Prophet sent to the *Ummiyin* (plural of "Ummi")" that is to say to the Arabs who do not know the Scriptures.

Besides the fact that it is obvious in this case, that the Lord in question is the protective god of the Kaaba of Mecca, and not the god of the Christian general Abrahah; what is obvious from all this is that these first revealed verses are very short, rhythmed, incantatory. The topics are few: the self-sufficiency of preaching, the absolute superiority of God compared with the miserable status of mankind, and the creation or end of the world.

Here the first of the fundamental problems arises.

The traditional Muslim hagiography presents to us the preaching of Muhammad as having immediately aroused strong reactions of rejection from the pagans of Mecca. But is that correct? At the beginning

there is no mention in the Quran of the oneness of God. The insistence to condemn idolatry will come only in a second time. And what is certain is that the verses of Medina do not postulate that the existence of God is ignored, whether it is by Muhammad or his audience. On the contrary, they take as their starting point the belief in a god called God.

According to William Montgomery Watt, the original message of Muhammad in Mecca was not such a radical criticism of paganism, and in no way formed a sudden and unexpected irruption of God's worship in his tribe. Muhammad probably addressed a people who already believed in a god named Allah or Al-Ilah. He only focused attention on this term and his worship. According to Watt, the name of Allah was not an invention, nor a revelation brought by Muhammad, because it existed for a very long time, even before Muhammad put it forward. But it is true that it was especially part of the language of the Christian Arabs. Muhammad may have borrowed it from them, especially during his trips to Syria or his discussions with them (or later with his wife and cousin Waraqa ibn Nawfal).

N.B. Christians also used the Greek word *kyrios*, lord; conveyed by *Rabb* in Arabic or by other names such as the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Good (the good God), etc.

The slogan of Muhammad: "There is no god but Allah" is probably more henotheistic than monotheistic at first, at least in the minds of those who listened to him. He means perhaps initially, for Muhammad or those to whom he addresses himself, the inhabitants of Mecca: "Of all the gods you worship, Allah is by far the most important." This slogan does not relate to the nature of Allah, but to his place in the pantheon.

Mecca was a haven for all kinds of religions, its inhabitants were tolerant. The 360 symbols or divine representations exhibited in their pantheon (the Kaaba) prove it. As open or positive secularism, we cannot do better! See also the *qissatu el gharaniq*. These controversial verses (what is certain is they do not appear in the current Quranic canon) are mentioned by Tabari. Muhammad seems to have more or less accepted at first the three main goddesses of the Arabic pantheon mentioned in the Quran, chapter 53, verses 19-20. See also chapter 6, verse 100, chapter 37, verses 149-153. That is to say Uzza, Lat and Manat or Manaf. Muhammad had also been careful not to touch the ancestral traditions; otherwise his enterprise would have been immediately doomed to failure: circumcision, polygamy, worship of the black stone, lunar calendar, sacrifices, immolations, talismans, amulets ... etc., etc.

Considering what happened next, it is indisputable that the choice of the name of Allah to mean God was an effective way to rally behind his cause all the Arab tribes living around Mecca.

The Quran word of Allah will preach the inaccessible mystery of this God, will list his names and attributes, will describe his actions. He is the creator, judge and redeemer. He does not beget and is not begotten. He is omnipotent, omniscient and lord of the worlds. In short! About the many powers of Allah according to Muhammad (dispenser of rain, creator, etc.) see the assessment we will make of them after Yathrib/Medina.

In Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad will therefore be content to make God pass from the status of secondary god of a pantheon, to that of single God of a monolatrous worship. It is extremely significant that Muhammad did not consider it necessary to make an entirely new deity; and that he more or less contented himself to clear the pagan god God from his associates (the other pagan deities) by subjecting him to a kind of dogmatic purification. The "more or less" is required, because the chapters of Archangel Gabriel on the subject are not very evident. In fact, there is only one sure thing: for Muhammad the jinns did exist really: they emanate from God, but are not pleasant to him. (Chapter 37 verse 158 and chapter 6 verse 100.)

As we have seen, a violent rejection of the initial message of Muhammad at this point is therefore incomprehensible on the part of the Quraysh.

Unless the object of this rejection was less the message itself than the person of the messenger. The personality of Muhammad will therefore be alluded in our next essays about Islam.

In fact, everything happens as if the tradition had deliberately dramatized the facts A POSTERIORI, in order to cast them into the mold of the accepted idea that any Judeo-Christian prophet is persecuted.

The argument in support of this hypothesis: the pseudo-prophecy attributed to the cousin of Khaija (Waraqa) warning Muhammad that he would be driven out of Mecca by his own fellow countrymen (does this remind you of something??) and which really looks like a post eventum (afterwards) prophecy.

According to the New Testament, Jesus was not very lucky in his conversion of crowds, the Gospels repeatedly emphasize the low number of converts. Muhammad had no more success, the Quran does not cease to deplore it. He is only mocked in his preaching (4: 140): "When you hear the revelations of God some reject and deride them."

The unbelievers are deaf to every word, every miracle (10 : 97): "They will not believe, though every token come unto them, till they see the painful doom." But God himself says it (11: 17): "Be not you in

doubt concerning this book. Lo! it is the Truth from your Lord; but most of mankind believe not." See also chapter 16 verse 24: "And when it is said unto them: What hath your Lord revealed ? they say: (Mere) fables of the men of old"; and also chapter 37, verses 14 and 15: "They seek to scoff when they behold a portent. And they say: Lo! this is mere magic ."

The teaching of the Quran paradoxically has the opposite effect of the one sought (17:41): "We verily have displayed Our warnings in this Quran that they may take heed, but it increases them in nothing save aversion. " Men remain desperately insensitive to any message (26, 5 to 8): "Never comes there unto them a fresh reminder from the Beneficent One, but they turn away from it. Lo! herein is indeed a portent; yet most of them are not believers.

We find in 43: 88, a confession of Muhammad on this subject: "And the prophet says: O my Lord! Lo! these are a folk who do not believe. "

What particularly shocked the people in the city, it was not so much the idea that there is a superior god above all the other gods, saints, angels or demons (God) even monotheism; but the notions of resurrection of the dead, then of judgment or hell, borrowed from Christians by Muhammad. The latter also announced a judgment to which all men, past, present, and future, would one day be submitted, and therefore which destined to hell, ancestors or parents dead in the error.

Said al-Andalusi himself (a qadi / judge of Toledo in the eleventh century), pointed out in his time that the novelty of the message of Muhammad did not lie in the Revelation of a higher God, God; whose distant existence already included in the pre-Islamic sensibility of Arabs, the multiplicity of gods and goddesses. It was especially in "the promise and the threat" of an imminent final judgment, a personal judgment, which broke with the notion of collective destiny of peoples. "We shall assemble them on the Day of Resurrection on their faces, blind, dumb and deaf; their habitation will be hell; whenever it abates, We increase the flame for them"(Chapter 17 verses 97-98). Muhammad often had emphasis that the Christian tradition would call "apocalyptic."

This insistence of Muhammad on the topic of the resurrection of the dead, and the notion of last Judgment, will arouse therefore the strongest reticence.

There are in the Quran echoes of this initial gap between Muhammad and the Meccans he wants to convince. The debate is focused around the question of the resurrection (36: 77-79, 37: 16-18, 56: 47-50) and the end of time (when will it come? 21:38-40).

What hurt the Meccans was the exclusive nature of his monotheism, which was by no means a philosophical and thought out monotheism like that described in the famous passage of the Baghavad-Gita here below.

Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way because I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I accept it. I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend, is in me, and I am also a friend to him" (Bhagavad Gita 9: 23-29, dialogue between the god Krishna/Vishnu and prince Arjuna).....

What probably also hurt the Meccans, it was the iconoclastic nature of his henotheism.

WE WILL FIND AGAIN EXACTLY THE SAME PROBLEM A FEW DECADES LATER IN THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE. WHAT HAPPENED IN MECCA AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 7TH CENTURY IS THEREFORE PERHAPS SIMPLY A DRESS REHEARSAL OF THE GREAT FEUD OF IMAGES BETWEEN ICONOCLASTS AND ICONOPHILES; WITH THIS DIFFERENCE THAT IN ISLAMIC LANDS, THEY ARE THE ICONOCLASTS WHO OVERCAME.

It is obvious that a piece of stone, wood, metal, or cloth, could not be God, in his totality (could not be the divine totality).

It is no less obvious that a piece of stone, wood, metal, or cloth, can, however...a) contain a force or power, dangerous or beneficial (for instance the radioactivity that can heal or kill); although this force or power is not endowed with its own will . Islamic example: the water in the sacred well of the Kaaba, the water of Zam-Zam, the babbling water.

b) Contain more subjectively, but like everything in this world, a morsel of God, or a divine spark.

c) Help the spirits to rise towards God, by serving as a support for their meditation (provided, of course, not to confuse under any circumstances the end, THE DIVINE TOTALITY, and the means (the image, the statue, the representation).

An explicit point of view of the Meccan intellectuals, as the Quran itself admits.

N.B. This is not an invention of the compiler author of this modest essay who has only one purpose: to teach his readers how to think. This is written in full in the Quran, chapter 39 verse 3: those who choose protecting friends beside Him (say): We worship them only that they may bring us near unto God.

What therefore repelled the Meccans was that the iconoclasm of Muhammad was obviously, by definition, incompatible with the presence in the Kaaba of 360 statues, icons, or other divine representations; of which Abraham, El Khalil or the Friend of God, represented with divining arrows - which is perhaps an error of the chroniclers as Azraqi -; an icon depicting Jesus carried by his mother Mary; the group of three cranes (?) and finally Manat, the goddess of destiny, in the form of black stone; the one that can still be seen today set in the Kaaba of Mecca, not far from the entrance, at the south-east corner. So there was something for everyone and that was one for each day of the year or almost (the Quraysh could not imagine that, thanks to the triumph of Islam, their city one day would attract even more pilgrims).

His moreover, very "social" preaching (Muhammad could only insist that the poor and orphans be treated better than he had been himself); made him able to increase his audience gradually on the muhajirun in the traditional sense of the term (chapter 26 verse 111: they are the lowest of the people who follow you ?) Most came from other tribes and some were even slaves.

PERSECUTION OR NOT PERSECUTION ?

The word persecution is a term that comes from Latin *persecutio* meaning judicial proceedings. What excludes therefore....

-Individual violence or reactions.

-The unofficial collective violence of pogrom type.

-Violence outside the judicial framework and limited to a decision of a monarch, type Nero making Rome burn and then blaming the Christians for that.

For there is true persecution in the strictest sense of the word, it is necessary to have...

-A legislative framework.

-Implemented by public authorities.

- Common law charges provided by law (kind impiety blasphemy cannibalism infanticide lese-majesty high treason, etc.)

-A trial according to the law (with witnesses evidence accusation defense judge verdict, etc.).

Let us then specify immediately at this point in our presentation that the Romans never persecuted anyone because he worshiped a foreign god or son of God.

The most frequent charge was the non-respect of the Emperor's decisions, the lack of respect for him, the lack of civility (the refusal to burn a few grains of incense in front of an effigy of the emperor or before a representation of the gods of Rome) .

Even what Decius decided in 249 was not persecution! It was a general supplication that turned into anti-Christian persecution as many members of that religion refused to pray for the salvation of the then crisis-stricken Empire.

Let us now turn to the number of martyrs who fell during these persecutions.

Point of view of the pious Christians (AmourdeJesus.com, traditionalist Catholic website for evangelization).

"What is the number of martyrs? Some estimate it at ten millions, others at thirteen. If we cannot fix it with certainty, we must recognize, however, that it was very high.

We can prove it by the testimony of Christian and Pagan writers of the first three centuries.

Tacitus (*Annals* XV, 44) informs us that under Nero a huge multitude (*multitudo ingens*) of Christians was burned alive . Eusebius affirms that, under Marcus Aurelius, the animosity and fury of the people made an almost infinite number of victims (two million). Lactantius reports that under Diocletian the followers of Christ were tortured in troops. "The whole earth," he says, "was cruelly tormented; if you except Gaul, East and West were ravaged, devoured by three monsters. Diocletian and Maximian boasted of having exterminated the Christian name. Now, at their advent, Christianity was flourishing throughout the empire; it is therefore necessary they have shed streams of blood.

We also prove it by the circumstances in which the persecutions took place: the duration.

From the year 64, when the persecution of Nero began, to 313, date of the Edict of Milan, the Church was persecuted for 129 years. During her 120 years of rest, she was able to repair her losses and prepare for new fights. The universality of persecutions: the struggle between paganism and nascent Christianity raged to the ends of the Roman Empire. The tendencies of the emperors, eager for popularity and obviously hostile to Christians, the bloody tastes of the Roman rabble, whose festivals themselves were only carnage scenes."

The most drastic revisionism is therefore necessary in this respect.

The measures of Septimius Severus (191-211) targeted only conversions to Christianity. The Acts of the martyrdom of St. Perpetua show that those who were born in this religion were not worried.

-The measures of Decius (249-251, brief but violent. Obligation to sacrifice to the gods. At the end targeted only Christianity and Christians as such.

-The measures of Valerian (253-260). Passes from the greatest indulgence in the application of the instructions of Decius to the utmost cruelty.

-The measures of Diocletian (284-305), the last and most serious. Target first the Manicheans besides. Goal: to restore Pax Deorum.

OUR CONCLUSION WILL THEREFORE BE THE FOLLOWING: THERE IS NOTHING COMPARABLE AGAINST ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN THE MECCA OF THE YEARS 613-622.

TO TELL IT IS LYING TO SUGGEST IT IS MISLEADING. There was only

a) individual clashes, cries of insults or mockery.

b) Nothing bodily against the person of Muhammad himself. He was not crucified, as some of my pen-friends say, because of a bad interpretation of I don't know what article. On the other hand, it is true that he died in Medina in atrocious suffering as a result of his poisoning by a young Jew from Khaybar.

c) A quarantine of the followers decided or encouraged by the city authorities. Not a real blockade since some could migrate to Abyssinia (modern Ethiopia). Good riddance had to think some Meccans.

d) Exceptionally deadly mistreatment of slaves by their masters in accordance with the morality of the time, masters with nothing against the new religion but sickened by seeing their slaves devote themselves to something other than labor and obedience to their master.

The martyrdom most often mentioned as an example is that of Bilal.

Editor's note. One wonders how Muslim tradition has been able to have as much information about this slave when in reality we have much less about Muhammad himself.

Ibn Ishaq Life of Muhammad Guillaume page 143.

Bilal at that time belonged to one of B. Jumah, being slave born. His father's name was Ribah and his mother was Hamama. Umayya b. Khalaf b. Wahb b. Hudhafa b. Jumah used to bring him out at the hottest part of the day and throw him on his back in the open valley and have a great rock put on his chest; then he would say to him, 'You will stay here till you die or deny Muhammad and worship Al-Lat and al Uzza.' He used to say while he was enduring this, 'One, one!' Waraqa b. Naufal was passing him while he was being thus tortured and saying, 'One, one,' and he said, 'One, one, by God, Bilal.' Then he went to Umayya and those of B. Jumah who had thus maltreated him, and said, 'I swear by God that if you kill him in this way I will make his tomb a shrine. Umayyah took no notice.

Ibn Kathir doubts this tradition because the rejection of the Muslims only began several years after Waraka's death (Ismail ibn Umar ibn Kathir. *Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya*. Translated by Le Gassick, T. (1998). *The Life of the Prophet Muhammad*, vol. 1 p. 357. Reading, U.K).

Sprenger, A. (1851). *The Life of Mohammad, from Original Sources*, pp. 161-162. Allahabad.

Sprenger points out that Bilal, being ancestrally Ethiopian, was probably a Christian before he was a Muslim, and it may be possible that Umayyah was mistreating him for this reason before 610. In that case, the story that Waraka tried to help his co-religionist is likely to be true.

Now what can we learn from the story of Bilal? Umayya b. Khalaf, his master, decided to make him an example (for his other slaves) and had him lie down on the burning sand of the desert, with a big stone on his chest. It is undeniable that he could very well have died, but able slaves were very costly, so it would be counterproductive to harm your own investment.

In view of his value, his owner preferred not to spoil longer the goods, and stopped the torture before it was too late to save him. The proof: he survived since we find him later muezzin in Medina.

The pagans of Mecca will not be as radical as Muhammad, or the Muslims after him, regarding those who did not share their ideas of the divine. That there was then death of men, during this period, therefore seems hardly possible. Some hadiths, however, mention a named Yasir and his wife Sumayya Yasir was a stranger without attachment to Mecca and poor, Sumayya was like Bilal a black slave of Ethiopian origin therefore a Christian. Tabari notes some stories as a case of possible confusion between two Meccan women named Sumayyah.

On the reality of martyrdom, in the Christian religion, see our previous study. Edward Gibbon.

History of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Chapter 16. Part 8. Number of martyrs.

"We shall conclude this chapter by a melancholy truth which obtrudes itself on the reluctant mind; that, even admitting, without hesitation or inquiry, all that history has recorded, or devotion has feigned, on the subject of martyrdoms, it must still be acknowledged that the Christians, in the course of their intestine dissensions, have inflicted far greater severities on each other than they had experienced from the zeal of infidels" .

It is to be admitted that the number of victims was probably quite high ... But let us not talk about hundreds of thousands of dead. It was not the Holocaust by bullets, far from that! The historian of the Church Eusebius of Caesarea says that throughout the Empire nine bishops only died. On the other hand, as he speaks of a total of 72 victims for the Palestine, a projection (calculation of Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*) on the basis of this last figure makes it possible to estimate up to two thousand, at most, the total number of fanatics who preferred death to a small symbolic gesture in honor of the Emperor (from 303 to 313).

615: THE YEAR OF THE SATANIC COMPROMISE.

Satanic is the term used by Muslims. As for the author of this compilation, it would be rather (to choose).

-Religious pluralism.

-Open secularism.

-A concrete expression of the principle of the different levels of truth.

-A concrete expression of the relations of the One and the Multiple.

-A widening of the concept of intercessor, applied to the Virgin Mary by the Christians and to Muhammad himself by the Muslims (during the last Judgment Muhammad will intervene to God in favor of the members of his community).

In 614 a doubly dramatic event occurs.

A U-turn by Muhammad followed by a hardening of the economic sanctions taken by the authorities of Mecca.

First time, Muhammad makes a compromise known as *qissat al-gharaniq* or story of the Cranes.

An extensive account of it is found in al-Tabari's history.

"The prophet was eager for the welfare of his people, and desiring to win them to him by any means he could. It has been reported that he longed for a way to win them, and part of what he did to that end is what Ibn Humayd told

When the prophet saw his people turning away from him, and was tormented by their distancing themselves from what he had brought to them from God, he longed in himself for something to come to him from God which would draw him close to them. With his love for his people and his eagerness for them, it would gladden him if some of the hard things he had found in dealing with them could be alleviated. He pondered this in himself, longed for it, and desired it.

Then God sent down the revelation. 'By the star when it sets! Your companion has not erred or gone astray, and does not speak from mere fancy...' [Q.53:1] When he reached God's words, "Have you seen al-Lāt and al-'Uzzā and Manāt, the third, the other?' [Q.53:19-20] Satan cast upon his tongue, because of what he had pondered in himself and longed to bring to his people, 'These are the high-flying cranes and their intercession is to be hoped for.'

When Quraysh heard that, they rejoiced. What he had said about their gods pleased and delighted them, and they gave ear to him. The Believers trusted in their prophet with respect to what he brought them from their Lord: they did not suspect any slip, delusion or error. When he came to the prostration and finished the chapter, he prostrated and the Muslims followed their prophet in it,.....Those mushrikun 1) of Quraysh and others who were in the Kaaba also prostrated on account of what they had heard him say about their gods. In the whole Kaaba there was no believer or kafir 2) who did not prostrate. Only al-Walid bin al-Mughira, who was an aged shaykh and could not make prostration, scooped up in his hand some of the soil from the valley of Mecca [and pressed it to his forehead saying, "It is sufficient for me"]. Then everybody dispersed from the Kaaba.

Quraysh went out and were delighted by what they had heard of the way in which the prophet he spoke of their gods. They were saying, 'Muhammad has referred to our gods most favorably. He said that they are "high-flying cranes whose intercession is to be hoped for.'"

Those followers of the Prophet who had emigrated to the land of Abyssinia³) heard about the affair of the prostration, and it was reported to them that Quraysh had accepted Islam. Some men among them decided to return while others remained behind.

Angel Gabriel came to the Prophet and said, 'O Muhammad, what have you done! You have recited to the people something which I have not brought you from God, and you have spoken what He did not say to you.'

At that the Prophet was mightily saddened and greatly feared God. But God, of His mercy, sent him a revelation, comforting him. God told him that there had never been a previous prophet or apostle who had longed just as Muhammad had longed, and desired just as Muhammad had desired, but that Satan had cast into his longing just as he had cast onto the tongue of Muhammad. But God abrogates what Satan has cast, and puts His verses in proper order....

So God drove out the sadness from His prophet and gave him security against what he feared. He abrogated what Satan had cast upon his tongue in referring to their gods: 'They are the high-flying cranes whose intercession is accepted [sic]'. Replacing those words with the words of God when Allat, al-Uzza and Manat the third, the other are mentioned: 'Should you have males and He females [as

offspring]! That, indeed, would be an unfair division. They are only names which you and your fathers have forged'... as far as 'As many as are the angels in heaven, their intercession shall be of no avail unless after God has permitted it to whom He pleases and accepts' [Q.53:21-26].

When there had come from God the words which abrogated what Satan had cast on to the tongue of His prophet, Quraysh said, 'Muhammad has gone back on what he said about the status of our gods relative to God, changed it and brought something else,' for the two phrases which Satan had cast on to the tongue of the Prophet had found a place in the mouth of every polytheist. They reinstated, and more than ever, the sanctions they had imposed against those who had accepted Islam and followed the Prophet.

The band of the Prophet's followers who had left the land of Abyssinia 3) on account of the report that the people of Mecca had accepted Islam when they prostrated together with the Prophet drew near. But when they approached Mecca, they heard that the talk about the acceptance of Islam by the people of Mecca was wrong. Therefore, they only entered Mecca in secret or after having obtained a promise of protection."

Editor's note. The attempts at rapprochement, compromise, and the relentlessness that the Quraysh show in their implementation, vainly; are therefore the proof of the fundamental misunderstanding then existing between the proponents of the traditional religion and the members of the new sect (the word being used here in its etymological sense Islam having not yet become the mass religion we know today). All efforts without exception come from the Quraysh. Faced with this display of spinelessness, Muhammad appears incorruptible and uncompromising. This is at least the image that the official Muslim hagiography gives us; but the reality seems more contrasted according to some traditions, and this vision of things tells us finally more about the Muslims of later generations, that about the situation on the ground in Mecca in 615.

The first use of the expression 'Satanic Verses' is attributed to Muir (1858). The plural "verses" is usually employed even though the passage in question is only six words in Arabic.

The earliest biography of Muhammad, Ibn Ishaq (761–767) is lost but his collection of traditions or hadiths survives in Ibn Hisham (833) and al-Tabari (915). The story appears in al-Tabari, who includes Ibn Ishaq in the chain of transmission, but not in Ibn Hisham, who admits in the preface of his text that he voluntarily omitted matters from Ibn Ishaq's biography that "would distress certain people.

The majority of Muslim scholars have rejected the historicity of the incident on the basis of their weak isnads (chains of transmission) and the incompatibility of the incident with the dogma of isma (Prophetic infallibility, divine protection of Muhammad from mistakes). But the doctrine of Muhammad's infallibility and impeccability (the doctrine regarding his isma) emerged only slowly.

The meaning of "gharaniq" is difficult to discern, as it is a hapax legomenon (i.e., only used once in the text). All commentators understood that it meant the cranes.

The authors of the tafsir during the first two centuries of the Islamic era do not seem to have regarded the tradition as in any way inauspicious or unflattering to Muhammad, but, on the other hand, it seems to have been universally rejected by at least the 13th century, and most modern Muslims likewise see the tradition as problematic, in the sense that it is viewed as "completely heretical" because, by allowing for the intercession of the three pagan female deities, they eroded the authority and omnipotence of God. And has damaging implications in regard to the revelation as a whole, for Muhammad's revelation appears to have been in this case distorted by his desire to soften the rejection of the deities of the people.

William Montgomery Watt and Alfred Guillaume believe it is unthinkable that the story could have been invented by Muslims, or foisted upon them by non-Muslims.

According to Uri Rubin, the evocation of the mushrikun's participation in the prostration shows how the effect of this revelation was immediate on those who were present in the kaaba that day.

This concession, however, diminished the threat of the Last Judgment by enabling the three goddesses to intercede for sinners and save them from eternal damnation. It diminished Muhammad's own authority by giving the priests of Uzza, Manat, and Allat the ability to pronounce oracles contradicting his message. Disparagement from Christians and Jews who pointed out that Muhammad was reverting to his pagan beginnings and rebelliousness and indignation from among his own followers as Umar influenced Muhammad to backtrack. In doing so he cast off everything related to the traditional religion consigned the Meccan's ancestors and relatives to Hell. This was therefore the final break with the Quraysh.

The situation therefore changed completely in Mecca around 614-615 when the first relatives of Muhammad among the wealthy families reached important positions. Amr ibn Hisham al-Makhzumi, whom the Muslims will call Abu Jahl (the father of ignorance / barbarism), a young man from a high

family, sensitive at first to his speech,for example turns against him and mobilizes several members of the dominant clans.

- 1) Associators: polytheists or tritheists or trinitarian Christians.
- 2) Unbelievers or subhumans.
- 3) Current Ethiopia.

615 STILL: THE QUARANTINE OF THE BANU HASHIM AND BANU MUTTALIB CLANS IRRESPECTIVE OF RELIGION, MUSLIMS AND NON-MUSLIMS TOGETHER.

This return to the previous situation seems to have consummated the break-up between the first Muslims and the Meccans; by obliging Muhammad to give up any ambiguity in his approach. The public figures in the city felt having been betrayed by the latter, they no longer wanted to hear anymore about him. This will be one more step towards seclusion of the sect in the city, and one more step in the separation of the community from the rest of mankind called kufar or "infidel".

The Meccans having rightly felt, moreover, that Muhammad had gone back on his word, they went to Abu Talib, Muhammad's uncle, who protected him, although he did not agree with his message, and asked him to reason with his nephew. Abu Talib calms them with the appropriate words, but a few days later they come back to find him again, threatening this time to ostracize him and his clan from the Meccan society, if he does nothing. Abu Talib summons his nephew and asks him to stop, but refuses to withdraw his protection from. Hamza, one of his uncles, even implied himself on the contrary more and more by his side.

The Meccans therefore increase the economic sanctions (the embargo targeting the clan Banu Hashim and Banu Muttalib Muslims and non-Muslims together) and even decide to use what for them is an extreme measure: the quarantine. The pressure tactic is in fact considerable in a tribal environment, but it has the advantage of remaining nonviolent. The process nevertheless implies that the whole group is in solidarity with the decision, what shows the anxiety of the city or its leaders clearly.

The Banu Hashim had to regroup and settle in a place of Mecca easy to defend, a kind of ghetto a bit like that of Venice but with the desert instead of the sea. This situation will last two or three years, but was without any real impact on the affairs of the two clans targeted by this measure.

The bourgeois and literary men of Mecca (the poets, etc.), of course, resorted to the most odious persecutions against Muhammad himself. All our sources agree on one point, these persecutions were real (but relative). His sympathizers were told that he was a majnun. That is to say a man possessed by spirits or a jinn (25 : 8: "You only follow a bewitched man") or a diviner. (69 : 38-43). His revelations are also reproached for being merely human, which was true, of course. (Chapter 25: 4-5.) He is asked for proofs, signs or miracles (17: 90-95).

But as for Muhammad himself, nobody dared to put his life in danger, given his rank in society (and, therefore, the blood price that would have been paid for his death).

But if the tension seems indeed extreme in the city at this time, because of the preaching of Muhammad, real fights, as in a "normal" civil war, are not seen. These are mostly bad jokes or humiliating treatments. But Muhammad does not suffer from blows: the aggressions are superficial, and aim especially to humiliate him ... The martyrology will concern especially the companions of Muhammad, especially the humblest. Pressures of all kinds apparently fell on those members of the Muslim community who had no tie with a clan and did not have protection as al Mut'im b. Adly, Abu 'l Bakhtari or Hisham b.'Amr among the public figures. Hence their migration in Ethiopia. The citizens of Mecca hoped to cut Muhammad "from his base" (as we would say today), in other words, from the hard core of his followers. Some will thus retract, to escape the attacks on their property, or blows.

This emigration to Ethiopia is nevertheless a historical fact that is difficult to analyze. Since some of these emigrants did not return when the opportunity arose (they waited until 629) one wonders whether this does not mean that some of the early followers found it increasingly difficult to put up with the personality of the founder. Anyway, let's move on and get back to trade sanctions per se.

Ibn Ishaq. The Life of Muhammad by Guillaume page 159.

THE DOCUMENT PROCLAIMING QUARANTINE AND EMBARGOES.

Quraysh came together and decided among themselves to write a document in which they should put an embargo on B. Hashim and B. Muttalib that they should not marry their women nor give women to them to marry; and that they should neither buy from them nor sell to them....Then they hung the deed up in the middle of the Ka'ba. The writer of the deed was Mansur b. Ikrima... the apostle invoked God against him and some of his fingers withered.

When Quraysh did that, the two clans of B. Hashim and B. al Muttalib went to Abu Talib.....Abu Lahab Abdu'l Uzza went out from B. Hashim and helped Quraysh....I was told that among the things that he said at that time were, 'Muhammad promises me things which I do not see. He alleges that they will happen after my death....

They remained thus for two or three years until they were exhausted, nothing reaching them except what came from their friends unknown to Quraysh.

Abu Jahl [whose real name was Amr ibn Hisham, Abu Jahl or father of ignorance is only a nickname given by Muslims] they say, met Hakim b. Hizam b. Khuwaylid b. Asad with whom was a slave carrying flour intended for his aunt Khadija, the prophet's wife. He hung on to him and said, 'Are you taking food to the B. Hashim? By God, before you and your food move from here I will denounce you in Mecca.'

Abu 'l Bakhtari came to him and said, 'What is going on between you two?'

When he said that Hakim was taking food to the B. Hashim, he said: 'It is food he has which belongs to his aunt and she has sent to him about it. Are you trying to prevent him taking her own food to her? Let the man go His way!'

Amr ibn Hisham (Abu Jahl) refused until they came to blows, and Abu'l Bakhtari took a camel's jaw and knocked him down and trod on him violently, while Hamza was looking on near by.....

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad by Guillaume page 172.

THE ANNULING OF THE EMBARGO.

The B. Hashim and the B. al Muttalib were in the quarters which Quraysh had agreed upon in the document they wrote, when a number of Quraysh took steps to annul the embargo against them. None took more trouble in this than Hisham b. Amr ... for the reason that he was the son of a brother to Nadla b. Hashim b. Abdu Manaf by his mother and therefore was closely attached to the B. Hashim. He was highly esteemed by his people. I have heard that when these two clans were in their quarter he used to bring a camel laden with food by night. He would do the same thing another time, bringing clothes for them.

He went to Zuhayr b. Abu Umayya b. al Mughira whose mother was Atika bint Abdu'l Muttalib and said: 'Are you

content to eat food and wear handsome clothes and marry women while you know of the condition of your maternal uncles ? They cannot buy or sell, marry, nor give in marriage. By God I swear that if they were the uncles of Abu'l Hakam b. Hisham and you asked him to do what he has asked you to do he would never agree to it.'

Zuhayr said, what can I do? I'm only one man. By God if I had another man to back me, I would soon annul it.'

Hisham b. Amr said, 'I have found a man. Myself.'

'Find another,' said Zuhayr.

So Hisham went to al Mut'im b. Adly and said, 'Are you content that two clans of the Banu Abdu Manaf should perish while you look on consenting to follow Quraysh ? You will find that they will soon do the same with you.'

Al-Mut'im made the same reply as Zuhayr and demanded a fourth man.

So Hisham went to Abu'l Bakhtari b. Hisham who asked for a fifth man, and then to Zama'a b. al Aswad b. al Muttalib b. Asad and reminded him of their kinship and duties. The latter asked whether others were willing to cooperate in this task and Hisham gave him the names of the others.

They all arranged to meet at night.... and there they bound themselves to take up the question of the document until they had secured its annulment. Zuhayr claimed the right to act and speak first.

So on the morrow.....

Now Abu Talib was sitting at the side of the Kaaba. When al Mut'im went up to the document to tear it in pieces, he found that worms had already eaten it except the words 'In Thy name O Allah.' (This was the customary formula with which Quraysh began their writing.) The writer of the deed was Mansur b. Ikrima. It is alleged that his hand shriveled

When the deed was torn up and made of none effect Abu Talib composed the following verses in praise of those who

had taken part in the annulment....

On the other hand, 619 was a dark year. Muhammad successively loses his uncle, the old clan chief Abu Talib (he was nearly ninety years old) and Khadija, his wife (sixty-five).

It is important to note that Abu Talib died without converting to Islam. The fact, aberrant, is developed in detail by the tradition: it is a good man, but pagan, something difficult to imagine for a Muslim, who wonders what could be the after death destiny of the character (hell or heaven ?)

The death of Khadija, however, does not seem to have long disturbed Muhammad. It is besides very little mentioned in our sources and she will be replaced soon. Even if she is considered the first convert, if she was his support at the beginning of the preaching, she will not have been able to give him a son. And then, she's just an old woman without any use. The first to fill the void will be an unattractive widow but good cook, Sawda (the second, a girl, Aysha, will play a very important part). Abu Talib gone, the Meccans have their hands free to do what they want. His successor at the head of the Banu Hashim clan, Abu Lahab, another uncle of Muhammad, ceases to protect him (see chapter

111 who curses him). The Meccans nevertheless hesitate still to bodily eliminate the troublemaker (Muhammad will not have this kind of scruple with the Jewish or non-Jewish intellectuals in Medina). But deprived of the support of his clan, Muhammad himself and his small group of faithful did not feel any longer safe in Mecca.

First Acts of Violence: A stone and camel bone fight between Muslims and non-Muslims. The very first Muslims indeed sometimes met, in valleys outside Mecca, to engage in the activities of any sect in this case (because with 80 or 100 members, you are still only a sect and not a mass religion). A group of Meccans saw them and made fun of them. A fight ensued. Saad ibn Abi Waqqas struck one of the Quraysh with a camel's jaw, and wounded him.

EMIGRATION INTO ETHIOPIA ?

William Montgomery Watt. Muhammad Prophet and Statesman (1961).

The most important questions to be answered are why these Muslims went to Abyssinia, and then why some of them remained there so long. A subordinate question is whether the initiative for this migration was the emigrants' or Muhammad's.

The difficulties of the situation after the abrogation of the 'satanic verses' must have had something to do with the migration. Once the policy of opposition to Muhammad had been adopted, the leading merchants and their friends took

steps to make life difficult for their younger brothers and cousins and other members of their families and clans who

were attracted to Muhammad's movement. In one way this would be mild as a form of persecution, but in other ways

it might be extremely annoying and frustrating. It mostly happened within the family or clan. There was no public judicial or police system in Mecca. Crime was kept in check by the blood feud. That meant that each clan exacted vengeance or a blood wit for injuries to its members. Apart from this it was dangerous for a man to lay hands on a member of another clan. Within the clan, however, the power of the leading men was almost unquestioned. If the head of a family decreed that measures were to be taken against a Muslim member of it, they would be taken, and no redress would be possible, since there would be no one to whom appeal could be made.

There is a curious fact which supports the assertion of the sources that it was the difficulty of the situation which made

the Muslims go elsewhere. Apart from two exceptions, all the early Muslims known to us who remained in Mecca were members of a group of five clans, headed by Muhammad's clan of Hashim.

This group seems to be a reconstituted form of the League of the Virtuous (fudul).....

This did not mean that they all became Muslims, but it did mean that this group of clans did not create difficulties for those of their members who followed Muhammad. This would explain the clan attachment of the Muslims remaining in Mecca. They were those who were not being "persecuted" in any way by their clans. Of the two belonging to the 'persecuting' clans one was a blind poet, and so in a special position. The other was al-Arqam, who, with a large house of his own, was sufficiently independent not to be troubled by hostile measures.

Thus there are strong grounds for thinking that these Muslims went to Abyssinia to avoid the situation.

This can hardly

be the whole reason for the migration, however, since it does not account for some of them staying on in Abyssinia

after the Muslims had settled in Medina..... Are there any other reasons for the migration ?

Perhaps they went to engage in trade. This was the normal occupation of Meccans, and there must have been opportunities in Abyssinia. Those who made a living then until 628 presumably did so by trading and there were trade relations between Mecca and Abyssinia. But this could not have been the sole reason for leaving Mecca. To run away from their native town in this way at a critical stage in the development of the movement was tantamount to a betrayal, and the chief among the emigrants were not weak men of this type.

Could it be, then, that Muhammad had some plan in mind, and sent them to Abyssinia to.....

Whatever may have been in his mind, the Meccans may nevertheless have thwarted Muhammad's aims by informing the Negus of his weakness in Mecca.

There remains another important possibility. Was there a sharp division of opinion within the nascent Islamic movement ? Of the Muslims who remained in Mecca the most important after Muhammad was Abu Bakr but he came from a

very weak clan. Were the Muslims from the influential clans ready to follow Muhammad and to support the policies he favored. There are slight traces of rivalry between his group and that led by Uthman ibn-Maz'un. The latter belonged to the same generation as Muhammad and Abu Bakr.

Before Muhammad began to preach, he had lived a disciplined life and avoided wine.....Perhaps also the emigrants disliked some attitude adopted by Muhammad to meet the growing vehemence of the opposition. Muhammad should quickly have become aware of the incipient schism and have taken steps to heal it. This might have been

by suggesting the journey to Abyssinia in furtherance of some plan to promote the interests of Islam.

Uthman ibn Maz'un and the others who returned to Mecca before 622 were soon reconciled with

Muhammad and Abu Bakr, and this shows that the break can never have been complete. The migration to Abyssinia, then, however, certain as a fact, remains therefore obscure in its interpretation.

It gives a tantalizing glimpse of conditions in the little band of Muslims after the appearance of a first vigorous opposition against their movement."

Muslim sources speak therefore to us at this time of one or two or three emigrations of the first Muslims in Abyssinia modern Ethiopia. In addition to the banishment of the Banu Hashim clan and Banu al-Muttalib in the ghetto of Abu Talib (Shi'b Abu Talib) located some distance from the city center. The various accounts concerning them are contradictory and do not fit into a context of global persecution (which has only been a generalized embargo besides).

Notice.

In the year 5 of the New Prophecy year – 8 of hegira + 615 A.D. a part of the Muslims leave Mecca and move to Ethiopia.

12 000000 men 4 000000 women cross the sea and settle on the other side. They declare themselves vaguely monotheistic, and the religion of the Ethiopians, a Monophysite Christianity strongly related to Judaism, is the best reception context that can be found.

The details abound (we have the complete list of the names and first names) but it is not a good sign: everything seems invented in the story of this refuge far away from the troubles, of course, but also from the authority of the leader, heavier and heavier and certainly challenged. The pattern is often found in sectarian development.

It would be useful to know in what capacity these "proto-Muslims" were received in Ethiopia: but of that our sources say nothing.

Some historians have proposed to see in this Ethiopian exile a first split in the Muslim community badly supporting the authoritarianism of the leader, in a sectarian context.

In fact, the sources seem embarrassed to explain the delays in the return of exiles, and the apostasy of some others.

The ruler generously welcomes them and enjoys therefore a preferential treatment in Muslim sources, who invent the tall tale of his secret conversion to Islam. It is remarkable that they never really understood why the Muslims had been properly received by the Abyssinians. This is why the myth of the conversion of the Negus, which alone can explain this welcome, has taken shape. Presenting the Negus as a convert to Islam is also a way of distracting the audience attention away from the problem that this emigration arouses and of feeding its superiority complex.

THE NUMBERS NOW: SOME TENS OF MEN AND WOMEN EACH TIME which again does not match a background of global and systematic persecution, even taking into account the weakness of the troops.

In the following diagram, we will designate by the letter A the Muslims remained in Mecca and by the letter B the Muslims who have gone to Abyssinia / Ethiopia.

About 15 Muslims (including 4 women).

- In 615 some of the emigrants return to Mecca (this is the group we will call "B.A").

- Others still remain in Abyssinia ("B.B").

Those who return to home from Abyssinia ("B.A") learn very quickly that the rumor was false and that things have, on the contrary, worsened.

- Some of them still come to Mecca ("B.A.A").

- Others ("B.A.B") return immediately to Abyssinia, without entering Mecca; this still happens in 615.

Among those who then entered Mecca ("B.A.A"):

they are some ("B.A.A.B") who stay there very little time and quickly back on track to Abyssinia.

- And there are some ("B.A.A.A") who stay there, at least a certain time.

In the year 617, the second emigration to Abyssinia took place. Take part in it...

- Muslims who had not emigrated the first time but remained in Mecca ("A.B").

- Muslims who had emigrated to Abyssinia but returned in the year 615 ("B.A.A.A"). We do not know if all the Muslims of the "B.A.A.A" group will participate in the second emigration, or if only some of them will do so (these would then form the "B.A.A.A. B" group, while those of them who would remain in Mecca would be the "BAAAA").

Anyway after this second emigration, there will be....

- Muslims in Mecca ("A.A") (and perhaps "B.A.A.A.A," as we have just said).

- And Muslims in Abyssinia: ("B," "B.A.B," "B.A.A.B," "B.A.A.A," "A.B") (those who did not emigrate the first time).

.....

But it is in total in three groups that Muslims have returned from Abyssinia.

- There was therefore a group that returned to Mecca while Muhammad still lived there and had not yet emigrated to Medina and therefore which remained there until the emigration to Yathrib / Medina of all Muslims in 622. ("BAAAA," and "A").

- But there was also, according to Ibn Sa'd (Zad ul-ma'ad 3/26), a second group, composed of 41 persons, who returned to Arabia when they knew that the Prophet of Islam too had emigrated to Yathrib/Medina. Among them...

- Some were kept against their will at Mecca and could not emigrate to Medina immediately.

- Thirty-two of them were able to reach Medina (among these 32 people, 24 later took part in the battle of Badr in 624).

There was, finally, a third group which, under the direction of Ja'far, did not return until the year of Khaybar, that is to say in 629. According to Ibn Ishaq, they were 16 Muslims having left Mecca for Abyssinia in 615.

620 THE CONVERSION OF THE JINNS OF TA'IF (NAKHLA).

In 620 there was a great turning point in the history of Islam and in the content of its message: the discovery by Muhammad of the world of jinns. In addition to that of angels and demons. This fundamental discovery (in addition to angels and demons there are also jinns, that Christians do not know) occurred after an attempt to preach in Ta'if, having completely failed.

Oasis of orchards and gardens 1650 m above sea level Ta'if was one of the granaries of the region, a prosperous city located 65 km east of Mecca and sheltering a miraculous statue of the goddess Allat. Suratul Jinn was revealed after Suratul A'raf and before Surah Yasin and is the fortieth Surah to be revealed. This Surah is the seventy-second Surah in the present edition of the Quran and contains twenty-eight verses.

This Surah contains 285 words, or as some scholars have stated, 235 words. The number of letters in the Surah is also debatable. Some say that there are 870, while others state that there are 759.

In the explanation of verses 29 to 32 of Suratul Ahqaf (46), various incidents have been narrated, which are the same as that which have been mentioned for this Surah. This denotes that both of these Surahs are therefore related to one particular event.

The verses of Suratul Ahqaf (46) that discuss the jinn are the following:

"And When We turned a party of the jinn towards you to listen to the Quran, then when they attended they said to each other, "Be silent," and when it was over, they turned back to their people in warning and said, "Our people, indeed we have listened to the recitation of a Book revealed after Musa. It confirms the Books revealed before and guides to the Truth and the Right Path. O' our people! Respond favorably to the one (Muhammad) who invites people to God and believe in Him. He will forgive your sins and rescue you from the painful torment."

The importance of the event (the first conversions of jinns) justifies a look at it.

ASBAB AL NUZUL OR CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS REVELATION.

The year 619 had been particularly trying for Muhammad. He sees Khadija, his wife, Abu Talib, his uncle, leader of the Banu Hashim clan and father of Ali, his cousin future son-in-law, die. Abu Lahab, another uncle who takes the head of the clan, is his sworn enemy. At the end of May or the beginning of June 620, accompanied by his freedman Zayd ibn Haritha, Muhammad went on foot to the small city of Ta'if. He comes into contact with all the tribes he meets on his way, but none responds favorably.

Ibn Ishaq The life of Muhammad by Alfred Guillaume page 192.

GOD'S APOSTLE GOES TO THAQIF.

"When the apostle arrived at al Ta'if he made for a number of Thaqif who were at that time leaders and chiefs, namely three brothers: 'Abdu Yalayl, Mas'ud, and Hablb, sons of 'Amr b. 'Umayr b. 'Auf b. 'Uqda b. Ghiyara b. 'Auf b. Thaqif. One of them had a Quraysh wife of the B. Jumah.

The apostle sat with them and invited them to accept Islam and asked them to help him against his opponents at Mecca. ---One of the brothers swore that he would tear up the covering of the Ka'ba if God had sent him.

-The other said, "Could not God have found someone better than you to send?"

-The third said, "By God, don't let me ever speak to you. If you are really an apostle from God as you say you are, you are far too important for me to reply to, and if you are lying against God it is not right that I should speak to you!"

So the apostle got up and went, despairing of getting any good out of Thaqif.

I have been told that he said to them, "Seeing that you have acted as you have, keep the matter secret," for he

was loath that his people should hear about it, so that they would be still further emboldened against him. But they

did not do so and stirred up their louts and slaves to insult him and cry after him until a crowd came together, and

compelled him to take refuge in an orchard belonging to Utba b. Rabi'a and his brother Shayba who were in it at the

time. The louts who had followed him went back, and he made for the shade of a vine and sat there while the two men

watched him, observing what he had to endure from the local louts. I was told that the

apostle.....[Muhammad to have been about to give up according to what Ibn Ishaq's text tells us

here] 'When Utba and Shayba understood what happened they were moved with compassion and

called a young Christian slave of theirs called Addas and told him to take a bunch of grapes on a platter and give them to him to eat.

Addas did so, and when the apostle put his hand in the platter he said "In the name of God" before eating.

Addas looked closely into his face and said, "By God, this is not the way the people of this country speak."

The apostle then asked, "From what country do you come, Addas and what is your religion?"

He replied that he was a Christian and came from Nineveh.

"From the town of the righteous man Jonah son of Mattai," said the apostle.

"But how did you know about him?" asked Addas.

"He was a prophet and I am a prophet," answered the apostle.

Addas bent over him and kissed his head, his hands, and his feet.

The two brothers were looking on and one said to the other, "He's already corrupted your slave!"

Thus when Addas came back they said to him: "You rascal, why were you kissing that man's head, hands, and feet?"

Addas answered that he was the finest man in the country who had told him things that only a prophet could know.

They replied, "You rascal, don't let him seduce you from your religion, for it is better than his."

Then the apostle returned from Ta'if when he despaired of getting anything out of Thaqif.

When he reached Nakhla, he rose to pray in the middle of the night, and a number of jinn whom God has mentioned passed by. They were—so I am told—seven jinns from Nusayin. They listened to him and when the prophet had finished his prayer they turned back to their people to warn them after having believed and responded to what they had heard. God has mentioned them in the words "And When We inclined to you certain of the jinns who were listening to the Quran" as far as "He will give you protection from a painful punishment"(chapter 46). And. "It has been revealed unto me that a number of the jinns listened" (chapter 72).

View point of pious Muslims.

On his way back, the Prophet (prayers of God be upon him and his family) reached a place which was referred to as the Valley of the Jinn. He stayed there for the evening and was absorbed in the recitation of the Holy Quran. A group of Jinn, who were present and listening to him, immediately accepted the faith of Islam. After this, they returned to their own group to spread and propagate the teachings which they had accepted.

Ibn Abbas (may God be pleased with him) relates that the Prophet was busy in the recitation of Salat al-Fajr.... A group of the jinn who were investigating into why their flow of information which they used to receive from the Heavens had been stopped, happened to hear Muhammad reciting the Quran. They said to each other, 'The reason for the halt in the transmission of information from the Heavens is because of this.' They returned to their group and proceeded to invite them into the religion of Islam.

Some authors mention other circumstances regarding the revelation of this chapter in the Quran. On his way back from his Tahannut retreat in Hira Muhammad would have declared: "Last night, an invitation from the Jinn came to me and thus, I went to where they live so to be able to recite the Quran to them."

When Muhammad arrived in the environs of Makkah, he sensed that he could not reenter his native city now that his uncle, Abu Talib, was not there to protect him. Pagan hostility towards him had reached the flash point. Muhammad could not enter his hometown, and there was no other place to go to. What was he to do?

In this extremity, Muhammad sent word to three nobles in the city asking each of them to take him under his protection. Two of them refused but the third one – the gallant Mutim ibn Adiy – responded to his signal of distress. It was the same Mutim who had, earlier, flouted the chiefs of Quraysh by tearing into pieces their covenant to quarantine the Banu Hashim, and had brought the two clans of Banu Hashim and Banu al-Muttalib from their exile in the valley of Abu Talib back into the city. Mutim ordered his sons, nephews and other young men of his clan to put on their battle dress. He then marched, in a full panoply of war, at their head, out of the city. He brought Muhammad with him, first into the precincts of the Kaaba where the latter made the customary seven circuits, and then escorted him to his home.

Ali Asgher Razwy, a 20th-century Shia author, in his book heading "The History of Islam and Muslims."

“This episode [The application of Muhammad Mustafa, the Apostle of God, upon his return from Ta’if, to Mutim ibn Adiy, a non-Muslim, seeking his protection] raises once again, a most uncomfortable question on the attitude and conduct of the Muslims regarding Muhammad.

Why didn’t the Apostle ask any of them to take him under his protection even though some of them were said to have been rich and influential, and some others were touted to have been the terror of the pagans? Why is it that the Apostle sought the protection of a non-Muslim but didn’t condescend even to inform the Muslims that he wanted to reenter Makkah and was in need of protection? Why didn’t the Muslims themselves go to the city gate and escort their Prophet ? Here they had a splendid opportunity to demonstrate to him that they were worthy of his trust even if he had considered them unworthy. But they missed the opportunity. They did not do anything that would show that they had any anxiety for his personal safety.

Pagan Arabia fortunately was not devoid of chivalry and heroism. These qualities were personified in Mutim ibn Adiy, Abul Bukhtari and a few others. After all it was they who challenged the Quraysh in some of the most critical moments of the life of the Prophet of Islam. In doing so, they were inspired only by their own ideals. They considered it their duty to defend the defenseless. They were the knights of Arabia, and it was their chivalry that was to make their country famous in later centuries. Pagan Arabia never produced nobler figures than these. Even Muslims ought to acknowledge their debt of gratitude to them.”

Such a solution (the protectorate of Muhammad by a small minor clan in Mecca) could only be temporary, which is why Muhammad tried to settle elsewhere, hence his negotiations with sympathizers living in the city of Yathrib (future Medina) since apparently there was a problem in Mecca.

THE FIRST PLEDGE AQABA (621).

KNOWN AS BAYAT AL NISA OR PLEDGE OF WOMEN.

(because not contemplating the case that it would be necessary to resort to arms to defend Muhammad)

Wadi ul Qura (the Valley of Qura) was the large trade route from Yemen to Syria. After passing by the side of Makkah the trading caravans of Yemen entered this long valley and along with it there were some green oases, one of them being the city of Yathrib, which became known later as Madinat ur Rasul (the city of the Prophet).

Two famous tribes known as 'Aws' and 'Khazraj,' who were Yemenite Arab migrants (Qehtani) had settled in this region since the well-known tribes of the Jews (Bani Qurayzah, Bani Nadir and Bani Qaynqa'), who had migrated from the northern areas of the Peninsula, had also settled there.

Yathrib (now known as Medina) was a city more than 300 kilometers from Mecca. It was located in a pleasant oasis, recognized today still for the excellence of its dates. This oasis, however, had been the scene of incessant tribal conflict. Jews were fighting against other Jews, and Arabs against other Arabs; Arabs sometimes made alliances with Jews against other Arabs who were allied with other Jews.

Every year therefore a group of Yathrib Arabs went to Mecca to perform Pilgrimage ceremonies, and Muhammad contacted them. Many of these contacts did not prove fruitful.

Notwithstanding this, however, some pilgrims from Yathrib, seduced by the non-Jewishness of his message (the sayings of Luqman), discussed with him. They were Khazraj, Judaizing Arabs or Arabized Jews, already familiar with the notions of Revelation, prophets, angels, and especially, having heard many times their fellow Jews of Medina evoke the imminent return of the Messiah.

These men return to Yathrib / Medina where soon, in each home, it is spoken of the Meccan Muhammad.

The tradition mentions several meetings which range from 617 to 622. The accounts are quite muddled even contradictory but let's try nevertheless to unravel the common thread (below and with reservations).

One day Muhammad learned that an important person from among the Arabs, Suwayd bin Samit, had arrived in Makkah he contacted him immediately and presented his religious reformation to him.

Suwayd thought that these realities were perhaps indeed the wise sayings of Luqman 1) which he had already with himself.

Then he returned to Yathrib but he was killed by Khazrajites before the famous Battle of Bu'ath (617).

There was also a named Anas bin Rafi.

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad, A. Guillaume page 197.

When Abu'lHaysar Anas b. Rafi' came to Mecca with members of the B. Abdu'l Ashhal including Lyas b. Mu'adh seeking an alliance with Quraysh against their sister tribe the Khazraj, the apostle heard about them. He came and sat with them and asked them if they would like to get something more profitable than their present errand. When they asked him what that could be he told them that he was God's apostle sent to humanity to call on them to serve God and not associate any other with Him; that He had revealed a book to him; then he told them about Islam and read to them some of the Quran. Lyas, who was a young man, said, 'By God, this is something better than you came for!'

Thereupon Abu'l Haysar took a

handful of dirt from the valley and threw it in his face, saying, 'Shut up! We didn't come here for this.'

So Lyas became

silent. They went to Medina and the battle of Bu'ath between Aus and Khazraj took place.

Within a little while lyas died. Mahmiid said: 'Those of his people who were present at his death told me that they heard him continually praising and glorifying God. They had no doubt that he died a Muslim.'

One day in the year 620 Muhammad heard six men talking in Aqaba, a place outside Mecca. They had come from Yathrib to perform the pilgrimage (Hajj). In Yathrib, there were Jewish tribes whose rabbis, versed in the scriptures, had often spoken to the pagans of a prophet to come with whom the Jews were going to annihilate the Arabs, just like the tribes of Aad and Thamoud had been destroyed in the past because of their idolatry.

Muhammad asked them permission to sit with them and they readily agreed. He asked them whether they had concluded a deal with the Jews. They replied in the affirmative. Thereupon he said to them: "Please sit down so that I may tell you something." Muhammad read out surah 31 to them. The thing which made them inclined to hear this speech was they have heard from the Jews that a prophet of Arabian descent, who would introduce the religion of the Oneness of God and would wipe out idol

worship, would be appointed by the Almighty soon and they would, therefore, thought that before the Jews stole a march on them they should be allowed to become victorious over their enemies. They also thought perhaps that Muhammad, with his new religion, would be the man who would finally help them make peace with the tribe of the Aws, the other great Arab tribe in Yathrib.

The negotiations were secret and took place under the guise of a pilgrimage to the sacred city. In Mecca, the new religion and its spokesman were more than contested. In Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad expects to find more favorable conditions. With this handful of men, he therefore perfects an alliance in keeping with the customs of the time, an alliance of tribal nature all the more natural inasmuch as Muhammad was related to them by his grandfather Abd-al-Muttalib; born of a temporary marriage, or mut'a, with a woman of the Medina clan of Najjar, of the Kazhraj tribe precisely. In Yathrib / Medina, the Khazraj had lost power in favor to the tribe of the Aws, who became more powerful than them, following the famous Battle of Buath 617 during which they burned the palm grove of the enemy. Thereafter war and peace took place alternately. Abdullah bin Ubay who was one of the chiefs of Bani Khazraj did not participate in this battle and was held in respect by both the tribes. The two parties had gotten exhausted and, therefore, became very much inclined towards peace. Both the tribes therefore insisted that Abdullah should become their king. They even have already made a crown for him so that he might wear at the appropriate time.

Muhammad and his followers therefore represented a significant potential support for those who disagreed with that and as far as they were concerned this might have been sufficient reason to reach an agreement with him and ask for his moving in Yathrib, without any other considerations of a religious nature.

The six men in question therefore return to Yathrib / Medina where soon, in each home it will be talked about the Meccan Muhammad so much so that there was no house left there where the Prophet of Islam was not talked about.

EXPLANATION OF THIS SUCCESS... The Judaism of Ancient Arabia, Collection the Ancient Judaism and the Origins of Christianity, 3, Turnhout, Brepols, 2015, 1 vol., 568 pp.

Our author wanted to answer the following two questions.

The first: why is it that more than a third of the Quran contains allusions to the stories of biblical characters when the context was that of Meccan idolatry?

And the second: How could these pagan Meccan listeners understand the multiple biblical allusions to these stories, since the Quran makes them explicit in no way - except in Sura Yūsuf - and instead gives the feeling that the listeners know these stories in detail?

For more than two decades, numerous inscriptions from Arabia have been studied, so much so that epigraphic discoveries now provide a much clearer picture of the religious currents in Arabia before Islam, and plausible hypotheses can be put forwards in response to the asked questions.

First of all, you have to take into account the events that took place in the kingdom of Ḥimyar around the end of the fourth century and the reign of Malkīkarib Yuha'min (from c. 375 to c. 400).

Around 380, the kingdom abandoned the ancient paganism already in decline during the reign of its father Ta'rān Yuhan'im (324 to c. 375), and adopted a Judeo-monotheism which was not directly affiliated to any other structured Jewish community. The Judaism of Ḥimyar will thus and for a fairly long period of time have a semi-official status. And this decision will have a considerable impact on the whole of the Arabian Peninsula following the expansion of Ḥimyar and its conquest of desert Arabia. The considerable influence of this type of Judaism, which radiates up to c. 500 from Yemen, cannot be underestimated. But there is also, in connection with this Judaism in Yemen, the very important presence of the Jews in Ḥidjaz, where the roots of Judaism remain scattered and are not unified by the fact that the political power is favorable to the Jews, as in Ḥimyar. During this period of about one hundred and fifty years, therefore, Judaizing monotheism has had plenty of time to permeate minds throughout the peninsula.

As early as 485, the kingdom of Ḥimyar enters into crisis; Christianity, supported by the Ethiopian power of Aksūm, gradually infiltrates, gaining ground from the periphery of the country, so that between 500 and 522, the country is little by little put under aksūmite protectorate: about end 518 - beginning 519, it is Aksūm which puts on the throne of Ḥimyar a Christian prince, Ma'dīkarib Ya'fur. As for north-western Arabia, it is the influence of Byzantium that imposes itself between 500 and 560. This development will be abruptly interrupted when an anti aksūmite Judaizing revolt breaks out led by the king of Ḥimyar Yūsuf As'ar Yath'ar (also called Yūsuf dū Nuwās), who had been enthroned in June 522,

He massacred the aksūmite garrison of the capital Ṣafār, set fire to the church and attacked the Christians of the city of Najran who were martyred. But the Ethiopian king reacted: he began a reprisal expedition that took place between 525 and 530, and re-established the aksūmite domination over Yemen. The king Yūsuf is put to death and a new ḥimyarite king, Sumūyafa' Ashwa', is put on the

throne. Christianity becomes the official religion of Ḥimyar. This situation will last until around 570-575 when the Persians succeed in imposing themselves. But in the meantime, a major event will take place, which will have important repercussions and brings us directly back to the questions asked in relation to the Quran.

Between 531 and 535 indeed, one of the generals of the Ethiopian king, named Abraha - well known to Muslim sources - will revolt against the Negus and the king whom he has put on the throne; he takes power. Around 550, he began expeditions northwards and various tribes submitted to his authority. Abraha also seized the oasis of Yathrib and built a large church at Ṣan'ā', al-Qalīs, which is also mentioned in the *Sīra nabawiyya* (life of Muhammad).

An inscription from the time of Abraha specifies the year: 559-560; this is extremely important because, according to Professor Robin, the inscriptions from this period also reveal a major internal evolution in the Christianity of Abraha. The inscriptions dating from the time of the previous ḥimyarite king, Sumūyafa' Ašwa', contained the classical Christian Trinitarian invocations, mentioning Raḥmānān, and then the second divine person, his Son, the victorious Christ, as well as the Holy Spirit.

Christian Robin notes an important change in the inscriptions from the time of Abraha: "Abraha's devotion is limited to Raḥmānān (possibly Lord of Heaven) and his Messiah. The disappearance of the word "son" in Abraha's religious invocations may indicate that belief in the divine sonship of Jesus is no longer considered essential.

Jesus is no longer a divine entity, but only the Messiah. Thus, in another inscription dating from 548: "With the power, help and mercy of Raḥmānān, of his Messiah, and of the Spirit of holiness,"

According to Robin, the absence of the word 'son' and of the appellation 'Messiah' is in keeping with the Christology of the most radical Judeo-Christians. More remarkably, they reflect a doctrine that may have inspired the Quran, which recognizes Jesus as an exceptional person with a miraculous birth, since he is called "Jesus son of Mary" (ʿĪsā bin. Maryam, not "Jesus son of Joseph") and calls him the "Messiah" (al-Masīḥ).

One of Professor Robin's explanations for this dogmatic shift is that King Abraha, who is aksūmite in origin, and a Christian, and who seized power in the kingdom of Ḥimyar whose elites have been inclined towards Judaism for almost two centuries, could no longer rely on Aksūm.

He therefore had to find a way to reconcile at least some of the local population. On the religious level, it was a form of Christianity which did not offend the Jews too much.

In Muhammad's hands, this kind of compromise would nevertheless fail very quickly as far as Jews were concerned, but would seduce many Arabs, including a certain number of inhabitants of Yathrib/Medina to begin with, since the following year, that is to say in 621, when the time of the pilgrimage came, a delegation came from Yathrib to meet Muhammad.

This delegation consisted of twelve men, five of whom belonged to the group of the previous year, and two members of the tribe of Aws. They again met Muhammad at Aqaba and swore allegiance to him, first in their name and that of their wife, promising not to associate anyone with God in their worship, not to steal or commit adultery or to kill their children, even in the most extreme poverty. And they also promised to obey the Prophet of Islam in everything he commanded them to do right and good. This oath is known as the first pledge of Aqaba but is also called the "Pledge of women." All its signatories are men, of course, but peace at the time was seen as a state unworthy of men, and more in keeping with the nature of women. Hence the name for this pact which did not foresee a fight since it was only defensive.

Ibn Ishaq. *The Life of Muhammad* Guillaume page 198.

THE MISSION OF MUS'AB (April 621).

In the following year, twelve Helpers attended the fair and met at al Aqaba —this was the first Aqaba— where they gave the apostle the 'pledge of women. This was before the duty of making war if necessary was laid upon them.

These men were....

Ubada b. al Samit told me: 'I was present at the first Aqaba. There were twelve of us and we pledged ourselves to the prophet after the manner of women because that was before war was enjoined, the undertaking being that we should associate nothing with God; we should not steal; we should not commit fornication; nor kill our offspring; we should not slander our neighbors; we should not disobey him in what was right; if we fulfilled this paradise would be ours; if we committed any of those sins it was for God to punish or forgive as He pleased.....

When these men left, the apostle sent with them Mus'ab b. Umayr... and instructed him to read the Quran to them and to teach them Islam and to give them instruction about religion. In Yathrib Mus'ab was called 'The Reader'; he lodged with As'ad b. Zurara.

'Asim b. 'Umar told me that he used to lead the prayers because Aus and Khazraj could not bear to see one of their rivals take the lead. He was the first Meccan Muslim to arrive in Yathrib Ibn Ishaq. He

preached until almost all the families in Yathrib had at least one sympathizer among its members. And before the pilgrimage of the following year, that is to say, the year 622, he returned and saw Muhammad to give him an account of his mission.

1) Luqman is the name of an Arabian mythical figure long before the Quran. There has been much debate and discussion, theologically and historically, about the relationship of the two characters. Some maintain that it's the same person, others that they simply share the same name. Arabic proverb collections actually fuse the two characters, drawing from both the Quran and pre-Islamic stories, endowing him with superhuman strength and lifespan. The pre-Islamic Luqman was of the Ad people, who lived in Al-Ahqaf in the Arabian peninsula, near modern-day Yemen.

* Same reasoning among Jehovah's Witnesses to explain the two Goliaths of the Bible.

THE SECOND PLEDGE OF AQABA June 23, 622.

KNOWN AS BAYAT AL HARAB OR MALE PLEDGE.

Male because of its explicit reference to force in order to defend oneself, if necessary.

APPEARANCE OF THE ANSARI OR HELPERS

Still for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, 73 men and 2 women from Yathrib / Medina, including twelve of their leaders; from the Khazraj tribes, and even this time, according to some authors, which is more difficult to believe; convinced by the cause of Muhammad, swear obedience and loyalty to Muhammad in this same rocky narrow pass, situated near Mina * (5 km or 6 km from Mecca) and commit to welcome or protect him against all those who would like to attack his person. They also pledge to help his followers if necessary, to associate no other god with the worship which they already paid more or less to the god called Allah, and to respect minimum moral rules. These sympathizers of Yathrib / Medina will henceforth be called the ansar ("helpers, allies, assistants").

According to Ibn Ishaq, God had not yet given the Messenger of God permission to go to war during the first pledge of Aqaba in 621, but there "He gave it to him."

Ibn Ishaq, Life of Muhammad, Alfred Guillaume page 221.

THE APOSTLE RECEIVES THE ORDER TO FIGHT.

The apostle had not been given permission to fight or allowed to shed blood before the second 'Aqaba. He had simply

been ordered to call men to God and to endure insult and forgive the ignorant. The Quraysh had persecuted his followers,

seducing some from their religion, and exiling others from their country. They had to choose whether to give up their

religion, be maltreated at home, or to flee the country, some to Abyssinia, others to Yathrib.

Ibn Ishaq Life of Muhammad Alfred Guillaume page 208.

CONDITIONS OF THE PLEDGE AT THE SECOND AQABA.

The second Aqaba contained conditions involving war which were not in the first act of fealty. Now they bound themselves to war for God and his apostle, while he promised them for faithful service thus the reward of paradise.

Ubada b. al Walid b. Ubada b. al Samit.....told me, 'We pledged ourselves to war in complete obedience to the apostle in weal and woe, in ease and hardship and evil circumstances; that we would not wrong anyone; that we would speak the truth at all times; and that in God's service we would fear the censure of none.'

Ubada was one of the twelve who gave his word at the first Aqaba.

THE NAMES OF THOSE PRESENT AT THE SECOND AQABA.

There were seventy-three men and two women...who they allege pledged their obedience also. The apostle used not to strike hands with women; he merely stated the conditions, and if they accepted them he would say, 'Go, I have made a covenant with you.'

Ayatullah Jafar Subhani. The Life of the Holy Prophet of Islam (2014).

"All Bani Hashim, whether they believe in his religion or not, are responsible for his defense. However, Muhammad is now inclined towards you and desires to be among you. If you are confident that you will abide by your agreement and will protect him from every harm from his enemies, we are prepared to let him go with you. However, if you are not capable of defending him in difficult circumstances you are free to forsake him here and let him spend his life among his kinsmen with great dignity and respect."

At this time Bura bin Ma'rur stood up and said: "By God! Had there been anything in our hearts other than that which we have said with our tongues we would have expressed it. We have no other intention than sincere compliance with the agreement and sacrifice in the path of the Prophet." Then the Khazrajites turned towards the Prophet and requested him to say something. The Prophet recited some verses and stirred their inclination towards Islam.

Thereafter he said: "I take this oath from you that you will defend me in the same manner in which you defend your children and the members of your family." Upon this Bura rose up again and said: "We are the children of campaign and have been trained as warriors. We have inherited these qualities from our ancestors."

Some writers believe that verses 39-40 of chapter 22 of the Quran are a distant echo of this second Aqaba oath.

Mohammed, Quran 22, 39-40. "Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and God is indeed Able to give them victory; Those who have been driven from their homes unjustly only because they said: Our Lord is Allah."

Permission to use violence in Islam therefore came early, during this second oath, and not after the Hegira at Yathrib / Medina.

These agreements are important: pledges are religious acts, but they are also contracts between two parties, a program and reciprocal obligations. We thus move gradually from the sectarian model to the theocratic model, where religious, economic, social, military and political offices are mixed. These pledges bring Muhammad or his people to the level of the "inter-Arab" policy. By this contract of allegiance, Maccan migrants and allies of Yathrib, if they do not break all their links with their groups of origin, superimpose another one upon them, that of a common belief represented by a single leader. Muhammad then sent some of his followers to Yathrib / Medina, under the leadership of a man named Massat ben Umayr, in order to realize the alliance with the Khazraj and to eventually arouse others joining his cause.

Yathrib, the city where Mohammed decided to emigrate and which will become Medina, is located 350 km north-west of Mecca.

The definitive explanation of such a joining the person and the cause of Muhammad remains to be determined, the first being that apparently they had begun to speak of him in Yathrib, even before it became Medina.

The most commonly put forward explanations are....

-The presence in Yathrib of a large Jewish community.

- The Hathib war occurred forty years earlier (583) between the two main Arab tribes of Yathrib, Aws and Khazraj.

* According to Tabari.

HEGIRA * (622).

* Hegira means emigration in Arabic.

Muhammad as such was especially a Meccan speaking to other Meccans. His message was addressed only to the Meccans, to the faithful of their sanctuary, and he spoke only of the god of Meccans.

But the inhabitants of Mecca then considered Muhammad someone who "has lost his marbles," completely (misguided our texts say) they did not sympathize with the ideas of Muhammad. They laughed at the first Muslims and ridiculed them, but never with a few exceptions did they kill somebody only because of his adherence to Islam. The explanation of such a lack of enthusiasm from the Meccans was likely, as we said, that Muhammad totally disrespected their beliefs and philosophy of life (open secularism). In short, what was at stake was the personality of Muhammad and not his message.

The later Muslim hagiography has certainly tried to make believe that it was because of the strict Abrahamic monotheism of Muhammad, but nothing is more wrong for two reasons:

--The first is that the Abrahamism of Muhammad dates mainly from his break with the Jews or Judaizers in Medina and not from his Meccan period.

- The second is that Abraham is a legendary or mythical figure with little historical likelihood.

It is certain that the Hebrews of that time were still polytheistic or henotheistic. It is better not to speak of the god of Abraham of Isaac and Jacob, but of the gods of Abraham of Isaac and Jacob. See our previous study on Judaism. This proves well in passing, and if need be, that what Muhammad had taken over about Abraham, was in no way a divine revelation or the result of very detailed personal historical research ... But simply various misconceptions about him in Jewish or Christian communities.

The character of Abraham being an imposture all this amounted to overdoing it, to adding fake to fake, in short some imposture power 2. The Abraham of the Muslim tradition is only a squared false identity. The main source of anxiety or conflict with other members of the Quraysh tribe was not the fact that Muhammad claimed to be the agent of a divine revelation; (He was not the first in this case, because at the time everyone believed more or less in jinns and soothsayers: kahin;) but his iconoclasm. That is to say, his religious intolerance for the benefit of Allah alone and to the detriment of other gods. The chief personages in Mecca, like Abu Lahab and his brother-in-law Abu Sufyan, saw in him an injinned epileptic (a majnun) whose ideas could seriously harm the material and moral interests (its reputation) of the city. The attitude of the Meccan bourgeoisie against Muhammad was therefore motivated only in part by the content of his so-called divine revelations. At the beginning, as we have seen, Muhammad had scarcely attacked the deities whom it was fashionable to honor in Mecca, since he had even admitted the worship of the goddesses Lat, Uzza and Manat (53: 19-20).

On a more personal level, however, things had gotten better and a month or so after the death of Khadija (at age 65) Mohammed had remarried. Twice ! On the one hand, he had married a good and strong housewife named Sawda, who had returned from Abyssinia after the conversion of her husband, Sakran ibn Amr, to Coptic Christianity (or his death in other versions); and, on the other hand, the daughter of his follower Abu Bakr, Aisha (6 years old).

"The messenger of God married Saudah in the month of Ramadan, the tenth year of the prophecy, after the death of Khadija. This was the first woman God's messenger married just after Khadija."

Going beyond the very conventional middle-class or scandalous nature of these episodes, it must be emphasized that Muhammad has thus promoted polygamy worldwide, a phenomenon with very important social, economic and military consequences, for Muslims themselves as well as for others. It is necessary to be a particularly egotistical man not to understand that it is inhuman to impose on women to live every day with one man under the same roof.

Hegira is the beginning of the Muslim calendar, forms the beginning of the Muslim era, because it is a capital event. In Muslim history, it is the decisive turning point in the life of Muhammad. Before, he was a prophet mocked by his fellow citizens, placed in quarantine and ostracized, after he becomes the leader of Yathrib / Medina, raises an army, organizes raids for booty then wars of conquest (always defensive wars in the Muslim presentation of things *) , and manages to found an empire.

Such an important event, however, left only a tiny trace in the text of reference: the Quran.

Muhammad Quran 8 : 30 " And when those who disbelieve plot against you to wound you fatally, or to kill you or to drive you forth; they plot, but God also plots."

In Mecca, Muhammad, who is more or less under house arrest in the city, is now preparing for his departure, and encourages his followers to do the same.

We know almost nothing about the departure of these few dozens of families (100 people ???). All the attention of Muslims has focused on the figure of the charismatic leader and his adventure.

The quantity of specifications on this subject is besides suspect. For example, the story of the conspiracy against Muhammad of the Quraysh, who had suddenly become bloody Neros - after ten years of ostracism, they suddenly decide to kill him when even the Germans let Lenin reach St. Petersburg in Russia in 1917, too happy to kill two birds with one stone, get rid of an ideologically dangerous agitator and tell him to get lost in an enemy of whom they hoped well that would disorganize or weaken the defenses. In the case of Lenin, their wishes were fulfilled by the signing of the surrender of Brest-Litovsk in 1918, but as far as Yathrib was concerned it was without counting with the indisputable political acumen of Muhammad.

This story is timely to hide the fact that the preaching was breathless in Mecca, and that the move to Yathrib had already been decided during the second Aqaba oath a few months earlier.

The first followers of Muhammad (about 80 men, the muhajirun) begin therefore to discreetly go out of Mecca in small groups to go to Yathrib / Medina where were now friends devoted to their cause. They will constitute there a kind of elite, at least in the eyes of Muslims of later generations, helped by their assistants in the city (the ansar).

Muhammad himself finally will also decide to try his luck there a few weeks later. Hijrah (or emigration) had begun.

Very technical aspects are mentioned at the time of departure, which increase the likelihood: the financial affairs of Muhammad, the lack of foresight of Abu Bakr, the choice of the guide, etc.

According to some hadiths, the morning of his departure, Muhammad would have narrowly escaped an assassination.

Ali having taken the place of Muhammad in his bed, it is him that the Meccans came to kill him, would have found in his place, to their great disappointment.

The artificial nature of the episode is obvious, it is evidently intended to highlight the symbolic importance of the character of Ali, replacing Muhammad before the letter. What is also important here is that Ali finds himself in a martyr position, that is to say, in the almost innate posture of the Shiite.

We can hardly ask for other services from this poor Ali, given his very weak reasoning abilities. It is also an easy fictional motivation, even if it could be used as a support for a somewhat muddled theology.

Abu Bakr and Muhammad, after having communed with themselves one last time at the Kaaba, manage to leave Mecca on the 20th of June according to some, on the 16th of July, or on the 14th of September, according to the others, of the year 622; with their guide Abdullah Ibn Urayqit and a servant of Abu Bakr called Amr Ibn Fuhayrah.

Some Quraysh would have then tried a last time to eliminate him physically. With his companions, Muhammad takes refuge in a cave. According to legend, a spider then begins to weave its web in front of the entrance to the cave, while a dove quietly broods its eggs. The Meccans, convinced that there is no one in the cave, go on their way and do not bother to search it.

This is the episode that has remained the most popular in the Muslim tradition, while it does not bring anything substantive. But simple stories are loved in the lands of Islam. The episode in any case highlights the character of Abu Bakr as the main companion of Muhammad (which will legitimize therefore he carries the interim in 632).

Let us remind the fact that the hero of the initiatory romance heading Gospel, the high Nazarene rabbi named Jesus, did not succeed in escaping from his enemies and that he did not die in his bed at 60 but crucified as a thief. The event is quite embarrassing when you think about it so that it has a good chance of not having been invented.

To compensate for the lack of miraculous episodes, especially in comparison with the life of Christ; the Muslim tradition inserts in this place of the Mohammedan epic accounts that fall under the miracle; and whose true date is, in fact, of no importance.

ISRA AND MIRAJ.

The night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem (Isra) must be distinguished from the heavenly ascension from Jerusalem (miraj) that ensued.

ISRA.

One night, angel Gabriel came to find Muhammad during his sleep. He entered the room by making a hole in the roof, then ordered Muhammad to ride an unknown mount midsize between the donkey and the mule. The horse had a peacock's tail and a woman's head and was called Buraq.

The mount brought by Gabriel had wings and, at a fabulous speed, like the Pegasus of Greek mythology, led Muhammad from Mecca, where he was supposed to live, to a distant mosque located in ?????Jerusalem.

After praying, Muhammad went to Heaven, approached God so closely that he heard him creak his reed pen on the parchment while writing his decrees himself.

Then Mahomet returned to ??????Jerusalem took up the flying animal, returned to Mecca, went to bed, and fell asleep. Gabriel covered the hole in the roof in such a wonderful way that the next day nobody saw the slightest trace of it.

N.B. This miraculous or incredible trip has made Jerusalem a sacred city for Muslims, the third greatest after Mecca and Medina.

Only two sources mention this nocturnal journey: chapter 17 verse 1 of the Quran and the Sira (the legendary biography of Muhammad). The first of these sources, the Quran, is of a lapidary abruptness on this subject.

Chapter 17 verse 1.

" Glorified be He Who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the Far distant place of worship the neighborhood whereof We have blessed, that We might show him of Our tokens! "

The term "Isra" means to take refuge ("to go secretly from a dangerous place where you are not safe in a safe place"). It could therefore be simply a prefiguration of the departure of Muhammad for Yathrib / Medina, a dream or a vision of Muhammad, ordering him to flee to Yathrib/Medina.

All that this text tells us in any case is that God took Muhammad in a mosque called Al-Haram to drop off him in a mosque called al-Aqsa (the furthest).

This text therefore evokes two holy places, the first called Al-Haram which can only be the Kaaba of Mecca, the second an unknown mosque called Al-Aqsa. But in Palestine at that time, there was no mosque. At that time, in Jerusalem, no one believed in Muhammad. Most of the inhabitants were Christians or Jews. The first mosque was built there at the end of the seventh century, probably during the conquest of Jerusalem by Omar. It is undoubtedly later, perhaps under the Caliphate of the Umayyads of Damascus, when one sought to dispossess Mecca of its prerogative of single religious center of Islam; that the expression "distant Mosque" no longer designated the "Heavenly Jerusalem" but the capital of Judea. But let's repeat it, nothing says in the Quranic text that this very distant mosque was a mosque located in Jerusalem. Given the dates, it would be even impossible. The very distant Mosque is perhaps simply a metaphor of the heavens (as Shiites think) similar to the HEAVENLY Jerusalem.

THE MIRAJ.

The verse in question of the Quran states that this trip was made to show certain "tokens." According to the legend, then Muhammad would have gone to Heaven, well before his death. As he rushed to heaven, he would have left his footprint on the rock of Abraham (Qubbat el-Sakhra) which is sheltered by the cave located under the Dome of the Mosque of Omar; where tradition reports that Abraham would have tried to make a human sacrifice on the person of his son.

The marble pavement of this mosque is interrupted in the center of the building, under the dome, and lets out the rock. According to the official Muslim tradition, his mount would have left Muhammad on the esplanade, in this place, and, leaning on the rock, Muhammad would have jumped to heaven. The proof of this fact, still according to Muslim tradition, is that the foot of Muhammad left on the rock a footprint that you can see still today.

However, it can be seen that no inscription makes mention of this nocturnal journey, neither on the walls of the mosque nor on the circumference of the dome. If the legend of the night trip had existed in 691, during the building of this mosque, it would have been mentioned in the inscriptions. This legend (analogous to innumerable similar tales in the West: footprint of Gurgunt = Gargant, of the devil, or of any saint ...) is necessarily later than 691. And in fact, this miraculous miraj is known to us only by Hadiths, in other words, only by legendary traditions very much later than the alleged date of events. Such ascensions of someone during his life are impossible in this world and this purely legendary ascent must be understood as a metaphor or a symbol (unless, of course, the physical nature of Muhammad then underwent changes that made him able him to truly see Heaven and Hell in the flesh).

These myths, directly inspired by popular Christianity, had two aims: to strengthen the influence of the Umayyads in Palestine, at the moment when the Hijaz and Mecca revolted against them; and affirm the domination of Islam over the two previous mass monolatries, the Jewish and the Christian, in the very place of their formation.

Let's go back down to earth! The Quraysh of Mecca mocked such a dream, of course, despite the details reported by Muhammad the next morning (the very precise description of a caravan coming to Mecca during the day).

* The 8th-century Muslim empire was the only example in the world of Empire only formed as a result of defensive wars or self-defense wars.

ARRIVAL AT YATHRIB/MEDINA (September 622).

The fugitives take about a month to travel the 400 km separating Mecca from Yathrib / Medina. They arrive at Qba one of its suburbs, on the night of the twelfth day of the month of Rabil, either July 16 or September 24, 622.

The arrival of the four men (Muhammad Abu Bakr, his servant Amir, and their guide Abdullah ibn Arqat) caused a sensation and was one of the great moments of the Muslim gesture.

It was the day of the Yom Kippur festival among the Jews of the city and Muhammad will make it one of the feasts of Islam under the name of Ashura.

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad by A. Guillaume page 227.

When we heard that the apostle had left Mecca and we were eagerly expecting his arrival we used to go out after morning prayers to await him.

The first to see him was a Jew. He had seen what we were in the habit of doing and that we were expecting the arrival of the apostle and he called out at the top of his voice 'O Banu Qayla your luck has come!'

So we went out to greet the apostle who was in the shadow of a palm tree with Abu Bakr who was of like age. Now most of us had never seen the apostle and as the people crowded round him they did not know him from Abu Bakr until the shade left him and Abu Bakr got up with his mantle and shielded him from the sun, and then we knew.

.....'Ali stayed in Mecca for three days and nights until he had restored the deposits which the apostle held. This done he

joined the apostle and lodged with him at Kulthum's house. He stayed in Quba only a night or two.

He used to say that in Quba there was an unmarried Muslim woman and he noticed that a man used to come to her in the middle of the night and knock on her door; she would come out and he would give her something. He asked her what was the meaning of this nightly performance as she was a Muslim woman without a husband. She told him that the man was Sahl b. Hunayf b. Wahib who knew that she was all alone and he used to break up the idols of his tribe at night and bring her the pieces to use as fuel.....

The apostle stayed in Quba' among B. 'Amr b. 'Auf from Monday to Thursday and then he laid the foundation of his

mosque. Then God brought him out from them on the Friday. The B. 'Amr allege that he stayed longer with them, and

God knows the truth of the matter. Friday prayer found the apostle among B. Salim b. 'Auf and he prayed it in the mosque which is in the bottom of the Wadi Raniina. This was the first Friday prayer that he prayed in Medina.

Itban b. Malik and 'Abbas b. 'Ubada b. Nadla with some of B. Salim b. 'Auf came and asked him to live with them and

enjoy their wealth and protection, but he said, 'Let her go her way,' for his camel was under God's orders; so they let her go until she came to the home of B. Bayada, where he was met by Ziyad b. Labid and Farwa b. 'Amr with some of their clansmen. Finally, the camel came to the home of B. Malik b. al Najjar when it knelt at the door of his mosque, which at that time was used as a drying place for dates and belonged to two young orphans of B. al Najjar 1) of B. Malik clan.... When it knelt the apostle did not alight, and it got up and went a short distance. The apostle left its rein free, not guiding it, and it turned in its tracks and returned to the place where it had knelt at first and knelt there again. It shook itself and lay exhausted with its chest upon the ground. The apostle alighted and Abu Ayyub Khalid b. Zayd took his baggage into the house....

When the Apostle asked to whom the date store belonged Mu'adh b. 'Afra' told him that the owners were Sahl and Suhayl the sons of 'Amr who were orphans in his care and that he could take it for a mosque and he would pay the young men for it.

The apostle ordered that a mosque should be built, and he stayed with Abu Ayyub until the mosque and his houses

were completed. The apostle joined in the work to encourage the Muslims to work and the muhajirun and the ansar

labored hard. One of the Muslims rhymed...

If we sat down while the prophet worked

It could be said that we had shirked.

As they built, the Muslims sang,

There's no life but the life of the next world.

O God, have mercy on the ansar and the muhajira .

The apostle used to sing it in the form

There's no life but the life of the next world.

O God, have mercy on the muhajirin and the ansar.

Last trace of the Meccan spirit, the fraternization between migrants and Ansars.

As we have had the opportunity to see above, a moral fraternity between first Muslims (muhajirun) and assistants or helper (ansar) is established. Muhammad proceeded to a kind of twinning between Muhajirun and Ansar in order to strengthen the links between them. Each of the ansar had to choose a friend among the newcomers and they could even inherit each other. This institution was quickly given up, however, especially with regard to the possibility of a legacy based on a non-biological fraternity (or not resulting from an adoption).

Ibn Ishaq. The life of Muhammad Alfred Guillaume page 234.

BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN EMIGRANTS AND HELPERS

The apostle instituted brotherhood between his fellow emigrants and the helpers, and he said : 'Let each of you take a

brother in God.' He himself took 'Ali by the hand and said, 'This is my brother.'....

Hamza, the lion of God and the lion of his apostle and his uncle, became the brother of Zayd b.

Haritha the apostle's freedman. To him Hamza gave his last testament on the day of Uhud when battle was imminent in case he should meet his death.

Ja'far b. Abu Talib and Mu'adh b. Jabal brother of B. Salama became brothers.

The pairs of Muslims were arranged thus:

Abu Bakr and Kharija b. Zuhayr brother of B. Harith b. al Khazraj.

'Umar and 'Itban b. Malik brother of B. Salim

.....

Salman the Persian and Abu'l Darda Uwaymir b. Tha'laba brother of B. al Harith. Some say, 'Uwaymir was the

son of 'Amir or of Zayd.

Bilal freedman of Abu Bakr and the apostle's muezzin, and Abu Ruwayha Abdullah b. Abdu'l Rahman al Khath'amī, one of the Faza.

These are the men who were named to us as those to whom the apostle made his companions brothers.

1). Some distant relatives of Muhammad, as chance would have it.

HELLO Mr. HYDE.

Yathrib is not an urban center, but rather an aggregate of palm groves, hills, villages, markets or fortresses. Its population, as we have already seen, is complex: two Arab tribes, three Jewish or Judeo-Christian tribes, who practice cattle breeding, agriculture and handicrafts. Muhammad will then find himself in a case totally different from that of Mecca. It will be an opportunity for him to confront other types of people, other gods, and even other ideas of God; to rub his shoulders with Jews and Christians apparently enough organized, for whom the god of the Kaaba in Mecca is nothing; and who will thus contribute therefore to build another divine figure than that of the god Lord of the Kaaba of the beginning of the preaching, with a more universal vocation this time. The city becomes a kind of new Mecca similar to that of the beginning of the preaching, where the little sect is reconstructed.

After having mentioned the great political, military, administrative and social responsibilities that awaited the Prophet (PBUH) in Medina, the Encyclopedia of Islam writes nevertheless : "We are confronted with one of the most delicate problems of the Prophet's biography. ; the double personality that he presents clearly according to the sources. The inspired religious visionary, whose thought was mainly concerned with the impending judgment; who had patiently endured all the attacks and all the humiliations, who was only timidly touched by the possibility of active resistance, and who preferred to rely entirely on the intervention of God; after his settling in Medina, appears on a secular theater and suddenly reveals himself as a first-rate political genius ."

In Yathrib / Medina, and despite his pretensions to the contrary, Muhammad will indeed become "the leader" and "the chain of command" will be as short as possible: God, the Archangel Gabriel, Muhammad. Totalitarianism, that is, intervention in private life, will only become more striking. And this totalitarianism, despite its insistence on pretending the opposite, will not be based on a real past, but on a past recomposed through the filter of Muhammad's personality. Muhammad will be in fact his own reference; and this, contrary to what he will affirm constantly, we have stressed; immediate and progressive, like a tautology; what could make us smile if this totalitarianism had not been applied for eight years to a human society.

The Islamic Law, the famous Sharia, is a global and total law that governs the entire community as a single block. It comes from the dictates of the Quran, which are confirmed or supplemented by tradition: the hadiths. But it is in Yathrib / Medina that most of this legislation will be passed, in the form of Quranic revelations. It is here also that it will be enforced for the first time in the world, in its original strictness. It would be interesting to compare this at once archaic and totalitarian, structure, with the Justinian Code, a century earlier.

On the other hand, about the Sharia, we will make some remarks.

This legislation claims to have no other source than the divine will transmitted to the head of the community.

- It never takes into account the human being as such, and never considers his own interests, it obeys no great guiding principle apart from that of the submission to the deity or the decisions of the religious leader. Individual and autonomous morality does not exist.

- It is aroused almost exclusively by the events that affect the community, or the life of Muhammad.

- It does not form a coherent and organized whole: they are the circumstances that build it. The true codes will appear much later, through the contact with the Roman or Persian worlds.

It favors, as any archaic law, the interests of the group, to the detriment of that of the individual. It would be therefore vain to think of finding in it any form of humanism.

- It basically distinguishes the Muslim from the non-Muslim, different rules apply to these two categories of human beings.

- Within the group of Muslims, it sanctions the distinction between several categories of human beings with unequal status.

- Finally, it has no limits in its area for action and has no explanation.

Such an attitude will quickly provoke opposition from those who are in his way: the Judaizers and all those who did not understand at first, what would imply the arrival of Muslims. But it is thanks to these opponents, after long struggles, harsh invectives, even crimes, that the Muslim theocracy will set up, and find its idealized form forever. An exceptional case, even unique, in the History of Mankind.

From then on, there will be 4 communities or categories of inhabitants in Yathrib / Medina.

Medinans of the Jewish denomination.

Native Medinans remained pagan (even Christians for some). Often called hypocrites (munafiqun) in our texts.

Native Medinans converted to Islam or sympathizers since a certain time, called Ansars (helpers, assistants).

Muslims from Mecca, called Muhajirun. The name Muhajir is a name in the uncertain sense. Its translation by "migrant" expresses only imperfectly its meaning. The emigration in question is certainly to be taken in a symbolic sense. Be that as it may, the prestige of these muhajirun will cause they will always be mentioned separately, and receive booty afterwards.

THE LIFE IN YATHRIB/MEDINA.

A new period of Muhammad's life begins therefore. The emigration to Yathrib bore no resemblance to that which took place a few years or months earlier in Ethiopia, with the blessing of the Negus, for this time Muhammad was also personally involved; and it was not in a Christian country that the Muslims arrived, but in a region half Jewish. Jews will play a significant role in the life of the new community. It must be said that Muhammad had not yet pretended to profess a "new" religion. In addition, another difference with Ethiopia, Muhammad already had on the spot sympathizers (the ansar, who had sworn allegiance to him a few months earlier, in the valley of Aqaba as we have seen).

The chronicle tells us about the picturesque aspects of his arrival. As many ways to hide the attitude of the rest of the population in the oasis. These stories are also marked by the later influence of the families of Medina, concerned about the prestige that arose from this or that ancient and favored relationship with the founder of their religion.

Muhammad asks his faithful Abu Bakr to sell him the she camel on which he had traveled, because he wanted to enter Yathrib on his own horse. This camel will enter the Muslim legend under the name "Qaswa" (the one with a quarter ear cut).

The first problem to solve was "where to settle? To accept one's hospitality was to arouse jealousy and restrict one's freedom of movement. Muhammad will therefore choose to have his own place of residence. It is probably also for him not to impose brutally in the middle of the locality. In short, do not insist, the fact is trivial and by no means miraculous!

The arrival of the Muslims will therefore bring material changes in the Medina community. These documents, too prosaic, are rarely presented. This is, of course, land transactions, newcomers acquire homes or building land.

One of the first actions of Muhammad will therefore be the building of what will soon be called the Mosque (but in fact, it was initially only the house of Muhammad himself and his family).

Opportunity to see Muslims working, in common and in joyfully. The painting is therefore popular and naive.

In two months, and in general enthusiasm everything was over. Muhammad's house in Yathrib / Medina consisted of a single row of small rooms for his wives, each opening onto a vast courtyard of about fifty meters. There are also some chambers for the daughters he had from Khadija, and, of course, Fatima. Muhammad does not have an apartment of his own, he stays in turn with his wives.

The qibla is the direction to which Muslims turn to pray. It was first towards Jerusalem, the direction of prayer for Jews and Judeo-Christians.

To designate the north wall as the qibla, in front of which the faithful must go to pray, since the mihrab had not yet been invented; and also because the main prayer and assembly of the community were done on Friday at noon, therefore in full heat; Muhammad makes a simple roof of palm leaves built. A roof that rested on two rows of trunks parallel to the north wall, to protect themselves from the heat of the sun, delimiting thus the part of the mosque called musala (or mussala).

Muhammad also built a shelter against the sun along the south wall. It was used to receive the faithful passing through and perhaps also as a parlor.

When as a result of his break with the Judaizers in Medina; Muhammad changed the direction of the qibla, from Jerusalem to Mecca, in order to designate the south wall and ensure the same shaded area for himself and his faithful during the prayer; he reversed the device. This covered part played the role of a kind of courtroom, with a throne in the middle, ancestor of the minbar (sort of pulpit).

As scanty as was the home of Muhammad, in keeping with the rusticity of the Arab manners of the time, it still had a general placement; dictated directly by the offices to be satisfied and by the means available to the Arabs of that time. This first mosque also corresponded to what was expected of a public building in the 7th century Medina. But, to observe his description well, as we have already said, it was more than a place of worship. It was a new monument, mixing religion, administration, representation and family life of the chief.

This first mosque was therefore also used for purely political affairs since it was also the court (dar) inhabited by Muhammad or his family, the worship meetings and prayers being done in the

musala. It became ipso facto the prototype of any mosque afterwards and was used as a model for Muslims.

The general plan of the first mosques was therefore very simple. A rectangular courtyard with a fountain for ablutions, a minaret, a large prayer room in which we find the mihrab (axial niche indicating the direction of Mecca) and the minbar (pulpit reserved for the Imam). The minbar quickly became an indispensable piece of furniture in the main mosques of the big cities, because it symbolizes for the Muslim the theocratic aspect of Islam, the syncretism of the political, military and financial powers, with religion.

But let's go back to the moving of the first Muslims, the Muhajirun, in Yathrib / Medina.

Muhammad then will make come the rest of his faithful remained in Mecca, by small groups.

The beginnings are difficult. The four or five hundred newcomers settle with difficulty in an already densely populated oasis. Muhammad must therefore carry out the survival of the small community, by reconciling the natives, and organizing accommodation, supplies, and activity of his faithful, who don't bear very well too humid climate. The allusions to emigrant diseases are an echo of this precarious situation. The cases are not precisely described, but we cannot help but think of malaria.

Medina is a prosperous oasis, but the sudden burst of hundreds of people, religious activists accompanied by their families, can only upset the social, economic, and demographic balance of the place.

Before the launching of looting expeditions, whose idea will come only later, the community is therefore in a delicate position concerning economy, and looks a little parasitic. Muhammad will therefore urge his native faithful, the Ansar, to help them financially. Allusions to it are perceptible in the Quran.

Muhammad, Quran 2: 272.

And whatsoever good thing you spend, it is for yourselves, when you spend not save in search of God's Countenance; and whatsoever good thing you spend, it will be repaid to you in full, and you will not be wronged. (Alms are) for the poor who are straitened for the cause of God, who cannot travel in the land (for trade). The unthinking man accounts them wealthy because of their restraint. You shall know them by their mark: They do not beg of men with importunity. And whatsoever good thing you spend, lo! God knows it.

Muhammad, Quran 9: 79.

Those who point at such of the believers as give the alms willingly and such as can find nothing to give but their endeavors, and deride them – God (Himself) derides them. Theirs will be a painful doom.

According to the exegesis, it is to the financial support of a man named Abd al Rahman ibn Awf that the following excerpt would be alluded to.

Muhammad, Quran 3:180.

And let not those who hoard up that which God has bestowed upon them of His bounty think that it is better for them. Nay, it is worse for them.

The mention of economic activities to which Muslims settled in their new homeland devote themselves are very rare, except, of course, plundering expeditions.

Here is one of those rare allusions, among others that insist rather on the domination of the Jews in this domain. Basically, this primitive Islam remains very contemptuous for agricultural activities, which are left to the inferior.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 3, Book 34, hadith 263.

You people say that Abu Huraira tells many narrations from God's Apostle and you also wonder why the emigrants and Ansar do not narrate from God's Apostle as Abu Huraira does. My emigrant brothers were busy in the market while I used to stick to God's Apostle content with what fills my stomach; so I used to be present when they were absent and I used to remember when they used to forget, and my Ansari brothers used to be busy with their properties.....

The problem of the physical subsistence of the group besides will impose the first decisions, including the practice of looting caravans or Bedouin encampments. There is little evidence of other activities practiced by early Muslims than those of war and loot sharing. The one we have just seen is one of the few.

The followers of Mecca who emigrated to Yathrib / Medina (the first Muslim called in Arabic language muhajirun) and those of the local tribes who agreed to help them, the Aws, as well as

the Khazraj (called ansar) merge and form a single community called muslimun. Arabic term from which derives our modern "Muslims." Muslimun is a common name meaning something like those who obey, those who accept, those who submit (implicitly to God or his prophet).

The image that the hadiths convey to us of the first Muslims of Yathrib / Medina is that of a group of men (and women) overflowing with initiative and confidence, even fanaticism or intolerance in their actions of proselytes. But we must not forget that these texts were composed by Medinan families in search of renown, and wanting to be the contemporaries of the first Meccan Muslims. Arriving in Medina, the sect of Muslims has become a religion, but it is not yet Islam: it is the Hanifiya, Religion with a big "R" or Religion of Abraham. The goal of fasting is to strengthen the cohesion of a group by the compulsion of a common obligation. The Muslim religion will use without restriction of the method, effective since it involves the body by subjugating it to a harsh discipline. The rite will be copied on Jewish usages, and developed. Muhammad fleeing Mecca had arrived at Yathrib / Medina during Yom Kippur, and as the Jews fasted that day, he asked his followers to do the same ("God forgives the sins of a passed year to anyone fast on the day of Ashura").

Indeed the cultural level of these Jews or Judaizers is higher than that of the Arabs, according to Muslim sources themselves; they master especially writing. In Yathrib / Medina, society is more diversified than in Mecca, political authority is weaker, and Jewish influence seems to prepare the mind for a form of monolatry. The poetic production of these "Jews" has been preserved in Arabic works: it is impossible to distinguish specifically Jewish traits in the literary genre in question; on the contrary, they seem to have integrated for the most part Arab cultural characteristics. Only the religious domain distinguishes them. The strength of their religious institutions is remarkable. They are therefore considered by Muhammad at first, as superior in religious science.

For a long time, Muhammad had a Jewish secretary, and his Jewish friends of the Ansar continued to observe all Jewish practices, without Muhammad taking offense about that. He will be inspired by them besides in his recommendations on dietary prohibitions, particularly those related to pork.

Pig species (wild boars, etc.) are considered sacred in many traditions, including Indo-European (in the druidic tradition where pork is considered "divine food," in the Indian tradition where we see one of the avatars of the god Vishnu, Varaha, take the form of a wild boar); but are sensed as unclean animals in Judaism and in the Muslim religion. The revulsion provoked by the mere thought of eating pork is, to say the least, irrational; it undoubtedly feels more under psychosis than under true spirituality.

Other Jewish customs taken up by Muhammad after his arrival in Yathrib / Medina.

-To turn to Jerusalem during the prayer while normally it is to Mecca that every good Muslim must turn.

- The salat al-wusta (the midday prayer).

- Congregational Friday prayers.

We will never emphasize enough, Jewish practices will be, after those of paganism, the basis of the new idea of ritual in Muhammad. Either he integrates most of the content and of the form, or he adapts, or he takes the opposite. But Jewish ritualism, binding as possible, remains the reference.

Muhammad will also adopt the lunar calendar of the Jews, with months of 28 days set on the cycles of the moon.

As John Toland very clearly saw in his book Nazarenus, Muhammad was, during the first part of his life, nourished by the Jewish spirit, whether through Orthodox Jews or Christian Jews.

Muhammad will also appropriate in Yathrib / Medina the huge topic of the prophets of the Hebrew people.

To convince and no doubt in a sincere effort on his part, he will refer to the great figures of Abraham and Moses. He was initially convinced to preach a message substantially similar to the one the Jews had received for a long time in Sinai. By leaving for Yathrib / Medina, he expected to get their support and even the full support of all the monolaters in the region. Muhammad was counting on the formation of a united and coherent set combining the Jews and his faithful to thwart the open or positive secularity of the Quraysh (360 different gods, you could not be more open); for he still thought it possible to unite in a single confederation, or in a same ecumenism, the Jews, the Christians, and his own faithful.

The ideological feat of the Islamic doctrine therefore will be to divert the Bible by making Abraham also go through by Mecca, of which he would have been the founder. The Quran affirms it, then the Sunnah, in an astonishing mythological account.

Hence verse 62 of chapter 2, which lays down the principle of the religious equality of Islam with Judaism, Christianity, and even Sabeism. Too bad that this beautiful verse in the Quran has been repealed by later verses, much less tolerant.

In other words, what Muhammad wanted to found at the time is not a new religion, but a new community: a zealous community which has already been revealed: the hanifiya.

The point of view of the pious Muslims: "There is an identity between the Quran and the Torah, but the Torah in its original form, not in the version that the Jews gave it after many alterations."

To reconcile Jews who are still expecting for the Messiah, Muhammad tries to recover the great themes present in the Torah. It is, first of all, a way of showing his knowledge of the texts - but it remains very superficial - and therefore of competing with the demanding or suspicious audience of the rabbis. He dwells on the presentation of the two emblematic prophets of Judaism, first Abraham, then Moses, with whom he visibly identifies himself, since in Medina, it is the new office he tries to hold. It is clear from the Quran that Muhammad rewrites the history of the Jewish people from his knowledge of the Pentateuch. But these being very limited, it is the least that can be said, these remarks therefore do not convince, by no means, the rabbis of Medina.

Muhammad is not a theologian. And he was never a rabbi, it seems. In the early days, during the seduction phase, where an agreement can be made, based on a misunderstanding; a clear border is therefore drawn between the good Jews, those who accept Muhammad as a prophet, and the others, the bad Jews, who are much more numerous; who do not accept his speech and his arguments.

Ibn Ishaq in his *Life of Muhammad* translated by Alfred Guillaume page 239, reports on several pages lists of refractory, or "hypocrites" rabbis, that is to say considered as having converted but not doing much zeal towards the new religion. The process is surprising and disconcerting. The author of the lists wants to denounce them to posterity. We will notice the considerable proportion of rabbis, for a fairly reduced population all in all. In a way, in these communities, every man who could read was considered a rabbi.

Ibn Ishaq tells us very lively scenes in which Muslims and Jews confront each other first verbally and then bodily. The fighting takes place in the community sites of each one, and the general impression is that of a permanent tension maintained by provocations. Theological debate remains limited, even degenerates very quickly into blows. However, we must be wary of these sources, quite biased, although plausible.

The main Jewish opponents of Muhammad were Pinhas ben Azaryah, Kaab ibn Ashraf, the poet Abu Afak, more than a century old, who sought to make him ridiculous in the Arab eyes; and finally, Abdullah bin Surya, considered to be the most learned Jew of Hijaz. All mocked Muhammad, ridiculed his revelations and his preaching (by God, he is never satisfied, the women take all his care, if he is truly a prophet, let he deal with his mission and not with all these stories of jealous old wives).

Because the fact is that the Jews of Medina will remain in reality insensitive to his maneuvers or his assertions. An Arab leader proclaiming himself a prophet of the Jews, not knowing Hebrew, but glorifying Abraham as a surety for his message, that didn't make among them.

The Mohammedan principle on this subject was however simple.

Muhammad, Quran 3: 67.

The Torah, the real one, has been falsified. Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a Hanif.

Editor's note. Hanif. This strange word is used in the Quran, especially to describe the faith of Abraham, stripped of his Jewishness, but not yet really Muslim.

Muhammad's artificial and forced references to the Jewish Bible thus has almost no success with the concerned Judaizers. Although quite strongly Arabized, these populations still know their founding texts well and practice Judaism still alive. There can be no question for them of admitting a messiah of Arab origin, who does not know the liturgical language and who does not appear in the texts.

The conversions will therefore remain exceptional, because of the enormous blunders made by Muhammad about the texts of the Jewish Bible. Each is presented with emotion and emphasis.

The information about them is therefore very suspicious. The only significant means of

conversion remain violence and intimidation. The overall failure of the enterprise will lead therefore to the complete elimination of the Jewish presence from Yathrib / Medina. Once firmly established in his new office, Muhammad never ceased to convert, by word or compulsion, the rest of the population of this oasis city. This panting activism thus submits a crowd of inhabitants of Medina to the new faith. But these people converted without real conviction. There are so many allusions to the "hypocrites" or "munafikun" in the Quran, that we can draw a true police sketch of this everywhere present adversary. These Medinans called hypocrites or "munafiqun" (singular "munafiq") are excessively vilified in the Quran and the Muslim tradition; who group under this name believers considered too soft and not aggressive enough (especially at the time of the fighting), simple opportunists or supposed such, followers without energy who do not want to break with the infidels, traitors; or sincere people who displease the leader, or even simply bear with difficulty autocracy. A chapter besides has their name, chapter No. 63, the chapter called "munafkun." It is often recited on Fridays and is one of the five most popular chapters. This is a serious matter, as far as ideology is concerned, because this pressure makes it possible, for all eternity, to point out any deviant or simply suspicious attitude in the Muslim community. This surah is also particularly violent, since a call to murder is launched in it, unambiguously. Verse 4: They are the enemy, so beware of them. God confound them! How they are perverted!

The munafikun, even if they do not act openly against Islam, therefore constitute a threat by their very existence. Muslims fear especially their alliance with Jews, and the defection in case of war. The plots evoked by the Muslim tradition may have existed, but nothing can confirm this. On the other hand, what is known is that these accusations were used by Muhammad to launch Stalinist purges before the word is invented (assassination of some Jewish or not Jewish poets, etc.). Islamic tradition clarifies the description, and further accentuates the description of punishment. This speaks volumes about the atmosphere of suspicion and obsequiousness that prevailed then in Medina. This gnawing opposition is sensed by Muslims as a danger for their community, which explains the extreme violence of the excerpts of the Quran concerning men and women practicing "hypocrisy."

In the end, it seems that these munafikun will be simply those who are not members of the small troop of bellicose and fanatic Muslims, grouped around the leader. As recently converted pagans, the poor men have in common that they have not yet grasped the true nature of Islam (love), but in the face of Muhammad's men, they dare not openly step back, and risk death. To resist, it seems that they had to be associated with the Jews, also in difficult position. Here and there we can see signs of mutual protection, of solidarity, through the Muslim accusations against them. It is only after the elimination of any Jewish presence in Yathrib / Medina that Muhammad will focus his attacks and rants against them. Against this party, which resists his authority, he will be pitiless; he accuses them of everything and the threats are terrible, in real life or in the hell that is promised to them. Editor's note. Apostasy is the fact of leaving a revealed religion, whatever it may be. Islam is clear and definitive on this subject, which does not imagine that man can no longer believe in it and the sanction can only be death, thirteen hundred years ago, as now. Here also appears the totalitarianism, the one that muzzles all oppositions. The Quran abounds in various imprecations and fulminations against these men and women, at a time when many in Yathrib / Medina and elsewhere have submitted to its authority; without really understanding the full meaning and scope of it, or simply being forced to do so.

Some examples of munafikun who went down in history (they were certainly not the monsters complacently described and doomed to the worst atrocities that the Quran and the Muslim Tradition present to us).

Honor to whom honor is due, let us begin with the one who is presented as their leader: Abdallah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, a personality who could probably continue to hold the first place in Yathrib / Medina, if Muhammad had not arrived. In fact, beyond the filter of the Muslim tradition, the eight-year period in Medina appears as an endless duel between the two rival clan chieftains Abdallah ibn Ubayy and Muhammad. He will be nevertheless clever and powerful enough to escape the assassinations and will be one of the few not to die of violent death.

The power of Ibn Ubayy was to be great, and until his death in 631; since Muhammad himself was compelled to pay him a funereal homage, having not been able to get rid of him through assassination, as for others, less powerful.

Muhammad, Quran :9: 84 and never pray for one of them who dies, nor stand by his grave. Lo! they disbelieved in God God and His messenger, and they died while they were evildoers.

Abu Amir, the resistant hermit.

A strange character, surrounded by silence and embarrassment. He represents a strong and of religious nature opposition, which explains the unspoken about him. He is described as a Christian, a fierce opponent of Muhammad, forced to flee, accompanied by his disciples. He would have taken refuge among the Byzantines, and his name will reappear at the time of the heresy called "the mosque of dissent" (a church?) Chapter 9, verses 107 to 110.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad A. Guillaume page 278.

With him was a man of Aus whom Aus obeyed, Abu Amir He had been an ascetic in pagan days and had worn a coarse hair garment and was called 'the monk. These two men were damned through their high status and....

Abu Amir stubbornly refused to believe and abandoned his people when they went over to Islam and went off to

Mecca with about ten followers.... before he left for Mecca Abu 'Amir came to the apostle in Medina to ask him about the religion he had brought.

'The Hanifiya, the religion of Abraham.'

'That is what I follow.'

'You do not.'

'But I do! You, Muhammad, have introduced into the Hanifiya things which do not belong to it.'

'I have not. I have brought it pure and white.'

'May God let the liar die a lonely, homeless, fugitive!'

1) False prophecy or prophecy after the fact. Abu Amr, of course, never said that!

623 THE FIRST RAIDS.

In 623, just a few months after settling in Yathrib / Medina, the community around Muhammad will begin a long guerrilla war against the Meccans, a conflict that will last until 628 in fact.

Muhammad then undertook to negotiate with certain tribes, in order to have enough to live on while setting up a kind of economic blockade against Mecca: the Ghafar, a tribe with the reputation of attacking caravans a little too often, the Banu Damrah and the Banu Madlij. The Banu Madlij only accepted to participate in the looting of the caravans, and in no way for religious reasons. For the Ghafar, however, it may have been different, given the role played by a man named Abu Dharr. Abu Dharr believed in the oneness of the Higher Being and refused to worship other gods even before the advent of Islam (well, according to the authors we consulted, but he was perhaps simply henotheist, like many Meccans). After his joining Muhammad, the latter renamed him Abdullah and then asked him to return to his tribe in order to preach his message, and he had managed to convince his family as well as his tribe and his leader. The first Muslim congregational prayer (Salat al-jamaa) was perhaps recited among them. When Muhammad settled in Yathrib / Medina, Abu Dharr had left his house and his tribe to follow him.

Semantic clarifications.

Sariya plural saraya. An expedition or raid ordered by Muhammad but in which he himself does not participate.

Ghazwa plural ghazwat. Expedition in which Muhammad personally participates. Usually translated as "battle" in English, even when it doesn't look like a pitched battle like at Hunayn in 630. The end of a world! Equivalents in the Far West battle of Culdreimhe in 561 or Arfderydd in 573.

Their number varies according to the authors, some saraya being called ghazwat and vice versa.

The difference between sariya and robbery is the difference between privateers and pirates. See the famous quote from Surcouf: "A man fights always for what he lacks the most."

The Sarayas at first were not small jihad, and had not as aim to fight in the name of God. They responded to purely economic necessities, and were intended only to get resources to the detriment of the Meccans by catching their caravans. These commandos were each composed of a handful of very little armed men. It was Hamza, the uncle of Muhammad, who was charged, with 30 cavalrymen, to carry out these first actions of robbery between Yathrib / Medina and Mecca. They went towards the coast and at Sali al Bahr met a detachment of 300 Bedouin or Meccan cavalrymen commanded by Amr ibn Hisham (= Abu Jahl) bivouacking. A man named Majdy ibn Umar al-Juhany narrowly avoided the confrontation, and the Muslims, commanded by Hamza, retreated. Muhammad made another attempt with his uncle or cousin Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas, without much more success. A little loot taken from the enemy, but no caravan.

BIRTH OF THE LESSER JIHAD.

Everything changed, however, when a sariya led by Abdallah bin Jahsh, at the end of the month of Rajab, one of the holy months when it was forbidden to fight, ended in a clash at Nakhla, a valley between Mecca and Ta'if.

December 623 therefore, in Nakhlah, twelve Muslims attack a caravan from Mecca. They kill a man with an arrow, make two prisoners, and bring back a substantial loot, of which they give a fifth to Muhammad.

The case makes a splash in Yathrib / Medina even in the whole region, because this attack took place during a period of sacred truce.

Muhammad disapproves at first his disciples. They are dismayed ... but a divine revelation will come very opportunely to comfort them (chapter 2, verse 217). This chapter states that it is certainly reprehensible to fight during periods of religious truce, but it is even more reprehensible to stand outside the right path of God, as the polytheists in Mecca.

In other words, the war intended to extend the realm of Islam (dar al Islam) may excuse murder in sacred times.

Note added by the author of this compilation.

This form of war is the most brutal aspect of jihad, but it is perfectly true that the word initially has only the meaning of effort on oneself. This effort must be understood in the sense of a "struggle" or a "fight," but it does not necessarily imply, nor, moreover, as a priority, a bodily action.

Muhammad seems to have clearly distinguished two forms of Jihad.

- The great jihad or jihad al-akbar, literally "the great war". This war is the one that the Muslim applies to himself in order to be improved. The true fighter (al-Mujahid) in this case is the one who fights himself, who leads an inner spiritual struggle against his own transgressions in order to perfect himself in the way of God.

- The lesser jihad or jihad al-asghar, literally "war" (against the enemies of Islam).

End of the note added by the author of this compilation.

But let there be no mistaking: this temporal "little jihad" is no less authentically Islamic than the great jihad. This is not a misinterpretation of the Quranic text, although it may appear to be an approach inferior to the spiritual process. This little jihad is simply proselytism.

Jihad is especially spiritual in Dar al-Islam that is to say in the land of Islam, but temporal and violent in Dar al-harb. Dar al-harb refers to the non-Muslim world, where it is lawful to wage holy war, as opposed to Dar al-Islam, or realm of Islam. The sword is besides a symbol of this aggressive version of jihad performed accomplished performed in the name of God.

Quran 2 : 190.

" Fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but do not begin hostilities. Lo! God loves not aggressors. And slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for fitna (apostasy?) is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship (Kaaba) until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers."

The consequences of this reversal compared with the total pacifism of the Meccan time have been very serious from the theological point of view because it amounts to saying (horresco referens) that God has legitimized the jihad not intended for conversion of souls but for economic ends.

There was henceforth interest, even materially speaking, to become a Muslim. As a result, conversions will increase rapidly, and the lure of booty will attract the most militant of Islam. It is not a question here of questioning the sincerity of a Christian like Khadija, of an intellectual also Christian like Waraqa even Bilal in the rise of the very first Islam. But let us doubt the purity of the intentions of those who, like the prince of Yathrib / Medina, Abdallah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, and the munafiqun 1) even Abu Sufyan joined Muhammad after his first victories. The lure of profit and the beautiful Jewish, Christian, Coptic of Ethiopia, or Byzantine, Roman, Persian, Babylonian, Syrian, etc. sexual slaves (the thirst for gold and the concupiscence are innate in man, the Quran admits it itself) will be even stirred up by the frequent statements of Muhammad on paradise (wine, and eternally virgin hours? ...) Wherever Muslims can settle after having won, they will share the women, children, and possessions of the vanquished, and some of them even remained there as new lords or proprietors.

As a result, it will be no longer spoken of saraya (raids), but of ghazwat and maghazi as well as of spoils of war. The change of vocabulary implies a change of design. Whoever dies in battle is a shahid, a "martyr" 2), and the spoils are shared, 1/5 coming down to Muhammad, who will personally participate in 63 of them.

Buwat. No sign of the targeted Quraysh caravan.

Ab-Abwa. Result: a non-aggression pact.

Al Ushayrah. The Quraysh caravan had already passed. Treaty of alliance with the local tribe.

1) Hesitant or lukewarm Muslims

2) Hero would be a better translation.

YEARS 623 AND FOLLOWING: THE DIFFERENT PACTS IN MEDINA.

Let us remind of the starting situation.

Some 200 families of converts from Mecca, invited and helped by Arab monotheists ("God-fearing" when it is spoken of the first Christians) in the oasis of Yathrib, sympathizers from the very early, settled in this principality in crisis which was not a virgin land. But Muhammad proved to be a political genius, a true Talleyrand at the First Congress of Vienna in 1815, my Parisian correspondents say, and by means of a series of agreements he managed to pass from being simply responsible for the newcomers and their local supporters to being the absolute master of the oasis, through alliance pacts imbued with great political skill that gave him a growing place in the principality each time.

A more detailed study of the documents shows that there were indeed institutions in Yathrib / Medina, a leader (Abdallah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul), who even seems to have had the attributes of a real little king, and who will remain until his death. Mohammed's fierce opponent. Yathrib / Medina is a prosperous city, but divided between tribes and clans. Muhammad must not neglect this data. The city is not at best, it comes out of a civil war that took place a few years ago (Battle of Buath, 617).

Ibn Ishaq. The Life of Muhammad by Guillaume page 253.

There were two parties: The B. Qaynuqa' and their adherents, allies of Khazraj; and al Nadir and Qurayza and their

adherents allies of Aus. When there was war between Aus and Khazraj the B. Qaynuqa' went out with Khazraj, and alNadir and Qurayza with Aus, each side helping his allies against his own brethren so that they shed each other's blood,

while the Torah was in their hands by which they knew what was allowed and what was forbidden them. Aus and

Khazraj were polytheists worshiping gods and goddesses knowing nothing about paradise and hell, the waking and the resurrection, the scriptures, the permitted and the forbidden [...] the battle of Bu'ath Aus and Khazraj fought and the victory went to Aus.

Our texts, however, don't dwell a very long time on the fact that the city, despite its instability, was directed. It was not the situation of anarchy, of political void, which is usually presented to us.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad Guillaume page 277.

When the apostle came to Yathrib/Medina the leader there was Abdullah b. Ubayy b. Salul al Aufi of the clan of B. al Hubla; none of his own people contested his authority and Aus and Khazraj never rallied to one man before or after him until Islam came, as they did to him.

Some time after his arrival, Muhammad will benefit from a twist of fate (a true stroke of luck) to begin to take the political upper hand over at least a small tribe (or a clan) which we don't know very well if it was Jewish or Arab. It will be a small-scale repetition, of what will happen a little later. This is the tribe with which he had distant family ties, going back to his grandfather.

Ibn Ishaq The life of Muhammad by Alfred Guillaume page 235.

During the months in which the mosque was being built Abu Umama As'ad b. Zurara died; he was seized by diphtheria

and a rattling in the throat.

....the apostle said:

-'How unfortunate is the death of Abu Umama! The Jews and the Arab hypocrites are sure to say "If he were a prophet his companion would not die" and (truly) I have no power from God for myself or for my companion (to avert death).'

The B. al Najjar came to the apostle, for Abu Umama was their leader, saying that he held the high rank the apostle knew of and would he appoint someone from among them to act in his place; to which the apostle replied:

-'You are my maternal uncles, and we belong together so I will be your leader.' The apostle did not want to prefer any one of them to the others. Henceforth the B. al Najjar regarded themselves as highly honored in having the apostle as their clan chief.

The Constitution of Medina is undoubtedly a myth to which it is appropriate to substitute the idea of a series of modus vivendi (8?) consciously worked out and accepted (we have the names of the witnesses) but implicitly only, by the different tribes and subtribes in Yathrib / Medina (Arabs, Jews, Muslims, etc ...) without more.

The philosophy of the whole can be summarized in the following three points.

-The Muslims constitute a new autonomous community compared to the others of which Muhammad is the leader.

- In case of attack, common front of all against the assailant.

- Conflicts involving only Muslims will be of the only competence of Muhammad.

- In case of conflict not involving Muslims the arbitration of Muhammad may also be solicited to settle the conflict.

This was there, moreover, the supreme acumen of Muhammad.

With the exception of the Quran, the text known as "Charter of Medina, Pact of Medina, Constitution of Medina" etc.

IS THE FIRST KNOWN MUSLIM DOCUMENT. We call it "a Muslim document" because it was drafted by a Muslim with authority to do so (Muhammad himself) and for Muslims or third parties who agreed to subscribe, the set being designed to organize a modus vivendi among all these groups living in the city of Yathrib.

But we do not have the original text, only copies, fragmentary and with variants.

As we pointed out to begin with, this document has many names: kitab (book), saḥifah (document), waṭḥiqah (agreement), suhl (treaty), mithaq (charter), dustur (constitution).

Medieval Muslim historians as Al-Tabari or Ibn Khaldun knew him only partially and did not understand his nature. For those who knew it, it was considered a treaty between the Medinan tribes.

The document is known through two medieval Arab writers Ibn Ishaq in his "Life of Muhammad" and Abu Ubayd in his Kitab al-Amwal or "book of Finance". Both reported it two centuries after Muhammad's death.

The estimated date on which the document of Medina or its various parts would have been worked out varies according to the authors.

William Montgomery Watt estimates that the development of the document started in 622 or 624. It then reached its final form in 627 after articles were modified, deleted or added. This last date is estimated from the omission of the three main Jewish clans in the agreement (Banu Quaynuqa, Banu Nadir, Banu Qurayza).

The very number of documents composing the text of this modus vivendi is uncertain. Wellhausen thinks that the document consists of a single text. Watt estimates that there would be at least two different documents given the repetition or almost repetition of several articles. Serjeant thinks there would be eight parts.

In the end, the document of Medina is probably authentic in view of the arguments made. But the areas of obscurity related to the writing down of the document still make uncertain the precise context of its elaboration. In the same way, these ambiguities and this lack of clarity of the constitution make the authors analyzing it able to project in it their own vision of the Constitution.

This document is for example called by some Muslim authors never stingy of superlatives when it comes to Islam, the oldest constitution in the world, which is doubly false (it is not a constitution and it is not the oldest document of this kind 1).

Abdurrahman Badawi states in a note that it is not a treaty, nor a pact, but rather a modus vivendi, that Guillaume is right to translate by "a friendly agreement." Bernard Lewis believes that the "charter of Medina" should not be regarded as a treaty but as a unilateral proclamation of Muhammad. Julius Wellhausen himself spoke of "Gemeindeordnung," municipal code.

The document begins by stating that the different stakeholders are members of a single community based on religion (ummah) distinct from other peoples. "Document governing the relation between the Believers from among the Qurayshites and Yathribites and those who follow them and join them and struggle with them.

THEY FORM ONE AND THE SAME COMMUNITY AS AGAINST THE REST OF MEN."

Through this agreement Muhammad tries therefore to overcome tribal affiliations.

This document also organizes the various aspects of the community, such as the common defense for example, between the Ansar, the Muhajirun and the Jewish tribes. This document establishes a political-military treaty aimed at securing Yathrib and the contractors of the document.

Some articles deal with minor issues while other articles are almost repetitions. These repetitions are indications according to Watt that the articles were written on several different dates. The oldest articles would go up to numbers 15 or 16, even 23, and were developed shortly after the hegira. They deal with issues related to clan cohesion.

The community had not only a religious base, but also a local base without distinction of kinship. This is why the territory of Medina is considered sacred according to articles 39 and 44.

§ 39. The Valley of Yathrib is sacred for the people of this document.

§ 44. They help one another against those who attack Yathrib.

The security of the community was kept thanks to a high level of social solidarity. Since Muhammad is not a political theorist, the concepts used are borrowed from pre-Islamic tribal mores and mentalities.

According to them, the alliances between the clans took the form of confederation where all the contracting parties were equal. This notion is introduced in Article 15 with the expression "the dhimmah of God."

§15. The protection (dhimmah) of God is one; the protection granted by the least of them is binding on all. The believers protect each other to the exclusion of [other] people.

By saying that the "dhimma of God is one," it is meant that all members of the ummah protect each other. Everyone gets protection from the community and everyone protects the community. There can therefore no longer be confederation of hilf type between two tribes because if two tribes of the community establish special relations (hif) between them, it would mean that the "dhimmah of God" is insufficient.

In summary, the essential points according to the Constitution of Medina are that the community of Medina forms a single community or ummah. They are clans and not individuals who are contracting the agreement. And each clan of this community is responsible for its members according to articles 2 to 11. Subsequently, according to articles 13 to 21, the members of the community are in solidarity with each other against the criminals. Similarly, they are united against unbelievers at all times according to articles 14, 17, 19 and 44. Finally, Muslims and Jews are mutually in debt and they keep their religion according to articles 24 to 35, 37, 38 and 46.20.

The document does not mention a police, army or taxation system, letting the clans manage their spending. The mode of governance or the institutions with their authority and powers are absent. And the justice system is limited to qisas, or retaliation. In the end, the Constitution of Medina says nothing about the management of a state. Even worse, the very meaning of some articles is sometimes ambiguous and therefore problematic.

The concept of ummah is a term whose meaning is ambiguous in this document. The term ummah coined by Muhammad would refer based on religion and not based on the kin (qawm).

Nevertheless, there is the question of the integration of Jews in the ummah with Muslims. In Article 1, the contractors, therefore including the Jews, are said to form a single community distinct from other peoples. But Article 25 states, however, that Jews form a community (ummah) similar to that of believers.

§ 25. The Jews of the Banu Awf are one community with the believers. To the Jews their religion and to the Muslims their religion. [This applies] to their clients and to themselves with the exception of anyone who has done wrong or committed treachery, for he harms only himself and his family.

Therefore, everyone has his religion and his community. This ambiguity makes it doubtful whether or not Jews are included in the same ummah as Muslims.

The political function of Muhammad.

The political powers of Muhammad will gradually increase. According to Article 42 of the Constitution of Medina, disputes must be submitted to God and Muhammad.

§ 42. Whenever there is disagreement among the people of this document and trouble to be anticipated, the matter is to be referred to God and Muhammad. God is the most scrupulous and truest [fulfiller] of this document.

To submit his differences to God and Muhammad may suggest either that the arbitration should be based on the Quran, or that a divine intervention would help Muhammad in his arbitration. Muhammad, leader of the Meccan Migrants' clan, is not, however, superior to the other eight clan chiefs, despite his status as an arbitrator or hakam.

Within the ummah, tribal chiefs form a council of public figures. This organization is based on the concepts of pre-Islamic tribal life. Each tribe has its leader or sayyid who is a primus inter pares among the public figures of his tribe. And each tribe has a warlord or qa'id. Muhammad is not therefore the head of the ummah, even if superior attributions are recognized to him. Each clan leader concerned by these pacts indeed recognizes Muhammad as a Prophet. To be more precise the clan leaders accept the revelation, but they do not necessarily accept the personal opinions of Muhammad. This separation of powers leaves Muhammad with little political power, far from being autocratic, especially during the first years of the Medinan period.

In "the case of the ifk" for example, the main opponent of Muhammad, Abdallah Ibn Ubayy will seize the rumor of adultery concerning Aisha to discredit him. A revelation will then exculpate Aisha, but Muhammad will not have enough political power to order the punishment of his opponent. He will have to appeal to the clan leaders to ask them to put pressure on those who slander his marriage.

According to Watt, the Muslims of Medina join the expeditions of Muhammad and the clan of the Migrants "fighting in the way of God." Muhammad's military force will be strengthened as his victorious military expeditions develop. The prestige of his victories encourages the weakest tribes to join the Migrant clan, thus developing his system of alliances. The authority of Muhammad being strengthened, he will finally find himself alone in deciding the external affairs of his embryonic state.

Conclusion

In the beginning Muhammad was to be only the religious leader of the ummah and the chief of the Migrants clan. But after Badr's victory in March 624, he will get a political force that will become immense after the defeat of the siege of Medina on April 627.

In addition to sayyid 2) and hakam 3), Muhammad will eventually also cumulate the office of qa'id 4). Muhammad strengthened his power through military victories and not through institutional arrangements.

THE POINT OF VIEW OF RB SERJEANT IN THE SUNNAH JAMI'AH, PACTS WITH THE YATHRIB JEWS, AND THE TAHRIM OF YATHRIB: ANALYSIS AND TRANSLATION OF THE DOCUMENTS COMPRISED IN THE SO-CALLED CONSTITUTION OF MEDINA. Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London Vol. 41, No. 1, 1978.

RB Serjeant considers that the references to God as the guarantor (God will be the most just and truest [fulfiller] of the contents of this document) are final formulas and consequently distinguishes 8 different pacts, one of which (G) having been inserted. The proclamation of Yathrib / Medina as a sacred enclave (haram) 39 - 42 would to be put in reality after 47b, what would give us the following chronology.

Set A, B, C and D, Confederation Treaty, Umma (three Jewish tribes).

A. The confederation (ummah) treaty. 1-20 a.

B. Supplement to the confederation treaty. 20b – 23.

C. Treaty defining the status of the Jewish tribes in the confederation. 24-33.

D. Supplement to the treaty defining the status of the Jewish tribe. 34-36.

625-627: A new document, E, is signed, which reaffirms the status of the Jews and the payment of the nafaqah tax as had the Umma treaty did. It seems that after the battle of Badr (in 624), the Jews felt some apprehension and moved closer to the Quraysh of Mecca. The harassment of Meccan caravans led by Muhammad, in order to weaken Mecca and also to finance his activities, may have affected Jewish traders. The killing of Ka'b 5) and the concern of the Jews, which is echoed in Ibn Ishaq, being subsequent to the elimination of Banu Qaynuqa, at least one Jewish tribe has already been eliminated at the signing of this document.

Document E therefore. Reaffirmation of the status of the Jews of Medina, document G, new treaty with the Banu Qurayza (at least one Jewish tribe in less for E, one remaining Jewish tribe for G).

E. Reaffirmation of the status of the Jews. 37-38.

G. The treaty concluded prior to the battle of Khandaq (627) among the Arabs of Yathrib and with the Jewish Qurayzah to defend Yathrib from Quraysh of Mecca and their allies. 43 – 47 b.

628-629: Set F and H, Proclamation of Yathrib/Medina a sacred enclave, haram (no more Jewish tribe).

F. The proclamation of Yathrib a sacred enclave (haram). 39-42.

§ 39. The Valley of Yathrib is sacred for the people of this document.

§ 40. The guest is as his host except he who causes harm or acts treacherously.

§ 41. No woman can be treated as a guest except with the consent of her family.

§ 42. Whenever there is disagreement among the people of this document and trouble to be anticipated, the matter is to be referred to God and Muhammad. God is the most scrupulous and truest [fulfiller] of this document.

H. Codicil to the proclamation of Yathrib a sacred enclave. 47 c -end.

Oddly enough, the agreement will not reappear in the course of subsequent events, but it could later justify the elimination of Jewish tribes accused of failing to honor its commitments.

This modus vivendi will be broken for the first time in 625 regarding the Banu Qaynuqa.

It will then be broken regarding the Banu Nadir in 626.

He will finally be broken regarding the Banu Qurayza in 627.

Reminder about Jews or Judeo-Christians in Yathrib / Medina. The three most important Judaizing tribes regularly appear in our sources; but there are others, more modest. The names of the first three are strangely absent from the "Constitution of Medina." However, care should be taken in this respect for retrospective reconstructions. As we have already seen, the ethnically Jewish character of these tribes has been questioned. For some authors, it would be only Judaizers or Arabs converted to some form of Judaism, or even of Judeo-Christianity.

Prudence advises, therefore, to limit oneself to sure facts, such as the Arabism of their names, their hold on the oasis, and their policy of alliance with the Arab tribes. These "Jews" participate in the fight, but against each other, with their Arab allies. It is a remarkable fact, which will be confirmed during the successive eliminations of these tribes by the Muslims: there is no trace of interreligious solidarity. On the contrary, it is their Arab allies who assist them every time.

1) A written democratic constitution already existed in Athens in the 5th century before our era, so more than a millennium before the Medina Charter. And the oldest Constitution in the New World is that of the Iroquois Indians called GAYANASHAGOWA The Great Binding Law, 117 articles dating from the 14th century.

2) Sayyid representative or spokesperson.³

3) Hakham arbitrator.

4) Qa'id war chief (see El Cid in Spain)

5) Ka'b was a Jewish poet related to the Nadir, guilty of having taunted Muhamad. The enigmatic expression in 37 (" A man will not be made liable for the crimes of his confederate ") probably refers to Muhammad himself.

SECOND PART.

BATTLE OF BADR MARCH 17, 624.

March 17, 624 Muslim victory of Badr. Badr is actually a well located 70 miles southwest of Medina towards Mecca. Editor's note. The figures which follow are, of course, given with reservations. In the spring of 624 therefore, at the approach of a big Meccan caravan coming from Syria and moving towards Mecca (a thousand camels led by a few dozen men); Muhammad decided to attack with 300 men (90 muhajirun from Mecca, 210 ansar from Yathrib / Medina) two cavalymen and 70 camels (each carrying three men in turn). His plans are foiled by a spy. The head of the caravan, Abu Sufyan, warned by scouts, managed to avoid confrontation by passing through Yanbu instead of Badr (Martin Lings, Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources, p. 140). The Meccans being informed by their spies that their caravan runs the risk of being intercepted in Badr by the Muslims they decide hastily to send 600 men commanded by Amir Ibn Hisham to escort it. Warned by Abu Sufyan that the caravan is intact and that it is almost arrived in Mecca, some of them immediately make a U-turn and the others decide to continue on Badr. On March 1, after much hesitation, Muhammad decided to confront Amir Ibn Hisham and these reinforcements become dangerous. The strategy adopted by the Muslims was to fill or dry up all the wells of the region, and to leave only one in good condition, the well of Badr, around which they waited in ambush.

Tabari provides a very precise and very detailed account.

There were 79 migrant Quraysh living in Medina (the famous Muhajirun) and 236 native Medinans, the Ansars. Some with horses, others more numerous with camels, most of them on foot. Ibn Ishaq gives the complete list of the three hundred and fourteen Muslims who participated in this battle. This list is classified by clans, 74 clans being mentioned, the clans being grouped by tribes: 15 clans are named for the Migrants (83 men in action), 12 clans are named for the tribe of Banu Aws (61 men in action), 47 clans are named for the Banu Khazraj tribe (170 men in action). It was almost a civil war, because relatives or near relations clashed: the father drew the sword against his son, the son against the father, or the slave against the master ... The Muslim leaders will be distinguished later according to whether or not they participated in the Battle of Badr.

As always the battle begins with some single combat that takes the form of score settling between (Muslim or remained pagan) Quraysh. The advantage remains to the Muslim Quraysh.

The two armies then clash with arrows.

Muhammad lastly gives his men the order to charge by throwing a handful of sand (a magical gesture perhaps) in the direction of the Meccan lines exhausted by their long march on Badr, which disbanded almost immediately.

Losses: 70 men on the Meccan side, 14 on the Muslim side.

Muhammad addressed the Meccan dead, saying: "So-and-so, so-and-so and so-and-so ... You should have listened to God and his prophet. We had what God had promised us! And you ? "

"You are talking to lifeless bodies! Umar pointed out. But Muhammad retorted, "By the one who holds my soul, they hear me as well as you." Then he shouted to his men, "If you meet Abu Jahl (Amr ibn Hisham), do not let him escape. If you do not find him, look for him among the dead; because God promised me he would be killed today. If you do not recognize him from his face, which may be covered with dust, you will recognize him by the scar on his foot ... so cut off his head and bring it back to me! "... What was done.

The loot consisted of 115 camels, 14 horses, a great store of vestments and carpets, articles of leather, with much equipage and armor. The famous sword of Amr ibn Hisham, known as Dhul-Fikr fell to the share of Muhammad .

The first major beneficiary of the Battle was Abu Sufyan, safely away from the battle leading the caravan . The death of Amr ibn Hisham, as well as many other Quraishi nobles will weaken for a long time the capacity of reaction of the city and will give to the aforementioned Abu Sufyan the opportunity, almost by default, to become chief of the Quraysh. As a result, when Muhammad marched into Mecca six years later, it was Abu Sufyan who helped negotiate its surrender. Abu Sufyan subsequently became a high-ranking official in the Muslim Empire, and his son Muawiya will be the first Umayyad Caliph.

Remained to settle the fate of the 40 prisoners. Some proposed that they be executed, others that they be released in exchange for a ransom. Muhammad began by favoring the last solution in order to earn some money, but before returning to Medina, he will nevertheless order the execution of two of them, the beginning of political assassinations so, who had once had the audacity to ask him

embarrassing questions. Notably a storyteller named Nadr Ibn al-Harith, who used to tell the Meccans about the tales of the Great Rostam, of Isfandiyar, and of the King of Persia; bragging that the verses of the Quran reported by Muhammad were no better than his. This too much entertaining Muhammad's opponent, captured during the battle, paid his stories with his life, because Muhammad took the opportunity to make him be executed. Two days later on the way back to Yathrib / Medina, it was the turn of a man named Uqbah bin Abi Mu'ayt. Muhammad had told him several months before: "I make an oath to God that if I catch you one day outside Mecca, I will cut off your head." Order was also given to execute him. The unfortunate asked why he? "Because of your enmity for God and his prophet," replied Muhammad. Uqbah had in fact once asked him awkward questions. Ibn Ishaq The life of Muhammad, Guillaume, page 308.

"Al Nadr was killed by Ali, as a learned Meccan told me. When he was in Irqu'l Zabya Uqba was killed He had been captured by Abdullah b. Salima, one of the B. al' Ajan. When the apostle ordered him to be killed Uqba said, 'But who will look after my children, O Muhammad?' 'Hell,' Muhammad said." However Uqba did not much persecute the first Muslims).

This very personal interpretation of the will of merciful and forgiving God troubled some sensitive souls, and especially an intellectual called Ka'b ibn al-Ashraf, as we shall see; but a very timely (!) new chapter fell quickly from the very mouth of the supernatural entity later identified with the Archangel Gabriel. "It is not for any prophet to have captives until he hath made slaughter in the land" (Chapter 8 : 67).

Which reassured everyone! The other prisoners will be well treated and released for ransom according to the pre-Islamic practice. The Muslims, having only had 14 or 15 dead as a result of this first victory, they concluded, of course, that "God was with them" (German Gott mit uns * chapter 3, verse 123 and chapter 8 verse 17: God killed them) . This was felt by them as a great liberation and Badr's victory has since been considered the first true holy war (jihad) against non-Muslims.

The legend which has it that thousands of angels intervened militarily against the Meccans will convince the Muslims that God is well on their side (in fact gusts of wind loaded with sand that simple minds have taken for angels).

WHAT MUSLIM THEOLOGIANs DEDUCE FROM THE BADR BATTLE.

- a) The help of angels. This help was not spiritual or moral as some people imagine, because there were actually 1000 angels to participate concretely in the fight alongside Muslims. This fact has been reported in both collections of Sahih hadiths.
 - b) The dead have a proper spiritual life of which we do not know the modes or the nature, and their souls fly around their bodies ; since Muhammad addressed the dead pagans and even assured the future caliph Umar who was amazed: "By the one who holds my soul, they hear me as well as you! "
 - c) Finally, more concretely, spies and observers are allowed to be sent by Muslims into enemy territory to discover their positions or plans and to know their weapons and numbers.
- The battle of Badr is therefore at the origin only a raid organized by Muhammad against a Meccan caravan returning from Syria, at a water point. The interception fails but degenerates into a small pitched battle because of the intervention of a rescue party. Unaccustomed to the fight, the Meccan traders give ground to a less numerous but very motivated we suspect it, and organized, opponent. Muslims make a relatively large booty (but not the caravan itself) and some prisoners from whom they can have a big ransom.

This battle nonetheless constitutes an essential step in the birth of Islam, which will condition its relations with the infidels for several centuries, and which even had doctrinal repercussions. During this battle, Muhammad will let his conditioning by the previous religious system (which he followed for forty years, it is necessary to point it out, just like his ancestors for centuries) show through. The tradition in fact reveals in this episode some traits peculiar to paganism, including in the attitude of Muhammad. In the following hadith excerpt, for example, Muhammad threatens his god to no longer be honored if his men experiment defeat. The most remarkable is the reaction of Abu Bakr, who realized this almost blasphemy.

Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 5, Book 59, hadith 289.

Narrated Ibn `Abbas: on the day of the battle of Badr, the Prophet said, "O God! I appeal to You (to fulfill) Your Covenant and Promise. O God! If Your Will is that none should worship You (then give

victory to the pagans)." Then Abu Bakr took hold of him by the hand and said, "This is sufficient for you."

1). According to some Muslim authors he would have one day nevertheless thrown dead animal entrails on Muhammad, or wrapped his garment around Muhammad's neck while he was praying. These pious Muslims believe that it deserved the death penalty (a few kicks in the back would have been enough).

* Therefore God is not always on the side of the big battalions as Voltaire said but of the best shots.

THE BEGINNING OF ASSASSINATIONS.

(Purpose: to silence other critics, other opponents, or force them to leave.)

This combat fought at Badr, mediocre by the size of the troops in presence, will have an enormous impact in the Islamic culture, since it constitutes the first Muslim victory over the infidels, miraculous since unexpected, due to the intervention of God, and of his angels. Many verses of the Quran refer to the episode. The victory of Badr was only a successful surprise attack, but it had a great impact among the Arabs of Yathrib / Medina, and even among the Jews, indeed throughout the Hijaz. The multiplication of political assassinations that ensued cannot be due to chance alone. Because in Yathrib / Medina, it is indeed in this way that Muhammad will now gradually install his (counter) power. (He could not do otherwise because he was then still an immigrant in Medina and not his legitimate leader.) It is obvious that this terrorism was a deliberate strategy to conquer power. The "political" assassination will be part of the means used by Muhammad to succeed in emerging or being powerful enough so that nobody thinks to take revenge on him or his followers.

To frighten, so much frighten that no one will dare to attempt something against him, such will be the strategy of Muhammad to take power in Yathrib / Medina. The terrorist attacks in question were perpetrated, of course, only because that was his pleasure. "It does not become a believing man or a believing woman, when God and His messenger have decided an affair (for them), that they should (after that) claim any say in their affair; and whoever is rebellious to God and His messenger, he verily goes astray in error manifest " (Chapter 33 verse 36).

The assassinations ordered by Muhammad, recorded by Ibn Ishaq, were numerous, and occupy an important part of the third part of his book (killing of Sallam ,page 482, Abu Afak and Asma, page 675, etc.). These assassinations are classified by the chroniclers in the category "expeditions (maghazi) of the Prophet." These first terrorist attacks, at the request of Muhammad, were perpetrated by some of his relatives on leaders or intellectuals not convinced by his message, including Jews, of course, because the break with them had begun.

In 624, when Muhammad became aware of the failure of his attempt towards the Jews, the tone changes, and the methods too. Contacts are broken, threats and insults appear, including in the Quran. The conviction time is gone away, that of pressure begins; obvious calls for murder then arise in Muhammad's speeches.

Five personalities of Yathrib / Medina will be assassinated by the henchmen of Muhammad with his blessing, his explicit approval, even at his request. Mohammed does not like poetry or criticism. This will lead him to practice in Medina a very effective policy of eliminating opponents. The technique will be that of the commando, of the small group attacking by surprise and night. The victims will be important characters. Beyond the simple elimination, the desired effect will be to inspire the fear, it is clearly mentioned in the sources (see further the conclusion of the killing off Asma Bint Marwan). These are the intellectuals named Abu Afak, the poetess Asma Bint Marwan, Kab ibn al-Ashraf, Ibn Sunayna and finally Sallam Abu Rafi.

The first of the list was probably the poet Abu Afak, a hundred-year-old Jew, who had dared to compose a satirical poem about Muhammad. Muhammad ordered his assassination, but in a roundabout way, like a mafia godfather launching a contract on someone: "Who will deal with this rascal for me? And someone actually took charge of this attack: a man named Salim b. Umayr. Abu Afak was killed during his sleep because of four wretched lines.

Ibn Ishaq: The life of Muhammad, translation A. Guillaume page 675.

SALIM B. Umayr's EXPEDITION TO KILL ABU AFAK.

Abu Afak was one of B. Amr b. Auf of the B. Ubayda clan. He showed his disaffection when the apostle killed al Harith b. Suwayd b. Samit and said:

Long have I lived but never have I seen....

....A rider who came to them split them in two (saying)

'Permitted,' 'Forbidden' of all sorts of things.

The apostle said, 'Who will deal with this rascal for me?'

Whereupon Salim b. Umayr, brother of B. Amr b. Auf one of the 'weepers,' went forth and killed him.

Umama b. Muzayriya said concerning that:

You gave the lie to God's religion and the praised one!

By him who was your father, evil is the son he produced!

A Hanif gave you a thrust in the night saying

'Take that Abu 'Afak in spite of your age!'

Though I knew whether it was man or jinn

Who slew you in the dead of night ".

The assassination of Asma Bint Marwan. The episode is obscured in all works devoted to the origins of Islam for the West, ad usum delphini, but sources abound in detail about the murder of this personality. This is an exception to the rule of Muhammad prohibiting the killing of women.

Ibn Sa'd's Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir, translated by S. Moinul Haq, volume 2, pages 30-31.

SARIYYAH (EXPEDITION) OF Umayr Ibn Adi.

Then occurred the sariyyah of Umayr ibn Adi Ibn Kharashah al-Khatmi against Asma Bint Marwan, of Banu Umayyah Ibn Zayd...in the beginning of the nineteenth month from the hijrah of the apostle of God.

Asma was the wife of Yazid Ibn Zayd Ibn Hisn al-Khatmi. She used to criticize Islam, the prophet and instigate the people against him. She composed verses. Umayr Ibn Adi came to her in the night and entered her house. Her children were sleeping around her. There was one whom she was suckling. He searched her with his hand because he was blind, and separated the child from her. He thrust his sword into her chest till it pierced up to her back. Then he offered the morning prayers with the prophet at Medina. The apostle of God said to him: "Have you slain the daughter of Marwan?" He said: "Yes. Is there something more for me to do?"

He [Muhammad] said: "No. Two goats will butt together about her. This was the word that was first heard from the apostle of God.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad, translation Alfred Guillaume page 675.

UMAYR B. ADIY'S JOURNEY TO KILL ASMA D. MARWAN

She was of B. Umayya b. Zayd. When Abu 'Afak had been killed, she displayed disaffection. she was married to a man of B. Khatma called Yazid b. Zayd.

Concerning Islam and its followers, she said :

"You obey a stranger who is none of yours,

One not of Murad or Madhhij.

Do you expect good from him after the killing of your chiefs

Like a hungry man waiting for a cook's broth ?

Is there no man of pride who would attack him by surprise

And cut off the hopes of those who expect anything from him ?

.....

When the apostle heard what she had said he said, 'Who will rid me of Marwan's daughter?'

Umayr b. Adiy al Khatmi who was with him heard him, and that very night he went to her house and killed her.

In the morn ing he came to the apostle and told him what he had done and he said, 'You have helped God and His apostle, O 'Umayr!

And when he asked if he would have to bear any evil consequences the apostle said, 'Two goats won't butt their heads about her'Now there was a great commotion among B. Khatma that day about the affair of Bint Marwan. She had five sons, and when Umayr went to them from the apostle he said, 'I have killed Bint Marwan, O sons of Khatma. Withstand me if you can; don't keep me waiting.'

That was the first day that Islam became powerful among B. Khatma; before that those who were Muslims concealed the fact. The first of them to accept Islam was Umayr b. Adiy....

The day after Bint Marwan was killed the men of B. Khatma became Muslims because they saw the power of Islam.

The assassination of Kab ibn al-Ashraf. The other best known assassination of the period is undoubtedly that of Kaab Ibn Ashraf, because it legitimizes the principle of dissimulation in the interest of Islam called taqiyya. According to Ibn Ishaq indeed, Muhammad allowed recourse to lie to eliminate this opponent. Poetry has always been one of the most formidable weapons of the human mind.

Ashraf was a man from the Tayyi tribe, his mother a Banu Nadir. He was therefore half Jewish. He was undoubtedly the most rebellious of all poets. When he heard of the victory of the Muslims at Badr, he began to doubt it; but when the news was confirmed, he went to Mecca to recite an ode to the memory of the unfortunate slain by the Muslims. He also disapproved of the execution of some of the prisoners after the battle of Badr, and addressed erotic or gallant poems to the wives of some of the disciples of Muhammad. For Kaab's true crime may have been to accompany some of his satires with verses teasing the wives in question (including those of Muhammad?) The non-Muslims of Yathrib / Medina took great delight in hearing his poems spread throughout the city. A quirk peculiar to men that is not always very subtle and that can be described as almost natural in them to the extent that old habit die hard; but about which there is no reason to go crazy about it, at least not deserving death).

Muhammad, however, ordered his assassination, but again in a convoluted way, exclaiming: "Who will rid me of Kaab ibn Ashraf? The desire expressed by Muhammad was received as an order by several Muslims, including the own foster brother of the poet.

Ibn Ishaq The Life of Muhammad , A. Guillaume, page 364.

THE KILLING OF KA'B B. ALASHRAF.

After the Quraysh defeat at Badr the apostle had sent Zayd b. Haritha.....Ka'b b. al Ashraf who was one of the Tayyi of the subsection B. Nabhan whose mother was from the B. Al Nadir, when he heard the news said, 'Is this true? Did Muhammad actually kill these whom these two men (i.e., Zayd and Abdullah b. Rawaha) mention ? These are the nobles of the Arabs and kingly men; by God, if Muhammad has slain these people it were better to be dead than alive.'

When the enemy of God became certain that the news was true he left the town and went to Mecca to stay with..... She took him in and entertained him hospitably. He began to inveigh against the apostle and to recite verses in which he bewailed the Quraysh who were thrown into the pit after having been slain at Badr. He said:

Badr's mill ground out the blood of its people.
The best of the people were slain round their cisterns,
Don't think it strange that the princes were left lying.
How many noble handsome men,
The refuge of the homeless were slain,
Liberal when the stars gave no rain,
Who bore others' burdens....
I was told that al Harith ibn Hisham
Is doing well and gathering troops
To visit Yathrib with armies,
Etc...

Ka'b b. al Ashraf answered her:

Do you taunt me because I shed tears
For people who loved me ?

As long as I live, I shall weep and remember.

Then Ka'b returned to Medina and composed amatory verses about Ummu'l Fadl daughter of al Harith, saying:

.....

She is one of B. Amir who bewitches the heart,
And if she wished she could cure my sickness.
The glory of women and of a people is their father,
Never did I see the sun rise at night till I saw her.

Then he composed amatory verses of an insulting nature about the Muslim women. The apostle said, 'Who will rid me of Ibnu 'l Ashraf ?'

Muhammad b. Maslama said, 'I will deal with him for you, O apostle of God, I will kill him.'
'Do so if you can.'

So Muhammad b. Maslama returned and waited for three days without food or drink, apart from what was necessary.

When the apostle was told of this he summoned him and asked him why he had given up eating and drinking.

He replied that he had given him an undertaking and he did not know whether he could fulfill it.

The apostle said, 'All that is incumbent upon you is that you should try.'

He said, 'O apostle of God, we shall have to tell lies.'

He answered, 'Say what you like, for you are free in the matter.'

Thereupon he andsent Silkan ibn Salam foster brother of Ka'b to the enemy of God, Ka'b b. Ashraf, before they came to him. He talked to him some time and they recited poetry one to the other, for Silkan was fond of poetry. Then he said, 'O Ibn Ashraf, I have come to you about a matter which I want to tell you of and wish you to keep secret.' 'Very well,' he replied. Silkan went on, 'The coming of this man is a great trial to us. It has provoked the hostility of the Arabs, and they are all in the league against us. The roads have become impassable so that we and our families are in great distress.'

Ka'b answered, 'By God, I kept telling you, O Ibn Salama, that the things I warned you of would happen.'

Silkan said to him, 'I want you to sell us food and we will give you a pledge of security and you deal generously in the matter.'

Ka'b replied, 'Will you give me your sons as a pledge?'

Silkan said, 'You want to insult us. I have friends who share my opinion and I want to bring them to you so that you may sell to them some food and act generously, and we will give you enough weapons for a good pledge.'

Silkan's object was that he should not take alarm at the sight of weapons when they brought them.

Ka'b answered, 'Weapons are a good pledge.'

Thereupon Silkan returned to his companions, told them what had happened, and ordered them to take their arms. Then they went away and assembled with him and met the apostle....who walked with them as far as Baqfu'l Gharqad. Then he sent them off, saying, 'Go in God's name; O God help them.' So saying, he returned to his house.

Now it was a moonlight night and they journeyed on until they came to Ka'b's castle, and Abu Na'ila called out to him.

Ka'b had only recently married, and he jumped up in the bedsheet, and his wife took hold of the end of it and said, 'You are at war, and those who are at war do not go out at this hour.'

Ka'b replied, 'It is Abu Na'ila. Had he found me sleeping he would not have woken me.'

She answered, 'By God, I can feel evil in his voice.' Ka'b answered, 'Even if the call were for a stab a brave man must answer it.'

So he went down and talked to them for some time, while they conversed with him. Then Abu Na'ila said, 'Would you like to walk with us to Shi'b al' Ajiiz, so that we can talk for the rest of the night?' 'If you like,' Ka'b answered, so they went off walking together; and after a time Abu Na'ila ran his hand through Ka'b's hair. Then he smelt his hand, and said, 'I have never smelt a scent finer than this.' They walked on farther and Abu Na'ila did the same so that Ka'b suspected no evil. Then after a space he did it for the third time, and cried, 'Smite the enemy of God!' So they smote him, and their swords clashed over him with no effect.

Muhammad b. Maslama said, 'I remembered my dagger when I saw that our swords were useless, and I seized it. Meanwhile the enemy of God had made such a noise that every fort around us was showing a light. I thrust it into the lower part of his body, then I bore down upon it until I reached his genitals, and the enemy of God fell to the ground. AlHarith had been hurt, being wounded either in his head or in his foot, one of our swords having struck him. ...We carried him and brought him to the apostle at the end of the night. We saluted him as he stood praying, and he came out to us, and then we told him that we had killed God's enemy. He spat upon our comrade's wounds, and both he and we returned to our families. Our attack upon God's enemy cast terror among the Jews, and there was no Jew in Medina who did not fear for his life.'

THE AFFAIR OF MUHAYYISA AND HUWAYYISA.

The apostle said, 'Kill any Jew that falls into your power.' Thereupon Muhayyisa b. Mas'ud leaped upon Ibn Sunayna, a Jewish merchant with whom they had social and business relations, and killed him.

Huwayyisa was not a Muslim at the time though he was the elder brother. When Muhayyisa killed him Huwayyisa began to beat him, saying, 'You enemy of God, did you kill him when much of the fat on your belly comes from his wealth?' Muhayyisa answered, 'Had the one who ordered me to kill him ordered me to kill you I would have cut your head off.' This was the beginning of Huwayyisa's acceptance of Islam. He exclaimed, 'By God, a religion which can bring you to this is marvelous!' and he became a Muslim.

In some countries today when a man or a politico-religious party is behind such facts (for example Mr. Yahya Maryam - Jean-Marie - Le Pen in Gaul) he is immediately charged and tried, by the street by intellectuals (journalists) by religious and finally by the courts.

Editor's note. Parisian friends coming out of a weekly visit to the rector of the Paris great mosque told me that it was not the same, and that I had misunderstood. Duly noted!

GESCHICHTE DER JUDEN/HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN MEDINA BY HEINRICH GRAETZ 1853.

"Upon his arrival in Yathrib (622, the year of the Hegira), Mohammed took care to gain the support of the Jews, giving the appearance as though he aimed to make Judaism the universal religion of Arabia." Introduction appearing in the translation Abraham Benedict Rhine New York 1919 of the Book by Heinrich Graetz and not in the French translation by Moses Wogue published in 1882.

"He reached the city on the day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), and when he found the Jews fasting he said: "It behooves us more than the Jews to fast on this day," and introduced the fast day Ashura (tenth).

Mohammed concluded a formal alliance for mutual support with the Jews, and to ingratiate himself with them, he directed his followers to turn their faces towards Jerusalem while praying (Kiblah). In disputes between Jews and his followers (Moslems) which were submitted to him, Mohammed showed himself prejudiced in favor of the Jews.

Mohammed, who himself was illiterate, employed for some time a Jewish secretary for his correspondence, and the Jews of Yathrib were flattered by the compliment thus paid to one of their number on the part of a man of so much promise. They regarded Mohammed almost as a proselyte, and believed that, through his influence, Judaism would become the prevailing religion of Arabia. Some of them became his intimates and helpers (Ansar), the learned Abdallah ibn-Salom of the tribe of Kainuka among them. This Abdallah and other Jews helped Mohammed in publishing this revelation of the Quran, and the non-believing Arabs charged him often enough with "being an ear," and that he was taught not by the angel Gabriel but by a "human being."

However, only an insignificant number of the Jews of Medina stepped over to the band of the faithful, and especially so when they recognized Mohammed's self-seeking, his arrogance, and his insatiable sexual passion. Their ideal of a prophet was too lofty to place this sensual man who coveted every pretty woman in the category of the prophets. The chief Jewish opponents of Mohammed were Phinehas ibn Azura, a man who possessed a biting sarcasm, and rendered the prophet ridiculous on every occasion; Kaab-ibn-Ashraf, bom of an Arab father and a Jewish mother; an aged poet over a hundred years of age, by the name of Abu-Afak, who sought to render Mohammed odious among the ignorant Arabs; and Abdallah ibn Sauras, who was looked upon as the most learned Jew of Hijas.

These Jewish opponents of Mohammed sneered at and taunted him, gave his expressions and revelations a ridiculous turn, and treated him disparagingly, little suspecting that this fugitive from Mecca who came to Medina pleading for help would, within a short time, humble their tribes, and become the arbiter of the fate of a large number of their co-religionists for many ages to come.

Mohammed at first shrewdly simulated indifference to the contempt of the Jews. To his faithful he said: "Argue with the people of the Scriptures and say to them: 'We believe in what has been revealed to us as well as in what has been revealed to you. Our God and your God is one and the same, and we are his faithful servants.' " But this condition of tolerance could not endure. On the one hand, the Jews endeavored to alienate his disciples, and succeeded in arousing against him the bitter enmity of Abdallah ibn Ubey, of the tribe of Khazraj, who was on the point of being elected king of Medina, and whose luster was dimmed by Mohammed's appearance. On the other hand, the faithful urged upon him to define his attitude to Judaism. They saw his Jewish adherents continuing the observance of Jewish laws and abstaining

from the camel's flesh, and they asked him: "If the Torah is a divine book let us also follow its precepts." As Mohammed was too much of an Arab to submit completely to the requirements of Judaism, and as he knew full well that the Arabs would

resist the adoption of religious usages which were altogether strange to them, he had no choice but to break with the Jews decisively. Thereupon he revealed a long Sura (entitled The Cow) which is replete with invectives against the Jews. He ordained that, in prayer, the faithful should turn their faces towards Mecca and Kaaba, instead of towards Jerusalem, as he had taught them formerly, he abolished the fast of the Day of Atonement (Ashura) and substituted for it the fast of Ramadan — a month which the Arabs held sacred from time immemorial, and had to retract many other statements which he had formerly issued as divine revelations. ' Mohammed now maintained that the Torah contained many references to his coming and to his prophetic office, but that the Jews had corrupted those passages. While he had formerly preached that the Jews possessed the true faith, he afterwards spread the report that the Jews worshiped Ezra as the son of God, as the Christians worshiped Jesus, and were in consequence to be regarded as infidels. His bitterness against the Jews who denied his claim to the office of a prophet led him to treat them with ever-increasing injustice.

However, much as Mohammed hated the Jews, he did not as yet dare attack them openly. His own hold was not yet firm enough, and the Jews with their allies outnumbered the band of his followers. But after the battle of Badr (winter, 624), when the handful of Mohammedans gained a victory over the numerous Korais, Mohammed exchanged the role of a humble prophet for that of a suspicious tyrant who stopped short of no means, even that of assassination, in order to accomplish his purpose. Nevertheless, too shrewd to pick a quarrel with the powerful Jewish tribes, he began with the weak tribe of Kainuka. A Mohammedan killed a member of that tribe in the course of a quarrel, and the Kainuka avenged the murder. Thereupon, Mohammed demanded that they either become Moslems or prepare for war. The Kainuka replied that they would prefer peace to war, but inasmuch as Mohammed was seeking a pretext for war, they would show him that they also possessed courage. The tribe of Kainuka counted upon the assistance of their co-religionists of the tribes of Nadhir and Kuraiza, and withdrew to their fortresses near Medina. Mohammed gathered his troops and besieged the Kainuka. Had the numerous Jews of northern Arabia and Khaibar come to the rescue of their brethren in the anticipation that, otherwise, their own fate would be similar to that of the Kainuka, and had they formed an alliance with Mohammed's opponents as they did later when it was already too late, they would have experienced little difficulty in annihilating the small and not altogether reliable band of Mohammedans. But the Jews, like the Arabs, were given to dissensions, and looked only after the selfish interests of their immediate tribes. The tribe of Kainuka fought bravely for fifteen days in the hope of receiving reinforcement, but when help failed to arrive, they opened the gates of their fortresses to the enemy. Mohammed ordered all the Jews of the tribe cast into chains, and was about to slaughter them, when the threatening attitude of Abdallah ibn Ubey, their ally, frightened him into changing his intention. Abdallah took hold of his coat of mail saying: "I leave thee not unless thou set the captives free, they had been my support, and had defended me against the blacks and the red." Mohammed was intimidated, and spoke: "Set them free, and may the curse of God fall upon him and them!" The Jews of the tribe of Kainuka, numbering seven hundred, had to leave all their possessions, and emigrated to Palestine. They settled in Batanea, east of the Jordan, near Adraat, and probably received a fraternal welcome at the hands of their co-religionists who, at that time, were free from the Byzantine yoke. After his victory over the tribe of Kainuka, Mohammed announced a new revelation against the Jews which was intended to deprive them of all protection. "O true believers, do not take the Jews or Christians for your friends; they are friends the one to the other; but whoso among you taketh them for his friends, he is surely one of them; verily, God directs not an unjust people."* The Christians were not much affected by this exclusion, since their number in northern Arabia was small, and since, on the whole, they maintained a passive attitude. The Jews, on the other hand, accustomed to their independence, and full of courage, were placed in a precarious position by this act of exclusion. Their former confederates broke off their alliances with them for the most part, and resorted to malicious acts of revenge upon Mohammed's command."

WHAT MUSLIM THEOLOGIAN'S DEDUCE FROM BADR'S VICTORY AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE JEWISH TRIBE OF BANU QAYNUQA.

It is obvious that the Jews began to think that the prophet, peace and blessings of God upon him, would be a mere leader; who would simply make a political agreement with them, and only deal with the earthly interests of his community. When the Prophet, peace and blessings of God on him, and the Muslims, won a decisive victory against the Quraysh, in Badr, they were disappointed. In fact, they expected the Quraysh to kill many Muslims. That is why, even before the news of the victory reached Medina, they had already spread the rumor that the prophet, peace and blessing of God on him, had perished in the fighting; that the Muslims had been beaten, and that Abu Jahl's army was marching on the city. But when the battle went wrong for them, they exploded in anger. For example, Kaab bin Al-Ashraf exclaimed: "By God, if Muhammad did indeed kill all these noble Arabs, the belly of the earth is better for us than his back." Then he went to Mecca and incited his inhabitants to revenge by writing and reciting provocative elegies, in honor of the Quraysh rulers who fell in Badr. After returning to Medina, he composed lyrical verses of an insulting nature towards Muslim women. The prophet, peace and blessing of God upon him, was sickened by so much malice. So much so that he sent Muhammad Ibn Maslamah Al-Ansari to kill him.

After Badr's victory, the Banu Qaynuqa were so annoyed that they began to harass Muslims going to their shops, especially women. Things so much grew worse that a Muslim woman was completely naked in front of everyone, having been stripped from her clothes.

"Some time later, a Muslim went to a jeweler, the men wanted to unveil her, but she refused, so the jeweler secretly raised the end of his dress on his back and tied it. She stood up, uncovering her private parts and screamed. A Muslim threw himself on the Jewish jeweler and killed him ... "

This episode shows us that the veil imposed on women by Islam must cover not only their bodies, but also their faces. Otherwise, the Jews would not have been tempted to unveil her. They wanted to taunt her religious feelings that were visible, and, of course, to defy Muslims, for they did not hesitate to openly threaten the prophet by saying, "Here is an opportunity for you to pit against us."

Editor's note. We are still somewhat surprised by the wording of this remark, because according to the website in question itself, they were the "private" parts of the lady sitting while trying jewelry on that were suddenly uncovered. And it is this joke, unquestionably bad (but which did not deserve death nevertheless, just two slaps) of the Jewish jeweler (or of one of his relatives) that sparked things off; and not the unveiling of her face that did not take place. End of the Editor's note.

This incident provoked by the Qaynuqa Jews shows the hatred that they secretly vowed to Muslims. If they had respected the pact with the believers, the latter would never have uttered a single word against them, nor touched their houses. But their bad intentions turned against them.

The prophet, peace and blessings of God upon him, went to the place, gathered them, and asked them for some restraint. But the Jews replied, "O Muhammad, do you really think that your people are of our moral fiber? Do not trust your own followers, they do not know anything in the art of war. Tackle us, and you will see who is stronger. "

When the Prophet (pbuh) gathered the Banu Qaynuqa, he reminded them of the fact that his coming was announced in their own books [Editor's note. What was inaccurate, of course !]

The Jews knew very well that a prophet (pbuh) was to come in a palm-tree country like Yathrib, but after realizing that God had chosen a prophet from the Arab people, they refused to admit him.

The Muslims who were allied with the Qaynuqa clan therefore canceled their commitments. God indeed forbids believers to have non-believers as friends. Previous verses that can go in the opposite direction are repealed by these: "O you who believe! Do not take for friends Jews and Christians, they are friends of each other. Whoever among you takes them for a friend is theirs. But God does not direct an unjust people "(chapter 5 verse 51).

True Muslim always feels anger towards unbelievers, anger provoked by their disobedience to God. But this feeling only reflects the immense pity he feels towards the unbeliever, just as we might consider the wrath of a father acting in the interest of his son; for it does not please the Muslim to know that a non-believer will go to hell. A true Muslim must wish for all what he wishes for himself. This does not preclude, however, being sometimes indulgent towards non-believers if justice requires it, or respecting the agreements concluded with them.

As a result, the prophet - peace and blessings upon him – cordoned off their district at the end of Shawal month (or according to some of Dhul Qidah month) year 2 of the Hegira. The siege lasted a

fortnight, then they were defeated and their fighters taken prisoner. But Abdullah Ibn Ubayy came to support them and insisted that they be forgiven. Abdallah ben Ubayy ben Salul had converted to Islam by mere hypocrisy. Before the arrival of the Muslims, this hypocrite was to be proclaimed King of Yathrib / Medina. He had therefore welcomed the Hegira of Muslims with hatred and we will see in other stories that he did not miss any opportunity to harm Muslims. This was the reason why the envoy of God (pbuh) accepted the exile of Banu Qaynuqa. The prophet granted him this request and decided that they would be exiled out of Yathrib / Medina, but would leave their goods, their armor, their tools, and all their trade. Believers, however, continued to keep an eye on the hypocrites by carefully observing their behavior, because it is a certain and constant duty of every Muslim "(about Muslim Hisba see the following notebook).

POINT OF VIEW OF A SPIRITUALIST ATHEIST, PANTHEIST OR AGNOSTIC. NOT JEWISH OR ARAB-MUSLIM.

As we have seen, on his arrival at Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad had been confronted with well-organized and supervised Jews, several tribes, three principal, and many clans. They were, according to the texts, the most active part of the population. Muhammad might have expected that his ideas are favorably received, since he claimed they were identical with their religious doctrine; but the confrontation will be brutal, punctuated by individual or collective assassinations. And at the end of this period, nothing will remain of the Jewish communities in the city.

In their overwhelming majority, the Jews refused the "new" religion offered them by Muhammad.

Muslim sources do not enlarge much on the reasons for this refusal; but we may suppose that it is simply because they do not find themselves in the way that Muhammad distorted, or interpreted in his way, the histories of Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and other characters of the Pentateuch. It is true that one doesn't see very well how Medinan rabbis could have agreed with Quranic stories so different from what their own sacred scrolls reported to them. It is enough to compare the current texts of the Pentateuch and the Quran to realize it.

On the doctrinal level, the break-up will also be clear. Muhammad, Quran 3 : 119. Lo! you are those who love them though they love you not, and you believe in all the Scripture. When they fall in with you, they say: We believe; but when they go apart, they bite their fingertips at you, for rage."

The Quran attacks the Jews in an unusual way. They are accused, like Christians, of giving a son to their god. The conflation is based on ...on what by the way? but Muhammad uses it to lump the two religions together in the same bag.

Muhammad, Quran 9: 30.

And the Jews say: Ezra is the son of God

And the Christians say: The Messiah is the son of God.

That is their saying with their mouths.

They imitate the saying of those who disbelieved of old.

God (Himself) fights against them. How yufakuna are they!

What seems obvious is that after Badr, Muhammad will begin to adopt the same way of reasoning as Christians with their notion of Verus Israel, and that he will then consider himself the only true heir to Abraham and Moses. Abraham was neither Jewish nor Christian - he was a Hanif or Muslim because a Muslim means anyone who submits to the law of God, the sovereignty of God as a Hanif. Islam or hanifiyya as a true religion given by God to men is therefore much older than Judaism or Christianity. This, perhaps, is ultimately the meaning of chapters 2 and 4 of the Quran. Abraham and the patriarchs were not Jewish, they were all Hanifs or Muslims. Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon. The characters and prophets of the Bible have always been Muslim (hanifs)! Even better, Muhammad will consider that his message is only the natural religion of mankind, a reminder of the natural religion of Mankind. Chapter 30, 30. Islam is the natural religion of Man. Man was created Hanif or Muslim and God tries to reveal to everyone that he is Hanif or Muslim. Adam was a Hanif or Muslim, Noah was a Hanif or Muslim ... In other words, God chose the Jews to bring Islam to the world, but they failed in their mission, they killed the prophets, they persecuted the prophets. God rejected them. The result of this rejection or this gap between Muhammad or his followers and the Medinan Judaism was that the nascent Islamic community had from then on an increasingly pronounced Arab character.

The Muslim religion will be constructed by opposing Jewish customs and this separation is the true birth certificate of Islam. The term also appears at this time, to designate the faithful following the new message, the muslimun, according to the infinitive Islam "to follow, to submit".

Various institutions, dating from that year, will tend to separate Muslims from the surrounding populations.

THE CASE OF CHANGE OF QIBLA.

Statement of the facts. At first, on their arrival at Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad as well as the Muslims, Muhajirun and Ansar, prayed like the Jews towards Jerusalem.

March 624, a divine revelation enjoined Muhammad and his disciples to pray henceforth turning not to Jerusalem, but to the black stone of the Kaaba, the sanctuary of the idolaters in Mecca. Quran 2 : 142-143: "The foolish of the people will say: What hath turned them from the qiblah which they formerly observed ? Say: Unto God belong the East and the West. He guides whom He will.... We appointed the qiblah which you formerly observed only that We might know him who follows the messenger, from him who turns on his heels. In truth it was a hard (test) save for those whom God guided. But it was not God's purpose that your faith should be in vain, for God is Full of Pity, Merciful towards mankind....We shall make you turn (in prayer) towards a qiblah which is dear to you. So turn your face towards the Inviolable Place of Worship " (the Kaaba of Mecca).

The point of view of pious Muslims. The orientation towards Jerusalem responded to a divine order, whereas the prophet (PBUH) would have liked to be oriented towards the Kaaba, as the Holy Quran informs us about it. " We have often seen the turning of thy face to heaven. So we will now orienting you towards a direction that you will surely agree ... "[Chapter Al Baqara / The Cow].

We cannot penetrate the secret of God in this matter. Was it a divine attempt to win the Jews to Islam? Was it for the Jews not to harm the first Muslims in Medina? (End of the presentation of pious Muslims on the issue.)

The change of Qibla is therefore the ritualistic expression of the break-up with the Jews and of the victory of Badr, which gives back confidence to Muslims. The prayer in the direction of Jerusalem, in concert with the Jews, was only carried out with a view to doing a rapprochement with them. The separation being consummated the Muslims can stand out and make a radical change: turn in the opposite direction, the Kaaba in Mecca. The most embarrassing was then to present the pagan temple in Mecca as the center and origin of monotheism, because it was at the time a pagan temple like any other, continuing to be honored as such by the Arab populations. Then legends and new traditions arose in the Muslim community, including the verse 96 in chapter three of the Quran.

"Lo! the first Sanctuary appointed for mankind was that at Becca (= ? Mecca) a blessed place, a guidance to the peoples " 1).

According to the Muslim exegetes, this verse would have descended during a debate between Muslims and Jews but the debate in question probably took place between Muslims.

Muhammad also got used to claim himself as being from the direct Abrahamic lineage and to systematically assign to Abraham the construction of the Kaaba (which is, of course, totally inaccurate). It is, however, difficult to say whether Muhammad was the first Arab to refer to this example or whether it was a legend already known, and that Muhammad would then have only taken over for himself. What seems certain in any case is that this idea is absent from the Meccan verses of the Quran on the subject.

The legend known as "night journey" (isra) will give another explanation for the first choice that of Jerusalem, but nevertheless without saying why it once ceased to be good. Part of this story is happening on the Temple Esplanade. But the Dome of the Rock, built in 691 on this Esplanade, does not mention it: this story explaining the choice in question therefore appeared after 691.

N.B. In any case, this change was generalized only much later, several precise elements attest it. The first is a letter of Jacob of Edessa showing that the change of qibla in 660 was not realized in Alexandria or Babylonia, more than a quarter of a century after the death of Muhammad. On a trip on that date, he writes indeed (see Patricia Crone and Michael Cook).

"It is not to the south that the Jews pray; neither the Mahgraye. The Jews who live in Egypt, as likewise the Mahgraye there, as I saw with my own eyes and will now set out for you, prayed to the east , and still do, both peoples –the Jews towards Jerusalem and the Mahgraye towards the Kaaba. And the Jews who are to the south of Jerusalem pray to the north; and those in Babylonia pray to the west. And also the Mahgraye who are there pray to the west, towards the Kaaba; and those who are to the south of the Kaaba pray to the north, towards the place.

Jacob of Edessa is mistaken when he speaks of Kaaba (which is perhaps in his letter only a common noun) , but his sentence indicates the main thing, that the Mahgraye - who were not yet called Muslims in 660 – In Egypt and Babylonia, pray in the same direction as the Jews, who pray towards Jerusalem. Friday and not Saturday (Shabbat) was chosen as the day of the solemn weekly great prayer, the faithful were called by the voice of the famous Bilal (the first muezzin); and no longer by the Jewish shofars (trumpets) or Christian rattles. New divine revelations also led to a reshaping of the calendar. They specified in particular that the Muslim fast was to be practiced during the month of Ramadan, during which the battle of Badr well took place. The fasting of Ramadan will therefore replace that of Ashura or, more precisely, fasting on the day of Ashura will remain recommended, but not obligatory, and provided to fast two days - the day before and the day of Ashura itself - so as not to do as in Judaism.

Ashura is therefore become a kind of Muslim December 31 or January 1. What this feast commemorates is variable, according to the hadiths that were invented to explain or justify this fast: the landing of Noah's Ark, Abraham spared by the stake fire, Adam leaving the heavenly paradise Some of the hadiths invented for this sake also emphasized the Arab and non-Jewish origin of this practice.

Imam Malik's Muwatta, Chapter 18 hadith 33.

The day of Ashura was a day the Quraysh used to fast in the Jahiliyya, and the Messenger of God [.....] used also to fast it during the Jahiliyya. Then when the Messenger of God [...] came to Madina he fasted it and ordered that it be fasted. Then Ramadan was made obligatory, etc.

Sahih Muslim, Volume 3, Book 6, hadith 2499.

Aisha reported that the Quraish used to fast on the day of Ashura in the pre-Islamic days and the Messenger of God also observed it. When he migrated to Medina, he himself observed this fast and commanded (others) to observe it. But when fasting during the month of Ramadan was made obligatory, he said: "He who wishes to observe this fast may do so, and he who wishes to abandon it may do so."

Sahih Muslim, Volume 3, Book 6, hadith 2509.

Abdullah b. Umar reported that the day of Ashura was mentioned before the Messenger of God and he said: It is a day when the people in the pre-Islamic days need to observe fast, so he who wishes to observe fast should do so, and he who wishes to abandon it should do so" [it was therefore optional so !].

Eid al-Adha.

The new community needed a holiday, like the Jews, who possessed many of them, great and venerable. The infamous episode of Isaac's sacrifice by Abraham will provide an ideal pretext. The Sacrifice Feast was originally part of the Hajj pilgrimage rites (hence the name of the month of dhul Hijjah). Muhammad will take it out this too much Meccan for his taste, background, but the rite will remain unchanged, however, as to the manner of performing it. There is no difference between the previous ritual and that taken over by the community gathered by Muhammad in this regard. As in any religious system, especially the most archaic, the sacrifice remains indeed the fundamental and founding act. It makes the link between the men and the supernatural, and groups individuals in the consumption of meat.

N.B. Judaism, which remains the reference in this field, proposes several types of sacrifices, but tends gradually to reject them as a secondary point of its doctrine. Christianity, for its part, prefers to exclude it completely, and to replace it with symbolic substitutes.

1) Psalm 84: 6: "As they pass through the Valley of Bakka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools." But about what it is necessary to think of the piles of stones like the Kaaba see the words of St Stephen about the Temple in Jerusalem, Acts of the Apostles 7, 48-50.

THE EXPULSION OF BANU QAYNUQA (APRIL 624).

This first group of Jews is the weakest of the three, and the closest to Yathrib / Medina: simple craftsmen, but who are wrong to be rich, to control the trade, and to manufacture weapons. The Banu Qaynuqa were especially famous for being a tribe of goldsmiths. They held the main market of the city of Yathrib / Medina, which was also known as the "Banu Qaynuqa Market." They had some fortresses north of the urban area.

Muhammad was then informed, according to Tabari, that in one of the Jewish tribes of Medina, the Qaynuqa, they made fun of the vanquished Quraysh; that the Qaynuqa accused of having been very poor warriors for having let themselves be defeated by a Muslim army, however, very badly prepared. The whole accompanied by boasting as stupid as imprudent of the kind: "We uns, Qaynuqa, we know how to fight, if the Meccans had a tiny bit listened to us, they would have won, etc. "

The Banu Qaynuqa were proud of their bravery and their worth. Being blacksmiths or goldsmiths by profession, even their children were armed. They could immediately mobilize more than 700 fighters. They also enjoyed good relations with the Khazraj and with Abdallah Ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, Prince of Yathrib / Medina. These bragging from their part did not form aggression in itself, and did not break the contract of mutual defense with the Muslims passed a few months earlier; but a new divine vision fell from heaven to urge Muhammad to take the lead:" If you fear treachery from any folk, then throw back to them (their treaty) fairly. Lo! God loves not the treacherous" (Quran, 8 : 58). Muhammad, who until then had been nevertheless ready to deal with them, therefore will violently reject these Jews by the chapter of the Cow (chapter 2 verse 40: O Children of Israel! Remember My favor wherewith I favored you, and fulfill your (part of the) covenant, I shall fulfill My (part of the) covenant, and fear Me. etc. , etc.).

The Banu Qaynuqa lived in a particular district of Medina. As they practiced the crafts of goldsmiths, blacksmiths or craftsmen, as we have said, the inhabitants of the city often had the opportunity to visit their shops. But some time later, a Muslim woman went to a Qaynuqa jeweler. He wanted to unveil her (to make her try on the jewels?) but she refused.

Here below the pious Muslim version of the incident.

The jeweler then unknowingly from her rolled up the end of her dress on her back as she was sitting and tied it. When she got up, suddenly, she uncovered her buttocks and uttered a loud cry. A Muslim (her husband?) pounced on the jeweler and killed him, but was shot in turn by the shop staff.

Muhammad went there personally, gathered the Banu Qaynuqa and asked them for explanations (words reported with reservations). "Oh Jewish people, dread that God (Glory to Him the Most High) will take revenge on you as he took revenge on the Quraysh, since you know now, since my victory in Badr, that I am really the Envoy of God. My advent is even announced in your book." But their answer was something like this: "O Muhammad, you think perhaps that we are like the Quraysh, who did not know how to defend themselves. Come and cross sword s with us, and you'll see how true men are fighting. "

Once again, let us repeat, these imprudent words are reported with reservations. What is certain is that all these boastings finally proved to be very expensive for the unfortunate Banu Qaynuqa.

Through a series of more or less secret negotiations, based on his strategy of terror, Muhammad therefore will manage to deprive the Banu Qaynuqa of their local support, and even to cut them off from other Jewish clans. Some of the Medinans who had made an alliance with them declared that they no longer considered themselves as their friends. Forced to take refuge in their fortress north of the town, and not rescued by the other Jews, the Qaynuqa had to surrender after a fortnight and paid a heavy price for their boasting.

Some chroniclers say that Muhammad would have preferred to kill them all, but that the king of Medina, Abdallah Ben Ubayy ben Salul (still him) their ally, converted without conviction to Islam (or simply pagan) would be opposed that; and threatened Muhammad with reprisals if he attacked them. Tabari therefore may have perhaps wanted to make this episode disappear by inventing an imaginary "feat of arms." The Banu Qaynuqa fled further north into Wadi al-Qura and into the city of Adhrat (Syria), but many of them could not survive and died there. The booty division will provoke some Quranic verses adapted to the circumstances as usual. Muhammad seized three swords, three spears, three bows, three coats of mail, for his personal use. The other Jewish tribes, Banu Quraysa and Banu Nadir, did not move, and were not worried.

THE BATTLE OF UHUD (March 23rd??? 625).

POINT OF VIEW OF PIOUS MUSLIMS.

Quran chapter 3 verse 166. " That which befell you, on the day when the two armies met, was by permission of God; that He might know the true believers; and that He might know the hypocrites."

In 625, the Muslims again confronted the Meccans, who came en masse, accompanied by their wives, north of Medina, on the slopes of Uhud mountains.

This battle takes its name from the place where it took place. Located six kilometers north of Medina, at an altitude of 121 meters, this height is made of red granite stones. The Kanat Valley separates this mountain from the small hill that will be known after the battle as "archer's mount." The Meccans were determined to avenge the defeat they had suffered in Badr, and mourning was even banned by their new leader Abu Sufyan until the dead were all avenged.

Abu Sufyan has been in charge of the caravan that had been attacked a few months earlier by the Muslims at the Badr well, and he had promised the Quraysh to avenge this insult. As Muhammad was threatening the route of their caravans to the north, the merchants of the city agreed to undertake the necessary expenses, and launched their counter-attack in the spring of the following year (March 625).

Abu Sufyan enlisted under his banner the Kinana and Sakif tribes, by promising them necessary arms and provisions. A large number of slaves also joined the expedition, hoping to get their freedom, including Washi, an Ethiopian slave. He handled the spear perfectly and was promised that he would be freed if he could kill Muhammad, Ali or Hamza.

Abu Sufyan gathers an army composed of 3000 men, 700 of them with cuirasses, and 200 horsemen, divided into two corps, the right wing commanded by Khalid ibn al-Walid, the left wing by Ikrimah, the son of Amr ibn Hisham (dead at Badr). This army set out and camped at the foot of the Uhud Hills in April 625.

Muhammad had been informed of the intentions of the Quraysh by his uncle Abbas.

The city of Yathrib / Medina and the council of war which ensued were immediately divided into two camps: the supporters of a head-on clash on the outside and those who preferred to entrench themselves in the city to fight in it a defensive battle. The native Medinans, led by Abdullah ben Ubayy, leaned rather for the second option, the defensive one in the streets of Yathrib / Medina (like during the battle of the trench 2 years later finally) and young Muslims for the first one: the offensive option.

Muhammad was split. At the beginning he was a supporter of the defense but at the end, he also became a strong supporter of the camp of those who wanted to march in order to meet the Meccans, to face them on a carefully chosen ground. A very good plan and that could have succeeded if ... because there is always some if, in life.

Unless the insistence on Muhammad's initial caution as well as on his democratic behavior is due only to the desire to exonerate him of any responsibility in the ensuing disaster.

Whatever it be, what is certain is that Muhammad finally decided to confront the Meccans outside Medina. Some Muslims urged him to seek help from the Jews, in accordance with the agreement signed with them upon their arrival at Yathrib / Medina. Muhammad would have answered them: "We must not be helped by idolaters against other idolaters."

Muhammad took his cuirass, his sword, and his helmet, and prepared himself personally for the battle. The Muslims having meanwhile changed their mind, Muhammad replied to his uncle Hamza who came to announce it to him: "When a prophet has put on his battle armor, it is not suitable that he puts it down before having fought."

The army of Muhammad, with a thousand men, then stopped at Shaykhan, halfway up Uhud Mountain. The sun had begun its setting down towards the horizon. Muhammad dismounted and got down. A light-colored turban surrounded his helmet. He wore a breastplate under which was a coat of mail attached by the leather strap of a sword. A shield protected his back and on his side a sword hung. When the sun was down, Bilal immediately called for prayer. Muhammad reviewed his troops a last time. It was then that he noticed the presence among the men of eight young boys who, despite their age, clearly aspired to take part in the fight. Among them were Usuri ibn Said and Abdullah ibn Umar, aged thirteen. The two boys showed that they were accomplished fighters and were allowed to stay, while the others were sent back to their homes.

Abdullah bin Ubayy who was of the first opinion of Muhammad (to remain on the defensive at Medina like two years later for the battle of the Trench) refused to go on further and returned to entrench himself in Medina with his 300 men; arguing that Muhammad had listened to the youngest, rather than listening to the voice of wisdom. So only 700 men remained in the Muslim camp, 100 of whom had armor, 50 bowmen, 2 horsemen.

Arrived at Uhud, Muhammad divided his army in four battalions:

- The vanguard commanded by Abu-Ubayda ibn al-Jarrah.
- The right wing commanded by Ukashah bin Mohsin.
- The left wing commanded by Abu-Salama bin Abdulasad.

Turning his back on Mount Uhud, to protect his "Medinan" rear, Muhammad detached a body of fifty bowmen under the command of Abdullah bin Jubayr. In position on Aynayn Mount in front of Uhud, from where they could stop the possible counter-attacks of the Quraysh cavalry. The orders he gave them were the following: "Keep your positions and cover us. If you see us being victorious, don't come, and if you see us being cut to pieces, don't lend us a helping hand."

A well thought out strategy!

Muhammad encouraged the rest of his troops by shouting to them words like this: remember that God is with those who obey, and that Satan is the companion of those who disobey. Stay firm in this jihad and enjoy the blessings promised by God to killed in action martyrs. No one will die until God has decided ...

Abu Sufyan, on his side, as we have seen, had divided his army into 3, the infantry being placed in the center, and he made his men move in order of battle, with Khalid on the right wing, Ikrimah on the left wing.

The first to open hostilities was a Meccan called Talha ben Abi Talha, a great warrior of the army of Abu Sufyan, standard-bearer of the Quraysh. He moved on the battlefield and enjoined the Muslims of the first line to confront him in single combat. The challenge was accepted by Ali, who overcame him very quickly. The Meccan banner was later taken up two of Talha's brothers, but they were shot down by Muslim bowmen. Nine Meccans took up the Quraysh banner, one after the other, but all succumbed under the arrows. An Ethiopian named Sawaab then moved on the battlefield. He had a scary face. On seeing him, no Muslim dared to move, but he was shot by Ali. Annoyed by these preliminaries, Abu Sufyan ordered a general attack. The two armies ran towards each other. During this time, Khalid and his cavalymen were trying to find a flaw in the Muslim defense, trying three times to attack them behind their lines; but each time the bowmen repelled them with their arrows, and the fray thus turned to the advantage of the Muslims.

The Ethiopian slave named Washi then slipped behind Hamza and slaughtered him with a spear in the abdomen. The Muslim hagiography adds that Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, took advantage of that to snatch his liver and ate it, but is that very likely? The standard was entrusted to Mus'ab ibn Umair, the Muslims continued their assault, and Abu Sufyan ordered his men to withdraw.

The Muslim fighters then laid down their arms and ran on the spoils.

Thinking that the battle was over, the majority of bowmen blocking the passage to the hills immediately left their post, too, to run on the spoils. Only a few Muslims remained on their positions, urging others to keep their places.

From where he was, the commander of the Meccan cavalry, Khalid bin Walid, noticed the thing. He turned around Uhud Mount with his cavalymen, took bowmen on the hill from the rear, crushed them, and in turn launched a violent counter-attack on the left wing of the Muslim army. The faithful of Muhammad were caught "in the crossfire" namely the cavalry in their backs and the Quraysh army in front. They were so surprised they did not know what to do. A certain hesitation settled in their rows.

Abu Sufyan noticed it. The banner of the Quraysh, which was on the ground for a while, was then lifted up by a kind of Arab Joan of Arc, and the Meccans took advantage of that to regroup and then to attack again.

The most total confusion thus settled in the Muslim rows and they lost contact with their chiefs. The Muslim standard-bearer, Mus'ab ibn Umair, was killed. As he was much like Muhammad, the Meccans began to shout that he was dead, and the rumor that Muhammad himself had been killed spread. Some were slaughtered by theirs. Believing Muhammad dead, too, many lost all courage. One part stood aside waiting for orders, another fled. Some like Abu Bakr and Umar ibn al-Khattab, even threw their sword. Uthman fled so far that he could not return to Medina until three days later.

Muhammad having been recognized by his own, the fighting resumed fiercely. A sword stroke hurt him and broke his upper teeth. He rolled into a ditch in a very bad state and escaped the Meccan bowmen only thanks to the intervention of Ali, of a woman called Umm Ammarah, and of some other anonymous people. The rumor of his death spread a second time, in one camp as in the other, and the fighting decreased in intensity. Believing that Muhammad really died this time, Abu Sufyan withdrew without attempting to storm Medina. According to Montgomery Watt, the Meccans would also have suffered quite significant losses, and that is why they would have preferred to give up the city, but they nevertheless returned to Mecca as winners. They had avenged Badr, what their goal was.

As for the Muslims, on the other hand, it was the most complete rout for them, and they mourned theirs: Mus'ab ibn Umair and many others. There were 75 dead on the Muslim side and 70 wounded. 22 dead on the Mecca side, including 12 killed by Ali personally. Muhammad even had to mourn the loss of his uncle Hamza (mutilated by the Meccans?) He gave the order to bury them without cleaning their wounds, nor to embalm their bodies, nor to make the funeral prayer, two by two in shrouds, the best connoisseurs of the Quran first. The prophet's daughter, Fatima, and several of her companions, had to heal the wounded.

Editor's note. These figures, relatively low, do not really make Uhud the massacre of Meccans, or Muslims, described by the Islamic legend.

Some passages in chapter 3 of the Quran (verses 152-158) seem to allude to this battle (self-criticism? Apologies??).

Hence the revelation of verses 165 to 174, probably also inserted afterwards: the misfortunes of the faithful are made possible by God in order to test their consistency or as punishment for their disobedience. Classical quibbling of the believers of Judaism and Christianity.

The Muslim hagiography also mentions more prosaically, just after, various guerrilla actions on behalf of the Muslims, launched against the rearguard of the victorious Meccan army demobilized .

First version. After having celebrated their victory, the Meccans wished to take the city, but Muhammad left Yathrib / Medina again, despite his wounds, halted about twenty kilometers, and made kindled big campfires; to make the Meccans believe that they were very numerous. A Quraysh went to Uhud, where the Meccan army was feasting, and told them in substance (in substance, because once again we can have a reasonable doubt as to the accuracy of the words); "Muhammad leads an army whose number exceeds all that I have known until now, they are driven by a terrible hatred ... etc., etc. "

Second version. The same day the noble prophet called the fervent servants of Islam to accompany him in the pursuit of the pagans, to dissuade them from attacking the city again. The calculations of the noble prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) were absolutely right. He knew well that the Quraysh would quickly regret having left so quickly, without taking advantage of their victory, and that they would want to retrace their steps.

So he decided to go after them, and immediately six hundred and thirty Muslims proposed to accompany him. When they reached Hamra al-Assad, on the road to Mecca, they camped there for three days, the time necessary so that the noble prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) has information. He learned from a non-Muslim sympathizer that Abu Sufyan had remained in Rawha, 80 km from Yathrib / Medina, with an army of 2,978 men, that they regretted their mistake, and indeed planned to return to attack the city. However, when they heard that the noble prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) chased after them with an entire army, they gave up.

It is up to everyone to make an opinion! A guerrilla warfare or a display of force against the Meccan rearguard is, of course, always possible.

Social consequences in Yathrib / Medina.

The large number of war victims forces to improvise a special legislation (some Sharia law therefore) on inheritances and orphans. Muslims have begun to hoard property under the circumstances we know, and their transmission therefore is to be regulated.

Muhammad, Quran 4, 2-11.

Give unto orphans their wealth.

Exchange not the good for the bad
nor absorb their wealth into your own wealth.

Lo! that would be a great sin.

Muhammad, Quran 4, 7-18.

Unto the men belongs a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, and unto the women a share of that which parents and near kindred leave, whether it be little or much.

The combat fought in Uhud, resulted in many casualties, and the leader himself was jostled or wounded: opportunity to glorify the beauty of martyrdom in combat, in an unparalleled rhetorical one-upmanship; but the importance of the battle is also due to the fact that it is a defeat, which it is indispensable to explain theologically, beyond the classic theme of human failure. If Badr's victory was a sign of God, the defeat of Uhud is to be too. Muhammad had to find an explanation for the fact that God allowed such misfortunes fall on his followers. The Banu Nadir Jewish tribe was therefore accused of provoking this defeat by refusing to take part in the fighting.

Discouragement settled in the Umma. Back in Medina, Abdallah bin Ubayy bin Salul and his (the munafiqun) did not hesitate to repeat to Muslims: "You should have stayed with us, if you had listened to us, then you would not have lost all these men; you should not have gone to meet enemies but instead wait for them at Yathrib / Medina ... Etc. Etc. "

YEAR 625 STILL, IN MEDINA.

Ibn Ishaq, the Life of Muhammad, translated by Alfred Guillaume, page 426, heading "the day of Al-Raji."

The economic blockade of the city, organized at the initiative of the Meccans, even threatened for a while the survival of the inhabitants, and there were also plans of attack from the tribe of Banu Asad of the Najd (center of Arabia). But Muhammad was informed by spies, and he sent a battalion of 150 men, under the command of Abu Salamah, to dissuade them. Taken by surprise, the Banu Asad must flee, leaving all their belongings on the spot.

A delegation of the tribes Udal and Al Qara, sworn enemies of the Quraysh in Mecca, nevertheless came in Muhammad's house to make contact with him. Muhammad sent some of his to negotiate with them. They were Marthad b. Abu Marthab, Khalid bin Al Bukayr, Khubayb ben Adiy, Zayd bin Al Dathinna and Abdullah bin Tariq. The delegation was led by a man named Asim ben Thabit, but in Raji (between Rabigh and Jeddah, halfway between Asfan and Mecca) they were spotted by the Banu Lihyan tribe. A certain Hudhayl promised them to spare their life if they surrendered.

Asim answered him something like "I will never trust the word of a disbeliever, O God, let your Prophet know what has happened to us"; (in short, Cambronne's word it would be said in France, or "The guard dies, and does not surrender!") and the fight began. There were a hundred bowmen on the side of Banu Lehan (a figure may be slightly exaggerated), so four envoys from Muhammad were killed. On the other hand, Khubayb and Zayd were brought alive to Mecca.

There are two versions of their end.

In the first, they are sold as slaves (this is the most likely).

In the second, they end up as martyrs, tortured before being executed. This second version even adds that before dying, Khoubai'b asked to pray, which would have been granted.

Ibidem page 433: Bi'r Ma'una.

Muhammad also sent dozens of men to the Banu Amr of Najd (center of the peninsula) to win them over. Another ambassador named Abu Bara Amir Ben Malik came to Yathrib / Medina to see if his tribe, who also lived in the Najd, had an interest in joining him. Muhammad proposed to convert to Islam, but Amir b. Malik declined the offer, while not being hostile. He answered on the contrary, "Send some of your men into my tribe, and I will ask their members to respond favorably to them." Muhammad, however, having expressed some fears about their safety, Amir retorted, "I will protect them." As a precaution, however, Muhammad decided to send 70 of his best warriors.

[Editor's note. As a result, it began to look more like a small military expedition than like an embassy, or a missionary sending. The little troop encamped near the well of Ma'una and sent one of its men to meet the chief of the local clan, a man named Al Tufayl, who refused to receive him, and instead made him executed. Al Tufayl did not stop there and even decided to attack the rest of the delegation, asking for help from the Banu Amir. The latter refused, saying: "We do not want to embarrass Abu Bara." Al Tufayl therefore turned to other tribes, the people of Usayya, Ril and Dhakwan, of the tribes of Banu Sulaym, who agreed to lend him a hand, and the Muslims were trapped around the well (Bi'r) of Ma'una. The entire delegation, except Amr b.

Umayya Al Damri, was consequently exterminated. On the way back to Yathrib / Medina, he met two men of the Banu Amr tribe, whom he mistook for enemies, and killed them. But they were

also envoys sent on a mission by Muhammad [Commentary in the form of a question: how could such an error be possible?] because the Banu Amr had just joined up to the Muslim cause. Muslims were therefore obliged to compensate the families of the victims. The tribes of Ril, Dhakwan, Lihyan, and Ussayya, who had refused to join up to Islam, were cursed by Muhammad then, since the Banu Nadir were, in principle, allies of the Banu Amr, Muhammad went to find them with some of his companions to ask for their participation in the compensation of families.

THE DEPORTATION OF BANU NADIR (AUGUST 625).

The Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir was more powerful than the previous one. Our sources suggest the thesis of a Jewish conspiracy to justify the attack; but in reality, after their defeat in Uhud, the Muslim troops were simply in search of an easy success and Muhammad anxious to get rid of a possible hotbed of resistance, by making an example, moreover.

After long praying for the salvation of their souls in the Qba Mosque (his home located in the suburbs of Yathrib / Medina as we have already had the opportunity to see); Muhammad therefore went on a Saturday among the Banu Nadir and asked them for a financial contribution on this subject (the compensation due to the families of the dead fallen in Uhud), in accordance with the pact signed a few months earlier. We imagine the embarrassment of the latter. It is true that one wonders why the Jews should have paid for deaths in which they had nothing, but then nothing to see. The discussion was stormy, and quickly turned to a negative answer. There were even gestures of hostility towards Muhammad, who was waiting outside for their answer. Furious at this refusal, Muhammad had to return home without having got something. The prince of Medina, Abdallah ben Ubayy, advised the Banu Nadir to barricade themselves at home and promised to help them.

There are allusions to these events in the Quran (chapter 59 verses 11 to 17):

Hast thou not observed those who are hypocrites (how) they tell their brethren who disbelieve among the People of the Scripture: If you are driven out, we surely will go out with you, and we will never obey anyone against you, and if you are attacked we verily will help you. And God bears witness that they verily are liars.

(For) indeed if they are driven out they do not go out with them, and indeed if they are attacked they help them not, and indeed if they had helped them they would have turned and fled.....They will not fight against you in a body save in fortified villages or from behind walls. Their adversity among themselves is very great. You think of them as a whole whereas their hearts are divers. That is because they are a folk who have no sense, etc.

Muhammad gathered a small army to besiege the Banu Nadir and gave them the following ultimatum: "You have betrayed my confidence, I ask you to leave the territory, you have ten days to do so, those who will not obey will be killed ." During this new siege, he ordered the cutting of a number of date palms belonging to the Nadir. The Jews, from the top of their ramparts, were indignant at what they considered a crime, but a revelation soon stopped the felling of the aforementioned fruit trees:

"Whatsoever palm trees you cut down or left standing on their roots, it was by God's leave, in order that He might confound the evil livers" (Quran, 59, verses 2 and following). Given the situation, the display of force and the threats against their palms, the Jews asked therefore to leave. Muhammad accepted, but on the condition that they lay down their arms and take with them only what their camels could carry. What was done! The Banu Nadir loaded their mounts as best they could, and left the oasis to settle between Khaybar and Syria. The district of the city which they inhabited, their gardens, their fortresses, as well as other properties belonging to them, passed into the hands of the Moslems, and the remaining goods were given to the Meccan migrants, as well as to two poor among the ansar (Muslims of Yathrib). Only two of them remained in Medina and agreed to convert. But when they reached Khaybar, the Banu Nadir turned to the Quraysh of Mecca and their allies, the Gatafan tribe, as well as some others, to ask them to help them in recapturing their property.

WHAT HIRSCH GRAETZ DEDUCES FROM THAT???? (GESCHICHTE DER JUDEN 1853.)

Under such a condition of mutual hatred between Mohammed and the Jews, it is credible that the Banu-Nadhir, whose chief was then Huyay ibn Akhtab, a courageous warrior, once invited Mohammed to their castle of Zuhara with the object of precipitating him from the terrace. Mohammed accepted the invitation ; but, suspecting their object from the movements of the Jews, he escaped and hastened to Medina. The Banu-Nadhir had to pay for their evil designs upon the prophet. He gave them the alternative of leaving their homes within ten days or preparing for death. The Banu-Nadhir were at first inclined to avoid the struggle and to emigrate ; but, encouraged by Abdallah ibn Ubey, who promised aid, they accepted the challenge. Mohammed began the war by destroying the date trees which supplied them with food. As the promised help failed to arrive, the Banu-Nadhir capitulated after a siege of several days, and were permitted to depart without arms, and to take with them of their possessions only one camel's load. To the beating of drums and the sounding of fives, six hundred of them left their fortresses and settled partly among their brethren in Khaibar and partly near Jericho and Adraat (June-July, 625).

Conclusion appearing in the 1882 French version of the Geschichte and not in the 1919 English version.

Later, Muhammad justified this war in the following revelation: " All that is in the heavens and all that is in the earth glorifies God, and He is the Mighty, the Wise. He it is who hath caused those of the People

of the Scripture who disbelieved to go forth from their homes unto the first exile (the Kainuka) . You did not deem that they would go forth, while they deemed that their strongholds would protect them from God. But God reached them from a place whereof they recked not, and cast terror in their hearts so that they ruined their houses with their own hands and the hands of the believers.”

WHAT MUSLIM THEOLOGIANs DEDUCE FROM THIS DEPORTATION.

God warned his messenger of the plot of the Jews. This is one of the many miracles with which God honored him before and after the revelation of his vocation, and which serve to strengthen our belief in the mission of the Prophet (pbuh). Did not the Lord keep his promise when he said in the Quran, "God will protect you from mankind" (chapter 5 verse 67).

Chapter 59. The theme of this chapter is the judgment on the battle against the Banu Nadir.

Five main points will be treated.

The first four verses contain a warning and an exhortation to carefully ponder the fate of the Banu Nadir. An important tribe, as large in number as the Muslims, whose members had more wealth and property, who were well equipped militarily and who were able to support the siege led by the Muslims for several days. Some biographers did not hesitate to say that the messenger (pbuh), by intuition, had guessed the plot. The Quran says that this happened, not because of a mysterious power possessed by Muslims, but because the Jews had wanted to resist or fight God and His Messenger, peace and blessings of God upon him. Those who dare to resist the power of God always end in the same way. Scholars allow the felling the fruit trees of the enemy and their destruction if it can cause him to surrender. The doctors of the Law also deduce from this fact that the spoils Muslims take on the enemy, without any fighting, must be used to what the Imam considers to be in the interest of Muslims; and should not be divided among the fighters as the mere booty made after the battle. In verses 6-10 it is stated that land and property that fall under the control of Muslims as a result of war must be used. As this was the first time Muslims took control of a foreign territory, the matching divine law was revealed to them. The spoils that Muslims take on their enemies without fighting must not be shared between the warriors or the soldiers of the jihad, but assigned to the uses judged the most appropriate. The attitude adopted by the munafiqun or non-Muslims on the occasion of this battle against the Banu Nadir is mentioned in verses 11-17, and the causes of it are underlined.

The last part of this chapter 59 (verses 18-24) is a warning to all who have joined the Muslim community but have deviated from true faith. They are shown what true belief is, what the difference is between piety or perversity, what is the place and importance of the Quran, and what are the attributes of God.

The Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir continued to violate the pact of Medina; so much so that, during the month of Rabi al Awwal, of year 4 of the Hegira, they even plotted against the life of the Holy Prophet himself (Peace and Blessing of God upon him). They had agreed in principle to help compensate the families of their allies who had been killed by a Muslim by mistake; yet they plotted so that one of them goes up on the wall against which the prophet was leaning, and makes a stone fall on him in order to kill him. But before they put their plan into action, God warns his prophet, peace and blessing of God upon him. He stood up at once and returned to his home. It was no longer a question of making concessions to Banu Nadir. On the contrary, the prophet gave them an ultimatum, announcing to them that their trick had come to his attention, and that consequently they must leave Medina within ten days; if one of them was found in their district after that time, he could be killed. Abdullah bin Ubayy, the leader of the hypocrites in Medina, nevertheless encouraged them to defy this order and refuse to leave. He promised to support them with 2,000 of his men, and assured them that the Banu Ghatafan of the Najd would support them too. Convinced by these promises, the Banu Nadir made it known that they would not leave, whatever the noble prophet did (peace and blessings of God on him). That is why he besieged them a few days later (6 days according to some accounts, 15 according to others) as soon as the deadline had expired. But since none of their supporters in reality had the courage to come and help them, they ended up surrendering on the condition that they be allowed, in groups of three, to load a camel with what they could carry with them, and go (leaving the rest of their belongings). The members of this disloyal tribe dispersed in Khaybar, Wadi al Qura and in Syria.

THE STRANGE WAR OF AL-KHANDAK (OF THE TRENCHES) MARCH 627.

THE MUSLIM POINT OF VIEW.

Ibn Ishaq The Life of Muhammad by A. Guillaume page 450.

A number of Jews who had formed a party against the apostle, among whom were (...) with a number of B. al Nadir and B. Wa'il went to Quraysh at Mecca and invited them to join them in an attack on the apostle so that they might get rid of him altogether. Quraysh said, 'You are the first scripture people and know the nature of our dispute with Muhammad. Is our religion the best or is his? They replied that certainly their religion was better than his and they had a better claim to be in the right. (.....)

These words rejoiced Quraysh and they responded gladly to their invitation to fight the apostle of God, and they assembled and made their preparations. Then that company of Jews went off to Ghatafan and invited them to fight

the apostle and told them that they would act with them and that Quraysh had followed their lead in the matter; so they

too joined in with them (....)

When the apostle of God heard of their intention, he drew a trench about Medina (....)

When the apostle had finished the trench, Quraysh came and encamped where the torrent beds of Ruma meet between

al Juruf and Zughaba with ten thousand of their black mercenaries and their followers from B. Kinana and the people of

Tihama. Ghatafan too came with their followers (.....)

When conditions pressed hard upon the people, the apostle sent to Uyayna b. Hisn b. udhayfa b. Badr and to al Harith b. Auf b. Abu Haritha al Murri who were leaders of Ghatafan and offered them a third of the dates of Medina on condition that they would go back with their followers and leave him and his men but (.....) Sa'd took the paper and erased what was written, saying, 'Let them do their worst against us!' (.....)

As God has described, the apostle and his companions remained in fear and difficulty when the enemy came on them

from above and below. Then Nu'aym b. Masud b. Ghatafan came to the apostle saying that he had become a Muslim though his own people did not know of it, and let him give him what orders he would.

The apostle said: 'You are only one man among us, so go and awake distrust among the enemy to draw them off us if you can, for war is deceit.'

Thereupon Nu'aym went off to Banu Qurayza with whom he had been a boon companion in heathen days, and reminded them of his affection for them and of the special tie between them (...) then he said them: 'Quraysh and Ghatafan are not like you: the land is your land, your property, your wives, and your children are in it; you cannot leave it and go somewhere else. Now Quraysh and Ghatafan have come to fight Muhammad and his companions and you have aided them against him, but their land, their property, and their wives are not here, so they are not like you. If things go badly, they will go back to their own land and leave you to face the man in your country and you will not be able to do so if you are left alone. So do not fight along with these people until you take hostages from their chiefs who will remain in your hands as security that they will fight Muhammad with you until you make an end of him.' The Jews said that this was excellent advice.

Then he went to Quraysh and said to Abu Sufyan b. Harb and his company: 'You know my affection for you and that I have left Muhammad. Now I have heard something which I think it my duty to tell you of by way of warning, but regard

it as confidential. The Jews have regretted their action in opposing Muhammad and have sent to tell him so, saying: "Would you like us to get hold of some chiefs of the two tribes Quraysh and Ghatafan and hand them over to you so that you can cut their heads off? Then we can join you in exterminating the rest of them," Muhammad has sent word back to accept their offer; so if the Jews send to you to demand hostages, don't send them a single man.'

Then he went to Ghatafan and said: You are my stock and my family, the dearest of men to me, and I do not think that you can suspect me.' And he told the same story as he had told Quraysh (....)

However it came about by God's action on behalf of His apostle that Abu Sufyan and the chiefs of Ghatafan sent Ikrima to B. Qurayza with some of their number saying that they had no permanent camp, that the horses and camels were dying; therefore they must make ready for battle and make an end of Muhammad once and for all.

They replied that it was the Sabbath, a day on which they did nothing, and it was well known what had happened to those of their people who had violated the Sabbath. 'Moreover we will not fight

Muhammad along with you until you give us hostages whom we can hold as security until we make an end of him; for we fear that if the battle goes against you, you will withdraw at once to your country and leave us while the man is in our country, and we cannot face him alone.'

When the messengers returned with their reply Quraysh and Ghatafan said that what Nu'aym told you is the truth; so send to B. Qurayza that we will not give them a single man, and if they want to fight let them come out and fight.

Having received this message B. Qurayza said: 'What Nu'aym told you is the truth. The people are bent on fighting and if they get an opportunity they will take advantage of it; but if they do not they will withdraw to their own country and leave us to face this man here.

So send cold wind against them in the winter nights which upset their cooking pots and overthrew their tents (....)

Then Abu Sufyan said: "O Quraysh, we are not in a permanent camp; the horses and camels are dying; the B. Qurayza

have broken their word to us and we have heard disquieting reports of them. You can see the violence of the wind which

leaves us neither cooking pots, nor fire, nor tents to count on. Be off, for I am going!" Then he went to his camel which

was hobbled, mounted it, and beat it so that it got up on its three legs; by God its hobble was not freed until it was

standing. Were it not that the apostle had enjoined me not to do anything else until I returned to him, if I wished I could

have killed him with an arrow..... When Ghatafan heard of what Quraysh had done, they broke up and returned to their own country.'

In the morning the apostle and the Muslims left the trench and returned to Medina, laying their arms aside.

THE POINT OF VIEW OF A MAN OF TWELVE BOOKS AND NOT OF ONE.

Let's say it right away, the author of this compilation thinks well that there was

a) on the part of Mohammed a separate peace attempt (with some of the besiegers).

b) on behalf of the politicians of the Jewish tribe of the Qurayza....

- Non-respect of the defensive pact (wrongly) known as the Constitution of Medina.

- But in no case packing up and going in the opposite camp.

- No active participation in the defense of Medina.

- But a kind of neutrality.

-What was indeed a non-respect of the defensive pact signed with the Muslims of Muhammad (see our chapter on the subject).

-But in no case deserving such a collective punishment: a holocaust by swords. The trial for high treason of some leaders of the tribe possibly with a death sentence into the bargain, of course, could have been enough.

As we have seen, the Islamic tradition thus emphasizes the maneuvers of the last two Jewish tribes, the Banu Nadir and the Banu Qurayza, but it sounds a little too much like a justification after the event of their elimination. Some "Protocols of the elders of Medina" in a way forged quite after the fact.

For the rest everything is strange in this story (the fortunate coincidences, the hazards of the weather, etc.)

The public figures of the Banu Nadir tribe went to Mecca where they asked the Quraysh for helping to recapture Medina, even going so far as to declare to them: "Your religion is better than that of Muhammad." It is true that the philosophical and thought out paganism (henotheism, hypostases, vyuha ...) of the Meccans was very far from biblical caricatures about this ecological spirituality before the word is invented, but such words in the mouth of Judaizers are still rather astonishing. Finally, let's move on! Other tribes, including the Ghatafan, also decided to join the coalition.

In March 627, the Meccans, encouraged by their victory of Uhud, decided to finish once and for all and launch all their forces (those of the city of Mecca + those of their Bedouin allies) to the assault; nearly 10,000 men (9,000 infantry and 600 horsemen according to the Sira). Always headed by the master of Mecca at the time, Abu Sufyan.

When Muhammad learned that all these tribes were preparing to march on him and that their army had left Mecca, he informed the Muslims and consulted them. A Persian slave, named Salman Al-Farisi, advised him to dig trenches. This military technique, hitherto unknown to the Arabs, pleased the Muslims. The north side was the gateway to take the city, the other sectors being already fortified by natural obstacles such as palm trees (which prevented the cavalry charges). The Muslims, numbering 3000, left Medina and camped at the foot of Mount Sal, thus turning their backs to the mountain. There, they dug the trench (khandaq) recommended by the Persian.

The ditch was completed in one week and Mohammed himself set an example by taking part in the work. The Medinans, who were not very enthusiastic about the situation, hesitated or joined their families as soon as they could but staunch Muslims first asked for permission from Muhammad before leaving and then returning to work as soon as possible. (Quran Chapter 24, verse 62.)

The Muslims built a whole series of forts in addition to the ditch. The defense of those who were on the southern flank was entrusted to the Jews of the Qurayza tribe.

The attackers were surprised by the ditch. The first who tried to cross it with his horse fell into it, and was immediately killed. All cavalry charges being blocked by the Persian stratagem, the two sides settle face to face, and clash with insults and projectiles. The siege is severe and lasts twenty days. The Meccan coalized, meanwhile, sent a Jew named Huyayy ben Akhtab to make contact with the leader of the Banu Quraiza clan, Ka'b b. Asad. Huyayy insisted and finally convinced the Qurayzite leader to refrain from actively participating in the fighting. This defection was, of course, a hard blow for the Muslims. The Banu Qurayza did not join the Meccans, but accepted a kind of separate armistice. The situation became so desperate, following the neutrality of the last Jews in Yathrib / Medina, that Muhammad even considered for a while the purchase of the defection of part of the besiegers, the Ghatafan tribe; by secretly granting them a third of the date fruitage belonging to the inhabitants of the oasis.

A Ghatafan named Nu'aym b. Mas'ud then told Muhammad that he had long desired to join his cause, and asked him what he wanted him to do. Muhammad replied, "What can a man do alone? But you can resort to trickery, the war itself being only deception." Nu'aym then went to the Banu Qurayza, who did not know of his conversion (secretly performed, it is true), and then persuaded them not to go to the side of the Meccans without getting securities or hostages from them; according to the custom of the time in this kind of situation (the hostages were used as guarantors).

The Quraysh fully approved Nu'aym. The latter then went to the Meccan coalized to say: "Take care, the Banu Qurayza went back on their agreement, they now plan to give some of yours up to Muhammad to regain his confidence. If members of the Banu Qurayza clan come to ask for hostages, above all do not give them one. Things having happened thus, and in accordance with this rather Machiavellian plan, the discord settled between the Meccans and the Banu Qurayza. The allies saw traitors everywhere and as an exceptionally cold temperature had also settled in the region, the coalition broke up after 15 days. The besiegers went home one after the other, practically without fighting, with the exception of one of their chiefs who was killed by Ali. Abu Sufyan put an end to the operations and Muhammad exclaimed on seeing him withdrawing thus (at least according to the legend): "The next time, it will be us who will invade them."

THE HOLOCAUST BY SWORDS (APRIL 627).

The end of the last Jews in Medina is narrated in several texts, which have all in common a great dramatic sense.

GESCHICHTE DER JUDEN/HISTORY OF THE JEWS BY HEINRICH GRAETZ 1853.

The banished Banu-Nadhir, who remained in Arabia, determined to avenge their misfortune, and busied themselves with organizing a coalition of Mohammed's enemies in order to destroy him. Three leading members of the Banu-Nadhir, Huyay, Kinanah ibn ul-Rabia and Sallam abu Mishkam, spurred on the Kuraish of Mecca, the mighty tribe of Ghatafan, and others to unite against the tyrannical prophet who was growing mightier and more cruel day by day. The Arabic tribes were easily induced to join the coalition, but the Jewish tribes of the Banu-Kuraiza held aloof for some time because they had formed an alliance with Mohammed and the Moslems and were blind enough to have faith in Mohammed's promises. The Nadhirite Huyay finally convinced Kaab ibn Assad, the chief of the Kuraiza, of the danger threatening his tribe as Jews, and induced him to join the coalition. Ten thousand Confederates took the field, and expected to take Medina by surprise. But, warned by a traitor, Mohammed did not permit himself to be drawn into an open battle with a superior enemy, but had the city strongly fortified, and surrounded it with a deep ditch. The Arabs, accustomed to fight man to man, exhausted their arrows in vain against the fortifications. Mohammed finally succeeded in scattering the seed of distrust among the leading tribes of the coalition, the Kuraish, Ghatafanites and the Jews, and the allies withdrew.

The "Battle of the Trenches," as this war of the coalition was styled, terminated happily for Mohammed ; the Jews, however, had to pay dearly for instigating it. Immediately upon the departure of the allies, Mohammed, alleging a new revelation, inflamed three thousand of his followers with holy zeal to take the field against the Kuraiza. The Jews withdrew to their fortresses and entrenched themselves, and Mohammed with his three thousand besieged them for twenty-five days (Feb.-March, 627). When the food supply gave out, the Kuraiza were willing to capitulate and demanded that they be allowed to leave their fortresses with their families and a part of their possessions, as Mohammed had formerly granted to the Banu-Nadhir. But Mohammed rejected this proposal, and demanded an unconditional surrender. Thereupon, seven hundred Jews, among them the chiefs Kaab and Huyay, were slain in the market place of Medina, and cast into a common pit, whence the place received the name of the "Market of the Kuraiza." This outrage was committed in the name of God. The reference of the Quran to this event reads : "and he has caused such of those who have received the scriptures (the Jews) as assisted the Confederates to come down out of their fortresses, and he cast into their hearts terror and dismay; a part of them you slew, and a part you made captives, and God has caused you to inherit their land, their houses, and their wealth, and a land in which you have not trodden, for God is almighty."* The women were exchanged for weapons and horses ; Mohammed retained for himself as a mistress a beautiful girl, Rihanah, who, however, proudly scorned his favors.

THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE FENIAN.

Back in town Muhammad decided to end with this third and last Jewish tribe, and unleashed against it more than a pogrom, a real genocide. The case is very well known, by wordy sources, but the current presentations on the beginnings of Islam generally strive to minimize or obscure the episode, which is very rarely mentioned, at least for the Western audience, one wonders why. The former authors were already pushing in the same direction, because they themselves were embarrassed by the behavior of Muhammad in this case.

-The fear of betrayal seems to motivate this last assault against the Jews in Yathrib / Medina.

-We also feel the will to definitively eliminate the Jewish presence in the oasis.

-The judgment of the captives will give rise to a particular procedure, which has not often been understood.

-Muhammad assigns them as judge their former head under customary tribal law, but meanwhile become Muslim, who is more dying: Sa'd ibn Mua'dh, the chief of the clan Aws.

-He sentences them to death, but it is Muhammad who enforces the sentence.

The case can be understood in two ways.

-Subterfuge of tradition, which is reluctant to give Muhammad a direct role in this genocide.

-Acumen of Muhammad that who makes a dying person responsible, and thus avoids the risk of revenge, always possible in tribal environment.

The massacre will be perpetrated, either by Muhammad himself or by relatives (Ali, etc.). The corpses are piled up in common graves dug under the market, against all the usual rules (it is an additional humiliation inflicted on the victims). Women and children are divided between Muslims, and Muhammad himself will appropriate one of the most attractive widows. The booty consists mostly of weapons.

As mentioned above the massacre gave rise to some clear verses in the Quran (33:26): "God brought those of the People of the Scripture who supported them down from their strongholds, and cast panic into their hearts. Some you slew, and you made captive some. And He caused you to inherit their land and their houses and their wealth, and land you have not trodden." Repetere = ars docendi. The numerous variations and additions concerning this atrocious affair indicate that the story was very popular in the Muslim audience, while for non-Muslims it was completely obscured.....

This is how things are presented by Muslim hagiography.

The maneuver did not save the Jews from the consequences of their betrayal. They thought that the contingent led by Ali was just an intimidatory tactic. They realized the extent of the threat only when they saw the Islamic Army arrive under the command of the holy prophet himself (peace and blessings of God on him). A siege of two or three weeks was sufficient for the surrender of the Jews. They agreed to surrender under the conditions of Sa'd Ibn Mua'dh, the chief of the Aws. They had made him judge of their case, because in pre-Islamic times, the Aws and Qurayza were allies. So they hoped that in memory of this, Sa'd would help them to leave Medina, like the Banu Qaynuqa and the Banu Nadir a few months before. The Allies themselves relied on a lax judgment on the part of Sa'd in favor of their former allies. But Sa'd knew very well what the two tribes who had already been allowed to leave the city had done. As soon as the gates of Yathrib / Medina had been passed, they had been eager to rouse the men of the surrounding clans against the Muslims. He also knew the treachery the Quraysh had demonstrated at the time of the attack on the city: a separate armistice with the people of Mecca, which had endangered all the Medinans. In view of these elements, Sa'd Ibn Mua'dh decided that all the men of Banu Qurayza would be put to death, and that their property but also their wives and children would be distributed to Muslims. His judgment was applied literally. Entering the citadel, the Muslims found there a whole paraphernalia prepared by these traitors: 1500 swords, 300 coats of mail, 2000 spears and 1500 shields. This war material was to be used to take Medina from the rear after crossing the ditch by the polytheists.

Tabari's version (quite pathetic when all is said and done).

In April 627, after having left the trench, put away his arms and coated his body with lotion, Muhammad had a hallucination ordering him to attack the Banu Qurayza.

Volume 8 page 27 The Expedition against the Banu Qurayzah (a true dramaturgy).

"At noontime Gabriel, wearing a cloth-of-gold turban, came to the Messenger of God on a mule with a brocade covered saddle. He said, "Have you laid down your arms, Messenger of God?"

"Yes," he replied. Gabriel said: "The angels have

not laid down their arms! I have just returned from pursuing the enemy. God commands you, Muhammad, to march to the Band Qurayzah. I, too, will betake myself to the Band

Qurayzah.....Ali b. Abi Talib marched and, having approached the fortresses, heard foul words from them about the Messenger of God. He went back and met the Messenger of God on the way and said, "Messenger of God, it would be better for you not to go near these most wicked men." "Why?" he asked, "I think you have heard them insult me." Ali said, "Yes, Messenger of God ."

When the Messenger of God had approached their fortresses, he said: "You brothers of apes! Has God sent down his retribution on you?" They said, "Abu al-Qasim, you have never been one to act impetuously."

Before reaching the Banu Qurayzah, the Messenger of God passed his companions at al-Sawran.

"Has anyone passed you?" he asked. "Yes, Messenger of God," they replied. "Dihyah b. Khalifah al-Kalbi passed us on a white mule with a brocade covered saddle." The Messenger of God said,

"That was Gabriel, sent by God to the Banu Qurayzah to shake their fortresses and cast terror into their hearts.".....Ka'b b. Asad said to them: "People of the Jews, you see what has befallen you. I shall propose three alternatives to you. Take whichever one you will." "What are they?"

they asked. Ka'b said: "That we follow this man and believe him; for, by God, it has become clear to you that he is indeed a prophet sent [from God] and that it is he whom you used to find

[mentioned] in your book. Then you will be secure in your lives, your property, your children, and your wives." They said, "We will never depart from the law of the Torah or exchange it for another."

"Since you reject this proposal of mine," Ka'b said, "come let us kill our children and wives and go out to Muhammad and his companions as men who brandish swords, leaving behind us no impediments to worry us, until God judges between us and Muhammad. If we die, we shall die having left nothing behind us for which we fear; if we win victory, by my life we shall find women and children."

They said: "Kill these poor ones? What would be the good of living after them?"

Ka'b said: "Since you have rejected these proposals of mine, tonight is the night of the Sabbath. Perhaps Muhammad and his companions feel safe in it. Go down; perhaps we can take them by surprise."

They said, "Profane our Sabbath and do on it what none of our predecessors has ever done, except those you know about-and they were transformed in a way that you surely know?"

He said, "No man among you has ever shown sound judgment since his mother bore him!"

Then they sent to the Messenger of God, saying, "Send us Abu Lubabah b. Abd al-Mundhir, one of the Banu Amr b. Awf -They were Confederates of al-Aws-"so that we can ask his advice in this affair." The Messenger of God sent him to them.

When they saw him, the men rose to meet him, and the women and children rushed to grab hold of him, weeping before him, so that he felt pity for them.

They said to him, "Abu Lubabah, do you think we should submit to Muhammad's judgment?"

"Yes," he said, but he pointed with his hand to his throat, that it would be slaughter (Abu Lubabah [later] said, "By God, as soon as my feet moved, I knew that I had betrayed God and His Messenger" by saying that).

Then Abu Lubabah rushed away at a loss.

Before coming to the Messenger of God, he tied himself to one of the pillars in the mosque, saying, "I will not leave this spot until God forgives me for what I have done."

In the morning, they submitted to the judgment of the Messenger of God. The al-Aws jumped up and said: "Messenger of God, they are our clients (mawli), not clients of al-Khazraj.....When the al-Aws spoke to him, the Messenger of God said, "will you not be satisfied if one of your own men passes judgment on them?"

"Yes," they said. So he said, "It shall be therefore entrusted to Sa'd b. Mu'adh."

The Messenger of God had placed Sa'd b. Mu'adh in the tent of a Muslim woman named Rufaydah. She used to nurse the wounded

When the Messenger of God appointed him judge over the Band of Qurayzah Jews, his tribesmen came to him and lifted him onto a donkey on which they had put a leather cushion, for he was a stout man. They brought him to the Messenger of God, saying, "Abu Amr, treat your clients well; for the Messenger of God has put you in charge of the matter only that you may treat them well." After they had plied him with many such requests, he said, "The time has come for Sa'd for the sake of God not to be influenced by anyone's reproach."

When Sa'd came into sight, the Messenger of God said, "Arise and go to your master (or the best of you), and help him dismount." Then the Messenger of God said [to Sa'd], "Pass judgment on them."

Sa'd replied, "I pass judgment on them that their fighters shall be killed and their children made captives and that their property shall be divided."

Then the Messenger of God said, "You have passed judgment on them with the judgment of God and the judgment of His Messenger."

As for us, men of twelve books, here is what we may say about that.

The tribal rules that prevailed in the city were therefore apparently saved. The prisoners were executed by their local allies for the crime of high treason, and not by Muhammad himself, who did not belong to their federation. It was a carnage at which Muhammad was present on the mound which topped the mass grave, in which the corpses were precipitated. Some of them were spared, however, at the request of Muslim Ansars who knew them personally. But one of the Jews thus saved, learning that all his relatives had perished, preferred to be beheaded too. This was granted to him. On the other hand, afterwards, Muhammad took for de facto wife the beautiful Rayhana daughter of Amr b. Khunafa, widow of one of the executed men.

The hadith 362 book 59 volume 5 of the Sahih Bukhari states: "He then killed their men and distributed their women, children and property among the Muslims, but some of them came to the Prophet and he granted them safety, and they embraced Islam."

Ibn Ishaq wrote on page 466 of his Life of Muhammad : " Then the apostle divided the property, wives, and children of B. Qurayza among the Muslims, and he made known on that day the shares of horses and men, and took out the fifth. Then the apostle sent Sa'd b. Zayd al Ansari brother of b. 'Abdu'l Ashhal with some of the captive women of B. Qurayza to Najd and he sold them for horses and weapons. The apostle had chosen one of their women for himself, Rayhana d. Amr b. Khunafa, one of the women of B. 'Amr b. Qurayza, and she remained with him until she died, in his power. The apostle had proposed to marry her and put the veil on her, but she said: 'Nay, leave me in your power (slave), for that will be easier for me and for you.' She had shown repugnance towards Islam when she was captured and clung to Judaism. So the apostle put her aside and felt some displeasure" (poor man!)

THE TARGETED KILLING OF THE CHIEF OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN KHAYBAR (MAY 626).

The theme of Abu Rafi's murder became popular because it concerned an important question: is it allowed to kill an infidel at night, contrary to customs? The movie is dramatic.

Ibn Ishaq the Life of Muhammad, translation Alfred Guillaume page 482.

THE KILLING OF SALLAM IBN ABU'L HUQAYQ.

When the fight at the trench and the affair of the B. Qurayza were over, the matter of Sallam b. Abu'l Huqayq known as

Abu Rafi came up in connection with those who had collected the mixed tribes against the apostle.

Now Aus

had killed Ka'b b. al Ashraf before Uhud because of his enmity towards the apostle and because he instigated men

against him, so Khazraj asked and obtained the apostle's permission to kill Sallam who was in Khaybar (oasis located 150 km north of Medina).....

Five men of B. Salima of Khazraj went to him. As they left, the apostle appointed Abdullah b. Atik as their leader, and he forbade them to kill women or children. When they got to Khaybar, they went to Sallam's house by night. Now he was in an upper chamber of his to which a ladder led up. They mounted this until they came to the door and asked to be allowed to come in.

His wife came out and asked who they were and they told her that they were Arabs in search of supplies. She told them that their man was here and that they could come in. When we entered we bolted the door of the room on her and ourselves fearing lest something should come between us and him. His wife shrieked and warned him of us, so we ran at him with our swords as he was on his bed. The only thing that guided us in the darkness of the night was his whiteness like an Egyptian blanket. When his wife shrieked one of our number would lift his sword against her; then he would remember the apostle's ban on killing women and withdraw his hand; but for that we would have made an end of her that night. When we had smitten him with our swords Abdullah b. Unays bore down with his sword into his belly until it went right through him, as he was saying Qatni, qatni, i.e., it's enough....It's enough. Then we went out.....

We asked each other how we could know that the enemy of God was dead, and one of us volunteered to go and see; so off he went and mingled with the people. He said

'I found his wife and some Jews gathered round him. She had a lamp in her hand and was looking into his face, and said -'By the God of the Jews he is dead!'

Never have I heard sweeter words than those....Then we disputed before him as to who had killed him.

The apostle demanded to see our swords and when he looked at them he said, 'It is the sword of Abdullah b. Unays that

killed him; I can see traces of food on it.'

Tabari volume 7 the foundation of the community page 101.

This expedition sent by the Messenger of God against Abu Rafi Sallam b. Abi al-Huqayq was sent in the fourth year of the Hegira in Dhu al-Hijjah (May 626)One of the favors which God conferred upon his Prophet was that these two tribes of the Ansar, al-Aws and al-Khazraj, used to vie with one another like stallions as regards the Messenger of God; al-Aws did not do anything which benefited him without al-Khazraj saying, "By God, they will not gain superiority over us in Islam in the eyes of the Messenger of God by doing this," and they would not cease until they had done something similar. Thus, when al-Aws killed Ka'b b. al-Ashraf on account of his hostility to the Messenger of God, al-Khazraj said, "They will never take superiority from us by doing that ." They conferred together to find a man comparable to Ibn al -Ashraf in hostility to the Messenger of God and called to mind Ibn Abi al-Hugayq. They then asked the Messenger of God for permission to kill him. etc.etc.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 5 Book 59 hadith 371.

Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib: God's Messenger sent some men from the Ansar to ((kill) Abu Rafi, the Jew, and appointed Abdullah bin Atik as their leader. Abu Rafi used to hurt God's Messenger and help his enemies against him. He lived in his castle in the land of Hijaz. When those men approached (the castle) after the sun had set and the people had brought back their livestock to their homes. Abdullah (bin Atik) said to his companions, "Sit down at your places. I am going, and I will try to play a trick on the gatekeeper so that I may enter (the castle)." So `Abdullah proceeded towards the castle, and when he approached the gate, he covered himself with his clothes, pretending to answer the call of nature. The people had gone in, and the gatekeeper (considered Abdullah as one of the servants) addressing him saying, "O God's Servant! Enter if you wish, for I want to close the gate for the night."

Abdullah adds in his story, "So I went in (the castle) and hid myself. When the people got inside, the gatekeeper closed the gate and hung the keys on a fixed wooden peg. I got up and took the keys and opened the gate. Some people were staying late at night with Abu Rafi for a pleasant night chat in a room of his. When his companions of nightly entertainment went away, I ascended to him, and whenever I opened a door, I closed it from inside. I said to myself, should these people discover my presence, they will not be able to catch me till I have killed him.'

So I reached him and found him sleeping in a dark house amidst his family, I could not recognize his location in the house. So I shouted, 'O Abu Rafi!' Abu Rafi said, 'Who is it?'

I proceeded towards the source of the voice and hit him with the sword, and because of my perplexity, I could not kill him. He cried loudly, and I came out of the house and waited for a while, and then went to him again and said, 'What is this voice, O Abu Rafi?' He said, 'A man has hit me with a sword! I again hit him severely but I did not kill him. Then I drove the point of the sword into his belly (and pressed it through) till it touched his back, and I realized that I have killed him. I then opened the doors one by one till I reached the staircase, and thinking that I had reached the ground, I stepped out and fell down and got my leg broken. I tied my leg with a turban and proceeded on till I sat at the gate, and said, 'I will not go out tonight till I know that I have killed him.' So, when (early in the morning) the cock crowed, the announcer of the casualty stood on the wall saying, 'I announce the death of Abu Rafi, the merchant of Hijaz.

Thereupon I went to my companions and said, 'Let us save ourselves, for God has killed Abu Rafi. So I (along with my companions proceeded and) went to the Prophet (pbuh) and described the whole story to him'. He said, 'Stretch out your (broken) leg. I stretched it out and he rubbed it and it became All right as if I had never had any ailment whatsoever.

Is it possible???? In any case it is an account different from that of Ibn Ishaq and therefore of Tabari.

THE EXPEDITION AGAINST BANU AL MUSTALIQ OR BATTLE OF AL MURAYSI.

After the name of a well located in the valley of Qadid, between Jeddah and Rabigh on the Red Sea shore.

JANUARY 627.

Historians here generally place a series of raids all over the place intended to subdue the independence velleities of the neighboring tribes. These expeditions have been the subject of studies and censuses by Muslim scholars. But there is a lot of confusion in this area. The accuracy of the information itself is often questionable.

We will therefore ignore the subject, with the exception of one case, the expedition against Banu Mustaliq, because it gave rise to a scandal that divided the Muslim community; the case of the (alleged) adultery of Aisha, Muhammad's favorite wife.

This pathetic episode (booty 200 prisoners 200 camels and household utensils, we are far from the fortunes of Caesar or Chosroes) is therefore only interesting by the two wives of Muhammad he it will question, the beautiful and noble Mustaliq princess Juwayriya and the little Aisha (who will be suspected of adultery, see next chapter).

The event (sic) was mentioned in many collections of ḥadīth.

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 3, Book 46, hadith 717.

Narrated Ibn Aun: I wrote a letter to Nafi and Nafi wrote in reply to my letter that the Prophet had suddenly attacked Bani Mustaliq without warning while they were heedless and their cattle were being watered at the places of water. Their fighting men were killed and their women and children were taken as captives; the Prophet got Juwairiya on that day.

Sahih Muslim Book 19 hadith 4292.

Ibn Aun reported: I wrote to Nafi inquiring from him whether it was necessary to extend (to the disbelievers) an invitation to accept (Islam) before attacking them. He wrote (in reply) to me that it was necessary in the early days of Islam. The Messenger of God made a raid upon Banu Mustaliq while they were unaware and their cattle were having a drink at the water. He killed those who resisted and imprisoned others. On that very day, he captured Juwairiya bint al-Harith. Nafi' said that this tradition was related to him by Abdullah b. Umar.

Abu Bakr was entrusted as the commander of the Muhajir's (Emigrants), and Sa'd bin Ubadah was the commander of the Anṣar (Helpers).

On hearing the advent of the Muslims, the tribe was terrified, and the other Bedouins that accompanied them fled.

They fought with bows and arrows for an hour, and then the Muslims advanced so rapidly, they surrounded the al-Muṣṭaliq and took the entire tribe as prisoners.

Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib killed a few wounded Banu al-Muṣṭaliq; among whom were Malik and his son. Two hundred families were taken as captives, two hundred camels, five thousand sheep, goats, as well as a huge quantity of household goods. The household goods were sold in an auction to the highest bidder and women raped but with contraception anyway as some hadiths indicate it.

Sahih Muslim volume 2 book 8 hadith 3371.

Chapter: Al-Azl (incomplete sexual intercourse): Coitus Interruptus.

"O Abu Said, did you hear God's messenger mentioning about al-azl (coitus interruptus)?" "Yes," and added: "We went out with God's messenger on the expedition to the Mustaliq and took captive some excellent Arab women and we desired them for we were suffering from the absence of our wives (but at the same time) we also desired ransom for them. So we decided to have sexual intercourse with them but by observing azl" (withdrawing the male sexual organ before emission of semen to avoid conception). But we said: "We are doing an act whereas God's messenger is among us; why not ask him?" So we asked God's messenger and he said: "It does not matter if you do not do it, for every soul that is to be born up to the Day of Resurrection will be born."

Commentary by Peter DedLaCrau. These roughneck soldiers do not want to damage "the goods" (sic) and Muhammad answers "spirituality! "

Only one Muslim was killed (by a Helper and by mistake). Juwayrīyah bint al-Ḥārith (20 years old), daughter of the Banū al-Muṣṭaliq chief was one of the captives, and agreed to marry Muḥammad (58 years old) in exchange for releasing 100 prisoners who converted to Islam, as compensation (according to the Muslim historian Saifur Rahman al Mubarakpuri).

The Muslims remained on the spot for several days, during which an altercation ensued between the Muhajir and Anṣar. One of the Muhajirun, named Jahja, attacked an Ansari, and the two groups immediately clashed.

BACKGROUND.

Muhammad has always hated the Bedouins, he who is an Arab of the cities. The Bedouins are distinguished by their freedom of thought or action, and by their pragmatic humanism: they have everything to displease him. The Quoran hits them with the hardest blows.

Muhammad, Quran 9, 97-107.

The wandering Arabs are harder in disbelief and hypocrisy, and more likely to be ignorant of the limits which God hath revealed unto His messenger.

And God is Knower, Wise.

And of the wandering Arabs there is he who takes that which he expends (for the cause of God) as a loss, and awaits (evil) turns of fortune for you.

The evil turn of fortune will be theirs.

God is Hearer, Knower.

And of the wandering Arabs there is he who believes in God and the Last Day, and takes that which he expends (for the cause of God) and also the prayers of the messenger as acceptable offerings in the sight of God. Lo! verily it is an acceptable offering for them.

God will bring them into His mercy.

Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful.

.....

And among those around you of the wandering Arabs there are hypocrites, and among the townspeople of Madina (there are some who) persist in hypocrisy whom you know not. We, We know them.

And We shall chastise them twice; then they will be relegated to a painful doom.

And (there are) others who have acknowledged their faults. They mixed a righteous action with another that was bad.

It may be that God will relent towards them. Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Take alms of their wealth, wherewith you may purify them and may make them grow, and pray for them.

Lo! thy prayer is an assuagement for them.

God is Hearer, Knower.

Know they not that God is He Who accepts repentance from His bondmen and takes the alms, and that God is He Who is the Relenting, the Merciful.

And say (unto them): Act!

God will behold your actions, and (so will) His messenger and the believers.

The attack against the Bedouins is a relatively late phenomenon in Islam: they are targets of Muslims only as potential allies of the Meccans, as herdsmen, and demographic reservoirs. But behind these clashes, there are also traditional phenomena: cattle rustling, fighting for water points, abduction of women and revenge. The weight of Medina, and the new policy of Muhammad, change the balance of power.

THE BEGINNING OF THE DOMESTIC PROBLEMS OF MUHAMMAD. I THE CASE OF THE NECKLACE OR THE POSSIBLE ADULTERY OF AISHA (AL IFK).

Wanting not to appear as making fun with Muhammad.....

- Given the current application of the laws on the freedom of opinion or speech....

- Given the equally current application of anti-racist laws...

For this purpose we will leave the floor to a website the opposite of Islamophobic, since it is called "Islamophile"; with only a few minor adjustments for a better understanding of the reader who knows nothing about Islam and its greatness, in short for a good translation. "Peace and blessings of God be upon him" with each utterance of the name of the prophet, replaced by PBUH (PBUH: peace be upon him, it is shorter), harmonization of certain proper nouns, addition of chapter numbers, reminders of some useful details in brackets, style, subtitles, etc. On the other hand, we have left certain things as they are, for otherwise we would have to again translate a text that has yet been already translated into our language. Well, at least, in principle ...

As we have already had the opportunity to say it, one of the problems of Islam is its extraneity; the fact that it results literally from another way of thinking (or of speaking, more accurately), from another planet, from another world, from a certain conception of God.

Its opinions on the subject are therefore made available to our readers, for the purpose of information, knowledge and mutual respect between the different cultures and religions in the world.

A brief reminder of the facts already discussed above, the expedition against Banu al Mustaliq, in order to make the reader able to understand how the enemies of Islam can be bad persons.

Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, the man who financed Islam at the beginning, had married Muhammad when she was six years old. She was now fifteen and had participated in the expedition against the Banu al Mustaliq. It was at the return of the expedition, on the way to Medina, that the famous adventure occurred which might have cost her his position as a wife of the prophet; if Muhammad had not then received a revelation (verses 4-5, 11-20, chapter 24) exculpating her very opportunely from any suspicion (combined with the fact that she was not pregnant, hence the delay put by God to bring down his revelation: it was necessary to wait and see if Aisha thus had again or not, her period).

During a stop, she gets off her palanquin and walks behind a dune to comply with a need of nature.

Then she returns to the camels and realizes that she has lost her necklace; she returns to look for it. But the caravan drivers who have already seen her come back for a first time, think that she is now in the palanquin, and put it back on her camel's packsaddle. (Note: what is curious is that they did not realize the difference in weight) but let the world say what it will, the result is that the caravan leaves, forgetting the unfortunate ... When she returns to the scene of the stop, the Muslim army is gone, and she begins to cry about his fate. She knows that in the desert, alone, it is an atrocious death that awaits her ... But then comes a handsome young man on his camel who, too, is late. He takes Aisha on his camel and they both return to Yathrib / Medina.

Jews and Arabs who are "scandalmongers" then make the rumor spread that the prophet is a cuckold. The accusation is serious, the two young people risk stoning, as it is the custom at this time. More important for the history of Islam is that this affair gave rise, among the leaders of the Aws or Khazraj Muhajirun and Ansar, to a serious conflict, which continued well after the death of Muhammad. The latter, then, is the laughing stock of all Medina, and brings in archangel Gabriel, who declares Aisha innocent, but Ali having been among those who thought her guilty, she will be angry with him throughout her life; and this break-up between Aisha and Ali was not without later political consequence (birth of Shiism?)

From the top of his minbar (pulpit), the Prophet (PBUH) solemnly declared in substance (see below Ibn Ishak's text) : brothers.....my wife acted only all above board , and the man who is accused is beyond suspicion. Moreover, he entered my home only with me. Usayd b. Hudayr then told him: "O Prophet, know that if they are Aws, we will rid you of them , but if they are Khazraj, you will decide yourself, and we will enforce it. What Sa'd b. Ubada Al Ansari, the leader of Khazraj, who was also a pious man, said to Ibn Mu'adh, "You are a hypocrite!

Tempers began to flare in the Aws and Khazraj clans, to such an extent that they nearly killed each other before the eyes of the prophet who, from the top of his minbar, had not ceased to intervene to calm them; before finally succeeding in bringing order and serenity back into the minds.

This argument has been reported in the corpus of hadiths, and in the Sira (the biography of Muhammad). This was indeed one of the first negative consequences of the ifk incident, and it did not fail to inflame, episodically, the relations between Aws and Khazraj, thus threatening the unity of Muslims.

But let Aisha speak of that with her own words.

Ibn Ishaq. The Life of Muhammad, translation A. Guillaume page 494.

"When the apostle intended to go on an expedition he cast lots between his wives which of them should accompany him. He did this on the occasion of the raid on B. al Mustaliq and the lot fell on me, so the apostle took me out. The wives on these occasions used to eat light rations; meat did not fill them up so that they were heavy. When the camel was being saddled for me, I used to sit in my palanquin; then the men who saddled it for me would come and pick me up and take hold of the lower part of the palanquin and lift it up and put it on the camel's back and fasten it with a rope. Then they would take hold of the camel's head and walk with it.

When the apostle finished his journey on this occasion, he started back and halted when he was near Medina and passed a part of the night there. Then he gave permission to start and the men moved off. I went out for a certain purpose having a string of beads on my neck. When I had finished, it slipped from my neck without my knowledge, and

when I returned to the camel I went feeling my neck for it but could not find it. Meanwhile the main body had already moved off. I went back to the place where I had been and looked for the necklace until I found it. The men who were saddling the camel for me came up to the place I had just left and having finished the saddling they took hold of the

palanquin thinking that I was in it as I was normally, picked it up and bound it on the camel, not doubting that I was in it.

Then they took the camel by the head and went off with it. I returned to the place and there was not a soul there. The men had gone. So I wrapped myself in my smock and then lay down where I was, knowing that if I were missed they would come back for me, and by God I had but just lain down when Safwan b. al Mu'attal al Sulami passed me; he had fallen behind the main body for some purpose and had not spent the night with the troops. He saw my form and came and stood over me. He used to see me before the veil was prescribed for us, so when he saw me he exclaimed in astonishment "The apostle's wife" while I was wrapped in my garments. He asked me what had kept me behind but I did not speak to him.

Then he brought up his camel and told me to ride it while he kept behind. So I rode it and he took the camel's head going forward quickly in search of the army, and by God we did not overtake them and I was not missed until the morning.

Editor's note. Muhammad indeed was too busy interrogating his new prisoner the beautiful Mustaliq princess Juwayriya.

The men had halted and when they were rested up came the man leading me and the liars spread their reports and the army was much disturbed. But by God I knew nothing about it.

'Then we came to Medina and immediately I became very ill and so heard nothing of the matter.

Editor's note. Dizzy spell probably due to sunstroke but the scandalmongers must also have thought that Aicha was become pregnant.

The story had reached the apostle and my parents, yet they told me nothing of it though I missed the apostle's accustomed kindness to me. When I was ill he used to show compassion and kindness to me, but in this illness he did not and I missed his attentions. When he came in to see me when my mother was nursing me, all he said was, "How is she?"¹ so that I was pained and asked him to let me be taken to my mother so that she could nurse me. "Do what you like," he said, and so I was taken to my mother, knowing nothing of what had happened until I recovered from my illness some twenty days later.

Now we were an Arab people: we did not have those privies which foreigners have in their houses; we loathe and detest them.

Our practice was to go out into the open spaces of Medina. The women used to go out every night, and one night I went out with As she was walking with me, she stumbled over her gown and exclaimed, "May Mistah stumble," Mistah being the nickname of Auf. I said, "That is a bad thing to say about one of the emigrants who fought at Badr." She

replied, "Haven't you heard the news, O daughter of Abu Bakr?" and when I said that I had not heard she went on to tell me of what the liars had said, and when I showed my astonishment she told me that all this really had happened. By God, I was unable to do what I had to do and went back. I could not stop crying until I thought that the weeping would burst my liver. I said to my mother, "God forgive you! Men have spoken ill of me and have not told me a thing about it." She replied, "My little daughter, don't let the matter weigh on you. Seldom is there a beautiful woman married to a man who loves her but her rival wives gossip about her and men do the same."

'The apostle had gotten up and addressed the men, though I knew nothing about it. After praising God he said: "What do certain men mean by worrying me about my family and saying false things about them? By God, I know only good of them, and they say these things of a man of whom I know nothing but good, who never enters a house of mine but in my company."

'The greatest offenders were Abdullah b. Ubayy among the Khazraj and Mistah and Hamna d. Jahsh, for the reason that her sister Zeynab d. Jahsh was one of the apostle's wives and only she could rival. As for Zeynab, God protected her by her religion and she spoke nothing but good. But Hamna spread the report far and wide opposing me for the sake of her sister, and I suffered much from that.

'When the apostle made this speech Usayd b. Hudayr said: "If they are of Aus let us rid you of them; and if they are of the Khazraj give us your orders, for they ought to have their heads cut off." Sa'd b. 'Ubada got up—before that he had

been thought a pious man—and said, "By God, you lie. They shall not be beheaded. You would not have said this had you not known that they were of Khazraj. Had they been your own people you would not have said it." Usayd answered, "Liar yourself! You are a disaffected person arguing on behalf of the disaffected." Feeling ran so high that there was almost fighting between these two clans of Aus and Khazraj.

The apostle left and came in to see me. He called Ali and Usama b. Zayd and asked their advice.

-Usama spoke highly of me and said, "They are your family and we and you know only good of them, and this is a lie and a falsehood."

-As for 'Ali he said: "Women are plentiful, and you can easily change one for another. Ask the slave girl, for she will tell you the truth." So the apostle called Burayra to ask her, and Ali got up and gave her a violent beating, saying, "Tell the apostle the truth," to which she replied, "I know only good of her. The only fault I have to find with 'A'isha is that when I am kneading dough and tell her to watch it she neglects it and falls asleep and her sheep ('pet lamb') comes and eats it!"

'Then the apostle came in to me. My parents and a woman of the Ansar were with me and both of us were weeping. He sat down and after praising God he said, "'A'isha, you know what people say about you. Fear God and if you have done wrong as men say then repent towards God, for He accepts repentance from His slaves." As he said this, my tears ceased and I could not feel them. I waited for my parents to answer the apostle but they said nothing. By God I thought myself too insignificant for God to send down concerning me Quranic verses which could be read in the mosques and used in prayer, but I was hoping that the apostle would see something in a dream by which God would clear away the lie from me, because He knew my innocence, or that there would be some communication. As for a Quranic revelation coming down about me, by God I thought far too little of myself for that. When I saw that my parents would not speak I asked them why, and they replied that they did not know what to answer.....

The apostle had not moved from where he was sitting when there came over him from God what used to come over him (when he received a revelation).

He was wrapped in his garment and a leather cushion was put under his head. As for me, when I saw this I felt no fear or alarm, for I knew that I was innocent and that God would not treat me unjustly. As for my parents, I thought that they would die from fear that confirmation would come from God of what men had said. Then the apostle recovered and sat up and there fell from him as it were drops of water on a winter day, and he began to wipe the sweat from his brow, saying, "Good news, 'A'isha! God has sent down (revelation) about your innocence." [Editor's note. The verse 11 in chapter 24].

I said, "Praise be to God!"

He went out to the men and addressed them and recited to them what God had sent down concerning that. Then he gave orders about Mistah b. Uthatha and Hassan b. Thabit and Hamna d. Jahsh who were the most explicit in their slander and they were flogged with the prescribed number of stripes.

Editors note. Cf. chapter 24 verse 4. That is to say, eighty lashes. In other words, almost as many as adultery itself.

* The young man wrongly accused of having had this brief love affair with Aisha was called Safwan ben al-Mu'attal, and he was an honest servant of the Prophet. The verses of the ifq who affirm the innocence of Aisha, therefore also wash, indirectly, Safwan, the accusation brought against him by the band of munafiqun the orders of Abdallah ibn Ubayy. (Editor's note. The most likely is that he followed the caravan by far, hoping to find something that would have fallen from its load of loot).

II THE OTHER DOMESTIC PROBLEMS OF MUHAMMAD.

At that time, therefore, two problems had to be examined more closely. On the surface, they mostly touched especially the marital life of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), but it became necessary to remedy it in order to guarantee peace to the one who was working to promote Islam. God himself dealt with the two questions.

The first problem was the precarious economic situation of the Holy Prophet. During the first four years, he did not have any resources of his own. In the fourth year of the Hegira, after the banishment of the Banu Nadir, God ordered that part of their land be reserved for him, but this still did not cover the needs of his large family. The mission of the prophet was, on the other hand, so heavy that it demanded all his energy from him. So he could not work to earn a living, and his wives ended up disturbing the peace of his foursome, constantly complaining of economic difficulties.

Note from Peter DeLaCrau. There was, of course, another solution. That this poor Muhammad remain single like Jesus or have only one wife, in order to devote all his energy, including sexual energy, which was considerable, to his apostolate. But God apparently did not think of it!

A) The marriage with Zenob.

Before marrying Zenob, the Prophet (PBUH) had already four wives: Sawda, Aisha, Hafsa and Umm Salama. The non-Muslims wondered (and succeeded in making some Muslims doubt) about the fact that the Holy Prophet could have five wives, whereas for the other Muslims it was limited to four. Such were the dramatic questions that preoccupied the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) and the Muslims when the chapter 33 (the clans/ al-Ahزاب) was revealed.

The themes and context demonstrate that this chapter was not revealed at one time. Rather, it consists of a succession of injunctions and commandments, revealed in the course of events.

1. Verses 1 to 8 seem to have been revealed before the battle [of the ditch or trench] fought in March 627. By reading them and having in mind the historical context, it is clear that Zeyd [the adopted son of Muhammad] had already divorced Zenob. The clarification on the customs and superstitions concerning adoption became therefore indispensable (sic). The Prophet (PBUH) also knew that the deep and delicate feelings towards the adoptive children could not be eradicated (re-sic) as long as he did not implement to himself the command about the subject. But he hesitated. He was already anticipating the response of the hypocrites, the Jews, and the mushrikun, if he married the wife of Zeyd. Their wickedness and their mischief (???) would seize this opportunity to discredit Islam.

2. Verses 9 to 27 return to the battle of the Trenches, as well as to the attack against the Banu Qurayza. This is why these verses could be revealed only after these events.

3. Verses 28-35 may be divided into two parts. In the first, God addresses the wives of the holy prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) who were impatient with the situation: O Prophet! Say to your wives: If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner (repudiation). But if you desire God and His Messenger, and the home of the Hereafter, then verily, God has prepared for the good doers among you an enormous reward. On the other hand, O wives of the Prophet! Whoever of you commits an open illegal sexual intercourse, the torment for her will be doubled, and that is ever easy for God. And whosoever of you is obedient to God and His Messenger, and does righteous good deeds, We shall give her, her reward twice over" (verses 28 to 31).

The second part lays down certain social rules adapted to the Islamic model. To the extent that these verses address the wives of the prophet, the reformation was first implemented in his home. As opposed to the days of ignorance [of paganism, the famous Jahiliyya], the wives were invited to stay at home and use a restrained language with other men. This was the beginning of the commandments of the Purdah (Editor's note. Urdu word coming from the Persian language and meaning roughly decency, but also seclusion).

a) Verses 36-48 deal with the marriage of the Holy Prophet and Zenob. They respond to the objections of the opponents of Islam, while at the same time casting aside the doubts which still disturbed the mind of the Muslims. These verses also remind to the believer of the position and status of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

b) Verse 49 contains a clause concerning the law of divorce [translation mistake? Repudiation would be more accurate. Women do generally AND THEY ARE RIGHT TO DO IT a big difference

between divorce and repudiation]. This verse comes alone, for it was certainly revealed in relation to these events.

c) In verses 50-52, God explains that because of his special status, the prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) may derogate from certain restrictions on married life imposed on other Muslims.

d) Verses 53-55 goes further in social reform: Islamic etiquette about visits and invitations; the visits to holy wives are limited to close relatives [about the holiness of the wives of Muhammad, see our notes on the catechism of the French Muslims in the Reunion Island]; as for the other men, from now on they could only speak to them through a curtain; the prohibition for the spouses of the Prophet (PBUH) to marry other Muslims [and non-Muslims. We prefer to assume indeed that the author of this website has forgotten the billions of non-Muslims inhabiting this planet and we do not believe that he advocates banning marriage of a Muslim with a non-Muslim. What would be racism].

e) Verses 56 and 57 warn those who criticized the prophet's marriage and marital life. They invite Muslims not to copy the enemies of Islam by criticism, but rather to invoke the blessings of God upon the Prophet. Chapter 33 also recommends avoiding any false accusation between them and not slandering the person of the prophet. [Poor Muhammad!]

f) Verse 59 passes to the third measure of the social reform. Muslim women must come out only completely covered and for a specific purpose. [So, at least this is clear, and it is not a Rumi like me who says it].

The following verses reprimand [oh the naughty persons] hypocrites and other scandalmongers for the rumors they have spread against Islam and Muslims.

Editor's note. "Reprimand" is perhaps not the right word. This is precisely what the verse in question, verse 61 of chapter 33, says: "Accursed, they will be seized wherever found and slain with a (fierce) slaughter, etc. "

"Suppressing" might have been a more accurate word. Still that damn extraneity of Islam that harms so much its just understanding by the non-Muslims, seen all these repeated mistakes in translation.

The conclusion of the marriage contract with Zenob triggered a storm against the holy prophet (PBUH). The polytheists, the hypocrites, and the Jews, all burned with jealousy because of the succession of triumphs, the humiliation they suffered during the battle of the trenches, as well as the affair of the Qurayza Jews, continued to affect them in full heart. They had long hoped to subdue the prophet (PBUH) on the battlefields, but given their failures, they made do with this marriage affair. It was an opportunity for them to question the moral superiority (isma) of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). They claimed that the Prophet (PBUH) had fallen in love with his adoptive son's wife, that the latter knew it and had decided to divorce from his wife so that the Prophet (PBUH) could marry her. Zenob also did not agree, but it was the order of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The wedding was celebrated. If the Holy Prophet (PBUH) had really desired Zenob, he would certainly not have married her to Zeyd at first, and would have married her at once. In spite of this, the detractors of Islam invented all kinds of romances about this subject or spread so many rumors that some Muslims believed it. [Editor's Note: In any case, this Zenob, although having the same name as a famous queen of Palmyra, was very ugly, and it is only for this reason that Muhammad married her, in spirit of sacrifice, and to obey God]. He submitted to this order during the siege of the Banu Qurayza.

The delay that seems to have been waited is certainly due to the fact that the prescribed waiting period was not over, and that the Prophet (PBUH) was completely absorbed in his war preparations [pogrom against the Banu Qurayza could have been a more accurate word. What the Devil ! Still these damned problems in translations!!!] The fact that legends invented by their enemies become subjects of talks among Muslims shows that these problems of sensuality had gone beyond all limits. If the evil had not already been present in the hearts, the minds would certainly not have given as much importance to these absurd and disgusting stories about the person of the prophet (PBUH).

It was on this occasion that the audacious innovations in the reform of the law (it sounds like a politician of the Republican right-wing in France) of hijab or purdah, were set up in Islamic society. They supplemented those of the Divine Directive 24, distributed after the gossip about the equivocal attitude of Aisha, the young favorite wife of the prophet, in the desert. Incident evoked

remaining. What many don't realize is that Sura 4:128 was actually revealed for Sauda bint Zamah (because she had become old and unattractive).

From where Holy Quran chapter 4 verse 128.

"When a woman dreads the abandonment or the indifference of her husband, no sin will be imputed to them if they reconcile themselves by some compromise because reconciliation is a good thing."

Circumstances of this revelation (asbab al nuzul).

Muhammad indeed thought of separating from one of his first wives, Sawdah, because she had become too old. Sawdah therefore agreed to give up her nights (her bed turn) to the very young Aisha but on condition that she remains one of Muhammad's official wives. Mohammed was delighted by this market.

Abu Dawud At-Tayalisi recorded that Ibn Abbas said, "Sawdah feared that the Messenger of God might repudiate her and she said, 'O Messenger of God! Do not repudiate me; give my nights to A'ishah.' And he did ...

In the Two Sahihs, it is also recorded (that 'A'ishah said) that when Sawdah bint Zam'ah became old, she forfeited her nights to A'ishah and the Prophet used to spend Sawdah's night with 'A'ishah ...

The Sunni exegete Ibn Kathir wrote: Making peace is better than separation. An example of such peace can be felt in the story of Sawdah bint Zam'ah who when she became aged, the prophet wanted to divorce (sic) her, but she made an agreement with him by offering the night he used to spend with her to A'isha so that he would keep her. The Prophet accepted such terms and kept her.

"Making peace is better" refers to the wife relinquishing some of her marital rights. Such compromise is better than total repudiation, as the Prophet did when retained Sawdah bint Zam'ah. By doing so, the Prophet set an example for his Ummah to follow as it is a lawful act, etc. God is almighty, but still! How can you think that the being of beings whatever the name given to him (the Tawhid God or Allah) may be lowered to the extent of directly dealing with the marital problems of Muhammad ?? This, indeed, is well the meaning of one of the words of Muhammad's favorite wife, Aisha, as recorded in the hadith 48 volume 7 book 62 of Sahih Bukhari.

"When the verse: (O Muhammad) you may postpone (the turn of) any of them (your wives) that you please (Quran 33:51) was revealed, Aisha exclaimed: O God's Apostle, I do not see, but, that your Lord hurries in pleasing you ."

De minimis non curat praetor. God does not deal directly with secondary or subordinate things. Destiny the second causations or the divine providence it is used for that. How can you have of the being of beings or Tawhid, God or Allah, such a low idea ???

This is there really a very schizoid idea of Tawhid or God as being of beings that to lower him to take sides in all these pathetic stories (see also for example chapter 111 of the Quran).

How can you have of the being of beings or Tawhid, God or Allah, such a low idea ???

It is to blaspheme the very idea of God and to insult human intelligence.

1) Now how do we know all this, will you tell me? Because God in the Quran constantly intervenes to defend Muhammad. If the Nazarene high rabbi Jesus had been as well defended he would never have finished crucified for an attempt at Zealot rebellion against the Roman authorities (it is true that for the Quran which is here echoing various Gnostic or Judeo-Christian doctrines, he was not really crucified).

MARCH 628 PLEDGE AND ARMISTICE OF HUDAYBIYYA.

Armistice concluded with Mecca in principle for 10 years but which will be broken two years later by Is Fecit Cui Prodest , the sequence of events will show, the balance of power having changed, who had interest to break it, or had an interest in doing everything to keep it in force, the Meccans or Muhammad.

Hudaybiyya was an oasis on the edge of the "haram" or "sacred territory" of the city of Mecca, a well located 22 km north-west of the city. Ibn Ishaq specifies page 505 : "The Apostle of God was encamped in the profane country, and he used to pray in the sacred area."

There are, in reality, two very distinct pacts: the first in fact is that of about 1400 men, towards Muhammad, "beneath the tree": they thus show their will to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca, and strengthen his position.

Second pact of Hudaybiyya. Fortified by this support, Muhammad can then meet representatives of Mecca.

But the first thing first.

In 628 and after a dream (or a not recorded in the Quran divine revelation), Muhammad wanted to take advantage of the sacred truce of pagan pilgrimages to Mecca, to try to return to it (umra). He prepared himself for this purpose (Ihram), purified himself and took with him offerings. 1400 emigrants from Mecca or native Medinans accompanied him, dressed in white and armed with their only sword. As soon as the Meccans had heard of the affair, of these 1400 men who were moving towards Mecca, they immediately sent scouts, led by Khalid ibn al-Walid , to locate the column of Muslims and stop it entering the city. On the way, Muhammad asked Bishr Ben Sufyan for news about Meccans. The latter told him a few days later that Quraysh intended to prevent them from entering the city. Muhammad asked if anyone knew of any other way to go to Mecca without the Quraysh being aware of it. " Yes !" Replied a warrior from the Aslam tribe.

The Muslims therefore took another path, more difficult, but unknown to the Meccans. On the way, the old camel of Muhammad, the famous "Qaswa," stopped, and did not want to leave again.

"She is old and tired," the Muslims thought, but Muhammad replied, "The one who immobilized her like this is the one who once so immobilized the elephant." [Editor's note. Muhammad's reference to the attack on Mecca by Ethiopian forces from Yemen in 570 under the command of Christian General Abraha. God would then have saved the city by miraculously stopping the elephant which was at the head of their troops. See chapter 105 of the Quran. But it was in reality only a beautiful story told by the grandfather Abd al Muttalib to his grandchildren in the evening during the evening].

Muhammad whipped his camel, which got up, but to stop finally near a small pond outside Hudaybiyya. As she could not give enough water, Muhammad took an arrow in his quiver and then asked one of his to dig a hole in the pond with it. It began to overflow with fresh water, and there was enough for everyone [this legend, of course, looks very much like that of Moses hitting a rock with his staff to make a spring gush from it. Exodus 17: 6]. Muhammad then sent his son-in-law Uthman Ben Affan to propose a truce. He went to Quraysh to discuss, but the negotiations lasted so long that Muhammad believed he had been killed. He vowed to avenge him, then asked his companions to promise him to fight to the death, what they did beneath a tree in a place called Radwan. The companions shook his hand in turn, swearing that they would never give up. Then Muhammad shook himself his hand while saying, "That's for Uthman."

Editor's note. This stop in what surely a former pagan sanctuary was will therefore give rise to original ceremonies. The pledge is always a great moment in the history of totalitarianism. There are remarkable examples of collective madness or incredible personality cult, that crosses the limits of idolatry, not to mention the fanaticism, which is expressed in it with pomposity (cf. Gustave Le Bon).

Muhammad, Quran 48 :18. God was well pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee beneath the tree, and He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down peace of reassurance (shakinah) on them, and hath rewarded them with a near victory; and much booty that they will capture. Editor's note. Strange

Pilgrimage!

1) Applying this old Roman adage is the only way to avoid a being idiot approach to the history of Islam.

THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIYYA PROPER.

The Quraysh, seeing the Moslems on their doorstep, agreed in turn to start negotiations, and sent Suhayl ben Amr for this purpose.

Ibn Ishaq is very precise and extends at length on the circumstances of the pact and on its contents by making no allusion to the previous one (the pledge). The negotiations are long, and seemingly end on a balance: a truce of ten years is concluded, and the Muslims postpone for a year their pilgrimage, in a city that will be for three days and as a precaution, emptied from its inhabitants. This agreement is marked by a great acumen of Muhammad, who, sure of his force, and aware of the advantages that he will draw from it, will accept this treaty apparently humiliating for him and his companions. He will take advantage of this very slight concession to finally win the game.

Ibn Ishaq the Life of Muhammad translation Alfred Guillaume page 504.

THE ARMISTICE

Then Quraysh sent Suhayl b. Amr brother of B. Amir b. Lu'ayy to the apostle with instructions to make peace with him on condition that he went back this year, so that none of the Arabs could say that he made a forcible entry [in Mecca].

When the apostle saw him coming he said, 'The people want to make peace seeing that they have sent this man.' [in order to negotiate].

After a long discussion peace was made and nothing remained but to write an agreement.

Umar jumped up and went to Abu Bakr saying, 'Is he not God's apostle, and are we not Muslims, and are they not polytheists?' to which Abu Bakr agreed, and he went on: 'Then why should we agree to what is demeaning to our religion?' Abu Bakr replied, 'Stick to what he says, for I testify that he is God's apostle.' Umar said, 'and so do I.'

Then he went to the apostle and put the same questions to which the apostle answered, 'I am God's slave and His apostle. I will not go against His commandment and He will not make me the loser.'

Umar used to say, 'I have not ceased giving alms and fasting and praying and freeing slaves because of what I did that day out of fear for what I had said, when I hoped that (my plan) would be better.'

Then the apostle summoned Ali and told him to write, 'In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful.' Suhayl

said, 'I do not recognize this; but write, "In your name, O God."' The apostle told him to write the latter and Ali did so. Then he said: 'Write "This is what Muhammad, the apostle of God has agreed with Suhayl b. Amr."'

Suhayl said, 'If I witnessed that you were God's apostle I would not have fought you. Write your own name and the name of your father.'

The Apostle said Ali: 'Write "This is what Muhammad b. 'Abdullah has agreed with Suhayl b. 'Amr: they have agreed to lay aside war for ten years and refrain from hostilities. We will not show enmity one to another and there shall be no secret reservation or bad faith. He who wishes to enter into a bond and agreement with Muhammad may do so and he who wishes to enter into a bond and agreement with Quraysh may do so."

Here Khuza'a leaped up and said, 'We are in a bond and agreement with Muhammad,' and B. Bakr leaped up and said the same with regard to Quraysh, adding, 'You must retire from us this year and not enter Mecca against our will, and next year we will make way for you and you can enter it with your companions, and stay there for three nights. You may carry a rider's weapons, the swords in their sheaths. You can bring in nothing more.'

These conditions were considered humiliation by the companions who, like Umar, were members of important families in Mecca.

He came to Muhammad and asked him: "Do not our dead go to Heaven and their dead to hell? " Yes replied Muhammad!

"In that case, why dishonor our religion by accepting such a treaty? Have not you promised us that we could finally perform our ritual tours around the Kaaba?

Yes replied Muhammad, but did I specify that it would be this year?

Ibn Ishaq specifies page 505: "The apostle was encamped in the profane country, and he used to pray in the sacred area. When the peace was concluded, he slaughtered his victims and sat down and shaved his head. I have heard that it was Khirash b. Umayya b. al Fadl al Khuza'i who shaved him then. When the men saw what the apostle had done, they leaped up and did the same.

Tabari has a version of things a little more laborious.

Tabari, Volume 8 page 88.

When the Messenger of God had finished his Pact, he said to his companions, "Arise, sacrifice, and shave." By God, not a man stood up until he had said it three times. When no one stood up, he arose and went into the tent of Umm Salamah and told her what he had encountered from the people. Umm Salamah said to him: "Prophet of God, do you approve of this? Go out, and do not speak a word to any of them until you have slaughtered your fattened camel and summoned your shaver to shave you." He arose, went out, and did not speak a word to anyone until he had done this. He slaughtered his fattened camel and called his shaver, who shaved him. When they saw this, they rose up and slaughtered, and they began to shave each other, until they almost killed each other for grief.

With hindsight, we may say that it was a victory for Muhammad, who negotiates on an equal footing with his former compatriots, reinforced in his role as politico-religious leader. He will partially respect the truce, and justify his non-respect of the rest by divine revelations, made explicit in the best interests of his side. The treaty of Hudaibiyya is literally the birth certificate of the first Muslim state in the world, since the Meccans, for the first time, treated as equals, or almost, with Muhammad. The latter will therefore benefit from the respite that will ensue to finally strengthen his authority over the entire region of Medina. The Meccans have, in fact, left his hands free to strengthen and smother them even more.

As one of the principal provisions of this treaty was the immediate cessation of all acts of hostility during ten years, and the free choice for the Arab tribes; the tribe of Kuzaa immediately joined immediately the side of Muhammad; while the Banu Bakr, themselves preferred to remain faithful to their alliance with the Quraysh. The Treaty signed by Muhammad also obliged the Muslims to send back to Mecca all those who would like to join their camp after that, a clause that had irritated many of the Muslims of that time. When the terms of this truce were known, some inhabitants of Mecca departed nevertheless for Yathrib / Medina, and particularly one named Abu Hasir. But he is overtaken by Meccans. He kills one of them and fled to the region of al Is, where, joined by other defectors, he looted in the name of Islam all Meccan caravans passing by. The situation thus turns to the advantage of Muhammad. The sympathizers of his new religion, knowing that they could not go to Yathrib / Medina without openly breaking the commitments made by Muhammad, converged in the coastal region. And as these new Muslims were no longer bound by anything that they had become uncontrollable, they attacked all the caravans that passed through the area. The Meccans therefore asked Muhammad to regard the clause of the treaty in question as null and void, and Muhammad made therefore Abu Hasir and his come to Yathrib/Medina. First infringement of the truce, but at the request of the Meccans themselves. Other inhabitants of the city besides had also preferred to leave Mecca, for example some women, including Umm Kulthum, the daughter of Uqba. Muhammad then had a vision ordering him not to keep his word regarding them. Chapter 60 verse 10. " O you who believe! When believing women come unto you as fugitives, examine them. God is Best Aware of their faith. Then, if you know them for true believers, send them not back unto the disbelievers. They are not lawful for them (the disbelievers), nor are they (the disbelievers) lawful for them."

Second infringement of the truce and not at the request of Meccans this time.

[Editor's note. Uqba was the unfortunate man who had been summarily executed by Muhammad after his victory at Badr, and who had asked him who would take care of his daughter after his death. The anecdote seems therefore very suspicious and perhaps intended to correct the painful impression left by the answer of Muhammad at the time: hell! Unless, of course, to consider that living as a Muslim in a land of Islam is in itself a real hell].

For the first time in the history of Arabs, a man has created a new people, ex nihilo, different from all others, and considering oneself superior: the Muslims (Quran 3:110). After the Battle of the Ditch, the balance of power with Mecca begins to lean in favor of the latter. The looting operations do not stop. The treaty is seen only in a logic of confrontations, as a necessary respite, but not as a definitive conclusion. Muhammad will then launch to the attack of objectives a little bigger than

the tribes of the surroundings: other oases, equivalent to that of Yathrib / Medina. The populations will be different, by the level of their wealth and by their religion. Cf. Khaybar, a Jewish Massada locate 150 km north of Medina.

Summary of the movie.

1 Following a dream, Muhammad decided to make the pilgrimage to Mecca.

2 He asks the Bedouins living around Yathrib / Medina to accompany him, but they refuse.

3 Muhammad decides to leave leading 700 to 1400 men, according to estimates.

4 In Dhul Khulayfa, he puts himself in a state of ritual purity to perform the pilgrimage.

5 Having heard of the preparations of Muhammad, the Meccans sent 200 horsemen commanded by Khalid to Kura al Ghanim.

6 Muhammad decides to follow another way. In Al Hudaybiyya, his camel stops very opportunely. Hudaybiyya is a small oasis located just outside the sacred territory (haram) of Mecca.

Muhammad therefore orders that the camp be installed at this place.

7 Faced with the aridity of the place, Muhammad would then have performed a miracle, by impounding again, with the help of an arrow, a dried well.

8 Quraysh delegates arrive to negotiate with Muhammad.

9 Osman is sent to Mecca to continue the negotiations; he has always stayed behind in the attacks against the city and has still good contacts there.

10 A rumor spread that Osman was killed in Mecca.

11 In front of the dramatic turn of events, Muhammad make his troops swear loyalty beneath an acacia with divine powers (48:18, the shakina).

12 The rumor of Osman's death turns out to be false.

13 The Quraysh send Suhayl to negotiate an armistice. Its text states that:

-There will be a truce of ten years.

- Muslims must withdraw from the oasis and return to Yathrib / Medina.

- Muslims will be able to return the following year and make the pilgrimage for three days in their own way.

- The neighboring tribes are allowed to join Muhammad or the Quraysh freely.

- Muslims must send back to the Quraysh anyone who has taken refuge in Yathrib / Medina by converting to Islam without the consent of his legal head.

14 Abu Jandal, son of the negotiator Suhayl, will thus be sent back to his father, in accordance with this agreement.

15 Muhammad therefore renounces entering Mecca to complete his pilgrimage and orders his troops to do the same by shaving their heads and sacrificing their animals on the spot, what they accept with difficulty.

16 On the way home, the Quranic chapter 48 known as of sura of victory is "revealed."

17 Abu Hasir flies to Yathrib / Medina, but he is overtaken beforehand by Meccans. He kills one and takes refuge in a place called al Is, where, joined by other defectors, he looted, always in the name of Islam, Meccan caravans. Muhammad makes them come to Yathrib / Medina, but at the request of the Meccans: first infringement of the truce.

18 Continuing his policy of non-compliance with the agreement, Muhammad also welcomes in Yathrib/Medina a group of women from Mecca but a divine revelation comes very opportunely to confirm this new option.

THE LAST RETURNS FROM ETHIOPIA.

As we have seen, the question of the coming and going between Mecca and Ethiopia of some of the early Muslims is rather confused. One of the last returns seeming to have occurred after the conclusion of this armistice (which resembles a little the case of the satanic verses) let us try again to unravel this tangle.

William Montgomery Watt. Muhammad Prophet and Statesman (1961).

The beginning of the migration to Abyssinia is probably to be dated after the abrogation of the 'satanic verses,' perhaps about 615. The main facts are tolerably clear, but the underlying reasons are obscure. The widely accepted form of the story among Muslims is contradicted by many details in the early sources. This is that there were two distinct migrations, since the first party returned on hearing of the 'satanic verses' and Muhammad's reconciliation with his opponents, but found on their return that the verses were abrogated and the struggle more bitter. The following is an attempt at a critical reconstruction of the events.

The universally admitted facts are that a number of Muslims went to Abyssinia round about the year 615. Of these some came back to Mecca and went to Medina along with Muhammad in 622, while others remained in Abyssinia until 628. Lists have been preserved of the names of those who went to Abyssinia, of those who returned to Mecca, and of those in the party which returned straight to Medina in 628. There are some discrepancies in the lists, chiefly with regard to minor figures but there is no doubt about the main participants.

Ibn Ishaq Life of Muhammad translation A. Guillaume page 526.

THE RETURN OF THOSE WHO HAD MIGRATED TO ABYSSINIA.

These are the names of the prophet's companions who stayed in Abyssinia until he sent Amr b. Umayya al Damri to the Negus to fetch them back in two boats and who ultimately rejoined him in Khaybar after al Hudaybiya...

The widows of those who had died in Abyssinia were also brought in the two boats.

The total number of the men whom the Negus sent in the two boats with Amr b. Umayya was 16.

Of those who migrated to Abyssinia and did not return until after Badr and the Negus did not send in the two boats to the apostle; and those who came afterwards and those who died in Abyssinia were: from B. Umayya b. Abdu Shams: Ubaydullah b. Jahsh, an ally from Asad of Khuzayma with his wife Umm Habiba d. Abu Sufyan and his daughter Habiba from whom Abu Sufyan's daughter got her name (kunya), her own name being Ramla.

Ubaydullah had migrated with the Muslims, but when he got to Abyssinia he turned Christian and died there as such

having abandoned Islam. The apostle afterwards married his wife.

Muhammad b. Ja'far b. al Zubayr from Urwa told me about Ubaydullah's turning Christian and said: When he passed

by the apostle's companions he used to say, 'Our eyes are opened but yours veiled,' i.e., we can see clearly but you are only trying to see: you can't yet see clearly, the metaphor being taken from a puppy who tries to open its eyes and flutters them before he can do so, i.e., we have opened our eyes and we see, but you have not opened your eyes to see though you are trying to do so.....

Adiy had a son called al Nu'man who returned with the Muslims. In the caliphate of Umar, he composed the following verses:

Hasn't al Hasna heard that her husband in Maysan
Is drinking from glasses and jars ?

If I wished, the chief men of the city would sing to me
And dancing-girl pirouette on tiptoe.

If you're my friend, give me a drink in the largest cup,
Don't give me the smallest half broken!

Perhaps the commander of the faithful will take it amiss
That we're drinking together in a tumbledown castle!

When Umar heard of these verses, he said: 'He's right, by God, I do take it amiss! Anyone who sees him can tell him

that I have deposed him.' After his deposition he came to Umar and pleaded that he had never acted in the way that his

verses implied, but that he was a poet who wrote in their exaggerated way. Umar replied that as long as he lived he

would never act as his governor after having used such words.....

THE FULFILLED PILGRIMAGE, A.H. 7

When the apostle returned from Khaybar, etc.etc.

-It is therefore in three distinct groups that Muslims returned definitively from Abyssinia or Ethiopia....

- There was a group that returned to Mecca while Muhammad still lived there and had not yet emigrated to Medina and therefore stayed there until 622.

- There was, according to Ibn Sa'd (Zad ul-ma'ad 3/26), a second group, composed of 41 persons, who returned to Arabia when they knew that Muhammad had emigrated to Medina. Among them...

- Some were held against their will at Mecca and could not emigrate to Medina immediately.

- 32 of them were able to join Muhammad in Medina (among these 32 people, 24 were to participate in Badr later).

There was, finally, a third group which, under the direction of Ja'far, did not return until the year of Khaybar (629) that is to say 7 years after the emigration to Medina. According to Ibn Ishaq, it was 16 people who left Mecca for Abyssinia who returned on that day.

Even if we take into account the number of Muslims who died in the land of the Negus, we do not find the account of the 80 people of the second emigration for the Horn of Africa. Perhaps the second group was a bit larger, numerically, than Ibn Sa'd found: Aisha spoke of "most of those who had emigrated to Abyssinia" ...

629 KHAYBAR THE MASSADA IN ARABIA.

Fortified Oasis 150 km north of Medina, last refuge of the Jews of Hedjaz.

North of Medina was a fertile land called Khaybar Valley. It was populated by 20,000 Jews, farmers and very competent warriors. They had built seven forts to protect themselves from attack.

Khaybar (Hebrew h'aybar) means "fortress" or rather "life in nature." Located 150 km north of Medina, Khaybar was in reality a series of fortresses overlooking dried swamps in the mountainous highlands of north-western Arabia. Their high peaks were used as lighthouses at night for the caravans that were heading towards Hijaz. The Jews sanitized these swamps and cultivated the stony lands. They were working in the valleys during the day and took refuge in their fortresses at night. They were renowned for their technicality in agriculture (the best dates in Arabia, vineyards, fruit trees and vegetables) and in breeding horses and camels. They were also specialized in weaving and making silk garments that were exported by caravans to Syria. Some were jewelers or manufacturers of weapons and armor. They were well off, with great hospitality, opening their doors even at night.

GESCHICHTE DER JUDEN/HISTORY OF THE JEWS 1853. Chapter XII.

The following year came the turn of the Jews in Khaybar. But the campaign that Muhammad launched against them was much more difficult than the previous wars. The region was covered with a series of forts defended by valiant and strong warriors; Arab tribes, Ghatafan and Fezara, had promised their help. The soul of the resistance was the Nadirite exile Kinanah ibn-ar-Rabia, a man of tenacious will and unshakeable bravery, nicknamed King of the Jews. He had as a lieutenant Marhab, a true giant, of Himyarite origin. Muhammad began by addressing solemn prayers to God for victory. This act of piety having been performed (sic) he marched against the Jews in Khaybar with an army of fourteen thousand men. As usual, he marked the starting of his campaign by the destruction of the palm trees to cut off supplies for the enemy; afterwards he captured some small forts quite easily. Camus Castle, which was built in a steep rock, opposed a longer resistance; it repelled several attacks attempted by the best captains of Muhammad, Abu Bakr and Umar. One of Camus's defenders was Marhab, who had to avenge the death of his brother Harith; he did miracles. When Ali, another lieutenant of Muhammad, approached the fort, Marhab shouted at him: Khaybar knows my valor, I am Marhab the hero, and he challenged Ali in single combat; he was killed. With Marhab also felled the fortress of Camus. We do not know what happened to the prisoners. Kinanah was put to the torture so that he indicates the place where the treasures of the vanquished were hidden; he died without speaking. The fall of this fortress caused the surrender of the other castles; Fadak, Wadi-I-Kora, and Tayma also submitted. The Jews were allowed to stay in the country and keep their land, on the condition that Muhammad be given half of their income as a tribute. This campaign lasted nearly two months (Spring 628).

THE POINT OF VIEW OF HIRSCH GRAETZ. GESCHICHTE DER JUDEN / HISTORY OF THE JEWS 1919. Chapter X.

Mohammed carried away two beautiful Jewish women from Khaybar — Safya, the daughter of his mortal enemy, the Nadhirite Huyay, and Marhab's sister, the beautiful Zainab. The latter conceived a scheme by which to avenge the blood of her kinsmen and her co-religionists. Simulating love for him, she prepared a banquet for Mohammed and his friends, and the unsuspecting Mohammed partook of the poisoned meat which she set for them. One of the guests died. Mohammed, who spat the meat out the moment he felt its unpleasant taste, was saved for the time being, though he suffered from the effects of the poison to his dying day. When Mohammed inquired as to the motive for her deed, she replied; "Thou hast inflicted untold woes upon my people; I therefore thought if thou be merely a bloodthirsty tyrant, I shall procure rest for my people by means of poison, but if thou be a prophet God will forewarn you, and the poison shall do thee no hurt." Mohammed ordered Zainab's execution.

The Jews who remained in northern Arabia did not yet give up the hope of being able to rid themselves of their arch-enemy; they plotted against him secretly, and made common cause with the discontented Arabs. The house of a Jew, Suwailim, in Medina was the rendezvous for the discontented whom Mohammed and his fanatic followers called the hypocrites. This place was betrayed and Suwailim's house was set on fire.

FADAK. Because of the circumstances of its capture, the lot of Fadak will be peculiar: its appropriation causes a legal novelty, abundantly commented. Indeed, subjected through mere terror, and not through violence, there is no booty to be made by definition, and the oasis falls directly to the leader of the Muslims, who does not have to share it.

WHAT THE MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS DEDUCE FROM THAT.

The contracts known as watering (land renting, sharecropping) since Muhammad left the lands to the Jews in Khaybar, in compensation for their farming and of the sharing of products.

A developed and fertile territory which was situated near Khayber and was considered to be the last stronghold of the Jews of the Hijaz, after the forts of Khayber, was called the oasis of Fadak. After destroying the strength of the Jews of Khayber, Wadi'ul Qura and Tayma and filling up, with the power of Islam, the political vacuum which was felt in the north of Madina, the Prophet also thought of destroying the strength of the Jews of this area he considered to be a danger to Islam and the Muslims. He therefore sent an envoy named Muhit to the elders of Fadak. Yush'a bin Noon, who was the chief of the village, preferred surrender without fighting, and the residents of that place agreed to place at the disposal of the Prophet half of the produce every year and to live under the protection of Islam and not to conspire against the Muslims. The Government of Islam, in its turn, guaranteed the security of their territory.

According to Islam the areas which are conquered through war and military power are the property of all the Muslims and their administration rests with the ruler of Islam. However, lands which fall into the hands of the Muslims, without any military operations pertain to the person of the Prophet and after he to the Imam.

He (i.e., the Prophet or Imam) exercises full authority over such lands and is entitled to gift them away or give them to lease. On this basis the Prophet made a gift of Fadak to his dear daughter Lady Fatimah Zahrah.

The Shi'ah exegetes and some Sunni scholars think that the verse "Give the kinsmen his due, and the needy, and the wayfarer" (17:26) was revealed to the Prophet at that time.

The custom was that lands conquered by force were part of the booty to be shared among the faithful; but the lands given up to Muslims without any resistance, as it was the case with Fadak, was to belong to the imam of the time who had the right to do what he wanted with it. Chapter 59 verses 6 to 10. The oasis of Fadak thus became the personal property of Muhammad. Jafar Ben Abou Talib came to meet him with sixteen men and women returning from Ethiopia via Yemen (see previous chapter about the last returns from Abyssinia). Muhammad also gave him some of the booty, with the agreement of the soldiers.

Summary of the movie category drama.

In 625, after his defeat at the battle of Uhud Muhammad expelled the Jewish tribe of Banu Nadir from Medina which, according to Muslim sources, attempted to assassinate him. Most of Banu Nadir found refuge in Khaybar.

In 627, Huyayy ibn Akhtab, the leader of the Banu Nadir, makes an alliance with tribes of the Quraysh and Ghatafan to attack the Muslims in Medina. After the battle of the trench won by Muhammad and his followers, they besieged the Banu Qurayza, the last Jewish tribe in Medina. Akhtab and his son joined the Banu Qurayza. All male adults of the Banu Qurayza, as well as Akhtab and his son were executed. As for women and children, they were taken prisoner and later sold for horses and weapons. - The Battle of Khaybar is recounted as a response to the battle of the ditch on all traditional biographies of Muhammad.

Shibli Nomani sees Khaybar's alliance with the Ghatafan tribe, who attacked Muhammad during the Battle of the Gap as the main reason for the battle. He also drew attention to the action of Banu Nadir, Huyayy ibn Akhtab, who had joined the Banu Qurayza and pushed them to attack Muhammad. Watt sees the intrigues of Banu Nadir in Khaybar as the main motive for the attack. According to Watt, the Banu Nadir had paid Arab tribes to fight Muhammad, leaving him only the solution to attack the first. -Interpretation of Stillman and Vaglieri.

Some modern historians such as Norman Stillman and Laura Veccia Vaglieri think that one of the reasons for Muhammad's decision to attack Khaybar was the need for him to raise the morale of his troops and increase his prestige that had been dented by the Hudaibiyya armistice, in March 628. But this Hudaibiyya agreement strategically assured Muhammad that he would not be attacked by the inhabitants of Mecca during his expedition. Vaglieri also argues that the Jews were effectively responsible for the coalition that besieged Muslims at the Battle of the ditch, but suggests that the history of Muslim attacks may have economic reasons similar to other attacks, throughout history. The conquest of Khaybar allowed Muhammad to offer large spoils to his companions who hoped to conquer Mecca and were disappointed by the armistice with the Quraysh. Stillman adds that Muhammad needed a victory to show the Bedouins, who were not closely related to the Muslim community, that the alliance with him was paying off.

THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE FENIAN ON DUTY.

Tabari does not say what the *casus belli* was but on their side, as a war with Muhammad seemed imminent, the Khaybar Jews signed an alliance with the Jews of the Fadak Oasis. They also succeeded in persuading the Arabs of the Ghatafan tribe to join them in the event of war, with the promise of receiving half of their harvest. However, the lack of central authority in Khaybar prevented any further defensive preparations, and the quarrels between the various families left the Jews disorganized. The Banu Fazara, related to the Ghatafan, also offered their assistance to Khaybar, after their unsuccessful negotiations with the Muslims²⁰.

The Muslims marched on Khaybar in May 628, Muharram 7 AH21. According to various sources, Muhammad's army numbered between 1,400 and 1,800 men with 100 to 200 horses. Some Muslim women (including Umm Salama, one of Muhammad's wives) joined the troops to take care of the wounded.

The inhabitants of Khaybar had no doubt about the war imminence but the fast march of the Muslims took them by surprise. This prevented the Jews from organizing a centralized defense, leaving each family to defend its own fortified redoubt.

The capture of Khaibar is particularly highlighted by our documents: it is the example, or the prototype of the treatment of enemies defeated by Islam. The Jews, under severe pressure, will agree to surrender, according to precise terms that will then be used for the domination of the infidels.

The capture of Khaybar gave into the hands of Muslims a large number of prisoners (the men were executed - 600 dead - women and children enslaved).

The capture of Khaybar by the Muslims was indeed marked by various atrocities, including the murder of Kinanah ben al-Rabi, his chief, an important figure in Khaybar. It was in his house that the Banou Nadir treasure was supposed to be.

Tabari, the victory of Islam page 122.

"After the Messenger of God conquered al-Qamus, the fortress of Ibn Abi al-Huqayq, Safiyyah bin Huyayy b. Akhtab (17 years old) was brought to him, and another woman with her. Bilal, who was the one who brought them, led them past some of the slain Jews. When the woman who was with Safiyyah saw them, she cried out, struck her face, and poured dust on her head. When the Messenger of God saw her, he said, "Take this she-devil away from me!" He commanded that Safiyyah should be kept behind him and that his cloak should be cast over her. Thus the Muslims knew that the Messenger of God had chosen her for himself. The Messenger of God said to Bilal when he saw the Jewish woman doing what he saw her do, "Are you devoid of mercy, Bilal, that you take two women past their slain men?" [Editor's note: what a gallant man this Muhammad still....]

.....

Kinanah b. al-Rabi b. Abi al-Hugayq, who had the treasure of the Band al-Nadir, was brought to the Messenger of God, who questioned him but he denied knowing where it was. Then the Messenger of God was brought a Jew who said to him, "I have seen Kinanah walk around this ruin every morning." The Messenger of God said to Kinanah: "What do you say? If we find it in your possession, I will kill you." "All right," He answered. The Messenger of God commanded that the ruin should be dug up, and some of the treasure was extracted from it.

Then he asked him for the rest of it. Kinanah refused to surrender it; so the Messenger of God gave orders concerning him to al-Zubayr b. al-Awwam, saying, "Torture him until you root out what he has." Al-Zubayr kept twirling his tinder lighter in his breast until Kinanah almost expired; then the Messenger of God gave him to Muhammad b. Maslamah, who beheaded him to avenge his brother Mahmud b. Maslamah.....

When the people of Khaybar surrendered on these terms, they asked the Messenger of God to employ them on the properties for a half share. They said, "We know more about them than you and are better cultivators of them." So the Messenger of God made peace with them for a half share, provided that "if we want to make you leave, we may." The people of Fadak made peace with him on similar terms. Khaybar became the booty (*fay'*) of the Muslims; Fadak belonged exclusively to the Messenger of God, because the Muslims had not attacked its people with horses or camels. When the Messenger of God rested from his labor, Zaynab bt. a l-Harith, the wife of Sallam b. Mishkam, served him a roast sheep.

She had asked what part of the sheep the Messenger of God liked best and was told that it was the foreleg. So she loaded that part with poison, and she poisoned the rest of the sheep, too. Then she brought it. When she set it before the Messenger of God, he took the foreleg and chewed a bit of it, but he did not swallow it. With him was Bishr b. al-Bara b. Ma'rur, who, like the Messenger of God, took some of it, Bishr, however, swallowed it, while the Messenger of God spat it out, saying, "This bone informs me that it has been poisoned." Then he summoned the woman, and she confessed. He

asked, "What led you to do this?" She said: "How you have afflicted my people is not hidden from you. So I said, 'If

he is a prophet, he will be informed; but if he is a simple tyrant, I shall be rid of him....According to...The Messenger of God said during the illness from which he died-the mother of Bishr b. al-Bara' had come in to visit him-"Umm Bishr, at this very moment I feel my aorta being severed because of the food I ate with your son at Khaybar." The Muslims believed that in addition to the honor of prophethood that God had granted him the Messenger of God died a martyr."

Editor's note for Michael Fishbein. All this is disgusting when it is thought of the fate of the unfortunate victims of this man! A shahid is not a martyr in the etymological meaning of the word in English. The true meaning of the word martyr in English appears for example in the acts of the martyrdom of Saint Polycarp in Smyrna, or of Saint Perpetua in Carthage. Translating shahid by martyr is a shame! As for the unfortunate Safiyya (17 years old) the state of mind that was that of this unhappy Jewish Deirdre can easily be imagined.

Longes mac nUislenn (an anonymous poem translated from Gaelic).

Ah Conor! what of thee! I nothing can do!

Lament and sorrow on my life have passed:

The ill you fashioned lives my whole life through;

A little time your love for me would last.

The man to me most fair beneath the sky,

The man I loved, in death away you tore

The crime you did was great; for, till I die,

That face I loved I never shall see more.

That he is gone is all my sorrow still;

Before me looms the shape of Usna's son;

Though o'er his body white is yon dark hill,

There's much I'd lavish if but him I won.

I see his cheeks, with meadows' blush they glow;

Black as a beetle runs his eyebrows' line;

His lips are red; and, white as noble snow

I see his teeth, like pearls they seem to shine.

Well have I known the splendid garb he bears,

Of among Alba's warriors seen of old:

A crimson mantle, such as a courtier wears,

And edged with borders worked of ruddy gold.

Of silk his tunic; great its costly price;

For full one hundred pearls thereon are sewn;

Stitched with white gold (findruine) bright with strange devices,

Full fifty ounces weighed those threads alone.

Gold-hilted in his hand I see his sword;

Two spears he holds, with spearheads grim and green;

Around his shield the yellow gold is poured,

And in its midst a silver boss is seen.

Fair Fergus ruin on us all hath brought!

We crossed the ocean, and to him gave heed:

His honor by a cup of ale was bought;

From him hath passed the fame of each high deed.

If Ulster on this plain were gathered here

Before King Conor; and those troops he'd give,

I'd lose them all, nor think the bargain dear,

If I with Naisi, Usna's son, could live.

Break not, O king, my heart today in me;

For soon, though young, I come my grave unto:

My grief is stronger than the strength of the sea;

You, Conor, know well my word is true.

My grief is stronger than the strength of the sea!

MEDINAN INTERLUDE.

But back to Medina.

Muhammad enlarged the mosque which is used as his residence, and had various works done, works become necessary by the growth of his movement. He made build a pulpit or a platform (minbar) with two steps and a chair (maq'ad) to be better heard by the faithful.

According to the legend, Muhammad sent ambassadors to the great political leaders of the region to invite them to join his cause and his idea of divinity. Six men would have left the city of Medina for that, with missives, stamped with his seal, and fluent in the language of the people to whom they were sent. Ibn Sa'd's Kitab al-Tabaqat al-Kabir Volume 1, Parts II.73.

Account of the dispatch of epistles by the apostle of God, may God bless him, to the chiefs, inviting them to join the fold of Islam and what the apostle of God, may God bless him, wrote to the people of Arabia and others.

When the Apostle of God, may God bless him returned from al Hudaybiyah in (the month of) Dhu al-Hijjah, 6 H. (April-May 628), he sent messengers to the chiefs inviting them to join the fold of Islam, and he wrote epistles to them. Then it was said to him: O Apostle of God! the rulers do not read but sealed epistles. Thereupon, the Apostle of God, may God bless him, got a silver ring prepared; its signet also was of silver in which was engraved Muhammad Rasul Allah (Muhammad, the Apostle of God) in three lines. Then he sealed the epistles with it. Six of the messengers set out, in one day, and this was in Muharram, 7 H. (May 628). Every one of the persons dispatched, spoke the language of the people to whom he was sent.

-The first messenger whom the Apostle of God, may God bless him, sent was Amr Ibn Umayyah al-Damri, who was sent to the Najashi. He wrote two epistles to him, in one of them he invited him to join the fold of Islam; it contained the verses of the Quran. The Negus took the epistle of the Apostle of God, may God bless him, and rubbed his eyes on it and alighted from his throne and came to the ground in all humbleness. Then he embraced Islam and bore witness to the truth, and said: I would have gone to him if I could.

He wrote to the Apostle of God, may God bless him, about his accepting, believing in, and embracing Islam at the hands of Ja'far Ibn Abi Talib.

In another epistle he had asked him to marry Umm Habibah Bint Abi Sufyan Ibn Harb to him (Prophet). She had migrated to Abyssinia with her husband Ubayd Allah Ibn Jahsh al-Asadi. There he had embraced Christianity and had died. The Apostle of God, may God bless him, had asked him in his letter to send back those of his Companions who were there. He did accordingly and married Umm Habibah Bint Abi Sufyan to him and paid to her a dower of four hundred dinars on his behalf. The Negus ordered that the Muslims be provided with necessaries and sent them in two boats with Amr Ibn Umayyah al Damri. He then sent for a vessel of ivory and placed in it the epistles of the Apostle of God, may God bless him, and said: Abyssinia will not cease receiving blessings as long as these letters are there.

Tafsir (comment) by Peter DeLaCrau: "My God, how is it possible to so much faith and so little reason!"

-The Apostle of God, may God bless him, sent Abd Allah Ibn Hudhafah al-Sahmi, one of the six {messengers} to Khosrow inviting him to embrace Islam; he also wrote an epistle to him. 'Abd Allah said: I handed over the epistle of the Apostle of God, may God bless him, to him. It was read to him. Then he took it and tore it (into pieces). When the news reached the Apostle of God, may God bless him, he said: O God: Tear (break) his kingdom (into pieces).

Khosrow wrote to Badhan, who was his governor (amil) over Yaman, asking him to send two sturdy persons to the man who was in Hijaz and to bring information about him. Thereupon, Badhan sent Qahramanah with another man with a letter. They came to Madinah and handed over Badhan's letter to the Prophet, may God bless him. The Apostle of God, may God bless him, smiled and invited them to embrace Islam while they were trembling (with fear). Thereupon, he said:

Retire today and come tomorrow and I shall inform you what I want (of you). They came on the following day and he said to them: Inform your master that my Lord has killed Khosrow last night at the seventh hour (minutes and seconds are missing). It was Tuesday, 10th First Jumada,' 7 H. (13th September 628).

Verily, God made his son, Shahriyar overpower and kill him on that day. They returned with this news, and he and his sons, who were in Yaman, joined the fold of Islam.

Tafsir (comment) by Peter DeLaCrau: "My God, how is it possible to so much faith and so little reason!"

-The Apostle of God, may God bless him, sent Hatib Ibn Abi Balta'ah al-Lakhmi to al-Muqawqis, the ruler of Alexandria, the chief of the Copts, inviting him to embrace Islam; he also wrote an epistle for him. He delivered the epistle of the Apostle of God, may God bless him, to him. He read it and called it

a blessing, and then placing it in a vessel of ivory he sealed it and handed it over to his slave girl. He sent this reply to the Prophet, may God bless him; I knew that a prophet was yet to appear, but I thought he would rise in Syria. However, I have shown due honor to your messenger and I am sending two slave girls, who command respect among the Copts, and a mantle and a mule for riding, as presents to you.

There was nothing in it besides this, and he did not embrace Islam. The Apostle of God, may God bless him, accepted his presents, the two slave girls, Mary, subsequently the mother of Ibrahim, the son of the Apostle of God, may God bless him, and her sister Shirin, and the white she-mule, like which there was not one in Arabia in those days, and that was Duldul.....

Tafsir (comment) by Peter DeLaCrau: "My God, how is it possible to so much faith and so little reason!"

The Apostle of God may God bless him, wrote to the bishop of Banu al-Harith Ibn Ka'b and the bishops and priests of Najran, their followers and their monks that everything, small or great, pertaining to their churches, chapels and monasteries would remain in their possession, that God and His Apostle guaranteed that no bishop would be removed from his see, nor any monk from his monastery, nor any priest from his office and none of their rights or powers would be changed as long as they were good and sincere, etc.etc.

-The Apostle of God, may God bless him, sent Dahyah Ibn Khalifah al-Kalbi, who was one of the six (messengers) to Caesar (Heraclius), inviting him to embrace Islam, and he wrote (and sent) another epistle to the governor (azim) of Bosra in Syria to hand it over to Caesar (Heraclius). The governor of Bosra handed it over to Caesar who happened to be at Homs (Emessa), as he was going on foot in pilgrimage from Constantinople to Iliya (Jerusalem) in fulfillment of a vow. It was that in case the Romans overpowered the Persians he would go up to Iliya (Jerusalem) on foot. He read therefore the epistle and then addressed the Roman grandees in a church at Homs (Emessa). He said: O people of Rome! will you like guidance and prosperity, so that your kingdom may be stable and you may follow what Jesus son of Mary had said. The Romans said: What is it, your majesty? He said: Follow this Arabian Prophet. Our narrator said: They ran away like wild asses, snorting and with their crosses raised. When Caesar Heraclius saw this, he was disappointed as to their joining the faith of Islam and became apprehensive of the safety of his person and authority. So he consoled them and said: I said this to test your steadfastness in your religion and now I have seen what I like most. They prostrated before him.....

If we except the contact with the Christians of Najran at the border of Yemen, all these documents raise serious problems of authenticity as to their (past) existence as to their content or their form. In the form in which these letters have reached us, they cannot be admitted as authentic because they contain details which reflect a later period of Islam. What is said about these writings hardly deserves the credit that most Muslims have given them. Their content and their form reflect the time of the power of Islam, whereas they are dated before the conquest of Mecca. The identification of the Egyptian governor of Alexandria called Muqawqis in our text (Makaukos?) is also problematic (given the time it could only have been a Persian in the service of the Sasanian Empire and not a Coptic patriarch). And there is also the prophecy announcing in advance the death of Khosrow without anything to suggest it, which is obviously a false prophecy, made after the fact, post eventum as it is said in Latin. How pious Muslims can one have so much faith and so little reason?

A letter therefore would have been sent to the governor of Bosra in Syria so that he sends it to the Byzantine Roman Emperor Heraclius. The bearer in charge of the message was a man named Dahyah Ibn Khalifah al-Kalbi. But as Heraclius was then busy in Armenia, the latter could get acquainted with it at best only in the city of Aelia Capitolina (Jerusalem) in 629.

The letter to Heraclius according to the Armenian bishop Sebeos (History of Heraclius, chapter XXX). As the chronicle of Sebeos dates from 660, about thirty years after the date of the letter in question, and it has not been filtered by the newly established Islamic authorities; it reflects the state of mind of the men of the time better than later traditions; the oldest of which date back more than a century after this event, and the most numerous more than two centuries later.

"All the remnants of the sons of Israel then assembled and united, becoming a large force. After this they dispatched a message to the Byzantine emperor, saying: "God gave that country as the inherited property [i kaluats zharhangut'ean] of Abraham and of his sons after him. We are the sons of Abraham. It is too much that you hold our country. Leave in peace, and we shall demand from you what you have seized, plus interest.

The emperor rejected this. He did not provide a fitting response to the message but rather said: "The country is mine. Your inheritance is the desert. So go in peace to your country." And he started organizing brigades, as many as 70,000 [troops] giving them as a general, a certain one of his faithful

eunuchs. He ordered that they were to go to Arabia, stipulating that they were not to engage them in war, but rather to keep on the alert until he could assemble his other troops and send them to help." The remarkable element of the letter supposedly addressed to Heraclius according to Sebeos and more surely to begin to one of his local representatives; that "Jews" and "Arabs" then seemed to be fighting together in the same army (in accordance with the Constitution of Medina besides); and that the Arabs considered themselves as "Jewish" as their partners, therefore as heirs to Abraham and Palestine as they were.

Editor's note. When it is known that Bosra will finally fall into the hands of Muslims due to the betrayal of the governor of the city, a named Romanus; we cannot help but think that there is perhaps a content of truth in the legends concerning this second type of correspondence; the letters with the bishops or the leaders of sectors immediately adjacent to the nascent Muslim empire.

BATTLE OF MU'TAH 629.

Sura 30 verses 1-5. A.L.M. The "Romans" * have overcome in the nearest of the land [but] they, after their victory, will be defeated within some years; To God belongs the Fate, in the past as well as in the future. And that day the believers will rejoice..." (Translation Regis Blachere Translation).

* Byzantines.

FIRST ATTEMPT AGAINST THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE or FIRST ATTEMPT TO TAKE JERUSALEM. This is the first attack outside Arabia proper, in what will later be considered the "land of war," that of the infidels (Dar el Harb). It will be a crushing defeat and the affair will turn into disaster.

Muslim historians have often ignored the date and circumstances of the defeat of Muhammad at Mu'tah in 629. The Byzantine documents nevertheless attest to this defeat. At Mu'tah, a Roman-Byzantine border post located in Jordan, to the east of the Dead Sea, near the modern Al Karak, they undoubtedly won, and their historians were able to question the victors on their return, but the Arab scholars nevertheless also make some vague allusions to it.

BACKGROUND.

Heraclius became the emperor in 610, during the Byzantine-Sassanid Wars, after overthrowing his predecessor Phocas. The Sassanid Persians conquer Mesopotamia and in 611 they overrun Syria and entered Anatolia, occupying Caesarea in Cappadocia (modern Kayseri). Heraclius, in 612, manages to expel the Persians from Anatolia, but is decisively defeated in 613 when he launched a major offensive in Syria against the Persians. Over the following decade the Persians were able to conquer Palestine and Egypt. Meanwhile, Heraclius prepared for a counterattack and rebuilt his army. Nine years later in 622, Heraclius launches his offensive. After his overwhelming victories over the Persians and their allies in the Caucasus and Armenia, Heraclius, in 627, launches also a major winter offensive against the Persians in Mesopotamia winning a decisive victory at the Battle of Nineveh thus threatening the Persian capital of Ctesiphon. Discredited by these series of disasters, Khosrau II is overthrown and killed in a coup led by his son Kavadh II who at once sued for peace, agreeing to withdraw from all occupied territories of the Byzantine Empire.

After the conclusion of the peace with Kavadh II in 628, Theodore, the brother or half-brother of Heraclius is sent as an imperial emissary to oversee the Persian withdrawal from Syria and northern Mesopotamia. According to the chroniclers, the Persian garrisons are reluctant to leave the occupied territories, despite orders from Kavadh. This is particularly the case at Edessa in 629-630, where the local Jewish community would have encouraged the Persians to stay. The Byzantines must lay siege to the city that they bomb with siege engines before the Persians agree to retreat. When Theodore's troops enter the city, they attack and kill the Jews, until Heraclius, warned by a Jew who has managed to escape, orders him to end it. Heraclius leaves Theodore as a kind of "viceroy" in the East. He entrusted him with the command of the Byzantine forces in the region with the office of restoring the imperial authority. It is at this post that Theodore faces the first Muslim attacks against the Byzantine provinces.

BYZANTIUM AND THE EARLY ISLAMIC CONQUESTS. WALTER E. KAEGI. University of Chicago. 1992.

The battle of Mu'tah was part of the Byzantine reconnaissance missions into regions where they had not operated for more than two decades. Theodore was attempting to reestablish their authority in areas after the Persian evacuation. They were extending south, with the aid of allied tribes, and the Muslims were probing north. They collided at Mu'ta.

It would have been risky for Theodore to have dispatched significant numbers of troops to the areas east of the Jordan while it was uncertain whether the Persians were really evacuating other more critical occupied areas.

Most of the Byzantine soldiers and commanders, unless recruited locally or simply designated as representatives of the emperor, cannot have had time to familiarize themselves with the local situation there and military needs. Except for local recruits, they cannot have had much local experience, and they would have had little time to build or repair structures, roads, bridges, warehouses, supplies, or watchtowers.... The Byzantine military presence east of the Dead Sea was therefore very vulnerable so soon after the end of hostilities with the Persians. They would hardly have completed occupying probably disused camps and positions. Under those circumstances, the best that the Byzantines could

have done would have been, in so far as the budget and the number of troops permitted, to reoccupy the old Byzantine positions until new strategic decisions could be made.

The Byzantines do not appear to have used many Greek, Armenian, or other non-Arab soldiers at Mu'tah even though the overall commander was the vicarius Theodore himself.

The friendly Arab tribes from whom the Byzantines raised troops included the Bahra, Kalb, Salih, Tanukh, Lakhm, Judham, Ghassanids, and the Banu Irasha.

At Mu'tah precisely Theodore used troops raised from the Lakhm, Judham, Banu al-Qayn, Bahra, and Bali.

Their commander was one of the Bali, from the section of B. Irasha.

Another tradition asserts he was a Ghassanid, Ibn Abi Sabra al-Ghassani. Unless there was no overall Arab commander, just the Byzantine Theodore.

The numbers are, of course, uncertain, but unlikely to have exceeded 10,000. The figures of 100,000 or 200,000 men claimed by some Muslim authors for the Byzantine army and only 12 dead on the side of the expeditionary force from Medina ARE OF COURSE COMPLETELY FANCIFUL.

In any case, the 300 Greeks of Sparta have made stronger: 1 against 200 at the Thermopylae narrow pass. Some authors even put forwards the figure of three million Persians. But for the whole campaign, not in the gorge.

There is a brief reference to this battle in the Byzantine sources, unearthed by Walter Kaegi: a passage in chronicles written by a Byzantine monk of the 9th century. Here is the text (translation Harry Turtledove Philadelphia 1982). "Muhammad was already dead, but had appointed four emirs to attack Christians of Arab race, as they wanted to attack the Arabs on the day of their own sacrifice to idols, they came to a country called Moukheon, in which place was the vicar Theodore. When the vicar learned this from his servant Koutabas, who was a man of Quraysh, he assembled all the desert guards, he determined the day and hour on which the emirs intended to attack, and attacked them at a place called Mothous. He killed three of them and most of their army, but one emir, Khalid (whom they call the sword of God), got away."

The only problem with this text is that the Greek word used to designate the religious festival in question looks more pagan than Christian, but the Christianity of these Arab tribes was perhaps only superficial.

The specifications given by the chronicle show that Muhammad himself organized this expedition and the quirks of the Muslim version go in this direction (Muhammad describes what happens as if he were personally on the spot, and he approves the retreat which followed).

BYZANTIUM AND THE EARLY ISLAMIC CONQUESTS. WALTER E. KAEGLI. University of Chicago. 1992.

The battle or skirmish of Mu'tah was the first armed clash between the Muslims and Byzantine military forces, and it occurred therefore during the lifetime of Muhammad. It resulted in a clear Muslim defeat. The Byzantine vicarius Theodore had his base at the town of Moucheai and learned from a member of the tribe of the Quraysh the time of the intended attack.

Its location is uncertain. Perhaps the village of al-Mihna, which overlooks the plain of Mu'tah, about 19 kilometers south of the Jordanian stronghold of Karak.

It possibly was fought on 10 April (10 Dhu'l Hijja) but 1 Jumada, AH 8, that is, September 629, is more likely. The troops that the vicarius Theodore used against the Muslims were soldiers of the guards of the desert, who were Arabs themselves therefore. Tactical details are tantalizing. It was not a mere clash of armed mobs.

The Muslim texts present this defeat as a heroic struggle, where the Muslims displayed heroism such that this defeat is almost a victory, of the kind Malplaquet 1709 for France or Napoleon at Waterloo. Khalid Ibn al-Walid, was so brave that he broke nine swords, the tenth, a Yemeni sword, being the only one able to sustain his vigor. And according to Bukhari the battle ends with a Muslim victory. Baladhuri gives similar indications. Jafar would have received 72 wounds before falling, then Khalid led the retreat.

But it is doubtful that a soldier can continue to fight after receiving dozens of sword or lance thrust, falling only at the fiftieth or the ninetieth. It is also evident that no one goes to battle with a hood full of spare sabers in the back; and that a battle followed by a retreat is a defeat (for example, the battle of Borodino or of the Moscowa for the Russian army in the nineteenth century).

The hadiths of this chapter of Bukhari are therefore obviously forged or exaggerated, but not necessarily by him. What seems to be established is a very clear numerical advantage in favor of the Roman forces (professional soldiers supervising a militia recruited locally) who were perhaps two or three times more numerous than the Muslim army.

In Medina during this time, Muhammad was describing live to his companions everything that happened on the battlefield located hundreds of miles away. He even announced to them the martyrdom of the three commanders, saying: "All three of them died, one after the other. The standard has passed in the hands of a sword (Khalid) that will lead Muslims to victory, with the help of God. " That is the Islamic legend! We say well the legend. I inquired, we have the right not to agree, it is not yet considered as Nazi or demonic Islamophobia by our dear president.

In short, at Mu'tah, some Christian and vassal of Byzantium, Arabs, easily repelled a raid of desert Arabs. Muslim tradition prefers to conceal this harsh reality by the story of heroic scenes, the pathetic death of Muhammad's adoptive son, Zayd, for example, and a magnificent retreat under the command of the future Muslim Napoleon known as God's sword (Sayf Allah) *.

Professor Regis Blachere nevertheless found a trace of this first defeat in the heading verses of the chapter entitled "the Romans" precisely. In his translation of the Quran (Paris 1966), the chapter commenting on Surah 30 he notes that verses 1 to 4 have nothing to do with the rest and therefore form a unity of meaning in itself. He also thinks that the word "Romans" means, of course, Greeks of the Late Empire and that these verses have nothing to do with the invasion of Syria Palestine by Persians in 613-614 but rather with the defeat of the Muslim troops (led by Muhammad ?) in front of the Arab Byzantine border post of Mu'tah in 629.

Blachere notes that the translation currently accepted by our Muslim friends does not make any sense, at least with the vowels that we find today:

"Ghulibati alroomoo: The Romans [i.e., the Byzantines] were defeated (gulibati) in the nearest land. They, after their defeat will be the opposite (sayaghiboona) in a few years.

To God belongs Fate before and after.

Then the believers will rejoice."

But who, then, never rejoices at the victory of his enemies, and that "in a few years"? The absurdity of this reading does not escape the Muslim commentators, who prefer to move on. Where is the mistake? Another reading is possible, based on a different vowelization of the three important words of the same root: to have been defeated, victory, and victorious.

The question is legitimate because the vowels were added only very late to the Quranic text. It is precisely these vowels that determine the passive or active form of the word. And if we read an active instead of the passive and vice versa, we get the following verses....

"The Romans have overcome (ghalabati) in the nearest of the land.

They, after their victory, will be the opposite (sayaghiboona) within some years.

To God belongs Fate before and after.

Then the believers will rejoice"

The text becomes again perfectly clear and logical - what it was originally. This is not a prophecy but a return to a recent and disastrous event that occurred "in the nearest land" that is to say at Mu'tah in 629. This passage wants to raise the courage of the vanquished, promising that they will be victorious "in a few years" and that they "will rejoice " (which was done five years later actually, but after the death of Muhammad).

The exact meaning of this surah before the addition of the diacritic signs was therefore according to Blachere ...

1. Alif, Lam, Mim.

2-The Romans conquered,

3-In the neighboring country, but after they will be defeated,

4-In a few years. To God belongs the command, from beginning to end, and on that day the Believers will rejoice.

There the verse becomes more logical, it dates from the year 630 and not from 613 because it helps to comfort the first Muslims after their defeat against the "Romans." In fact, Christian Arabs framed by some Byzantines.

To note.

a) The meaning of these verses remains controversial, many exegetes seeing exactly the opposite.

b) This chapter begins with three letters apparently meaningless: the letter A (lif), the letter L (am), and the letter M (im), which are probably not part of the recitation; but presumably imply a written text (letters written on a leaf to be used to classify it?)

It is not us, Western barbarian druids, specialists in nothing at all, to settle this controversy. Let the experts do it!

* Waterloo, the most beautiful of Napoleon's victories APART FROM THE LAST QUARTER OF TIME.

MECCA AS OPEN AND IMMEDIATELY CLOSED... CITY (630).

This episode is placed in the category "conquest" by the Muslim tradition.

Montgomery Watt locates in January 630 the taking of the city. Let us specify immediately that, contrary to the legend spread among Western intellectuals (journalists bishops antiracist sportsmen, etc.), but according to the classification in the heading "conquest" of the first Muslim accounts, for once, the taking of Mecca was not made without encountering any opposition because there were some resolute men who fought to the end, but they were only skirmishes and there was no frontal assault of the type Stalingrad. Note also that a list of outcasts including about ten names also circulated in parallel in the city. Then there were settling of scores.

Tabari Volume 8 page 181.

"According to Wagidi: The Messenger of God commanded that six men and four women should be killed. Of the men, [al Wagidi] mentioned those whom Ibn Ishaq named. The women he mentioned were Hind bt. 'Utbah b. Rabi'ah, who became a Muslim and swore allegiance; Sarah, the mawldh (freed slave) of Amr b. Hashim b. Abd al-Muttalib b. Abd Manaf, who was killed on that day; Quraybah, who was killed on that day; and Fartana, who lived until the caliphate of Uthman.

We will return to the identity of the men because it is revealing (they are mainly intellectuals).....

Muhammad in 629 was well aware that the best thing for him was to strike a decisive blow and to take the control of Mecca. The truce of ten years concluded with the Quraysh seemed to delay this moment; and the Muslims, admitted, on the basis of this truce, in the sacred precincts of Mecca, to perform the ceremonies of pilgrimage, had not dared or wished to take advantage of it to seize the city. Anyway the proven facts seem to be the following ones.

- The Meccans did not try to use the truce in order to strengthen their positions. Perhaps they were waiting for the death of Muhammad, perhaps they were waiting for the end of the ten years in question.

-Muhammad took advantage of the truce to make contacts all over the place.

We will probably never know who first broke the agreement made in Hudaibiyya two years earlier.

Muslim sources tell us that it was the Meccans. The pretext for this attack of the city is indeed given to us by Tabari in his chapter entitled THE CONQUEST OF MECCA (volume 8 page 160).

"The truce having been concluded, the Banu al-Dil of the Banu Bakr took advantage of it against Khuza'ah. To retaliate for the sons of al-Aswad b. Razn they wanted to kill the persons from Khuza'ah who had killed their men.

According to al-Wagidi: Among the members of Quraysh who helped the Banu Bakr against Khuza'ah that night, concealing their identity were Safwan b. Umayyah, Ikrimah b. Abi Jahl (sic) Suhayl b. Amr, and others, along with their slaves.....This was one of the things that prompted the conquest of Mecca" .

Let us note in passing that the Khuzaa were still pagan. In short a shadowy story of vendetta between allies of each other in which Ikrima the son of Amr Ibn Hisham, the pet peeve of Muhammad nicknamed Abu Jahl by Muslims, would have participated secretly (sic).

What is certain, on the other hand, is that the official authorities did their best to avoid the conflict by offering to compensate the family of the "victim" of this vendetta.

"Abu Sufyan then set out and went to the Messenger of God in Medina. He [first] visited his own daughter, Umm Habibah bt. Abi Sufyan. When he was about to sit on the carpet of the Messenger of God, she folded it up to stop him. He said, "My daughter, by God, I don't know whether you think I am too good for this carpet or you think it is too good for me." She said: "It is the carpet of the Messenger of God, and you are an unclean polytheist....." He said, "My daughter, by God, evil came over you after you left me."

Then he went out and came to the Messenger of God. He spoke to him, but the Messenger of God gave him no reply...

When Abu Sufyan came to Quraysh, they asked, "What is your news?" I went to Muhammad and spoke to him; and, by God, he gave me no reply..... "Woe to you!" they said. What you have said is of no use to us. Abu Sufyan replied, "By God, I found nothing else to do"....The Messenger of God commanded the people to prepare for travel, and he commanded his family to make his travel preparations."

LOFTY POINT OF VIEW.

Facts. Various troubles in Mecca. A conflict broke out between the tribe of Banu Bakr, allies of the Quraysh in Mecca, their close neighbors, and the Kuzaa tribe (there was a heavy dispute between them) allied with Muhammad. A number of Banu Bakr attacked the Banu Kuzaa, asleep: 20 dead ? The Quraysh regretted this slaughter and sent Abu Sufyan to offer compensation to the Banu Kuzaa, but he could not succeed, and returned empty-handed. To note: the Banu Kuzaa tribe was not yet converted to Islam, so it was still pagan.

Muhammad considered the lack of more energetic reaction from the Couraichites, as a breach in the armistice of Hudaibiyya; and in order to defend or avenge those pagans (Kuzaa) to whom he is more or less bound, he decides to attack Mecca, and thus prepares himself, in the greatest secrecy.

To guess what fate Muhammad reserved for the Meccans is difficult. The Muslim popularization works presents us an irenic apotheosis, marked by a general forgiving (tulaqua) and an almost Christlike behavior from Muhammad. It is to forget a little fast that the taking of the city is considered in these chronicles as a diplomatic and military operation. One thing is certain: the Muslim Party reserves the right to use violence if the circumstances require it.

The cynical procrastination about the fate of the city and its ruling tribe are to be placed in the background of the subsequent struggles, where it is debated through weapons and words of their respective statuses.

The forced or reticent conversion, of the sworn enemy of Muhammad, Abu Sufyan, father of a future caliph, gave rise to several versions; each author wishing to give this purple passage a personal tone. The fact that Abu Sufyan is at the origin of the future ruling Muslim dynasty, the Umayyads, is certainly no stranger to it.

WHAT THE MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS DEDUCE FROM THAT.

God paved the way like that for the conversion of Abu Sufyan, so that he returns to Mecca to ask its inhabitants for stopping the fight [the difficulty is to know what the validity is of a conversion performed under threat of a supporter of the philosophical and thought out paganism or of the most open secularism]. Abu Sufyan began by saying that he doubted before, a moment later, to pronounce a double profession of faith (shahada). During fight Muslim is not asked for judging the authenticity of the conversion of infidels by ascribing it to the fear or covetousness for the booty, or by reproaching it for being a simple simulation. Because what Islam recommends is not to probe hearts and consciences, but only to correct apparent errors. ???????????

At the request of Al Abbas, Abu Sufyan therefore came back to the city in order to warn the people of Mecca that the life of anybody who would stay home that day would be spared but he was insulted by his wife and certain other Quraysh.

Muhammad then marched on Mecca with his ten thousand men grouped into four battalions. The right wing commanded by Khalid Ibn al-Walid, had for a mission to enter the city from the south. The left wing commanded by al-Zubayr Ibn al-Awwam, had the mission to enter through the northeast. The (Medinan) Ansar, led by Sa'd Ibn Ubadah, had as their mission to enter from the west. The fourth battalion, composed of Muhajirun, that is to say of Meccans left to Medina, commanded by Abu-Ubayda, had the mission of entering by the north-west. It was with it that Muhammad went underway. He nevertheless ordered his troops to use force only in cases of absolute necessity, and against those who would be hostile, with the exception of ten people (including four women) whose names he gave and drew up the list.

Muhammad ordered to enter through the different gates of the city in order to disperse any hostile Meccan troops. Only Khalid met a little resistance, and therefore had to use force. 28 dead.

Muhammad could therefore enter Mecca in this way, without encountering real opposition and almost without bloodshed on January 11, 630.

BACKGROUND.

With the Truce of Hudaibiyya, Muhammad had become a negotiator and had effectively carried out the Quraysh two years' respite. This delay was not used by the Meccans, who thought it right to respect the treaty, but he allowed Muhammad to reap the rallying, including that of Khalid Ibn al-Walid - the victor of the battle of Uhud and Amr b. al-As, the negotiator sent to the Negus [citation needed]. Muhammad therefore continues more than ever in a dialectic that designates enemies, dispossesses them, and feeds his loyalties from this dispossession.

The pogrom before the word is invented, of Khaybar is perceived as a mark of his power, that of a king of Hijaz, who shares the spoils with his companions of Medina, as well as with the Arabs of the tribes who take part in the siege.

Muhammad rallies massively to his cause various Bedouin elements: Aslam undermined by the famine, Muzayna, Juhayna, Sulaym, Ghifar, Khuza'a, who form a second circle. Other Bedouin elements Tamin, Qays and Asad, come to bolster the ranks of an army, fortified by ten thousand men at the time of the siege of Mecca in the year VI, of Hegira, perfectly organized with wings and a center.

Faced with such a display of force Mecca will fall as a ripe fruit and Muhammad will become the master of the Kaaba's, pilgrimage, of the Meccan trade, the master of the Quraysh power. At the same time, they join definitively Islam, whose leader happens to be from their own tribe. During the defeat of the Hawazin and the city of Taef that will ensue a few days later, an important part of the immense booty realized on this occasion will also come to the Quraysh newcomers, related to the prophet of Islam by the blood relationship, and diminishing equally the part of the Medinans, related to the prophet of Islam by the anteriority of the ideological links. Hence stratification into three circles of nascent Islam.

The first circle was the core of the Meccan Emigrants and the Medinan Ansars, among whom were those who had fought in Badr.

The second circle will be formed before the taking of Mecca, and will be made of Bedouins from around Medina, formerly allied with Khazraj and Aws, or around Mecca, formerly allied with the Quraysh and of whom many had migrated to Medina.

With the massive rallying of the Quraysh will appear a third and final circle based on blood relationship. The result will be a conflict of values around which the whole history of the nascent Islamic State will be organized.

In the Sira of Ibn Ishaq the account of the occupation of Mecca is about twenty pages (540-561 in the translation by Alfred Guillaume) essentially made of anecdotes, military operations being briefly described.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad Alfred Guillaume page 550.

"The apostle had instructed his commanders only to fight those who resisted them, except a small number who were to be killed even if they were found beneath the curtains of the Ka'ba.

-Among them was Abdullah b. Sa'd. The reason he ordered him to be killed was that he had been a Muslim and used to write down revelations; then he apostatized and returned to Quraysh and fled to Uthman b. Affan whose foster brother he was. The latter hid him until he brought him to the apostle after the situation in Mecca was tranquil, and asked that he might be granted immunity. They allege that the apostle remained silent for a long time till finally he said yes. When Uthman had left, he said to his companions who were sitting around him, 'I kept silent so that one of you might get up and strike off his head!' One of the Ansar said, 'Then why didn't you give me a sign, O apostle of God! He answered that a prophet does not kill by pointing .

-Another was 'Abdullah b. Khatal of B. Taym b. Ghalib. He had become, etc.

Then the Prophet went to Khandama with Safwan, Suhayl, and Ikrima and when the Muslims under Khalid arrived a skirmish

followed in which Kurz b. Jabir, one of the B. Muharib b. Fihri, and Khunays b. Khalid b. Rabi'a b. Asram, an ally of B. Munqidh, who were in Khalid's cavalry, were killed. They had taken a road of their own apart from Khalid and were killed together. Khunays was killed first and Kurz put him between his feet and fought in his defense until he was slain, saying meanwhile...

Salama b. al Mayla too, one of Khalid's horsemen, was killed, and the polytheists lost about 12 or 13 men; then they took to flight.

As for Ibn Khatal's two singing girls, one was killed and the other ran away until the apostle, asked for immunity, gave it

her. Similarly Sara, who lived until in the time of Umar. A mounted soldier trod her down in the valley of Mecca and

killed her. Al-Huwayrith was killed by Ali, etc.."

TRIUMPHAL ARRIVAL OF MUHAMMAD TO THE KAABA.

It is officially in order to participate in the Ka'ba pilgrimage that Muhammad enters Mecca and the sacrifice of seventy ritually prepared animals (fatted camels) will impress the population favorably by the recognition that it implies of the pre-eminence of the Ka'ba in Mecca.

He went, as agreed with the Meccans the year before, to the shrine of the Kaaba, and went to the temple chanting the chapter 110 (the succor chapter), mounted on his camel. Arrived not far he dismounted, wrapped himself in his pilgrim's garment and stretched out his right hand, declaring: "May God have mercy on him who shows his strength today."

Then he took the black stone as a landmark and began the seven ritual circumambulations (tawaf) by touching it with his staff, and by shouting out his usual war cry: "Allahu Akbar! A little as if the Pope came to honor God by prostrating himself at the foot of Stonehenge standing stones. He made his first three circumambulations at a rapid pace, and the other four at a more ordinary pace, to silence rumors about the health of Muslims (it was rumored that they were sick or weakened by fevers).

Ibn Ishaq still page 552.

"The apostle after arriving in Mecca when the populace had settled down went to the temple and encompassed it seven times on his camel touching the black stone with a stick which he had in his hand. This done he summoned Uthman b. Talha and took the key of the Ka'ba from him, and when the door was opened for him he went in. There he found a dove made of wood. He broke it in his hands and threw it away. Then he stood by the door of the Ka'ba while the men in the mosque gathered to him.....

From Abdullah b. Abu Bakr from Ali b. Abdullah b. Abbas: The apostle entered Mecca on the day of the conquest

and it contained 360 statues which Iblis (Satan) had strengthened with lead. The apostle was standing by them with a stick in his hand, saying, 'The truth has come and falsehood has passed away; verily falsehood is sure to pass away* (Sura 17: 82).

Then he pointed at them with his stick and they collapsed on their backs one after the other 1). As we have had already the opportunity to say, the beginning of Muhammad's apostolate does not contain any attack against idols; it is a moment when the new prophet can hope for a compromise solution with the aristocracy of the Quraysh .

In practice, idols, rough stones and altars are mixed, both in appearance and in their ritual functions.

The absolute rejection of these practices will consecrate the break. Muhammad takes up an old biblical theme, a little easy, moreover, and idolatry will thus become an absolute evil in his mouth. But in reality for the highest spirits like the high king of Ireland Cormac the idol is not the god himself but a mirror of the divinity, a symbol.

"Ar baí cretím in óenDé oc Cormac . ar ro ráidseom na aidérad clocha ná crunnu acht no adérad intí dosroni & ropo chomsid ar cul na uli dúla" (Senchas na relec inso).

"Cormac believed in one god. He said that he did not worship stones or trees, but only the one who made them and who is the protector of all the elements" (History of burial places).

The distinction was, however, too subtle for some individuals and led to endless caricatures of this way of seeing things. According to various passages of the Quran, some Meccans seem to have been educated enough, philosophers or atheists enough to mock the dogma of the resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment (cf. Mehdi Azaiez The Quranic counterspeech. De Gruyter) and An Nader al Harith refused to believe in the miracle of the moon split in two.

According to Muqatil (Tafsir al Quran 3, 226) it was this writer who was the originator of the frontal criticism of the Quran mentioned in chapter 25 verses 4 and 5.

"The unbelievers say: 'All this is a lie that he (Muhammad) invented, and where other people helped him.' But this is an injustice and a lie. They say, 'He is writing tales of the ancients! They are dictated to him morn and evening."

When the apostle had prayed the noon prayer, he ordered that all the idols which were round the Ka'ba should be collected and burned and broken up....

This war of images before its time (in the Byzantine Empire it will be from 723 to 843) will have serious consequences from the artistic and therefore philosophical point of view: difficulties in imagining man and human rights in the face of the rights of God (Huquq Allah), or in admitting that man is the only measure of all things (Protagoras).

From Hakim b. Abbad b. Hanif and other traditionalists: Quraysh had put pictures in the Ka'ba including two of Jesus son of Mary and Mary (on both of whom be peace!).....The apostle ordered that the pictures should be erased except those of Jesus and Mary.

A traditionist told me that the apostle stood at the door of the Ka'ba and said: 'There is no God but Allah alone; He has no associate. He has made good His promise and helped His servant. He

has put to flight the Confederates alone. Every claim of privilege or blood or property is abolished except the custody of the temple and the watering of the pilgrims.....

Thus the apostle let them go though God had given him power over their lives and they were his spoil. For this reason the Meccans were called 'the freed ones' (Tulaqa). Then the populace gathered together in Mecca to do homage to the apostle in Islam. As I have heard, he sat (waiting) for them on al Safa while Umar remained below him imposing conditions on the people who paid homage to the apostle promising to hear and obey God and His apostle to the best of their ability 2).....

Then the apostle sat in the mosque and Ali came to him with the key of the Ka'ba in his hand asking him to grant his family the right of guarding the temple as well as the watering of the pilgrims, but the apostle called for 'Uthman b. Talha and said, 'Here is your key.....'

MECCA IN MEDINAN ERA.

Then it was time for settling scores. In the city, Muhammad enforces his law. He has forgotten nothing ! And especially not the Meccan period of his preaching, with dramatic development and catastrophic conclusion. People have to pay, dramatically, by expiating for the rest of the population. Muhammad therefore proceeds to a targeted but largely sufficient purge. His previous policy, in Medina, made of diplomatic maneuvers and terror, makes unnecessary other acts of violence, which would have damaged the splendor of his triumph. The most interesting is the nature of the crimes attributed to the outcasts, whose list is duly recorded: they are especially guilty of words and speeches against the very person of Muhammad. It is not the politicians, the aristocrats who are targeted, but rather those who have spoken, those who sing or know how to write, and have made fun of him. But this purge will have holes. A certain number of them escape, by flight, chance, or conversion others will die, almost as if by mistake. Because if some escape death by officially converting, others among those of whom Muhammad had asked for execution, were actually killed, including poets or poetesses who had mocked him. Abdallah ibn Khatal, a satirist poet who mocked him, Abdallah ibn Abu Sahr, a former secretary of Muhammad, and Al-Huwayrith, were beheaded.

Execution also of Sarah, a freed female slave, as well as Qaribah and Fartana, female singers who had also mocked Muhammad. Death sentences in absentia of Ikrima, and even of Hind, the wife of Abu Sufiyan (forced to flee Mecca).

The point of view of the pious Muslims on these events. Mohamed Al Bouti (1929-2013): "Fiqh As Sira" (lesson from the life of the prophet).

"Here are the Companions, returned to their homeland, their families, and their property, having multiplied their numbers and strengthened their forces. Even those who had driven them eight years ago, received them with their heads down, humiliated, submissive. Bilal Ben Rabah, the Abyssinian, whom the polytheists had persecuted, climbed on the roof of the Kaaba and declared in a resounding voice: Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar ! This same voice, weakened by suffering, murmured under the blows of his torturers: Allahu Ahad [allusion to the persecutions of which he would had been a victim from the Meccans a few years earlier]; here it is today which sounds from the top of the Kaaba proclaiming: "La illaha illa Allah Muhammad Rasul Allah » and the whole Mecca listens to him with recollection and submission ".

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TERROR (BECAUSE OF THE REFUSAL OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM).

Tabari tome 8 page 187. The Destruction of Idolatrous Shrines.

In this year, five nights before the end of Ramadan, Khalid b. al-Walid destroyed al-Uzza in the lowland of Nakhlah. Al-Uzza was a goddess of the Banu Shayban, a subdivision of Sulaym, allies of the Banu Hashim. The Banu Asad b. Abd al-Uzza used to say it was their goddess. Khalid set out for it, and then he said, "I have destroyed it." [The Messenger of God) said, "Did you see anything?" "No," said Khalid. "Then," he said, "go back and destroy it." So Khalid returned to the spot, destroyed its temple, and broke the idol. The keeper began saying, "Rage, O al-Uzza, with one of thy fits of rage!"-whereupon a naked, wailing Ethiopian woman came out before him.

Khalid killed her and took the jewels that

were on her. Then he went to the Messenger of God and gave him a report of what had happened. "That was al-Uzza," he said, "and she will never be worshiped [again)."

Editor's note. There is only one thing to do.

First solution: it was a goddess, and then there is not much to worry about her. She is still alive in the hearts of our friends in the Wicca.

Or it was really a woman of Ethiopian origin who passed by and whom Khalid killed to strip her from her jewels.

Muhammad therefore left only the black stone which, although having no human or animal form, was indeed an "idol" or a "fetish." Perhaps it is necessary to see in this "incorporation," a last attempt of Muhammad to cajole the inhabitants of Mecca. Having given up leaving pagan deities beside God as intermediaries between Him and men, he circumvents the problem by placing the black stone at the center of the worship he wanted to impose.

Bukhari reported, according to Ibn Abbas, that Muhammad spent nineteen days in all at Mecca before returning to Yathrib / Medina; but that he took advantage of it to marry Umm Habiba 3) the daughter of the powerful Abu Sufyan, thus becoming the son-in-law of the richest man in the city. He will not make Mecca his new capital. He will stay in it only the time necessary and no more.

During this brief visit to Mecca, he also married Maymuna Bint Al Harith, the sister of his uncle Abbas's wife, under a marriage contract; while he was still in a state of sacralization for his pilgrimage (ihram, or in a state of desacralization for others). Muhammad consummated his marriage with Maymuna on the way back to Yathrib / Medina.

For the Medinans, he becomes the one who opened them access to the sanctuary again.

Strengthened theologically by the possession of the Kaaba, and militarily by the mass of Meccan new converts; it will then embark on the conquest of new territories in Arabia, in south to Yemen, in the north to Palestine, and in the east to the Persian Gulf. By a typically messianic combination of preaching and fighting.

1) The statue collapsed because behind there were strong fellows, converted to Islam, responsible for ousting them; who waited only for this signal - the fact that Muhammad pointed his staff on it while reciting this verse of the Quran - to go into action).

2) Swearing is part of any self-respecting totalitarian ceremony.

3) According to Ibn Ishaq the marriage had already taken place at that time.

630 HUNAYN BATTLE AND TA'IF SIEGE.

THE END OF A WORLD.

(Far western equivalent the battle of Arfderydd 579 .)

Hunayn is a valley south of Ta'if. This is one of the few battles (two) fought by Muhammad that is mentioned in the Quran (9: 25).

"God hath given you victory on many fields and on the day of Huneyn, when you exulted in your multitude but it availed you nothing, and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you; then you turned back in flight."

It also caused another divine revelation, verse 24 of chapter 4: "All married women are forbidden unto you save those (captives) whom your right hands possesses."

As well as to a number of hadiths like the one that follows.

Sahih Muslim Book 8 hadith 3432.

Chapter: It is permissible to have sexual intercourse with a captive woman (after menses or delivery) in case she has a husband; her marriage is abrogated after she becomes captive.

"Abu Sa'id al-Khudri reported that at the Battle of Hanain God's Messenger (Peace be upon him) sent an army to Autas and encountered the enemy and fought with them. Having overcome them and taken them captives, the Companions of God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) seemed to refrain from having intercourse with captive women because of their husbands being polytheists. Then God, Most High, sent down regarding that: "And women already married, except those whom your right hands possess (IV. 24)"

The note on this hadith says that "after the distribution of the spoils of war a man may have intercourse with the female slave after passing one menstrual period, if she is not pregnant. If she is pregnant one should wait till she delivers the child. This is the view held by Malik, al-Shafi and Abu Thawr. Abu Hanifah holds that if both the husband and wife are captivated together, their marriage tie still continues; they will not be separated. But according to the majority of scholars, they will be separated. Al-Awzai maintains that their marriage tie will continue till they remain part of the spoils of war. If a man buys them, he may separate them if he desires, and cohabit with the female slave after one menstrual period.

The episode is difficult to be pointed because we have only sources....

- Muslim therefore collected several generations after the facts (100 or 200 years).
- Muslim therefore matters of faith and not of reason.
- Muslim therefore devoid of critical thinking (multiple contradictions).
- Muslim therefore not objective but on the contrary powerfully subjective.

Personal attempt at reconstitution.

The Hawazin and their allies gather at Awtas south of Ta'if in the Hunayn Valley.

Their leader Malik Ben Awf being informed that an immense Muslim army (that he mistakes for a Meccan army, that is to say simply some traditional foes) approaches, desperate, takes the lead and ambushes it.

First clash therefore in Hunayn. Muhammad falls into the trap (a fight in a narrow pass?) But after a vigorous Muslim counter-attack, the Bedouins disperse and flee.

A second clash in Awtas where the Muslims seize the Hawazin camp. Huge booty comparable to that of the capture of Abd al Qadir's encampment in 1843 in Algeria.

A third and final confrontation in Ta'if where the last Hawazin took refuge under the command of their leader Malik ben Awf.

This is an important episode: the last danger threatening Islam disappears, during the greatest battle that Arabia has ever known until then. It is it which decides the final control of the peninsula.

After the taking of Mecca, the tribal confederation of Hawazin may be worried: the balance of power has changed in their disfavor. Their Meccan enemies are reinforced by the Medinans, of course, impoverished by the break-up of the trade but led by a new ideology whose aggressiveness has proved very effective. With Muhammad, the old opposition between nomadic and settled people takes a new turn. The latter with the Meccan contribution can rely on redoubled forces.

After the taking of Mecca, as we have seen, Muhammad had sent various detachments of cavalry to subdue the surrounding tribes, and to destroy their places of worship. The Banu Hawazin and the and the inhabitants of Ta'if then decide to be ready resist under the direction of Malik Ben Awf.

Muhammad went to them on the 6th day of the month of Shawwal, leading 10,000 Medinans and 2,000 Meccans. He also sent Abdullah ben Abu Hadrad al-Aslami to spy on them. When Malik Ben Awf was warned of the arrival of the Muslim army, he asked his men to gather in the Hunayn Valley. Sahih Muslim book 19 hadith 4385.

"Al Abbas : I was in the company of God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) on the Day of Hunayn. I and Abd Sufyan b. Harith b. Abd al-Muttalib stuck to God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) and we did not separate from him. God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) was riding on his white mule which had been presented to him by Farwa b. Nufitha al-Judhami. When the Muslims had an encounter with the disbelievers, they fled, falling back, but God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) began to spur his mule towards the disbelievers. I was holding the bridle of the mule of God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) checking it from going very fast, and Abu Sufyan was holding the stirrup of the (mule of the) Messenger of God (may peace be upon him), who said: Abbas, call out to the people of al-Samura. Abbas (who was a man with a loud voice) called out at the top of the voice: Where are the people of Samura? (Abbas said:) And by God, when they heard my voice, they came back (to us) as cows come back to their calves, and said: We are present, we are present! 'Abbas said: They began to fight the infidels. Then there was a call to the Ansar. Those (who called out to them) shouted: O you party of the Ansar! O party of the Ansar! Banu al-Harith b. al-Khazraj were the last to be called. Those (who called out to them) shouted: O Banu Al-Harith b. al-Khazraj! O Banu Harith b. al-Khazraj! And God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) who was riding on his mule looked at their fight with his neck stretched forward and he said: This is the time when the fight is raging hot. Then God's Messenger (may peace be upon him) took (some) pebbles and threw them in the face of the infidels. Then he said: 'By the Lord of Muhammad, the infidels are defeated'then their force had been spent out and they began to retreat."

Malik Ben Awf and his family then returned to Taif where they barricaded themselves after giving up their property and their families to the hands of Muslims. Muhammad deposited the booty at Jirana, where he had it guarded by Ma'sud Ben Amr Al Ghifari. The Muslims decided to attack. They suffered heavy losses without succeeding in taking the city 1). Muhammad therefore decided to return to Yathrib / Medina.

On the way home, Muhammad stopped in Jirana to share the loot. He first received a delegation from Hawazin who agreed to join the Muslim camp, and who asked for the return of their property and of the members of their families captured. Muhammad asked them to choose between their property and their families. The Hawazin chose their families. Muhammad inquired about the fate of Malik Ben Awf and let him know that if he embraced Islam, he would give back his own, and his wealth, and that he would give him in addition hundred camels. What was done. Malik left Ta'if, joined Muhammad between Jirana and Mecca, then rejoined the Muslim camp.

Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Masud. Nomads then asked Muhammad for more booty. They even drove him to a thorny shrub that tore his coat. Muhammad answered them: "If you were actually entitled to as much property as the trees of Tuhama, I would have already distributed it among you for a long time, so that you do not call me a miser, liar, or coward." One of the Bedouins seized Muhammad so violently by the end of his cloak that his neck was marked with it, he shouted at him: "Give me some of the goods of God that you have had yourself." Muhammad gave up to him his share. He also gave a large share to the still hesitant Meccans. He gave, for example, one hundred camels to a man named Al Aqra Ibn Halays. He gave the same thing to Uyayna Ibn Hisn. He also gave more to some other members of the Arab nobility, favoring them in sharing. Some Ansar (Medinans) then complained about that: "May God forgive our Prophet! He gives our share of spoils to the Quraysh and forgets us, while our swords are still stained with fresh blood! It is a distribution of loot that is truly lacking justice and in which it was not sought to please God.

Muhammad therefore gathered the ansar and said to them:

"O ansar! Of what am I informed?

You were lost and God made me able me to put you back on track,

You were divided, but God gathered you through me,

You were poor and God enriched you,

You do not answer me? "

What could we say to you, O prophet!

You could tell me

that I came to you when I was called a liar and yet you believed me

that I was defeated and that you then helped me to conquer,

that I was hunted down but that you gave me refuge,

That I was destitute and that you rescued me!

You think that you are wronged, O Ansar, because of a simple ephemeral material good of this low world, which I granted to disbelievers in order to convert them. The Quraysh will have sheep and camels, but you will return to your houses with me. Will not your booty be better than theirs? I swear by him who holds the salvation of my soul in his hands, if I had not left Mecca to come to Medina, I would have liked to be one of yours. If men walked one way and ansar another, then I would rather follow the ansar.

All wept with emotion and declared that they were glad to have God and his prophet alone as their only booty.

LET'S RETAIN FROM THIS RATHER HAGIOGRAPHIC OR LEGENDARY EPISODE, THAT THE LURE OF SPOILS PLAYED A VERY BIG PART IN THE BEGINNINGS OF ISLAM; BUT MUHAMMAD KNEW HOW TO SPEAK TO MEN SINCE THE ANSAR HAD THEIR MIND COMPLETELY CHANGED BY THESE FINE WORDS AND THAT THEN THEY CONTENTED THEMSELVES WITH THE MINIMUM, NOT WITH THE LION'S SHARE, IN THE SHARING OF THE SPOILS OF THAT DAY ... WITH DUE RESPECT TO THE VERY PERSON OF THE HOLY PROPHET, OF COURSE.

During the battle of Hunayn, the fighting will have been the unintentional opportunity of a rise of ancestral reflex behaviors, including from Muhammad himself. The war effort of the Muslims will have been unprecedented, but will nevertheless show serious weaknesses, that the Quran echoes (9:25). The Muslim camp is not as united as it seems, many have not yet understood the advantage that can be drawn during a war, from the rallying of former enemies. The mass of fighters has grown even bigger, and arithmetic worries these Muslims who know that the share of spoils will be reduced. The Medinans begin to rumble facing the new converts and the opposition is growing.

The battle is long, fierce, painful, and Muslim troops far from exemplary. The victory will be at the end of the ordeal The Hawazin are defeated, only the sharing of their huge spoils will be important finally as well as the division of the many captive women who comfort the victors. These loot issues may seem to some, scandalous accounting problems: it is not so! It is the engine of the expansion of all imperialisms. Those who have been looted then converted are in fact in turn, pushed to legitimize an ideology that encourages looting. In the Muslim society that is being built, the amount of booty shares ranks individuals and clans in the hierarchy of honors and power. In this case the new converts of Mecca will be favored at the expense of the veterans of the cause, the Ansar, resulting in rather funny grunts. This act of authority, strictly arbitrary, and crafty as regards policy, from Muhammad, has remained in Muslim tradition known as the episode of the "Inclining hearts" (of the former Quraysh enemies).

WHAT MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS DEDUCE FROM THE BEHAVIOR OF MUHAMMAD IN THIS CIRCUMSTANCE.

1° In Hunayn Muslims were more numerous than ever, but that was not useful to them, for among them were men whose beliefs were not strong enough, and who had joined the Muslim army only to make booty. Victory never depends on the size of the numbers. Two hundred warriors nevertheless restored the victory to Muslims. They routed the enemy, succeeding where a heterogeneous host of 12,000 warriors had failed.

2°. A Moslem leader is allowed to borrow or rent arms from pagans, and anything he may need for the fight. This comes under the heading of the recourse to the help from infidels in time of war. The disbelievers can be of a double help.

3 ° the fighter is allowed each time to appropriate the remains of the enemy he has just killed on the battlefield and does not need for this to have the permission of the imam or of his leader . Abu Hanifa and Imam Malik nevertheless regard this rule as a mere legal law dependent only on the Imam; fighters each time should get the prior permission of their imam before appropriating the remains of the vanquished. In the event that they do not get this authorization, the remains of the dead must be added to the spoils and subject to the laws regulating this type of division.

4. The imam is permitted to increase his gifts to the new converts, inasmuch as their conversion has advantages for Muslims. He is allowed to take this extra gift from spoils.

1) Then begin long and tragic negotiations, where this people will try to safeguard its identity, but vainly.

CRISIS AND TAKING OVER THE REINS.

THE PROBLEM OF THE BATTLE OF TABUK.

According to Muslim historiography in 630 Muhammad, warned about an imminent invasion by the Roman-Byzantine forces would have taken the lead at the head of an army of 30 000 come to stop them in the region of Tabuk that is to say in the north-west of present-day Saudi Arabia.

The problem is that we have no element on the Byzantine side that could indicate that such a clash has taken place.

El-Cheikh, Nadia Maria. *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs* (2004, Harvard University Press p. 5). "One major challenge to examining initial contacts between Byzantium and the early Muslim umma arises from the controversy surrounding the traditional Islamic account... ..sources are not contemporaneous with the events they purport to relate and were sometimes written many centuries later. They contain internal complexities, anachronisms, discrepancies, and contradictions. Moreover, many of them provide evidence of embellishment and invention that were introduced to serve the purposes of political or religious apologetic."

Hypothesis A therefore: This is an episode invented from A to Z or almost in order to erase the defeat of Mu'ta during the year before. A bit like in the case of the second "battle" of Badr 1).

Hypothesis B: Muhammad has really received reports that could suggest a start of worrying military preparations by the Byzantines in the east of the Dead Sea or in Areopolis (Ma'ab).

Hypothesis C: This is another umpteenth example of the victim psychology or position of militant Muslims like Safiur Rahman Mubarakpuri (See his book entitled *The Sealed Nectar*). Everyone knows indeed that Muslims in history, starting with Muhammad himself, have never attacked or killed, that a staunch Muslim is only defending himself (victoriously, it is true) or punishing (harshly, it is true) persons guilty of crimes earning death like the caricatures or virulent criticisms of Muhammad or of his idea of God.

[Note of Jean-Lou DeLaCrau: our father used to say, "They are Bakka'in, in other words, whiny bears of Calimero type escaped from the Fantasy Land"].

The Muslim Empire of the 8th century is the only example in the world (for once the superlative is required) of empire resulting only of defensive wars.

Brief reminder of the situation of the Roman-Byzantine side. In 622, two landings, on the shores of the Mediterranean and of the Black Sea, had made Heraclius able to take the Persian forces of Anatolia in a pincer and in 627 he thus made a decisive breakthrough in Mesopotamia: by seizing Ctesiphon, the capital of the Sassanids. Heraclius will content himself with a return to the pre-609 borders. He undoubtedly considers that a prolonged campaign inside Persia would be too risky, while peace – that seems to guarantee him an increasing anarchy in Persia, where several pretenders quarrel over power - gives him the opportunity to reorganize his states and thus to rebuild his forces.

The background will be the same as the one that prevailed for Mu'ta one year ago. An Eastern Roman Empire slowly reoccupying territory that was lost to the Persian Empire for 25 years. A Persian empire in which some generals refuse to apply the peace treaty concluded by their new emperor. The major difference with Mu'ta will be that in Mu'ta the Byzantines had heard of the projects of Muhammad while in Tabuk it will not be the case.

For historians, the figure of 30,000 fighters alongside Muhammad is unlikely, as the coexistence of some 30,000 horses and camels, while it is known that these animals do not tolerate each other. The figure of 3000 to 5000 fighters is much more plausible, divided into two groups, or even, several: one with horses, the others with camels. The horses were certainly less numerous, because at the time, they were expensive, and contrary to camels in the middle of the desert, they had to drink a lot of water.

On the Muslim side, there appear to have been two camps established in Ghassanid Territory (vassals of Byzantium), one in Tabuk in northern Hijaz and one in Dumat al Jandal (present-day Jawf oasis in Saudi Arabia) and expeditions from these first two bases.

The fact which seems sure is that a number of localities in the south-east of the Roman Limes, Ayla (al-Aqaba on the Red Sea), Jarba, and Adroa / Adruh -25 km east of Petra present-day Jordan -) negotiated in a disorganized manner the withdrawal of the Muslim army occupying their territory.

We may finally assume that, seeing no significant Byzantine army coming, as time passed, fearing that it would finally happen, Muhammad, a cunning tactician, preferred to withdraw (onto his lodge, where other problems were brewing (see the mysterious episode of the Mosque of Dissent or Masjid al-Dirar, Surah 9 verses 107-108 of the Quran).

Either the attempt to build a church (his promoter Abu Amir al-Rahib being obviously a Christian monk or a first heresy).

But let us come to the Muslim historiography proper now.

Khalid ibn al-Walid led a detachment north-west to Dumat al-Jandal, an important stop on a desert trade route from southern Syria to northern Arabia, while Muhammad himself commanded the main body of men and marched directly northward. He passed by Mada'in Salih, the southern capital of the ancient Nabatean Kingdom, and reached Tabuk, an oasis in the far north-west of modern Saudi Arabia.

This happened in the Rajaj Month of the 9th year after the Hegira, in the middle of summer. The heat was at its height. A number of Medinans refused to embark on this expedition because of the heat. On the other hand, the most zealous Muslims [or those most interested in loot] ran from all sides. The richest lent to the poor all that they could do without as money or armament. Osman lent three hundred saddled camels and 1,000 dinars. Abu Bakr invested all his money. Umar invested half of his wealth. Some, later called "The Weepers," even came to ask for mounts to Muhammad, in order to participate in this raid. The Muslim army amounted quickly to 30,000 fighters, including 10,000 horsemen. They took turns to be on the mounts, and even went so far as to sacrifice camels to drink the water stored in the humps. The Mohammedan legend places here another miracle of the type of the loaves and fishes as in the Gospels.

Baladhuri, Kitab Futuh Al-Buldan page 92.

Chapter XII : Tabuk, Ailah, Adhruh, Makna and al-Jarba.

Tabuk makes terms. When in the year 9, the Prophet marched to Tabuk in Syria (sic) for the invasion of those of the Greeks, Amilah, Lakhm, Judham and others whom he learned had assembled against him, he met no resistance.

So he spent a few days in Tabuk, whose inhabitants made terms with him agreeing to pay tax.

Ailah makes terms. During his stay at Tabuk, there came to him Yuhanna ibn-Ru'bah, the chief of Ailah, and made terms, agreeing to pay on every adult in his land one dinar per annum making it 300 dinars in all. The Prophet made it a condition on them that they provide with board and lodging whomsoever of the Moslems may pass by them. To this effect he wrote them a statement that they may be kept safe and protected.

.....

Adhruh makes terms. The Prophet made terms with the people of Adhruh stipulating that they pay 100 dinars in Rajab of every year.

Al-Jarba makes terms. The people of al-Jarba made terms and agreed to pay tax. To this effect the Prophet wrote them a statement.

Makna makes terms. The people of Makna made terms with the Prophet, agreeing to offer one fourth of what they fish and spin, one fourth of their horses and coats of mail, and one fourth of their fruits. The inhabitants of Makna were Jews. An Egyptian told me that he saw with his own eye the statement that the Prophet wrote them on a red parchment, the writing on which was partly effaced, and which he copied....

" In the name of Allah, the compassionate, the merciful.Written by Ali-ibn-abu-Talib in the year 9." Ibn Sa'd, Kitab al-tabaqat al-kabir, volume 2 page 205.

The Apostle of God, may God bless him, then sent Khalid Ibn al-Walid at the head of four hundred and twenty horsemen in Rajab of the ninth year, in a sariyyah (raid) against Ukaydir Ibn 'Abd al-Malik, at Dumat al-Jandal. (The distance) between it and al-Madinah is equal to fifteen nights. Ukaydir belonged to the Kindah control over whom he had obtained, and he was a Christian.

Khalid reached there, he had emerged from his fort in the moonlight along with his brother Hassan, to hunt a wild cow. The horsemen of Khalid Ibn al-Walid attacked them. He (Khalid) captured Ukaydir. His brother Hassan resisted and fought till he was killed. Those, who were with them, fled away. Then he entered the fort and Khalid granted him amnesty against being slain, till he was produced before the Apostle of God, may God bless him, on the condition that he surrendered Dumat al-Jandal. He complied and he (Khalid) concluded peace with him for two thousand camels, eight hundred heads of cattle, four hundred coats of mail and four hundred spears. He set apart the special share of the Prophet, may God bless him. Then he divided the spoils after separating the tithe (one fifth in fact) and what was set part for the Prophet, may God bless him. Then he distributed the remainder of the spoils among his companions. Now Khalid Ibn al-Walid set out with Ukaydir and his brother Musad who was in the fort, and with what he had concluded peace on....."

In Tabuk therefore Muslims met no resistance, the enemy army seemed to have vanished (had it ever existed?) There is no natural border between the Arabian Peninsula and the lands to the north of it; crossing from modern Saudi Arabia to Jordan, one observes no change in the scenery— the same imposing sandstone mountains, volcanic outcrops, and bleak sandy desert continue for a while as one heads northward. It was quite natural then that Muhammad, encountering no resistance at Tabuk itself,

should continue on to Ayla, modern Aqaba, the northernmost port of the Red Sea, and to Udruh, very near Petra, the main capital of the Nabatean Kingdom.

The case turns to the simple display of force making some Christian lords or great landlords submit. The bishop or governor of Ayla (Aqaba), Yahna bin Rawbah (Yuhanna b. Ru'ba) would have gone to Tabuk in order to negotiate some kind of open city status, same thing for the authorities of Jarba and Adruh a little further north because there were no Byzantine garrisons in these localities. Hence the absence of fighting. Same thing for Ma'an located 40 km south-east of Petra. It's up to everyone to think what he wants about this non-event, this non-battle, this non-encounter. The terms of the peace agreements Muhammad concluded with these and neighboring settlements differ considerably, suggesting that there was no collective negotiation by an agent of the Byzantine government, but rather the towns had been left to fend for themselves and the head persons of each place had to bargain as best they could.

WHAT PEOPLE OF SEVERAL BOOKS DEDUCE FROM THAT.

30,000 men, 80 refractories, a city (Tabuk) taken without a fight. All this is still odd !!!!!

The expedition is unlike anything: there is no big fight, and the army is running idle. Muslim power has grown too fast, united only by the lure of profit, the charisma of a leader, and misunderstandings.

Tabuk is an opportunity to observe a beginning of disintegration, and the troops drag their feet. The worst thing for the Byzantines is that their Ghassanid allies did the same thing.

WHAT MUSLIM THEOLOGIAN DEDUCE FROM THIS RAID.

Jihad against the enemies of Islam is not limited to preventive war, nor should be reduced to that.

Jihad involves a lot of spending on war material, so it is essential that Muslims participate, according to their means, if the Muslim state itself cannot suffice.

Legitimacy, normality, as well as legality, of the payment of a tribute from Christians or Jews, in exchange for their life and their property. Those who agree to pay this tax (jizya) also pledge to obey Islamic laws, even though they are not Muslims. For the people of the Book (damned book), there can be (unlike pagans or atheists) integration into a Muslim society as well as into its system of organization, while remaining faithful to their own religion. They must not transgress Islamic laws, but they are, of course, allowed to disobey their own customs or their own religious laws. [Editor's note.

The contradiction is only apparent. What these Muslim theologians mean is that Jews and Christians are allowed to remain faithful to their religion in lands of Islam, BUT THEY ARE NOT OBLIGED TO DO SO! As for atheists, pagans, and other similar communities, they have nothing that enables them to be integrated; for it is impossible for atheism or paganism to agree with Islamic laws on anything, since they are radically opposed in their bases and their roots.

Note of the people of several books! When you know that the first eleven chapters of the Bible are Sumerian pagan myths; and that much of the Muslim religious laws or designs are in no way "Abrahamic," but originally pagan, beginning with the pilgrimage to Mecca; this "radical" opposition between paganism and Islam gives something to think about (ignorance - attributable not to the pagans previous Islam but to pious Muslims. - Schizophrenia? Psychosis?)

THE FIRST MUSLIM HERESY (Masjid ad-Dirar. Quran chapter 9, verses 107-110).

Muslim sources give us very superficial information on this rather odd incident, which nevertheless left traces in the Quran: the destruction by Muhammad of a mosque known as "opposition mosque," also built in Qba, in the suburbs of Yathrib / Medina, and the dispersion of its faithful. We will probably never know what really happened: heresy, schism, rebellion, Christian church?

The events immediately following the death of Muhammad show that this first Muslim community was already traversed by tensions or dividing lines. Some want to see the influence of Abu Amir, the Christian hermit having been forced to leave the oasis a few years earlier. This "heretic" mosque would then have been simply a church.

Whatever it be and even before returning to his lovely city of Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad sent a vanguard to destroy the mosque built by some Medinans, in his absence.

There is an allusion to this first heresy of Islam in the Quran: chapter 9 verse 107.

"And as for those who chose a place of worship out of opposition and disbelief, and in order to cause dissension among the believers, and as an outpost for those who warred against God and His messenger aforetime, they will surely swear: We purposed nothing save good. God bears witness that they verily are liars."

Let us notice, however, that it was the founder of Islam himself who took it on himself to destroy this mosque; the second from Yathrib / Medina in chronological order (unless it was a church, of course).

COMMENTARY (TAFSIR) OF A MAN OF SEVERAL BOOKS.

We will never insist on our desire not to be the men of one book, but of at least twelve books, like the Fenians in Ireland, for obvious reasons of open-mindedness, the bare truth being our only religion. That is why, let's say it quite simply, WE HAVE NO IDEA OF WHAT THE CONTENT OF THIS FIRST HERESY IN ISLAM, DURING THE VERY LIFE OF MUHAMMAD, CAN BE. It was perhaps related to what the Islamologist Siyavash AVESTA writes on the subject.

1) At the end of the Battle of Uhud, Abu Sufyan had indeed challenged the Holy Prophet (pbuh) and the Muslims, saying, "We shall again meet you in combat at Badr next year." In reply the Holy Prophet announced through an envoy: "All right: we accept your challenge." Accordingly, at the appointed time he reached Badr with 1,500 of the Muslims. From the other side, Abu Sufyan left Makkah with an army of 2,000 men, but could not have the courage to march beyond Marr-az-Zahran (modern, Wadi Fatimah). The Holy Prophet waited for him at Badr for eight days; the Muslims during these days did profitable business with a trading caravan (what business ?? Some plundering?)

THE BEGINNING OF OFFICIAL RECOGNITIONS (SANAT AL WUFUD).

Muhammad returned to Medina during the month of Ramadan of the same year, after two months of absence. Muslims who had refused to participate in the Tabuk raid without valid reason, came to ask for forgiveness. They were over 80. Muhammad did not accept their excuses (Quran chapter 9 verses 93-96), with the exception of Ka'b bin Malik, Murara bin Ar Rabi, and Hilal bin Ummaya but after (or before?) the revelation of verse 118 stating that (see commentary of Ibn Khatir on this subject. It is both edifying and terrifying!!

Battle of Tabuk

"This verse was revealed concerning the battle of Tabuk. They left during a period of distress. It was a year with little rain, intense heat and scarcity of supplies and water... The Prophet raised his hands and did not put them down until rain fell from the sky in abundance. It rained and then stopped raining for a while, then rained again, so they filled their flasks. We went out to see where the rain reached and found that it did not rain beyond our camp".....

The three, whose decision was deferred (by the Messenger of God). Imam Ahmad recorded that..... We remained in that state for ten more nights, until the period of fifty nights was completed, starting from the time when God's Messenger prohibited the people from talking to us. When I had finished the al Fajr prayer on the fiftieth morning on the roof of one of our houses, while sitting in the condition in which God described (in the Qur'an) my very soul seemed straitened to me.....There I heard the voice of a man who had ascended the mountain of Sal calling with his loudest voice, 'O Ka`b bin Malik! Be happy (by receiving good tidings).' I fell down in prostration before God, realizing that relief has come with His forgiveness for us. God's Messenger announced the acceptance of our repentance by God after the prayer. The people went out to congratulate us. Some bearers of good news went to my two companions, a horseman came to me in haste, while a man from Banu Aslam came running and ascended the mountain and his voice was (of course) swifter than the horse. When the man whose voice I had heard, came to me conveying the good news, I took off my garments and dressed him with them; and by God, I owned no other than them on that day. Then I borrowed two garments, wore them and went to God's Messenger . The people started receiving me in batches, congratulating me on God's acceptance of my repentance, saying, 'We congratulate you on God's acceptance of your repentance.'" Ka`b further said, "When I entered the mosque, I saw God's Messenger sitting with the people around him. Talhah bin Ubaydullah swiftly came to me, shook my hands and congratulated me. By God, none of the Muhajirun got up for me except Talhah; I will never forget Talhah for this." Ka`b added, "When I greeted God's Messenger , his face was bright with joy. He said (' Be happy with the best day you have ever seen since your mother gave birth to you). I said to the Prophet, 'Is this forgiveness from you or from God?' He said (No, it is from God). Whenever God's Messenger became happy, his face would shine as if it was a piece of the moon, and we all knew that characteristic of him. When I sat before him, I said, 'O God's Messenger! Because of the acceptance of my repentance I will give up all my wealth as alms for the sake of God and His Messenger.' God's Messenger said (Keep some of your goods, as it will be better for you). I said, 'So I will keep my share of the spoils from Khaybar with me.....

So God revealed the verse (God has forgiven the Prophet, the Muhajiroun and the Ansar who followed him in the time of distress, after the hearts of a party of them had nearly deviated, but He accepted their repentance. ...

Abdullah, the son of Ka`b bin Malik, who used to guide Ka`b after he became blind, said that he heard Ka`b bin Malik narrate his story (when he did not join the battle of Tabuk with the Messenger of God) . Ka`b bin Malik said, "I did not remain behind God's Messenger in any battle that he fought except the battle of Tabuk.....

Whenever God's Messenger wanted to go to a battle, he used to hide his intention by referring to different battles, until it was the time of that battle (of Tabuk) ...the Prophet clearly announced the destination to the Muslims, so that they could prepare, and he told them about his intent. God's Messenger was therefore accompanied by such a large number of Muslims that they could not be listed in a book by name, nor registered. Any man who intended not to attend the battle therefore would think that the matter would remain hidden unless God revealed it through divine revelation." End of this edifying and terrifying tafsir of Ibn Khatir on verses 93 to 96 of chapter 9 of the Quran. This takeover in his own camp having been thus carried out, and the stinging defeat of Mu'ta followed by the wild-goose chase in Tabuk having shown that it was not the time to go beyond, Muhammad

refocused himself on "Arab" politics. The year 630 was also the great year of the official recognitions (Sanat al wufud).

According to the Tunisian historian Hichem Djait (the great discord Paris 1989) tribes throughout Arabia "embraced the religion of Allah by multitudes", coming to pledge allegiance in Medina. The extent of the rallying of these "proud and warlike tribes" who "suddenly offer their loyalty without a fight" remains "unexplained" for Hichem Djait and ditto for us.

The author of this compilation is equally perplexed about the expansion of Christianity. Peter DeLa Crau understands very well

A) The spread of the first Christianity among the Jews of Palestine in the first century of our era: an internal protest or an attempt to reform the Judaism of the time.

B) The spread of this first Christianity in the Jewish Diaspora of the 2nd century and among proselytes or Godfearers still uncircumcised.

D) The spread in the 4th century of Christianity having become state religion following the choices of Constantine I.

What the author of this compilation cannot understand is phase C) of this picture, the miracle of the boom of Christianity outside the Diaspora and the circle of proselytes around, in the 3rd century (10 of the inhabitants of the Empire) even before its acculturation to the world of Greek philosophy, given its aberrant expressions. Christianity being in no way the true religion of God, a meaningless concept, it should correspond in the collective and popular ways of thinking to a need that did not fill the other mystery religions but which one?

First of all, let us remember that, contrary to what one might think, there was a lot of travel in Arabia. Some people, the nomads, the Tayaye, were even doing only that. Exchanges of messages and delegations to hand them over were therefore commonplace, but the content of these letters was mostly pure diplomacy. The real feelings of their authors could be very far from it.

And let us also point out that at the time very few Arab (or Byzantine) leaders had perceived the strictly religious and more specifically theocratic dimension of the Mohammedan adventure. Muhammad was perceived as the new king of Hijaz, the rising power in Arabia, resulting from the union of the Medinan and Meccan states, period! And the obligatory nature of his alms (zakat) simply made it a tribute like any other, not to mention the fact apparently known until Yemen (Christians in Najran) that the people had always the possibility of not becoming Muslims in exchange for the payment of a specific tribute called jizya. In the mind of many of these Arab ambassadors, it was therefore above all a question of negotiating politico-military balance of power, alliances or allegiances almost of the feudal type; "of Barrois mouvant type," my Parisian pen-friends say to explain the personality of Joan of Arc 1).

Ibn Khaldun was the greatest historians, geographer and philosophers of history, in Muslim lands. Born in Spain in 1332, he lived mainly in Tunis where he died in 1406. In his Prolegomena (Muqaddimah), a philosophical introduction to his main work, the History of the Berbers, he quotes the lost work of Ibn Ishaq, the first biographer of Muhammad. Ibn Ishaq wrote a century after the death of Muhammad. Ibn Khaldun had in his hands a copy, which remained at that time, of the book by Ibn Ishaq. He has read this book therefore and quotes from it the following passage (translated by Franz Rosenthal):

" When Qurashite affairs were well organized, all Mudar 2) affairs were likewise well organized. Thus, all the other Arabs obeyed them.....Muslim armies entered the remotest countries. That happened in the days of the conquests. It remained that way later on in the (Umayyad and 'Abbasid) dynasties, until the power of the caliphate dissolved and the Arab group feeling vanished. The great number of the Quraysh and their superiority over the Mudar 2) subtribes is known to all diligent students of, and experts in, Arab history, biography, and relevant conditions. Ibn Ishaq mentioned this in the Kitab as-siyar, and (so did) other (authors)".

Therefore many tribes asked for being members of the allies of Muhammad, en masse, in waves, or herds, success leading to success and spoils to spoils as Hichem Djait saw it very well (the lure for profit in these raids is not to be neglected) ; no one imagining then in addition what would happen to Islam later; and almost everyone seeing the adventure of Muhammad as a classic warlike conquest. The first of the delegations to get the ball rolling or to come to speak was that of the unfortunate inhabitants of Ta'if, victims of an implacable blockade having succeeded the siege which they had victoriously repelled a few weeks earlier.

As they were not "people of the Book" there was no question of keeping their religious freedom.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad translated by Alfred Guillaume page 614.

THE ENVOYS OF TA'IF ACCEPT ISLAM, A.H. 9

The apostle returned from Tabuk in Ramadan and in that month the deputation of Thaqif came to him.

When the apostle came away from them 'Urwa b. Mas'ud al Thaqafi followed him until he caught up with him before he got to Medina, and accepted Islam. He asked that he might go back to his people as a Muslim, but the apostle said—so his people say—'They will kill you' for he knew the proud spirit of opposition that was in them.'.... Thaqif delayed some months (after the killing of Urwa). Then they took counsel among themselves and decided that they could not resist a long time the Arabs all around them, who had paid homage and accepted Islam..... We are in an impasse. You have seen how the affair of this man has progressed. All the Arabs have accepted Islam and you lack the power to fight them, so look to our case.'

Thereupon Thaqif said one to another, 'Don't you see that your herds are not safe; none of you can go out without being cut off.' So after conferring together they decided therefore to send a man to the apostle as they had sent 'Urwa. They spoke to 'Abdu Yalil, who was a contemporary of 'Urwa, and laid the plan before him, but he refused to act, fearing that on his return he would be treated as 'Urwa was. He said that he would not go unless they sent some men with him. They decided to send ...Abdu Yalil went with them as leader in charge of the affair. But he took them with him only out of fear of meeting the same fate as Urwa and in order that each man on his return could secure the attention of his clan. When they approached Medina and halted at Qanat they met there al Mughira b. Shu'ba whose turn it was to pasture the camels of the apostle's companions, for the companions took this duty in turn. When he saw them, he left the camels with the Thaqif and ran to give the apostle the good news. Abu Bakr met him before he could get to the apostle and he told him that riders from Taif had come to make their submission and accept Islam on the apostle's conditions provided that they could get a document guaranteeing their people and their land and animals. Abu Bakr implored Mughira to let him be the first to tell the apostle the news and he agreed, so Abu Bakr went in and told the apostle while al Mughira rejoined his companions and the camels. He taught them how to salute the apostle, for they were used to the salutation of paganism. When they came to the apostle, he pitched a tent for them near his mosque. Khalid b. Sa'id b. al-As acted as intermediary between them and the apostle until they got their document ; it was he who actually wrote it. They would not eat the food which came to them from the apostle until Khalid ate some and until they had accepted Islam and had got their document.

Among the things they asked the apostle was that they should be allowed to retain their statue Al-Lat undestroyed for

three years.....They had also asked that he would excuse them from prayer and that they should not have to break their statues with their own hands. The apostle said: 'We excuse you from breaking your statues with your own hands, but as for prayer there is no good in a religion which has no prayers, etc.etc.

The delegation of Banu Tamim.

The great tribe of Banu Tamim also submits, but for a short time: it will participate in the forefront of the general revolt against Islam by following the Judaizing or Christianizing movement of the prophetess Saja, and later, will side with the Kharijite heretics.

Christianity in no way constitutes at this time a priority for Muhammad. But our sources mention nevertheless the arrival this year too, in Medina, of a copious delegation of Christians of the tribe of Balharith, coming from Najran (north of Yemen, today Saudi Arabia).

First opportunity to tackle an always fascinating subject: the contact between two religious systems, and the often surprising behaviors that result from it.

The delegation arrived in January 631. His arrival in Medina caused a sensation. They mix with the Muslim population and exchange friendly words with it. Muhammad even allows them to celebrate a mass inside the mosque. At the audience he grants them the next day, the discussion becomes theological. Muhammad reproaches the Christians for believing in the divinity of Jesus. The Nadjranites defend their beliefs with energy. The interviews lasted three days. To put an end to the controversy, Muhammad proposed to rely on the judgment of God, and that there is some kind of ordeal (mubahala) in which an oath would be taken from both sides: "If I lie, may God punish me." There is an allusion to this kind of judgment of God in the Quoran, chapter 3, verse 61. Muhammad sets the date for the next day, the 4th Shawwal of the year 10 of Hegira (January 15, 631). Each party had to present themselves openly and publicly, accompanied by the beings who were particularly dear to it; and invoke God so that he strikes with his lightning anyone who lies, in his person and his relatives, present on the spot. Christians spend the night deliberating. Their conclusion was undoubtedly that such an ordeal would be useless, that nothing would happen and that each one would be reduced to interpret any sign that he would have thought to see. That the most reasonable thing was to negotiate cleverly.

Muhammad came with his "children" (in fact his grandchildren Hassan and Hussein), his "wives" (in fact his daughter Fatima their mother), and Ali his son-in-law, their father. He was dressed in a black tunic of goat hair, tasseled with silk. The Najranites renounced this mubahala (ordeal) which in their opinion was useless and solicit an alliance treaty. A negotiation according to the law took place immediately.

It goes without saying that the original text of the agreement has disappeared for a long time and that only very suspect copies remain. All that can be said is that according to Ibn Ishaq and his life of Muhammad the treaty was negotiated equally between two powers, one military (Medina) and the other in industry or more exactly in crafts (Najran). But can we really speak of equality when only one of the two parties has an army? The sequence of events will prove it. A few months later these naive people who thought it best to ignore the old Roman adage "si vis pacem para bellum" will be expelled, in accordance with Muhammad last will.

Al-Baladhuri, Kitab futuh al-buldan, page 101: "When Umar ibn-al-Khattab became caliph, they began to practice usury, and became so numerous as to be considered by him a menace to Islam. He therefore expelled them and wrote to them the following statement..... Thus the people of Najran were dispersed, some settling in Syria and others in an-Najranyah in the district of al-Kufah (in Iraq), after whom it was so named. The Jews of Najran were included with the Christians in the terms".

See also hadith 4366 book 19 sahih Muslim.

Sahih Muslim chapter 21: Expulsion of Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula

"It has been narrated by Umar b. al-Khattib that he heard the Messenger of God say: I will expel the Jews and Christians from the Arabian Peninsula and will not leave any but Muslim."

The Christian point of view on this treaty appears in the ecclesiastical chronicle of Bar Hebraeus (13th century) volume 3.

Eo tempore innotuit Mohammed Arabum propheta ; eratque tunc princeps christianorum Nigranensium deserti quidam nomine Said : hic, assumptis muneribus ac donis, una cum Jesu episcopo illorum Mohammedem adiit ilia oblaturus, accepitque ab eo diploma praeclarum, nimirum decretum ad Christianos pertinens, ut Arabes ab omni vexa illos tuerentur, non cogere ipsos ut secum procederent ad bellum neque mores legesque illorum immutarent cum Christiani ; vellent collapsae ecclesiae aedificium instaurare, eos in hujusmodi aedificatione Arabes adjuvarent porro tributum egenorum, qui non essent sacerdotes aut monachi, quatuor zuzas non excederet, mercatorum autem et divitum esset zuzarum duodecim ; cumque mulier Christiana versaretur in domo cujusdam Arabis, is eam haud compelleret ad fidem ejus deserendam, neque a jejuniis precibus ac ipsius fidei disciplina minime prohiberet; atque id genus alia.

At this time rose appeared Mohammed, the prophet of Arabs. There was then a man named Said, leader of the Najranite believers, those who live in the desert. He took with him offerings and gifts and came to Mohammed accompanied by Bishop Jesus. He got from him a writing that commanded the Arabs to protect Christians from any damage (vexa) etc.

The account of Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhammad, page 270.

A DEPUTATION FROM THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN.

"A deputation from the Christians of Najran came to the apostle. There were sixty riders, fourteen of them from their nobles of whom three were in control of affairs, namely (a) the Aqib the leader of the people, a man of affairs, and their chief adviser whose opinion governed their policy, Abdu'l Masih by name; (b) the Sayyid, their administrator who saw to transport and general arrangements, whose name was al Ayham; and (c) their Bishop, scholar who controlled their schools, Abu Haritha b. Alqama, one of B. Bakr b. Wa'il.

Abu Haritha occupied a position of honor among them, and was a great student, so that he had an excellent knowledge of their religion, and the Christian kings of Byzantium had honored him and paid him a subsidy and gave him servants, built churches for him and lavished honors on him, because of his knowledge and zeal for their religion.....

Muhammad b. Ja'far b. al Zubayr told me that when they came to Medina they came into the apostle's mosque as he prayed the afternoon prayer clad in Yamani garments, cloaks, and mantles, with the elegance of men of B. al Harith b. Ka'b. The prophet's companions who saw them that day said that they never saw their like in any deputation that came afterwards. The time of their prayers having come they stood and prayed in the apostle's mosque, and he said that they were to be left to do so. They prayed towards the east.

The names of the fourteen principal men among the sixty riders were: Abdu'l Masih the Aqib, al Ayham the Sayyid; Abu Haritha b. Alqama

The first three named above spoke to the apostle. They were Christians according to the Byzantine rite, though they differed among themselves in some points, saying He is God; and He is the son of God; and He is the third person of the Trinity, which is the doctrine of Christianity..... When the two divines spoke to him the apostle said to them, 'Submit yourselves.' They said, 'We have submitted.' He said: 'You have not submitted, so submit.' They said, 'Nay, but we submitted before you.' He said, 'You lie. Your assertion that God has a son, your worship of the cross, and you're eating pork hold you back from submission.' They said, 'But who is his father, Muhammad?' The apostle was silent and did not answer them. So God sent down concerning their words etc.etc."

Muhammad even received ambassadors from the rival confederation of the Banu Hanifa, led by his competitor Musaylima, who grouped tribes more anciently monotheists and worshiping a God they did not call Allah, like Muhammad, but Al Rahman, the Merciful. This name of Aramaic etymology leads many researchers to think that it was perhaps pre-Nicene Monophysite Christian groups .

Editor's note. At the beginning of 632, Muhammad, beginning to feel the effects of his illness or of his poisoning, will be treated by his young wife, Aisha, whom he will also make responsible for setting up a raid against his competitor, the prophet of the Yamama sent by Rahman.

In short, many delegations or personalities went to Yathrib / Medina to Muhammad, in order to form alliances with him (or simply to ask for news and to contact, just in case); so much so that this year is called the year of delegations (sanat al wufud).

Most Arab tribes recognized therefore Muhammad's quest for power and wisely pledged their political allegiance without a fight. This quickly presented a problem for his core band of followers, however, since they had become used to living off spoils got in raids or battles (economy of predation).

Since it was against the rules to attack fellow Muslims, Muhammad began demanding tribute from his new "converts" instead, but this proved to be less profitable than the jizya - not to mention that it carried the risk of internal resentment and strife.

Khaybar, which had been changed into a colony of sharecroppers working for Muslims, was a preferable economic model for an Islamic empire based on a predatory economy justified by religious superiority.

1) "Ah, the Barrois in the dependency (of the king) and the independent Barrois, vast problem! Our father often said jokingly, with his terrible (pointu) accent.

2) Northern Arabs.

THE PROBLEM OF THE PROHIBITION OF MECCA TO NON-MUSLIMS.

We must not confuse prohibition of Mecca to non-Muslims and prohibition of Mecca to pagans or polytheists.

The Meccan pilgrimage of the time remained multi-confessional almost until the end of the so-called prophetic period, that is, during most of Muhammad's life.

It is often assumed today in Muslim circles that this period was an example of purity and perfection and belonged to the founding age par excellence of Islam; nevertheless, it should be known that the followers of local male or female tribal deities continued to perform their own rituals in the center of Mecca, in parallel with the Muslim ritual that was being put in place.

The first problem therefore the prohibition of Mecca to pagans polytheists atheists , etc., in short to all those who are not "people of the book."

Muhammad, strengthened by a revelation on this subject, sent Abu Bakr and Ali on the spot, with the mission to forbid from now on to pagans the access to the Kaaba, and to give them a time to convert or die. This declaration of war (and at the same time of victory), against paganism, mentioned in the Quran (see chapter 9 verse 28), closes the phase of religious cleansing properly, of the sanctuary. Sahih Bukhari Vol. 1, Book 8, hadith 365.

On the Day of Nahr (10th of Dhul-Hijja, in the year prior to the last Hajj of the Prophet when Abu Bakr was the leader of the pilgrims in that greater pilgrimage) Abu Bakr sent me along with other men to Mina to make a public announcement: "No pagan is allowed to perform greater pilgrimage after this year and no naked person is allowed to perform the Tawaf (seven circumambulations) around the Ka'ba. Then God's Apostle sent Ali to read out the Surat 9 to the people."

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad Alfred Guillaume page 617.

ABU BAKR LEADS THE PILGRIMAGE, A.H. 9

The apostle remained there [Medina] for the rest of the month of Ramadan and Shawwal and Dhu'l Qa'da. Then he sent Abu Bakr in command of the greater pilgrimage in the year 9 to enable the Muslims to perform their hajj while the polytheists were at their pilgrimage stations. Abu Bakr and the Muslims duly departed. A revelation came down permitting the breaking of the agreement between the apostle and the polytheists that none should be kept back from the temple when he came to it, and that none need fear during the sacred month. That was a general agreement between him and the polytheists; meanwhile there were particular agreements between the apostle and the Arab tribes for specified terms...A discharge from God and His apostle towards those polytheists with whom you made a treaty i.e., those polytheists with whom you made the following general agreement: So travel through the land for four months and know that you cannot escape God.....Chapter 9 of the Quran verses 2-7...

So he was ordered to fulfill the agreement with those of B. Bakr who had not broken it, up to their allotted time. 'So long as they are true to you be true to them. God loves the pious'....Ali told me that when the discharge came down to the apostle after he had sent Abu Bakr to superintend the greater pilgrimage, someone expressed the wish that he would send news of it to Abu Bakr. The prophet said, 'None shall transmit it from me but a man of my own house.' Then he summoned Ali and said: 'Take this section from the beginning of revelation and proclaim it to the people on the day of sacrifice when they assemble at Mina. No unbeliever shall enter Paradise, and no polytheist shall make pilgrimage after this year, and no naked person shall circumambulate the temple. He who has an agreement with the apostle has it for his appointed time (only). Ali went forth on the apostle's slit-eared camel (Qaswa) and overtook Abu Bakr on the way. When Abu Bakr saw him, he asked whether he had come to give orders or to convey them. Ali said 'to convey them.'

WHAT THE PEOPLE OF SEVERAL BOOKS AND NOT OF ONE DEDUCE FROM THAT (It is always better, like the Fenians, be men of 12 books, rather than of a single writing).

As we have already had the opportunity to see, contrary to what is generally believed, Muhammad left a deadline for Arabs who wanted to go to the Kaaba on pilgrimage before reserving it to Muslims only; no doubt not to provoke a revolt among the Bedouins, nor a too large financial loss for the Meccans.

Rituals practiced in the same place by two different religions could live together for a few months around the Kaaba in year 9 of the Hegira or on the occasion of the pilgrimage of the year 631.

Surrealistic situation by definition.

Ibn Kalbi, Kitab al Asnam, Introduction (3).

They (the Nizar) used to say:

"Here we are O Lord! Here we are! Here we are!

Thou hast no associate save one who is thine

Thou hast dominion over him and over what he possesses ."

It cannot be repeated enough that the faithful of the ancient male and female tribal deities of Mecca were able to continue for some time to practice their own rites in the very heart of the city, in parallel with the Muslim ritual which had just begun to be put in place. But it is true that this concession, of course, was not meant to last.

The only stake was local: the rivalry for the control of the sacredness remaining between the Muslims already "won to the alliance" with Muhammad - the word "converted" not being very appropriate in this sociological background -; and the local pagans who resided on the spot or who, coming from the neighborhoods, went to the city for their annual pilgrimage. Outside the period of the pilgrimage, coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims remained the rule on the territory of Mecca as well as in Yathrib / Medina. No one was forbidden entry, at least for reasons of belief and religion! As for Yathrib / Medina, it became forbidden territory and holy city only in a largely post-Quranic Muslim context. This was not the case in the time of Muhammad. Moreover, unlike Mecca with its Kaaba, the oasis of Yathrib / Medina had never previously been a taboo place (haram) as there were a certain number of them in Arabia.

Therefore, verse 28 of chapter 9 of the Quran did not have the meaning and scope that is usually given to it today. And it was in no way like today a question of prohibiting the visit or stay of the followers of the other two mass religions from the Middle East, Judaism and Christianity. It is true that the question of cultural tourism or that of business travel did not arise at the beginning of the seventh century!

The (second) problem, however, is that this prohibition has finally been extended to all non-Muslims on an indeterminate date, which can only be said to be subsequent to the reign of the first caliph. As proof this story reported by Muhammad Hamidullah in his book "The life and work of the Prophet of Islam" : one day Umar received a Christian at the Mecca Mosque during his Friday service sermon. The Christian had come to complain about the Muslim customs officers at the border and Omar did him justice. Or this hadith: "The Prophet said: No polytheist will enter this mosque which is ours, after this year, except the People of the Book and their servants" (Bashar Awwad, Musnad al-jami , vol. 4, No. 2408, p. 21).

These testimonies prove that Sura 9, verse 28 did not originally concern the "people of the Book." The prohibition of Mecca and Medina to non-Muslims, even Jewish or Christian, is a decision after at least the reign of Caliph Umar (in truth, the first four caliphs). This prohibition is not based on the Quran or the hadiths.

Still, we do not see why a Buddhist monk or a Gandhi or the pope would not have the right to go in it ON CONDITION OF RESPECTING ITS PLACES OF WORSHIP. That goes without saying.

It was therefore only several decades after the death of Muhammad that the prohibition of access to Medina and Mecca to non-Muslims was decided; this prohibition, which is difficult to define with certainty, probably dates back to the time of the Umayyad caliph Umar bin Abd al-Aziz (682-720), whose policy was characterized by a marked hostility towards Jews, Christians and non-Muslims in general. It is a posteriori that Muslim exegetes justified this practice from the Quran (9: 28), declaring non-Muslims impure by nature and their presence in the haram as a stain. Nevertheless, until the seventh century, or even beyond, a number of testimonies attest to the presence of non-Muslims in Medina and Mecca.

MARCH 10, 632 THE APOTHEOSIS (HIJJAT AL WADA).

Peter DeLaCrau's answer to those who criticize the choice of the title of this chapter of his notebook about Islam.

Apotheosis is a term of Greek origin originally designating the admission into the rank of gods, of heroes like Hercules (or Cuchulainn in Ireland, on his phantom chariot) and their rise to heaven. So, of course, in the case of Muhammad this ascent to heaven on his magical mount Buraq had already occurred during his lifetime a few years earlier (see *isra* and *miraj*), but we may say that it was that day that began in the mind of pious Muslims (in the hearts of believers will say pious Muslims) the reign of the most shocking of the characteristics of Islam: *isma*.

This idolatry of the very person of Muhammad is a real insult to human dignity (Christians have at least the very pagan modesty of making Jesus more than a mere mortal, a divine person) this *isma*, therefore justifies the term apotheosis. And anyway the time of the death of Muhammad was approaching (a few months later in 632 according to the Muslim tradition).

THE BACKGROUND.

The recovery of his own camp having been carried out, Muhammad had once again considered the question of the pilgrimage to the Kaaba. According to the Muslim tradition, therefore, at the beginning of the month of *du-l-hijja* of the year 10 of Hegiran era (= March 10, 632?) Muhammad went to Mecca to perform the greater pilgrimage. He was accompanied by several of his wives and a large number of faithful. This greater pilgrimage which for Muhammad was the only one to be complete was called *Hijja al-wada* or "Farewell Pilgrimage" either by the contemporary generation of Muhammad or by the one who followed.

It may be presumed that he did not fail to take advantage of the pilgrimage ceremonies to peak to the crowd of the faithful addresses of a special solemnity. One to Arafat and one to Mina for example. Perhaps a certain prescience of his possible - even next - end; inspired him more pathetic emphasis and a choice of more essential themes. Perhaps, too, that all the Believers listened to him with all the more fervor as it was the first major pilgrimage performed by Muhammad for ten years, and that this pilgrimage consecrated the defeat of the philosophical and thought out or of the open secularism of an Abu Sufyan. We may also think that death gave to appropriate words significance or a meaning that they did not have originally. Hence the stupidity of making it a new philosophical and theological best of the best to follow literally still today as in the 7th century.

As we have seen in the first part of our notebook on Islam, there were two distinct pilgrimages before Muhammad; the one within the city of the Meccans around the Kaaba, the *umra*, consisting of levorotatory or anticlockwise circumambulations around the Kaaba *betylus* and of walking still within the very city of Mecca between the two small rises in the ground that are Safa and Marwa, situated a little oblique on the east side of the Ka'ba, with a sacrifice at Marwa; and finally that of the Bedouins around Mount Arafat.

Muhammad decided to unite the two pilgrimages, as if wanted to show his control of the nomadic space as much as of the settled space. He will thus perform in it a pilgrimage of three days, the same pilgrimage as that of the time of paganism, but with a shrine this time emptied from any divine representation, except the black stone. The pilgrimage known as "farewell pilgrimage" (*hajjat al-wada*), whose circuit and ritual proceedings will be used as a model for the *hajj* or greater pilgrimage, canonical obligation of the current Muslim religion. The pagan rituals will be preserved, but from now on being justified by legends featuring characters of the Jewish Bible. These decisions are always strictly respected, without any reflection, by the faithful who do not know that they are actually following barely changed rituals of pagan origin.

These rituals having hardly changed in their (archaic) form before and after Muhammad, so we can assume that there was on that day.....

- 1 Purification of the pilgrim (*Ihram*).
- 2 Entry into the sanctuary (*haram*).
- 3 Prayer and invocations to the Kaaba.
- 4 Direct contact or gesture towards the black stone.
- 5 Seven turns around the building, three fast and four slow ones (*tawaf*)
- 6 Seven fast turns around the rocks of Safa and Marwa (*Sa'i*).
- 7 Drinking water from the Zamzam well.
- 8 Walk towards Mina.
- 9 Camp in Mina.
- 10 Walk to Mount Arafat.
- 11 Standing in front of Mount Mercy (*Ar Rahma*).
- 12 March and camp in Muzdalifa.

- 13 Collection of 49 pebbles in Muzdalifa.
- 14 Walk to Mina.
- 15 Throwing stones against pillars (ramyu'r rijam).
- 16 Sacrifice.
- 17 Cutting or shaving hair.
- 18 Second stoning.
- 19 Third stoning.
- 20 Return to the Kaaba.
- 21 Seven turns around the building, three fast and four slow ones.
- 22 Fourth and final stoning (optional).

End of our attempt to reconstruct the greater pilgrimage of the year X of Hegira.

Gaudefroy-Demonbynes (The Pilgrimage to Mekka 1923) nevertheless thinks that the least enlightened period in the history of the pilgrimage "is between the death of the Prophet and the reign of the great Orthodox imams; it is that of the constitution of the ceremony, precisely that which should be better known."

As Muhammad had announced in advance his intention to go on pilgrimage to the Ka'bah that day, a huge crowd of several thousand people also went to Mecca to see him and participate with him. The prophet entered the city from the upper part and stopped in front of the Banu Shem gate; then he continued on his way, giving advice to those who accompanied him, a little taxing besides, with regard to the status of women.

THE FAREWELL SERMON.

The speech or discourses generally found in this place of the narrative in the works of pious Muslims is not the one or the ones really uttered by Muhammad that day. These are only a posteriori reconstructions made of a set of commentaries of Quranic verses arranged on this subject, and which probably date from the ninth century, the time of the Abbasid dynasty.

It goes without saying therefore that what is currently presented to us as the farewell sermon of the prophet of Islam is not an original text but an almost chemical synthesis or a literary 1) even artificial composition grouping possible (and perhaps even likely) how-to themes; as well as more theoretical, more political philosophical themes (also likely since the anonymous author who placed them in the mouth of Muhammad that day, took great care, for the sake of credibility more than likelihood perhaps, to take them from the Quran).

It is difficult to establish which parts of this religious will and testament of the Prophet of Islam can be considered genuine. The testimony of Amr ibn Ḥarijja has, for example, reached us in two different ways (Ibn Hisham and Ibn Sa'd), two different channels that give us two results very different. It is therefore generally a work of a later time. Around a genuine core were organized, over time, various elements of which the whole melted later, in the "Farewell Speech."

This was already the opinion of Goldziher and Snouck-Hurgronje.

In short, nothing proves that Muhammad gave this or these speeches that day. Even if he has given any speech. It is a fluid mass, in perpetual grouping, whose "Farewell Speech" is one form among many others. Professor Regis Blachere distinguished in this "speech" 16 ongoing themes and five major versions developing them.

Whether they are found in collections of traditions (hadiths), biographical writings, or adab books, the harangues put into Muhammad's mouth during his "Farewell Pilgrimage" take on quite a different aspect. Sometimes simple speeches of a few sentences dealing with a single theme, sometimes short orations where two or plus, more or less related themes, are juxtaposed, these "sayings" are also presented in the form of a rather long speech where are grouped almost all themes already found in an isolated state or partially combined. From the rapid examination of the "sayings" preserved in this heterogeneous aspect, several conclusions emerge: the number of "items" dealt with in these speeches is limited; these are stated with variants of unequal importance; they tend to be organized into a speech that has become famous under the name of *Khutbat al-wada* or "Farewell Speech."

Below is the list of topics covered in these various latest sermons.

Muhammad's speech during the Farewell Pilgrimage by Regis Blachere, professor at the Sorbonne. *Analecta* pp. 121-143.

- 1) This pilgrimage is perhaps the last one.
- 2) Dialogue between Muhammad and the audience: "What is this day? "It's a sacred day! », Etc.
- 3) The blood, the goods, the honor of Muslims are as sacred as the Day of Sacrifice.
- 4) Prohibition of usury loans, repeal of the exercise of retaliation for facts dating back paganism (Jahiliyya).
- 5) Partial powerlessness of Satan regarding the Believer.

- 6) Prohibition of the intercalary month; reminder of the Quranic stipulations on the calendar; sacred months.
 - 7) Dependence of the wife on her husband.
 - 8) Quran and Tradition, guides of the Believer.
 - 9) Brotherhood between Muslims.
 - 10) Fear of future dissensions.
 - 11) The sinner sins against himself.
 - 12) Duties towards the slave.
 - 13) Obedience to who is invested with command.
 - 14) Equality of Men.
 - 15) Devolution of the inheritance.
 - 16) Dialogue between Muhammad and the audience that testifies that he has accomplished his mission well; Muhammad's farewell.
- Editor's note. Non-exhaustive list.

And here are the 5 major versions identified by Regis Blachere.

Ibn Ishaq the life of Muhammad translated by Alfred Guillaume page 651 (11 of the 16 items listed above); the Basrian version placed under the authority of Abu Bakra, died in Basra in 672, the version of Ibn Hisham, Waqidi and Tabari 2), the version of Muslim and Abu Dawud, the version of al Jahiz (died about 866) in his Kitab al-bayan wattabyin. This last version, very worked, was well received in the literary circles, less in the traditionalists of hadiths. Its emphasized non-racism 3) makes it a text often quoted today by our Muslim friends who presume it original.

Below, finally, some remarks by this great French specialist of the Quran on the sources that can shed light on the genesis of this purple passage.

In spite of the number of the assistants, the status of some of them, the solemnity of the circumstances, the words pronounced by Muhammad at Arafah then at Mina, do not seem to have left memory in many minds. In our texts, all is limited to the testimony of half a dozen people, no more, but repeated in such a way that it gives the feeling of a more general distribution. Among these witnesses are the names of adults such as Umm al-Husayn or Amr ibn Hārīja. Generally, the account comes from characters who, still children or teenagers, made the pilgrimage with their father. The data are found both in the collections of traditions (hadith) and in the biographical or annalistic compilations collected in the 9th century and in the books of adab. In these "sources," the "sayings" put in the mouth of the Prophet of Islam are of two kinds.

- Some are familiar words, answers to interlocutors, indications more or less related to the accomplishment of the pilgrimage.

- Others, on the contrary, have the appearance of speeches, of orations which deal with general problems, already arisen and solved in the Quran.

The dogma of the isma (You have in the Apostle of God a good example -chapter 33 verse 21-) is already in embryonic form in these two types of remarks ascribed to Muhammad. The "sayings" and gestures of the Prophet of Islam are used to mark the obsolescence of certain past practices and to define the ceremonies preserved and consecrated by Islam.

1) It is generally accepted that, apart from the moments when divine inspiration took him, Mahomet had no oratorical gifts, it is necessary to the soul of an apologist like Ibn Sa'd (Kitab al-tabaqat al-Kabir) to maintain the contrary, and the few speeches other than the Farewell speech we know from Muhammad, are in fact only direct questions and answers with familiar style and tone.

2) The presence of the word "then" three times in our text proves that it is a mosaic made up of originally distinct elements.

3) The author of this version adds to the non-racist notion of brotherhood between Muslims the idea of equality of men and non-distinction between Arabs and non-Arab.

WHAT MUSLIM THEOLOGIAN'S DEDUCE FROM THAT. WHAT PIOUS MUSLIM DEDUCE FROM THAT.

"O God ! How these words uttered on Mount Arafat are sublime! The holy prophet spoke himself to the various generations to come and to history, having led the whole community but also fought for the cause of his sacred mission without respite during twenty-three years. The Messenger of God saw through the crowd the coming generations of the Muslim empire that was going to spread east and west of the Earth and gave them his farewell sermon in these terms. The whole universe was silent to listen to the prophet (saw), the stone, the desert, the villages, everything was attentive to this farewell speech pronounced by the prophet (saw); after the world had the happiness of knowing him for sixty-three years [including the Jews he had assassinated]. "I forbid everything related to the pre-Islamic era; revenge peculiar to this period is now prohibited, starting with that of Ibn Rabiya Ben Al Hareth; the usury of interest bearing loans of the time of the Jahiliyya (era of ignorance) is also forbidden, starting with that of Al Abbas ben Abd al Muttalib ."

The prophet (saw) rejected all the harmful traditions of the Jahiliyya [of the pre-Islamic pagan religion] and proclaimed that they were forever buried, in order to prove to the whole world, and to make heard by all future generations; that henceforth no one can pretend to spiritual progress if he tries to unearth the least element of this corpse buried underground for eternity. "The intercalary month (nasi) is only an increase of impiety. Non-Muslims are wrong; every other year, they declare it profane, in order to agree with the number of months that God has declared sacred. They thus declare profane what God has declared holy. Time has gone through a complete cycle, as in the day when God created heavens and earth. The year has twelve months. Four of these months, including three successive ones, Dhu al Qada, Dhu al Hijja, Al Muharram, and the month between Jumada and Shaaban, are sacred. The Prophet (saw) therefore insisted on the question of the months of the calendar as well as on the fact that it is not permissible to change as you please their value, for cultic or other reasons, as the polytheists did. Consequently the months of the year could no longer be brought forward or delayed, and the pilgrimage should now be performed in the month of Dhu al Hijja.

[Editor's note. What God is doing in all these calendar, solar, lunar, lunisolar stories? This intercalary month had at least the advantage of stabilizing the lunar year every three years by matching it with the solar year. Was it wise for God to remove this institution?]

"Fear God in your wives [...]. They have rights over you, and you have rights over them. They must not welcome somebody in your home without your consent. If they do, hit them moderately [...] This principle secures the status of women. The Prophet (saw) confirmed in a few concise words the disappearance of the oppression that was rampant during the era of ignorance, as well as the preservation of women's rights and dignity in Islamic law. The prophet (saw) insisted on this point, because of the many Muslims who had not ceased to follow the pre-Islamic traditions on this subject, neglecting the woman and admitting no right for her. This recommendation also aimed to teach Muslims how to make the difference between safeguarding the dignity of women and their natural rights through Islamic law; and that of resorting to different means allowing them to enjoy them more or to consider them only as some objects for pleasure 1).

"Think carefully about this message that I gave you, O Muslims. I leave you two guides which will prevent you from getting lost if you comply with them: the Book of God and the Tradition of his prophet ."

This principle encourages Muslims, in the ordeals they may encounter during their life, to refer to two sure sources that will always prevent them from going astray or suffering: the Quran and Tradition (Sunnah). The prophet (saw) points out this double guidance to all future generations, because Quran and tradition are not addressed only to their time, and they must never give way to another tradition or a different culture.

"O Muslims, listen well and obey, even if you are ruled by an Ethiopian slave with a flattened nose, as long as he directs you by complying with the Book of God. As for your domestic workers (servants), feed them with your dishes and dress them with your clothes. If they commit a fault that you do not forgive them, sell them, O servants of God, but do not make them suffer. "

This principle defines the relations of the governor, of the caliph or of the chief, with the people or their subordinates. The people must obey their leader, regardless of their origin, importance, and appearance, as long as he governs according to the precepts of the Quran and the Prophet's Tradition. In case he departs from it, no one must longer obey him.

The prophet (saw) also wanted to convince himself that his community would testify for him before God, the Day of the Resurrection of the dead and of the Last Judgment, so he asked them: "If you are asked about me, what will you say ? "

The crowd answered him: "We vouch that you have fulfilled your mission and that you have lavished your counsels." This reassured the prophet (saw) who was from then on certain of soon being able to face God, fortified by this testimony. His eyes shone with satisfaction. The prophet (saw) raised his index finger towards the heaven and pointed it in the direction of the crowd by declaring three times: "O God, be in witness." The Prophet (saw) had great joy at having sacrificed his youth and his life [after I do not know how many wives still] for the cause of God; he contemplated the result of his efforts: the crowd [of Meccan tulaqa like Abu Sufyan and submissive people since that is the meaning of the word Islam] proclaiming with one voice the oneness of God, by prostrating oneself before his religion, bursting with love and fervor. The Prophet (saw) remembered with delight the thirst of the long marches in the desert, the humiliation of mockery, and the suffering of oppression for the cause of this religion that he had consolidated on the earth that God made . God bless you ! O our prophet, and may God fill your heart with infinite joy."

1) O you Muslims my sisters in God,
Uh no, in Humanity,
Do not behave in small featherbrains
Or in fragile island birds
Locked up in golden cages,
Be rather noble Khadija
Except for the choice of your men
Never accept being treated as an objectified woman.
Limited only the three K,
Not the three K of Ku Klux Klan
But the three K of Kinder, Kuche, und Kirche,
Children, cooking, and religion.
Clarifications: these few
Free ... Very free, verses
Have not been revealed to me by God
Through Archangel Gabriel
But have come to my mind naturally
Brisk walking every morning
To go to my daily work
The one I'm doing to make a living
And pay the alimony
Transferred to my very Catholic ex-wife
Seeker of this divorce
For currently fashionable faults (H. Umor).

WHAT PERSONS OF SEVERAL BOOKS OR HAVING A LITTLE (GENERAL) KNOWLEDGE) DEDUCE FROM THAT.

All this is appalling! That whole peoples from Samarkand to Cordoba, a few generations after the death of this man (in 750); could to idolize to that extent (isma) a human being is incredible! So much servility towards him is terrifying. Where are intelligence, reflection, scientific mind, philosophy, general knowledge, and freedom or tolerance, in this Islam about which we are harped ??? What a backsliding for mankind!

Two examples.

Item number 6) of Regis Blachere's list above: prohibition of the intercalary month; reminder of the Quranic stipulations on the calendar; sacred months.

The most massively useful calendar is the solar calendar because it puts the life of man in harmony with the cycle of seasons.

The one that is most convenient for counting the days of the week, or the fortnight more exactly, is the lunar calendar, because of the different phases of the moon, clearly observable in the night sky (with some exceptions of course).

The only problem, the only trouble, of the lunar calendar, is that it is slightly out of step with the rhythm of the seasons, and therefore after a few years the winter falls on summer or conversely.

A lunar year has about 11 days less than a solar year. The period which passes during the completion of a complete cycle of the phases of the moon is called lunation, and lasts on average 29,530,588,861 days, i.e., 29 days, 12 hours, 44 minutes and 2,878 seconds. Since a calendar can only include a whole number of days, in practice, the year is divided into months with alternately 29 or 30 days. As twelve lunar months form 354 days, so about 11 days are missing in each lunar year to remain at one with the changing seasons (the calendar should be a little less than 365 days for that).

To be at one with the seasons the most suitable way is to add every two or three years an intercalary month, usually at the beginning or end of the year. This is the method that the high knowers of the druidic tradition had for example adopted if we believe the calendar found in Coligny: a five-year cycle (lustrum) during which they inserted twice a month, a first time at the beginning of the cycle (Qvimon), a second time in the middle (Ciallos). The count of the days of the year and of the lustrum is essential to appreciate how the calendar manages to keep the harmony, both with the course of the moon - for it, primordial - as with that of the sun. Eóin Mac Neill proposed as early as 1924 an attractive hypothesis. If, like for our month of February, there were 28 days for Equos in the second and fourth years, alternating with the 30 days of the other three years; it would have a lustrum of 1831 days, very close to the 1830,891 days that have on average its 62 lunations. The harmony with the sun, on the other hand, can only be approximate to the extent that five true solar years are only about 1826 days ($365.2422 \times 5 = 1826.211$); a difference of more than four days in five years compared to the moon and five days compared to the lustrum of Mac Neill. This is where the thirty-year "century" mentioned by Pliny comes into play. Indeed, thirty solar years correspond in duration to 371 lunations ($365,2422 \times 30 = 10,957,266$; $29,5305 = 371$) while six lustra of 62 lunations are 372. It was therefore enough, every thirty years, to start the new lustrum directly, without inserting the intercalary month that usually starts it, to find a much better harmony with the sun (only 1,266 days of difference); without losing the essential adjustment with the course of the moon which, at the end of thirty years, is almost perfect (0,152 day compared to the return of the first quarter marking the beginning of the new "century"). In summary, two intercalary months and nothing but one (Sonnocingos) every thirty years. Which is not so stupid!

Among the Babylonians, it was a nineteen-year cycle in which they inserted seven times a month, this cycle is still in use in the Jewish calendar. In the old Arab calendar, it was customary to add one month every two or three years. We do not see the interest of the suppression of the intercalary month (which was a good idea of the Arab high-knowers, but also of the Jews to try to make the lunar calendar and solar calendar coincide) decided by Gabriel / God / Muhammad. But here, in lands of Islam God also dealt with these calendar stories by vigorously reminding that he was against the solar calendar and by extension against the lunisolar calendar, one wonders why.

Item number 7) of Regis Blachere's list: Dependence of the wife on her husband.

Chapter 65 verse 6 states: Make your women live where you live, according to your means. Do not trouble them by putting them too close.

God is very kind, but is there a similar chapter advising women on how to treat their men of the kind, "make your men live where you live, or according to your means. Do not trouble them by parking them too close together. " No ! So ??

All this looks a little cattle breeder : do not let your livestock too crowded, give it food, etc. Etc.

Like it or not, the logion ascribed to the Nazarene Jesus on this subject (in the romance of his life: John 7, 53-8, 11) is nevertheless of an incomparably superior morality and its greatness can be summarized in a few words:

- That he who was without sin should throw the first stone (without comment).
 - Go and sin no more! (the Nazarene does not approve of the behavior of this wife to the point of advising her to continue, he reaffirms that in his eyes there was a fault)
 - But, back to square one: that he who was without sin should throw the first stone (without comment).
- At least there is really here a religion of love, of so great a moral stature that one can wonder if it is really in an orthodox Jewish background that this logion could have appeared. The least we can say is that it is not very orthodox (John 7: 53-8,11).

The equivalent among the high-knowers of the druidiaction is their reaction to the adultery of Partholon's wife.

Trust not to a kitten ;

Foaming milk from horned cattle

Trust not thy very sharp ax

With a woodcutter

When the chest in which this ax is stored

Cannot be locked.

Let us not forget either that the high-knowers of the druidiaction sentenced more severely the murder of a foreigner, and therefore of a believer of another religion, than the murder of one of their own. At least, according to Nicholas of Damascus: " Among them, man is punished more rigorously for the murder of a stranger than for that of a fellow citizen: in the first case, death, in the second exile only" (Fragment N° XLIV, 41, according to Stobaeus).

And let's not even talk about the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10, 29-37). Does Islam also clearly recommend kindness or charity towards unbelievers, polytheists, miscreants, atheists, or followers of other religions ??? To the best of our knowledge , no! There is indeed, at least as far as we know , no Muslim equivalent of the hadith of the good Samaritan or of the custom reported by Nicholas of Damascus, the hadith of the good Samaritan or his equivalent the remarkable custom reported by Nicolas of Damascus does not exist in the lands of Islam. For it is without question, with the hadith about the woman caught in adultery, one of the unsurpassable, really unsurpassable (such an ideal is even almost impossible to reach by the poor humans stuck in their prejudices that we are) moral superiority of (authentic) Christianity over Islam. Let's repeat it, because repeterere ars docendi: there is no equivalent of the parable of the Good Samaritan or of the wife taken in adultery, in the Quran nor in the hadiths either.

The two other (moral) superiorities of the theoretical Christianity, or even of the high knowers of the theoretical druidiaction compared with the also theoretical Islam, being faithfulness to the spirit rather than the letter of a divine precept, and the necessary distinction to make between private or personal spirituality and social or political life.

In terms of giving priority to the spirit over the letter, the distrust of the high knowers of the druidiaction towards any writing of important things is well known ("They regard it unlawful to commit their teaching to writing, though in almost all other matters, in their public and private transactions, they use Greek characters" according to Caesar, BG VI, 14); we will content ourselves here with giving the references of the wording of this principle in the four Gospels.

Gospel according to St. Mark 2: 23-28. One Sabbath Jesus was going through the grainfields, and as his disciples walked along, they began to pick some heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Jesus answered, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need? In the days of Abiathar the high priest, he entered the house of God and ate the consecrated bread, which is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

As for the necessary distinction to be made between private or personal spirituality and social or political life, we could here, of course, arrived at this point in our presentation, pastiche the Four Gospels by writing: We must give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to Boadicea (or Ambiorix or Vercingetorix or Arminius ...) what is Boadicea's or Ambiorix's or Vercingetorix's or Arminius's ... More seriously and more modestly, we will content ourselves with reminding that the high-knowers of the druidiaction in the time made the distinction between the public sacrifices which were only rarely obligatory, or of oenach type (in Ireland) and the private sacrifices, which were to be very numerous

since these barbarians were *admodum dedita religionibus*: very devoted to the things of religion. N.B. Caesar's exact sentence is "*Illi rebus diuinis intersunt, sacrificia publica ac priuata procurant*" (BG Book VI, 13).

As for the expression of this principle in Christianity, here are the references: Gospel according to Matthew, 22, 21. "Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."

This is one of the incontestable moral superiorities of theoretical Christianity, compared with, even theoretical, Islam (end of the tafsir on this subject by Peter DeLaCrau).

FOR REALITY WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT! HERE IS THE TRUTH! FOR REALITY WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT! HERE IS THE TRUTH! FOR REALITY WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT! HERE IS THE TRUTH! (as a famous television series would say).

MARCH 632 STILL: THE EXHORTATION OF GHADIR KHUMM.

Ghadir Khumm, or Khumm Swamp, is a water point that appears in spring in Wadi Rabigh midway between Mecca and Medina.

The 18th of the month of Dhu al-Hijja Year 10 of the Hegiran calendar - or in March 632 of the Gregorian calendar - during a stop on the way back to Medina, Muhammad spoke a few words which since then never cease to provoke polemics between Sunnis and Shiites.

The comments on the pilgrimage in Mecca are unanimously accepted by all Muslims but not those concerning his cousin and son-in-law Ali and especially the meaning to give to the Arabic word Mawla to designate Ali. And it is not up to us, barbarian druids of the far west, men of twelve books, and not of one, to decide between them.

Below text of the hadith 950 in volume 1 of the Musnad of Ahmad bin Hanbal; who considers it sahih, that is to say, certainly genuine.

“Sa’id bin Wahb and Zaid bin Yuthai’ said: ‘Ali adjured the people at ar-Rahbah, saying: Whoever heard the Messenger of God speak on the day of Ghadir Khumm, let him stand up. And (of the people) around Sa’id, six men stood up, and (of the people) around Zaid, six men stood up, and they testified that they had heard the Messenger of God say to Ali on that : « Isn’t it God Who is closer to the believers? » They said: Yes. He said: « O God, if I am a person’s mawla then Ali is also his mawla; O God, take as friends those who take him as a friend, and take as enemies those who take him as an enemy.” Comments: [sahih because of corroborating evidence].

Below text of hadith 5920 Book 31 of the Sahih Muslim.

Chapter: The Virtues of Ali b. Abi Talib.

“Zaid.... said: One day God’s Messenger stood up to deliver a sermon at a watering place known as Khumm situated between Mecca and Medina. He praised God, extolled Him and delivered the sermon and exhorted (us) and said: Now to our purpose. I am a human being. I am about to receive a messenger (the angel of death) from my Lord and I, in response to God’s call (would bid goodbye to you), but I am leaving among you two weighty things: the one being the Book of God in which there is right guidance and light, so hold fast to the Book of God and adhere to it. He exhorted (us) (to hold fast) to the Book of God and then said: The second are the members of my household I remind you (of your duties) to the members of my family. He (Husain) said to Zaid: Who are the members of his household? Aren’t his wives the members of his family? Thereupon he said: His wives are the members of his family (but here) the members of his family are those for whom acceptance of Zakat (obligatory alms = tax) is forbidden. Who are they? Ali and the offspring of Ali, Aqil and the offspring of Aqil and the offspring of Ja’far and the offspring of Abbas. Husain said: These are those for whom the acceptance of Zakat is forbidden. Yes!”

Shiite writers also claim that several verses of the Quran were revealed just after.

Verse 3 of Chapter 5: " This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favor unto you, and have chosen for you as religion al-Islam."

Or for the occasion.

Verse 67 of the same chapter 5: " O Messenger! Make known that which hath been revealed unto thee from thy Lord, for if thou do it not, thou wilt not have conveyed His message. God will protect thee from mankind. Lo! God does not guide the disbelieving folk."

The Sunnis do not question the event but say it was nothing more than an exhortation to pay the respect and honor due to his cousin and son-in-law Ali, because he had to face the discontent of some of his men further to the way in which the spoils had been distributed (again a spoils question) on the return of a raid in Yemen.

JUNE 8, 632 DEATH OF MUHAMMAD (63 YEARS OLD ?)

As usual CONTEMPORARY Muslim sources are missing, what make possible all assumptions, and especially those who see him die in Palestine in 634.

-Leaving aside the Sira, which makes him a character as little credible as are nowadays the official biographies of a Stalin or of a Mao, Edouard-Marie Gallez 1), based mainly on the (too) rare testimonies of the chronicles of the time, depicts us one of those great men who marked history with their strong personality but very different from the ideas received about him.

The end of life of Muhammad will be difficult. He did not die as a hero on the battlefield but after suffering a serious military defeat at Mu'ta in 629, inflicted by vassals of the Byzantine Empire, after having been challenged in his own camp (case of the Opposition Mosque) , and after a more or less long agony, without a male heir.

-Stephen J. Shoemaker 2) studied several non-Muslim sources dealing with .He quotes the Doctrina Jacobi, the Apocalypse of the Rabbi Simeon bar Yochai , the Khuzistan Chronicle (660), that of Jacob of Edessa (691/692), the History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria (before 717), the "Spanish eastern Source" (741), the "Syriac Common Source" , the Syriac chronicle of 775, the Zuqin chronicle (775), the Samaritan chronicle (compiled at the latest in the 14th century).

- For her part the Tunisian researcher Hela Wardi 3) highlights the multiplicity of Muslim traditions related to the death of Muhammad. According to some, he would have died of a short illness, perhaps pleurisy, for others he would have died poisoned by a Jew from Khaybar. The historical credit to give to these texts is debated.

-It is not up to us, pantheistic barbarian druidicists of the far west, to decide

After the surrender of Mecca and the relative calm that had settled in the conquered areas, the Muslims were taking a breather and many had taken advantage of this well-earned warrior rest to take care of their personal business. Everyone expected in any case for an imminent death of Mahomet, some even plotted already to succeed him. The closest to Muhammad no longer listened to him and no longer obeyed his orders, whether they were political military or regarding everyday life. For example, when he asked the Muslims to prepare a raid on the Balqa (present-day Jordan) and the Darum (Gaza), then against the Byzantine Empire, with a young man named Osama ben Zayd as commander; few Muslims thought it necessary to oppose it, believing that Muhammad would die before.

Some even mocked him and made rude jokes about his wives, or shared them in advance. In the last days of May 632, Muhammad fell more seriously ill, and it was with his head bandaged (because of the headaches) that he had to address these few words to the army in question. "In reproaching me today for having entrusted the command of the army to Osama, you reproach me for having formerly entrusted it to his father, who was worthy of it, by God; I loved him above all, and I still consider him worthy of this honor. The son, whom I esteem just as much, will be too. I recommend him to you, it is a member of the best ones ."

Osama left Yathrib / Medina followed by the Muhajirun (the first Muslims, from Mecca) and the Ansar (native Medinans) then camped in a place called Jurf, a stage from the city.

As Muhammad's condition got worse, Usama did not go on, expecting the worst.

The war of

succession is therefore open, whereas before, it was only brewing. A prophetic decision is publicly contested, which is unheard from the Muslims. They think above all of their personal security, and on a strictly hierarchical level, they refuse to obey a greenhorn, mixed race in addition. The psychological mistake has no doubt been to enroll with him the veterans of the old Mohammedan Guard. But the deep reason for the awkwardness is that the leader is weakened, and that in the absence of recognized institutions, his power is already challenged.

June 4, 632 therefore BEGINNING OF THE DEATH THROES (according to the Muslim theologians) BUT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES ON THE DATES WHICH ARE CONSEQUENTLY GIVEN WITH RESERVATIONS.

Having been the victim of several assassination attempts, he is wary of those around him. There were doctors in Medina at the time but our sources do not mention any of them. On the other hand, whenever he is given a remedy, Muhammad also forces his relatives to drink of it, perhaps for fear of poisoning, what speaks volumes about the atmosphere of end of reign which was to prevail then in Medina . He will be given medication without his knowledge.

This does not prevent the prophet of Islam from having ultimate divine revelations and some hadiths credit him with various premonitions about the unity of the Muslim community and finding the strength to lead a last time Friday prayer or deliver a last sermon.

The text of which is likely to be as genuine as the farewell sermon delivered in Mecca. See previous chapter.

Muhammad will give no instructions regarding his replacement, but according to some Sunni and Shiite sources, he was deliberately prevented from doing so by Abu Bakr and Umar, among others. The Tunisian Hela Wardi in his book entitled *The Last Days of Muhammad* depicts an old prophet manipulated by his wives and best friends. Today, it looks like he was the victim of an abuse of weakness. Hela Ouardi notes many strange facts, quoted by the traditions, after the death of Muhammad, in the description of the behavior of Abu Bakr and Umar. It could be the first maneuvers to seize power.

On Thursday, June 4, 632 for example he would have asked what to write his will but his entourage and mainly Umar, would have done everything so that he cannot write. The Sunni texts also report this episode, which is not in their interest. One can think that there is there a beginning of truth, even if the historian must always keep a critical perspective, of course. Some Sunni traditions also report the existence of commandments or important objects, like his sword, entrusted to Ali by Muhammad just before his death.

Story. Abu Muwayhiba. The prophet made me summoned in the middle of the night and said to me: "I received the order to pray for the dead, come with me." I followed him to the cemetery. Here were his words according to the Sira.

Ibn Ishaq, the life of Muhammad, Alfred Guillaume, page 678.

« Peace upon you, O people of the graves! Happy are you that you are so much better off than men here. Dissensions have come like waves of darkness one after the other, the last being worse than the first...I have been given the choice between the keys of the treasuries of this world and long life here followed by Paradise, and meeting my Lord and Paradise (at once)". I urged him to choose the former, but he said that he had chosen the latter. Then he prayed for the dead there and went away."

It was then that the pain began to tease him atrociously. At first he had a frightful headache. His headache quickly became unbearable and he had violent bouts of fever. He moved from the house of his wife Maymuna, supported by Al Fadl ben Al Abbas and Ali ben Abu Talib, to settle in the house of Aisha, but his illness worsened. Aisha tried to heal him by reciting Quranic verses. She then blew in both hands and passed them on her body, but in vain.

Ibn Ishaq the Life of Muhammad Alfred Guillaume page 679.

The apostle went out walking between two men of his family, one of whom was al Fadl b. al'Abbas. His head was bound in a cloth and his feet were dragging....

Then the apostle's illness worsened..... He said, 'pour seven goatskins of water from different wells over me so that I may go out to the men and instruct them.' We made him sit down in a tub belonging to Hafsa d. Umar and we poured water over him until he cried, ' Enough, enough!'the apostle went out with his head bound up and sat in the pulpit. The first thing he uttered was a prayer over the men of Uhud asking God's forgiveness for themthen he said, 'God has given one of his servants the choice between this world and that which is with God and he has chosen the latter.'

Abu Bakr perceived that he meant himself and he wept, saying, 'Nay, we and our children will be your ransom.' He replied, 'Gently, Abu Bakr,' adding, 'See to these doors that open on to the mosque and shut them except one from Abu Bakr's house, for I know no one who is a better friend to me than he....If I were able to choose a friend on earth, I would choose Abu Bakr....O Muhajirun, behave kindly to the Ansar, for other men increase but they in the nature of things cannot grow more numerous. They were my constant comfort and support. So treat their good men well and forgive those of them who are remiss.' Then he came down and entered his house and his pain increased until he was exhausted. Then some of his wives gathered to him, Umm Salama and Maymuna and some of the wives of the Muslims, among them.

Asma d. 'Umays while his uncle Abbas was with him, and they agreed to force him to take medicine. Abbas said, 'Let me force him,' but they did it. When he recovered he asked who had treated him thus. When they told him it was his uncle he said, 'This is a medicine which women have brought from that country,' and he pointed in the direction of Abyssinia.

When he asked why they had done that his uncle said, 'We were afraid that you would get pleurisy'; he replied, 'That is a disease which God would not afflict me with. Let no one stop in the house until they have been forced to take this medicine, except my uncle.' Maymuna was forced to take it although she was fasting because of the apostle's oath, as a punishment for what they had done to him.....when the apostle's illness became severe he and the men came down to Medina and he (Usama) went in to the apostle who was unable to speak. He began to lift his hand towards heaven and then bring it down upon him, from which he knew that he was blessing him....

'When the prophet became seriously ill he ordered the people to tell Abu Bakr to superintend the prayers. Aisha told him that Abu Bakr was a delicate man with a weak voice who wept much when he

read the Quran. He repeated his order nevertheless, and I repeated my objection. He said, "You are like Joseph's companions; tell him to preside at prayers." My only reason for saying what I did was that I wanted Abu Bakr to be spared this task, because I knew that people would never like a man who occupied the apostle's place, and would blame him for every misfortune that occurred.....Bilal called us to prayer, and he told us to order someone to preside at prayers. So I went out and there was 'Umar with the people, but Abu Bakr was not there. I told Umar to get up and lead the prayers, so he did so, and when he shouted God is most great the apostle heard his voice, for he had a powerful voice, and he asked where Abu Bakr was, saying twice over, 'God and the Muslims forbid that.' So I was sent to Abu Bakr and he came after Umar had finished that prayer and presided....Anas b. Malik told that on the Monday (T. the day) on which God took His apostle he went out to the people as they were praying the morning prayer. The curtain was lifted and the door opened and out came the apostle and stood at Aisha's door. The Muslims were almost seduced from their prayers for joy at seeing him, and he motioned to them (T. with his hand) that they should continue their prayers. The apostle smiled...and the people went away thinking that the apostle had recovered from his illness.....That day Ali went out from the apostle and the men asked him how the apostle was and he replied that thanks be to God he had recovered. Abbas took him by the hand and said, "Ali, three nights hence you will be cursed. I swear by God that I recognized death in the apostle's face as I used to recognize it in the faces of the sons of Abdu'lMuttalib. So let us go to the apostle; if authority is to be with us, we shall know it, and if it is to be with others we will request him to enjoin the people to treat us well.'

'Ali answered: 'By God, I will not. If it is withheld from us, none after him will give it to us.' The apostle died with the heat of noon that day.....When the apostle was dead Umar got up and said: 'Some of the disaffected will allege that the apostle is dead, but by God he is not dead: he has simply gone to his Lord as Moses and will return after forty days in order to.....etc. etc.'

Sahih Bukari, Volume 1, Book 8, hadith 427.

Narrated 'Aisha and 'Abdullah bin 'Abbas:

When the last moment of the life of God's apostle came, he started putting his 'Khamisa' on his face and when he felt hot and short of breath he took it off his face and said, "May God curse the Jews and Christians for they built the places of worship at the graves of their Prophets."

More seriously ! Let us acknowledge, however, that the last words attributed, even fictitiously, to the Jesus of the four Gospels: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34) HAVE NEVERTHELESS MORE NOBILITY AND GREATNESS!

CAUSE OF DEATH.

Neither crucifixion nor death in battle but in his bed!

Pleurisy or fever of Medina according to some, after-effects of a poisoning which took place 3 years earlier. Having taken place much later according to some Shiite writers who point Aisha, Hafsa, even Abu Bakr and Umar.

FUNERAL.

Three days were necessary so that Muhammad is buried, which speaks volumes about the level of affection or respect that some persons of his entourage like Umar or Abu Sufyan had for him. Some texts even evoke the rotting of the corpses.

Two major hypotheses can explain this situation: first, denial. They do not want to believe that he is dead and they think that he will return like Moses (or Jesus, that great rival that is to be surpassed in every respect).

The second reason is more political, and it is the one supported by the Shiites: these three days made Abu Bakr and Umar able to remove the family of Muhammad (Ali, Abbas) and to get organized to succeed him. They needed time to put in place what could be called a "coup d'etat."

The traditions are contradictory on the date of the burial but are unanimous on a night burial contrary to the habits and religious rules and in the absence of Abu Bakr, Umar and Aisha, on the very place of his death, namely in his mosque house of Medina, in the apartments of Aisha.

The inaccuracies between the descriptions seem to attest to a lack of knowledge, until the beginning of the eighth century, of the exact location of the tomb of Muhammad. It will be fixed during the construction of a tomb in 707 by the Ommeyyades. As all the descendants of the Prophet were then eliminated, there is no longer any risk of a dynasty of divine right. The new dynasty, which originated in Mecca too, but yet opposed the Prophet at the beginning of the Revelation, will be able to use it to establish its legitimacy.

EPITAPH.

Let's leave the words of his epitaph to Father Edouard-Marie Gallez "The Messiah and His Prophet, The Origins of Islam," published in 2005 because the great merit of the thesis of E.-M. Gallez is to finally give his true originality to the character of Muhammad.

He was successively a merchant, a preacher, a conqueror, and a head of state, more exactly, "Lord of the Arabs."

-Merchant, thanks to his membership of the Quraysh tribe and his marriage with Khadija, the rich cousin of one of the Judeo-Nazarene "priests," Muhammad was traveling for his trade through Palestine, Mesopotamia, South Lebanon, and Mecca.

-Preacher "Learned and well acquainted with the story of Moses," Muhammad let it be said (without stating) that he was a prophet announcing the return of the Messiah-Jesus which was to be preceded by the "liberation of the Promised land" [Palestine] "and" the restoration of the House of God [rebuilding the Temple].

- Conqueror, Muhammad is by his "charisma" warlord, his ability to federate Arab tribes and to impose a warlike ideology.

- Head of State finally, Muhammad is so by his vision of the community of believers (Ummah) transcending nations and empires, which is to be imposed on the whole world divided in submitted territories (dar al Islam) and war zones (dar al harb). Projects that he will not have time to implement, but which will be realized and developed by the caliphs who will succeed him.

1)The Messiah and His Prophet, The Origins of Islam, 2005.

2) The Death of a Prophet. The End of Muhammad's Life and the Beginning of Islam, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.

3) The last days of Muhammad, Albin Michel, Paris.

THE "PRIVATE" INHERITANCE FROM MUHAMMAD : THE FATE OF FATIMA.

Muhammad's personal inheritance is a well-documented and controversial topic, both then and at present.

The Shi'ite sources tell us that Muhammad's daughter, Fatima, died of grief or due to various mistreatment, material or moral, from Abu Bakr and his entourage (Sahih Muslim Book 019, hadith 4354), before giving birth to a child who was to be named Muhsin.

What is certain is that it was disinherited, including from Fadak (personal property of Muhammad) by the new caliph.

The mysteries of the private inheritance from Muhammad.

After the capture of Khaybar in 628, Muhammad had become the richest man in the Hijaz and yet after his death he left nothing as an inheritance; according to certain traditions, at the time of his death he possessed only a tunic, a loincloth of coarse cloth and used a security his armor in exchange of a gallon of barley at a Jew's pawn shop.

The fact of the matter is that Muhammad's inheritance did not occur as is prescribed in the Quran. The devolution to Fatima of the Fadak oasis located 150 km northeast of Medina was disputed by Abu Bakr who will confiscate the oasis for the treasury based on these words of Muhammad himself: "We uns prophets, we do not inherit and we leave nothing as an inheritance. All that we leave is to be distributed in alms." In spite of the restitution of the property, carried out by the same Abu Bakr some time later, Fatima will never forgive to him this first decision. She did not speak to him anymore during her lifetime. In any case, the future second caliph, Omar, had this return canceled on a technicality (one of the witnesses was also involved, the other being a woman); and will confiscate these lands again for the Muslim Treasury, which earned him, of course, also a strong enmity from Fatima and his family.

In addition to his landed property, such as that of Fadak, and a large number of servants or slaves, Mahomet left twenty-two horses, five mules, the best known of which was called Duldul; two donkeys, Ufayr and Yafur; four camels to be mounted, not counting twenty others for milk; a hundred sheep and a few goats. Of the nine swords which he possessed, the best known, which afterwards passed to his cousin and son-in-law Ali, is the Dhul fikar, which had two tips; in addition there were three spears, three bows, seven armors, three shields, a white standard, and a black banner, called Ukab (black eagle), preserved to this day in Istanbul. His silver seal bore the following words: "Muhammad, Apostle of God." Some of the objects that belonged to him; like his cloak and his staff, were long preserved in the furniture-storage unit of the Abbasid caliphs. It was up to everyone to see whether it made him poor among the poor or not, as in his childhood or in his youth, compared for example to Prince Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha).

Muhammad's inheritance did not occur as is prescribed in the Quran, since Abu Bakr, one of Muhammad's most prominent companions said that he heard Muhammad declare, "We uns prophets we leave no inheritance, what we leave behind us is alms for the poor."

Several of Muhammad's relatives were not convinced and this resulted in a dispute that continued all the way to the era of Umar II, around one hundred years later.

Involved people were...

-Ali, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law, future fourth Sunni Caliph and first Shia Imam.

-Fatimah, Muhammad's daughter, married to Ali.

-Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib, also known as Al-Abbas, a paternal uncle of Muhammad.

-Abd God ibn Abbas, also known as Ibn Abbas, Muhammad's cousin.

-Abu Bakr, one of Muhammad's companions and the first Sunni caliph.

-Umar one of the companions second Sunni caliph.

-Uthman, the third Sunni caliph.

-Aisha, Abu Bakr's daughter and Muhammad's favorite wife.

-Muhammad's wives, the rest of them.

The present interpretation of the sources describing the event is, of course, also controversial. Shia and Sunni do not agree about Fadak.

The quarrel started the day after the death of Muhammad occurred in the year 10 (632).

Ibn Sa'd, a 9th century Sunni Islamic scholar writes what is following.

Fatimah came to Abu Bakr and demanded her share in the inheritance. Al-Abbas came to him and demanded his share in the inheritance. Ali came with them. Thereupon Abu Bakr said, "The Apostle of God said, "We leave no inheritance, what we leave behind us is alms for the poor." I shall make provisions for those for whom the Prophet had made."

On this Ali said, "Solomon inherited David,[Quran 27:16] and Zechariah said, 'He may be my heir and the heir of the children of Jacob (Zachariah about John the Baptist)'"[Quran 19:6].

Abu Bakr said, "This is as this is. By God! You know it as I know."

Thereupon Ali said, "This is the Book of God that speaks." Then they became quiet and retired.

Fatimah asked Abu Bakr, "When you die who will inherit you?"

He replied, "My children and relatives."

She said, "What is the justification of your becoming inheritor of the Prophet keeping us away?"

He replied, "O Daughter of the Apostle of God! I did not inherit your father's land, gold, silver, slave, or property."

"The tithe, the share of God (Khums i.e., one fifth) which He has allotted to us and which is only our share, is in your hands."

Thereupon he replied, "I heard the Apostle of God saying, 'It is the food that God makes me eat. When I die it will be distributed among the Muslims.'"

And Abu Bakr said, "Verily, the Apostle of God said, 'We do not leave inheritance, what we leave goes to the poor.' Verily, the members of Muhammad's family will get provision from this money. By God! I shall not change the distribution of the sadaqa of the Apostle of God (alms) from what it was in the time of the Apostle of God. I shall continue to spend them under the same heads as the Apostle of God was spending."

So Abu Bakr refused categorically to give anything to Fatimah. Consequently Fatimah became angry with him and she did not talk with him until she died. She lived six months after the Apostle of God (Sahih Muslim Book 019, hadith 4354).

A narration attributed to Aisha reports:When the Messenger of God died, his wives made up their minds to send Uthman ibn Affan (as their spokesman) to Abu Bakr to demand from him their share from the legacy of the Holy Prophet. (At this), Aisha said to them: Hasn't the Messenger of God said: "We (Prophets) do not have any heirs; what we leave behind is (to be given in) charity"? Sunnis tend to view this hadith (certain) as Sahih and have included it in Sahih Muslim.

Abu Bakr died two years, on AH 13 (634/635), and at that point, the demands for the inheritance were renewed to Umar, who became Caliph after the Caliph.

A narration attributed to Urwah ibn Zubayr from Aisha reports: So far as the charitable endowments at Medina were concerned, 'Umar handed them over to Ali and Abbas, but Ali got the better of him (and kept the property under his exclusive possession). And as far as Khaybar and Fadak were concerned Umar kept them with him, and said: These are the endowments of the Messenger of God (to the Umma). Their income was spent on the discharge of the emergencies he had to meet. And their management was to be in the hands of one who managed the affairs (of the Islamic State). The narrator said: Khaybar and Fadak have been managed as such up to this day.

Note from(Sunni?) Muslim theologians.

To fully understand the problem of the disagreement that arose between the beloved daughter of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), Fatima (radhia allahu anha) and the first well-guided caliph, Abu Bakr (radhia allahu anhu); it is necessary to return to the circumstances at the origin of this dispute.

The hadiths inform us that after the departure of this world of the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam); Fatima (radhia allahou anha) came to claim from Abu Bakr (radhia allahou anhu) a certain number of lands (including the one of "Fadak," located in the "Hijaz" and farmed by Jews) as an inheritance from his father. Abu Bakr (radhia allahu anhu) refused, and reminded her of the hadith he had personally heard from the very mouth of the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam): "We prophets never leave goods as an inheritance. All that we leave behind is alms for the poor. It should be noted that Abu Bakr (radhia Allahu anhu) was not the only one to hear the Prophet Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) say this. Such remarks are also reported by Aysha herself (Bukhari - volume 2, page 996) and by Abu Hurayra (Bukhari - volume 2, page 996). They were also heard by Umar (Radhia Allahu anhu), Uthman (Radhia Allahu anhu), but especially Ali (radhia allahu anhu) and Abbas (radhia allahou anhou); both recognized members

of the family of the Prophet Muhammad ("Ahl ul Bayt"). (See Bukhari - volume 1, page 435, volume 2, pages 575 and 596, Muslim - volume 2, page 90 and Tirmidhi - volume 1, page 194, among others) As a result of this refusal, which was therefore quite justified, as we have just seen, Fatima (radhia allahu anha) was not very happy with Abu Bakr (radhia allahou anhu); and therefore spoke no longer to him.

THE TRUE LEGACY OF MUHAMMAD.

THE ISMA.

Although born on the narrow and remote territory of an arid valley, near an unlikely well, Islam does not escape the fate of world mass religions. It is the son of his past as well as of his future, though most of the time believers know nothing about it, lost as they are in the illusion of the purifying return to a past that was never lived. We have recently had the tragic experience of it. It is probably the favor and the risk of the historian to focus on re-reading the sacred legends, as much as trying to decipher a landscape, beyond its present appearance.

Six clues mark the beginning of Islam and of Quran for the West: the appearance of an Arabic term alongside the Aramaic word in order to designate the companions of Muhammad (Muhajirun instead of Mahgraye); the end of the work in common between "Jews" and Arabs (in the beginning Muslims were welcomed as liberators), and the collection or shaping of materials of the Quran.

There are in addition the three clues indicated by Patricia Crone.

These clues are the destruction and reconstruction of mosques to change their qibla, political conflicts centered on the themes of the Mahdi and of the imamate, the attempts to impose a standard text of the Quran. Since at the time of the first Islam, the Mahdi was the Christ, these political conflicts had to concern the role of Christ, and, therefore, the delation of the role played by Judeo-Christianity. The change of qibla falls under the same category, as well as the imposition of a standard text for the Quran. The first three clues give roughly the same date, around 645 or 650. The next three are somewhat later, and reflect the development of the enterprise of replacing the Jewish-Christianity of Messianist type by Islam being creating. The time elapsed between the death of Muhammad in 632 and the date indicated by the first three indices, 10 to 15 years, was the time necessary to accept the evidence: the armed Christ would not come and Muhammad was no longer here.

The evolution of the Muslim profession of faith, the shahada bears the traces of an expression that has changed over time.

The pseudo-Clementine homilies are a long text, written mostly around 135, in twenty books, which recount the controversies of the time from the point of view of Judeo-Christians and Gnostics. It presents an early version of the profession of faith of Judeo-Christians and Gnostics. Here it is 1): "I (Peter) bear witness that God is one, and there is no God but him."

The expression is identical to the initial shahada of Islam.

The first disciples of Muhammad testified indeed of their belief by saying: "I bear witness that there is no God but God, and that he has no associate." This formula could be reconstructed from graffiti and from the first unofficial Arabic epigraphs, almost always engraved on stone. This expression comes directly from the Bible 2). It was formulated at a time when neither the term Muslim nor Islam existed, and Muhammad was not presented as a prophet.

The shahada from 690 to 735 approximately.

The Dome of the Rock, famous mosque built on the esplanade of the Temple, in Jerusalem, in 691 during the reign of the caliph Abd al-Malik, bears, on the south face, outside the following mention: "There is no god but God. He is One. He has no associate. Say: He is God, the One! God, the eternally Besought of all! He does not beget nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him. Muḥammad is the Messenger of God."

Bet Shean is a very ancient city, probably founded around 3000 before Common Era, in the Jordan Valley, twenty-five kilometers south of the Sea of Galilee. It contains a mosaic, dated 738 or 739, which bears the same text as that of the Dome of the Rock: "There is no God but God, he has no associate, Muhammad is his Messenger."

But between 690 and 735, there were two professions of faith or two types of shahada: "I bear witness that there is no God but God, and that he has no partner. Muhammad is his Messenger "; but also: "I bear witness that there is no God but God, and that he has no associate. Christ is his Messenger. On the same Dome of the Rock, other inscriptions are in fact on the inside.

-On the south face, it is: "Muhammad is the Messenger of God and his servant."

-On the north side there is: "O God, bless your messenger and your servant Jesus, son of Mary."

-On the east side, it is a quotation from chapter 4, verses 170 and 171: "The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was only a Messenger of God."

The specification "only" is a challenging Christianity. There are thus two statements, "Jesus is his messenger and his servant." "Muhammad is his messenger and his servant."

At that time there were two shahadas, one based on Jesus, the other on Muhammad.

N.B. The current form of the shahada is: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his messenger."

Thus, between the early shahada, without reference to Muhammad, identical to that of the Judeo-Christians or Gnostics, and that of today, there was apparently an intermediary expression, in three propositions, which added Muhammad to the early form.

On the papyri, the coins, the tombs, the inscriptions and the Moslem texts, the mentions of Muhammad as messenger are therefore gradually more numerous, whereas those which concern Jesus as Messiah become rarer and disappear. After 735, a century after his death, only Muhammad is mentioned.

The transition from the shahada with three terms to the current two-terms shahada. In about fifty years, from about 690 to 740, at the same time as the deletion of Jesus; the Muslim belief in three propositions was simplified to keep only two: "there is no God but God, and Muhammad is his messenger."

The probable reason is that Arab thought expresses itself willingly in binary terms, either symmetrical or opposite, or consequences of each other, or complementary. The intermediate shahada was a ternary formula, a form foreign to traditional culture, and therefore not able to become kerygma or a slogan. The affirmation of the single god, fundamental was to be preserved. Muhammad's messenger of God and transmitter of the Quran was the core of the new version. The third term could therefore be eliminated. The specification "He has no associate" was no longer as indispensable, especially since this expression could be considered as a consequence of the affirmation of the divine oneness. It is therefore this word that has been obscured, thus giving birth to the shahada that we know today.

1). Pseudo-Clementine homilies, 17: 15 and 16.

2. Deuteronomy, 32: 39. Isaiah, 44 : 6.

THE PILGRIMAGE TO MECCA.

We will never insist enough on our desire not to be men of one book (the Book), but of at least twelve, like the Fenians of Ireland, for obvious reasons of open-mindedness, the truth remaining our only religion. We will allow ourselves therefore to do some advertising for Jalal ad-Din Rumi and Abu al Ala al-Ma'arri on the subject.

Jalal ad-Din Rumi (1207-1273).

I search for the way, but not the way to the Ka'ba and the temple.

For I see in the former a troop of idolaters

And in the latter a band of self-worshippers.

Abu al Ala Al-Ma'arri (973-1057).

And stranger still that Muslims travel far

To kiss a black stone said to be divine:

Almighty God! will all the human race

Stray blindly from the Truth's most sacred shrine?

O fools, awake! The rites you sacred hold

Are but a cheat contrived by men of old

Who lusted after wealth and gained their lust

And died in baseness

And their law is dust.

What do we see during the pilgrimage to Mecca: fanatics who stone imaginary creatures, kiss a stone, go around a pagan temple counterclockwise seven times, and indulge in absurd rites. The pilgrimage to Mecca, with its superstitions and childish rites, is an insult to philosophical and reflective monotheism. Let you understand well! We respect in our own way all the religions that can exist; it is therefore not our intention to systematically denigrate or caricature the ancestral paganism of Arabs; but it is important to remind that the Muslim rituals in Mecca are only a fragment of paganism that has become incomprehensible, incorporated into Islam without having been digested.

There are three different ways to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca.

A simple visit (umra) to the sacred place. Umra is an abridged version of the hajj. It only takes an hour and a half to complete it and it can be done at any time of the year, except for the eighth, ninth and tenth days of the month reserved for the Greater Pilgrimage (Hajj) justly.

Directly the hajj without umra: it is the mode "ifrad."

Or the umra and the hajj done at the same time: it is the mode "queran."

The pilgrim arrives at the miqat meeting point corresponding to his country (one of the five gates to the sacred territory of Mecca).

Before entering the sacred territory for the pilgrimage, it is recommended that the pilgrim carry out a great purification, a general toilet of the body, and to perfume himself.

It is advisable to cut one's hair; to cut one's nails, to get rid of pubic hair, to take a bath. In miqat the pilgrim leaves his ordinary clothes to clothe himself with two pieces of white cloth, one around the waist and the other on his shoulder, and to wear simple sandals.

The pilgrim pronounces the formula: "Here am I my God for an umra ... or for the hajj ... or even: for an umra and the hajj" ...

And from that moment, he is in a state of sacralization: Ihram.

Then he repeats aloud the Talbiyah.

"Here I am at Your service O Lord; here I am.

Here I am at Your service and You have no partners.

Thine alone is All Praise and All Bounty, and Thine alone is The Sovereignty. Thou hast no partners."

The pilgrim then enters the sacred territory of Mecca (haram) where he is supposed to abstain from killing animals, plucking plants, any violence, and any sexual act.

In the mosque, he renews his ablutions and recites other prayers. He must then turn seven times around the Kaaba, the cubic construction in the center of the open courtyard of the Sacred Mosque; counter-clockwise, three turns with quick pace four with slow pace 1). At each passage, he embraces the black stone that is set in the most eastern corner of the Kaaba, but the crowd

most often prevents from doing so. To compensate, he makes a symbolic gesture towards the stone. Then he touches the Stone of felicity at the opposite corner or compensates in the same way. He then goes to Maqam Ibrahim 2), where Abraham would have prayed turning to the Kaaba. The pilgrim says a prayer and returns to the black stone he is kissing again. Nearby is the sacred well of Zam Zam 3) where, according to Muslim tradition, Hagar, Abraham's wife, and Ishmael his son, quenched their thirst.

Editor's note. It is necessary to insist on this "according to Muslim tradition" because it is, of course, untrue and completely invented!

The pilgrim then drinks a little Zam Zam water and wanders in an enclosure known as al-hijr, where Muslims believe that Hagar and Ishmael are buried; and where it is said that Muhammad slept the night of his miraculous journey from Mecca to Jerusalem (isra).

Then the pilgrim leaves the sacred mosque by one of his twenty-four gates. Outside, he walks up the slope of Safa, a rise in the ground located in the sacred enclosure at a distance of about 300 meters, reciting verses from the Quran. From there he runs to the top of the rise in the ground called Marwa, also located in the sacred enclosure which is about the same distance, while reciting various prayers. He goes back and forth seven times. This absurd ritual, called Sa'i, is supposed to symbolize Hagar's journey through the desert in search of water.

The seven courses of this procession having been carried out, he shaves his head or shortens his hair, if he has only come to perform the umra in tamatu mode, the pilgrim can then resume his normal rhythm of life. (Otherwise he will cut his hair only at the end of the great pilgrimage or hajj.)

1) The Kaaba is located in the center of the Great Mosque of Mecca. It is a building of approximately cubic shape (hence its name) 15 m high and 10 m to 12 m side. The door is located in the wall facing east and is 2.10 m above the ground. It makes possible to access to the inside of the building provided to use a ladder that is set up during the Great Pilgrimage. The panels of the door would be covered with gold. In the south-east corner of the construction is set the famous black stone. The Kaaba is covered with a canopy of black brocade (the kiswa) embroidered with Quranic verses. The part of the veil between the black stone and the door is called al-Multazam and it is said that if you say a prayer by touching this place of the fabric, the aforementioned prayer is always answered.

The black stone. Long ago black stones have been the subject of worship in various parts of the Arab world. Referring to the black stone of Dusares at Petra, Clement of Alexandria already mentioned, about 190, "The Arabs worshiped stones."

Two "explanations" are proposed as to its nature.

-The simplest is to say that it is a basalt block.

-The most "beautiful" would make it a meteorite fallen from the sky.

-The most improbable makes it a stone from Paradise.

Nowadays, the black stone, which is about forty centimeters high, is set in a silver ring and is located about 1.40 m from the ground, that is to say within reach of the lips of pilgrims. Normally, all pilgrims should kiss him on each of their seven turns, but they are now so many that it is physically impossible for this to happen. As sacred as it is, this stone has nevertheless experienced some vicissitudes. In 684, the Kaaba suffered a fire and the Black Stone would have burst under the action of heat (let us note that it would not have occurred if it had really been a meteorite).

In 938, during a revolt, Mecca was assaulted by the Qarmatians, and the Black Stone stolen by the insurgents who did not restore it until years later, in 950, and again, in exchange of a big ransom. Its authenticity is therefore doubtful. We may legitimately wonder if the stone that the Qarmatians gave back is the same one that they had taken. Same problem with the famous stone of the Destiny (of Scone) of the kings of Scotland.

2) "Maqam Ibrahim" (Station of Abraham), it is a sacred space also where it is/was possible to see the footprint (s) of Abraham's foot/feet.

3) The Zamzam well (the babbling water). Tradition has it that this well was dug by Abd al-Muttalib, Muhammad's own grandfather; its water, like that of Lourdes for Catholics, has a reputation for curing all ills.

HAJJ OR GREATER PILGRIMAGE.

It is obligatory at least once in their life, for all Muslims who are financially and bodily able to do it. It takes place from the 8th to the 12th day of the month of Dhu-al-Hijjah (the twelfth month of the Muslim lunar calendar).

First day: Pilgrims perform the rites of umra if they have not already done so. The pilgrim goes to Mina, a place eight kilometers away, taking with him what will be necessary. It is the day of tarwiya, that is to say the day of the water supply for the journey.

On the morning of the 9th day, he goes to the plain of Arafat, 16 km away. From this plain, it is possible to see the mount Arafat or "Ar Rahma," the "Mount of Mercy," on which Adam would have prayed (what is false, of course!) and on which Muhammad spoke his farewell sermon in 632 (what is possible). There pilgrims spend the day meditating.

At dusk, after sunset, the pilgrims return to Muzdalifa. There they recite the bedtime and evening prayers; then pick up dozens of small pebbles the size of a chickpea, which will be used for the stoning to be done in Mina; and spend the night there.

On the 10th, before sunrise, they set out for Mina to celebrate the Feast of Sacrifice. Each pilgrim arriving at Mina stoned the three stelae there, first the smallest, then the average, and finally the biggest, that of Aqaba (Jamarat al Aqaba). On each he throws seven pebbles saying: Allahu Akbar (God is Greater) just between two stelae, he faces the Quibla that is to say he faces the Kaaba in Mecca, and recites some invocations. The Muslims explain that this ceremony represents Abraham rejecting the devil who was trying to prevent him from sacrificing his son Ishmael as (his) God had ordained him 1).. The three stone stelae are supposed to mark the place where Abraham stoned the demon who was trying to convince him to disobey God. Another tradition claims that the Devil tried to convince Abraham that he did not really intend to sacrifice his son, and that he would only have pretended to perform the sacrifice. This ceremony is called "ramyu'r rijam" (stoning). Holding a pebble between the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, the pilgrim throws him a distance which must not be less than fifteen steps; and says, "In the name of God Almighty, I do this by hating the devil and his shame." Difficult to be more childish! The remaining pebbles are thrown in the same way.

It is necessary to have left before sunset.

After this first symbolic stoning, the pilgrim who owes an offering then deals with the sacrifice of his animal 2). This sacrifice can be made in the three days that follow, which are called the days of Tashriq.

On the 11th, 12th, and 13th, during the three days of Tashriq, therefore, the pilgrim performing the Hajj, still stone these three stelae erected at Mina.

After the second or third day of Tashriq, the pilgrim therefore performed all the rites necessary for the pilgrimage.

Once he has finished his preparations for departure, he then performs a final circumambulation, the farewell tawaf, the ifada (mandatory) tawaf. Then he leaves and must therefore sacrifice an animal: a sheep, camel, ram or any other lawful animal 22), in memory of Abraham to whom the ram appeared at the time when he was going to slaughter his son. This animal sacrifice is supposed to commemorate the miraculous replacement of the ram for the son of Abraham.

After that the pilgrimage is finished, but before returning to his everyday clothes, the pilgrim cuts a lock of hair. Some shave their heads completely.

1) On the question of human sacrifices see our notebook on Druidism. With regard to the three large mass monolatrics we can never repeat enough the deep and criminogenic stupidity of this "model" of unquestioning obedience.

2) Today's Saudi government imports thousands of sheep from major producing countries, including Australia and New Zealand, to meet the demand for animals to be sacrificed by pilgrims from around the world. Some local Bedouins, however, still have not given up their ancestral sacrifice of camelids. But nobody cares more about them. They are only a drop in the great flood of pilgrims. The passage of the desert livestock to sheep is, moreover, fortunate, for it is impossible to see where enough animals would have been found to meet the pilgrims' frenzy of sacrifice; even if many admit to no longer sacrificing themselves, and pay for it a compensatory sum. The animal goes directly from the slaughterhouse to the freezing spaces. Because there is no question of letting the vultures of yesteryear to eat it. A convert to Islam from the very beginning would have been very surprised perhaps, if it had been proposed to him to close his pilgrimage by the sacrifice of a sheep. Besides, where would he have been to look for this animal, so little present in the desert? Everyone knows that

sheep breeders live on the periphery of desert areas, that is to say, in this case, far away from Mecca and Medina, the two founding cities of Muslim civilization. The sheep farmers have prevailed over the camel drivers in such a fundamental operation involving the worship, it is clear that it was they who took the lead over the native Muslims in matters of religion.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN DAR AL-ISLAM AND DAR AL-HARB.

According to Shariah terminology, Dar al-Islam is defined as the land which is governed by the laws of Islam and whose security is maintained by the Sharia even if the majority of its inhabitants are non-Muslims.

As far as Dar al Harb is concerned, a distinction should be made between those nations which are considered as Dar al-Harb Fi'lai (actual land of war) like the state of Israel which occupies Islamic land and simple Dar al-Harb Hukman (potential land of war) which include other states which are not occupying Islamic land or engaged with a direct war against Islamic lands. But what to think in this case of the role of our country in Afghanistan ?

Another element having serious consequences which is part of the collective psychology (1) of Islam as a structured crowd is the principle of jihad.

Just as the Jewish Tradition teaches that the non-Jewish world is fundamentally impure and one (the non-Jews form a confused and indistinct whole that does not deserve any distinction); Orthodox Islam teaches that the non-Muslim world is fundamentally bad and one, facing Islam. "Al Kufri millatun wahida": "Unbelieving is one and the same nation," teaches the Muslim tradition. Same principle as with the notion of goyim for ultra-orthodox Judaism (Haredim).

Islam has four types of jihad: through heart, tongue, hand and sword. Jihad through the heart, also called "Greater Jihad," invites Muslims to fight to improve oneself or improve society. Many today Muslim scholars interpret jihad as a struggle in a spiritual meaning. To call the offensive armed struggle lesser jihad does not mean its moral condemnation or disqualification, and Islamic history has known many Sufis engaged in military service in the fortress hermitages called ribats. Some Sunni scholars (a minority) consider besides sword jihad the sixth pillar of Islam, although jihad does not have this official status. In Twelver Shiism, it is considered one of the ten religious practices of the worship.

Al-Shafi'i first expounded the doctrine that jihad is to be a permanent war against non-believers and not only when they come into conflict with Islam. Based on the verse, "Kill the polytheists wherever you find them" (Quran chapter 9 verse 5).

The best-known meaning of the word jihad is therefore the sword jihad or "lesser jihad."

Quran, chapter 8 verse 39. "Fight them [the infidels] until there is no longer heresy (fitna) and there is no more than worship paid to God."

Quran chapter 47, verse 35. "Do not falter and cry out for peace when you (will be) the uppermost."

The duty of jihad (lesser jihad or minor jihad) remains as long as the universal domination of Islam has not been got. Peace with non-Muslim nations can only be a temporary situation in this case.

In other words, when Muslims are weak and in the position of a minority, they must behave according to the spirit of the verses revealed in Mecca (peace, tolerance); but when they are strong, on the other hand, they must go on the offensive and rely on the orders expressed in the verses revealed in Medina (war and conquest).

The minor jihad or small jihad is when the Muslims make war against the infidels, after they have called them to embrace Islam and pay the dhimmis tax after being humiliated (what is required in summarized verse 29 of chapter 9), but they refused.

Quran 9: 73 and 66 : 9, exclude considering that jihad can only be spiritual.

Chapter 9, verse 73. " Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites! Be harsh with them!

Chapter 66, verse 9. " Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites! Be harsh with them !

The repetition may be unintentional, but it could only help emphasize the importance of this divine commandment.

On the other hand, we may indeed consider that in the verses of the Meccan period, the use of the word jihad and its derivations, rather seems to designate a spiritual war that is to say resisting the surrounding impiety.

The compulsory nature of jihad is expressed in the dichotomous view of the world seen by Muslim theology, which opposes the realm of Islam to the realm of war. The first, Dar al-Islam, is the "kingdom of submission to God," the world where Sharia governs social life; the second, Dar al-Harb (the kingdom of war), is the non-Islamic world.

The struggle must continue until the kingdom of Islam submits the non-Islamic world - and this is a perpetual situation that still persists today. Ibn Khaldun clearly expresses this division. Outward-oriented expansion jihad (the lesser jihad) is a religious duty because of the universal nature of the mission of Muslims.

The non-Muslim world, whatever its system of government, lives in sin by definition, since the good for Mankind lies only in living according to the law of God. Is good therefore what is in conformity with the norms of Islam is wrong what is contrary to them or are different from them.

As the Saudi jurist Basem Alem very well summarized in March 2009: " As a member of the true religion, I have a greater right to invade [others] in order to impose a certain way of life [according to Shari'a], which history has proved to be the best and most just of all civilizations. This is the true meaning of offensive jihad. When we wage jihad, it is not in order to convert people to Islam, but in order to liberate them from the dark slavery in which they live."

In short, the condition for peace or reconciliation is that Muslims have the advantage. This is very clearly expressed in a Sunni text of Islamic law, *Umdat as-Salik*, written in the fourteenth century by an Egyptian scholar named Ahmad Ibn Naqib al-Misri: "There must be some benefit [maslaha] served in making a truce other than the status quo."

In short, as we have just seen above, for Islam, the world is divided in two, Muslims and non-Muslims. The former make up the Islamic community, *Ummah Islamiya*, "the best community created for men" (chapter 3 verse 110), holding the territories of "Dar al-Islam" (realm of Islam) and governed by Islamic law. But being limited neither in time nor in space, the *Ummah* also encompasses any Muslim community established in infidel land and keeping its Islamic identity.

Non-Muslims, for their part, are "Harbiyun," inhabitants of "Dar al-Harb," realm of war, so called because they must pass one day or another under the Islamic jurisdiction, either through war (*harb*), either through conversion. In Dar al-Islam, the non-Muslim is "tolerated" if he is a monotheist or follower of an Abrahamic religion (*Ahl al Kitab* "People of the Book," Jews, Christians, Sabians, Zoroastrians). But the "People of the Book" can only be submitted (*saghirun*, in Arabic) to the Islamic Law, *Sharia*. They are forced to pay a specific tax (*jizya*) allowing them to be "protected," "protected" but not citizens. Islam categorically prohibits non-Muslims from holding political-administrative positions, giving them the right to enjoin the believer. The Muslim who accepts such a situation commits a sin, even if the infidel is a native (Maronites in Lebanon, Copts in Egypt, Hindus in Kashmir, Christians in the Philippines, etc.).

MEDIEVAL INNOVATION.

The term *Dar al Kufr* (land of disbelief) is synonymous with *Dar al-Harb* (land of war) as in origin the aim of Islam is to spread to all lands in the world until the Islamic state encompasses the whole globe. *Dar al-Kufr* is the land which is governed by the laws of *Kufr* that is to say of the disbelief, and whose security is not maintained by *Sharia* even if the majority of its inhabitants are Muslims.

The *Dar al-Kufr*, "domain of the infidels" or "domain of unbelief") is an expression that appeared long after the death of Muhammad and is also used to designate the territories where the *Sharia* was applied, but no longer applies, as in the case of the Iberian Peninsula or Septimania (Narbonne Carcassonne and Nîmes).

Dar al-Kufr" is therefore a territory that was (or should be) part of "Dar al-Islam" but has joined "Dar al-Harb."

ISLAMIC IRREDENTISM.

Muslims are allowed to wage war to recover their property and possessions since: "Permission is given to those who are attacked [to defend themselves] because they are truly wronged and God is certainly able to help them. Those who have been expelled from their homes, against all justice, simply because they said, "God is our Lord" (Quran, Sura 22, verses 39, 40).

These verses initially concerned only the situation in Mecca before 630, but they can very well be considered as still valid.

The obligation of Muslims to help their co-religionists oppressed by a foreign power is based on both the Quran and the Sunna.

Sura 49 verse 10: " The believers are brothers, so reconcile between your brothers."

Sura 9, verse 71: " The believing men and believing women are friends * of one another. They advocate virtue, forbid evil, perform the prayers, practice charity, and obey God and His Messenger. These—God will have mercy on them. God is Noble and Wise ."

This obligation is also derived from the Sunnah, since many hadiths also go in this sense.

"A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, nor should he hand him over to an oppressor. Whoever fulfilled the needs of his brother, God will fulfill his needs; whoever brought his (Muslim) brother out of a discomfort, God will bring him out of the discomforts of the Day of

Resurrection, and whoever screened a Muslim, God will screen him on the Day of Resurrection ." (Bukhari and Muslim).

"The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim. He does not betray him, does not lie to him and never refuses to help him. Every Muslim is sacred to every other Muslim: his honor, his property and his blood. Piety is here. It is enough for someone to be evil to despise his Muslim brother." (Reported by Tirmidhi)

N.B. We can also trace back to Muhammad the morality police called Hisba, which is intended to order good or prohibit evil according to Islam, i.e. to punish any violation of Muslim morality (essentially in terms of trade at the beginning, then morality later on).

Not to be confused with the Mihna which, from 833 to 847 (or more?) was a second Inquisition but intended to fight against heresies this time.

* The scholars of the Quran are unanimous in saying that the alliance in question here is an alliance THAT MAY GO TO MILITARY AID (Ibn Kathīr).

1) Under certain given circumstances, and only under those circumstances, an agglomeration of men presents new characteristics very different from those of the individuals composing it. The sentiments and ideas of all the persons in the gathering take one and the same direction, and their conscious personality vanishes. A collective mind is formed, doubtless transitory, but presenting very clearly defined characteristics. It forms a single being". (Gustave Le Bon, *the Crowd*.) So there are collective psychologies, that of organized, structured crowds, but it is important to make distinctions. The collective psychology of Nazism as an organized or structured crowd was not that of Nazism, the collective psychology of Judaism is not that of Christianity and the two are different from the collective psychology of paganism two thousand years ago in this part of the world.

THE QURAN.

Studies in the History and culture of the Middle East Volume 30. Mehdi Azaiez.

There are 37 chapters devoid of any counter discourse and therefore of any response from Muhammad. The Quran also bears witness to common, shared beliefs: for example, God sends envoys, God is the author of miracles or convincing signs, God can test and punish, God orders, gratifies and can manifest Himself ostentatiously.

On the other hand, there are counter-speeches in the present tense. Formulas such as yaqūlūna... fa-qul (they say... tell them). 277 in all, some counter-speeches from the past, and some counter-speeches placed in the future (on the occasion of the Last Judgment for example). Some expressed in a few words, others being double (two different sentences framing a traditional element of the Quranic discourse, in this case a threat .

Example. Sura 46 verse 17: "He who says to his father and mother: 'Fie upon you both. And both of them, imploring God's help, [said to him], 'Woe to you! Believe. For God's promise is true. But he (answered), 'These are but tales of the ancients.' "

The verb qala appears 1700 times in the Quran. The Islamologist Mehdi Azaiez has particularly studied these critical objections, complaints or accusations from Muhammad's opponents, be they real opponents or figures of speech. One tenth of the Quranic corpus is devoted to them, i.e., 588 verses, which, given the fact that many of the verses do not lend themselves to polemics, IS CONSIDERABLE AND GIVES TO THE QURAN A TONE UNIQUE IN THE WORLD. Muhammad devotes much of his time to answering them, which makes the whole holy book a non-stop polemic.

There is a paradox here since, as Azaiez explains, "to give the word to the adversary, is it not to weaken his own discourse? To refute the adversary, is it not also to strengthen the theses that you wish to fight."

The counter-speeches in the present tense embrace the entire spectrum of the Quran and the author notes that the polemics are intensifying, as if the increase in this counter-speech were a sign of growing opposition to the Quran itself.

He then defines and analyzes the themes: the discourses concerning God, Muhammad, Muslim believers and eschatology, as well as the affirmations or negations commonly associated with them (91 predicates).

Example God is...or is not...this that.

God has...or has not...this that.

-Concerning God Mehdi Azaiez counts 26 predicates.

Example chapter 36 verse 47: "And when it is said to them, "Spend out of what God has given you," those who have disbelieved say to those who have believed, "Shall we feed anyone whom God would have fed if He had wanted to? You are only in an obvious error. "And they say, "When will this promise be fulfilled if you are true? "

-Muhammad 7 predicates: man like everyone else, therefore a false prophet, a possessed, a liar, a poet (in the bad sense of the word) a sorcerer, he is not like Moses, etc.

Example chapter 21 verse 5: But they said: "This is rather a heap of dreams! Or he invented it. Or he is rather a poet. So let him bring us a sign [identical] to the one that the first envoys were entrusted with."

-The Quran.26 predicates, some of which are neutral or positive even in the mouth » of non-believers, but others more devastating: speeches of elders, fabricated, of foreign origin, lies, etc.

Example: Chapter 41 verse 44. "If we had made with it a Quran in a language other than Arabic, they would have said, 'Why have not its verses been made clear? What? A non-Arabic [Quran] and an Arabic [Messenger]?"

-The eschatology 18 predicates.

Example chapter 27 verse 67. "And those who do not believe say: "When we and our fathers are dust, will we and our fathers be brought out (from our graves)? Surely this was promised to us and our fathers before. These are but tales of the ancients!"

-The believers 5 predicate. They are foolish, fooled, supported only reticently.

Mehdi Azaiez then gives us a portrait of the beliefs and attitudes of these opponents of Muhammad as reported in the Quran.

There are only 3 undoubtedly polytheistic assertions in this counter-discourse: VI,136. XXI, 29; XXXVIII,5 .

The first assertion about God, on the other hand, is that He has begotten one or more children.

With regard to the eschatological counter Quran, our author distinguishes three phases. But obviously everything depends on the chronology adopted.

First phase. First and essentially descriptive, the Quran would have proclaimed a message of belief without a marked biblism. The reference to the tree of al-zaqqūm would attest to this.

Second phase . As a result of the growing hostility towards the messages delivered by Muhammed, biblical items are solicited as a point of reference and arguments of persuasion.

Third phase. In the face of ever-increasing hostility, the Quranic speaker, while preserving his biblism, seems to significantly increase his intervention to support his natural audience and strengthen his belief.

The Quranic work of persuasion increases and therefore adapts to circumstances and a context that it remains impossible to define more judiciously.

In this case, we can assume that the Quran is addressed to both opponents and converts, whom it is a matter of reinforcing their new beliefs.

As far as the opponents are concerned, the following list emerges: the Arabs the Christians (Nassara) the Jews the Quraysh the Magi the Sabians. Chapter 22 verse 17 mentions 4 categories. The Quranic text presents them by attributing to them various attitudes:

For example, chapter 4 verse 51: "Have you not seen those to whom a part of the Book has been given, lending credence to magic (gibt) and taghut, and saying in favor of those who do not believe: 'These are better guided (on the way) than those who have believed'? These are those whom God has cursed.

For a summary of the 277 examples of counter-speeches, see the third and last part of the book entitled "The Quranic Counter-discourse" .

Some authors mention the hypothesis that the Quran was initially several books, Uthman having kept only one. We have for example the testimony of a Christian monk who distinguishes between the Quran and the first chapter revealed in Medina, the chapter of the cow, al baqara, as sources of law. In other documents, we are told that Hajjaj (661 - 714), the governor of Iraq, had collected and destroyed all the writings of early Muslims. Like Wansbrough, these authors conclude that the Quran is grossly lacking in overall structure, and that it is frequently obscure or irrelevant, both in language and in content, superficial in the way it relates disparate materials; and used to repetition of entire passages in different versions. On this basis, we can plausibly argue that it is the product of the late and imperfect edition of materials from a plurality of traditions.

As we have seen, abundant evidence, from the hadith and Muslim commentary, shows that there were many variations of reading between the copies of the Quran made by the companions of Muhammad. This runs counter to Muslims' frequent claim that the current text of the Quran is only a faithful copy of a divine original.

Quran and hadiths are therefore dubious texts, texts that were "adjusted" to the ambitions of caliphs and imams. The caliphs recommended, for example, early on to resort to "readings" of the Quran based on the oral tradition rather than the written text. Like the Christian New Testament, the Quran we know today is only a purely human construction, constructed as and when needed, refined or modified according to circumstances. For example, by the invention of the so-called nasikh verses or abrogating (abrogating verses called mansukh or abrogated).

Even in scriptio plena 1), the meaning of the Quran is often obscure. The introduction of diacritical marks, vowels, and interpretations that attempt to give a meaning to the text thus completed, have been proposed by Persian grammarians, commentators, and lexicographers, more than two centuries after the death of Muhammad. These scholars had only indirect knowledge of the Arabic language, and knew nothing of the background or culture in which the texts of the Quran had been formed. Persian scholars have based their work on reflections and conjectures, without referring to a tradition from the origins: they did not have such a tradition. There was therefore a break in the transmission. The conjectures that suggest a meaning were essentially formed by Tabari in 896, nearly three hundred years after Muhammad's death.

But the basis of all the aberrations of (traditional) Islam are mainly the 1,600,000 hadiths collected by tradition (according to a former president of the University of Tehran, only 40 are really genuine). The hadith, perhaps even more than the Quran, is the fundamental building block of Islamic theology and thought. Not only are hadiths to be found in books of hadiths, but in any Muslim religious work: speculative theology (kalam), mysticism (tasawwuf), ethics and law (fiqh), etiquette (adab). These apocryphal hadiths have been gathered by a number of imams or scholars called traditionalists, in collections of which the best known are called "sahih" or "sunnan".

1) Writing using diacritical marks.

MEDIEVAL CHRISTIAN POINT OF VIEW.

The Byzantine world and the Christian Church in the East established links with Islam as soon as it appeared. and contrary to what one might think, contemporary Byzantine scholars of the beginnings of Islam enough quickly got wide knowledge of the content of the Muslim religion, drawing their information directly or indirectly from the very sources of the teaching of Islam (Quran, Sira *, hadith). At the same time, their inability to recognize Islam as a new religion appears. Convinced of the absolute truth of the Christian revelation, they deepen their knowledge of Islam to reveal the weak points that will help to fight it and refute its teaching.

On the basis of this theme set, we can distinguish three main phases of writing on Islam in the Byzantine era.

-The first begins shortly before the middle of the eighth century and extends until the first decades of the ninth century. The earliest writings of this period come from Syria and are written by Hellenized Fathers, such as John Damascene (+755) and Theodore Abu Qurra, bishop of Harran in Mesopotamia (+825), before experiencing a major development in Constantinople.

-The second phase of the confrontation of Byzantine scholars with Islam began in the first decades of the ninth century and ended in the middle of the fourteenth century. Constantinople, seat of the Byzantine Empire, becomes the center of the production of these writings, unlike the previous phase, ushered in at Damascus, an important Hellenistic center of letters and arts, which will become the capital of the first Islamic Caliphate of the Umayyads (661-750).

-The third phase of communication about Islam began in the middle of the fourteenth century and ended with the fall of the Byzantine Empire (1453). In the present chapter we will study the main authors and their writings from the first two phases because they are historical testimonies, contrary to Muslim traditions. They are testimonies free from the caliphal compulsion, which are not the case of Muslim traditions.

Homilies of Sophronius, 634.

Letter by Theodore, 637.

Doctrina Jacobi, 640.

Chronicle of Thomas the Presbyter, 634.

Khuzistan Chronicle , also known as anonymous Guidi's Chronicle. Middle of the 7th century.

Controversy of 644 between the Jacobite Patriarch of Syria John I and the Emir Said ibn Amir, 644.

Arculf's account , 670.

Jacob of Edessa 640-708.

Pseudo Sebeos, late 7th.

John of Damascus, 676-749.

Chronicle of Theophanes – 811.

Theophanes the Confessor (about 760-818) was a descendant of an illustrious family of the Byzantine Empire. Born in Constantinople, he entered early a monastery and fought for the restoration of the cult of images, what him imprisonment under Leo V (813-820), then exile on the island of Samothrace where he died in 818. His Chronography, which is the continuation of the chronography of his friend George Syncelus , opens with the accession to the throne in Rome of Diocletian (248) and ends with the end of the reign of Michael I Rangabe (811-813). In his Chronography, Theophanes devotes a small chapter to Islam and Muhammad. It deals extensively with the life of Muhammad and more briefly with the Quran. This is neither an apology for Christianity turned against Islam, nor a treatise on the teaching of the Quran. Theophanes is mainly interested in the conditions in which the prophetic consciousness of Muhammad developed and the appearance of Islam, to explain the clashes between the Byzantines and Muslims. It begins with the announcement of the death of Muhammad followed by Abu Bakr under which begins the attack by Arab Muslims of the countries surrounding Arabia. He then continues with a brief mention of the genealogy, life and appearance of Muhammad as a prophet. Theophanes is the first to mention the epilepsy of Muhammad, favorite subject of later Byzantine writings on Islam, and assumes that the difficulties in his marriage with Khadija, because of his epilepsy, his meetings with Jews and Christians during his travels in Palestine, as well as the erroneous teachings he received from a Christian heretical monk exiled to Arabia, explain the conditions in which the prophetic awareness of Muhammad, thus the rise of Islam, developed. He writes that after their marriage, Khadija was very upset by the discovery of the (epileptic) state of Muhammad. The latter, to console her, told him that, visited by the angel Gabriel, whose sight he could not bear, he fell to the ground unconscious. Deeply disturbed, she went to seek advice from an exiled monk because of his heretical faith (Waraka ibn Nawfal)). He assured him that the angel Gabriel

was manifesting in the same way to all the prophets. Many of Théophanes' points of view will be taken over later by Byzantine historians.

This Chronography of Theophanes is therefore a fundamental source for the events that occurred in the 7th and 8th centuries, as well as the main Greek source for the dating of the first clashes between Arabs and Byzantines. The narrative of the Arab-Byzantine wars is succinct, but precise. The specialists of the Arab world began by misrepresenting or misinterpreting the information he gave, which, to a certain extent, restores the true sequence of events.

During this first phase, the theologians of Syria who were already living under Islamic rule had got an immediate and living knowledge of the Islamic religion and had grasped the fundamental points of the relations and differences between the Christian and Muslim teachings, while refusing to accept Islam as a new religion.

1. John Damascene or John of Damascus.

This great theologian of Christianity in the East (680-755), to whom we owe a synthesis of the dogmatic teaching of the Eastern Orthodox Church, knew perfectly well Greek, in addition to his mother tongue, Arabic. Before becoming monk he had served, like his father Sergius, at the Umayyad court in Damascus, presumably as the high financial adviser of the Muslim empire.

For John Damascene, who read the Quran in the original and has soaked up its spirit, Islam is primarily a Christian or Judeo-Christian heresy and therefore has no legitimacy. Among the many works that he wrote, we can distinguish his great dogmatic work "the Fount of Knowledge" designed in three parts, in the form of a trilogy:

- a) Dialectics or philosophical chapters.
- b) On Heresies.
- c) Exposition of the Orthodox faith.

In the "On Heresies" which is the second part of this trilogy, John of Damascus included a chapter on Islam which he analyzes as a "Christian heresy", the 101st. The refutation of the teachings of Islam, which reveals a thorough knowledge of the Muslim religion, is also developed in two dialogues that have the title Dialogue between a Saracen and a Christian. In this work, the father of the Eastern Church develops the Christian points of view on the Word of God, that is to say Jesus Christ, Son of God and Word of God embodied, the second person of the Holy Trinity, in opposition to the Muslim teaching for which the Quran is the Word of God eternal and uncreated.

The opinion of John Damascene on Islam was decisive for the theology of Eastern Christianity. The spiritual authority of John of Damascus in the Eastern Christian Church, as well as the high office he had held at the Umayyad court, gave a decisive authority on his judgment of Islam. The Damascene is the first to bring forth a tradition that will later grow, namely that Muhammad met a monk of the Arian heresy, who would have transmitted his doctrine to him, on the basis of which he developed his own heresy.

* Life of Muhammad.

THE SUPERSTITION OF THE ISHMAELITES 1).

There is also the superstition of the Ishmaelites which to this day prevails and keeps people in error, being a forerunner of the Antichrist. They are descended from Ishmael, [who] was born to Abraham of Agar, and for this reason they are called both Agarenes and Ishmaelites. They are also called Saracens, which is derived from Sarras kenoi, or destitute of Sara, because of what Agar said to the angel: 'Sara hath sent me away destitute.' These used to be idolaters and worshiped the morning star and Aphrodite, whom in their own language they called Khabar, which means great.

And so down to the time of Heraclius they were very great idolaters. From that time to the present a false prophet named Mohammed has appeared in their midst. This man, after having chanced upon the Old and New Testaments and likewise, it seems, having conversed with an Arian monk, devised his own heresy. Then, having insinuated himself into the good graces of the people by a show of seeming piety, he gave out that a certain book had been sent down to him from heaven. He had set down some ridiculous compositions in this book of his and he gave it to them as an object of veneration.

He says that there is one God, creator of all things, who has neither been begotten nor has begotten. He says that the Christ is the Word of God and His Spirit, but a creature and a servant, and that He was begotten, without seed, of Mary the sister of Moses and Aaron. For, he says, the Word and God and the Spirit entered into Mary and she brought forth Jesus, who was a prophet and servant of God. And he says that the Jews wanted to crucify Him in violation of the law, and that they seized His shadow and crucified this. But the Christ Himself was not crucified, he says, nor did He die, for God out of His love for Him took Him to Himself into heaven. And he says this, that when the Christ had ascended into heaven God asked Him: 'O Jesus, did you say: "I am the Son of God and God"?' And Jesus, he says, answered: 'Be merciful to me, Lord. You know that I did not say this and that I did not scorn to be thy servant. But sinful men have written that I made this statement, and they have lied about me and have fallen into the error.' And God answered and said to Him: 'I know that you did not say this word.'

There are many other extraordinary and quite ridiculous things in this book which he boasts was sent down to him from God. But when we ask: 'And who is there to testify that God gave him the book? And which of the prophets foretold that such a prophet would rise up?'—they are at a loss. And we remark that Moses received the Law on Mount Sinai, with God appearing in the sight of all the people in cloud, and fire, and darkness, and storm. And we say that all the Prophets from Moses on down foretold the coming of Christ and how Christ God (and incarnate Son of God) was to come and to be crucified and die and rise again, and how He was to be the judge of the living and dead. Then, when we say: 'How is it that this prophet of yours did not come in the same way, with others bearing witness to him? And how is it that God did not in your presence present this man with the book to which you refer, even as He gave the Law to Moses, with the people looking on and the mountain smoking, so that you, too, might have certainty?'—they answer that God does as He pleases. 'This,' we say, 'We know, but we are asking how the book came down to your prophet.' Then they reply that the book came down to him while he was asleep. Then we jokingly say to them that, as long as he received the book in his sleep and did not actually sense the operation, then the popular adage applies to him (which runs: You're spinning me dreams).

When we ask again: 'How is it that when he enjoined us in this book of yours not to do anything or receive anything without witnesses, you did not ask him: "First do you show us by witnesses that you are a prophet and that you have come from God, and show us just what Scriptures there are that testify about you"?'—they are ashamed and remain silent. [Then we continue:] 'Although you may not marry a wife without witnesses, or buy, or acquire property; although you neither receive an ass nor possess a beast of burden unwitnessed; and although you do possess both wives and property and asses and so on through witnesses, yet it is only your faith and your scriptures that you hold unsubstantiated by witnesses. For he who handed this down to you has no warranty from any source, nor is there anyone known who testified about him before he came. On the contrary, he received it while he was asleep.'

Moreover, they call us Hetaeriasts, or Associators, because, they say, we introduce an associate with God by declaring Christ to be the Son of God and God. We say to them in rejoinder: 'The Prophets and the Scriptures have delivered this to us, and you, as you persistently maintain, accept the Prophets. So, if we wrongly declare Christ to be the Son of God, it is they who taught this and handed it on to us.' But some of them say that it is by misinterpretation that we have represented the Prophets as saying such things, while others say that the Hebrews hated us and deceived us by writing in the name of the Prophets so that we might be lost. And again we say to them: 'As long as you say that Christ is the Word of God and Spirit, why do you accuse us of being associators? For the word, and the spirit, is inseparable from that in which it naturally has existence. Therefore, if the Word of God is in God, then it is obvious that He is God. If, however, He is outside of God, then, according to you, God is without word and without spirit. Consequently, by avoiding the introduction of an associate with God you have mutilated Him. It would be far better for you to say that He has an associate than to mutilate Him, as if you were dealing with a stone or a piece of wood or some other inanimate object. Thus, you speak untruly when you call us associators; we retort by calling you Mutilators of God.'

They furthermore accuse us of being idolaters, because we venerate the cross, which they abominate. And we answer them: 'How is it, then, that you rub yourselves against a stone in your Ka'ba and kiss and embrace it?' Then some of them say that Abraham had relations with Agar upon it, but others say that he tied the camel to it, when he was going to sacrifice Isaac. And we answer them: 'Since Scripture says that the mountain was wooded and had trees from which Abraham cut wood for the holocaust and laid it upon Isaac, and then he left the asses behind with the two young men, why talk nonsense? For in that place neither is it thick with trees nor is there passage for asses.' And they are embarrassed, but they still assert that the stone is Abraham's. Then we say: 'Let it be Abraham's, as you so foolishly say. Then, just because Abraham had relations with a woman on it or tied a camel to it, you are not ashamed to kiss it, yet you blame us for venerating the cross of Christ by which the power of the demons and the deceit of the Devil was destroyed.' This stone that they talk about is a head of that Aphrodite whom they used to worship and whom they called Khabar. Even to the present day, traces of the carving are visible on it to careful observers.

As has been related, this Mohammed wrote many ridiculous books, to each one of which he set a title. For example, there is the book *On Woman*, in which he plainly makes legal provision for taking four wives and, if it be possible, a thousand concubines—as many as one can maintain, besides the four wives. He also made it legal to put away whichever wife one might wish, and, should one so wish, to take to oneself another in the same way. Mohammed had a friend named Zeid. This man had a beautiful wife with whom Mohammed fell in love. Once, when they were sitting together, Mohammed said: 'Oh, by the way, God has commanded me to take your wife.' The other answered: 'You are an apostle. Do as God has told you and take my wife.' Rather—to tell the story over from the beginning—he said to him: 'God has given me the command that you put away your wife.' And he put her away. Then several days later: 'Now,' he said, 'God has commanded me to take her.' Then, after he had taken her and committed adultery with her, he made this law: 'Let him who will put away his wife. And if, after having put her away, he should return to her, let another marry her. For it is not lawful to take her unless she have been married by another. Furthermore, if a brother puts away his wife, let his brother marry her, should he so wish.' In the same book, he gives such precepts as this: 'Work the land which God hath given thee and beautify it. And do this, and do it in such a manner' —not to repeat all the obscene things that he did.

Then there is the book of *The Camel of God*. About this camel he says that there was a camel from God and that she drank the whole river and could not pass through two mountains, because there was not room enough. There were people in that place, he says, and they used to drink the water on one day, while the camel would drink it on the next. Moreover, by drinking the water she furnished them with nourishment, because she supplied them with milk instead of water. Then, because these men were evil, they rose up, he says, and killed the camel. However, she had an offspring, a little camel, which, he says, when the mother had been done away with, called upon God and God took it to Himself. Then we say to them: 'Where did that camel come from?' And they say that it was from God. Then we say: 'Was there another camel coupled with this one?' And they say: 'No.' 'Then how,' we say, 'was it begotten? For we see that your camel is without a father and without a mother and without genealogy, and that the one that begot it suffered evil. Neither is it evident who bred her. And also, this little camel was taken up. So why did not your prophet, with whom, according to what you say, God spoke, find out about the camel—where it grazed, and who got milk by milking it? Or did she possibly, like her mother, meet with evil people and get destroyed? Or did she enter into paradise before you, so that you might have the river of milk that you so foolishly talk about? For you say that you have three rivers flowing in paradise—one of water, one of wine, and one of milk. If your forerunner the camel is outside of paradise, it is obvious that she has dried up from hunger and thirst, or that others have the benefit of her milk—and so your prophet is boasting idly of having conversed with God, because God did not reveal to him the mystery of the camel. But if she is in paradise, she is drinking water still, and you for lack of water will dry up in the midst of the paradise of delight. And if, there being no water, because the camel will have drunk it all up, you thirst for wine from the river of wine that is flowing by, you will become intoxicated from drinking pure wine and collapse under the influence of the strong drink and fall asleep. Then, suffering from a heavy head after sleeping and being sick from the wine, you will miss the pleasures of paradise. How, then, did it not enter into the mind of your prophet that this might happen to you in the paradise of delight? He never had any idea of what the camel is leading to now, yet you did not even ask him, when he held forth to you with his dreams on the subject of the three rivers. We plainly assure you that this wonderful camel of yours has preceded you into the souls of asses, where you, too, like beasts are destined to go. And there is the exterior darkness and everlasting punishment, roaring fire, sleepless worms, and hellish demons.'

Again, in the book of *The Table*, Mohammed says that the Christ asked God for a table and that it was given Him. For God, he says, said to Him: 'I have given to thee and thine an incorruptible table.'

And again, in the book of *The Heifer*, he says some other stupid and ridiculous things, which, because of their great number, I think must be passed over.

He made it a law that they be circumcised and the women, too, and he ordered them not to keep the Sabbath and not to be baptized. And, while he ordered them to eat some of the things forbidden by the Law, he ordered them to abstain from others. He furthermore absolutely forbade the drinking of wine.

CONCLUSION.

The second great doctor of Syrian Christians, Theodore Abu Qurrah (750-825), understood better the spirit of Islam and approached it more methodically (Theodore Abu Qurrah, *Refutation of the Jews and of the Saracens*). Later to John Damascene, Abu Qurrah, bishop of Harran in northern Mesopotamia (circa 750-825), entered St. Sabbas monastery where he devoted himself to the prayer and the study of works and spiritual teaching of John Damascene, whose memory was still particularly vivid at the monastery. It is in this sense that he is considered a disciple of John of Damascus. A fervent defender of the orthodox faith, Abu Qurrah was also an important figure of letters. His profound knowledge of Arabic, Greek and Latin made him able to develop an intense activity as a translator and to transmit to the Arabs an important part of the Greek letters. He is the first to translate Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* into Arabic. His preserved writings, mainly theological, are written in Arabic, and some fragments in Greek. His "Refutation of the Saracens," written in the form of dialogue, is the first attempt to understand the nature of Islam, which he approaches as a totally new teaching.

The contribution of John Damascene and Theodore Abu Qurrah of Harran to this first relationship with Islam appears particularly important, not only for Christians, but also for Muslims. These defenders of Christian belief, by systematically refuting the doctrines of Islam, provoked the Muslim theologians, and forced them to methodically develop their own theology, adopting the method and argumentative logic of Christian theology, as well as the Greek speech, and notably Aristotelian, which, from the end of the eighth century, spread through translations into Arabic in the Islamic world.

This first phase of confrontation with Islam took place in Damascus, and in the monastery of St. Sabbas in Palestine, that is to say in the heart of the Umayyad Islamic power. Although the Islamic world at that time was on the warpath and in a phase of expansion, a liberal spirit dominated in spiritual exchanges. If the (unimaginable today) freedom and audacity of language used by the two writers mentioned are also considered, we may think that the relations between Christians and Muslims, even under Islamic rule, experimented a period of relaxation. While the borders of the two Byzantine and Islamic empires were periodically the scene of intense tension, the Christians under Islamic rule, under the protection of the caliph, enjoyed the relative freedom offered by their status as dhimmi (protected), thus allowing the scholars to undertake the translation of the works of Greek philosophers and writers into Arabic.

1) The fact for the author of this compilation of quoting Theodore Qurrah and John Damascene at this point in his essay on or, more precisely, against Islam, as a religious ideology, does not mean that he is a Christian. He was, of course, a Catholic in his early youth (always first in the catechism, learned by heart by leaving school) but his thinking is evolving now and for a long time in an isosceles triangle whose angles are atheism (categorical regarding the god of Abraham Isaac and Jacob) agnosticism and pantheism (we will all go to heaven).

QURAN AND MODERN EXEGESIS.

Contrary to popular belief, it seems that what we currently call the Quran, that is to say the text set in 1924 under the government of King Fuad I HAS A HISTORY. It is far from containing everything that was once considered part of divine revelation, and it may also contain texts subsequent to Muhammad. The third Caliph Uthman was not the first to carry out this kind of manipulation, besides. The Uthmanian corpus is nevertheless today the obligatory starting point for any study of the Quran, the rest having been burned at his request.

The Quran contains a large number of incomprehensible words or having an uncertain meaning. In total, about 20% of the Quran is incomprehensible, and 10% obscure or uncertain. The Quran itself takes note of its own difficulties, and declares that interpretative conjectures are uncertain): "No one but God knows the interpretation of the Book" (Holy Quran, Chapter 3. Verse 7).

These obscurities do not come only from the initial absence of diacritical signs and vowels, they also have another source: many words and grammatical turns of the Quran are unknown to classical Arabic. Scholars have tried to form reasonable conjectures. For certain turns, there are up to twelve different conjectures, none of which imposes itself. To justify these conjectures, there are sometimes more than thirty explanatory propositions, incompatible with one another. The Muslim tradition has mostly made a choice among conjectures, for reasons of convenience rather than reason. But Muslim commentators, overwhelmed by incomprehensible obscurities, often end their comments with an admission of ignorance: wa Allahu a'lam: God only knows!

Islamic scholars have sought to understand the existence of so many irremediable obscurities.

One of the explanations is that they come from the Meccan dialect, now lost.

Another explanation, as official as the forgetting of the dialect of Mecca, is that the Quran was written by God in the perfect Arabic of the paradise. On earth, men are by nature imperfect, they speak an imperfect earthly Arab. The difference between perfect Arabic and imperfect Arabic explains both that the Quran is inimitable, and that it contains incomprehensible grammatical words and phrases.

For modern scholars, an often-proposed explanation would be that the Quran uses an archaic Arabic today forgotten.

These three explanations have a lot in common.

All recognize that the obscurities of the Quran come from a foreign language present in this book. This is obvious because 30% of the Quranic verses contain grammatical words and suffixes that do not belong to classical Arabic (this figure is given by Christoph Luxenberg).

All attempt to reconcile this obviousness with the Islamic tradition that the Quran is pure Arabic. They imagine that the foreign language in question is a variant of Arabic, that of Mecca, or of the paradise, or from before Islam.

In all three cases, these variants of Arabic are totally unknown: there is not a single document, not a single oral tradition, neither in the Arabic-speaking countries, nor in those around them, which give a single word of these hypothetical variants. In particular, the pre-Islamic Arabic poems that do not give a single word or a single grammatical suffix to illuminate the obscurities of the Quran.

Lastly, all still have in common to avoid the main problem: how could the knowledge of this foreign language have disappeared? This language was in principle known to the first listeners of the Quran. How is it that it is lost, whereas the Quran is, since the origin of Islam, the sacred text of Muslims? The transmission of the language of the Quran has been continuous, as for Latin. But Latin has not been lost, although no people have spoken it for a millennium and a half because it is a religious language. Ge'ez, Hebrew, Mandaeen, Slavonic, and many other religious languages, have passed through centuries while remaining intact. The language of the Quran cannot have been lost, even partially, because it has been used religiously since the beginning. That a large number of grammatical words and phrases are now incomprehensible or uncertain is a problem. Given the history of other religious languages, the hypothesis of forgetfulness or hazard of history has no likelihood.

But this knowledge disappeared very early, because Tabari did not have it in 896 when he tried to understand the obscurities of the Quran; nor the grammarians who added the vowels soon after 800, nor Hajjaj the Iraqi governor who introduced the diacritics in 694.

The situation of languages in the Middle East in the seventh century.

At the time of Muhammad, Arabic was not a language of culture, nor an international language. For more than a thousand years, throughout the Middle East, the language of culture was Aramaic. International relations, especially trade, were in Aramaic, and Muhammad, a merchant, probably spoke it in this respect. The Arab scholars, few in number, spoke in Arabic and wrote in Aramaic. The same situation as the seventh-century European scholars, who spoke in their vernacular language, but

who wrote in Latin. Hence the presence of words of Latin origin not only in Latin languages, but also in Germanic languages, such as German or English, and even in Slavic languages. If we lose the meaning of all words of Latin origin, all the English texts of today would become incomprehensible, as well as a good part of those in German, and also a certain number of sentences in Russian texts. The language of the Quran contains as much Aramaic as German language contains Latin.

Many scholars have realized the presence of Aramaic in the Quran. Thus, to name only the best known, Sigmund Frankel, Theodor Nodelke, Alphonse Mingana. However, within the accepted tradition, they and their contemporaries considered that the identified Aramaisms had no general meaning. But this conclusion is contrary to the facts they themselves have highlighted, and given the role of Aramaic at the time, contrary to the likelihood. The Islamic tradition about the Quran written in Arabic has the same blinding effect as that pointed by Patricia Crone about the traditions on Mecca. Widening of the terms of reference.

For a non-Arab, it is already difficult to learn Arabic, with all its subtleties and ancient forms, in order to study the Quran in its text. Learning more Aramaic in addition, with all its grammatical complexity, archaic forms and variants, East Syrian and West-Syrian, is an enormous additional effort, of which we cannot know in advance how useful it will be. This is why the study of neighboring languages, though widespread among modern exegetes of other ancient books, including the Bible, has not yet been systematically applied to the Quran.

A German linguist, Christoph Luxenberg, nevertheless followed this path in a methodical manner, and much more complete than his predecessors. He showed fecundity of it: many obscurities and nonsense in the Quran are enlightened in this way if we seek the meaning of words and grammatical turns not in the Arabic language, but in Aramaic spoken in Syria .

Fragments of a very ancient Quran have recently been found in Sana'a, Yemen. They are fifty years old after the death of Muhammad. They are without diacritic marks or vowels. They include massive aramaisms, which have been removed from later versions. This confirms that the original Quran was written under a strong Aramaic influence, and that the most noticeable aramaisms were then deliberately eliminated. Words and incomprehensible forms were not lost, but deliberately excluded. This is why the Islamic tradition insists so much on the fact that the Quran is pure Arabic.

The words and grammatical forms of one language pass into another when they designate objects or ideas that one people borrows from another. The large number of terms and forms coming from Syrian-Aramaic in the language of the Quran, whereas these terms and forms are absent from the usual Arabic; means that the writers of the Quran have borrowed a large number of ideas and stories from a Syrian-Aramean system. The caravan drivers and the travelers would have introduced words and grammatical forms of Syrian Aramaic origin in the usual Arabic, and not only in the Quran alone. According to the analysis put forward by Christoph Luxenberg, based on the hymns of Ephrem the Syrian; for example, in Islamic paradise there would be "white grapes," "as clear as the day," rather than virgins with doe eyes always consenting (the houris). For Luxenberg, the context is clear: it is food and drink that are offered, not girls.

In Syriac, the word "hour" is a plural feminine adjective meaning white, in which the word "grape" is implicit. The immortal youth or pearl-like girls described by chapters, such as the 56 one, would be born from a misinterpretation of a Syriac expression meaning "fresh grapes" (or "drinks"); that those who have deserved Paradise will have the pleasure of tasting, as opposed boiling beverages for infidels and damned. The verse that promises 70 virgins to martyrs arriving in paradise would speak for example, in fact, only about "fruits white like crystal" instead of "wide-eyed virgins"! What changes everything indeed! But is such an error possible? The traditional meaning given to this verse is much more likely (rough psychology of brute soldiers who, moreover, are from tribes with intense machismo, taking sexually the notion of "well-earned rest").

In any case, it is not up to us, barbarian druids of the Far-West, to settle such quarrels between specialists.

All that can be said is that Luxenberg's method is purely philological, it consists in explaining the obscure passages of the Quran without trusting commentators, grammarians and lexicographers. This does not mean that he ignores them because he constantly refers to them. That means he's using them against the lie of the hair. All depend indeed on knowing in which language the Quran is written. In Arabic, as it says itself? Of course. But what Arabic? Is it the common language that made possible the literary contests of the pre-Islamic poets at the fairs of Ukaz? Or a mixed language with a high proportion of elements from the Meccan dialect? For Luxenberg, the Arabic of the Quran is certainly not the official Arabic, as it will be formed by the grammarians of the following centuries. It is an intermediate language, the result of a mixture of Arabic and Syriac, which for centuries has been the language of culture of the Syrian-Iraqi space (the Jazirah). The grammarians reasoned from classical

Arabic, whose Quran was supposed to be the inimitable masterpiece. So they were trying to explain things that are, in fact, not bad Arabic, but good Syriac. The application of this method gives the texts a more convincing meaning. The sentences slip more harmoniously into their context. Many weird details arriving at the worst possible moments, vanish. Everyone knows the houris, these virgins of the Muslim paradise that feed so many fantasies. As we have seen above, their existence is not without arousing some difficulties. The texts themselves are not clear, starting with the word "houris" itself. It comes from hur, commonly understood as meaning "white" as for the "eyes." Now, beautiful eyes cannot be white. Christians often draw arguments from the houris to blame the Muslims for their grossly materialistic paradise. Some Muslims pull through by discreetly allegorizing. Others, like Avicenna, argue that the paradise promised to Christians - the vision of God - could certainly be suitable for a people of philosophers, but that it is too bland to motivate hard fighters and that tangible things are necessary for people. With Luxenberg goodbye to the houris therefore and let us make way for the bunches of white grapes. What a pity ! As heavenly joys, the Quran would know only drinking and eating, nothing more. On this point it does not deviate from the symbolism of the eschatological feast, present in the earlier Scriptures. Even, it accurately repeats a current imagery in the Christian East, especially in the hymns about the paradise of an author who was widely read in the original background of the Quran, the father of the Syriac Church, St. Ephrem of Nisibis. The Quran, as Luxenberg restores it, proves thus to contain allusions to Christian prayers, not to say quotations from them.

Other chapters, such as 73 and 74, make a similar sound. They can be read as exhortations to prayer, especially to evening prayer, which would form a kind of monastic rule. See about this subject the works of Gerd R. Puin.

There follows a capital consequence as to the very nature of the Quran, taken as a whole.

The ORIGINAL Quran of the BEGINNINGS was what its name says very precisely once it is understood from Syriac: a lectionary; that is to say, an anthology, AT LEAST PARTIALLY, of passages from pre-existing and adapted in the vernacular language, holy books, an anthology made for liturgical reading. This is stated in the beginning of chapter 12, which tells the story of Joseph " A. L. R. These are verse of the Scripture that makes plain. Lo! We have revealed it, a Lecture in Arabic, that you may understand" (verses 1-2).

The Quran did not pretend to replace the Bible, but to provide an intelligible version of it to the Arabs of the time. It did not present itself as a recent revelation.

But although originally a lectionary, the Quran has become something else.

The current Quran contains, for example, legal precepts; such as those who enjoin the cutting of thieves' hands (5:33), humiliating non-Muslims living in Dar al Islam (in the land of Islam) when they pay their specific tax (9:29); it indicates how to share the spoils of looting (8:41), it exhorts, argues, incites to war (9:73, 66:9), etc. It is now therefore much more than a lectionary.

Another problem, that of the link of the Quranic texts with the person of Muhammad or the events told in his traditional biography. This link, which seems a priori massive, has in reality in the Quran itself very fine textual bases. Let us point for example, that the names on which the biography of Muhammad is focused appear only rarely: Mecca only once (48: 24). Yathrib (later Medina) only once (33 : 13), The Quraysh only once (106: 1) the very name of Muhammad twice (3: 144; 47: 2). All other identifications belong to the later tradition.

It may be that some texts in reality predate Muhammad, who would have taken them over, simply. It had already been suspected for some brief texts, like the last two chapters, which are magic formulas. The suras at the end of the Quran (69 to 114) are generally considered to belong to the oldest ones. They are characterized by their own peculiarities. They are brief, seem to come from oracular proclamations (which does not mean, however, that they are recordings of them), they contain many hapaxes...

Although acknowledging their antiquity, some authors refuse to call them "meccan," because this presupposes a context and a version of the genesis of the Quranic corpus that is not solved. This approach is speculative.

Indeed, these texts are not a simple stenographic transcription of proclamations but are written texts, often opaque, with layers of composition and rewritings. This does not prevent these suras from providing contextual elements (such as the expectation of an imminent End of Time among the followers of Muhammad). These texts are marked by a form of piety dependent on Eastern Christianity. These suras constitute the oldest part of the Quran (in contradiction to the majority order accepted by Muslim commentators) which is addressed, in a succinct and homogeneous style, to the men of the tribe of Muhammad (the Quraysh) who are asked to submit to the Rabb al-Bayt, the "Lord of the Mecca House" where they had settled some one hundred and fifty years before the revelation and

who provided them with food and protection, functions characteristic of the Rabb(s) in the old local tribal societies.

More generally, how can we not remain thoughtful about the decision of the caliph Uthman (644 - 654 or 656) to draw up an official text intended to supplant all the other texts spread among the first Muslim groups? And how not to wonder when we learn that the oldest manuscripts of the Quran are those of the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, dated back only to the ninth century, that is to say two centuries after Muhammad?

All this suggests that the Quran, as we know it today, is not a sufficient source for the knowledge of Islam, and that Islam is previous to it and it is obvious besides that many Muslim rites are of pagan origin.

The tradition mentions variants, omissions or interpolations in the writing of the Quran, and that already during the lifetime of Muhammad. A hadith mentioned by the famous commentator Bukhari, reports the following anecdote. "The Prophet heard a man reciting the Quran in the mosque and said, "May God bestow His Mercy on him, as he has reminded me of such-and-such Verses of such a chapter" (Sahih Bukhari Vol. 6, Book 61, hadith 556).

But there have been other interpolations.

An example. The chapter "The table spread": Chapter No. 5.

How is it that, in the same chapter, on the one hand, believers are encouraged to make friends among Christians (verse 82); and that, on the other hand, these same believers are warned against any link with these same Christians (verse 51)?

The chanting the Quranic text provides the solution of the problem.

When we sing verse 51, we immediately realize that the mention of the Christians (wa-n-nasara, "and the nasara") breaks the rhythm of the phrasing completely. It is a mere and simple addition, the original text probably contented itself with pointing out the Jews (al-yahuda). The phrase in question should therefore read: "Do not make friends among the Jews," nothing more. This addition is certainly not a single case but it is one of the most obvious. The Quranic text has certainly been gone back over, reworked, manipulated, several times. The Quran has undergone evolution and variations over time, and this history was possible because the writing of the text, which will become the Quran; has followed the ways of the production, composition, stylization, and rectification.

The first difficulty of this book is, first of all, its meaning, even for Arabic speakers. The interpretations of the Persians converted to Islam continue to guide those of the contemporaries, but a massive fact remains. The oldest dated Muslim sources we have on the early history of Islam don't go back less than two centuries after the events they claim to tell. The commentators claim to enlighten the verses from the context in which they were revealed (asbab al-nuzul). But we know nothing of what is called to know, of the circumstances in question. It may very well have been invented precisely to account for texts become incomprehensible: Islamic books have largely built the biography [of Muhammad] to explain different passages of the Quran. It is the quirks of the Quranic text that are behind these biographical details, and not the contrary.

It is necessary at all costs, to understand the original meaning, to avoid anachronisms, and to be wary like of the plague of meaning that later commentators have given, or still give, to these verses. On the other hand, the few non-Muslim (Christian or Jewish) sources contemporary with the facts, present to a rather different view of them.

The works of poets previous to Islam are also an obligatory reference for non-Arab, and later two-century commentators, of whom we have spoken. They try to explain Quranic terms by their use among the ancient pagan or Christian poets. But it often happens that we explain the obscure by obscurest still. They interpret a passage in an ante-Islamic poem in the light of the text of the Quran that they want to clarify.

It is important to find the real meaning of certain words. The Arabic term nasara, which we mentioned a little earlier, is systematically translated as "Christian," but is it right to do so? As we have seen in our essay on Judaism, the Nazarenes were a well-identified Jewish sect, which was only later related to the character Jesus. Some translators, and not least, are satisfied with a simple transliteration of the term into "Nazarenes," to also signify the Judeo-Christian sect in question. Judeo-Christianity, if it has disappeared from the Christian Church, may have been partly persisted in Islam.

Christians in the current meaning of the term were called by the designation "Rum," which is politico-religious, since it means Romans (Byzantines). But there is especially the very designation mushrikun, which means "associators " (hetaeriasts in John of Damascus). Presenting the Trinitarian belief as an association of three deities, that is to say, as a kind of polytheism, was, in fact, a common way of

thinking or speaking in Rabbinic Judaism, and certainly also in the "Judeo-Christian" movement. Christians supporting the notion of Holy Trinity were exaggeratedly equated with pagans (goyim), since they gave partners to God (Jesus and the Spirit): but is it not here a kind of polytheism (of tritheism more exactly)? The Quran says nothing else, not without irony often, an irony that betrays a very human origin. Where mushrikun ("associators") are concerned, they are equated with pagans Christians who are targeted, not only the polytheists.

John of Damascus around 746 and Bartholomew of Edessa later still, indicated it very clearly. In his Book of Heresies, the first stated: "They (the Muslims) call us Hetaerists or Associators because, they say, we introduce an associate with God by declaring Christ to be the son of God and God"; then, addressing them fictitiously, he added: "Why do you accuse us of being Associators? ". This is very precisely what we read for example in chapter 4 to verse 48. Traduttore traditore, is it often said. There are very difficult chapters in the Quran for today mind. Here is a brief example of 1869 Albert Biberstein-Kasimirski's translation: the chapter called Al-Rum in Arabic. This word is translated as Romans. But Kasimirski himself conveyed it by Greek, because the part of the Roman Empire concerned at that time was the Byzantine Empire. Was he wrong ?? . Although the translation of the Quran is problematic, as any translation, we said, the latter was translated very early, at least partially. The first chapter, the Fatiha, was translated during Muhammad's lifetime by one of his companions, Salman, to be recited as a prayer by Persians. Moreover, it is not impossible that some texts of the Quran are already only translations into Arabic Koiné of texts in Syriac or Aramaic, the great language of written communication at the time in the East. Qaryana, moreover, means "lectionary" in Syriac and the fatiha could very well have been a Judeo-Christian prayer at the beginning.

But let us return to the problem of translations of the Quran.

A complete translation into Persian was established in 956. Jafar ibn Abi Talib, brother of Ali, translated some verses about Jesus and Mary in the Ge'ez language (classical Ethiopian), on the occasion of an embassy to the Christian sovereign of Ethiopia, the Negus. Finally, the abbot of Cluny, Peter the Venerable, had it translated into Latin in 1141, during a stay in Toledo. On the French-speaking side, we can also mention the translation and the works of Regis Blachere in 1949, even if we admit having had some difficulty in finding our way. We are not a French teacher far from it.

We must warn our readers against the incredible blindness afflicting many of the translators of the Quran, even when they give a good account of the general meaning of the text. Man being what he is, that is, made to be schizophrenic, illogical or hemiplegic of the brain (even intelligent and educated men often have a field where their instruction and intelligence cease to function: Mariotte's blind spot);

These translators therefore often find a way to draw from their reading of the Quran very surprising and paradoxical conclusions about God.

For example, the chapter of Jonah (10: 27): "And those who earn ill deeds (for them) requital of each ill deed by the like thereof and ignominy overtake them - They have no protector from God - as if their faces had been covered with a cloak of the darkest night. Such are rightful owners of the Fire; they will abide therein." In a footnote, a translator we prefer not to name, yet sees a sign of the goodness of God. "This is not the only passage of the Quran where, to emphasize the goodness of God, the rewards of the righteous will be more generous than the punishments of the wicked will be severe." The politically or theologically correct of the translator runs up against common sense from simple reading.

N.B. Muslims who contest studies of the Quran made by people who, like us, do not speak Arabic, read the Quran in a translation, should abstain themselves from speaking of the Quran; they are unable to read it in the original text, without vowels or diacritical points, and without the help of conjectures. The edition of the Quran used today is that of Cairo, published in 1926 by Al Azhar University. It took thirteen centuries to get there. The 30% of the text incomprehensible or uncertain are "interpreted" by methods of which some examples were indicated, "black-eyed houris," "teenage houris," or "girls white as to the white part of the eyes." Muslims who believe they are reading a text proclaimed by Muhammad are actually reading a conjectural translation into classical Arabic.

To say that the fundamentalists, the terrorists, bin Laden and his men, misinterpret the Quran, is useless. They can find in it all the justifications for their actions. Islam can become a religion of tolerance and peace only when the Muslims themselves will have permanently erased from the Quran the unworthy verses that are found in it abundantly. The problem is that the Quran is supposed to be the word of God, dictated to the prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel. This makes it an "uncreated" book, eternal and intangible? "69:41 It is not the poet's speech - little is it that you believe!

Nor diviner's speech - little is it that you remember! It is a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds. And if Muhammad had invented false sayings concerning Us, we assuredly had taken him by the right hand and then severed his life artery" (Chapter 69. Verses 41-46). Mankind is therefore in a deadlock. The miracle, we can always dream, would be that one morning Islam turns out to be nothing but an empty shell, with Muslims saying they are Muslims out of habit, but no longer believing in the Quran or the Prophets. This is besides what is feared by fundamentalists who are afraid to see their co-religionists leave the mosque on tiptoe to join the values of the Enlightenment.

THE REPLACEMENT OF MUHAMMAD.

The news of Muhammad's death having spread like wildfire, Abu Bakr went on horseback to the mosque which had been used by him as a headquarters. He did not speak to anyone and went straight to Aisha. On leaving he saw Umar, who told that Muhammad was not dead, but that he had gone to his Lord, as Moses had done, and will return after forty days, that he could not die until God destroyed all the false Muslims (munafiqun). , etc., etc. Abu Bakr told him, "Calm down, Umar. Listen to me ! But as Umar continued to shout with emotion, Abu Bakr spoke directly to the faithful who surrounded him: "Whoever venerated Muhammad should know that the Prophet is dead! And let him who adores God know that God is alive, that he will never die! "

God said, "Muhammad is only a messenger before whom other messengers have already been sent. Will you fall BACK into error if he dies or is killed? He who apostatizes cannot harm God, but God will reward those who give him thanks "(chapter 3 verse 144).

A certain number of the faithful had never heard these verses, or had not retained them.

Umar: "When I heard Abu Bakr recite this verse, my knees buckled and I realized that the Prophet was really dead."

The rivalries of clans then resurfaced with an unheard violence, and the negotiations began to know who would succeed him. They lasted all night.

THE CONCILIABLES AMONG MECCANS.

In the end, it will be therefore the old Abu Bakr who will be chosen. He will take the name of caliph, an Arabic word that means substitute. The institution of the caliphate was born suddenly. No mention was made either in the Quran or in the Sunna concerning this institution, which remained vague in its functions, in its attributions and without its election and appointment formula. It is not strange, therefore, that his history is consequently a series of discords and civil wars. According to a sentence of Shahrastani, no institution has cost Islam more blood than the caliphate.

Abu Bakr was an early believer, a member of the same tribe as Muhammad, the Quraysh. He is not a member of the great families of Mecca, and this is undoubtedly what has earned him to be accepted by all. The fact that Muhammad, sick and diminished, had chosen him in the last days of his life to lead the pilgrimage to Mecca, and to lead the prayer, probably played a part. Not to mention that, considering his age, everyone thought he was also on his last legs. Umar will therefore put forward himself the name of Abu Bakr to succeed Muhammad. Abu Bakr was one of Muhammad's fathers-in-law (he was the father of Aisha, the favorite wife of the Prophet). With him, it is therefore the family-in-law of the Prophet who takes power.

The negotiations led therefore to the marginalization of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad. He was still sitting at the bedside of the deceased. It is said that when he learned of the appointment of Abu Bakr, he arose, and immediately went to Abu Bakr to take an oath. But according to other traditions, he paid homage to him only forty days later; others even say two months; still others after six months. [Editor's note. The margin is nevertheless enormous between the same day and six months. Tabari shows his honesty, or his prudence, mentioning it].

Abu Sufyan said to Ali, "Why do you give up power in the hands of Abu Bakr, who is of the Banu Temim clan, the most insignificant among all the Quraysh clans? As for me, I do not consent. I am going to bring from Mecca an army so numerous that everyone will be appalled. I do not want the power to come down to anyone other than Banu-Ummayya....

When Abu Bakr was informed of the words from Abu Sufyan and his refusal to take an oath; he immediately summoned the eldest son of Abu Sufyan, Yezid, and offered him the government of Syria, as well as neighboring countries, which had passed under the Moslem law. [Editor's note. Yes, but Syria was not yet conquered at the time, so what think about such "information" ??

Having learned of this appointment of his son, Abu Sufyan came in the very evening and took an oath.

THE MEETING IN THE COURTYARD (SAQIFA) OF THE BANU SA'IDA.

Ibn Ishaq, The Life of Muhammad, Guillaume, page 683.

"When the apostle was taken this clan of the Ansar gathered round Sa'd b. Ubada in the hall of B. Sa'ida, and Ali and al Zubayr b. al Awwam and Talha b. Ubaydullah separated themselves in Fatima's house while the rest of the Muhajiroun gathered round Abu Bakr accompanied by Usayd b. Hudayr with the B. Abdu'l Ashhal. Then someone came to Abu Bakr and Umar telling them that this clan of the

Ansar had gathered round Sa'd in the hall of B. Sa'ida. 'If you want to have command of the people, then take it before their action becomes serious.' Now the apostle was still in his house, the burial arrangements not having been completed, and his family had locked the door of the house. 'Umar said, 'I said to Abu Bakr, Let us go to these our brothers of the Ansar to see what they are doing.'

Tabari, History, volume IX, the last years of the prophet.

The Ansar gathered in a building (sagifah) of the Banu Sa'idah to render their oath of allegiance to Sa'd b. Ubadah.

This news reached Abu Bakr, so he came to them with Umar and Abu Ubaydah b. al-Jarrah, asking [them] why [they had gathered].

They replied, "Let us have a ruler (amir) from us and another from you."

Abu Bakr said, "The rulers (umara) will be from us, and the viziers (wuzara) from you."

Abu Bakr then added, "I am pleased [to offer] you one of these two men: Umar or Abu Ubaydah.

Some people came to the Prophet asking him to send a trustworthy man with them. The Messenger of God said that he would send a truly trustworthy man with them, and he sent Abu Ubaydah b. al-Jarrah. I am pleased [to offer] you Abu Ubaydah."

Umar stood up saying, "Who among you would be agreeable to leave Abu Bakr whom the Prophet gave precedence? And he gave him the oath of allegiance. The people followed [Umar]. The Ansar said, or some of them said, "We will not give the oath of allegiance to anyone except Ali."

Tabari, History, volume IX, the last years of the prophet.

"A man suddenly came running and said, "Listen to me, the Ansar have gathered in a building of the Banu Sa'idah to give their oath of allegiance to one of their men.

They say: Let us have a ruler from us and let Quraysh have another from them." Abu Bakr and Umar rushed away (as though each of them led the other) until they came to them. Umar wanted to speak but Abu Bakr stopped him so he said, "I will not disobey the Prophet's successor (khalifah) twice in a day."

Abu Bakr spoke and did not leave out anything that was either revealed about the Ansar or was said by the Messenger of God with regard to their qualities. He said, "You know that the Messenger of God said, 'If the people took one way and the Ansar another, I would take Ansar's path..... The righteous follow their kind, and the wicked follow theirs.'" Sa'd replied, "You have spoken the truth. We are the ministers and you are the rulers."

Umar said, "Stretch out your hand, O Abu Bakr, so that I may give you the oath of allegiance ." Abu Bakr replied, "Nay, rather you, O Umar. You are stronger than I ."

Umar was indeed the stronger of the two. Each of them wanted the other to stretch his hand so that he could strike the bargain with him. Umar stretched Abu Bakr's hand saying, "My power is for you with your power," and the people gave their oath of allegiance. They demanded confirmation of the oath, but Ali and al-Zubayr stayed away. Al-Zubayr drew his sword (from the scabbard), saying, "I will not put it back until the oath of allegiance is rendered to Ali." [When] this news reached Abu Bakr and Umar, the latter said, "Hit him with a stone and seize the sword." It is stated that Umar rushed [to the scene], brought them forcibly [while] telling them that they must give their oath of allegiance willingly, or unwillingly. So they rendered their oath of allegiance."

When the news spread to Medina, the whole population ran, and in the tumult Saad was almost trampled.

A man exclaimed:

- Look out, you crush Saad!

Omar retorted.....

- Let kill that hypocrite, who wanted to throw discord among Muslims!

Tabari, History, volume X, the conquest of Arabia. The events of the year 11.

Umar and Abu Ubaida advanced to make the allegiance.

But Bashir ibn Sa'd (Bashir belonged to the Khazraj tribe of the Ansar) forestalled them, and was the first to make the allegiance. Al-Habbab ibn Al-Mundhir exclaimed, "O Bashir ibn Sa'd, why have you gone in opposition to your own community? Were you jealous of Sa'd ibn Ibada, and unwilling that he should have the headship?" Bashir said, "No, by God. But I did not like to have to dispute this matter with those whom God has made deserving of it."

Tabari, History, volume X, the conquest of Arabia. The events of the year 11. " Aslam approached en masse until the streets were packed with them, and they rendered the oath of allegiance to Abu Bakr. 'Umar used to say, "It was not until I saw Aslam that I was certain we had won the day."

THE HIGHLIGHTS emerging from all these anecdotes about the few hours which followed the death of the prophet.

- 1) The presence of agents and spies of Umar's party among the Ansar (native Medinans).
- 2) The fact that Umar began by denying the death of the Prophet because the man chosen by his party to be Caliph (Abu Bakr) had not yet returned from the "market".
- 3) The arrival of Abu Bakr, Umar's recognition of the fact that the Prophet was dead and his condemnation of mourning as equivalent to worshipping him (for fear that such worship would reflect on his relatives and their children?)
- 4) Waiting for news from the Ansar, their transmitting in secret to Umar who does not communicate them to anyone other than Abu Bakr, with whom he leaves to go to the patio of Banu Saïda.
- 5) Their meeting on the way with other participants.

The decisive factors are: the rallying of certain Ansar (native Medinese) the arrival in mass of armed men who cut short any discussion by putting everyone in front of the accomplished fact.

Discussion.

It is obvious from the above facts that this was a pre-arranged affair; and that everything took place at the right time and place, as planned.

According to the presentation justifying the (double coup, the Ansar were the first to take action, for the Medinans, among whom Muhammad had come and took refuge with his first faithful after leaving Mecca in 622, no longer wanted Meccans who considered them inferior. They wanted to appoint their leader themselves, which forced the anti-Ali front to react promptly. But according to Shiavault, this is totally false. Ibn Ishaq clearly implies that the ethnic Medinans or Ansar and the majority of the Muhajirun immigrants had no doubt that Ali would succeed the Prophet as this was self-evident and they would never have put forward a candidate for the succession other than Ali if a small but powerful party led by influential people had not already claimed to do so.

But as mentioned above, armed men from the Aslam tribe eventually arrived and swore allegiance to Abu Bakr. It is not clear whether they arrived before the first of the Ansar to leave his side (the native Medinans), Bashir bin Saad, took his oath, because there are duplicates in all this, but what is certain is that they arrived at a time when Umar was not yet sure of winning. Given their numbers and the fact that they were living outside Medina, it is certain that someone with influence over them must have asked them to intervene. The question is who, but as they used to say in Rome: IS FECIT CUI PRODEST.

The victory of the Anti-Ali can therefore be attributed to division, defection, betrayal, jealousy, enmity and force. There were none of the elements necessary for a fair election. The Mouhadjiroun immigrants, with the exception of Omar Abou Bakr and Abu Ubaida, had no information and were not here, the names of the candidates had not been communicated and their respective qualifications had not been discussed (in what capacity did they claim to succeed the Prophet). No vote was taken and the matter was still pending when force ended the crisis.

It was under these conditions that the "Kingdom of God" was transferred from the Prophet to his "Caliph", and it was on such an "election" that the whole edifice of Islamic "democracy" was erected.

Sheikh al-Mufid believes that it was only by chance that the tribe of Aslam was in Medina that day: they had come to buy provisions. But that Abu Baker's supporters had taken the opportunity to ask

them to go and swear allegiance to the successor of the Prophet before they were sold what they wanted. Which they did.

THE GENERAL ALLEGIANCE AT THE MOSQUE.

The next day there was a great general pledge in full view of everyone.

The supporters of Abu Bakr led by Umar therefore escorted him with great pomp to the mosque. The people assembled Abu Bakr sat down in the pulpit, and Umar, standing underneath, spoke first in these terms (perhaps in order to put an end to this double putsch).

Ibn Ishak, Life of Muhammad, Guillaume translation, page 686.

On the morrow of Abu Bakr's acceptance of the caliphate in the courtyard (of the Banu Sa'ida) he sat in the pulpit and 'Umar got up and spoke before him, and after praising God as was meet he said, O men, yesterday I said something based on my own opinion and which I do not find in God's book nor was it something which the apostle entrusted to me; but I thought that the apostle would order our affairs until he was the last of us (alive). God has left His book with you, that by which He guided His apostle, and if you hold fast to that God will guide you as He guided him. God has placed your affairs in the hands of the best one among you, the companion of the apostle, "the second of the two when they were in the cave", so arise and swear fealty to him.

The first part is either a clever explanation of his lies of the day before (clever because what it puts forward is a religious belief of an eschatological type) or the proof that some Muslims, like some Christians at the beginning, had the conviction that the end of time, the apocalypses and the parousia of Christ were imminent. At the very least the occurrence of a great renewal of the world. Mark 9:1; Matthew 16:28; Luke 9:27. This theme was already known to the pagans, according the grandson of druid Virgil (see the fourth eglogue of the Bucolics).

Ultima Cumaevi venit jam carminis aetas ;

Magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.

Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna ;

Jam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto.

NB. It is four times longer in English. And my Parisian penfriends tell me the same thing. Umar may have had good communication advisors. But from Omar it is still surprising!

In short thereupon the people stood up and those who had not sworn during the day before swore it that day, which has since been called Oath Day.

Then Abu Bakr came down from the pulpit and entered the house of the prophet to have his personal care after death done and to make bury him.

The body covered with a coat still laid in the house and no one had thought of the personal care after death or burial.

Editor's note. This is the Shiite point of view on the issue. A kafir or mushrik like me cannot take sides in the debate with the Sunnis about this. It is out of the question for us to deny that there were also really strong emotional ties uniting Muhammad with some of his companions, a kind of brotherhood in arms, or family, very natural. It seems to us just as obvious, the man being what he is, that there must have been also strong rivalries, between men precisely, at that moment, to succeed Muhammad.

Anyway, whatever it be, we come into the world necessarily two, but we always die alone! Because no one can die in our place. But how important is facing eternity? The important thing is to have the feeling of the accomplished duty, the honest certainty of having done all that you could do until the end, humbly and without hubris.

CONCLUSION OF THE SHIAVAULT SITE.

The most daring coup in history was staged in the courtyard of the Banu Sa'ida on June 9, 632, and it had far-reaching consequences for Islam. The success of this coup was due to the consummate skill with which it was planned and executed. Its organizers demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the Arab character, as well as their ability to take advantage of the most diverse situations.

Note by Peter DeLaCrau.

I don't know if Al Mufid was Arab or Persian, but this conclusion is not 100% mine. My opinion is that Umar was the one who set it up.

Islam, so effective in many fields, had not erased ancestral solidarity and had not completely united the native Medinans (ansar) and the Meccan immigrants (muhajirun). The leader, Saad, seems at first sight a newcomer, but he comes from the entourage of Ibn Ubayy, the former prince of Medina. His heir or successor, Saad is indeed already very old (he had dared in particular to defend those who had been accused of slander in the case of the supposed adultery of Aisha).

The ansar therefore are for a diarchy, a dual power, a leader for Muslims who are ansar, one for muhajirun Muslims. This would immediately lead, of course, to a de facto break-up of the community. The Muslim theocracy is then a political practice, but not yet a state, the disappearance of the founder proves it cruelly. Abu Bakr and Umar act quickly, together with Abu Ubayda. Everyone acts in his own way, with his character and his own goals. We will never really know what happened between the two companions so that they decide the choice of the successor. The fact that the two men are not from Medina will ultimately prove to be an advantage for them, it will give them a neutrality that they could not claim otherwise if they had been native Medinans.

The relatives of Muhammad felt consequently wronged, especially Fatima, his daughter, and her husband Ali, also a cousin of the Prophet. Ali opposed the appointment, saying the replacement was to come down to him. He was supported by certain companions of the Prophet, who thus formed the Shi'at 'Ali, the Shiites.

Muslim tradition insists that everything pointed to Abu Bakr as the successor to Muhammad, including the latter's last wishes. In reality nothing is less certain and several solutions were possible. Back to square one or to the situation before the Hegira, the Medinans return to their princely system, succession of Ali, the only male relative by blood of Muhammad, etc.

What is striking in the death of Muhammad is what happens next. He has the destiny of other great historical figures, who have changed the world, concentrated power, and hoarded wealth. As soon as they die, their power is challenged, the deputies clash. In the case of Muhammad, there will be nothing astonishing about it. The following episodes will simply prove that the cultural revolution he had undertaken was more political than religious: there will be no more allusion to the doctrine, no mystical or metaphysical temptation. All that is happening is human, too human, and yet fascinating. But it is undoubtedly peculiar to great men to be even more interesting dead than alive. And if they are not more interesting, they are less dangerous. The main thing of what is happening then is the struggle between ambitions, and some stories are particularly cruel to the very person of the deceased, left to his fate.

When Muhammad died, the first Muslims therefore tore each other to pieces. Between native Medinans (ansars) and Meccan immigrants (Muhajirun) who are come and have settled in Medina with Muhammad.

And even within the family of Muhammad, on the one hand, his favorite wife Aysha and, on the other hand, his preferred daughter Fatima married with Ali the young cousin of Muhammad. Conflict that will give Sunnis on one side and Shiites on the other.

The most natural heir to Muhammad, since the death of his son Ibrahim, a few months earlier (born from the Ethiopian slave Mary the Copt), was, of course, his cousin and son-in-law Ali.

What Abu Bakr could not contemplate because the two men did not love each other at all.

On the other hand, the native Medinans, the ansars, had not understood that with Muhammad a page had been turned and were preparing for returning their previous political system : the election of a new leader for Medina, a new leader for Medina from their community. They no longer wanted Meccans who considered them inferior.

Against these two threats, Abu Bakr Omar and Abu Ubaydah joined their forces and agreed to oust Ali. Omar would do everything to support Abu Bakr who would take him as an heir apparent.

The stories of the struggle for influence that began even before the death of the head of the community were reworked for obvious political reasons but the later traditions show us that a true race to the throne (to the minbar) was engaged in the immediate entourage of Muhammad.

Strangely enough, Ali is both present and inactive, up to the point of suffering sarcasm about this subject.

The character represents the legitimacy of the family circle, and his attitude is presented as exemplary by its dignity or sincerity, in the eyes of Shiite readers of these texts. He is the loser of the replacement,

being not very comfortable in the intrigues: it is not a politician, as the (disastrous) continuation of his career will prove it.

This Shakespearian human comedy was a prelude to the innumerable and atrocious struggles of power that will break out between the successors. We can distinguish several phases and several facts very interesting, particularly realistic.

Although he had more than ten official wives and several de facto wives, Muhammad died without a male heir. The only boy he had had, with his Christian concubine Mary, having died when he was 16 months old, the day of an eclipse of the Moon, January 17, 632 very precisely.

Byzantine account (Byzantine-Arab Chronicle 741, § 17).

"Muhammad, the chief of Saracens mentioned above, after ten years of reign, reached the end of his life. He is the one whom they hold in such great honor and respect, that they say that he is the apostle and prophet of God in all their oaths, and all their writings. In his place, Habubeccar, who came from the same tribe of Saracens, was chosen (praelectus) by them as his successor."

The Shiite Muslims think that Muhammad wanted to choose Ali as his successor but was prevented from doing so by Umar and Abu Bakr.

"We find the same facts in writings from very different sources and these texts that could practice the double speak do not hesitate to say surprising things, sometimes even contrary to the interests of the parties they defend. The Sunni texts also report this episode indeed, which is, however, not in their interest. We can think that there is a beginning of truth, even if the true historian must always keep a critical distance, of course" (Hela Wardi).

The problem was that Muhammad had no son who lived long enough to succeed him, only grandchildren by women, sons-in-law or fathers-in-law, Abu Bakr, Umar, Ali and Uthman.

It is therefore between them that the succession will be played out.

The Shiites (10% of Muslims) claim that Ali ibn Abu Talib, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad, was appointed a few months earlier, in March, during the speech of Ghadir Khumm, to succeed him.

The Sunnis retort that this is false, and that Muhammad left to his young community the task of finding itself the best of the continuators of his action.

IT IS NOT UP TO US TO DECIDE ON THE QUESTION!

The only sure thing is that Muhammad had perhaps entrusted his old companion Abu Bakr with leading the congregational prayer.

See our previous chapter about Muhammad's death and Ibn Ishaq *The Life of Muhammad* Alfred Guillaume page 679.

After a quick but bloody takeover of the capital: serious injuries of a female singer who had mocked Muhammad (hands cut broken teeth), beheading of the named Fajda for apostasy, execution of Saad for hypocrisy (munafiq), actually to have thought to succeed Muhammad, at the head of the ansar; Abu Bakr was definitively recognized as chief and will impose himself by crushing in blood the various revolts against the new Medinese state, which broke out immediately after.

THE FORMATION OF THE CANON.

There is not ONE BUT SEVERAL traditions on this subject.

Muhammad stated the word of God (God) through many "revelations" that resulted in a shiver of his whole body! (epileptic attacks?) The first faithful had learned these words or had transcribed them somehow in an archaic alphabet making possible a plurality of readings, on various media: shards of pottery, pieces of leather, shoulder blades of camels ...

It was not intended that these oral teachings (Bible repeats mixed with superstitions and pagan customs) should be written together. Khatabi: "The prophet did not make a book, for he was still waiting for possible abrogation of certain orders." Moreover, Quran (at least according to the Arabic stem Qr) means "recitation" 1) and never does Muhammad use the word "reading" to speak about his teaching: he speaks of a "reminder" (reminder of the "Book," the Bible).

The question to what extent the Quran was written down before the very death of Muhammad is not fully clarified. Muhammad no doubt distributed himself during his lifetime the longest chapters or those he considered the most important but what seems equally probable is that there was no single manuscript in which the prophet himself compiled all the revelations.

There were only partial writing down! There were verses written down and thus having already been the subject of a beginning, even modest, of diffusion in this form.

There have been partial collections of several verses, more or less long, made available to some faithful.

There have even been entirely written down chapters (e.g., chapter 20 whose reading had led Umar to convert in 615).

When Muhammad died, many people knew by heart all the verses. On the other hand, there was no complete written text in one piece, of the Quran. At first, nobody cared. Each said a word or legend about the prophet.

Then a number of his followers tried to gather all the known revelations, and to keep them in the form of a written codex. Very quickly we had the codices of several personalities such as Ibn Masud, Ubay ibn Kaab, Ali, Abu Bakr, al-Asswad, and others (the great Islamologist Arthur Jeffery has listed fifteen primary codices, and a large number of secondary codices).

As we have already seen, the problem was worsened by the fact that the consonantal text had no diacritical marks that is to say that the points which distinguish, for example, a "b" from a "t" or a "th" were missing. Several other letters (f and q, j and kh, s and d, r and z, s and sh, d and dh, t and z) were indistinguishable. As a result, a wide variety of readings was possible, depending on how the points were added.

The vowels form an even worse problem. Originally, the Arabs had no sign for short vowels: Arabic writing being consonantal. Although short vowels are sometimes omitted, they may be represented by orthographic signs placed above or below the letters - three signs in all, having the form of a slightly inclined line or a comma. After fixing the consonants, the Muslims still had to decide which vowels to use: using different vowels, of course, resulted in different readings. The scriptio plena 2), which made a text able to have all the points and vowels, was not completed until the end of the ninth century. The problems aroused by the scriptio defectiva 3) inevitably led to the development of different schools with their own traditions varying in how the points and vowels were inserted into the texts.

1) According to Christophe Luxenberg QR would be an Aramaic root leading to the meaning of "lectionary" that is to say anthology of selected extracts to say mass evangelize catechize or meditate.

2) Writing having all the required diacritical marks.

3) Writing with no diacritical marks so ambiguous because incomplete.

THE EDITION OF QURAN.

At the death of Muhammad in 632, Tradition is unanimous on it, there was therefore no book called Quran. There was no complete manuscript duly authorized by the Envoy of God. What existed were fragments of writing, which would have been fixed on various supports: on shards, on flat stones, on camel shoulder blades, on palm petioles.

Worse, there was no authority delegated by Muhammad to carry out and control the transmission of the revealed text.

There was, of course, the memory of the companions who memorized more or less long pieces of the Revelation and some would even have known the whole. On the advice of Umar the interim new caliph got to work ...

There are different versions of this tradition on the compilation and transmission to us of the Quran; in some it is suggested that it was Abu Bakr who first had the idea of making the compilation and not Umar; in others the idea of this collection is first attributed to the future fourth caliph at the origin of Shiism, Ali; and some versions still provide other schemas, but still totally exclude any role of Abu Bakr in the process.

This divergence of the versions on this subject brings several remarks.

Some people first point out that it is unlikely that such a complex task could have been accomplished in just two years.

It also seems unlikely that the many dead of the war against the prophet in Yamama (Musaylima) were as good connoisseurs as that of the Quran; in most cases they were recent converts, or simply opportunists in search of loot.

But what is generally regarded as the most decisive element undermining this vision of things; is that once the compilation was done, it does not seem to have been treated in official code, but in private property of Hafsa the daughter of Abu Bakr and incidentally one of the widows of Muhammad.

In other words, no particular authority was attributed to Abu Bakr's mushaf (Quran).

Some have suggested that the story was fabricated to deprive Osman (who was a very unpopular caliph) of any decisive role in the handover of the Quran.

Other authors have suggested that this story was invented only to place this compilation of the Quran as close as possible to the death of Muhammad.

According to some Shiites, of course, authors, the first to be concerned about collecting the verses of the future Quran would have been Ali in reality.

"There is no dispute among Muslim scholars, whether they are Sunni or Shia, concerning the fact that the Commander of Believers, Ali, possessed a special transcript of the text of Quran which he had collected himself, and he was THE FIRST who compiled Quran. There are a large number of traditions from Sunni and Shia which states that after the death of Muhammad, Ali sat down in his house and swore an oath that he would not put on his outdoor clothes or leave his house until he collects the Quran.

This transcript of Quran which compiled by Ali had the following specifications.

a) It was collected according to its revelation, i.e., in the order in which it had been sent down. This is the reason that Muhammad Ibn Sireen (33/653 - 110/729), the famous scholar and Tabi'i regretted that this transcript had not passed into the hands of the Muslims.

b) This transcript contained commentary and hermeneutic interpretation (Tafsir and Ta'wil), some of which had been sent down as a revelation but NOT as a part of the text of the Quran. A small number of such texts can be found in some traditions in Usul al-Kafi. They were divine commentaries of the text of the Quran which were revealed along with matching Quranic verses. These commentaries and Quranic verses could sum up to 17000 verses. As Sunnis know, hadith al-Qudsi (the hadith in which the speaker is God) are also revelations, but they are not a part of Quran. The revelation includes the interpretation/commentary of the Quran.

In addition, this unique transcript contained the information about which verse was abrogated and which was abrogating, which verse was clear (Muhkam) and which was ambiguous (Mutashabih), which verse was general and which was specific.

c) This unique transcript also contained references to the persons, places, etc., about which the verses were revealed, what is called "Asbab al-Nuzul." For a more detailed discussion of completeness of Quran as well as the opinion of the Shia, look at the book entitled "al-Bayan," by Abul Qasim al-Khoei, pages 214-278" (<http://www.alseraj.net/maktaba/kotob>).

According to the Shia writers, if there was no writing down of the Quran immediately after the death of Muhammad, but only a few years later under Osman; it was because the presence on the spot in Medina of Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin, Ali, made the manipulation of the text impossible.

Another of the traditions on this subject presents things in this way. During the brief caliphate of Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (who himself was to succeed the old Abu Bakr in 634) worried that a large number of Muslims knowing the Quran by heart; had perished during the battles in Yamama (in Central Arabia) given against the prophet named Musaylima.

The civil war that followed the death of Muhammad caused the loss of 70 members of the group "Al Qurra," according to some; or 700 men of a group of three thousand early Muslims and being among the most connoisseurs, according to others; (including Zayd Ibn Al-Khattab Umar's own brother, and Al-Bara Ibn Malik the brother of Anas Ibn Malik).

Umar then became aware of the danger threatening the handover of the Quran and went to find the interim caliph (Abu Bakr).

"The companions of God's envoy fell in Yamama like butterflies in the fire. If they continue like this, the Quran will soon be lost and forgotten. Why not put the texts together and have them put in writing? In the last years of his life, Muhammad had quite officially employed various secretaries, some for routine tasks, others for the transcription of his hallucinations, visions or revelations. The young Zayd bin Thabit was a member of this last group. He had even become the main scribe and was among those who knew the Quran very well.

Sahih Bukhari. Volume 6, Book 61 hadith N° 509. Testimony of Zayd bin Thabit.

Abu Bakr said (to me). 'You are a wise young man and we do not have any suspicion about you, and you used to write the Divine Inspiration for God's Apostle. So you should search for (the fragmentary scripts of) the Quran and collect it in one book.'

By God if they had ordered me to shift one of the mountains, it would not have been heavier for me than this ordering me to collect the Quran. Then I said to Abu Bakr, "How will you do something which God's Apostle did not do?"

Abu Bakr kept on urging me to accept his idea and so I began to search."

Since the death of Muhammad, the Quran was written on various and scattered supports (stone, palm leaves, copper, bone, leather and skin). The texts having not been kept according to the chronological order, it was more practical to classify the verses in separate medium in order to find his way in them, but differences appeared very early within the community on the chronology of the chapters.

Zaid was instructed to find at least two written accounts of each verse before including them in his work. The caliph therefore asked the inhabitants of Medina to bring him all the fragments already written, of the Quran they could have.

"So I started collecting from what was written on palmed stalks, thin white stones and also from the men who knew it by heart, till I found the last verse of the chapter Repentance(the chapter 9, verses 128-129)) with Abi Khuzaima Al-Ansari 1) and I did not find it with anybody other than him. The verse is: "an Apostle from among yourselves etc.etc."

The leaves (Arabic suhuf) gathered in a mushaf by Zayd will be preserved by Caliph Abu Bakr until his death; these leaves were then kept by Umar, then by Hafsa, his daughter, who could read.

The recension and collection enterprise (jam ') was therefore entrusted to a leading man, Zaid bin Thabit, well qualified for such a task. He had indeed learned all the chapters by heart, and he had been a scribe of Muhammad, mastering both Hebrew and Aramaic. Who better than he could know the revealed text? However, his reaction is significant: he had initially refused to assume the mission entrusted to him, arguing that Umar and Abu Bakr did not have to do what the prophet of Islam did not do in his lifetime. Did Zaid mean that the Messenger of God wanted his message to remain oral? When he was finally convinced of the necessity of this work, he summoned a committee made of companions of Muhammad having memorized the suras by heart and he also used the written fragments. But if this scribe knew the text by heart, he only had to write it! Why a committee? Is the Quran we know the result of a working meeting, or even more?

The reality is that Zaid summoned a council, which suggests that there were differences and that the sacred text since the first time had been the subject of a consensus among the companions. The fact remains that Zaid worked with his team and handed the result to Abu Bakr himself. At his death, this single copy, called by the commentators of Tradition mushaf ("the codex [which is] between the two covers") moved to his daughter Hafsa, one of the widows of Muhammad. Why this codex did not come down to Caliph Umar ibn Al Khattab after the death of Abu Bakr? Why did not he promote it as official Quran? It is as if this codex was intended for private and not for state use.

During his ten-year reign, Umar did not feel the need to compile the Quran. The copy of Hafsa, also called suhuf "the leaves" of Hafsa seems to be sufficient for him.

The collection of Osman (around 650-655)

As Islam spread, Muslims ended up with having what became known as metropolitan codes in the urban centers of Mecca, Medina, Damascus, Kufa, and Basra.

Osman tried to put some order into this rather chaotic situation by making the Medina codex official, and copies of which were sent to all other metropolitan centers, with orders to destroy the other codices. Osman's codex was supposed to standardize the consonantal text, but many different traditions of this consonantal text survived until the eighteenth century.

It is therefore necessary to wait for Osman ibn Affan to see a major caliphal work in terms of writing and compilation of the Quran to be put in place. The Caliph decided to launch into the same enterprise as Abu Bakr. Why ? Do not we already have the specimen of Hafsa that it would have been enough to duplicate in innumerable copies? In other words, why did this Caliph feel the need not to have the Quran, of which there was a specimen established by Abu Bakr, copied, but to submit it again for the approval of a council ? And if he needed that for political legitimization?

Osman then used the same Zaid bin Thabit and request from him to form a new committee whose identity of the members is not always certain. Hafsa was asked for her copy, but it was not enough. Once again, the memory of the companions and the fragments are fully solicited. Zaid, by accepting the same mission that he led about 25 years ago, did he doubt his first work with Abu Bakr? Had the Quran he collected at that time changed since then to require a second collection?

Two hypotheses can explain this attitude: either Zaid was not satisfied with the first collection work, considering for example that whole pieces of the Quran were not recorded, which necessitated a new recension. Or the Uthmanian state needed legitimacy facing its many opponents and intended to draw it from the very business of establishing the Quranic text.

The fact remains that this committee met again, decided and judged. The result of his deliberations was the codex known as Mushaf al Osmani (the Osmani codex).

1) Editor's note. The Muslim subsect of Quranists, founded by the Egyptian Rashad Khalifa (1935 - 1990), does not keep for its edition of the Quran precisely this end of the chapter of repentance (the chapter 9 verses 128 - 129); that it considers as false and invented by Abi Khuzaima.

FIRST INTERIM CALIPH: ABU BAKR (Oct. 27, 573-August 23, 634).CAPITAL MEDINA.

Officially, the first successor of Muhammad was Abu Bakr, supposed to govern from 632 to 634 the 70,000 Muslims living in the western half of the Arabian Peninsula. Has never called himself Amir al Muminin, that is to say Commander of Faithful.

His acts as caliph are known only by late Muslim sources, including the Sira of Ibn Hisham, and are never mentioned in non-Islamic documents, unlike the following caliphs, Umar, Osman, Ali and his successors. This contrast has led some historians to wonder whether Abu Bakr, Muhammad's companion and father-in-law, had been a caliph. Historians commissioned by subsequent caliphs to write the history of the empire may have had to find a way to bridge the gap from Muhammad's death to Umar's election as caliph. The simplest was to take a relative, and to attribute him a kind of interim caliphate.

Another reason to think that Abu Bakr was never a caliph is that his history is different from the following thirteen: all were assassinated, while Abu Bakr died a natural death. The instability of early Islam, that show not only this long series of assassinations but also the religious wars that killed hundreds of thousands of Muslims in the first centuries; makes such a caliphate unlikely.

This is the view of the leading experts that are Patricia Crone and Michael Cook. We are nevertheless somewhat skeptical even if it is not up to us, the barbarian druids of the West, to decide in this field. We will therefore stick to the rest of this book to the traditional Muslim thesis: Abu Bakr was well caliph. This first interim caliph is fifty-nine years old. It is also the father of Aisha. He is one of the oldest companions of Muhammad and, as we have had the opportunity to say, will be the only one of the first ten caliphs, to die of natural death. He will reign only two short years but it was still him who completed the final conquest of eastern Arabia.

The disappearance of Muhammad, after having aroused the problem of the upholding of unity between Meccans and Medinans, will provoke the resistance of a large part of the East and South of the peninsula.

Contrary to the claims of the pious Muslims who maintain that all these tribes had SPONTANEOUSLY AND SINCERELY converted to Islam, it is obvious that at the time there had been only political agreement of allegiance to A PARTICULAR INDIVIDUAL: THE MAN MUHAMMAD. AGREEMENTS THEREFORE VALID ONLY WITH RESPECT TO MUHAMMAD AND ENDING WITH HIS DEATH. RIDDA WARS.

One should not imagine that on the death of Muhammad, Arabia was completely submitted and even less Islamized. Only the tribes which were immediate neighbors of Mecca and Medina, and as you moved away from the center, you met some partially Islamized tribes, others who, to avoid the worst calamities, resigned themselves to pay the tribute (zakat), and were only Muslim in name, others finally were completely independent. Almost all of them, on the death of the Prophet, hastened to recover their freedom, all the more because, in that time, the death of a man put an end to the treaties concluded with him.

The capture of Mecca had, of course, contributed to the subjugation of a large part of Arabia, but these rallying were more political than religious. The Arabs, seeing the sanctuary of Mecca fall into the hands of the Muslims, had sent ambassadors to negotiate treaties of alliance with the nascent Medinan State. In doing so, they acted only through politics and not for reasons coming under the highest spirituality. The death of Muhammad therefore had immediate consequences. The Bedouin or settled tribes who had been more or less forced to support his person, did not consider themselves, in any way, committed towards his successor, since they had sworn allegiance only towards Muhammad. Almost all of them tried to take back their freedom or to continue practicing their Christian, even pagan, worship; especially in Yemen and eastern Arabia, where the contacts were completely severed for several months. This first civil or religious war, crucial for the beginnings of Islam, is called Ridda war by Muslims, but somewhat abusively because a number of tribes remained Christian by means of agreement of the dhimma type, or even had never signed an agreement with Muhammad, preferring to follow other charismatic leaders like Musaylima ibn Thimama ibn Bani Hanifa or Musaylima ibn Habib al-Hanafi, died in obscure conditions (he left the fortress in which he was safe to take refuge in his kaaba to him, the hadiqa ar-Rahman). This charismatic leader defended with conviction a kind of Monophysite warlike Christianity throughout central Arabia (Najd). Or like Abhala al-Ansi nicknamed Al-Aswad in Yemen, or even Tulayha for the Assad and Gatafan tribes. And finally a woman named Sajah.

The monotheism of Al-Asswad was probably inspired by Christianity or Judaism since he was Yemeni. The monotheism of Tulayha was rather from Judaism since he was called the "Lord of Khaybar". Sajah was either Christian or close to Christianity since her mother was Taghlibite.

As for Musaylima according to the book entitled *Thimar al-qulūb* by Abd al Malik b. Muḥammad al-Tha'ālībī, "When the Prophet came to Medina, he found the people mentioning Musaylima, quoting his sayings and referring to the opinions of Banu Hanifa about him » (page 146 No. 207). Translation Jacob Kister who adds...

Al Baghawi, *Tafsir surah 25* verse 60.

(And when it is said unto them) to the people of Mecca: (Adore the Beneficent) submit to the Beneficent through the profession of God's divine Oneness! (they say: And what is the Beneficent) we do not know anyone with this name except Musaylimah the liar? .

The picture that Muslim sources make of them is, of course, grotesque and contemptuous. Everything is done to denigrate these men and this woman whose only existence undermines the dogma of the exceptional character of the Mohammedan adventure. Their area of specialization was the regions subjected to Christian, Persian, and especially Jewish influences. The violence of the suppression that will follow shows that these attempts were considered as dangers by nascent Islam.

This first war of conquest led by Abu Bakr caused heavy losses on both sides. The extent of these losses will even be indirectly behind the first writing down of the Quran. At least according to the Muslim legend.

On the death of Muhammad therefore, many tribes refused to pay zakat or MANDATORY alms to the Medinan State and Abu Bakr immediately undertook to get them back in line or to submit new ones.

Jews, Christians, and Muslims constantly use the word "apostate or apostasy" to refer to men or women who are no longer motivated or no longer convinced by their dogmas. And punish in various ways this situation: sentence to death by stoning or burning. Let us remind, therefore, that changing religion is one of the most ABSOLUTE rights of every human being, and that this right should not be anything but wishful thinking. As said I know no longer who: "No compulsion in religion! ". And fortunately that, one day, there were men or women to change their religion; otherwise Mankind would still be in prehistoric or even neanderthalian shamanism.

That is said, it remains to be seen what was rejected by those who were victims of the Ridda wars described in the literature of the expeditions.

During negotiations with Muhammad, a certain confusion was always established in the minds between sincere conversion to his religion and alliance (or submission) only political to this man.

As we have seen with the case of Abu Sufyan or the inhabitants of Ta'if, many of those who had pledged allegiance to Muhammad had done it not by spirituality, but rather by "political" necessity. According to Abu Miknaf, who died in 774, some of the Confederate tribes refused to pay the Islamic tax whether it was zakat (tithe) or sadaqat (alms). Here, for example, is the kind of statement attributed to Yemenis by Waqidi: "Here we have become the slaves of the Quraysh. They take what they want from our goods. By God! May the Quraysh be no longer again able to covet our properties ."

The apostasy interpretation of the rejection of the tax (which is rather a socio-political claim) is an ex-post reconstruction of Muslim history, intended to justify this war. The "struggle against an attempt at civil war" aspect is met, on the other hand, in the wars waged by Abu Bakr, which were systematically led against charismatic leaders of other tribes: diviners and poets, like the poetess and prophetess Sajah of the tribe Tamim. This aspect of the things is also obvious in the case of the tribal confederation of Banu Hanifa, led by Musaylima, in the region of Al Yamama, in the center of Arabia; which groups together tribes more anciently monotheistic than Islam, worshiping a God whom they call Al Rahman, the Merciful (the Hanifa, some pre-Nicene Monophysite Christian groups?)

The rise of Islam, in the seventh century Arabia, is certainly a unique historical phenomenon, but overshadows a second one, that of the other prophets existing at the time. The subject has been very little discussed in the West (it is almost unknown). It should be noted that our sources are still Muslim, so very biased, and even caricatured. By going beyond their point of view for the least unilateral, it is possible to put forward the idea that these prophetic movements were anyway present, on the Arab scene, even before the arrival of Muhammad.

Various other mystics had in fact at that time launched a little everywhere into the same adventure as Muhammad, for the greater glory of God; and particularly a certain Aswad al Ansi whose movement rivaled for a time that of Islam in Yemen; as well as a named Tulayha in the tribes of Assad and Ghatafan.

Probably some leaders of coalitions as open as that which governed Mecca at the time, or that which had been set up in Medina by Muhammad at the beginning (see its famous "constitution").

On the death of Muhammad, his first successor, Abu Bakr, will therefore have to face them in order to submit them, at the cost of heavy losses, and this war will be in reality a war against rival confederations.

The presentation of these massacres as a struggle against apostasy is a rewriting of history to justify this civil war. It is a continuous phenomenon in the history of Arab tribes subject to Islam, who revolt against any external political authority, no matter where it comes from. The motives are many: nostalgia of the old gods, banditry, rejection of taxation, or simply the result of an immense misunderstanding: the tribes had submitted to a new political order, without realizing its religious and totalitarian dimension.

Muslim sources have not insisted on the phenomenon, which undermines the received idea of unconditional submission to Islam from the outset. We can only glance over this protean and incontestable phenomenon. Some tribes divided even in two on this occasion. A part of its members remaining faithful to their new alliance, the other wanting to keep its ancestral religious freedom.

THE ALLEGED "RELIGIOUS" CIVIL WAR 1). HURUB AL-RIDDA.

This beginning of civil war (there were burned alive or unfortunate men thrown from the top of some rocks) extended to all Arabia, with the exception of the regions of Mecca, Medina, and Taif.

Ali Muhammad Muhammad As-Sallaabee, *The Biography Of Abu Bakr As-Siddeeq*.

"The various tribes that refused to pay Zakaat sent delegations to Al-Madeenah in order to meet with Abu Bakr and negotiate with him. They wanted to make peace, but they were adamant in their decision to refuse to pay Zakaat. But once they witnessed firsthand Abu Bakr's uncompromising resolve, about this subject, they realized that there no longer remained any point to further negotiations. Before leaving, however, they arrived at two conclusions concerning their situation. First.....

And second it was necessary to take advantage of the weakness – or perceived weakness – of the Medinans, who because of Usaamah's expedition, were few in number."

Still Muslims or "Apostates"?

A point that needs clarifying, were the delegations who came to Abu Bakr, were they apostates in the true sense, that they truly really renounced their Islamic faith? The answer is no. Although some among them renounced their Muslim faith and apostatized, vast majority of them were still Muslims, the only difference was that they didn't want to pay Zakat.

In his book entitled *Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah*, Ibn Abi Hadid (1190 – 1258) writes this notion of apostasy was used "metaphorically":

"Why do you say that those whom Abu Bakr fought were apostates? Truly, the apostate is the one who renounced the Islamic faith after he had embraced it. Now, those who refused to pay Zakah did not deny the Islamic faith. But they were only mistaken in their interpretation (of the Quran). They misinterpreted God's word (which says): 'Of their goods take alms that you might purify and sanctify them. And pray for them, for thy prayers are a source of peace for them.

Editor's note. It is the verse 103 in chapter 9.

They said (to Abu Bakr and the Madinan authority): 'We can only give our Zakah to him whose prayers are a source of security for us. After the Prophet's death, no one is qualified to do so. Therefore, our obligation to pay Zakah is now canceled.' This has nothing to do with apostasy. The Companions called ahl ar-riddah (the people of apostasy) only to describe metaphorically the enormity of their saying and erroneous interpretation." (Ibn Abi Hadid, *Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah* (Cairo 1959 – 1964).

Wael Hallaq explains, in the section Apostasy in the Encyclopedia of the Quran that, apart from within the cities of Medina and Mecca, plus the immediate vicinities surrounding the region, virtually the whole of Arabia tribes then rose up in a revolt against the Muslim rule..... Scholars disagree as to the causes of the revolt, some arguing that it was provoked by a rejection of the taxes the Prophet of Islam imposed on the "Islamicized" tribes together with what that implied in terms of political domination.

Others have seen it as expressing a religious revolt (challenging the religion of the new state of Medina)... The Banu Hanifa, led by Musaylima in Yamama, had never been subject to Medinan domination nor did they sign any treaty with Muhammad. It was only when the Muslim military commander Khalid b. al-Walid defeated them in 633 that they came, for the first time under Medinan domination.

To highlight his point, Hallaq emphasizes the position that the Banu Hanifa were in, which explains the reasons why there was no possibility of any apostasy in their case. They never converted to Islam in the first place and therefore they cannot correctly be labeled as apostates. His further explanation suggests that a very similar situation also existed within Uman, al-Bahrain, al-Yaman and Hadramawt. In these places of Arabia Muhammad only reached agreements and signed 'peace treaties' with the local military leaders, some of which are even argued to have been Persian 'agents,' who were then overwhelmed and defeated by local tribes. The tribes' resistance to Medina did not presuppose therefore a particular relationship in which they paid allegiance to the Muslim state. Thus their uprising does not form apostasy, properly speaking..... In the other cases, it was not exactly apostasy from the tribes which prompted the wars against them but rather the Medinan religious, political and territorial ambitions.

Bringing separatist rebels into the fold of the Medinan State was therefore the new preoccupation of Abu Bakr.

Once Usama's army returned to Medina after having made a raid in the North (having been in no way useful (if not accumulate various ruins) Abu Bakr sent an ultimatum to all these tribes (a letter

promising them life if they submitted, otherwise they would be massacred, burned alive, and their property confiscated); then he prepared a vast offensive to suppress the rebellion. The plan was simple, but its execution did not go as planned. See for example the "blunder" that costed the life of the famous Muslim poet Malik Ibn Nuwayra, a poet of renowned beauty. He was one of the first companions of Muhammad who had entrusted him with the task of collecting zakat, the obligatory legal alms, within his tribe, the Banou Yarbu. He was killed " by mistake" by Khalid Ibn Walid, who also mistakenly took his wife Umm Mutamim. The affair made a splash at the time, and the future second caliph, Umar will even ask, but vainly, for Khalid being punished for this crime. Hence in any case the revolt of their daughter Selma, drowned in blood by Khalid.

After the Muslims took Mecca, the tribes of Yemen also came to make an alliance with Muhammad; the latter had sent missionaries, also tax collectors (in Arabic, *amil*, what a strange idea), to them, but the sometimes brutal attitude of these tax collectors had triggered an insurrection. A nother prophet (again) then emerged from all this chaos, a certain al-Aswad, the black one, nicknamed Dhu al-Khimar (the one with the veil) or even "the man on a donkey,"some nicknames that were aimed to belittle him, of course.

AL-ASWAD.

According to somewhat chaotic Tabari's information on the subject, the man must have a great importance in Yemen at a given moment. In the midst of the flood of insults habitual to pious Muslims as soon as it is spoken of him, we find indeed the following sentence.

Tabari, volume 10 page 34.

"Al-Aswad was a soothsayer who had Satan with him and followed him; so he rebelled and fell upon the king of Yemen,

killing its king and marrying his wife. He ruled the Yemen. Badham had died before that, leaving his son in charge of his

affairs; so (al-Aswad) killed him and married [his wife]. At this, Dadhawayh and Qays b. Makshuh al-Muradi and I met

with Wabr b. Yuhannis, the envoy of the Prophet of God, plotting to kill al-Aswad. Subsequently al-Aswad ordered the people to gather in an open area of San`a'; then he came out so that he stood in their midst, [carrying] with him the javelin of the king. Then he called for the king's horse etc.etc."

A certain Qais continued the fight against Muslims somewhere between Yamama, Hadramwut and Oman. Vainly, of course! His tribe, the Abdul Qais, had only the choice to submit or be decimated.

Abu Bakr also ordered the destruction of the Christian Kinda tribe in Wadi Dohan. The survivors will spread in the region the Ibadi Kharijite doctrine, which will be the first schism in the Muslim world, and will become besides the ever-present official religion of the Sultanate of Oman.

TULAYHA AL-ASADI.

Eva-Maria Lika, PhD at the Free University of Berlin, noted in her book about the Kitab Ithbat nubuwat al-nabi (Confirmation of the Prophethood of the Prophet) by the Zaydi Imam Abu l-Husayn al -Mu'ayyad bi-llah al-Haruni (944-1020),that almost nothing was known about this character except one of the verses of his own Quran.

The Historical Figure of Tulayha al-Asadi is the second example discussed within the framework of alleged imitations of the Quran. Tulayha b. Khuwaylid b. Nawfal from the Asad tribe, in the north-west of the Arabian peninsula, was a clan leader.....Some sources report that he was defeated under Abu Bakr.

And here is the verse that al-Mu'ayyad bi-llah al-Haruni discusses in order to deal with the inimitable nature of the Quran (i'jaz).

« What does it make to God that you dust your cheeks and show your backside openly? But remember God chastely and standing [uprightly].

Ibn Ishaq nevertheless ascribed to him also the following strange poem.

Page 305 The Life of Muhammad translated by Alfred Guillaume.

QURAYSH PREPARE TO GO TO BADR .

"What do you think about a people when you kill them ?

Are they not men though they are not Muslims ?

If camels and women were captured

You will not get away injureless after killing Hibal.

I set Himala's breast against them—a mare well used to the cry of 'Warriors down to the fight!'

(One day you see her protected and covered,

Another day unencumbered dash to the fray)

The night I left Ibn Aqram lying

And 'Ukkasha the Ghanmite dead on the field."

Like he usually did, Khalid did heavy-handedly. The troops under his command promptly subdued Assad and Ghatafan, as well as their prophet (Tulayhah) who was, of course, executed (other versions report that he went to take refuge in Syria to then convert to Islam, in the time of Umar).

SAJA.

Saja, according to Tabari, would be born in Mosul, and would have been educated in the Taghlib tribe between Ana and Anbar. She was a member of the Namir ben Qasit clan who were Christians, as the inhabitants of Mosul, Mesopotamia, Iraq and Syria generally. Tabari notes that she had given up the "nasrania," that is to say, Christianity, by declaring herself a prophetess. She was well an apostate therefore, BUT OF CHRISTIANITY.

Apparently Saja adds to her political, and probably also economic (such a mission is clearly equated with an occasional raid) will, a spiritual message; what corroborates the impression of an early seventh century very agitated in terms of religion and ideas in this region of the world.

Saja, too, therefore, professed a Christlike and Pietist message tending towards syncretism. The details of her speech are unfortunately only known in the caricature that the 9th century Muslim writers do of it, and no one on the Christian side, of course, has cared to remind of the deeds of a new and original heresy OF CHRISTIANITY.

Saja in any case undertook to overrun with an important cavalry formed of warriors from the two Christianized tribes, plus some Lyads, the Arabian Peninsula.

This movement worries as much the prophet Musaylima as the Muslim general who was also in the vicinity. The Muslim armies withdrew at two days' march to avoid confrontation.

Musaylima, entrenched in his fortress, had a tent set up outside the city to receive the embassy of Saja. Fortified by the promise of receiving half of the region's revenue, she agreed to return to Mosul. MUSAYLIMA NOW.

The name remains problematic. It looks like the (probably original) Arabic Maslama, and also reminds of Moses (the little Maslama, the little Moses?)

NB. I hope that our fellow Muslims brothers will forgive us that we did not give much credence to the insults with which they shower the unfortunate defeated (since Brennus it is the ABC of the job of the objective historian) and that we strive instead to straighten up all partial or biased informations since his defeat (woe to the vanquished), our only religion to us being not that of the single god but that of truth, at least factual. What is in the heart of men his creatures, God alone knows, in our opinion, and we leave it to him besides.

But let us hazard that if Musaylima had prevailed, the number of hadiths to the glory of his person would equal that of the hadith idolizing Muhammad (isma), and there would be many of them to present Muhammad as a jealous poor liar ready to do anything in order to establish his supremacy, and that his own kaaba (his haqiqat ar-Rahman) would not have become a walled garden of death (haqiqat al-mawt) but on the contrary a great center of world pilgrimage.

What strikes us nevertheless and at first sight is the similarity of the careers as well as a large number of common points between their religious practices ... the reception of the revelation through Archangel Gabriel, some miraculous powers, the healing of the sick, and especially the use of the saj language (rhymed Arabic prose used since always by soothsayers and other sacred characters in Arabia to express the revelations received in a supernatural way). Finally, it should be noted that al-Rahman, the God of Musaylima, has become one of the most used names for God in the Quran. What a strange revenge for the vanquished! What brings us back to our starting point.

What inclines to thinking that Musaylima had started his preaching before Muhammad, in addition to the fact that he was a member of a tribe since a long time touched by Christianity, is chapter 25 verse 60 of the Quran.

"And when it is said unto them: Adore the Beneficent (Ar-Rahman) they say: And what is the Beneficent? ...And it increases aversion in them"

Commentary by Al Baghawi Tafsir surah 25 verse 60: [The Meccans retorted to Muhammad] that the only Rahman of whom we know is the Rahman of Yamama, i.e. Musaylimah.

Musaylima too therefore was a prophet but preached in the name of a god called ar-Rahman (the Merciful). He himself wanted to be the voice of ar-Rahman (presumably a rain god, who also had his haram). His doctrine preached chastity, asceticism, and it was more or less tinged with Christianity, given the level of penetration of this religion at the time in Arabia.

"Specific data regarding the religious teachings of Musaylima are highly limited in the primary sources.

"He insisted upon uprightness of life, and taught the doctrine of resurrection and Divine judgment based on what a man has done during his life"prescribing three formal prayers daily, fasting, and the recognition of a sanctuary or sacred territory in al-Yamima upon his followers.

Tabari records that in years of good harvest the nomadic B. Asad would raid the villages of al-Yamima and then withdraw into the sacred area (haram) set up by Musaylima, using it as a sanctuary. This happened repeatedly, even after warnings, until the people of al-Yamima prepared to pursue the B. Asad into the sacred area. Musaylima stopped them, saying: "Wait for him who comes to me from heaven," and then revealed: "By the dark night and the wily wolf, the B. Asad have not defiled the haram."

The people of al-Yamima replied: "Is the meaning of the haram to make permissible the forbidden and destroy [our] property?"

Later, according to the same account, the B. Asad again raided al-Yamima, and again Musaylima prevented his followers from entering the sacred area, with "the one who comes to him," revealing through him that, "By the tenebrous night and the dark wolf! The Asad have not cut [down your] fresh or dried dates."

These influences, Watt believes, were predominantly Christian, as was Musaylima's use of certain phrases such as "kingdom of heaven" (mulk as-samdi'). Watt's inference is highly probable, since al-Yamima was a region highly influenced by Christianity. Furthermore, the nomadic B. Tamim, who lived adjacent to the B. Hanifa, were largely Christian" (Dale F. Eickelman: Musaylima, An Approach to the Social Anthropology of Seventh Century Arabia).

The character can seem picturesque, but behind the almost-satirical appearances, it is clear that he was the most serious competitor of Muhammad. The denigration begins with the meeting between Musaylima and Muhammad precisely. Musaylima is presented as an anti-Muhammad, taking the opposite of the Muslim doctrine in all its aspects.

It would be wiser to recognize in his doctrine Christian influences, just as for Saja, who will replace him as a prophetess after his death.

The short correspondence between the two men is an exceptional document, and remarkable for the very strong contrast between the two, both in substance and in form. The presence of wine around him is compatible with Christianity and prayers should not take place 5 times a day. As for the word fornicate, it could mean many things at the time (marry a cousin for example). Let us not forget that the exclusive purpose of these documents is to demonstrate the imposture of the character (Musaylima of course) his artificiality, even his ridiculous nature.

Tabari volume 9 page 95.

A deputation of the Banu Hanifah came to the Messenger of God and among them was Musaylimah b. Habib the arch liar. They stayed with the daughter of al-Harith, a woman of the Ansar....

Ibn Humayd-Salamah-Ibn Ishaq-a shaykh of the Banu Hanifah from the Yamamah :The story of Musaylimah differs from the one mentioned before . [This shaykh] alleged that the deputation of the Banu Hanifah came to the Messenger of God and left Musaylimah behind with their baggage.....then he [Musaylima] began to speak in rhyming speech (saj) and in imitation of the Quran.....He rid them of the burden of prayer (5 times a day) and permitted them to drink wine and fornicate and so forth.The Bani Hanifah agreed with him on that.

Tabari volume 9 page 107.

He [Muhammad] wrote to Musaylimah: "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to Musaylimah the arch-liar. 'Peace be upon him who follows [God's] guidance.' Now then: 'Surely the earth belongs to God, who bequeaths it to whom He will among His servants...'"

GUILLAUME'S NOTES.

647. Musaylimah, diminutive of Maslamah (which was his real name), was the theocratic lord of a sacred haram. According to one report, he had set up this sacred enclave in Yamamah before the Prophet's arrival in Medina. He thus controlled an extensive area of the eastern Arabia.

655. He followed the kahin style (rhymed prose) and looked to the Heaven for revelation, and preached in the name of al-Rahman.

Below are some fragments of Musaylima's Quran.

The elephant, what is the elephant, and who shall tell you what is the elephant?

It has a poor tail and a long trunk; and is a trifling part of the creations of thy God.

Do you not see how your Lord has dealt with the pregnant woman

God has bestowed favor on the pregnant woman

He brought forth for her a living being that moves

From between the navel and the bowels

And allowed her to commit adultery??????????????.

The B. Tamim are of noble blood; do nothing to discredit them.

While we live we shall remain their good neighbors

And we will defend them from enemies.

When we die, let Rahman look after them.
 I swear by the sowers and reapers of the harvest,
 And the winnowers and millers of wheat,
 And the bakers of bread.....
 You are better than the nomads (ahl al-wabar)
 And no worse than town dwellers (ahl al-madar).
 Defend your fields, shelter the poor, and drive off the attackers.
 Verily we have given thee the jewels: so take them to thyself and hasten;
 Yet beware lest thou be too greedy or desire too much.
 Frog, daughter of two frogs, croak so much you croak
 Your upper part is in the water and your lower part in the mud
 Do not prohibit the drinker, nor make the water turbid
 For us is half of the land, and for the Quraysh [the other] half
 But the Quraysh are a tribe who does not consider.
 They forbade you dwelling and the rascal (the Quraysh?) looked for a dwelling, they fought the tyrant.
 Ed. These last lines of verses clearly target the prophet of Islam who is competing with him.
 The expedition against Musaylima: the battle of Aqraba or Haqiqat al-Mawt (the walled garden of death). October 632.

Abu Bakr had given Ikrima the command of the first army, in order to leave Khalid free for his own operations, and to fix Musaylima's forces in the center of the peninsula.
 Ikrima was a good horseman. He had commanded the left wing of the Quraysh during the battle of Uhud. He followed the instructions of Abu Bakr and managed to contain Musaylima in the Yamama, without starting fight. But when the news of Khalid's victory over Tulayha reached him, along with the announcement of the reinforcements that Shurahbil Ibn Hassanah (commander of the Eighth Army) was to bring him shortly, he rushed against Musaylima, and was crushed. Shurahbil made the same mistake as his counterpart, and was routed in turn, to the delight of Musaylima's supporters, of course. Khalid was then in al-Butah, where he had just completed his campaign against Malik Ibn Nuwaira. He therefore received a letter from Abu Bakr instructing him to meet the Banu Hanifa as soon as possible. After the arrival of the reinforcements, formed of Muhajirun (Meccans settled in Medina) and Ansar (native Medinans), Khalid reorganized his army (which had thirteen thousand men) and went to Yamama. Arriving at one day's march from his capital (Al Hajr near present-day Riyadh), his vanguard met six men, among whom was a man named Maja'a, one of Musaylima's deputies, very influential in his tribe. Khalid executed the five others and kept Maja'a as a prisoner.
 Musaylima decided to meet Khalid and set up his camp near Aqraba, just at the end of the cultivated fields and date plantations, located on the outskirts of the city.
 Khalid settled his own facing that of Musaylima and gave the command of the right wing to Zayd Ibn al-Khattab (the elder brother of Umar, the future second caliph) and that of the left wing to Abu-Huthayfa.

The Moslem army was not organized for the circumstance according to a clan or tribal affiliation, but in regiments or companies formed of men coming from all the tribes.

Although the balance of power was favorable to Musaylima (three against one), Khalid decided to attack the first. The fight began in December 632, by a general attack of Muslims.

Moussailima drove the Muslims back to their camp and even entered Khalid's tent, where his wife and Majaa were chained. A supporter of Musaylima wanted to kill Khalid's wife, but Majaa said, "Leave her alone, and take care of men instead."

Khalid rearranged his army again on a tribal base, and from that moment everyone also fought for the honor (of his tribe). The fight was fierce.

Khalid then tried to set an ambush to Musaylima, under the pretext of negotiations, but the latter managed to escape the trap in extremis, and joined his troops.

Not far from the camp of the faithful of Musaylima, there was a large garden surrounded by a thick wall, provided with a very solid door, called al-Haqiqat. The commander of the right wing of Musaylima, seeing that the situation was becoming desperate, shouted new orders to his soldiers: "In the garden, in the garden, I will cover your rear."

All of them rushed to the door of the walled garden, but their rearguard could not withstand the Muslims for a long time: part of Musaylima's army fled, or was killed.

The Muslims managed to force the door of the garden by climbing the wall and entered it, slaughtering all those who were there. Musaylima was killed.

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 5, Book 59, hadith 399.

"Are you Wahshi?" I said, "Yes.'.....I went out when God Messenger died, and Musailamah Al-Kadhdhab appeared (claiming to be a prophet). I said, 'I will go out to Musailamah so that I may kill

him, and make amends for Hamza's death. So I went out with the people (to fight Musailamah and his followers) and then famous events took place concerning that battle. Suddenly I saw a man (i.e., Musailamah) standing near a gap in a wall. He looked like an ash-colored camel and his hair was disheveled. So I threw my spear at him, driving it into his chest till it passed out through his shoulders, and then an Ansari man attacked him and struck him on the head with a sword....A slave girl on the roof of a house said: Alas! The chief of the believers (i.e., Musailamah) has been killed by a black slave."

It took no less than three armies to defeat these Banu Hanifa, who will be finally massacred at the same time as their prophet.

According to Ibn al-Athir, there were 21,000 dead among Musaylima's followers, and 600 for Muhammad's warriors.

Figures hardly compatible with the initial sharpness of the fighting and the fact that many of the living memories of the Quran died during this first true war of conquest 1) apparently (hence the need to put it in writing afterwards, at least according to Muslim tradition).

As night fell, Khalid made his men bivouac on the battle field, and the next day he sent cavalrymen around in pursuit of the fugitives. Then he sent a letter to Abu Bakr in order to tell him the news. Because of his losses and of the fatigue of his men, Khalid preferred to conclude a peace treaty. He released Majaa to negotiate a surrendering with the inhabitants. Majaa seeing that there were no more soldiers able to defend the city, asked the women to put on armor and to come on the ramparts to shout him down when he will come out.

Khalid, seeing all these armor shining in the sun, thought he had in front of him an army still important. He also asked Majaa, who had come to meet him, to whom the insults he heard were addressed. Majaa replied that it was for him, because people were not satisfied with the surrendering conditions offered to them. This was how he managed to get better conditions from Khalid. The population should give the victor a quarter of its wealth (Khaybar 629 the half), and Khalid could choose the house that he liked as a personal residence, but in return he promised to give back to them half of the prisoners he held.

The treaty concluded, Khalid entered the citadel and was therefore very surprised to see before him only old men, women and children. He turned to Majaa and asked, "Where are the fighters? Majaa told him, pointing to the women and the old men: "Here they are, I had made them put on armors and I had made them go on the ramparts."

Khalid then received a message from Caliph Abu Bakr instructing him to kill all men of military age and to enslave women and children.

Khalid replied that he could no longer execute this order in view of the treaty he had just signed with the Hanifa, and Abu Bakr ratified the situation. This stroke of genius of Majaa therefore saved the city. But not all the faithful of Moussailimah immediately became "good" Muslims. Ten or twenty years later, the man who had carried his message to Muhammad, as well as some others, was denounced as being still of his disciples and therefore put to death.

But not all the faithful of Musaylima became immediately became "good" Muslims. Ten or twenty years later, the man who had carried his message to Muhammad, as well as some others, were denounced as being still of his disciples and therefore put to death.

Sunnan Abu Dawud Book 14 hadith 2756.

Narrated Abdullah ibn Mas'ud:

Harithah ibn Mudarrib said that he came to Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and said (to him): There is no enmity between me and any of the Arabs. I passed a mosque of Banu Hanifah. They believed still in Musaylimah. Abdullah (ibn Mas'ud) sent for them. They were brought, and he asked them to repent, except Ibn an-Nawwahah. He said to him: I heard the Messenger of God say: Were it not that you were not a messenger, I would behead you. But today you are not a messenger. He then ordered Qarazah ibn Ka'b (to kill him). He beheaded him in the market.

As a result of this victory, Khalid was able to subdue the people of Bahrain and of the Persian Gulf, under the leadership of a descendant of the ancient rulers of Hira.

After this victory (February - March 633), and with the exception of a few areas on the borders of the country, most of Arabia was integrated into the nascent Muslim empire and Khalid turned against the Taghlibites and the Banu Tamim who, in the northeast of the peninsula, were still following the prophetess Sajah, as we have said. Having failed in her attempts to unite the opponents of Islam, she returned to her home country, the Mosul region of Iraq.

CONCLUSION.

The battles of this gigantic religious civil war resulted in the hardening of the Muslims. This was their first large-scale military maneuver, a training on all the levels: mobilization, movement, reconnoissance, encirclement, attack, and administrative organization. There were many dead on both sides. Almost all homes were affected. Some tribes were even decimated. The challenge after that was "how to appease resentment."

For example, the Hanifa tribe was slaughtered by Khalid ibn al-Walid, whose bloody exploits had already shocked Muhammad himself.

The forced expansion of Islam will then occur on all fronts in the north of the peninsula, the center and the south having been subjugated by arms. But the first expeditions organized in the time of Abu Bakr, towards Iraq and Syria, will still look much like raids on the borders of the Persian or Byzantine empires, exhausted by a long war lasting 25 years (from 602 to 628) and as for the Persian empire by a series of coups.

The Byzantine Empire was just slowly reoccupying (for lack of means) the positions given up a generation earlier, in a population mistrustful for various religious reasons, and the Sassanid empire was disorganized by the dynastic chaos that had plunged the country in anarchy.

1). In reality a first war of conquest because these tribes had never accepted until then to submit to the Medinan state.

THE ARABICUS LIMES.

The Arabicus limes was a border of the Roman Empire, mostly in the province of Arabia Petraea. It ran northeast from the Gulf of Aqaba for about 1,500 kilometers, reaching northern Syria. It had several forts and watchtowers.

Behind the Limes Arabicus Emperor Trajan built a major road, the Via Nova Traiana, from Bosra to Aila on the Red Sea (430 kilometers). Built between 111 and 114 its primary purpose was to provide efficient transportation for troop movements and government officials as well as protecting trade caravans emerging from the Arabian Peninsula. It was completed under Emperor Hadrian.

There were castra (forts) every 100 kilometers. In the south there was a legionary fortress at Adrou (Udruh), just east of Petra. It probably housed the Legio VI Ferrata, which was moved from Lajjun (in modern-day Israel) by Diocletian. It is similar to Betthorus (al-Lajjun in modern-day Jordan) in the plain of Moab, south of Wadi Mujib) in size (4.9 ha) and design. Alistair Killick, who excavated the site, dates it to the early 2nd century, but Parker suggests a date in the late 3rd or early 4th century.

A legionary camp may have also existed at Aila (modern Aqaba). The city was located at the north end of the Gulf of Aqaba where it was a center of sea traffic. Several land routes also intersected here. Legio X Fretensis, originally stationed in Jerusalem, was transferred here. Troops were progressively withdrawn from the Limes Arabicus in the first half of the 6th century and replaced with native Arab foederati (allies), chiefly the Ghassanids.

In the 7th century the border or Limes Arabicus of the Eastern Roman Empire was therefore a fortified border line roughly ranging from the east of Resafa or Palmyra in Syria to the Gulf of Aqaba passing through the east of Petra in Jordan. This "desert limes" included two elements. To the west, the old royal road, renamed via nova Traiana, formed the backbone. It was completed by a network of fortifications, watchtowers and forts (castra) built at Bostra / Bosra, Gerasa (Jerash), Philadelphia (Amman), Petra, Rabbath Moab and Aila (Eilath).

In the east, small fortifications made it possible to control the oases, that is to say the water supply of the nomads, and to send troops to patrol the desert.

In the west it was the Eastern Roman Empire and the (restored) Pax Romana.

But Heraclius, after recapturing Syria from the Sassanians, set up new defense lines from Gaza to the south end of the Dead Sea. These new placements had as a drawback that it enabled the Muslims, who emerged from the desert in the south, to reach as far north as Gaza before meeting regular Byzantine troops. In other words, Heraclius made the mistake of withdrawing troops from his southern flank.

Below is what can be read in Walter E. Kaegi's remarkable book on the subject (Byzantium and the early Islamic conquest. University press of Chicago 1992).

"Heraclius' armies on the eve of the Muslim conquests probably included approximately 10,000 to 20,000 elite mobile imperial (Latin praesentales) expeditionary forces at and near Constantinople. Those troops were capable of fighting in pitched campaigns. These were the best troops who could be sent against the Muslims, or against any other invader. Of varying but usually less reliable quality were other troops:..... 10,000 in Syria, especially northern Syria, of whom surely only 5,000 or less, including friendly but irregular Arab hired guards remained in the three Palestinian provinces and Arabia 2). The exact military command structure for these troops is unclear.... Protection of logistical lines and garrison duties probably reduced the maximum potential strength of a regular force to 20,000 or 30,000, in addition to friendly Arab contingents. However, it is possible that the financial strains at the end of the Persian wars led to an even sharper reduction in the total number of effectives, but this is very conjectural.

These troops varied greatly in quality. In any case, these totals were insufficient for internal security purposes and for proper defense of the empire's borders after 630. But the logistical problems of supporting even these inadequate numbers of soldiers were formidable.... The largest garrisons were not in any of the three Palestinian provinces, but in northern Syria and upper Mesopotamia, facing greater traditional threats to the Empire, namely, the Persians. A substantial garrison existed at or near Antioch, probably 1,500 or less, and a much smaller but important garrison at Chalkis (Qinnasrin) possibly a few hundred.... further in the south probably

only small postings of local regular units existed at scattered points in the three Palestinian provinces, Palestine I, Palestine II, Palestine III, and in Arabia around Bosra. The largest posting probably was at Caesarea (maybe 200 or 300 mobile troops available). Small garrisons, composed of Byzantine but in effect long assimilated troops, many of whom probably carried on some other occupation as well, probably existed of 100 or less to 200 soldiers, at sites on both sides of the Dead Sea and Jordan River Valley. The quality of these troops was mediocre but not impossibly bad. Some of them drilled at least occasionally. It was difficult to coordinate these scattered garrisons if some serious external threat appeared. These garrison troops were inexperienced at fighting any open warfare of maneuvers and pitched combat. They were best suited for defensive, low-intensity stationary guard duty, or for defending well-fortified positions. Individual towns may have held a garrison of the size of a numerus, whose numbers likely totaled 100 to 500 soldiers.”

Against empires like Persia, the Byzantines had an offensive strategy seeking confrontation in open country.

Against the Arabs, the Byzantines, however, had no pre-established strategy because the Arab-Muslims had never represented a threat before.

In the Levant, that is, in Syria and Palestine, the Byzantines have often used a defensive strategy, relying on heavy walls to slow down the enemy and force it to lay long sieges, thus making Constantinople able to send large relief armies. But this strategy will not work because the Byzantine cities like Bosra will surrender, the populations not wanting to be besieged again after the long Persian occupation that followed the previous war.

A conquest of the Roman (Byzantine) Levant was therefore possible, because of the weariness of inhabitants who suffered from incessant wars with the Sasanian (Iranian) empire, heavy tax le, or agricultural, levies. Egyptian wheat was for example purely and solely confiscated by the Byzantines, which led to starvation among the inhabitants or even epidemics (plague, cholera). Thus, between 630 and 649, dates of the conquests of the Middle East (Palestine, Syria, Upper Mesopotamia and Egypt), by the Arab-Muslim troops, the latter were SOMETIMES received and acclaimed, as victors, RARELY the opposite. The dominant attitude was the wait-and-see attitude, the famous British wait and see.

THE PROBLEM OF THE PRIMARY....AND SECONDARY SOURCES.

“Before we get into the details of the battles themselves, it is worth making clear that we have no good descriptions of the tactics or weaponry employed by any of the parties involved. The men who chronicled military affairs were mostly clergymen on the Christian side and storytellers and religious scholars of different sorts on the Muslim side. Their purpose in writing was to show the workings of God in the human affairs, not the machinations of man. Storytellers, or we might say preachers, had served in Arab-Muslim armies from an early stage, encouraging the troops by recalling past glories and heroic exploits, so adding a human dimension to the bare facts. They give us an impression, for example, of the characters of the early warriors (Abu Ubayda as prudent, Khalid ibn al-Walid as impetuous, Amr ibn al-As as wily), and of the self-image of the conquerors: “soldiers by day and monks by night,” emphasizing their passion for jihad and zuhd (simple living). We almost never receive from any writer, however, reliable details about troop strength and movements, specific planning, weapons deployed, layout of the site, and so on. In particular, the numbers given by our sources are very erratic, and the reader must just bear in mind that provisioning large numbers of soldiers was very difficult in the time before mechanized agriculture and transport. An army of 5,000—10,000 men is already very substantial, and 30,000—40,000 near the limit of what it is possible to sustain, especially in less fertile areas” (Robert G. Hoyland, In God’s path).

Muslim sources nevertheless all have in common

- To report a phenomenal disproportion of the numbers (in favor of the Byzantines).
- To present the Muslims as admirable heroic saints and their adversaries as men without faith or law, cowards and wicked.
- To provide us with very little precise and personal information (proper nouns -Romanus, of course, is not the real name of the governor of the city of Bosra- nationality, etc.) about the men of the opposite side ; but to overflow with details including without much interest or explaining many things about the fighters on their side.

A crude Manicheism injurious for the vanquished therefore from which it clearly emerges that God was with Muslims (attitude common to both sides, let us remind of it, the victories are due to God and the defeats are punishments of our sins).

As Nadia Maria El-Cheikh says very well in *Byzantium Viewed by the Arabs* (2004, Harvard University Press) p. 5: "One major challenge to examining initial contacts between Byzantium and the early Muslim umma arises from the controversy surrounding the traditional Islamic account... ..sources are not contemporaneous with the events they purport to relate and were sometimes written many centuries later. These sources contain internal complexities: anachronisms, discrepancies, and contradictions. Moreover, many of them provide evidence of embellishment and invention that were introduced to serve the purposes of political or religious apologetic."

Since we cannot under any circumstances subscribe to such an extreme racism, we will stick to the plausibility in this field and we will endeavor to identify at best the logistical or strategic, tactical and of numbers, problems, which can account for these victories or of these disasters, and will refer to a later chapter the political-religious questions that can also explain them, and more convincingly besides. Without deluding ourselves for all that on the real motivations of many of these conquerors (loot, glory, profitable offices, lure of gain).

Let us remind, however, that it took several years (4) and many twists and turns, many back and forth, many moves forwards or withdrawals, so that this part of the Roman-Byzantine empire definitely get away from Byzantium and we will speak here only of the main battles without overemphasizing the details of the numbers, which are still controversial (some Muslim sources speak of 400,000 troops for the Byzantine army, help!); but it seems well indeed that each time the Muslims were clearly outnumbered, except for Dathin in 634.

1) Praesentales, Latin word designating the elite units surrounding the emperor Heraclius during the wars against Persia, therefore the part of the regular army placed under his immediate orders and available immediately.

2) Small subdivision of the Roman Empire whose capital was Bosra in present-day Syria. This proper noun did not designate therefore the Arabian Peninsula as a whole, but a small part of its north-western periphery.

THE FIRST BYZANTINE WITHDRAWALS.

In short, in autumn 633 the interim caliph appealed to the tribes around Mecca, Medina and Taif for recruits (he was suspicious of others, that he had just crushed) and appointed three commanders.

It is not clear why the army was divided into three columns. Perhaps the lack of water in the desert forced them to move in separate detachments. In any case with no system of regular supply, this could have made it easier to live off the land.

Dividing the army might also have meant harassing raids rather than invasion, but the evolution of Arab Muslim warfare was unpredictable in this period.

Column one under Amr ibn al As was instructed to advance into southern Palaestina Salutaris through Aila (Aqaba) in the direction of Gaza.

Column two under Yazid ibn abi Sufyan was to march up the east side of the Dead Sea.

Column three under Shurahbil ibn Hasana was to march even further east in the direction of Bosra and Damascus.

If any column met strong opposition, the other two columns were to come to its assistance.

REMAINED FAMOUS BATTLES (chronology given without prejudice).

BOSRA or BOSTRA. End of the year 633. Traditionally first city DURABLY conquered. Capital of the Roman province of Arabia.

Roman vanity had decorated with the name of Arabia that of the fifteen provinces of Syria which included the cultivated lands east of the Jordan. The country was rich in the results of a varied trade; the emperors had taken care to cover it with a line of forts, and the solidity of the walls of Gerasa, Philadelphia, or Bosra, guaranteed them at least against a surprise. The last formed the eighteenth station from Medina. The road was well known to the caravans from Hijaz and Iraq; which went every year to this market, abundantly supplied with productions of the province and with those of the desert.

Bosra has kept its dual role of a border city and an administrative center under the Byzantines. The city had rapidly converted to Christianity and its bishops had occupied an important place in the theological controversies of the time. We have only later Muslim sources about it, nothing on the Byzantine side. The resulting picture is totally Manichean: net imbalance of forces in favor of the Byzantine side, conversion of the governor of the city, a certain Romanus (what a symbol), etc.

Other Muslim sources which are perhaps more intellectually honest, therefore, mention a siege according to the law led by the four Muslim generals: Abu Ubayda, Shurahbil, Yazid, and finally Khalid ibn Walid came especially from the northeastern front (Iraqi borders of the Persian Empire) through desert to lend them a hand.

AREOPOLIS / MA'AB. City located east of the Dead Sea. Rabba in present-day Jordan.

According to Baladhuri would have fallen before Bosra which may seem quite logical since located further south.

The city seems to have housed a small garrison (fustat). Some fights took place around the quarters then the city surrendered (end 633?)

On the other hand, we have a report from the Byzantine side, by Sebeos.

"They reached Moabite Rabbath, at the borders of Ruben's [land]. The Byzantine army was encamped in Arabia. [The Arabs] fell upon them suddenly, struck them with the sword and put to flight Emperor Heraclius' brother T'eodos."

DATHIN. Village located in the northeast of Gaza. February 4, 634.

It appears the Dux Sergius located 125 kilometers away up in Caesarea heard about the first Arab Muslim column of Amr ibn As and gathered what troops he could find in the immediate area and marched south. How many men he had we do not know. We can assume his quickly assembled force was numerically inferior. The two armies met at the village of Dathin on February 4, 634. The Byzantines were defeated and the candidatus Sergius himself was killed, together with 300 of his soldiers.

According to the *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati*, the Muslim victory was celebrated by the local Jews. The Arab Muslims fanned out over southern Palestine reaching as far north as Lydda and Jaffa.

Thomas the presbyter. This Jacobite priest lived in Upper Mesopotamia in what today Iraq is. He wrote in 640, just six years after the events he reports.

"In the year 945 [=634], indiction 7, Friday 4 February at the ninth hour, there was a battle between the Romans (the Byzantines) and the Tayyaye (Arabs) of Muhammad in Palestine twelve miles east of Gaza. The Romans fled, leaving behind the patrician Bryrdn whom the Arabs killed. Some four thousand poor villagers of Palestine were killed there, Christians, Jews and Samaritans. The Tayyaye (Arabs) ravaged the whole region.

Thomas refers to a local population of Christians, Jews and Samaritans, which is correct: Gaza was the see of a bishopric, but the presence of Jews and Samaritans is indicated by other sources. Thomas shows that he knows the local reality of this time, contrary to the Muslim texts on the same subject.

AJNADAYN, 37 kilometers southeast of Jerusalem? July 30th, 634.

The Muslim sources confuse this battle with that of the Yarmuk 2 years later.

The historian N. A. Miednikoff suggested that the battle was fought on the Wadi al-Samt River, where lies the twin village of al-Jannaba. According to the hypothesis advanced by Miednikoff, it was from the dual form (al-Jannabatayn) of the village the historical name of the battle emerged, by conflation with the plural for the word army : ajnad.

Regarding the strength of the armies, H. A. R. Gibb in the *Encyclopedia of Islam* argues that, at best, both forces were made up of 10,000 men, and that the numbers offered in the Muslim sources are "highly exaggerated," especially as regards the Byzantines. David Morray thinks both armies had approximately 20,000 troops each other.

The Byzantines were led by Heraclius' brother Theodore, as well as by a figure called "Artabun" or "Wardan" in the Muslim sources, evidently a corruption of the Armenian name Vardan. The Muslim sources name him as the patrician (commander) of Emesa (Homs) which was the major Byzantine base of operations in Syria in the early period of the Muslim conquests. According to Kaegi, he possibly commanded fresh reinforcements from the north, including Armenians, or from the army that had accompanied Heraclius to Syria. In addition, the army may have also contained local Arab tribal levies. The Arab army consisted of three separate contingents, with either Khalid or Amr, as the overall commander.

The Byzantines suffered a heavy defeat and were forced to retreat to Damascus. The Arab-Muslims also suffered heavy casualties, and Muslim tradition records several lists of Companions of Muhammad, including several members of the early Muslim aristocracy, who fell in the battle and were regarded as shahids. The high number of deaths served to reinvigorate the sense of religious martyrdom among the nascent Muslim community, while the high proportion of Meccan deaths served as a useful counterbalance to the influence of the Medinan Ansar. On the Byzantine side, the Muslim sources report that one of the two commanders, probably Vardan, fell in the battle, but that Theodore escaped and withdrew north where Heraclius replaced him with Vahan and Theodore Trithyrios and sent him to imprisonment in Constantinople. Heraclius himself withdrew from Emesa (Homs) to the greater safety of Antioch Ajnadayn, while the surviving Byzantine units fled to the safety of walled towns, and left the countryside undefended before the Muslim raids. The whole of Palestine was thus left open to Muslim raids, especially in the interior parts away from the coastal towns. As a result, panic spread across the region, and large numbers of the rural population also sought safety behind the town walls. After their victory, the Arab Muslim army once more broke up into several raiding columns, until they reunited once more to confront another Byzantine attempt at halting the Muslim invasion at the Battle of Pella/Fahl six months later.

ARRIVED AT THIS POINT OF OUR OPUSCULE THE QUESTION IS: IN WHAT SIDE WAS REALLY GOD ON THAT DAY?

Nor is the equipment of the Caliphate troops better than that of the Greeks and Persians. The Arabs do not have a heavy cavalry, unlike the Sassanids and their elephants (decisive at the Battle of the Bridge or al-Jasr in 634). Some historians even think that Muslims strictly speaking did not have cavalry: the horses brought the fighters on the battle field, the camels were used to carry all the logistics. Muslim armies, on the other hand, have for them mobility and knowledge of the desert, which make them able to move quickly, or to flee and seek shelter so as not to be exterminated after a defeat in a pitched battle. As for poliorcetics, it is the weak point of the Arabs, which explains their will to take the cities by treaties rather than by force.

It remains therefore difficult therefore to explain the Arab victories if we stick only to the military aspect. The wear of enemy armies has probably weighed, but it may also be necessary to turn to the reactions of local populations.

From the middle of the sixth century, all the woes of the world seem to be falling on Syria and Palestine. From 527, the wars of the Persians against the empire resume. Although they are paused by truces, they constitute a constant danger and give rise to invasions accompanied by capture of cities, looting and even deportations: in 573, the capture of Apamea is followed by the deportation of 292,000 men in Persian territory. At the beginning of the seventh century, Syria and Palestine were occupied by the Persians for twenty-five years; the divergences between the Jacobite Church, founded by James Baradeus under Justinian, which follows the Monophysite creed and the Chalcedonian Church, are increased. In addition to war and internal dissents, there are natural disasters, such as earthquakes, epidemics, with the plague of 540, and shortages resulting from poor harvests, in a new economic context marked by the recession. It is therefore a Levant exhausted or even worn out which will therefore succumb to the Arab-Muslim conquerors ...

Christians and Muslims, however, agree on one point: God is behind every defeat or victory. Defeats are punishments or trials, sent by God. See the explanations given by Muhammad after the battle of Uhud in 625. As for the victories they are, of course, the proof that God is with us.

On May 31, 632, Emperor Heraclius took an unprecedented initiative, under the influence of certain churchmen, apparently, by publishing a decree which obliged all his Jewish subjects to convert to Christianity. This edict concerned

the regions of Asia Minor (Turkey today), Syria, Palestine, Greece, Egypt and the Balkans. Although it was not executed, the decree lost him the Jews, who had been numerous, to ally themselves with the Persians in the beginning of the century. Long-standing discriminatory policies and laws pushed Samaritans and non-Orthodox Christians into the arms of Arab invaders at the same time as Jews. Moreover, in 633-34, Maximus the Confessor 1) and Sophronius 2) of Jerusalem paid excessive attention to anti-Jewish polemics where verbal violence was not absent.

At the same time, Maximus described the Arabs as "tough and foreign." He saw them first as a transient evil, and then considered their conquest of Jerusalem as a divine curse against Christian sinners.

As for Sophronius, his complaints about the capture of Jerusalem ran more the Jews than Arab conquerors. According to the Belgian scholar in Greek patristic Carl Laga, this fixation on the Jewish problem visibly turned obsessive, which prevented [the Christians] from measuring the real historical significance of the Arab-Muslim attack. It was, according to them, only a new, updated expression of the punishment of Christians for their sins, but especially of Jews for their eternal *apistia* (unbelief). Why was Byzantium unable to confront the real enemy who threatened Christendom with physical destruction and dire consequences, why did it prefer to embark on a long period of anti-Jewish effervescence?

Laga stresses that the Jews naturally found again their situation of targets of ecclesiastical anathemas that attributed to them the catastrophic situation of the Empire. According to Averil Cameron, another great specialist of Byzantium, the factors of anti-Jewish aggression during the seventh century were added to each other. These were the lasting damage caused by the writings of the Church Fathers, the sustained activities and laws of the Emperor Justinian against the mid-sixth century heretics, the fact that Jews were considered the henchmen of some factions or of some pretenders to the throne at the end of the sixth century, and their reputation as sympathizers of the Persians.

The debates between atheists are therefore raging to explain otherwise than by a divine intervention in human affairs type Gott mit Uns relative speed (4 years) of the conquest of the Levant (Syria Palestine) by the Muslim armies.

The importance of religious fervor, the lure of loot, a possible military superiority, or the favorable reception of local populations oppressed by the two rival empires, notably Byzantium, are cited pell-mell.

When Islam appeared in the seventh century, the Middle East was largely Christianized, even though Judaism was still well represented. In addition to Asia Minor and Armenia, Christianity was established in Palestine, in the Fertile Crescent (Syria and Mesopotamia), in the Roman province of Arabia (Bosra), where St. Paul had stayed after his baptism (Ga 1: 15-17), Yemen, Egypt, and Sinai. The Acts of the Apostles signal the presence of Arabs in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (2, 11). Evangelization was the result of the missionary work of many Apostles: Peter, John, Thomas, Mark, Bartholomew and Paul, of course. The Church of the Levant was organized in eparchies (dioceses) depending on four patriarchates: Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople.

But Eastern Christianity was very weak because of its internal divisions and of the political rivalries between the two great Empires of the time in this region, Byzantium and Persia. This double instability favored the Islamic conquest, without it being necessary to stick to the overly simplistic assertion, often made, that Muslims have been welcomed everywhere as liberators.

The institutional division of universal Christendom began in 395 when Theodosius shared the Roman Empire between his two sons, Honorius, who received the West, and Arcadius, to whom the East came down. This separation led to a cultural disparity between the two Christian "lungs," even though Latin remained the official language of the entire Church until 535, when the East adopted Greek, which already coexisted there with difficulty with the three Semitic idioms (Aramaic, Syriac and Arabic), plus Armenian and Coptic. Added to exegetical and dogmatic divergences, quarrels of patriarchal precedence, political calculations, semantic misunderstandings caused schisms.

ARIANISM.

The fourth century was first marked by the crisis provoked by a priest of Alexandria, Arius, who denied the divinity of Christ. Although it was condemned by the first General Council, held in Nicaea in 325, during which the consubstantiality of the Son with the Father was defined, Arianism experienced a prodigious expansion both in the East and in the West because of Emperor Constantine who cleared Arius and exiled Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, the main opponent of Arianism 3).

NESTORIANISM

A century later, a new crisis occurred at the initiative of Nestorius. This Syrian monk became the patriarch of Constantinople in 428, formed by the exegesis dualist in force at the Didascalia (Theological School of Antioch) he favored the humanity of Jesus to the detriment of his divinity, whence his refusal to admit that Mary is the mother of God, as it was believed in the Didascalia of

Alexandria, where the substantial unity between the two natures of Christ was emphasized. In 431, the council of Ephesus proclaimed the Virgin Mary Theotokos (in Greek "who gives birth to God") and deposed Nestorius for heresy.

But Nestorianism spread as far as Mesopotamia and Persia, territories then dominated by the Sassanids, where the local Church, which had already broken her link with the patriarchate of Antioch, located on Byzantine soil, in the hope of escaping persecution, made it his official doctrine. Christian Arab tribes, also vassals of the Persians, especially that of the Lakhmids, established in Hira, also became Nestorian, bringing along this way the residents of the Persian Gulf. The suppression of their kingdom by the Sassanids will leave them defenseless during the Islamic conquest. In 433, an agreement between John and Cyril, respectively patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria, stipulated the distinction between the divine and human natures of Christ and their union without confusion. This definition did not receive the consent of all the anti-Nestorians. Some believed that it implied an absolute separation between the two natures and thus amounted to denying Christ's uniqueness. They then followed the Monophysite thesis (of Greek monos = single and physis = nature) of a Syrian monk, Eutyches, for whom the human nature of Christ was absorbed by his divine nature.

SPREADING OF MONOPHYSITISM.

In spite of the excommunication of Eutyches by the patriarch of Constantinople, Flavian, theologically supported in this step by Pope Leo the Great, Monophysitism was endorsed by the patriarch of Alexandria, Dioscorus. The destitution of the latter by the Council of Chalcedon (451) led to the adoption of this doctrine by the Church of Egypt, which found there a way of freeing itself from the political tutelage of Constantinople. It must be said that Justinian, in order to unify the Byzantine Empire under the aegis of the Chalcedonian orthodoxy, developed a severe suppression against the Monophysites. In 536, the Coptic Church organized itself independently. From 617, she had to suffer the ravages of Persian invaders. On their departure, ten years later, the Byzantine ruler, Heraclius, appointed a certain Cyrus, from the Caucasus 4), both viceroy of Egypt and bishop of Alexandria. He too tried to force the Copts to adopt the Melkite faith of Chalcedon.

Monophysitism was also spread among the Christians of Inner Syria where, unlike the Hellenized cities of the Mediterranean coast, the populations were of Syriac culture. This was done under the impetus of the monk Jacob Baradeus. Bishop of Edessa, having rejected the canons of Chalcedon, the latter also wanted to escape the Byzantine Caesaropapism. Before his death, in 578, he appointed and ordained a Monophysite patriarch, Paul the Black, as well as bishops and priests, thus founding the Jacobite or "Syrian" Church, whose seat was in Antioch. Its followers were rather well treated by the Persians who had invaded Syria at the beginning of the seventh century. The Arab-Muslim conquest (634-638) rid them of the two enemy empires, but there were many passages to Islam. For, despite its "disdainful tolerance", the beginning of the dhimmitude, the Caliphate established in Damascus was at first able to seduce and reassure the baptized by enlisting them in his administration. Finally, Monophysitism was implanted in the southern, central and western regions of the Arabian Peninsula, particularly within the Banu Ghassan tribe, originally from "fertile Arabia" (present-day Yemen), a very early evangelized territory thanks to the neighborhood of Christian Abyssinia, as evidenced by the remains of a cathedral in Sana'a.

This Christianity, sensitive to the apocryphal Gospels of which the Quran will be inspired, was also tinged with paganism or various superstitions. The way of life of the Bedouin Arabs also gave also to their sacramental practice a rather random nature. This still fragile nature of Arab Christianity prevented them from seeing the radical differences that could exist between Islam and Christianity 5). Pious Muslims often also insist on the faith of the main Arab generals and their troops, but it cannot, alone, explain victories. The lure of loot was no doubt a significant factor, since on the Muslim side it was not a question of regular armies receiving pay.

Muhammad often spoke of the wealth of the other nations, which were waiting for them.

Ibn Ishaq, *Life of Muhammad* translated by Alfred Guillaume, page 113.

"I said to 'Abbas, "What is their religion? It is something new to me." He said, "This is Muhammad son of Abdullah who alleges that God has sent him with it and that the treasures of Chosroes and Caesar will be opened to him."

Ibn Ishaq *Life of Muhammad* translated by Alfred Guillaume page 243.

"Muhammad promises us that we shall enjoy the treasures of Chosroes and Caesar whereas it is not safe for one of us to go to the privy!"

The calimeros of the happy land or of the country of Winny the Pooh present to us this campaign of the Levant as a defensive war, hardly a preventive war, intended to counter in advance a combined attack of the Byzantine and Persian forces united (like during the battle of Firaz in 634) by a common will of nipping nascent Islam in the bud. The Muslim empire of the 7th century would be the only example in the world of an empire built only by defensive wars

Let us say at once that we hardly believe in this secret alliance between Heraclius and Yazdgard III for a simple reason: Islam is at the time a phenomenon too new, too recent, to be clearly defined.

The thing we must insist on is the mutual ignorance, especially about religion, despite trade contacts. For the Byzantine or Persian populations (themselves very diverse), the Arabs are not "Muslims" but "Agarenes," a name that comes from Hagar, the servant of Abraham; "Ishmaelites," from Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar; and "Saracens."

The Muslim religion is unknown. The Arabs are designated as scourges sent by God to punish bad Christians for their sins, including the official Byzantine Church seen by many Eastern Christians as a corrupted (Melkite) institution. Punishment is, however, considered temporary, and no one fears a forced conversion, for it is not the will of the conquerors. Saracens are not seen as practitioners of a religion competing with Christianity, but most often as pagans practicing a demonic and idolatrous religion.

To all this we have to add the tensions within the two empires attacked, and particularly the Byzantine Empire. If, among the Sassanids, the main and official religion is Zoroastrianism, the other religions are hardly persecuted. On the other hand, in Byzantium, the divisions of Eastern Christians carry weight. The religious and political authority of Byzantium is disputed, especially in Syria and Egypt. Since the Council of Chalcedon (451), the emperors support the Chalcedonian cause, which advocates the dogma of the unity of the two natures of Christ, divine and human. They oppose Monophysitism (and Miaphysitism), which believes in the only divine nature of Christ, and Nestorianism, which separates strictly divine and human nature. The religious organization of the empire, consisting of five patriarchates (Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem) does not really overcome these antagonisms, which worsen during the war against the Persians. Nevertheless, it is mainly the persecutions ordered by Heraclius after the recapture, which provoke some hostility towards the imperial power, rather than basic theological quarrels.

Local people are also struck by taxes increase, and the fact that Arabs are lowering them on arrival is not trivial, even if they do so first because they cannot effectively manage the heavy administration they find, which leads them to retain the majority of local officials.

The last explanation put forward, very often, to understand the Arab Muslim success, is its INITIAL religious tolerance, IN THAT TIME. It is true that they do not push for conversion to Islam at first. It is not in their interest because non-Muslims must pay taxes and accept submission to the new power to continue to practice their religion.

It is necessary, nevertheless, to qualify the reception reserved by the local populations to the conquerors. For a long time, an idealized vision spread the idea that the Arab-Muslims had been welcomed as liberators. The reactions, however, were very varied, split between negotiation, resistance or indifference.

For these populations, who for many of them contest the authority of Byzantium, the arrival of the Arab-Muslims does not change many things, except the identity of new leaders.

1) Maximus the confessor. 580-662. Monk and Byzantine theologian.

2) Sophronius. 560-638. A monk and theologian then patriarch of Jerusalem from 634.

3) Given the extent of the borrowing from the Arian doctrine in the Quran and its denial of the Trinity, it will not be surprising to read in the writings of the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), ideologist of the Muslim Brotherhood, that "Arius is the most valuable representative of Christianity."

4) This strange character who makes the problem is known from the Muslim tradition under the name of Muqawqis.

5) A similar phenomenon will then occur in the Romanized Berber North Africa, undermined by religious differences.

NORTHEASTERN FRONT.

In other words, the border regions of a Sassanid empire exhausted by 25 years of war, finally lost, against the Byzantine Empire, and having sunk into anarchy, with disputed central authority. A right bank of the Euphrates inhabited not by Persians or future Iranians but by future Iraqi Arabs who are predominantly Christian, while the official religion of the empire was a form of Zoroastrianism, hence sometimes in clashes. It should be noted, however, that the situation of these Eastern Christians was better than that of non-Melkite (that is, in opposition to the emperor) Christians, in the Byzantine Empire. The following, namely the gest of Khalid ibn Walid, and especially the Battle of Firaz (now Abu Kamal) on the border between the two empires, Persian and Romano Byzantine, but on the Sassanid Empire side, on the Euphrates, is more than suspect in terms of numbers, nationality of opponents of Islam, and their motives. What reasons, indeed, would have the local Byzantine forces (on the other side of the border) to make common cause with their traditional foe against what they took for a simple raid of nomads come from the desert? We will return in the end of this chapter on the general problem of the reliability to be given to Muslim sources dealing with the subject.

Nevertheless, as noted above, experts agree that the Arab armies were not disordered gangs swooping on the enemy, but commanded and structured troops, ultimately having nothing to envy the Byzantine and Sasanian armies .

Nor is the equipment of the Caliphate troops better than that of the Greeks and Persians. The Arabs do not have a heavy cavalry, unlike the Sassanids and their elephants (decisive in the Battle of the Bridge or al-Jasr in 634). Some historians even think that Muslims strictly speaking did not have cavalry: the horses brought the fighters on the battle field , the camels were used to carry all the logistics. Muslim armies, on the other hand, have for them mobility and knowledge of the desert, which make them able to move quickly, or to flee and seek shelter so as not to be exterminated after a defeat in a pitched battle. As for poliorcetics, it is the weak point of the Arabs, which explains their will to take the cities by treaties rather than by force. It remains therefore difficult therefore to explain the Arab victories if we stick only to the military aspect but let us try nevertheless.

Since the 1st century before the common era , the border between the Roman Empire (later Byzantine Empire) and the Parthian Empire (later Sassanid Empire) was the Euphrates. This boundary was continually disputed. Most of the battles, and therefore most of the fortifications, were concentrated in the northern hilly regions, the vast Arab desert or Syrian desert separating these empires from the rest of the world to the south. The only dangers coming from this unknown country were the occasional raids of Arab tribes. The two empires, on their side, had formed alliances with small, semi-independent Arab principalities, serving as buffer states, and thus protecting in one case Byzantium, in another one Persia, from Bedouin attacks.

The vassals of the Byzantines were the Ghassanids, those of the Persians the Lakhmids.

The Ghassanids and Lakhmids were constantly fighting, which occupied them greatly, but hardly affected the Romans of the Byzantine Empire, or the Persians of the Sassanid Empire.

But in the sixth and seventh centuries of common erar, everything changed.

The Persian Sassanid Emperor Khosrau II had fought a dangerous rebellion within his own empire, and then devoted all his energy to external problems, especially to his traditional foe, the Byzantines. He succeeds relatively well for a few years. From 613 to 614, he extended the Iranian borders as far west as the cities of Antioch, Damascus and Jerusalem. But the Byzantines pulled themselves together and Khosrau was beaten by Heraclius at the battle of Nineveh in 627. The Byzantines took again all Syria and penetrated far into the Persian provinces of Mesopotamia.

The Lakhmids took the opportunity to revolt against the Sasanian emperor, but Al-Nu'man III (son of Al-Mundhir IV, the first Christian Lakhmid king) was deposed and executed.

In 628, on the other hand, Khosrau II is assassinated. From 628 to 632, there will be no less than ten Persian sovereigns at the head of the Sassanid empire. This was a great opportunity for the Lakhmids to regain their independence.

The moment was also propitious to the enterprises of Islam for three reasons.

The Sassanids emerged very weakened from a recent war against the Byzantine Empire.

The Aryan mages (Zoroastrians or Parsis) of Persia were forced to defend themselves fiercely against the continuous progress of Christianity in their empire (the Nestorian bishop of Susa, for example, had destroyed in 418 one of their fire temples).

The "Nestorian" Christian Arabs will effectively help the Muslims to seize the Sassanid empire by not fighting hard to save it.

Faced with danger, the Persians pulled themselves together. Their magi and their great lords had Queen Azarmedukht deposed and her tiara (crown) was placed on the head of Yazdegard III,

grandson of Khosrau II. Given the youth and inexperience of the young prince (he was then only fifteen), the royal standard and the direction of the armies were entrusted to General Rostam. Below, therefore, is a brief summary of this Khalidan gest on the right bank of the Euphrates. In 633 Al Muthanna, head of the Bakr Bedouin tribe, bordering Iraq, and conquering on behalf of Abu Bakr of the Bahraini region, during the operations carried out in the fight against the anti-Medinan separatists, in the previous year; persuaded the interim Caliph of the interest of an attack on the borders of the Persian Empire. The initial target was the region of Basra (former Chaldea in southern Iraq) led by Hormuz, a Persian marzaban (governor) not very liked by his subjects. After the defeat and death of Musaylima in the Yamama in May-June, 633, Khaled b. al-Walid therefore marched north through eastern Arabia to join his forces with Muslim elements of the Banu 'Ejl and Banu Shayban of al-Muthanna ibn Haritha, who were already raiding the south of Iraq. At the battle of Chains 1) at Kazima, north of Kuwait, Khalid's army met and defeated Sasanian frontier forces under Hormozd.

The Persians were accustomed to the raids of the nomadic Arab tribes and had always easily repelled them until that time. Therefore they underestimated the threat.

Hormozd responded by gathering an army of 30,000 men (?) formed with militants from the Christian tribes in the region and some regular Sassanid troops available on the spot. He waited for Khalid at Kazima.

Khaled, arriving from Yamama, chose to maneuver through the desert where his army, fully mounted on camels or horses, could move easily. Hormozd's army, less mobile, was largely formed with heavily armed infantry.

Khalid made his three columns move across the desert, carefully avoiding Kazima, of course, but stopping in front of Hufeir.

On hearing this, Hormozd brought his army back to Hufeir, which he reached two days later. In vain, since at the same time Khalid had moved back to Kazima.

The Persians made the journey in the opposite direction and arrived at Kazima, tired, exactly what Khalid wanted.

This victory enabled Khaled to penetrate the (west) southern line of Sasanian frontier defenses near the coast and reach the Shatt al Arab where he defeated the survivors of Hormozd's army and reinforcements from Ctesiphon at the battle of Uballa in March-April, 633. There Khaled turned back and went north (still along the Euphrates's right bank) in the direction of Hira, the capital of the Lakhmid Christian kingdom, located on the borders of the Sasanian Empire. Muslim sources mention three other battles fought in the direction of Hira: the Battle of Mazar, the Battle of Walaja, the Battle of Ullais 2).

The local population, mainly Aramaic (Beth Aramaye), has long before Islam good proportions of Arabs. It becomes the capital of the Lakhmids in the fifth and sixth centuries.

Al-Hira has long been Manichean, and would even be behind the spreading of this doctrine in the Arabian Peninsula. Tradition has it that Arabic writing has developed there. Lakhmid kings are not Christians, apart from exceptions. They become Nestorian Christians around 594, and build a nearby monastery, then others (up to twenty), places of devotion and writing, which have much made dream, and write books, now missing.

At that time it is since, at least strongly Christianized, by missionary activity. It has its anchorites and some saints. It is the see of a bishopric of the Easter Church.

The fall of Hira region had very important strategic consequences. By its position between the desert and Ctesiphon / Madain (the capital of the Sassanids) this city was an ideal springboard to go to the assault of the Persian Empire proper. Moreover, as it was very rich, it was able to supply the Muslim army with food for the soldiers and fodder for the horses.

When the lords of the nearby villages heard the news, they also preferred to conclude a peace treaty with the Muslims and pay the jizya. Khalid set up his headquarters in the city and sent agents to the villages to collect the tribute.

Khalid then got into a systematic war of attrition against the Sasanian empire by constantly harassing it to weaken him, and by taking one by one the fortresses of its Nestorian Christian vassals.

Al-Anba or Anbar was an important city on the left bank of the Euphrates (the ruins of the city are five kilometers north-west of Falluja and gave its name to the province).

Anbar was originally called Firuz Shapur or Perisabor, and was founded around 350 of the common era by the Sassanid emperor Shapur II.

In 634, Anbar, after having been a time Roman or independent, had become Sassanid again. Its surroundings were a refuge for many Arab tribes fleeing Muslim troops, including the Banu Taghlib who had followed their prophetess Saja.

As we have already seen, the Banu Taghlib led a coalition of Rabia and Lyad under the aegis of the Persian governor of the region. The Shah-al-Riad bin Quraybun from our sources. The commander-in-chief was a man named Nawfil bin Mazin. The latter, in the harangues transmitted to us, repeats that the invaders must be clearly repelled; for they will not stop "until we have been obliged to join their din," that is, to submit to Islam; in accordance with the primary meaning of the word beside.

All these tribes clashed with the Muslim troops, but vainly! The Persian governor, seeing them flee, hastened to leave the city in turn, and to let the inhabitants of Anbar defend themselves as best they could. Khalid was inflexible, and would only admit unconditional surrender. The hostility of the Christian Bedouins nevertheless led him to take more and more hard measures. The chiefs were beheaded before the walls of the city, and all the men of the garrison were put to death. As for women and children, they were given to soldiers or sold as slaves.

South-west of Anbar, on the other hand, the Muslim advance was stopped by the first true fortress encountered, Dumat-al Jandal 3). This fortress city was at the crossroads of the roads leading to the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq and Syria (present Jawf oasis in Saudi Arabia). Its strategic importance forced the Muslim general responsible for this front, Lyadh, not to go beyond. According to Tabari Khalid decided to finish with it.

Dumat had two kings, Ukaydir and al-Jawdi, who, when they learned of Khalid's move towards them, debated with the other tribes the tactics to follow, either to resist him or to propose a conciliation. Their opinions diverged.

Arrived at Dumat, Khalid decided to attack the fortress in two different places. The garrison vigorously opposed it, but was soon forced to retreat, leaving many of its allies in the hands of the Muslim forces. They were all killed, with the exception of the men of the Kalb tribe, who were pardoned by the Tamimites of Khalid's army because of an old alliance between both tribes.

It is at this moment of the Khalidian gest that the Muslim tradition places the mysterious battle of Firaz (not far away from the current Abu Kamal today in Syria). Khalid and a handful of Muslims but still with the help of God, of course, would have triumphed over a huge international coalition of Christian Arabs (from Taghlib or Nimr tribes), Byzantines, and Persians, determined to nip in the bud the nascent Islam (what bad boys!) The official intervention of regular Byzantine forces alongside the Persian garrison is questioned by some historians like Peter Crawford (The War of the Three Gods 2013) despite the proximity of the official border 2).

Walter E. Kaegi of the University of Chicago thinks nevertheless that the region may have been occupied by Byzantine and allied troops after the signing of the peace treaty with Persia, defeated by Heraclius, from 630 to 637. View map page 49 of his book entitled "Byzantium and the early Muslim conquests" Cambridge 1992).

Anyway, what seems certain is that during this battle (which took place in January 634 ?), Khalid will use his cavalry to encircle the enemy forces which were then cut in pieces by his infantry; then having thus finished securing his rear, he prepared to advance further into the Persian empire but fate decided otherwise.

A letter from the interim caliph (Abu Bakr) reached him, which said to him in substance: "As soon as you receive my letter, if you are standing do not sit down, and if you are on horseback, do not dismount. Go to Syria immediately, leaving behind you under the command of Al Muthanna, a part of your troops. Take with you those who have followed you from Yamama and Hejaz. "

1).The presence of chains is repeatedly mentioned in the battles against Persians and Byzantines. This device was used either to show that the soldiers would fight to the death, or to prevent them from fleeing. It made possible a greater resistance, especially against the cavalry, but at the expense of speed (especially if one of the chained men was out of action) and left little chance of survival in case of defeat. It seems, however, that all this is actually a translation mistake. The chained men may be just men in close order. Faith can make somebody say nonsense and a great faith say a lot of nonsense.

2).“There are numerous primary sources on the early conquest of Islam. Most are Muslim sources which were written in the 9th-10th centuries long after the conquest happened, but there are also other primary sources such as Pahlavi, Armenian, Christian and Syriac sources, which would be more than helpful. There are non-literal sources as well, such as numismatics, epigraphic, and archeological findings that can verify our sources. One of the main issues in the study of Early Islamic conquests is that our main Arabic Sources were written around 200 years after the events took place and they are sometimes contradictory in the sequence of events and the dates..... It is extremely difficult

to read and comprehend the early Islamic historiography. Most of the conquest accounts were written to address the post-conquest politics such as the amount of taxes, tribute from cities, division of spoils and lands, and the administrative positions for the newly conquered lands. Accounts are often contradictory and the exact course of events is unclear, in addition the precise dates are elusive and the sizes of the armies are hard to determine "(Saeid Jalalipour, Arab Conquest of Persia. California State University, Fullerton 2013).

3) We have practically no sources which speak of Dumat al-Jandal in this period. According to al-Tabari, the king of Duma named Ukaydir was a Christian Kindite. The greatest difficulty is to distinguish the references to Dumat al-Jandal from those to Dumat al-Hira, as only the name "Duma" is mentioned. Shahid often preferred the former option, but this remains highly debatable in most cases. He suggested the implantation of the Persian power in the region and therefore at Dumat al-Jandal in the 4th century. He also spoke of the existence of two Greek Ghassanid inscriptions of a certain Silvanus and Mayia discovered at Anasarth, one dating from 425. Maya might be the daughter of a foederatus king of the tribe of Kalb, suggesting a relationship between Byzantium and the region of Dumat al-Jandal.

UMAR IBN AL KHATTAB (634-644) CAPITAL MEDINA IN ARABIA.

TRUE FIRST CALIPH (Since the first to make himself called Amir al-Muminin i.e., Commander of the Faithful).

Umar, a brutal and vindictive character, was one of Muhammad's first disciples and his unofficial adviser 1).

This shadow man who had so cleverly manipulated the prophet of Islam (or God?) for many years 1), but who had submitted the application of the old Abu Bakr just after his death, then asserted his rights to caliphate. The former slave of an obscure family, who had once been charged with killing Muhammad, then who had violently fought against him before joining him (as formerly St. Paul for Christianity) was a pillar of contradictions. Very violent and full of himself, he had the "delusion of grandeur," but he liked to display simple tastes and frugal manners. His anger was terrible, and it is said that he had beaten to death his own son, whom he accused of drunkenness or immorality. This energetic forty-year-old man therefore gave himself the title of "Commander of the Faithful" Amir al-Muminin (what made him the first true caliph) and laid the foundations of the Muslim theocracy, by starting the count of years based on the departure from Mecca, of Muhammad (Hegira). Zakah or mandatory alms will be paid to a kind of Treasure called Bayt al-Mal (house of wealth).

1) His suggestions are taken over three times in the Quran.

- Take Abraham's station as a place to pray near the Kaaba (2:125).

- The verse on the veil.

-And the fact that God could provide better wives for Muhammad (66: 5).

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 6, Book 60, hadith 10. Narrated Anas.

Umar said, "I agreed with God in three things," or said, "My Lord agreed with me in three things.

-I said, 'O God's Messenger! Would that you took the station of Abraham as a place of prayer.'

-I also said, 'O God's Messenger, Good and bad persons visit you! Would that you ordered the Mothers of the believers (Muhammad's wives) to cover themselves with veils.' So the Divine Verses of hijab were revealed.

-I came to know that the Prophet had blamed some of his wives so I entered upon them and said, 'You should either stop (troubling the Prophet) or God will give His Apostle better wives than you.'

When I came to one of his wives, she said to me, 'O Umar! Does God's Messenger haven't what he could advise his wives with, that you try to advise them?' " Thereupon God revealed:-- "It may be, if he divorced you (all) his Lord will give him instead of you, wives better than you Muslims (who submit to God)." (66.5)

Sahih Muslim Volume 5 Book 26 Number 5395.

A'isha reported that Sauda went out (in the fields) in order to answer the call of nature even after the time when the veil had been prescribed for women. She had been a bulky lady, significant in height among the women, and she could not conceal herself from him who had known her.

Umar b. Khattab saw her and said: Sauda, by God, you cannot conceal from us. Therefore, be careful when you go out. She (A'isha) said: She turned back. God's Messenger was at that time in my house having his evening meal and there was a bone in his hand. She (Sauda) came and said: God's Messenger. I went out and Umar said to me so-and-so. She (A'isha) reported: There came the revelation to him and then it was over; the bone was then in his hand and he had not thrown it and he said:" Permission has been granted to you that you may go out for your needs."

NORTH-WESTERN FRONT: COMPLETION OF THE CONQUEST OF GREATER SYRIA.

WARNING TO THE READER. THE FOLLOWING STORIES EMPHASIZE ALL THE FACT THAT THE ARAB CHRISTIANS HAVE UNTIL THE END FOUGHT MUSLIMS ON THE SIDE OF THE BYZANTINE TROOPS. NOTHING IS LESS CERTAIN, AND WE WILL RETURN ABOUT THE SUBJECT BESIDES. THE CHRISTIANS IN THIS REGION OF THE WORLD WERE FOR MOST MONOPHYSITE OR NESTORIAN AND HATED THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE WHOSE STATE RELIGION, CATHOLIC OR ORTHODOX (IN SHORT MELKITE) CHRISTIANITY, WAS IMPOSED ON THEM.

When the Council of Chalcedon (451) condemned Monophysite theses (recognizing only one nature in Christ), a violent religious and even political opposition resulted, although the concepts of "Nature" and "Person" had not been clearly defined.

Soon Monophysitism spread to Syria and spread mainly in the countryside; the Monophysites even succeeded in placing a patriarch of their obedience on the see of Antioch. The indecision of the Roman emperors, who wished to calm the Syrians, had as result that for seventy years, Melkite (future Catholic and orthodox) and Monophysite, patriarchs, alternately directed from Antioch, the Syrian Church.

The non-Chalcedonian Christianity in Syria Palestine was strengthened and then organized by Jacob Baradeus in the sixth century. It was established long ago in the Ghassanid tribes who guarded the desert border for Byzantium. It should also be remembered that many Arab tribes nomadized in the region, and played a role well before the arrival of Muslims, such as the Banu Kalb in Eastern Syria or the Banu Thaqif in Upper Mesopotamia.

The wars between the Roman Empire and Persia, which resume from 527, are waged via by Arab tribes, but it also happens that they take their own initiatives, without referring to their protectors. Thus Mundhir the Lakhmid raided in 529, which came almost beneath the walls of Antioch. In 531 again, on the advice of Mundhir, the Persian invading army left the Euphrates at Callinicum to push deep into the steppe and reach Gabbula directly on the road to Antioch, after avoiding the Roman armies. The exploits of Ghassanids were brilliant. They played a considerable part in the internal affairs of the Empire. It is for example Harith who got from Justinian, in 542, that two Monophysite bishops were crowned by the patriarch of Antioch. Thus was born a Syrian Monophysite church, rival of the Syrian Chalcedonian Church, which in the long run became hostile to the government of Byzantium.

This collusion between Monophysites and Ghassanides was a danger that the Emperor Maurice believed to avert by having Mundhir captured in 581, but it was already too late and this arrest unleashed on the contrary a general movement of uprisings or attacks directed against the Roman-Byzantine territory. There were, henceforth, two churches in Syria: the Monophysite Church of the Jacobites and the Catholic or Orthodox minority of Melkites (who remained faithful to the Byzantine Roman patriarch of Antioch).

The Emperor Heraclius didn't imagine that he had much to fear from a nascent empire such as that of Arabs, which he believed was torn apart by internal struggles. The conquests he had made on a people so formidable as Persians, seemed to promise him that no other nation would be bold enough to come and attack him in his states. This unfortunate confidence made him neglect the precautions that prudence should have inspired him, so that his frontiers were defenseless, chiefly on the southern side of Syria, where there was no big fortified place.

The Byzantine armies were mainly stationed in Damascus and Emesa (Homs), where the emperor Heraclius stood in the background. The first Muslim conquests having been made (Bosra, Areopolis / Ma'ab) the goal of the Byzantine Empire was then to regain lost ground, while the Muslims, as for them, waged a war of movement, accepting without qualms to give up ground.

"The Byzantines suffered a heavy defeat at Ajnadayn and were forced to retreat to Damascus. The Arabs too suffered heavy casualties, and Muslim tradition records several lists of Companions of Muhammad, including several members of the early Muslim aristocracy, who fell in the battle and were regarded as shahids. The high number of deaths served to reinvigorate the sense of religious martyrdom among the nascent Muslim community, while the high proportion of Meccan deaths served as a useful counterbalance to the influence of the Medinan Ansar. On the Byzantine side, the Muslim sources report that one of the two commanders, probably Vardan, fell in the battle, but that Theodore himself escaped and withdrew north where Heraclius replaced him with Vahan and Theodore Trithurius. Heraclius himself withdrew from Emesa/Homs to the greater safety of Antioch, while the surviving Byzantine units withdrew in towns, leaving the countryside undefended before the Muslim

raids. The whole of Palestine was thus left exposed to Muslim raids, especially in the interior parts away from the coastal towns. As a result, panic spread across the region, and large numbers of the rural population also sought safety behind the town walls” (Walter E. Kaegi).

REMAINED FAMOUS BATTLES.

PELLA / FAHL on the eastern bank of the Jordan 23rd January 635.

Umar's first decision was to confirm or to appoint again Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah as the new commander in chief of the Islamic army. The conquest of Syria continued. Abu Ubaidah decided to march towards the north,

after a brief battle against the poor garrison of Pella/Fahl and its detachment of cavalry gone out to give a gallant last stand, the survivors took refuge on the other side in the city of Scythopolis.

SCYTHOPOLIS. Beginning 635 still. Today Beth Shean, Baysan in Israel. Fourth city definitely conquered.

The city was not damaged and the newly arrived Muslims lived alongside its Christian population until the 8th century. Abu Ubayd al-Andalusi noted that the wine produced there was delicious.

DAMASCUS AND EMESA (HOMS).

During the year 635, the cities of Damascus and Emesa also surrendered to Muslims.

Heraclius regrouped the forces that he could dispose of under the command of his two new generals, Theodore Trithurius (called sacellarius, that is to say, treasurer ?) and the Armenian general Vahan, and early 636 the Byzantines managed to regain control of these two cities.

YARMUK (August 18, 19 and 20, 636)

Let's remember, however, before starting to look at the outcome of this battle that the Olympic champions in any category of victory against a much larger enemy are the Greeks in the Thermopylae in - 480. 300 Greeks from Sparta managed to block the enemy during the time required for the organization of the counterattack, at 1 against 200. Some authors even put forward the figure of three million Persians. But for the whole campaign, not in the narrow pass

Here the version given by the Armenian bishop Sebeos (7th century) in the chapter 30 of his History of Heraclius.

"All the remnants of the sons of Israel then assembled and united, becoming a large force. After this they dispatched a message to the Byzantine emperor, saying: "God gave that country as the inherited property of Abraham and of his sons after him. We are the sons of Abraham. It is too much that you hold our country. Leave in peace, and we shall demand from you what you have seized, plus interest. The emperor rejected this. He did not provide a fitting response to the message but rather said: "The country is mine. Your inheritance is the desert. So go in peace to your country."

And he started organizing brigades, as many as 70,000 [troops] giving them as a general, a certain one of his faithful eunuchs. He ordered that they were to go to Arabia, stipulating that they were not to engage them in war, but rather to keep on the alert until he could assemble his other troops and send them to help.

Now [the Greeks] reached the Jordan and crossed into Arabia. Leaving their campsite on the riverbank, [the Greeks] went on foot to attack [the Ishmaelites'] camp. [The Ishmaelites], however, had placed part of their army in ambushes here and there, lodging the multitude in dwellings around the camp. Then they drove in herds of camels which they penned around the camp and the tents, tying them at the foot with rope. Such was the fortification of their camp. The beasts were fatigued from the journey, and so [the Greeks] were able to cut through the camp fortification, and started to kill [the Ishmaelites]. But suddenly the men in the ambushes sprung from their places and fell upon them. Awe of the Lord came over the Greek troops, and they turned in flight before them. But they were unable to flee because of the quicksand which buried them to the legs. There was great anxiety caused by the heat of the sun and the enemy's sword was upon them. All the generals fell and perished. More than 2,000 men were slain. A few survivors fled to the place of refuge.

[The Ishmaelites] crossed the Jordan and encamped at Jericho. Then dread of them came over the inhabitants of the country, and all of them submitted. That night the Jerusalemites took the Cross of the Lord and all the vessels of the churches of God, and fled with them by boat to the palace at Constantinople etc.etc."

Let us try to see more clearly.

The Byzantine preparations began at the end of the year 635 and in May 636, Heraclius has a large army concentrated in Antioch, in the north of Syria¹⁵. It is made up of contingents of Greeks, Slavs, Franks, Georgians, Armenians and Christian Arabs. This force is divided into five armies whose joint command is entrusted to the Sacellarius Theodore Trithurius. Vahan, an Armenian and the former commander of the Emesan garrison, leads the Armenian contingent. Buccinator, a Slav prince, heads the Slavs, and Jabalah ibn al-Aiham, king of the Ghassanids, is at the head of a force composed solely of Christian Arabs. Other contingents from Europe are under the authority of Gregory and Dairjan. As for Heraclius, he oversees operations from Antioch.

We will borrow the outline of this key battle from the greatest specialist known today: Walter E. Kaegi of the University of Chicago.

Byzantine forces under Theodore Trithurios advanced through the Biqa Valley and then across the Golan Heights and encamped at and near Jilliq, which is modern Al Kiswah (13 kilometers south of Damascus).

Muslim forces withdrew from the Jabiya region to a line between modern Dayr Ayyub and Adhri'at (modern Daraa).

This move placed the Muslims in a topographically and strategically strong position, from which position they could attempt to block the advancing Byzantines and resist their penetration southwards. The principal commander of Muslim forces was Abu Ubayda b. al-Jarrah.

The Muslims waited two to three months before the decisive battle took place.

The Byzantines delayed combat, probably in part to allow their soldiers to gain some familiarity with the terrain. Other possible motives for their delay were their attempts to subvert the Muslims by diplomacy and intrigue and their desire to gain more intelligence about them.

But meanwhile on the contrary the Byzantine troops (formed mainly with Greeks, Slavs, Franks, Georgians, Armenians) clashed with the local Syrian population. Tensions rose between them.

Mansur, the chief Byzantine administrator of Damascus, refused to supply General Vahan with his requested number of provisions, claiming that the requisition was too great for the available resources in Damascus. Mansur resented Heraclius and Vahan. He contrived a noisy demonstration that caused the confusion and flight of some Byzantine soldiers in the night.

There was an initial clash in the vicinity of Jabiya, which compelled the Muslims to retire but Theodore Trithurios' forces were defeated near Jabiya, perhaps on 23 July 636.

The tradition that discontented Byzantine troops reportedly mutinied and proclaimed Vahan emperor is questionable.....

August 18. Mu'az b. Jabal led the Muslim right wing, Qubatha b. Usama commanded the left, Hashim b. Utba led the infantry and Khalid b. al-Walid led the cavalry. This was the first day of battle of three or more days of battle.

The Byzantines moved some of their forces to encamp between the Wadi-I Ruqqad and the Wadi-I Harir and suffered some desertions. They failed to cover all of the territory between Dayr Ayyub and their encampment, which allowed Muslims to penetrate and turn the Byzantine left flank with the hope of cutting off their retreat.

Negotiations opened between the Byzantines under Vahan and the Muslims.

The latter prepared a trap for the Byzantines by staging their withdrawal in the direction of Adhri'at. The Byzantines moved forward to occupy positions that the Muslims had evacuated, without taking notice of the Muslims who were hiding in the clumpy terrain.

The drungarios 1) then commanded the Byzantine left, while Gregory of Armenia commanded the right wing.

The Byzantine left pushed back the Muslim right wing and approached the Muslim camp, which even women defended. Likewise the Byzantine right forced the Muslim left to pull back on the center and the Muslim camp.

But the Muslims counterattacked.

The Byzantines broke ranks, took flight, and were shattered.

Byzantine cavalry became separated from the Byzantine infantry, probably while attempting one of the complicated Byzantine maneuvers identified with the "mixed formation" or "convex formation."

One Muslim commander, Khalid b. al-Walid, noticed this gap in Byzantine forces and managed to interpose his cavalry between Byzantine cavalry and Byzantine infantry, whom his horsemen proceeded to slaughter. A dust storm [SO THEN GOD WAS WITH MUSLIMS ??????] unsettled the Byzantines and created an opportunity which the Muslim forces exploited. Many Christian Arabs who had been supporting the Byzantines fled.

Muslim cavalry under the command of Khalid b. al-Walid managed during the evening to capture the only bridge over the Wadi-I Ruqqad.

This feat isolated much of the Byzantine forces between the steep and dangerous bluffs of the Wadi-I Ruqqad and the Wadi-I Allan, both west of the Wadi-I Harir. Muslims then attacked and stormed the Byzantine camp.

The main force of Byzantines was thus cut off by the Muslims and could not extricate itself.

The Byzantine camp at Yaqusa (perhaps a kilometer east of Fiq, in the Golan Heights, on the southern flank of the Wadi I Ruqqad) was stormed in turn.

On 20 August the battle reached its climax. Byzantine panic spread as soldiers learned that some Christian Arabs had deserted by simple flight or squarely switching to the Muslim side and that the Muslim capture of their only route of escape, the bridge, had eliminated their options. Then some

Byzantine forces simply ceased to fight and were slaughtered without resistance by the Muslims the next day. Other Byzantine troops and horses were destroyed when they fell down the sharp slopes into the wadi while trying to escape. The outcome was the annihilation of most Byzantine forces and hot and thorough pursuit of those who managed to escape (Walter E. Kaegi. Byzantium and the early Islamic conquest .Cambridge 1992. Pages 119-122).

Regarding the course of the battle, the accounts vary as to its duration (from one day to several days). On the exaggeration of the number of combatants, cf. H. Hubschmann, Zur Geschichte p. 13, nr. 1. Some historians estimate that 70,000 to 120,000 dead the Byzantine losses against three or four thousand killed Muslims.

According to Tabari for example, more than 120,000 Byzantines perished in the Yaqusa Valley and drowned in the river. Who can believe him except true Muslims (pious Muslims) ?? What is certain is that the defeat of the Romano-Byzantine army was complete. Theodore, the brother of Emperor Heraclius, was killed. The infantry was destroyed, and there remained only some horsemen (whose Ghassanids having deserted?) who scattered in all directions, towards Damascus, Caesarea, Jerusalem and even Antioch.

Heraclius then took steps to ensure the defense of Egypt, and left the East for Byzantium after having ordered that the relic of the True Cross be transferred again to the capital. An Arab squadron in his pursuit having reached Melitene and having been received by the inhabitants, the emperor ordered that the city be entirely destroyed. Heraclius therefore that year also kissed really the Syrian part of his empire goodbye, to better devote himself to the defense of his Anatolian part even to the defense of his capital (Constantinople) which had almost been taken by the Avars 10 years earlier . This sacrifice of the Syria gave 800 years of life longer to the Eastern Roman Empire. N.B. During the year 637, the Arabs seized Antioch and Aleppo, in northern Syria.

THE BATTLE OF YARMUK SEEN BY THE MUSLIM AUTHORS.

The Muslims fought for a whole day against these formidable Roman forces in Syria. When night came, the Muslim warriors gathered in their encampment to discuss the situation. In the end Khalid stood up and spoke to them in a determined: "My brothers! God is with us. We are fighting for the reestablishment of a regime based on equality, fraternity and justice (sic). Tomorrow we must teach a lesson to the Roman hordes."

"What? Asked a voice.

"I propose to confront the 60,000 men of Jabala, the king of the Ghassanids, with only 30 Muslims."

"Are you serious, Abu Suleiman? Asked the old Abu Sufiyan.

"Yes," replied Khalid Ibn Walid (whose nickname was Abu Suleiman).

"By doing so you will expose precious Muslim lives," Abu Sufyan retorted.

" Not at all. What I really want is to save Muslim lives. In this way, we will be able to impress this enemy who is too proud with his numerical superiority, his force, and his military equipment," replied Khalid Ibn Walid.

In the end, Abu Ubayda, the commander of the Muslim forces, intervened, and it was agreed that Khalid Ibn Walid, the indomitable lion-hearted warrior, would face the 60,000 fierce warriors of King Ghassanid Jabala with 60 Muslims instead of 30. The next day, therefore, Khalid and his 59 companions took part in a gigantic battle unparalleled in the history of Mankind, against the 60,000 ferocious Ghassanid Christians well equipped of Jabala. The battle raged all day long, the 60 Muslims were lost in a sea of armed men, yet they fought like lions against the breaking waves of these enemy forces well determined to crush them. From time to time the cry of Allahu Akbar (God is greatest) rose above the tumult of the battle, thus evidencing that they were still alive. In the end, in a last effort, Khalid Ibn Walid won, and the Christians were routed !!!

COMMENT OF PEOPLE OF SEVERAL BOOKS.

Unfortunately being ridiculous no longer kills, for a long time! The Dantesque spectacle thus described to us it is Roland at Roncevaux pass in Charlemagne's time. And yet ...

Leonidas and his 300 hoplites died at the Thermopylae in -480. The respite thus gained by this sacrifice allowed the Greeks to organize and then to confront the following year, with 4000 men, the

three million invaders. They buried their dead in the place where the Spartans had fallen. An inscription remembered that here four thousand Peloponnesians had fought against three million of Barbarians. Another inscription related specifically to the 300 Hoplites of Leonidas: " Oh stranger, go tell the Spartans that here we lie, obedient to their laws." We can wonder about these figures: 4,000 Greeks against three million Persians, 60 Muslims against 240,000 Christians. In the case of the battle of Yarmouk, what seems certain is that the advantage of the number was indeed on the side of the Roman-Byzantine coalition (at least to begin with); but that this defeat did not unduly affect the leaders of Constantinople, who were much more worried about the Persian or Bulgarian danger. As we have seen above, this sacrifice of the Syria gave therefore 800 years of life longer to the Eastern Roman Empire.

"Towns, cities, and countryside in Syria and Palestine reached arrangements with the Muslims. Some cities, such as Damascus, fell rapidly. Others, such as Ascalon, Gaza, and Caesarea Maritima, held out for a while. Inland cities fell first to the Muslims. No unusual strategic or tactical innovations are present. There was no coherent Byzantine defense of Syria or Palestine after Jabiyayarmuk. Byzantine towns, cities, and countryside in Syria and Palestine reached arrangements with the Muslims after the battle of Jabiyayarmuk.and sometime in 638 Caliph Umar visited the place and disposed of conquered properties and reorganized Muslim administrative structures in Syria." (Walter E. Kaegi).

JERUSALEM.

The Arab-Muslims will occupy Jerusalem between 635 and 638. The city was somehow already cut off from the world for several months.

Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem (d. 639)

[In a synodic letter without date, Sophronius asks for].....A strong and vigorous scepter to break the hubris of all the barbarians, and especially of the Saracens who, on account of our sins, have now risen up against us unexpectedly and ravage all.....More than ever, therefore, we entreat your Holiness to make urgent petitions.....quickly quell their mad insolence and deliver these vile creatures, etc.etc.”

[Christmas Sermon. The comments are dated to December of 634.].....

“We, however, because of our innumerable sins and serious misdemeanors, are unable to see these things, and are prevented from entering Bethlehem by way of the road.....by fear of the Saracens.”

“The Army of the godless Saracens has captured Bethlehem and bars our passage there, threatening slaughter and destruction if we leave this holy city [Jerusalem].

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

But the present circumstances are forcing me to think differently...for why are [so many] wars being fought among us? Why do barbarian raids abound? Why are the troops of the Saracens attacking us? Why has there been so much destruction and plunder? Why are there incessant outpourings of human blood? Why are the birds of the sky devouring human bodies? Why have churches been pulled down? Why is the cross mocked? Why is Christ, who is the dispenser of all good things and the provider of this joyousness of ours, blasphemed by pagans (ethnikois tois stomasi) so that he justly cries out to us: "Because of you my name is blasphemed among the pagans," and this is the worst of all the terrible things that are happening to us. That is why the God-hating Saracens, the abomination of desolation clearly foretold to us by the prophets, overrun the places which are not allowed to them, plunder cities, devastate fields, burn down villages, set on fire the holy churches, overturn the sacred monasteries, oppose the Byzantine armies arrayed against them, and in fighting raise up the trophies [of war] and add victory to victory. Moreover, they are raised up more and more against us and increase their blasphemy of Christ and the church, and utter wicked blasphemies against God. Those God-fighters boast of prevailing over all, assiduously and unrestrainably imitating their leader, who is the devil, and emulating his vanity because of which he has been expelled from heaven and been assigned to the gloomy shades....these vile ones would not have accomplished this nor seized such a degree of power.....unless we had first We are ourselves, in truth, responsible for all these things.”

[More interesting In a work originally composed by John Moschus (d. 619), but expanded by Sophronius (also d. ca. 639), the spiritual meadow, the following entry appears, concerning a construction dated by tradition at 638, i.e., soon after the capture of Jerusalem]

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

All we know is that it was not the caliph Omar who took the city and had built the mosque which bears his name. We do not even know if there has been a gallant last stand because the story of Sophronius demanding to hand over the keys of the city only to the caliph in person is impenetrable. We cannot imagine a victorious Muslim leader to let him thus be held out by a defeated Rumi, even if he were a bishop. At the time, the city had no economic or strategic importance.

The subsequent visit of the caliph (Omar) is not even assured either.

The only notable change was apparently the authorization given to the Jews, driven out in 630 by Heraclius, to relocate to Jerusalem.

Our traditions speak of a truce of a few months bought very costly by the Byzantines so that there is no immediate invasion of Jezireh (Upper Mesopotamia) or Egypt.

The Muslim expansion from Syria nevertheless continued from 640 in these two opposite directions.

- Towards East in Jezireh (Upper Mesopotamia).

-Towards West in Egypt.

THE PASSAGE INTO EGYPT.

Amr ibn al As therefore probably bypassed El Arish (North Sinai) with 3,500 or 4,000 men to begin with (this is the figure given by all Arab writers) and laid siege to the town of Pelusium, on the coast, but could capture it only after one month. According to Strabo, Pelusium had walls; so there was to be a garrison. There was perhaps another reason for making the siege of this city necessary: this was the end of the great wall erected during the XIX dynasty against the forays of the nomads, and this wall, without any doubt, to have been repaired by Cyrus 1).

Then Amr was wise enough to avoid Alexandria and preferred to go upstream of the Nile.

The Arab-Muslims therefore reached the ancient city of Phelbes, that is to say the current Bilbeis, located on the edge of the desert. This city stopped Amr again, according to Yaqut, and that for a month, which seems very exaggerated. From Bilbeis it was very easy to go towards Heliopolis, still following the desert, and it was therefore in the plain between Heliopolis and present-day Cairo that the first real battle between the Byzantine army and the Arab-Muslim Army took place.

According to Arab historians, there were several fights near the village, which remained undecided until finally Amr could enter it and settle there. After this victory, which probably cost him a lot, Amr saw himself in a position that could quickly become dangerous: his troops were not strong enough to attack the fortress of Memphis (known as Babylon of Egypt) where a large garrison had been entrenched.

To avoid any danger, he had recourse to a means which he had already used : he resolved to disappear a moment to come back when the reinforcements requested would be about to arrive. He therefore employed the greater part of his army in a raid we know only by John of Nikiu 2).

Amr made his soldiers cross the Nile on boats found at Tendunias and, on the left bank, he went as far as Oxyrhynchus (today El Bahnasa), and then went downstream to the Fayum following the Bahr-Yusuf or Joseph's canal. John of Nikiu speaks of one or more battles fought between the two armies and in which the Arabs were not always victorious, although in one of them they managed to massacre a company of fifty men, under the command of a certain John, and charged with watching the movements of the Arabs. The soldiers and their leader had hidden themselves in vineyards and palm trees, but their presence having been denounced by a traitor, they were surprised, and the detachment was slain. The news of this massacre spread with great speed, and from the fortress of Memphis the Byzantines sent another general named Leontius, a man of great build and understanding nothing about the warfare to support the governor of Fayum, appointed Theodore, who had undertaken to harass the Arab-Muslims.

Back to Tendunias Amr was reinforced by 4,000 or 12,000 men hurriedly dispatched by Caliph Umar. On the other side, Byzantine reinforcements also arrived at Heliopolis.

The collision of the two armies took place in the predestined plain of Heliopolis. The Greeks then realized how badly they had been inspired to accept the battle in a plain where the horses could maneuver at ease, without being stopped by dikes and canals.

The battle of Heliopolis had been fought at the beginning of June 640. The victor's first concern was to take his victory as far as he could, besiege and take first the city, then the fortress of that Babylon in Egypt where the Byzantines had taken refuge.

The siege offered nothing peculiar from the military point of view, and we know nothing of its vicissitudes; we know that that of the city lasted still at the beginning of December. The man to whom the Emperor Heraclius had entrusted the full powers, Cyrus (or Mokukos?) had gone in it to organize the defense. He had not been able to see what had happened in Egypt since the arrival of the Arab Muslims without having the most dreadful forebodings about it. He had noted the jealousy of the military leaders, their lack of technical skill, the almost complete anarchy which prevailed in the administration, the gnawing resistance the population opposed, and the assistance received from it by the Arabs; although he had done his best to elate in their heart the love for the country and the ardor of the struggle, he was forced to confess to himself that he had failed in his design, that every opportunity turned against him and that he would be defeated in the struggle. He began by preparing the besieged in Heliopolis for the idea of surrender. He did not have to ask permission to negotiate, for as a governor he was the absolute master of all things concerning Egypt. From the island of Roda, where he had retired, he sent to the Arab general envoys who presented the position of the Arab Muslims as very risky; they pointed out that the flood of the Nile surrounded their army with water as in a net and that it was best for them to withdraw to their country; as for the government, he was ready to make this retreat easier before the Egyptian armies had come running.

His stratagem was clever; but his envoys were dealing with a man who lacked neither mind nor judgment, who saw well in what state Egypt was and who, although his army was small, surely saw

what would be the outcome of the struggle provided he had the necessary tenacity. Did he not have relations with the Egyptian population whose sympathies went to the Arabs and not to the Greeks? Then there was a fight that turned to the advantage of the Muslims and Cyrus (or Makaukas?) managed to get the besieged in Heliopolis to accept what they had refused at first: a surrender with tribute. He presided over the surrender. Cyrus/Makaukos had to go to Constantinople to justify himself. Amir divided his army into a number of corps and sent them to Upper and Lower Egypt to secure the main towns. He led a small troop towards Antioch to capture the capital of Upper Egypt, and the Duke John, who commanded it, unwilling to defend himself, fled by taking with him the amount of taxes in order to take refuge in Alexandria.

Amr was free, therefore, to go to new successes; he decided to go and besiege Alexandria, even with an army weakened by the garrisons that he had to put in the conquered cities. But as victory had brought him partisans, even in large numbers, as the population supported him more and more, he rightly said to himself that the siege of Alexandria would be much easier for him than that of the fortress of Memphis, but he was disappointed in his expectation, and the artillery of the Alexandrians forced him to set up his camp out of the range of the machines which riddled his army with projectiles. The army of Amr has been estimated at 15,000 or 20,000 men, and the garrison of Alexandria at 50,000 combatants; these figures seem exaggerated; Amr was to have only 12,000 men at most under his command, since he had to leave part of his army, perhaps half, in the various cities he had occupied, Pelusium, Bilbeis, Heliopolis, Memphis, Nikiu, Sais, the cities in the Pentapolis; even supposing that the native soldiers enlisted his army had filled the obligatory gaps of conquest, it is impossible to suppose a higher figure, and the garrison of Alexandria had to have the same strength. The events which were going on in Egypt had not been ignored at Constantinople, just as the death of Heraclius had been known in Egypt, and had reached the army which besieged the fortress of Memphis. The emperor died during the exile of Cyrus; after his death, it was perhaps thought that the city of Alexandria had to be rescued, and it was decided to send back the man whom the whole court had accused of treason. He was therefore put again at the head of the government of Egypt to lead the negotiations of this peace which he had proposed. He was back in Alexandria at the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, September 14, 641.

During the siege, although Alexandria was supplied abundantly and the Arab army could only close the communications with the rest of Egypt, the trade had to stop almost completely: if the Byzantine ships could supply the port, they could not export goods that no longer reached the city. The population was therefore embarrassed by the blockade of the Arabs on the land side; moreover, it was a prey to the factions, like the rest of Egypt, and everything did very badly there. As soon as Cyrus (or Makaukas?) arrived, he had had to drive Domentianus, former governor general of Nikiu, who had loosely given up his city and had taken refuge in Alexandria where he was at the head of the Blue faction, which was opposed to the Green faction commanded by a certain Menas, because the two factions fiercely fought each other in the street of the city itself. This Domentianus, however, was the brother-in-law of Cyrus Makoukos; but he hated the governor bishop as much as he could, and was his fierce adversary.

Cyrus then decided to go and meet Amr at the Muslim camp and signed with him a treaty which was the loss of Egypt. Then he returned to Alexandria, and made the conditions known to the generals and the civil officers; He urged them to accept them, and sent to Constantinople the governor of Alexandria, Theodore, and the General Constantine, to explain the new emperor that nothing else had been possible.

Cyrus (or Makoukos?), who had remained in Egypt and saw the first effects of the Arab administration, Cyrus, who had perhaps dreamed, too, a very different behavior on the behalf of the conquerors, was struck to his heart by seeing how much he has mistaken: he died, according to John of Nikiu, even before the date fixed for the evacuation of Alexandria and Egypt by the Byzantine soldiers.

The Muslims will enter the city only in 642. The library had already suffered several fires, especially during a battle between Julius Caesar and the supporters of Pharaoh Ptolemy XIII. A legend dating from the 13th century, taken from the very real destruction of the library in the capital of the Persian empire Ctesiphon that took place in 637, reports that when the Muslims entered Alexandria, they would knowingly burn again the city library, rich in many books inherited from Hellenistic antiquity. The caliph Omar would have even said in substance about them: "If they say the same thing as the Quran, they are useless; if they contradict it, they are harmful; in both cases, they must be destroyed."

These precious manuscripts would have fueled the boilers of the city baths.

Below is the account by Ibn Khaldun concerning Ctesiphon's library. "When the Muslims conquered Persia and came upon an indescribably large number of books and scientific papers, Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas wrote to Umar b. al-Khattab, asking him for permission to take them and distribute them as booty among the Muslims. On that occasion, Umar wrote to him: "Throw them into the water. If what they contain is right guidance, God has given us better guidance. If it is an error, God has protected us against it." Thus, the (Muslims) threw them into the water or into the fire, and the sciences of the Persians were lost and did not reach us" (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddima).
Editor's note. Alexandria was briefly taken again by the Byzantines in 645 (for a few months), but these, after some initial successes, failed to restore their position in the region, and the episode remained isolated. The same year Alexandria was taken again by Muslims, and definitely this time.

1) Key character of this disaster but which is doubly problematic. The Greek sources call him Cyrus and the Muslim sources Mokoukos or Makaukas, but is it well the same man? His office then. That Heraclius appointed him Governor of Alexandria is obviously very possible. But that he also made him patriarch of the by definition Melkite, Church, seems stranger.

2) John of Nikiu is a chronicler of the late 7th century, bishop of Nikiu (now Zawyat Razin) in the Nile delta and general administrator of the monasteries of Upper Egypt in 696. He is the author of a universal chronicle (from Adam and Eve to the Muslim conquest) written originally, for the most part, in Greek.

COMMENTS ON THE MILITARY SITUATION OF EGYPT IN THAT TIME.

Jean Maspero (Military Organization of Byzantine Egypt, Paris, 1914) has shown that the Greek army was not formidable, not only in terms of numbers, but also in its command, where there was almost complete anarchy.

Egypt was then under the Byzantine Emperor who made it govern by officers appointed by him. To put these four senior officials in charge of their respective duties, they had to be given soldiers. Justinian had admitted in his legions some auxiliaries, barbarian or not. The papyri show us that in Egypt he had placed similar troops in certain garrisons, such as Dacians at Theodosiopolis, Moors at Hermopolis, at Antaiopolis some Scythians, etc.

Hence a first cause of inferiority: this Egyptian army lacked homogeneity; how could soldiers foreign in the country, having no connection with it, have been able to fight boldly for its defense? Egyptians themselves were enlisted in the Roman legions; the fact of the enlistment of St. Pachomius, at the moment when Constantine had to fight against Licinius, is a proof of this, and there is no reason to think that the Emperor Justinian and his successors had deprived of this recruitment. But one must also think that if the Egyptian soldiers were ever faced with an army which, rightly or wrongly, would be considered as favorable towards their country and their beloved ones, they would not have much courage to fight against it, and that's what happened, as we'll see soon.

Moreover, the positioning of the troops dispersed throughout Egypt and the way in which they were, used to collect the taxes that the population was unwilling to pay was a cause of weakening as well as indiscipline.

Jean Maspero has shown very well from the data of the Greco-Egyptian papyri that the number of soldiers present in Egypt, under the administration of Justinian, could not be higher than 25,000 or 30,000 men. He made his calculations according to the official number of the battalions present in Egypt at that time; he studied cities with garrisons one by one, and he showed that the strength of the Egyptian army was only about twice that of Amr's when he received all the reinforcements that Caliph Umar Ibn Khattab sent him, that is to say, 15,000 men, according to most of the Arab writers who must be quoted despite all, or at least 12,500 men. Thus 15,000 men, having against them a dispersed army of 25,000 or 30,000 men, succeeded in conquering a country of two or three millions of inhabitants.

It is true to say that Justinian, in his decree of distribution of the army in Egypt, had prepared defeat, as much as he could, by breaking up the command between the various generals, which he had somehow made independent of each other. These generals were more accustomed to the ceremonies of the Byzantine court than to the art of war; the aim they pursued was their special enrichment, and not the defense of the country into which they had been sent; they will be cowardly in the face of danger, not even having the physical strength to fight (an example above the general named Leontius), and so will their soldiers. Isolated in the midst of a population that hated them instinctively because they were the envoys of the Byzantine court, because it had inflicted countless vexations upon them, they can hardly behave, in the end, in another way as they did to yield not to superior forces, but to better commanded forces, helped by the population, full of that religious fanaticism and warlike enthusiasm which are the guarantee of success.

The Arab-Muslim Army as for it did not include, after the first reinforcements received, only about 8,000 combatants, and, to some figure that we make the number of the soldiers of Byzantium which occupied Egypt, fall, we cannot deny that their number exceeded this number, and no doubt much. Even if the Arab army went up to the figure of 15,000 men, how a population which, according to the Arab authors, had 2,500,000 people having to pay the tribute, could it not have found more 20,000 soldiers to resist invasion and conquest?

COMMENTS ON THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION.

Egypt, from the government of Constantine to the Arab conquest, was for three centuries the chosen land for all religious disputes. Alternately at the head of orthodoxy or heterodoxy, she blindly followed her patriarchs: Catholic and Orthodox when her patriarchs were Athanasius, Cyril, Theophilus, despite the crimes of the latter; schismatic, but still saying that she was Orthodox, when the Patriarch Dioscorus did not adopt the faith of the Council of Chalcedon, and since then resisted all persecutions, all attempts to change her opinion on a religious question about which the Egyptian monks, that is to say the most blissfully and most arrogantly ignorant part of the population, set the pace and decided what to believe.

Our own religion is only the religion of truth. As we are not people of a single book; we will therefore allow ourselves some remarks on this subject, for we will never dwell enough on our desire not to be the men of a book; but at least twelve, as in the case of the Fenians in Ireland for example, for obvious reasons of open-mindedness.

Two examples among a thousand.

a) The persecutions suffered by the Christians before Constantine are largely a myth or a tall story (we write well "largely," not "in totality").

b) Some Byzantine emperors were monstrous criminals a thousand times worse than Muhammad (e.g., Theodosius).

In the 370s, in Antioch, a wave of suppression fell on the old friends of the late Emperor Julian. If the famous rhetorician Libanius was only concerned, others did not as well: Maximus of Ephesus, the famous "guru" of the apostate emperor, his friend, his counselor, his confidant, was for example strangled. Simonides, a young philosopher, died at the stake, burned alive in the midst of his works. He and his unfortunate friends were executed because of their paganism? Officially, no! Although he was an Arian Christian fanatic of the worst kind, Emperor Valens, who ruled the East at that time, was anxious to be considered as the protector of all the worships in his empire.

These intellectuals, who were very active in Julian's time, and who had perhaps seen Procopius' usurpation with a fairly favorable eye, were therefore accused of witchcraft, an accusation all the more convenient in that it frightened the people while being perfectly unverifiable. Witchcraft, the eternal legal subterfuge of power to justify its political crimes! The witches of Salem, the English with Joan of Arc. When you want to get rid of your dog, you give him a bad name and you hang him!

Although not specifically evoking Simonides, these documents provide us with many very interesting details about this persecution of the intellectuals of the time by Christians.

At the end of 371, Valens spent his first winter in Antioch. The praetorian prefect of the East was the Arab Domitius Modestus. Comes Orientis under Constantius, he had cruelly presided over the Scythopolis Commission (359), charged with investigating crimes of high treason. He had apostatized under Julian, then became a Christian again. This friend of Libanius, a good jurist, was nevertheless a hard and savage man.

Valens, like Constantius, was terrified of magic, and he had forbidden in 370 to study the science of mathematici. Now, at the end of 371, a simple attorney, called Theodorus, was denounced on this subject by a chamberlain, Heliodorus, himself a mathematicus. This Heliodorus recounted that some people had consulted a tripod to know the name of the successor of Valens. On a tray were written the letters of the alphabet; above, a pendulum was hanged and the letters to which it was going were kept. THEOD was thus spelled. Libanius and a descendant of Jamblichus would have proceeded otherwise, by alektromanteia: letters are written on the sand, a grain of wheat is placed on each one, a rooster is dropped, the order of the letters which attract it is noted; that too had given "THEOD." The attorney (Theodorus) besides a rather deserving man, had been informed of the thing and took himself for the man chosen by the gods to become emperor instead of Valens.

Modestus, in charge of the investigation, led it atrociously. He attacked the characters of the highest rank. Even the proconsul of Asia, Eutropius, was in danger, and even the two consuls of the year 359, Eusebius and Hypatius, parents of Empress Eusebia. Nothing had yet equaled the horror of the tortures to which the suspects were subjected. "It was everywhere as if cattle were slaughtered."

Festus was chosen as a proconsul of Asia, because it was known that he would let no cultivated man survive. Maximus, who had become very rich again, confessed that he had also known the oracle, and was strangled at Ephesus. Libanius too was again in great danger; many neo-Platonist philosophers were massacred. The books were also attacked, and not only the books of magic, but a host of harmless works were sentenced to the stake. Throughout the East, the rich people frightened hastened to burn their libraries. Modestus was rewarded in 372 by the consulate. It is probable that it

was after this affair that the prohibition of bloody sacrifices was enacted, and that only incense was allowed. Themistius tried vainly to convert this brutal prince to philosophy.

Valens trembled his whole reign, and he was right to do so because he was still in danger of death. He had vainly prisons always full.

Vivus ardeat Valens! "May he burn alive! Such was the wish that the plebs of Antioch would repeat and that the Goths would answer.

THE NAME OF THE SUCCESSOR OF VALENS IN REALITY WAS NOT THEODORUS, BUT THEODOSIUS, more precisely FLAVIUS THEODOSIUS known as Theodosius I (born in 347, died in 395).

On February 27, 380, by the Edict of Thessalonica, he officially recognized for the first time the Catholic pre-eminence. A fervent supporter of the theses of the Council of Nicaea, Theodosius I authoritatively imposed the Nicene canons and systematically fought Arianism. As soon as he arrived in his capital of Constantinople, he summoned the Arian patriarch and ordered him to choose between a conversion to orthodoxy or exile. Theodosius, who had just been baptized, then enthroned Gregory of Nazianzus, a fanatical Christian Taliban, in the place of the exiled bishop. Then he sent the army to subdue Arians under penalty of death. [Editor's note. Cromwell will remember it at Drogheda] the heretical churches were destroyed along with their sacred books. In 381, to celebrate the triumph of the Nicene orthodoxy, Theodosius I summoned (without the consent of the pope) to Constantinople, a general council, which confirmed the Nicene dogma and recognized the supremacy of the Roman pontiff; while granting an honorary primacy to the Patriarch of Constantinople. Theodosius 1st thus ensured the religious unity of the Empire, giving primacy to the bishop of the West to the detriment of the bishop of Constantinople. In 15 years of rule, Theodosius I was to enact no less than 15 edicts of persecution against heretics, at a rate of one per year. He published in 390 an edict which definitively prohibited the pagan worship throughout the Roman Empire and made Christianity the only official religion. This umpteenth anti-pagan and anti-secular before the word is invented from the Christians provoked a riot in Thessalonica. The general-in-chief was killed in the circus of the city by an excited crowd. Theodosius, under the influence of anger, ordered an exemplary punishment of the secular and pagan people, which resulted in a bloodbath in the circus, where the soldiers took revenge by exterminating seven thousand people. The hatred of Christians for ancient civilization manifested throughout the Empire and filled the local bishop treasures. The magnificent library of Alexandria was sacked and all his books burned. In Rome, at the instigation of Pope Siricius, Theodosius I imposed a solemn oath on the Roman senators: they had to renounce Jupiter and swear fidelity to Christ. On May 15, 392, the leader of the Roman armies of the West, General Arbogast, murdered Valentinian II, to whom Theodosius I had abandoned the government. Arbogast then proclaimed emperor a named Eugenius, who was a moderate Christian (or advocate of secularism, or simply reasonable). Confronted with the hostility of Theodosius I, General Arbogast and Eugenius had no other recourse than to rely on the pagan party. In 392, the restoration of the worship of the ancient gods was proclaimed in Rome. But the armies of Theodosius I, composed of Gothic-speaking barbarians, crushed the Franco-Romans of Arbogast and Eugenius beneath the walls of Aquileia, in 394. Defeated Arbogast preferred to commit suicide, while Eugenius, given to Theodosius 1st, had his head cut off. Theodosius I had (for the last time) restored the unity of the Roman Empire.

In the 5th century, religious beliefs came to the forefront of history and everything moved aside in front of the question of whether or not Jesus Christ was the son of God as man, if Mary was truly the mother of God, if Christ had two natures or had only one. Theological controversies, where no one understood his adversary, dominated all the other questions. A sudden moment of religious folly seemed to shake the whole Roman empire, and the Christian religion, after its triumph, produced only divisions, troubles, and deaths. To the tax pressure from the center (the Byzantine Roman Empire) will be added also the quarrel between Monophysitism and Diophysitism, and its religious implications (on the nature of Christ), but also political, which will even provoke riots.

398: Bishop Porphyry claimed from the Roman emperor of the East Arcadius the end of the worship of Marnas in Gaza.

399: Order is given to the Prefect of Damascus to raze the temples of the surrounding countryside. A wave of destruction of temples in Africa with the blessing of Augustine. Suppression of the revolts which are the consequence of it.

402: Destruction of the last temples in Gaza and suppression of the revolt that results from it.

405: Vandalizing of the temples of Phoenicia.

408: Confiscation of the revenues of the last temples.

408: Edict closing the high administration to non-Christians.

410: Siege of Rome by Alaric whose men are Christians. The pope refuses pagan prayers to protect the city. After the sack, the pagans are denounced to the barbarians by the Christians ...

415: House arrest of pagan priests, confiscation of the property of the priestly colleges in Africa. Assassination of Hypatia in Alexandria.

416: Pagans are excluded from the army, administration and justice.

431: Council of Ephesus who decides to fix there the place of burial of the mother of Jesus of Nazareth. The temples of this holy city dedicated to Artemis are destroyed to make room for the churches.

435: Edict renewing the death penalty for practicing pagans. New edict ordering the destruction of the still intact temples.

438: Confirmation of the law providing for the death penalty for pagans.

451: The planned death penalty for practicing pagans is extended to the owners of the place where the worship is held.

485: In Athens, death of the Greek philosopher Proclus, last great non-Christian philosopher.

486: Hunting at the clandestine temples of Isis in Egypt.

515: The Emperor Justinian makes baptism compulsory and renews the death sentence for non-Christians.

529: The Roman emperor of the East Justinian I having closed the School of Athens and prohibited its philosophical teaching, in 529; Damascius and Simplicius of Cilicia, accompanied by five other philosophers, preferred to go to Ctesiphon in Persia (now Iraq), in order to place themselves under the protection of the Persian Emperor Khosrau I, who had also attracted already, in his capital, various Indian scholars. The fundamental themes of this neo-Platonic school of thought were the theory of the emanation (or procession) of all things from the One (or the Good); those of the three hypostases (or triads) - the One, the Spirit and the Soul - and the return movement of the Soul towards the One (or conversion).

The peace treaty signed in 532 between the Christians of the Byzantine Empire and the pagans of the Persian Empire, officially authorized them to return. But some of them, grouped under the aegis of Simplicius, chose to settle in Carrhae (Aramaic Harran), near the border (you never know), eight hours walk south of Edessa; where they founded a Neo-Platonic School which saved the torch of ancient wisdom for a few centuries, and thus allowed its subsequent transmission to the West, through translations into Arabic.

Simplicius of Cilicia was a disciple of Ammonius and Damascius. His best-known work is a commentary on Aristotle's treatise on the sky, the sun, the earth, the moon, and the stars (hence the charge of astrolatry made later by Muslim doctors of the law). This Neo-Platonic school in Harran (today Turkey) was the undeniable cause of the development of Hellenistic Hermetism and Pythagoreanism in the lands of Islam, through an original syncretic doctrine¹).

537: Official closing of the Temple of Isis at Philae in southern Egypt, the last vestige of ancient paganism, where the old worships were still practiced, especially that of Isis.

639. Egypt was defended only by a few thousand men, since for centuries no invader had seriously threatened her and was in addition divided by non-stop religious quarrels between Melkite Christians (supporters of diophysite official Christianity) and Monophysite or Jacobite Christians. Monophysitism ended up being defeated, but the Monophysites then came together in a new indigenous and national church: the Coptic Church. Almost the totality of the Egyptian population.

N.B. Copts are nevertheless only 10% of the Egyptian population today. At first, everything went very well with Islam, which even was an improvement for them compared to the Byzantine period, but the conversions of convenience or self-interested due to their status as second-class subjects were increasing from the 9th century. The Copts were still the majority in the fourteenth century and their elimination by Islam has been progressive, began very slowly or almost invisibly but was then more and more massive. In the 16th century, they were persecuted by Fatimids and Turks.

1) A passage of the Ghayat al hakim, of the aim of the wise or "Picatrix" in Latin, includes a prayer presented as belonging to the astral liturgy of the Sabians of Harran. It invokes Hermes stating that in Arabic it is called Hotarit, in Persian language Tyr, in Romaic language Haruz, and in Indian language Buddha (sic). This is undeniably the proof of some confusion if this testimony has any value.

REMARKS ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

The conquest of Egypt by the Arab army of Amr b. al As, in 641, will incorporate this country into a new world, that of the nascent Arab-Muslim empire. The new capital, Fustat (Cairo), will initially be populated by families and tribes from Arabia who will be distributed in districts or "housing estates" [hitat, hitat).

At the time of the conquest, two languages are used in Egypt: the Coptic, the last form of the ancient Egyptian, and the Greek, the official administrative language of Byzantine Egypt.

Arabic will become progressively the language of central administration while being the everyday language of newcomers. Coptic and Greek will continue to be widely used during the first few centuries after the arrival of the Arabs. But Arabic, a language used only by conquerors, will gradually become the language spoken by the entire population, Christian or Muslim.

In Egypt, generally, the recognition of the new regime was more resigned and wait-and-see than enthusiastic. When John of Niklu, who is a Monophysite, speaks of the conquest of the country by the Muslims, he never presents the invaders in a favorable light, but the Muslim domination did not change something for now in reality. The Muslims allowed the officials to continue levying the tax (for their benefit) and the Greek was gradually replaced by Arabic in the official documents only after half a century. The Christians, supervised by their bishops and their monks, were able to keep their religion at the beginning, which explains the survival of a Coptic majority 1) become a minority, until today.

The Egyptian-Greek papyri discovered in Upper Egypt or in the Fayum Show, first of all, that the Arabs of the 7th and 8th centuries had entirely preserved the Greek administration, that the Greek language had remained the official language, that the earliest times of the occupation were relatively peaceful times, when the Egyptian taxpayer was not squeezed beyond reason; they also show us that, if this taxpayer suffered injustice, he suffered them only from his fellow countrymen and not owing to the fact of the central government, because we still have the circulars that this government sent to its officials and there is nothing in them that reveals the least injustice, on the contrary, everything in them proves that the Arab governors took the greatest care in watching over the administration of the finances, the only thing that affected the Egyptians.

One of these governors is remained famous for the arbitrariness with which, it was said and still said, he demanded from the taxpayers all the money he could draw from them.

In the papyri discovered on the ruins of Aphroditopolis, we have the very letters written by this governor, Qorrah, son of Scharikh.

But these letters show us that he was a righteous man, that he took care of the smallest details of the financial administration so that it was honest and legitimate, that he had an eye on the officials who did not fulfill their duties well and were using their official functions to enrich themselves per fas et nefas (through good times and bad), that he punished them severely in their persons and their property, if they behave in such a way as to give rise to well-founded complaints.

And yet Arab historians have been pleased to portray Qorrah as a man fearing neither God nor man, chasing after shameful pleasures defended by his religion, and Western historians have echoed these unjustified accusations, even the most serious and more famous, like Wüstenfeld (*Die Slatthalter von Aegypten zur Zeit der Chalifen*, p. 39-40). What doesn't mean that the administration of Qorrah was flawless. But his letters show us that his vices, if he had some of them, didn't concern his administration, and that he took care to surround himself with faithful, diligent, and honest officials. The governor had these officials in front of him, and by a skillful and very developed system of messengers, who at every moment went upstream and downstream the Nile, he could direct the administration according to his views. This administration had preserved in full its Greek organism. The general governor took care of holding local assemblies for the distribution of the innumerable taxes that weighed upon Egypt not only because of the conquest, but because of the governments that were previous to the Arabs, including the government of the Pharaohs, from the earliest times.

The Arab or Coptic historians have claimed that all male Egyptians who have reached the marriageable age must pay the tribute imposed by the conqueror (Amr). It is an obvious untruth, as the Papyri of Aphroditopolis show). This tribute struck only a certain category of vanquished, the rich people, and it was not identical for all: it was proportionate to the wealth, varying according to the places and the years since a half-dinar, up to two or even three dinars. Egypt, being subject to special conditions under irrigation, could not be taxed everywhere in a fixed manner, and the Arabs understood it perfectly. The text of the treaty between Amr and the Coptic chiefs during the conquest even proves that there was not only scale but sliding scale in the taxes due to the government. These are established facts, and if they are not to the glory of the Arabs more than to that of the other governments of Egypt, they are no longer turning against them. If Arabs, on arriving in Egypt, found

themselves out of place in the midst of the complicated administration of the Nile valley, they had at least the political intelligence to see that they understood nothing in it, that they must to adapt to it; so, when the authors of their own nation, together with the Coptic authors, tell us that the Arab administration was tyrannical, unjust, cruel, and sticky, we can oppose them the genuine testimony of official documents.

1) In 640 Christians (Copts) formed almost the entire population. Today they are no more than a persecuted minority of about 10% of the population.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS.

In the end, this considerable fact, the one which alone has enabled Islam to get the resources necessary for the regular functioning of the Muslim empire, has hardly left sure traces.

In Greek writers, we find historical memories in small numbers and quite uncertain.

In Coptic writers who have written in Coptic or whose works have reached us in Arabic or another language, although originally written in Coptic, we will make a greater harvest of historical facts, but these facts are in the biggest disorder; they are diverted from their primitive meaning, accompanied by a magic we cannot take seriously even a while. When we look a little at the Chronicles of John of Nikiu we realize that his intelligence of the situations was hardly different from that of the other authors of the same religion, that he was just as credulous, just as uncritical, that he wrote more to serve the edification of his readers than to instruct them. He claims to write a universal history, but his story begins with that of creation according to the Bible, that is to say according to the Sumerian-Babylonian myths on the subject. He tells us without laughing that it was God himself who gave their name to Adam and Eve, but that it was Adam who gave their names to his children and to all creatures (chapter 1i), that Seth, the third son of Adam, gave their names to the rivers (chapter 2), that Kronos or Saturn was a giant of the Cham race (chapter 3). Regarding the history of Egypt, he says that a man named Hephæstus ruled over Egypt and rose to the rank of the gods, that he was the sun, and that after him his son, another sun, founded the city of Heliopolis (chapters 11 and 12). And when a historian indulges in writing calumnies like those he reports against Pulcheria, we can no longer count on his impartiality. However, it cannot be denied that he had a curious mind, that he had striven to read instructive books and, if his chronicle has flaws, these defects are attributable especially to his century, his country and the circle in which he lived.

Cyrus known as Mouqoqis in the Muslim tradition now. What was his exact role in all this? Was he the traitor that some pagan or atheist authors describe to us? The Muslim tradition presents him to us as already established in 628 and giving Muhammad two slaves with a remarkable beauty, Mary and Shirin. While fulfilling the two such different missions of governor and patriarch of the Melkite Church, did Cyrus sustain connections with the Arab armies of Syria to divert them from Egypt? The fact would have nothing incredible in itself, although we are entitled to be astonished that the governor of a country subjected to the emperor has thus negotiated such a surrender. The reasoning, the psychology, and the level of intelligence of the character, question and are problematic.

In order to recount this conquest, the historian will find lastly among the Arab authors certain circumstances in small numbers that they alone could know, and which, indeed, they alone knew; provided that these events are by no means legendary or marvelous, he may use them with complete certainty of conscience; for the rest, it is useless to ask them anything.

The Muslims, fortified by their successes in Syria and Palestine, had come to believe that the thing had been written, and that they were only the ministers of God. They did not think that the weakness of their adversaries came from their divisions, from their corruption, from their lack of courage, from their selfishness, and that in the presence of such weakening causes, their vigor and fanaticism could easily be regarded as the sufficient reason for their success.

It is particularly naïve and irresponsible to present the Arab conquerors as simple people, motivated only by the desire to make religious proselytism; they were not impervious to other passions, to other thirsts which are often the motives of human acts.

The leaders of the Moslem invasion were intelligent, thoughtful, capable of instruction, if not educated, eager to learn what they lacked, as they demonstrated it just after the conquest; they also had all the selfishness necessary to the conquerors, and the cruelty they showed did not differ noticeably from that the Persians had shown during the invasion which had just finished when Cyrus arrived in Egypt. Because conquest translates war, tyranny and cruelties; the sense of personal preservation necessarily outweighs the feelings of humanity.

The Arab-Muslims could therefore think, not without reason, that they were superior to their adversaries; but they also knew that they were less well equipped than they, that they did not know how to use the advanced weapons that the practice of the war had given to the Roman and Greek soldiers, especially that they did not know the handling of the weapons of contemporary artillery. From this necessity, lost as they were in a sea of men, to be more particularly severe, hard and everywhere cruel; besides, cruelty was then regarded as heroism if it was practiced against an enemy. It is therefore childish to exempt Muslims from all the horrors they were led to commit during an armed conquest; they were cruel, that is certain; but their chiefs admirably understood that they should

not think of settling in the Nile Valley in order to profit for them, if they did not entrust the administration to those who administered it before their arrival, while closely watching them; to anticipate thus the results, to decide them in the best way in advance, and to be able to stick to his decision, was the great merit of the leader of the conquest, Amr ben Al As.

PERSIAN OR SASANIAN CIVILIZATION.

The Sasanians reign over Iran from 224 until the Arab-Muslim invasion in 651. This period is a golden age for Iran both artistically and politically and religiously.

It was one of the two great powers in West Asia for more than four hundred years. Founded by Ardashir who routed the last Parthian king, Artaban V, it ended with the defeat of the last King of Kings, Yazdgerd III (632-651). The latter, after fourteen years of struggle, never succeeded in repelling the caliphate.

The territory of the Sasanian Empire encompassed the totality of Iran, Iraq, Armenia, South Caucasus (including South Dagestan), Southwest Central Asia, Western Afghanistan, fragments of Turkey, Syria, part of the coast of the Arabian Peninsula 1), the Persian Gulf region and fragments of West Pakistan. The Sasanian era is considered one of the most important periods in Iran's history. In many respects, it represents the highest achievement of Persian civilization and was the last great Iranian empire before the Arab conquest and adoption of the Muslim religion. Sasanian Persia had a certain impact on Roman civilization, and the Romans regarded the Sasanian Persians as their equals; it is evidenced by the letters of the Roman emperor to the shahanshah which begins with the formula : "To my brother ...". Their cultural influence extended well beyond the borders of the empire to reach Western Europe, Africa, China and India, and played a role in the formation of medieval European and Asian art. This influence is also visible from the appearance of the Islamic world and during the conquest of Iran by Muslims. The aristocratic and unique culture of the dynasty is proof of this. Abdolhossein Zarrinkoob of Teheran University goes so far as to argue that what is called Islamic culture, architecture, or writing, owes much to the Sasanian Persians, before spreading to other countries conquered by Islam.

From the reign of Khosrau Anushirwan (" the immortal soul"), called Chosroes I by the Greeks (501-579), reforms set up a new tax system, which was later taken over by the Arabs. The power is henceforth entrusted to the gentry, rather than to great landowners. The empire extends over southern Arabia, making possible the control of trade between Byzantium and the Far East (India, China). The victories that put an end to Hephthalite Huns domination also lead to a significant expansion eastward to the Oxus (present-day Amu Darya).

Khosrau I Anushirwan has remained very famous in Iran: many words and many facts are attributed to him. He carries out large public works, such as irrigation channels or the foundation at Gundeshapur of a medical school based on Greek 3) theories. It is also under his reign that Greek philosophers and scholars after the closing of the Neoplatonic School of Athens in 529 are welcomed in the court.

Under Khosrow II Parviz (the triumphant one), the territorial expansion continues, with the annexation of Syria, Egypt and Palestine. But the counter-offensive of Heraclius finally leads to the looting of the royal residence of Dastagird, then to the assassination of Khosrow in Ctesiphon during a revolt of the nobility in 628. This reign remains associated, however, with a period of luxury, with the construction of the palaces of Qasr-e Chirin and Dastagird, and the popularity of poetry and music.

The Sasanian dynasty shows a great sense of administration, international trade and farming (irrigation and dams). It is an oral civilization, with a strong and centralized power as well as a huge network of communication. The incessant wars that shake the Empire are also an important factor to take into account.

The society is divided into three categories, according to the Indo-European structure, each headed by a chef (salar).

- The priests.
- The Warriors
- The farmers.

The artisans are first members of the farmer class, before being recognized as a full category. This system of feudal type is generally quite stable, but nevertheless requires a good balance between nobility and religion. The revolt movement that began under Kavad I, Mazdakism, which rebels against the Mazdaean religion and calls for the bringing together of women and goods, shows that the break of this balance always causes unrest. A second great revolt movement, more related to a difficult geopolitical situation, will also see the day at the end of the 6th century.

The king is the head of the Sasanian state. Shapur I was the initiator of the Sasanian royal title, calling himself "King of the Iranians and non-Iranians" (shahanshah eran ud aneran). He exercised the main political, military, legal and administrative functions.

The construction of dams, large channels and bridges, makes possible to increase the farmed area, especially in Khuzestan, in the Diyala Basin and in the Fars. Crops (cereals, rice, sugar cane and from

the 6th century, sericulture) can thus be exported. The selection of horse breeds will later serve the Arab conquerors for the creation of the horses known as Arab that will astonish the first crusaders by their agility.

In addition to agricultural products, Sassanians also export manufactured goods, including silks. Indeed, from the end of the 4th century are established relations with China for export including raw silk. It is Sasanian Iran that has control of the western part of this Silk Road, and thus holds the monopoly of trade, to Byzantium and Europe in particular. Iranians settled even in China from the sixth century, relations developing especially through Nestorian caravans and missionaries.

A trade takes place to India by sea that is to say via the port of Mesena 4) and to Syria (Dura Europos and Palmyra) by land. Zagros products shipped by river, on the Tigris and Khabur river, a tributary of the Euphrates (which is not navigable). The Sasanians use wooden rafts on air-filled skins as the Assyrians already did and will continue to be used in the 19th century. These rafts can carry several tons of goods. A flourishing trade also takes place with Central Asia.

The Sasanian dynasty marks the period of glory of Zoroastrianism, which is promoted as state religion. A particular trait will be trilingualism: Pahlavi (Middle Persian), Greek and Parthian, are three languages commonly spoken by a large number of Iranians at that time. This characteristic is particularly evident in rock inscriptions, mostly bilingual and trilingual.

A close relationship exists between philosophy, medicine, astronomy, faith and science. The academy of Gundeshapur, founded by Shapur I, is a remarkable element of Sasanian culture. It houses in particular a faculty of medicine, the teachings are based on the Greek principles of Aristotle and Galen, brought to Iran through Nestorian Christians. Medicine in particular is developing through foreign doctors (Greek in particular), because of the problems of ritual defilement linked to the Mazdaean religion. Many Byzantine philosophers also find refuge in this academy after the closing of the schools in Athens (the Academy among others) by the Byzantine emperor, during the movement called *Translatio studiorum*.

Arab sources refer to Middle Persian literature and thus attest to its existence. Several works are preserved, among which we may mention ...

The Avesta, written and completed at this time.

The Manichean hymns, some of which existed before the Sassanians.

Arabic translations of foreign texts such as the fables of Kalila and Dimna, from India, or still the book of Sinbad's adventures, translated during the late Sasanian period.

The Khvatay-Namak, a national epic that will inspire Firdowsi in the tenth century for his Book of Kings (shahnameh).

Sasanian music is a base of traditional Iranian music. We can note in it the importance given to the song, both through religious hymns (Ghatahs), still sung in India today, songs extolling the greatness of monarchs, the achievements of heroes or the beauty of nature and human feelings. Some of these songs correspond to seasonal holidays. But instrumental music also plays a leading role. Sasanian music will be exported to Europe and Spain. It is the starting point of Arab-Andalusian music, and the instruments currently used in classical music have slowly evolved from the oriental models themselves very close to those of the Sassanians.

The Sasanian period is also a climax for the visual arts. Objects are made of the most diverse materials: glass, silver, rock crystal, fabrics ... Urban planning and architecture are also taking off considerably, with the creation of new forms such as the *chahar taq* 5) , or the use of Roman techniques and patterns.

1) Current historical research change the view of an autonomous Arabia, rejecting disdainfully external influences. The Persian civilization, of world importance, also crushes culturally speaking a vast empty space such as Arabia. All documents bear witness to this influence, even in everyday life. Ibn Khurradadhbih.

In the Jahiliyya both Yathrib/Medina and Tihama were under an official (amil) appointed by the marzban al-badiya (the marzban of the desert) who levied Medina's taxes. Now Qurayza and Nadir were kings whom they gave control over the Aws and Khazraj. On this matter a poet of the Anar said: You pay the tax after the tax of Khusraw and a tax from the Qurayza and Nadir ! "

Such a situation of dependence explains the very strong and very old resentment of the Arabs towards the Persians in the sixth and seventh centuries.

Sahih Muslim 28, 5612.

God's apostle said: He who played chess is like one who dyed his hand with the flesh and blood of swine.

2) 1923-1999. Author of the Arab conquest of Iran.

3) For various reasons related to the impurity issues in the Zoroastrian religion, strictly Persian medicine was poorly developed.

4) Mesena is the region corresponding to the current Shatt al Arab and Maysan in southern Iraq.

5) 4 arches.

THE SITUATION OF THE SASANIAN EMPIRE AS REGARDS RELIGION.

FOREWORD TO THE READER. THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNTS EMPHASIZE ALL THE FACT THAT THE ARAB CHRISTIANS HAVE UNTIL THE END FOUGHT MUSLIMS AT THE SIDE OF THE SASANIAN TROOPS. NOTHING IS LESS CERTAIN AND BESIDES WE WILL RETURN TO THE SUBJECT!

Beforehand, we need to clarify a question of vocabulary. The word "Nestorian" is unsuitable. It is better to speak of the Christian Church in Persia or, to take over the term currently used, of the Eastern Syrian Church.

The first Syriac communities.

We can think that these first Christian communities were formed here even more than elsewhere, from Jewish communities. This region, in fact, was, towards the eighth century before our era, one of the centers of the Assyrian and then Babylonian empires, at a time when, as we know, there had been important deportations of Jews towards Mesopotamia. Many (the majority perhaps) did not return and started a line on the spot. In Mesopotamia at that time, including in the Euphrates loop (Jezireh or Upper Mesopotamia), there were important Jewish communities; so much so that it is there that the Talmud "of Babylon" will be constituted, considered by the Jews as the most important book of their religion.

A number of these Jews would have recognized Jesus as Messiah, and this extremely early; it is there that, from the 1st century, we will find this form of Christian expression which is different from those which are familiar to us today.

Let's move on to the second half of the second century. History tells us that in these border regions between the Roman Empire and Persia, then dominated by the Parthians, there was a small kingdom called Osroene, centered on Edessa, with as monarch Abgar VII. This kingdom had accepted and recognized at home the existence of Judeo-Christian communities. Let's stay for a moment in Edessa. At this time appears there a character called Bardaysan (or Bar-Daisan) (154 - 222). What does this name mean? Literally "the Son of the torrent" the "torrent-like." But the Daysan is precisely the torrent whose floods ravage from time to time Edessa. It is therefore someone who comes from the banks of the Daysan, but whose name also indicates a torrent-like character. In fact, he is so! We have no texts from Bardaysan / Bar-Daisan except for a few fragments, notably some verses, quoted by St. Ephrem among others. Bardaysan / Bar-Daisan is in the wake of Gnostic movements that develop in this region during the second century. The most important text about him was written by one of his disciples. It is the Book of the laws of the countries, which gives us a kind of sociological and ethnological geography of the whole region, going beyond the Persian Empire to India. If you want to know Ephrem, you can read the book by Sebastian Brock, one of the best connoisseurs of the Syriac world. We are really in a world that is foreign to everything that develops in the Byzantine Roman Empire.

There are three languages behind of Christianity, Aramaic or Syrian-Palestinian, Greek (Paul), and Latin, the language of administration at the time of Jesus. This emphasizes the importance of the Syriac tradition, which must be considered as the equal of the Greco-Latin tradition, and according to which these early Christian communities of Osroene or Mesopotamia developed from Jewish circles. The Eastern Syriac Church called "Nestorian."

We have just seen how Christian communities developed very early in northern Syria as well as in Mesopotamia. Now, in the first centuries of our era, these regions were under the influence of the Parthians, of course fierce opponents of the Romans, but who were very tolerant, very "ecumenical." They do not seem to have had official religion, which made possible in the region the development of these first Christian communities. Everything changed when, in 226, there was a great break: succeeding the Parthians, the Sasanians took power. Coming from the Eastern Iran, from Bactria (currently Afghanistan), the Sasanians had a very specific religion, Mazdaism, in fact, a reformation of ancient Iranian traditions.

This Sasanian empire was extremely extended. In its largest extension, it will go from the east of present-day Turkey to near China. Its importance equaled that of the Roman Empire. It included Mesopotamia, its capital being besides located on the Tigris, in Seleucia Ctesiphon, a double city located on both banks of the river, not far from the ancient Babylon; very close to what will become later (from 751) the city of Baghdad.

This empire, it must be remembered to our readers, was rich, brilliant, and well organized. Its communication language was Aramaic, of which we have already said a few words, and whose importance is thus measured. But it is during this period that a Christian Church will be truly formed in this immense Persian space, which will be of great importance, even though it had difficult periods.

During the fourth century, around 345, about a century after the advent of the Sasanians in the time of Emperor Shapur II (Sapor II), there was a clear anti-Christian policy on the part of the authorities; since Christianity had become the official religion of the great competitor, the Byzantine Roman Empire.

At the beginning of the following century, the fifth, came a time of peaceful coexistence between the Eastern Roman Empire and the Sasanian Empire. In 410 Byzantium was therefore able to send a diplomatic mission to Seleucia Ctesiphon, which obtained that the Christian communities existing in the Persian Empire could henceforth be organized or even be constituted as a Church.

The first official synods of this Christian church in Persia take two kinds of decisions.

- The first synod declares in 410: we have the same belief as the Christians of "the West" (the Byzantine Christians in fact), we accept the confession of faith of Nicaea and the interpretation given by the "Western" Fathers ."

But, fifteen years later, in 424, in order to be able to defend themselves against the attacks of the Mazdeans, who reproached them for sympathizing with Rome, a second synod will confirm the precedent; while adding: "it is the bishop of the imperial cities of Seleucia Ctesiphon who is Peter among us, who is the guardian of belief. We have no relationship with the inhabitants of the Roman Empire ."

The fifth century is therefore the century when the Persian Church established itself as an independent church. Its chief, called Catholicos, or Patriarch, will sit at Seleucia Ctesiphon. What was the importance of this Persian Church in the Sasanian Empire? It is extremely difficult to say. Some authors believe that at its peak, around the year 800 (in fact, in the early days of Muslim domination), it could have been more important than Western Christendom at the same time; with a hundred bishops and millions of faithful.

Throughout the Sasanian period, however, this Church will have to defend important theological controversies, both with the Manicheans and with the Mazdean clergy.

Excerpts from the Shikand-Gumanig Vizar, doubt-dispelling exposition.

46. They (the Christians) state that the father and son and pure spirit are three entities which are not separable one from the other (47) nor is one foremost (48) and this, too, that, though a son, he is not less than the father, but in everything equal to the father. Why now is one to call him by a different name? 49. If it be proper for three to be one, which implies that it is possible for three to be nine and for nine to be three; (50) and it is possible to speak of other numbers, in this sequence, unlimitedly. 51. Moreover if a son is not less than a father, a father also is not greater than the son. 52. In these conditions is it possible to say that the father is from the son, or the son not from the father. 53. For whoever comes from someone else is less than the one from whom he proceeds, who constitutes his original substance; (54) if he is so in point of time, he is likewise in point of relationship. 55. If the son is not less than the father, that implies that the maker is not before his creation, nor yet is greater; (56) both must be original principles (57) and the creation is not less than the creator, nor the creator greater than the creation (58).59. Observe this, too, that if the son be equal to the father in all knowledge, that father is also as ignorant as the son who was unaware of his own death and execution on the tree (60) until he was slain by their capturing him and causing his wretched death, brutal treatment, and disgrace. 61. He did not know about it because they inquired of him thus: 'When is the day of resurrection?' And he answered thus: 'Of this no one is aware but the father.' 1) Among the disciples of Theodore of Mopsuestia, there was a certain Nestorius. A monk of Antioch, of Persian origin, who because of his brilliant qualities as an orator, will be chosen to be the archbishop of Constantinople (later it will be said the patriarch). Nestorius drew all the consequences of the Christological positions of the School of Antioch, and especially this one. Because of the duality of the natures, we cannot say that Mary is the mother of God (theotokos) or rather, if we say it, then we must also say that Mary is the mother of the man, mother of the true man in Jesus. It is then easier to simply say that Mary is the mother of Christ (sermon of Nestorius in Constantinople, Christmas 426). This preaching was considered scandalous, especially in Egypt where people were very attached to this idea of theotokos, for reasons that went back perhaps to its distant pagan past. In 431, therefore, a council was summoned at Ephesus, in which the Alexandrians prevailed. Nestorius was condemned; his writings burned; he was exiled to Petra [and perhaps even to Mecca] then to Libya and, as we have just said, the Christology of Theodore of Mopsuestia was rejected. About fifty years later, around 485, the Church of Persia, or the Eastern Syriac Church, refused the conclusions of the Council of Ephesus and the condemnation of Nestorius. His disciples therefore joined the Church of Persia. A little more than a century later, in 612, a profession of faith written by a theologian called Babai gave his final expression to the doctrine of the Eastern Syriac Church.

Is it necessary for as much to call this Church as "Nestorian," when it existed quite before Nestorius and that he never came to the east of the Euphrates? Why was this "Nestorian" Church called Nestorian in the West? It is undoubtedly a designation found to reject this church which wanted to be independent, and to put on it the mark of heresy, since Nestorius had been condemned as such.

1) Mt 24:36, Mark 13:32.

THE SASANIAN EMPIRE ON THE EVE OF THE MUSLIM CONQUEST.

Persia was then governed by a powerful dynasty, that of the Sassanids, remarkable for its administrative and military organization. It was also distinguished by the renewal of the Mazdaean doctrine, strongly associated with power. But the empire was also populated by Christian minorities, Jews, and heterodox religious movements (Manichaeism). This was a great opportunity for the Lakhmids to regain their independence. King Chosroes II is the one who appears most often in Muslim sources: he is a reformer who restores its power to Persia. He had subdued a dangerous rebellion within his own empire, annexed the Lakhmid kingdom become independent (Al-Nu'man III, son of Al-Mundhir IV, the first Christian Lakhmid king, is deposed and executed) and then devoted all his energy to external problems, especially to its traditional foes, the Byzantines. He succeeds relatively well for a few years. From 613 to 614, he extended the Iranian borders as far west as the cities of Antioch, Damascus and Jerusalem. But the Byzantines pulled themselves together and Chosroes was defeated at the battle of Nineveh in 627. The Byzantines took over all Syria and penetrated far into the Persian provinces of Mesopotamia. Heraclius besieges Ctesiphon. Chosroes flees but will be murdered by his entourage because he refuses to sign peace with Heraclius. His son Kavadh will do it for him. The reign of Kavadh II, marked by this peace treaty with Byzantium, which results in a withdrawal on the territory of Chosroes I, marks the end of the apogee of the Sassanids, and the beginning of an anarchy that ends only with the Arab conquest. For four years, about ten kings will succeed on the throne, members of the royal family or usurpers, including two women, Borandukht who signed the final peace with the Byzantine Empire around 630 and Azarmidokht who reigns only a few months (December 631, March 632), daughters of Chosroes II. Then a Sassanid prince will be discovered at Istakhr where he was hiding and crowned in this city under the name of Yazdgerd III. He was a grandson of Chosroes II and Shirin, son of Prince Shahriyar and of a black de facto wife. He had been saved from death by his grandmother and hid in the province in Fars during the massacre of royal princes perpetrated by Kavadh II. With the help of General Rostam, he will seize the capital Ctesiphon at the age of sixteen in 632. He ruled concurrently with his cousin Hormizd VI until the assassination of the latter in January 633.

The Sassanid army.

The Sassanid army, especially based on the use of heavy weapons such as war elephants and armored cavalry, was one of the most effective of the late antiquity.

The main strength of this army is the heavy cavalry. Formed of nobles, it is armored, well protected by iron plates and particularly well trained. The mount is also protected. Shapur II intervened to ensure that the cavalry was more carefully protected. So they were exposed to arrows only by small openings necessary for the sight, for example. They use spears (cataphracts), but also bows, swords, battle axes and maces (clibanarii). Cavalry archers are able to shoot backward during their retreat. The elite of this cavalry is named Immortals as among the Achaemenids, and the Armenians are also good horsemen. Part of this Sassanid cavalry is lightly armed, it serves as scouts and is recruited mainly among mercenary Kushans, Khazars or even Hephthalites. Although there are Sassanid armies completely mounted, the cavalry represents on average one third of the army. Infantry includes archers, slingers and javeliniers, as well as heavy infantry armed with spears or swords, of which Sogdia provides good units. The archers were shooting a lot of arrows behind a shield screen. The Sassanid army employs more elephants than its predecessors the Parthians. They support the horsemen and come from India. Another evolution compared with their predecessors manifests in poliorcetics (art of sieges) where scorpions and Roman ballistae are imitated and in defense boiling liquids are poured on the attackers.

Since the 1st century before the common era, the border between the Roman Empire (later Byzantine Empire) and the Parthian Empire (later Sassanid) was the Euphrates. This boundary was continually disputed. Most of the battles, and therefore most of the fortifications, were concentrated in the northern hilly regions, the vast Arab desert or Syrian desert separating these empires from the rest of the world in the south. The only dangers coming from this unknown country were the occasional raids of Arab tribes. The two empires, on their side, had formed alliances with small, semi-independent Arab principalities, serving as buffer states, and thus protecting the ones Byzantium, the others Persia, from Bedouin attacks.

The vassals of the Byzantines were the Ghassanids, those of the Persians the Lakhmids.

The Ghassanids and Lakhmids were constantly fighting each other, what occupied them greatly, but hardly affected the Romans of the Byzantine Empire, or the Persians of the Sassanid Empire.

But in the sixth and seventh centuries of our era, everything changed.

The Sassanids emerged very weakened from a last war against the Byzantine Empire.

The Aryan mages (Zoroastrian or Parsi) of Persia were forced to defend themselves fiercely against the continuous progress of Christianity in their empire (the Nestorian bishop of Susa, for example, had destroyed in 418 one of their fire temples or pyreum).

The Sassanid Empire, very weakened, will resist some years to the Muslim attacks.

The Muslim invasion seen by Christians of the Sassanid Empire (Khuzistan Chronicle circa 660-670).

"Then God raised up against them the sons of Ishmael, numerous as the sand on the sea shore, whose leader (mdabbrana) was Muḥammad (mḥmd). Neither walls nor gates, armor or shield, withstood them, and they gained control over the entire land of the Persians. Yazdgird sent against them countless troops, but the Arabs routed them all and even killed Rustam. Yazdgird shut himself up in the walls of Mahoze and finally escaped by flight. He reached the country of the Huzaye and Mrwnaye, where he ended his life."

In short, in 637 the capture of Ctesiphon then in 642 the defeat of Nahavand will mark the end of the empire. Yazdgard III fled to Merv and ended up being murdered there in 651. Then his son Peroz III will take refuge in the Chinese court and the Sassanid dynasty will survive for some time as governor of a small Chinese territory.

REMAINED FAMOUS BATTLES.

BATTLE OF THE BRIDGE (AL JISR) 634 NEAR HIRA.

The Battle of the Bridge took place in 631 or 632 or in 634 between Arab Muslims led by Abu Ubayd and the forces of the Sasanian Empire who emerged victorious.

Abu Ubayd, who was stationed at Hira, having had information about the movements of the Persian army, sends his troops to the village of Marauha on the west bank of the Euphrates. Then he orders to bridge the rivers with boats and the Muslim army crosses it (November 28, 634 in the morning?)

The Moslem cavalry is deployed but in front of the elephants the horses panic and the Persians counterattack. Abu Ubayd and his second in command are killed. Only 3,000 Muslims out of a total of 9,000 can withdraw in good order from the other side of the Euphrates, under the command of Muthanna. About 2,000 died fighting, 2,000 drowned and 2,000 scattered in all directions.

But the Persian commander Bahman Jadhuyih cannot pursue the Muslims across the Euphrates because a revolt broke out in the Persian capital Ctesiphon and he must return immediately in it in order to help Rostam Farrokhzad to contain it.

BATTLE OF BUWAIB 635.

After the Battle of the Bridge, Umar sent contingents from several Arab tribes under Jarir b. Abdallah to reinforce. Al Muṭhanna was also joined by local Christian Arabs of Namir and Taghlib. Mehrān, son of Mehrbande of Hamadan, who was sent to Hira to deal with this buildup of Arab forces on the Iraqi frontier, crosses the Euphrates on a bridge of boats and attacks their camp at Noḳayla on the Bowayb Canal, most likely in the fall of 635. Al-Muṭhanna and Jarir defeat the Persians, and inflicted heavy casualties, Mehran among them. The Arab victory at Noḳayla/Bowayb left the plain of Mesopotamia located between the two rivers virtually undefended; the remaining Persian border posts along the desert frontier were taken one after the other, and Muslim raiding parties multiplied. Destructive raids by al-Muṭhanna and his lieutenants pillaged villages, markets, and encampments of Nomads from Kaskar to Anbar. To prevent the Persians from sending aid or mounting a counterattack from Mesena and Ḳhuzestan Umar sent Utba b. Ghazwan with a few hundred men to create a diversion in lower Iraq around the end of 635. From his camp at the deserted frontier post of Ḳorayba, in the spring of 636, Utba attacked and conquered Uballa, then killed its marzban at the battle of Mazar. As success attracted Arab tribesmen to this front, the encampment at Ḳorayba grew into the garrison city of al-Baṣra.

BATTLE OF CADESIA (636) MODERN HILLA IN IRAQ.

For the record, troops of Alexander the Great (Dhu al Quarnayn) at Gaugamela in - 331. 35 000 infantrymen and 5000 horsemen. Old estimates 230,000 infantrymen 15,000 horsemen 15 war elephants 200 scythed chariots. Modern estimates: from 50 to 100,000 men. Olympic silver medal in the category victory against a numerically superior enemy (after the Thermopylae).

Here below now the version of the battle of Cadesia seen by the Armenian bishop Sebeos (History of Heraclius, chapter XXX).

« Then the Ishmaelite troops who were gathered in the east, went and besieged Tizbon [Ctesiphon/Mada'in], since the king of Persia resided there. Troops from the land of Media , some 80,000 armed men under their general Rostam assembled and went against [the Ishmaelites] in battle. Then [the Persians] left the city and crossed to the other side of the Tigris River. [The Ishmaelites] also crossed the river, pursuing them. And they did not stop until they reached their borders, at the village called Hert'ichan. [The Ishmaelites continued to pursue them, [eventually] going and encamping in the plain. Present were Mushegh Mamikonean, son of Dawit', the general of Armenia with 3,000 armed men, and also Prince Grigor, lord of Siwnik', with 1,000 men. The Persian and Ishmaelite armies] attacked each other, and the Persian forces fled before them. But [the Ishmaelites] pursued them, putting them to the sword. All the principal naxarars [nobles and chiefs of families] died, as did General Rostam. They killed Mushegh and two of his sister's sons, as well as Grigor, the lord of Siwnik', along with one son. Some [of the Persian troops] escaped and fled back to their own land. The remnants of the Persian forces assembled in Atrpatakan at one spot and made Xorhoxazat their general. Then they hurried to Tizbon [Ctesiphon/Mada'in] and took the treasury of the kingdom, the inhabitants of the city, and their king, and then hurried to get back to Atrpatakan. But as soon as they had departed and gone some distance, the Ishmaelite Army unexpectedly came upon them. Horrified, [the Persians] abandoned the treasury and the inhabitants of the city, and fled. Their king also fled, winding up with the southern troops. Now [the Ishmaelites] took the entire treasury and returned to Tizbon [Ctesiphon/Mada'in] taking the inhabitants of the cities along too. And they pillaged the entire country.”

Let us try to see more clearly.

Modern estimates suggest that the size of Sassanid forces was about 50,000–80,000 strong and Muslims around 30,000 strong after being reinforced by a contingent from Syrian front on the second day.

The Persian army reached Cadesia/Qadisiyyah in July 636 and established their fortified camps on the eastern bank of the Ateeq River.

The Sassanid army was about 80,000 strong: infantry, heavy cavalry, and the Elephant corps. The Elephant corps was also known as the Indian corps, for the elephants were brought from Persian provinces in India.

On 16 November 636, the Sassanid army crossed over the west bank of Ateeq, and Rostam deployed his 45,000 infantry in four divisions, each about 150 meters apart from the other. 15,000 cavalry were divided among four divisions to be used as reserve for counterattacks and offensives. About 30 elephants were also present, eight with each of the four divisions of infantrymen. The front was about 4 km long. The Sassanids' right wing was commanded by Hormuzan, the center by Jalinus, the reserves by Piruzan, and the left wing by Mihran. Rostam himself was stationed at an elevated seat, shaded by a canopy, near the west bank of the river and behind the center, where he enjoyed a wide view of the battlefield. By his side waved the Derafsh-e-Kāveyān, the 'flag of Kāveh'), the standard of the Sassanid Persians. Rostam placed men at certain intervals between the battlefield and the Sassanid capital, Ctesiphon, to transmit information.

As during the Battle of the Bridge the Arab cavalry was routed by the Persian war elephants from day one. But on the third day, the Muslim infantry having received reinforcements managed to turn the situation. Persian general Rostam Farrokhzad was captured and had his head cut off. The fact that the Arabs won this battle is indisputable. One of the direct consequences was the fall of the capital of the empire, Ctesiphon, the following year.

The battle was decided by the arrival of the reinforcements come from Syria and the death of Rostam. It was a decisive victory for the Muslims and a disaster for the Persians. They were

routed, and fugitive Persian soldiers were pursued and killed in the villages, reed thickets, on the river banks.

Some 4,000 North Iranian soldiers, the Hamra 1) joined the Muslim army at Cadesia, shared equally in the booty (Encyclopaedia iranica online).

As the survivors of Cadesia took refuge in Ctesiphon, the Sasanian garrisons in the eastern Jazira (in the eastern Upper Mesopotamia) were evacuated. Contingents in advance of the main Muslim army spread out across the Mesopotamian plain in systematic pursuit of the remnants of the Persian army, which they prevented from regrouping. Local notables, such as Bestam, the dehqan of Bors, collaborated with the victors (Encyclopaedia iranica online). N.B. After Cadesia Muslim soldiers began to equip themselves with the weapons, armor, and horses of the fallen Persians.

Let's try to see in that still more clearly!

Around the year 636, the advisor and general in chief of the young Sassanid emperor Yazdgerd III, led an immense army beyond the Euphrates in the region of Cadisia (center of present-day Iraq). Some writers believe that choosing to confront Arab Muslims on their own ground - the desert edge - was a fatal strategic mistake and that the Persians could have held out as long as the Eastern Roman Empire did if they had they remained on the opposite bank (of the Euphrates). The Moslems, at first twelve thousand, having quickly received reinforcements, deploy an army of thirty thousand fighters under the command of Saad ibn Abi Waqqas, in the plain.

The Persian army, two or three times more numerous, half of them being horsemen, is accompanied by a formidable body of elephants, the tanks of the time.

The Persians began to dominate, but on the third day the advantage came down to Muslims. Particular denominations distinguish the various periods of the battle of Cadesia

The first was called the relief day, because of the six thousand men come from Syria who came opportunely to lend a hand to the Muslims; the shock day probably indicates the disorder of one or perhaps both armies; the third one, during which the charges were made at night, received the strange name of night of roar, because of the clamor of the warriors.

The morning of the next day decided the fate of the Sasanian empire. The death of one of the elephants caused panic among the others who then turned against their own side, if any elephants can have a side, trampling on everything on their way. Thus, against all odds, Saad routed the Zoroastrian Persians and their pagan or Christian Arab and Armenians allies (hardly motivated allies, it is true).

The Persian general in chief was captured and then beheaded.

According to Muslim sources, the Iranian losses would have been enormous. The Muslims, for their part, admit the loss of seven thousand five hundred men, and rightly represent the battle of Cadesia as having been persistent and atrocious. But the importance of the forces involved and the disparity of losses may have been a little exaggerated.

CAPTURE OF CTESIPHON (636).

From there, everything went on quickly. The Muslims marched on the Persian capital, Ctesiphon (Mada'in in Arabic afterwards), which was quickly evacuated by Yazdgerd III.

The battle of Ctesiphon / Madain takes place two months after that of Cadesia. Saad ordered his army to cross the Tigris and found a ford for it. The Sasanian capital is invaded and Muslims seize the palace of Emperor Chosroes, even his crown. The booty was immense (some estimated it to nine billion silver coins). The circulating silver coins, among the first Muslims, were therefore Persian dirhams, and, consequently, adorned with a Mazdaean or Parsi fire altar (pyreum), in other words, a particularly pagan symbol.

Some Muslims even discovered things unknown to them: gold (which they called yellow silver) camphor (they mistook for salt). The captive Persian nobles were sold as slaves at ridiculously low prices and the city fell into ruin quickly.

Below is the account by Ibn Khaldun concerning Ctesiphon's library. "When the Muslims conquered Persia and came upon an indescribably large number of books and scientific papers, Sa'd b. Abi Waqqas wrote to Umar b. al-Khattab, asking him for permission to take them and distribute them as booty among the Muslims. On that occasion, Umar wrote to him: "Throw them into the water. If what they contain is right guidance, God has given us better guidance. If it is error, God has protected us against it." Thus, the (Muslims) threw them into the water or into the fire, and the sciences of the Persians were lost and did not reach us" (Ibn Khaldun, Muqaddima).

BATTLE OF JALULA 637 (center east of present-day Iraq).

According to Parvaneh Pourshariati, *Decline and fall of the Sasanian Empire*. London 2008.

Around the end of 635 two Muslim columns advanced north and east from Ctesiphon. One moved up the Tigris under Abdallah b. Mo'tamm and took Takrit with the help of Arabs of Ejl and Namer in the town who went over to the Muslim side during the siege. The other, under Hashim b. Utba, pursued the Persian refugees and soldiers along the road to Ḥolwan with 12,000 men, including the Ḥamra 1). The Sasanian rearguard under Ḳorrazad, Rostam's brother, entrenched their baggage and dependents at Ḳaneqin and attempted to cover the retreat, but Hashem defeated them with heavy losses at Jalula'. A flying column including Ḥamra 1) under b. Amr pursued the survivors to Ḳaneqin, where every fighting man who could be caught was killed, and their women, children, and property were captured.

When he heard of the defeat at Jalula and the death of Mehran at Kaneqin, Yazdegerd abandoned Ḥolwān and headed for Ray, leaving a holding force at Ḥolwan under Ḳosrowshonum. Ibn Amr routed the forces of Ḳosrowshonum at Qaṣr-e Širin and occupied Ḥolwan, which he garrisoned with some of the Ḥamra 1). Soon afterward the Persians who had fled from Ctesiphon were allowed to return upon agreeing to pay tribute, and the Muslim army settled at Kufa.

BATTLE OF NAHAVAND WEST OF CURRENT IRAN (642).

The Shah will attempt a last counter-offensive at Nahavand near Ecbatana, in 642, with 50,000 men (if these figures are not exaggerated). In vain! The Persians and Armenians are stupidly encircled by 30,000 Muslims, then trapped in a very narrow valley, and lose nearly 20,000 men.

In 643 took place his last battle, that of Faht-al-Futuh (for Muslims "the victory of victories").

The Sasanian empire broke out in a number of more or less independent provinces, and the unhappy Yazdagard III retreated further into Asia.

This ultimate retreat of the shah will lead him beyond the Oxus to Merv in Fergana Province, but he was never able to raise again a comparable army. The Khan of the Turks later sent him soldiers, but they mutinied and murdered Yazdgard in 652. The son of the deceased Shah nevertheless managed to flee to China, and it is said that the Safavids would be his distant descendants.

1) The Hamra or Dailamites were formidable warriors from northern Persia. The Arabs thought very highly of these men whom they called "Al-Hamra" (red-faced ones) and recruited some of these for their own armies. The vast majority of the Dailamites, however, refused to bow to the authority of the caliphs, even after the collapse of the Sassanians.

CONCLUSION.

The Arab-Muslim conquest will not necessarily change much the way of life of the Christians in the East IN A FIRST TIME. The Nestorians in Mesopotamia were accustomed to live under the domination of a non-Christian power: the Muslim empire replaces the Persian Empire, simply. The different Churches in the Near East generally welcome the new power, which allows them to continue practicing their faith. The Maronites and Jacobites are even freer than under Byzantine rule, since the new masters are indifferent to their obscure theological and liturgical quarrels. In Egypt, the Copts welcome with almost relief the arrival of the new power, which frees them from a Byzantine power become oppressive: for the first time in a generation, the patriarch of Antioch can travel in the country and visit the monasteries. The various monasteries join up willingly the conquerors and get as a reward a rate of kharaj (property tax) very low. On the contrary, the Melkite authors, loyal to Byzantium and therefore favored under the former regime, are generally the most opposed to the new one, just like the Armenians, who lose their autonomy, the Bishop Sebeos going as far as to compare Islam to the "fourth beast of the Apocalypse." But this is an isolated attitude.

It must be said that Muslim conquerors do not start a policy of forced Islamization, and do not persecute Christians. These, like the Jews and the Zoroastrians, are recognized as People of the Book (Ahl al-kitab), and are offered a special status, the dhimma (protection). The power is committed to protect the dhimmis, to respect their religious rights, but also legal, and to recognize their leaders 1). So, when the new Abbasid dynasty settled in Baghdad in the middle of the eighth century, the head of the Nestorian Church (the Catholicos patriarch) became an interlocutor of the caliph and an important figure of the court. In the eleventh century, the patriarch of Antioch, to get closer to the power, moved to Cairo, the new capital founded by Muslims. It is in the dhimma that we must look for the key to the "tolerance" often invoked to speak of the status of Christians and Jews in the land of Islam. It is in fact a carefully regulated coexistence. But of course, this protection is not without nothing: the counterpart of the dhimma is the capitation (jizya), a tax that weighs heavily on Christians. So heavily that conversions to Islam will multiply, to the point that the Fatimids, in the eleventh century, will have to ban them not to lose valuable tax resources. Height and decline.

The Christian Churches in the East reach their peak under Islamic domination: a very important missionary activity, the foundation of numerous monasteries, literary and artistic production, as witnessed still today by the churches of the Coptic District in Cairo. The dhimma is supposed to limit their visibility in the public space (clothing distinctions, prohibition to build new churches or to repair existing ones, ...), but in fact these measures are not applied. For the Christians of the East knew very early how to enter the new power, and often occupy an important place in the state apparatus, which enables them to compensate for their inferiority status in the society. In Egypt, for example, the tax apparatus is entirely in the hands of the Copts, who take great care to hand over their technical skills only to members of their community; and we know the case of Maimonides, great philosopher, leader of the Jewish communities and personal physician of the Egyptian sultan in the twelfth century. Many court doctors are also Christians or Jews: the Arabs thought they were less likely to poison their clients because they were less involved in political quarrels. An emblematic example of the status of these populations, both a part of the Arab world and carefully kept marginalized.

Nevertheless, the Christian communities are shaken by several developments, of which Arabization is undoubtedly the most important. This Arabization started in Baghdad, where the Bible was translated into Arabic as early as the 9th century, and spread throughout Dar al-Islam, as far as distant Andalusia. From the tenth century, Arabic replaced the Coptic in Egypt; Syriac will resist until the 13th century with Bar Hebraeus. This Arabization often goes hand in hand with a more or less fast Islamization. The - demographic and cultural - decline of these communities, worsened by episodic persecutions (especially under the Fatimid caliph Al-Hakim at the beginning of the eleventh century, which among other vexations, destroy the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem), appears then as inevitable.

- 1) We will return in a more detailed way in our next notebook on the long-term pernicious effects of this dhimma, the dhimmitude, WHICH IS THEREFORE COMPLETELY CONTRARY TO HUMAN RIGHTS.

OSMAN BEN AFFAN (Nov. 11th, 644- Jul. 17th, 656) CAPITAL MEDINA, IN ARABIA.

The brutal death of Caliph Umar, when he was fifty-five years old, will compromise the success of Muslims for a time. He was murdered in the mosque of Medina by a Christian slave of Persian origin, November 4, 644. In ten years of rule, he had propelled Islam in the conquest of the Mediterranean East and laid the foundations for a new empire. Given the very strong preference of Muhammad for the members of his clan, the Quraysh it was inevitable that the caliphate sooner or later come down to the most powerful clan of his tribe, to those Umayyads who had yet fought him to the end. As Umar during his lifetime had wanted to return to the elective principle that had led to the designation of Abu Bakr, after his death a "committee" of six wise men was therefore responsible for providing for his replacement. To succeed Umar, the party of the Quraysh, headed by Muawiya, a former secretary of Muhammad; succeeded in making elect another son-in-law of Muhammad (he had married two of his daughters) who was also at the same time a nephew of Abu Sufyan, his most implacable enemy: Osman. Ali had once again been ousted. He had a major handicap: he had antagonized Aisha; and the widow of Muhammad had a considerable political weight. Ali had formerly taken a stand against Aisha during a campaign accusing her of adultery. The conditions of this appointment are worth being mentioned: in fact one of the council members appointed Osman and the others endorsed the decision. It looked clearly like a scheming. The man was nevertheless irreproachable: he had followed Muhammad in his exile in Medina. He was nonetheless Umayyad.

Osman extended the rule of Islam northward to the Caucasus and eastward to the Indies. It was during his reign that the first canonical edition of the Quran was published, an "expunged" edition apparently and at the very least curious (see the analytical study that follows), but it is the one that has survived until today. This caliph very little rashid ("very little orthodox") adjusted the Quran to his policy and not the opposite. It was for this reason that he removed all other versions of the "revealed book." This is not the least paradox of Islam today.

The violent spreading of Muslim horsemen in the Middle East and North Africa brought him considerable tribute, which he put in good part in the service of his family (nepotism). The former Companions of Muhammad who criticized the management of Osman were exiled or harassed. The people complained of the tyranny of the governors.

Osman faced growing opposition. In Medina it was particularly focused around Aisha, the widow of Muhammad, two of the oldest converts, Talha and Zubayr, and especially Ali, son-in-law and cousin of Muhammad.

Scandalized by the confiscation of the Islamic State for the benefit of those who had first fought it; a camp of opponents gathered around him, the best of Muslims for some ones; the legitimate heir to Muhammad, of whom he was the cousin, the son-in-law and the father of his grandchildren, for the others.

THE SECOND STAGE OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANONIC TEXT.

The Islamic tradition states that Osman wanted to fix the text in order to avoid divergences in his recitation. The Arabs of each tribe or region of the time had indeed their dialect and recited the Quran with their accent. This multitude of dialects created considerable differences in the meaning of certain words.

The main step in the distribution of the Quran was officially achieved during the reign of Osman. Serious disagreements had broken out among the troops of various provinces over the reading of the Quran.

Osman therefore used again Zayd ben Thabit to develop his official text. Zayd, with the help of three Meccan families, reread the Quran carefully, comparing the texts with the "leaves" kept by Hafsa, Umar's daughter. As he had been instructed in case of difficulty in the reading, Zayd followed the dialect of Quraysh (Muhammad's tribe); then revised more or less the spelling in the sense of greater legibility of the text, especially for non-Arabic speakers. After public reading of the new edition in front of all those who already knew the Quran by heart in Medina, copies (?) of the new version, made between 655 and the death of Osman in 656, were sent to Kufa, Basra, Damascus, and perhaps also in Mecca. One of them was, of course, kept in Medina. Order was given to destroy all the original media, as well as all the other versions having circulated until then (some claim that there existed at the time about sixty of them).

The research group led by Zayd did a remarkable work of selection (who could claim the opposite besides since everything that was not in compliance with their ideas or those of Osman was destroyed).

On the other hand, there were nevertheless duplicates during this writing, since verses 48 and 116 of chapter 4 are identical.

Osman belonged to an "enemy" clan of that of Muhammad : it is therefore more than likely that his version differs from the original recitations of the prophet, which anyway, had already undergone alterations, as evidenced by the very existence of different versions.

The number of people having worked in the committee with Zayd varies according to the versions; in some are included Osman's sworn enemies, one of them even mentions the name of a person who is known to have already died at the time! This version of the story does not mention either the part already taken by Zayd in the compilation of the Quran made in Abu Bakr's time. In any case, the Arabic of this text is not the Quraysh dialect.

We can also use, to dismiss this Osmanian version of things, the same arguments that were used to dismiss the narrative making the loyal Abu Bakr play the first part. It may be objected that the Osmanian narrative was invented by enemies of Abu Bakr (hence Osman's friends); political controversies can, there also, be considered to have played a role in the making of the story. In addition, this also leaves many uncomfortable questions unanswered. What were these "leaves" in Hafsa's possession? If the version dating from Abu Bakr is a fake, from where did Hafsa hold them? What about the versions that seemed, according to this story, to be found in the different provinces? When were these alternative texts compiled for the first time, and by whom?

There is no compelling reason to accept the Osmanian version of things, and not the one that gives the first role to the loyal Abu Bakr; both come from the same sources, which are extremely tendentious, and of late manufacture, as we shall see.

Until now, none of these six "Omanian" Qurans have been discovered, no copy of the Quran dating back to that time, because there is no manuscript dating back at least fifty years or so after Muhammad's death.

The earliest known example of the Quran of Osman dates back 776, that is, one hundred and thirty-six years after Muhammad's death. There is therefore no unquestionable archeological evidence that the Quran existed from that time, Gerd Puin says, who himself locates the shaping of the Quran "after Osman."

Let's repeat it: no versions previous to that of Osman remain today, or even any version contemporary of Osman (only copies are left). And, of course, there was never a version contemporary of Muhammad.

The review of Caliph Osman is the only physical trace remaining from the early "revelation" of Muhammad. But it can only have been arbitrary. The current Quran is therefore perhaps only a reflection of the personal preferences of Caliph Osman, whose reign was only a long crisis?

What to choose anyway among the thousands of hesitant or distorted testimonies then circulating? Not forgetting that, according to the order chosen, the interpretation of certain passages could also vary.

If the distribution of the chapters in the Quran is observed, it is clearly seen indeed that they did not obey any criterion of composition. This is felt in the extreme disparity that exists between long chapters - about fifty pages for "The Cow" - and short chapters - a half line for the shortest. Chapter 2 has 286 verses, while the last contains only four to six. On its own, this long chapter is equivalent in length to the last seventy-five chapters, out of a total of one hundred and fourteen. Chapter 112 is the Muslim profession of faith and has only four verses. " Say: He is God, the One! God the eternally Besought of all! He does not beget nor was begotten. And there is none comparable unto Him ." (This is in fact a response to paganism and Christianity.)

This ranking has its supporters: they maintain that it must be seen as the affirmation of the profound unity of the Quran, of which no part can be considered independently. It also has his detractors who denounce a serious distortion of the meaning initially given to the revelation and making it definitively incomprehensible.

This definitive version of the Quran therefore froze the consonants of the text. As we have seen, it was intended to replace the different editions that had emerged in the twenty years separating the first collection, that of Abu Bakr, from this "more official" edition. The early editions indeed differed from each other, which was, to say the least, embarrassing. Osman imposed therefore "his" version. Nothing proves, however, that the one he approved was the best. An "opportunist" Muslim, Osman had apparently become a member of the new religion only in order to get benefits for his clan and himself. This policy probably led him to make write a Quran commensurate with his ambitions, a Quran "sorted" according to his will.

This policy, considered scandalous by "hard-core" Muslims, led to his assassination in the year 655; and it is with "his" Quran in his hand that he was stabbed by co-religionists (who accused him, probably with some reason, of having departed far from the true Quran, as well as from the policy of his two predecessors). The Shiites have always accused him of having removed many passages concerning Ali. Osman was therefore murdered by Muslims who considered his version of the Quran as "impious" and yet, even today, it is it which remains the official reference of Islam. A little as if the Christians were referring to a New Testament revised and edited by Judas!

Despite the difficulties associated with traditional narratives, the importance of this codex prepared under Osman cannot be questioned. Nowhere, however, is it undoubtedly proved that it was well under his reign that the Quran was established in its final form.

Experts in the field admit a first formatting of the Quranic text under the Caliph Abu Bakr, but they question the reality of a definitive fixation under Osman, for reasons that are related to the writing of manuscripts.

Formalist Muslims (also called fundamentalists or Islamists) claim that piety commands a literal reading of this sacred text. They are themselves bearded and are dressed to resemble the image they have of Muhammad! They force their wives to be veiled.

Others, but a small minority, start again the same fight as the Jews or the Christians of old to leave the Middle Ages and claim an adjustment to our time of the religious practices. It is not because Aisha shared the bed of the prophet when she was nine years old that we must, as requested by anti-racists in France, legalize the marriage of girls at this age! It is not because the Quran legitimizes slavery that it must be kept in the twenty-first century!

ANALYSIS OF THE OSMANIAN CODEX.

Failing to convince by thought out arguments, this Osmanian Quran hits with its prohibitions.

" You are the best community....You enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency" (chapter 3 verse 110 of the Holy Quran).

In order to better establish their authority by stigmatizing daily behavior, the religions brandish all more or less this plague, playing on the unhealthy balance: sanction - reward.

The Quran is not exempt from the rule and, from the 2nd chapter (verse 168): " Eat of that which is lawful and do not follow the footsteps of the devil."The fasting period of Ramadan is defined a little further (2: 185): "So whoever sights [the new moon of] the month, let him fast it." The pilgrimage to Mecca is regulated quite severely and has nothing of a spiritual path responding to the metaphysical anxieties of the believer. Verses 196 and 197 of chapter 2 give its menu and it is important to remember that the pilgrim who cannot come personally is required to make an offering brought in it. Wine and gambling are condemned: "They question you about strong drink and games of chance. Say: In both is great sin and (some) utility for men; but their sin is greater than their usefulness" (2: 219). See also chapter 5 verses 90. Consumption of alcohol, on the other hand, is considered divine when it takes place in the Next World. For those who know what I mean: " There wait on them immortal youths with bowls and ewers and a cup from a pure spring wherefrom they get no aching of the head nor any madness" (56 :17).

See also chapter 76, verse 5: " Lo! the righteous shall drink of a cup whereof the mixture is of camphor ."

Chapter 5 gives further details on foods unfit for consumption: "Forbidden unto you are carrion and blood and swine flesh, and that which hath been dedicated unto any other than God, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which hath been killed by (the goring of) horns, and the devoured of wild beasts, saving that which you make lawful (by the death stroke), and that which hath been immolated unto idols "(5: 3). Prohibitions which are also found in chapter 6, verses 145 and 146, and in chapter 16 verse 115.

There are also, of course, the sexual prohibitions, here is an example among many others : "The adulterer and the adulteress, scourge you each one of them (with) a hundred stripes "(24: 2-4).

Although one wonders what exactly debauchery is in this field (adultery?? Sex outside marriage?)

" Let not the believers take disbelievers for their friends in preference to believers" (3: 28).

See also chapter 3 verse 118: " O you who believe! Take not for intimates others than your own folk, who would spare no pains to ruin you."

And so that the message is unambiguous, repetitions are there to hammer home the believer's brain.

" O you who believe! Choose not disbelievers for (your) friends in place of believers "(4 :144).

" O you who believe! Choose not My enemy and your enemy for allies. Do you give them friendship when they disbelieve in that truth which hath come unto you " (60 :1).

But calls for slaughtering "disbelievers" (with the help of God, who brings forth "invisible" angels) are not compatible with the idea of Last Judgment. Why shorten the lives of human beings before they are judged? Why shut the door to possible repentance? Why would God need weak and ignorant humans kill for him?

In some passages of the Quran, God even explains that Muslims should not be sorry if some "wrongdoers" still have a good life in fact. It is only necessary to be patient to wait for the last judgment. "Thus we let some of the wrongdoers have power over others because of what they are wont to earn. " (6: 129).

There are, however, many verses in the Quran that incite the faithful to war. The warriors who kill are only the armed wings of God (who, however, theoretically, should not need help to suppress the human beings who displease him, right?) and the fighters are placed above the non-fighters ! The holy war so often invoked and put into practice nowadays does not find its origin in the madness of certain brains, but in the founding text of the Moslem religion itself. From chapter 2, verse 190, a call for war exhorts the believer to action: "Fight in the way of God against those who fight against you." In order to avoid too much liberty in the interpretation of the word "fight," the following verse is more explicit: "Slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out."

The war aims at imposing beliefs by force: " Fight them until impiety (fitna) is no more, and religion is for God" (2:193). The Quran does not manifest in a particularly metaphorical style, but shows a lot of clarity in its intentions: "one who attacks you, attack him in like manner as he attacked you" (2: 194).

Chapter 2 ends with this cry: "give us victory over the disbelieving folk" (2: 286).

Cleverly, the editor resolves the case of believers who died in battle by delivering them a direct ticket to heaven (3 : 157): "And what though you be slain in God's way or die therein ? Surely pardon from God and mercy are better than all that they amass"; and, more explicitly (3:169): "Think not of those, who are slain in the way of God, as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision." The following chapter again insists on this sacrifice to the glory of God (4:47): "Let those fight in the way of God who sell the life of this world for the other. Whosoever fights in the way of God, be he slain or be he victorious, on him We shall bestow a vast reward."

See also chapter 4, verse 95: "Those of the believers who sit still, other than those who have a (disabling) hurt, are not on an equality with those who strive in the way of God with their wealth and lives. God has conferred on those who strive with their wealth and lives a rank above the sedentary."

And also chapter 8 verse 7: "(and remember) when God promised you one of the two bands (of the enemy) that it should be yours, and you longed that other than the armed one might be yours. And God willed that He should cause the Truth to triumph by His words, and cut the root of the disbelievers ." Apparently therefore the first Muslims did not want a real armed confrontation, it was necessary that God and Muhammad pushed them .

"And when you see those who meddle with Our revelations, withdraw from them until they meddle with another topic. And if the devil cause you to forget, do not sit, after the remembrance, with the congregation of wrongdoers "(chapter 6 verse 68).

One of my Albertivillarian penfriends points out to me that there is the same kind of rejection of all dialogue in the New Testament, more precisely in the Second Epistle of John, first chapter verses 10 and 11.

"Whoever goes beyond and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not possess God; he who abides in this doctrine possesses the Father and the Son. If any man come unto you, and do not bring this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither say unto him, Hail: for he that says unto him, Hail, partakes of his evil works."

.Duly noted. We nevertheless emphasize...

Firstly, that this does not apply to all critics (agnostic atheists or members of another religion) but to members of the same religion who disagree on certain points (heretics gnostic persons).

Secondly, that the true believer is not asked to move away if such individuals come to discuss BUT NOT TO RECEIVE THEM AT HOME (let's skip the greetings which are only anecdotal).

All this is mentioned once and in a relatively minor part of the New Testament. While the Muslim prohibition appears in the Quran and twice.

Chapter 6 verse 68.

Chapter 4 verse 140.

As in any totalitarian system where blind obedience prevails over personal judgment, the believer must submit to orders; the time used in the Quran being systematically the imperative (4: 84): "So fight in the way of God you are not taxed (with the responsibility for anyone) except yourself - and urge on the believers."

This warlike * ideology spreads its hate unceasingly (4 : 91): "If they [the Infidels] do not keep aloof from you nor offer you peace nor hold their hands, then take them and kill them wherever you find them. Against such we have given you clear warrant."The Quran is not stingy with words to designate the hosts of God and uses the notion of a guard on this subject (5: 56): "And whosoever takes God and His messenger and those who believe for guardian (will know that), lo! the party of God, they are the victorious." No respite in the violence of the widespread talk, the outcome of the war is clear. The mode of execution is specified a little later (8 : 12): "Smite the necks and smite of them each finger." Even the angels buckle down (8 : 50): "If you could see how the angels receive those who disbelieve, smiting faces and their backs and (saying): Taste the punishment of burning!"

But be careful in this case (8 :17) as we have already seen: "You slew them not, but God slew them! "

The typically military speech of the exaltation of fight until death appears inevitably in this work, quite simplistic in its whole moreover (it is not Buddhism nor Jainism!) We have already had the opportunity to see chapter 8 verse 65: "O Prophet! Exhort the believers to fight. If there be of you twenty steadfast they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a hundred (steadfast) they shall overcome a thousand." The following verse reduces the estimates to more modest performances (8: 66): "Now has God lightened your burden, for He knows that there is weakness in you. So if there be of you a steadfast hundred they shall overcome two hundred, and if there be of you a thousand (steadfast) they shall overcome two thousand."The attack strategy remains still quite simple, as we have already had the opportunity to see, but repeter ars docendi as my Latin teacher said. (9: 5-6): " When the sacred months have passed, slay the idolaters wherever you find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush."

The Quran also does not escape more economic considerations (9:34): "They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of God, unto them give tidings of a painful doom."

As the book is read, the chapters pass, but the barbarity remains the same (47: 4). "Now when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then it is smiting of the necks until, when you have routed them, then making fast of bonds; and afterward either grace or ransom till the war lay down its burdens."

The end of the text approaching, the general congratulates his soldiers (61: 4): "God loves them who battle for His cause in ranks, as if they were a solid structure." He reminds (61: 11): "You should strive for the cause of God with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you if you did but know? " And (66, 9)": O Prophet! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be stern with them. Hell will be their home, a hapless journey's end."

The Quran is therefore a messy mixture of hatred, violence and call for murder. The structure of the text is a relentless repetition, an authoritarian and angry outburst in which war is sanctified.

Verses 47 to 49, chapter 5.

"Let the People of the Gospel judge by that which God revealed therein. ..so judge between them by that which God hath revealed, and do not follow their desires away from the truth which hath come unto thee.....beware of them lest they seduce you from some part of that which God has revealed unto thee. And if they turn away, then know that God's Will is to smite them."

A truly Muslim state is a state governed by Sharia law, that is, Islamic law from the Quran and from the Sunna of hadiths. A corporation of specialized scholars (the ulema) interprets their data and applies it to all the circumstances of social cultural and political life. Individual wills cannot prevail over the Quran and the Sunna of hadiths and they can even not oppose God. The famous "Man is the measure of all things" of Protagoras makes no sense in the lands of Islam. Or a clearly blasphemous sense. As for Plato besides, quite paradoxically.

Verse 8, chapter 63. "Might belongs to God and to His messenger and to the believers."

Verse 59 chapter 4. "O you who believe! Obey God, and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority."

These verses seem to exclude Western-style democracy (equality of rights between men and women, secularism, elections, etc.)

* Attitude that can be understood and be justified, a question of reciprocity. But other philosophies are conceivable as the absolute non-violence or ahimsa of Jainism of Gandhi or of the Nazarene high rabbi Jesus who, moreover, asks us to love our enemies (there it is too much!)

ALI IBN ABU TALIB (Jul. 17th, 656-Jan. 28th, 661) CAPITAL MEDINA THEN SOMEWHERE IN IRAQ.

(FOURTH AND LAST RASHID CALIPH FIRST SHIITE IMAM.)

Cousin of Muhammad born around 600, Ali had a close relationship with him. It is the one of his many cousins who will attend him the most. He was one of the Muhajirun who followed Muhammad to Medina in 622. In the same year he married Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad and Khadija, thus becoming his son-in-law.

The death of Mahomet had seen Ali removed from power since his succession had been quickly entrusted to Abu Bakr. Under the first three caliphs, he practically has no political or military office; however, according to tradition, he will be distinguished by his competence in Sunnah - that is to say, in statements or actions of Muhammad - to contradict Caliph Uthman when he tries to change certain things in religious or social field.

In 656 Caliph Uthman had to face the beginning of a revolt. For three months, from April to June 656, he managed to contain the insurgents but was finally killed on July 17th. The death of this old man more than eighty years old will be the cause of the most serious crisis of Islam.

The confusion that follows indeed sees Ali chosen as caliph by only part of the Medinans, whereas the mode of election to the caliphate requires, since Abu Bakr, the consensus of the elites of the city. Two powerful groups oppose him, on the one hand, the Umayyads, and, on the other hand, a fraction of the Ahl ul-bayt or family of Muhammad grouped around his third wife Aisha 1), and Talha and al-Zubayr, two parents of Abu Bakr who also claim the caliphate. The latter immediately leave Medina for Basra where they raise an army.

Even in Medina, despite their departure, Ali remains in a weak position 2).

When Uthman had been assassinated, Ali had not taken a stand, and this refusal to disavow the murder of a caliph of the Umayyad party was reproached to him. The Umayyads therefore refuse to pledge allegiance to him as long as the murder of Uthman remains unpunished, and the very coalition that brought him to power is formed of personalities, each with his own ambitions and interests to preserve.

Weakened by internal dissents and the insubordination of the "Arabs," Ali reaches Kufa in Mesopotamia and at the end of 656, Ali's army defeats his opponents gathered around Aisha in a big confrontation near Basra, which will see the death or the disappearance of Talha and al-Zubayr. This fight will go down in history under the name of "Battle of the Camel," through reference to the animal on which Aisha will get onto in order to exhort the troops. And still according to the tradition, reported by Tabari in particular - it is only after having cut the hollows of the knee of the camel, whose sight elated the enemy fighters, that Ali could win the victory.

The position of the caliph is not assured, however, since there is still the opposition of the Umayyad clan. This will be reinforced by the dissidence of Mu'awiya, one of the governors appointed by Uthman (nepotism?) Fearing to lose his prestigious and rich governorate of Syria, Mu'awiya therefore takes the lead of the opposition to Ali and therefore gathers in turn an army. The latter feels especially stronger as he claims the punishment of the murderers of Uthman.

The first civil war between Muslims, called in Arabic "al-Fitna al-Kubra" ("the Great Upheaval"), therefore continues with renewed vigor.

A substantive debate took place on the conditions for getting the title of caliph; each of the two tendencies involved developing ideas that were in keeping with its interests. Supporters of Mu'awiya founded what was to become Sunnism, whose doctrine stipulates that the caliph should be elected or appointed in the tribe Quraysh - the tribe of Muhammad. Thus the remunerations or the honorary positions would go as a priority to the members of this tribe. In addition, the Caliph's subjects owed him unconditional obedience, whatever his faults. Thus his back was protected, that is to say, the durability of the transmission.

Ali's followers thought that the caliphate came down to the descendants of the Prophet (who was not Ali) or to the people of his house, Ahl Ul-bayt (who he was, since he was his son-in-law).

The rivals meet at Siffin on July 26, 657. Ali launches his army, but as he begins to get the upper hand, Mu'awiya's troops place the Quran at the tip of their spears, exclaiming, "May God decide!" Impossible under these conditions for Ali's soldiers to attack them! This cunning will therefore oblige him to negotiate: two men, each representing a camp, were charged with finding an outcome for the conflict. But the man who represented Ali betrayed him and arbitrated in favor of Mouaouiya. Ali kept the title of caliph, but his opponent helped himself to the territories of the caliphate, leaving Ali only Iraq and made himself proclaimed caliph by his faithful, in Jerusalem May 660.

For his part, Ali, after having subdued his Kharijite opponents in Nahrawan, wants to march on Syria in order to eliminate Mu'awiya, but he will be assassinated before, on January 24, 661, at the exit of the mosque of Kuoufa, a thrust of poisoned sword, by Kharijites precisely.

With the son-in-law of Muhammad, the last of the four caliphs known as orthodox, or "well guided" (rashidun), disappears after the dead Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman.

The new caliph and his followers (future Shiites) preached a great strictness in the implementation of Islam, and the assimilation of the conquered populations. He also recommended that the caliphate comes down to the descendants of the prophet through blood relations. They therefore opposed on these points to Sunnis, followers of a different and more Arab implementation of the Muslim doctrine (Sunnah).

Ali's death will also sign the triumph of the prestigious clans of Mecca, who have only contempt for the close family of Muhammad, too poor in their eyes to be important.

Ali had two sons from Fatima: Hasan and Husayn. Mu'awiya gets from the eldest son, Hasan, that he gives up his rights, in exchange for considerable property, and he therefore withdraws in Medina. End of the caliphs companions and having known the prophet. A worldly "kingship" but still known as caliphate is settled, with Mu'awiya on the throne. IT IS A LITTLE LIKE JUDAS 5TH OF THE POPES OR THE POSTHUMOUS TRIUMPH OF ABU SUFYAN.

Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Meccans, who had been literally forced to "embrace" Islam under the threat of a sword, would really have had something to laugh about. His son Mu'awiya thus inherited the empire of Muhammad to the detriment of the Prophet's own family. Abu Sufyan indeed lived almost long enough to see his son become caliph instead of the caliph and his grandson Yazid to make the grandchildren of Muhammad murdered (in Karbala, Iraq, 680).

KHARIJITES AND SHITES.

Practically from the beginning therefore, as a consequence of a struggle for power rather than for theological differences as in the case of Christianity, Islam is divided into two branches. Three branches even, more exactly since some supporters of Ali had refused arbitration: according to them, it was a mistake to stop the battle because the judgment of God on this issue would be revealed at the end of it. They left therefore the army of Ali and, joined by others, formed the third largest group of Islam, the "outgoing," that is to say the Kharijites.

The Kharijites lashed out at Uthman, of course, but also at Ali, who had failed to defend his right. They developed an original design of political power, that is to say of the caliphate. The caliph was to be elected by the Muslim community, and could be anyone, even a black slave. Such positions earned them many followers among non-Arab Muslims.

Some Shiite extremists, on the other hand, went as far as to consider Ali as superior to Muhammad - which is unacceptable in Islam, Muhammad being the most perfect man who has ever lived (dogma of isma) - even as an incarnation of the divinity. This goes hand in hand with Shiite millenarianism, which awaits the return of the Mahdi (messiah) supposed to establish a reign of order and justice at the end of time. This Mahdi is generally presented as a more or less distant descendant of Ali; even in rare cases as Ali himself. On the contrary, it has happened that some particularly virulent Sunni imams have cursed Ali in some of their sermons.

Kharijism or Islamic terrorism first draft appeared following the refusal of arbitration between Ali and his opponent Mu'awiya in 657.

This battle between Muslims had been deadly and Ali had accepted the idea of an arbitration to stop the bloodshed. In principle supporters of Ali, the Kharijites nonetheless broke with his side on the grounds that it was up to God to decide and not to men.

This expression caused another name to Kharijism, that of Muhakkima, an Arabic word which designates the community of those who pronounce the formula, "Arbitration is up to God only."

According to them, once chosen and admitted by the community of believers, the caliph had the duty to fight the seditions, in order to preserve the unity of the group for which he was responsible.

They relied for that on this verse of the Quran:

" If two parties of believers fall to fighting,

Then make peace between them.

And if one party of them does wrong to the other,

Fight you that which does wrong

Till it return unto the ordinance of God " (verse 9 chapter 49).

The clan that was doing wrong was, from the Kharijite point of view, that of Mu'awiya, who should have given way to Ali.

After the unsuccessful arbitration of the Battle of Siffin in 657 - which therefore could not result in any compromise, some of Ali's fighters, seceded and removed their support from Ali who will now call them Kharijites (in Arabic, "those who have come out" "the outgoing").

While his intention was to head to Syria in order to fight Mu'awiya again, Ali had to face the Kharijites at the battle of Nahrawan near the current city of Baghdad in 658. Kharijites were routed and many were killed, but after this victory Ali's army refused to battle again against Mu'awiya and therefore Ali came back to Kufa.

Determined to avenge their deads, the Kharijites then had Ali assassinated by a certain Abd-al-Rahman ibn Muljam, while he prostrated himself to say the prayer of Al-Fajr.

Between 658 and 680, the Kharijites rose up about twenty times. They were dispersed but settled mostly in Basra in Iraq. Many sects are from this movement, which was firmly established in the Maghreb, especially in Tunisia, Zanzibar and Oman.

The Kharijites later divided into a multitude of groups (about twenty). Seven of them were recorded: Ibadi, Azraqi, Najdi, Sufri and so on. All share common foundations such as the excommunication (tafkir) of Muslims committing great sins, the obligation to revolt against the wrongdoing or debauched ruler, or the excommunication of certain companions of Muhammad. In short, they were the first Islamic terrorists.

Shiism.

It is easy to imagine that a mere political confrontation could not have given birth to such a significant split in Islam as that separating Sunni and Shiites. Ali's aspiration to the caliphate quickly becomes a theological object - all the more so as the foundation of a righteous and honest community of believers, which implies the choice of a righteous and honest ruler, is inscribed in the Quran. A betrayal or a political defection therefore has, in these first times of Islam, an irreducible religious dimension which

worsens it deeply. This claim of the caliphate - that is to say, this claim to succeed Muhammad at the head of the Umma - is based on a word of Muhammad, who, faced with the complaints of Ali who criticized him for to have left him alone by entrusting him with Medina during the battle of Tabuk, would have declared to him: " Are you not satisfied to be to me like Aaron to Moses except that there shall be no Prophet after me?"

Despite the restriction contained in these words - Muhammad being the Seal of the Prophets, the last of the Abrahamic line 3) - the comparison between Ali and Aaron in relation to Muhammad and Moses is interpreted by the Shiites as the evidence that Ali, like Aaron, must succeed his mentor upon the death of the latter and guide the community of believers to found a political entity. The Shiites also recognize a hadith considered false by the Sunnis, where Muhammad explicitly appoints Ali as his successor. At the death of the latter, Ali, with this conviction of being the legitimate heir to the Prophet, refuses to recognize Abu Bakr when he is appointed by the Medinan elites; it is only after the death of his wife Fatima, six months later, that he listened to the reason of the greatest number. His strength, which also explains the violence of the civil war, is to be supported by a number of people - for various reasons, ranging from the "faith" in his person to the opposition to the Umayyad power of Umar (634-644) and Uthman (644-656). After his assassination by a Kharijite in 661, the followers of Ali will keep their conviction that he was the first legitimate successor to Muhammad, and that his heirs must now succeed him: they then become the Shiites, from Arabic "Shi'a" ("party").

The fundamental role of this lineage in Shiism is also explained by the conviction that Muhammad has confided to Ali the "hidden" meaning of the Quran and of the revelation, secrets that only the direct descendants of the caliph may now handover.

1) Whom Ali had once accused of adultery in the famous case of the necklace or camel (ifk)

2) Ali's responsibility for the murder of Uthman was never proved, but his rather unclear role in this case alienated a number of believers. On the other hand, the sequence of events has well shown that embarking on a new war, to avenge Uthman, was not without risk (thousands of deads and several defeats).

3). Seal actually meant only at the beginning "confirmation." According to Christoph Luxenberg the Syriac expression "seal of the prophets" means "witness," witness of the prophets who came before him, and nothing more....

AND JUDAS BECAME POPE: THE DYNASTY OF Umayyads (661 - 750).

From the name of their family or their clan, a clan of the Arab tribe of the Quraysh in Mecca, the hometown of Muhammad, called the Umayyads. It is that of Mu'awiya, son of Abu Sufyan, the sworn enemy of Islam and Muhammad.

Mu'awiya will therefore settle in Damascus in Syria, instead of taking Medina in Arabia as political capital. Appointed governor of the rich Byzantine province after its conquest, he had liked its sweetness of life and its artistic magnificence. This transfer to the Middle East will be a first "break" with the Islam of the origins.

On October 10, 680, Husayn, Ali's second son, escorted by a small troop of 73 people, including members of his own family; went to join his followers in Kufa, who had called him for help and had promised him obedience. They were intercepted on the way at Karbala by the soldiers of Caliph Yazid I, son of Mu'awiya. A strange battle then occurred between the powerful army of the Umayyad caliph (30 000 men), and what there was as supporters of Husayn on the spot at that time; that is to say overall 72 people, men and children included. A real massacre therefore. Yazid's army was led by Ubaydallah. He demanded that Husayn take an oath of allegiance to Yazid. He refused. The first killed was Qasim, son of Hassan, Hussein's brother, ten years old. He was cut in half with a sword. Husayn's horse fell, hit by an arrow. Husayn sat on the ground, but the soldiers did not dare to kill him, not wishing to be held responsible for the death of a grandson of the Prophet. Abdallah, a one-year-old son of Husayn, was crying. Husayn took him in his arms, but an arrow hit the child in his ear and he was killed instantly. Weakened by thirst, Hussein wanted to drink in the Euphrates, but an arrow hit him in his mouth. Seven or eight men then hurled themselves on him. One of them pierced him with his spear from behind, and another cut his throat when he fell to the ground. Others stripped him from his clothes and his weapons. Husayn's tent was ransacked, the women's clothes were torn, but Husayn's son Ali, who had remained in his tent because he was sick, was spared. The child was born in 658 in Medina, his mother was one of the daughters of the last Sassanid emperor of Persia Yazdgerd III (he will become the fourth Shia Imam in 680). Hussein's head was sent to Yazid. The divorcement between Sunnis and Shiites was henceforth consummated, there was no longer reconciliation possible.

N.B. The commemoration of this battle is the Shiite Festival of Ashura.

N.B. Yazid, fearing a popular revolt, will disavow this assassination and send the survivors under escort back to Medina..

Umar had imposed special laws on Jews and Christians. Muslim legislation forbade them to build new synagogues or churches, but left them existing ones; "authorized" them also to wear clothes of a special color, but forbade them, on the other hand, to ride on horseback, a privilege reserved for warriors, wars of which they were, of course, exempted; but replaced this obligation by a specific property tax in addition to the jizya, the kharaj.

The difference between jizya and kharaj is that jizya is a capitation or personal tax levied on non-Muslims, while the kharaj is a property tax concerning land only. When a man converts and becomes a Muslim, he ceases to pay jizya, but continues to be subject to the payment of kharaj. Massive conversions were therefore not sought after, at least during the first centuries.

The Persian or Syriac Church itself, the importance of which we have seen with the Taghlibites (Maruta, Tikrit), will hardly suffer from the beginnings of Muslim domination in the region; on the contrary, it is estimated that it was around 781, under the Patriarch Timothy I, that it reached its peak, with the transfer of the see of the Patriarchate from Ctesiphon / Madain to Baghdad.

There was nevertheless a slow but inescapable progress of Islamization in the country, especially among the nobles or the inhabitants of the cities. Islam was slower to spread in the peasantry and the land gentry. In the end of the 10th century, the majority of Persians had become Sunni Muslims (Shiism developed only later from elements of Persian culture).

Under the Umayyads, Arabic was imposed, but the Persian language managed to persist, hence the modern Farsi (in Iran). Persian nevertheless incorporated into its vocabulary a number of words derived from Arabic, especially in the field of religion, of course; and also gave up the Aramaic Pahlavi alphabet, for a changed version of the Arabic alphabet.

The Persians therefore adopted Arabic script, but their language was the first to prevail in the Muslim world as a written language alongside that of the Quran. For the first time, too, in Damascus, Muslim Arabs met Christian thought, with theologians like St. John Damascene.

To better control the territories conquered, the caliphs used two means: the creation of new cities, populated by Arabs, which were the political and military centers of the provinces, and the distribution of lands, out of Arabia, to Muslims.

These new towns were originally essentially military bases. In this nascent empire, army will play an important role. Formed exclusively of Muslims, placed under the command of provincial governors, and divided into groups corresponding to the natural settings of the Bedouins; it constitutes militias or garrisons dispersed in the provinces, or settled in the new military bases. With these Muslim soldiers - whose caliph is the first - landowners as well as Arab senior officials, form the Muslim community; privileged by its adhesion to Islam, but also by the benefits from the conquest, and by special treatment in tax matters. They are not subjected to jizya. Among these "original" Muslims, Islamism and Arabism merge, and they have the feeling or the very clear impression of representing the elite that God has chosen to rule the world. Their social supremacy, they impose it on non-Muslims, who are administered locally by their own religious leaders or magistrates. But with time a new category of population appears: that of non-Arab converts. Theoretically, they should enjoy the same rights and the same advantages as the Arabs, but the "original" Muslims "keep them in an inferior status and consider them as "vassals," in debt people or vassals (mawali or muladi in Spain), of Arab tribes. They are not registered on local Muslim lists and receive nothing from the revenues generated by the conquest. They are therefore not fully equated with the Muslim community, and this status will push them later to rebel against the established powers or the public figures. The tensions were thus numerous, because the Umayyad dynasty, purely Arab, treated all the converts of non-Arab origin, as second-class subjects.

A whole series of internal troubles failed nevertheless to put an end to this dynasty. Opponents of the regime accused it of impiety for various reasons: it had usurped the place and shed the blood of Muhammad's family; it was too indifferent to Islam and its rules, for example by neglecting to convert the conquered populations. The Kharijites caused disorder in southern Arabia, central Iran, and Upper Mesopotamia. In 683, a Quraysh public figure, Abdallah ben al-Zubayr, made the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina to rise up. The inhabitants of Medina deposed the governor and his associates of Umayyad origin, that is, Marwan ibn Al-Hakam, Uthman ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Sufyan, and others who narrowly escaped; then replaced him by a certain Abdullah Ibn Handhalah.

When Yazid heard of the news, he sent an entire army to Medina (12,000 men) to quell the revolt. A man named Muslim ibn Uqba was its commander-in-chief. The battle was fought in the suburb of Al-Harra and Medina was sacked. According to Ibn Kathir, there were 7000 public figures killed plus 10 000 other victims among the population. The daughters of Muhammad's companions or of members of his family were raped. Then Muslim took the direction of Mecca in search of Abdallah ben al Zubayr, but he was hit by a spear and gave the command up to Husayn ibn Numayr, who continued his march forward onto Mecca. They besieged the rebels who had taken refuge in the Kaaba where they persisted in living according to the precepts of the original Quran. War machines were even used to breach the sanctuary. What will make Renan write that: "There was a strange scandal during this last siege of Mecca, when they saw the Mussulmans of Syria setting fire to the veil of the kaaba, and making it crumble under the blows of their balista" (Studies of religious history/Mahomet and the origins of Islamism).

At the same time, say some people, eleven days after others say, Yazid died, overwhelmed by a heart attack. He died while his army was still in Mecca.

His son succeeded him, but ruled only 40 days, before dying poisoned then stabbed in turn, it is unclear by who, at the age of twenty-one. Fortunately for the Umayyads, the various insurgent groups had no connection with each other.

Kharijites did not extend out of the deserts; Abdallah was defeated by the caliph Abd al-Malik, while Mukhtar was crushed by Abdullah's brother, who ruled Basra.

Shiite theology will therefore develop a martyrology completely foreign to Sunnism. A form of mortification that can be compared to certain forms of Catholic asceticism: self-flagellation, suffering. The open rebellion lasted until 687, when Ali's grandson, Muhammad ibn al-hanafiya, also recognized Abd Al-Malik in principle as the new caliph.

Officially supporters of the caliphate, the Shiites, however, remain faithful to the descendants of Ali to whom they give the title of imam (guide). In addition, they develop a doctrine that differs from traditional Sunni orthodoxy, more attached to the letter of the Quranic revelation. The Shiites develop the exegesis of the text, and thus feed their faith. They insist, for example, on the episode of Muhammad's ascension to heaven from Jerusalem (the miraj). On this basis, a theology peculiar to Shiism will develop, in which suffering as a means of redemption will occupy an important place. For the majority of Muslims, the Sunnis, the caliph must be a descendant from the tribe of Muhammad, in every sense.

For the Shiites (100 million: Iran), he can only be from the family of the prophet.

Shiites await the return of the hidden imam. The day of Last Judgment, Muhammad al-Mahdi, in reserve of the world since 874, will return to judge Mankind. This notion of hidden Imam is reminiscent

of that of sleeping ruler found in the Celtic (Arthur) and Germanic (Frederick I of Hohenstaufen) world, these great sovereigns in dormition also having to wake up in order to clean up the world from all evil. Under the leadership of the Umayyads, Muslim theology or kalam will gradually develop, and will also take a defensive or apologetic aspect in relation to Jews and Christians. What is nevertheless obviously important for the Umayyads is Arab nobility and pride; as such, it is necessary to note the indulgence of Mu'awiya towards the Christian Arabs in Syria. Local elites will remain in place. For the caliph, being Arab is more important than conversion to Islam which, far from being obligatory, is not even desired.

Foreign converts (mawali or muladi in Spain) come from great civilizations - Persian in particular - but by becoming Muslims they get a status similar to that of freed slaves! This probably explains their deep-rooted hatred towards the Umayyads.

Guided by expedience and pragmatism, the Umayyads will undertake various conquests for booty and not religious convictions. This policy of expansion will bring the frontiers of their colonial empire from the Atlantic to the confines of India. To the east, the Transoxiana, with Bukhara and Samarkand, will be conquered between 705 and 714. But if the Indus is reached in 710, the Umayyad troops will then have to withdraw (slightly).

The major objective will remain for a long time the capture of Constantinople: several sea expeditions will take place, but vainly, before the great siege of 716-717. The Byzantines had a formidable secret weapon: Greek fire. It was a mixture of chemicals that ignited on contact with the air. It was projected by pipes on enemy ships, or included in projectiles with which the enemy was bombed. It was a formidable weapon against wooden ships, and it was particularly useful to the Byzantines in naval battles against the Arabs. The Empire of the East, thanks to Leo III, ruthless and iconoclastic emperor, brilliant general, will preserve its independence at the end of this fierce battle, which will last from August 717 to August 718. This battle was decisive for the destinies of Europe and those of Christendom. Had the caliphs prevailed, the Eastern Roman Empire would not have survived, and the Balkans would have undergone Muslim domination as soon as the eighth century. Vanquished by the Byzantines, the Arabs will have to give up this conquest, which will nevertheless remain for them a dream (realized in 1453 by the Ottomans).

The contempt of the Umayyads for non-Arab Muslims will lead the latter to foment a rebellion. In June 747, during the reign of Caliph Marwan II, a revolt broke out in Persian Khorasan at the instigation of an Iranian leader named Abu Muslim, indignant at the laxism of the caliphate. The uprising will be picked up by Abdullah Abu-al-Abbas. Abdullah Abu-al-Abbas (thirty years old) is a descendant from Abbas, an uncle of Muhammad, hence the name of Abbasids given to his followers.

His troops, who display the black banner of the revolt, defeat in Kufa the troops of the established caliph, who, themselves, display a white banner. On October 30, 749, in the Kufa Mosque, Iraq, he was proclaimed caliph by his lieutenants. The following year, January 25, 750, the Umayyad troops are once again defeated on the Great Zab. A few months later, Abdullah Abu-al-Abbas seized Damascus.

On June 25, 750, the whole family of the Umayyad caliph was massacred. A prince, only one, escapes. He fled to Spain, where he will found the dissident Umayyad emirate of Cordoba. Marwan II was killed in Egypt at the head of his last faithful on August 5, 750. The winner, Abdullah Abu-al-Abbas, wins in the operation the nickname Saffah (which means: Blood-shedder).

NORTH AFRICA (7th 8th century).

In the early 7th century, North Africa was therefore still an integral part of the Byzantine Empire. This empire, as we have seen throughout these few notes, is very weak, following the blows delivered by the Muslim troops since 632, which have already led to the loss of two provinces, Syria and Egypt. The emperor of Constantinople is therefore in fact unable to defend his possessions in North Africa. In addition, Greco-Byzantines control only a tiny part of the North African territory. Concentrated in the towns of the coast, they live from the maritime trade and get along badly with the Berber tribes of the inland.

Before the arrival of Muslims, North Africa was multi-denominational: alongside Christian Berber communities (St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, Donatus) lived Jewish Berber communities; and a great majority of animist and pagan Berbers, as in many other parts of Africa besides. The Berber language was everywhere present outside major urban centers, where it coexisted with Latin and Punic language, as evidenced by the writings of St. Augustine or Sallust. A few centuries later, all Jewish and Christian communities will have disappeared).

From the end of the seventh century, North Africa will therefore see three forces confronting each other: the Byzantines first, strongly established on the coast, with Carthage especially and Septem (Ceuta) as a base of operation; the Berbers, inhabitants of the places, an ethnically homogeneous group, but deeply divided according to whether they were nomadic settled, farmers or urban traders; lastly, the Arabs, who came from the east and tried to enter Ifriqiya (present-day Tunisia).

The sources relating to the eruption of Muslims in North-West Africa are rare and later of one or two centuries to the events they relate. It is therefore necessary to take into account the legendary nature of certain episodes, and the desire to give various characters a heroic dimension, probably far away from historical reality. The proximity of the rich soils of Africa / Ifriqiya (present-day Tunisia and region of Constantine in Algeria) as well as the prospects of spoils that offered its numerous and opulent cities; could, however, only arouse the greed of the new rulers of Egypt.

Caliph Umar was staunchly hostile to further westward push, but his successor Osman allowed the Egyptian governor Abdallah ibn Saad to try in 647.

A small army, formed of contingents provided by most Arab tribes, left Medina in October. This troop did not exceed 5,000 men initially, but in Egypt, Ibn Saad, who took its command, added to it a body raised on the spot, which brought to 20,000 men the number of Muslim fighters.

The decisive shock against the "Rums" (Byzantines) commanded by the patrician Gregory, took place near Sufetula (Sbeitla), Tunisia. Gregory was killed during the clash. The looting of Sufetula and the raids carried out in southern Byzacena - now central Tunisia - made it possible to accumulate an enormous booty; and when the Byzantines offered to pay a large sum of money to buy the withdrawal of the invaders, the latter - who did not have the means to besiege the northern cities of Ifriqiya - accepted with good grace.

In 661, a second expedition was launched, which ended with the capture of Bizerte.

This Byzantine defeat and the raid possibilities offered by the province of Africa/Ifriqiya should have led to further raids; but the difficulties connected with the succession of Caliph Osman, as well as the break-up between the partisans of the Umayyad Mu'awiya, and those of Ali, son-in-law of the Prophet; offered a almost unexpected respite to Byzantine and Berber Africa.

The Muslims organized in 667 a new incursion into the country, but met for three years with a harsh resistance; and it will be necessary to wait for Uqba ibn Nafi, who had already made a profitable raid in the Fezzan, so that Muslims settle permanently in the region.

The third expedition therefore, led in 670 by Uqba Ibn Nafi, from Egypt, will be the good one. Ibn Nafi founds, in the heart of the Byzacena, a stronghold, Qairawan, which will become the great city of Kairouan, stronghold responsible for keeping the Byzantines still present in the coastal cities, under control; but also the Berbers, capable of threatening, from their bastion in the Aures mountains, the means of communication with Cyrenaica and Egypt. Poorly rewarded for the services provided, Uqba is replaced by Abu al Muhajir who, more politician than his predecessor, seeks the alliance of certain Berber tribes.

Returned to grace a few years later, Uqba received in 681 the supreme command of the Muslim forces in the Maghreb.

. According to the stories, transmitted with many variants by the Muslim authors, Uqba would have then multiplied the raids towards the west, seizing important cities; like Lambesa, which had been the seat of the 3rd Legion and the capital of Roman Numidia. He then went to Tahert, near the modern Tيارت, then even reached Tangiers in Morocco, where a certain Julian (Byzantine exarch of Septem /

Ceuta) would have described him the Berbers of the southern Morocco. "They are people without religion, they eat corpses, drink the blood of their cattle, and live like animals, because they do not believe in God and do not even know him." Uqba would have made a massacre of them, seizing nevertheless in passing their women, who were of an unequalled beauty, then would have penetrated on horseback in the Atlantic; calling God as a witness "that there were no more enemies of the religion to fight, nor infidels to kill" on this side of the Mediterranean.

But the study of the texts shows that this expedition did not have to exceed in reality the Chelif Valley and that the sea before which his leader called God as a witness that he could not go beyond would be only the Mediterranean, in no way the Straits of Gibraltar.

THE RESISTANCE OF THE CHRISTIAN CAECILIUS , OR AKSEL AND OF QUEEN DIHYA (683-704).

In 683, faced with the unprecedented brutality of Uqba and his troops (that frightens even the Caliph in Damascus!) The Greco-Byzantine townsmen forget their mistrust of the Berbers, and decide to make a common front with them. For their part, the different Berber tribes and principalities agree to unite for the occasion. The leader chosen to lead this anti-Muslim coalition is a Christian Berber prince, Caecilius, who governs a vast semi-independent kingdom in the Aures. His name is spelled in different ways by Muslim writers: Kosaila, Qosayla, Kusila. It was compared to the Latin name Caecilius. This is a likely hypothesis when you know that Kusayla was a Christian, but his name can also come from Berber language. The Amazigh dialects of Aures still have a KSL root from which the name of the cheetah is derived.

A respected leader but also a clever tactician, Caecilius vows his real hatred to Uqba ibn Nafi. The latter had in fact kept him prisoner several years before, and had humiliated him publicly.

Caecilius was the leader of the powerful tribe of Awraba who occupied a large part of the Aures Mountains. He had first fought the Arabs, but having been defeated at the battle of Al Alurit, near the spring of Tlemcen, he had converted to Islam (in 675). He had won the trust of the Muslim leader Abu al Muhajir Dinar and he had even become one of his close co-workers (same case as the famous Vercingetorix therefore, who served during a certain time in the legions of Caesar).

When he returned to the scene in 681, Uqba had taken revenge on the one who had in a way provided his cover, Abu al Muhajir, and had also treated harshly his protégé Caecilius, who was already to be called Kusayla. He had him chained and dragged him where he went as a personal trophy. Among the insulting remarks he allowed himself towards him, the following is told. Since he had just received sheep and wanted to eat one, he ordered Kusayla to slaughter it.

"May God direct the prince towards good," replied the noble Amazigh chief, "here are young men and servants who will be able to save me this trouble".

Uqba would have answered with offensive words to him and ordered him to take care of the sheep. Kusayla then would have withdrawn with anger and, after having slaughtered the animal, would have wiped his still bloody hand on his beard.

Some Arabs came up and asked, "What are you doing, Amazigh? "

To what he would have replied: "It's good for hair! "

But an old Muslim Arab who passed by would have exclaimed : "It does not mean that, it is a death threat! "

Abu Muhajir Dinar would have said then to Uqba, "What have you done! Here is a most distinguished man among his, a man who once was an unbeliever, and you do everything to arouse hatred in his heart! I advise you now to make his hands tied well in his back."

This is at least what the Muslim historian Al-Nuwayri tells us, but we may wonder if it is not one of the countless legends spread about this great Berber prince. What is certain is that Kusayla apparently would have managed to escape and join his tribe while giving up Islam at the same time, given the way Uqba had treated him. After having got help and reinforcements from the Byzantines, he took the lead of a small army determined to fight with the invader. The revolt completely sweeps Muslims away. Garrisons are massacred in the cities where they are stationed. Uqba is forced to retreat to the east. He then makes a basic mistake: he splits his troops in two, sending back to Egypt the bulk of his army, charged with escorting the fruits of their looting in North Africa, and keeping the rest with him.

Then Uqba and his rear guard head south-east. But they meet the Berber army of Caecilius at the exit of the Abiod Valley, in a place called Tahudha, not far from Vescera (Biskra), and he perishes in battle with most of his men. We are in the year 683.

The death of this general who had led the invasion of an iron hand since 670, marks the end of the first Muslim incursions in North Africa. The failure was great for the Arabs, who give up all their conquests west of Cyrenaica and Caecilius or Kusayla, as Muslim tradition calls him, enters Kairouan victoriously. He Berberizes the name of the fortress in Taqirouant and makes it his capital. From 683 until 688, his authority was recognized by everyone in the Aures Mountains and a large part of modern eastern Algeria. In the opinion of Muslim writers, he treated all his subjects justly, whether Amazigh or Arab, and even allowed them to freely practice their religion. Caecilius nevertheless did not manage to regroup all the Amazighs, nor to create a real State.

In 688, Umayyad Caliph Abd al Malik sent reinforcements, with the mission to recapture Kairouan. Given the importance of the Muslim forces, Caecilius/Kusayla, while calling for help the tribes of the Aures Mountains and Byzantines, but vainly. In the end, Muslims who were more numerous won. Kusayla was killed at the Battle of Mamma, a town east of Kairouan, the Amazigh or Byzantine who had escaped the massacre dispersed.

Editor's note. If, for the Arabized populations of North Africa, Uqba ibn Nafi has become a saint (a city, Sidi Oqba, having even been founded near the place of his death in Tahudha, in the vicinity of present-day Biskra); Kusayl's memory is still alive among Berber speakers.

The Moslem army thus prevails, but temporarily, and leaves only a simple garrison in Kairouan. Surprised by a Byzantine body landed in Barca, it will be massacred on the way home. Caliph Abd al-Malik did not admit defeat, and sent to Africa a new army, which succeeded in defeating the Byzantine exarch of Africa, and Hasan ibn al-Nu'man al-Ghassani, new governor of Ifriqiya, captures Carthage in 695. The Byzantines, taking advantage of their naval superiority, land an army that will recapture the city in 696, but for only three years.

In the inland, resistance is then led by a woman called Dihya, better known by the nickname of Kahina (the witch) that the Muslims gave her, following several defeats suffered by them in front of her troops. We know almost nothing about her origin. We do not know her date of birth. We do not know exactly her religion. Perhaps she was Christian or Jewish, but she could also be an animist. Ibn Khaldun hypothesizes that she was Jewish, or perhaps Christian. This is quite possible, since we know very little about the religion of Imazighen at that time. If it is considered that one of his sons is known as "yunani," that is to say Greek, then we may think that they were Hellenized, therefore Christians. What is certain, on the other hand, is that she was from the Jrawa tribe, therefore a Zenata, whose way of life was pastoral and semi-nomadic. It is not known how she became queen. It seems that her power was granted by a council of tribes, but it is very improper to evoke an Amazigh Senate, which may never have existed. This council recognized her intelligence and put her at the head of a confederation, gathering several tribes of the Aures Mountains, whose hers, from about 685 to 704 or 705. The legend adds that she was of a great beauty. It is quite likely that she succeeded Kusayla in the fight against Muslims, but it is in her old age that she was led to fight against them.

Berbers are first divided on the behavior to be held. Queen Dihya manages to gather them, thanks to her persuasive force and her great intelligence, in order to fight against the Muslim invasion. 40,000 fighters then go to the Aures Mountains under the command of Hassan ibn al-Nu'man al-Ghassani. We know nothing about that subject except that Queen Dihya managed to crush the Arab army on the banks of the Meskiana, between Ayn Al-Bayda and Tibissa. The Imazighen troops kill so many people that the Muslims called the place "Nahr Al Bala," which can be translated as "river of trials." The legend adds that the river then became red with the blood of Arab fighters. After this first victory, the Imazighen pursue Muslims, and impose on them a second defeat, forcing them to retreat. Caliph Malik recalls his troops back in Tripolitania (the current north of Libya). But it was only partly postponed, and the Muslims immediately made a strong come back from Libya but they decided then to focus their war effort against the Byzantine Christians. In 698, they recapture Carthage. The same year, Ibn al-Nu'man founds Tunis. This precaution is superfluous as the Muslim fleets at this time begin to outclass the Byzantine fleets in the Mediterranean. Ibn Khaldun's famous saying that "at that time, the Christians could no longer float a plank upon the sea" is indeed about to become a reality. The Byzantines will only keep their presence for a few years in Septem (Ceuta) and in the Balearic Archipelago. In fact, they will be forced to let go, worried by the tensions prevailing in the north of their empire. The rise in power of the European Christian kingdoms is an even greater threat for them than the Muslim invasion. The kingdom of Dihya will remain the only obstacle to the progression of Muslims to the west, and Hasan Ibn al-Nu'man resumes his offensive against the Imazighen. Aware of the strong resistance he will encounter, he undertakes a systematic conquest of the country. Ibn Al-Nu'man will receive reinforcements from Caliph Abd al-Malik in 702. His army will then probably have more than 50,000 men. As he has in his possession Carthage and the new city of Tunis, he has strong rear bases. These 50 000 men invade the Aures Mountains, from Gabes and Gafsa.

Dihya is thus forced to implement the scorched earth policy [same tactics therefore that the one which was implemented by Vercingetorix in front of Caesar] and before them Muslims will find only a destroyed country. This war lasts two years, but a part of the population does not like this policy [although this is not historically proved].

According to some historians, Dihya would have chosen to practice the scorched earth strategy, convinced that it was the only way to roll back the Muslims who attacked the country. Supported by the nomads, the Kahina would have alienated the support of sedentary and city dwellers attached to a quick return of the peace, even at the price of a submission to Islam.

The Muslims will not get it over with Berbers, but it is likely that the division of the latter made their task easier.

The final battle will take place in 704, in Tabarka. Here the legend involves an episode quite difficult to interpret, if it is true. Dihya sends his two sons to join the Muslim camp just before the outbreak of hostilities, ordering them to convert to Islam. It is probable that she knew that her fight was lost in advance, and that she was thus trying to save her children. The battle of Tabarka will therefore be won

by the Muslims, but with great difficulty. The Imazighen, although very numerically inferior, oppose a fierce resistance. Queen Dihya will be finally captured and beheaded at in a place called Blr Al Kahina (the well of Al-Kahina). Her head is then sent to Caliph Malik according to some, thrown into the well according to others. The sending of her head to the caliph, which makes one think thus of a kind of Medusa, therefore evil, was probably invented by commentators. The second version seems the most credible, given what is known of the warlike customs of pre-Islamic Arabia. As with the druids, the power of the individual is supposed to lie not in his heart, but in his brain.

Hasan Ibn al Nu'man shows great respect for the Amazigh people after his victory. He does not make prisoners but releases all the fighters and does not commit any looting. This great tolerance will make him one of the architects of the Islamization of Imazighen. As we have said, the two sons of Dihya (Ifrahan and Yezdia) had joined the Muslim camp before the battle. Some writers have seen here some treason on their part. This is, in our opinion, a mistake, since it is clearly established that they joined the opposing camp only at the express request of their mother, and that they did not participate in the battle. Moreover, they got a military command in the Muslim army only after, when Hasan Ibn al Nu'man decided to conquer Morocco.

Nothing is known about the father of these children (he too was to be high ranked), but if we consider that they got a command in the Muslim army rather quickly; they were no longer at all very young children at that time.

Editor's Note. Dihya and her sons have generated a lot of legends. She became the symbol of the imazighen women, the symbol of their culture, like Massinissa and Jugurtha. An outstanding political leader, she was also apparently a woman who was able to protect her children.

The death of Kahina can be considered the end of any armed resistance of Berbers against Muslims. Called back to Damascus, Hasan is replaced by Musa ibn Nusayr who receives, probably in 705, the government of Ifriqiya, from now on independent of that of Egypt. Musa will push the conquest to the Atlantic shores and will subjugate the West Maghreb.

In short, the Muslim conquerors, few, but motivated, did not find in front of them a state ready to resist an invasion. They only had to confront successive opponents: the Byzantine patrician, then the Berber chiefs, principalities after kingdoms, tribes after confederations. As for the African-Roman population, locked up in the walls of its cities, although very numerous, it had neither the possibility nor the will to resist for a long time these new masters sent by God.

The capitation imposed by the Muslims, the *jizya*, is hardly heavier than the demands of Byzantine tax authorities, and at least in the beginning, its collection appeared more as an exceptional contribution to the misfortunes of war than as a permanent taxation. As for the looting and spoiling perpetrated by the Muslim horsemen, they were neither more nor less execrable than those practiced by the Moors for centuries.

The conversion of the tribes does not unfold uniformly and experiences resistances, limited apostasies, or adoptions of syncretisms. Arabization will be slower still. Religious formations were then organized, as in Kairouan, in the kind of warlike monasteries called *ribat* in Arabic. It is difficult to estimate the extent and speed of this movement of adherence to Islam. Moreover, refusing assimilation, many rejected the dominant religion and preferred to support Kharijism, a Muslim heresy born in the East, which proclaimed the equality of all Muslims, regardless of race or class.

The Islamization and the very first Arabization were at first urban. The religion of the conquerors was established in the ancient cities visited by warrior missionaries, then by traveling doctors, well versed in theological discussions. The creation of new cities, at the same time religious centers, like Kairouan and Fez (creation of Idris II in 809), thus contributed to implanting Islam at both ends of the country. As for the Berber contingents, led by their leaders in fruitful conquests made in the name of this new religion, it is quite obvious that they too were brought to support the Mohammedan message of their new employers. The conversion of Berbers from the countryside, Sanhaja or Zenata, was performed more mysteriously (there is no document on the subject), but they were probably already prepared for monolatry; by the recent development of Christianity, as well as by some Jewish proselytism in the nomadic tribes of the South.

In any case, as in the case of Eastern Christians, Islam for them was to look a Christian heresy, one more (there were so many!) Rather than a new religion; and this relative indifference will undoubtedly explain many apostasies, also linked to political fluctuations.

The conversion of the federation leaders, often more for political reasons than by conviction, as we have said, greatly contributed to the spread of Islam in the common people. There were, however, parts of Berberia in which Islam penetrated only very late: the nomads of distant Hoggar Mountains and southern Sahara. It seems that there was, among the Tuaregs, according to their tradition, a very early Islamization, the work of Muhammad's companions ; but this Islamization, if it is not legendary, didn't have many consequences and the paganism subsisted among them until some missionaries (anbiya) try, in the 10th century, to reintroduce Islam in the Hoggar Mountains, without much success besides. True Islamization does not seem to be much earlier than the fifteenth century. And there was even a Berber-speaking country that was never Islamized, of which one never thinks, the Canary Islands (its primitive inhabitants, the Guanches, were still pagan at the time of the Spanish conquest, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries).

THE CONQUEST OF IBERIAN PENINSULA (711-726).

As in the case of North Africa, the sources for the Muslim conquest of Spain are rare and late. The Mozarabic Chronicle dates from 754, and the Asturian Chronicles were written at the end of the 9th century.

The Visigothic kingdom had encountered many difficulties since the end of the seventh century. Problems of succession to the throne, economic crisis, epidemics of plague, hostility of the Jewish minority regularly targeted by the laws promulgated at the Councils of Toledo, poor harvests related to catastrophic droughts. These have undoubtedly weighed heavily, and it should also be remembered that unlike the Franks in northern Gaul; the Visigoths are only a dominant minority that did not merge into the Iberian-Roman mass, naturally led to see in them foreign occupants.

In 710 the Visigoth king of Toledo, Witiza died leaving a son, Akhila, who was soon overthrown by the governor of Betica, Roderic or Roderick. Akhila takes refuge in Septem (Ceuta), but nevertheless keeps supporters in the peninsula. It was then the civil war. In 711, Julian, Byzantine exarch or count of Septem (Ceuta), but also governor of Algeciras, partisan of Akhila, therefore goes to war against King Roderick who allegedly raped his daughter. The identity of this Julian is very obscure: if it is very likely that he was indeed a Byzantine exarch, some sources also make him an independent Berber lord who would have escaped the Arab-Muslim conquest.

Julian (Arabic Yulyan) contacts the Muslim governor of Ifriqiya: Musa ibn Nusayr. The Muslim governor of North Africa had to face a very violent and fierce Berber resistance in Morocco. To restore calm and divert the fighting ardor of the people of his stronghold, he had the idea of accepting such an adventure, and he hastened to seize the opportunity to get rid of the most restless Berbers.

After a first reconnaissance led in 710 from Tarifa to Algeciras, Tariq ibn Ziyad crossed the strait in the spring of 711 with seven thousand men; and settled on the slope of the rock to which he gave his name, Jebel al-Tariq, now Gibraltar. Formed primarily of Islamized Berber contingents, the invading army, which received reinforcements, will face that of King Roderick.

The decisive fight takes place July 19, 711 at Guadalete. It is like a "pre-Poitiers," because the fate of the whole Peninsula will be played in one day. On the one hand, Roderick, the Visigoth king and his army, on the other, seasoned warriors. The battle lasts seven days. The betrayal of the two Visigothic leaders commanding the wings, and won over to his rivals, makes the Muslims able to prevail.

Faced with this unexpected success, Musa hastened to join Tariq in order to change what was initially a simple expedition 1); in an annexation campaign. He also wanted to impose his authority on Tariq, and prevent him from carving out a personal kingdom. The two commanders were able to conquer Toledo in November 711 without encountering opposition.

Musa had, in the meantime, seized Seville and Merida, who had opposed a fierce resistance, while a lieutenant of Tariq ensured the control of Cordoba, soon to become the capital of Muslim Spain. Charged with breaking a first revolt in Seville, Abd al-Aziz, the son of Musa, took Malaga and Illiberis - Granada - before pushing on as far as the region of present Murcia, then ruled by the Visigoth prince Theudimer. The latter concludes with the winners an agreement allowing him, in exchange for the payment of a tribute, to keep the control of the region. The following year, Abd al Aziz took Huelva and Lisbon, while Musa and Tariq march on Zaragoza, which falls in 714 with all the cities of the middle valley of the Ebro. Going upstream the valley of the river, Musa submits the Iberian-Roman Count Cassius - who, once converted, will be at the origin of the line of Banu Qasi - then, pushing in towards the west, will get the submission of the Leon, Astorga, and Galicia. Returning south, he seized Salamanca while Tariq, in the north-east of the country, captured Tarragona and Barcelona. The violent Muslim advance continued with ground agreements signed between Muslims and local chiefs who, in return for great autonomy and freedom of action, recognized Musa's sovereignty. The sons of Witiza, hostile to Roderick, accommodated themselves very well to Muslim victory. In exchange for their renunciation of the throne, they could preserve the property inheritance of the kings of Toledo. Their followers followed this example and were especially concerned with safeguarding their estates that a self-interested uniting with the victors made them often able to increase, to the detriment of the clan of the vanquished.

The inhabitants of the peninsula were probably unaware of what this Islamic occupation could ultimately represent; and the establishment of Islam in Spain was largely facilitated by the existence in this country of deep religious divisions (as in the East).

The Jews, particularly abused in previous reigns (forced conversions in 617, almost enslavement in 694) know that with Islam they will be treated on an equal footing with Christians and therefore welcome almost as liberators Muslims (what will be reproached to them in 1492).

Moreover Arian or Monophysite Christian minorities were close to Muhammad's ideas about Jesus.

The Muslim invaders were only a tiny minority in the beginning and there were never massive conversions by force, rather a long process of progressive Islamization of society.

When Visigothic Hispania was attached to the caliphate of Damascus, it was probably perceived by many as a simple change of dynasty, in favor of an Umayyad ruler, as far away as the Byzantine basileus had been a few decades earlier. The new religion is, moreover, at the time, very little known, and is not perceived as the sworn enemy of Christianity. On the contrary, Muslims were members of a tradition familiar to Jews and Christians, and their religion was often considered a new Eastern heresy; a familiar phenomenon in a Spain where Arianism and Roman Catholicism had been in competition until King Reccared restores in 587, a little more than a century before, the religious unity of the country. Lastly, the Berbers, who provided the bulk of the first troops of invaders, had long remained Christians in the same Roman imperial space; and did not appear as radically foreign or hostile as the Muslims of Al-Andalous were towards the Christian kingdoms a few centuries later.

Victors of the Visigothic Hispania at the beginning of the eighth century, the Muslims will therefore control most of the Iberian Peninsula until the eleventh century. Strongly established in the valley of the Guadalquivir, in the Valencian Levant and in the Ebro valley, they consider the north-west regions located north of the central mountain range, as lands of raids; and give little interest to the small Christian kingdoms that have succeeded in remaining in the Cantabrian region, from where will come the slow and patient effort to recapture (which will really bear fruit only after the year 1000). Until then, the balance of power will remain favorable to the emirate then to the Caliphate of Cordova; and at the end of the 10th century, the devastating raids led by Al-Mansur as far as Barcelona, or as far as Santiago de Compostela, testify to the military superiority still preserved by the Muslims, from Gibraltar to the Pyrenees.

The nostalgia of the Hispanic unity achieved by the Visigothic monarchy will appear only later, around the small core of resistance that will form the mountainous regions of North-West, future base of the Reconquista in the following centuries. The Visigothic kingdom collapsed, but the surviving shreds, marginalized in the foothills of the southern Pyrenees, formed the Christian kingdom of Asturias. In exchange for a regular tribute, it was not worried.)

In 716 a new province of the Muslim colonial empire was formed, Al Andalous, Andalusia.

After having swept North Africa and Spain, the Islamic wave will break north of the Pyrenees on the Frankish resistance; but for nearly three centuries, bands of Saracen pirates will make insecurity prevail on the coasts of Provence and Italy, while making deep and devastating incursions in the inland. But it will be from now on more plundering raid than a conquering project implemented in the name of the expansion or of the triumph of the new faith.

1) The Caliph of Baghdad, who knows that the two previous attempts failed, sent the following message to Musa: "Explore Spain by detachments of small importance, but be careful to expose the faithful to unknown dangers."

THE CONQUEST OF THE NORTHERN PYRENEES (719).

MUSLIM SEPTIMANIA.

In 714-716, Al-Hurr seized Barcelona.

In 716, the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula is completed, only Septimania remains free.

In 717, the Umayyads of al-Hurr ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Thaqafi began to cross the eastern Pyrenees into Aquitaine and Septimania in the wake of their Iberian conquest, but the commander did not succeed in extending further.

Al-Hurr is replaced in 719 by the Amir al-Samh who enters Septimania, besieges Narbonne (Arbuna for the Arabs), capital of the last Visigothic province.

In the 8th century, Narbonne still has the walls inherited from the Roman period, sung by Bishop Sidonius Apollinaris in 465. According to a local history known to the inhabitants of Narbonne, the Saracens entered the city by surprise in the autumn of 719, taking advantage of the opening of the gates during the harvest period. This would explain why the city, despite its defensive works, was so easily conquered and so long to retake. The Muslim leader had the men who tried to defend the city put to death and their wives and children deported to Spain. The Umayyads made it the capital of a province that would last 40 years. Under Muslim rule, Narbonne became Arbûna the seat of a wâli, capital of one of the five provinces of al-Andalus, alongside Cordoba, Toledo, Merida and Zaragoza. The victors brought whole families with wives and children from North Africa in order to broaden the bases of their domination, Christians and Jews became dhimmis (the dhimmah is a kind of protectorate).

The port of Narbonne makes them able to bring troops and food directly to the Languedoc coast without having to cross the Pyrenean mountains. The city is used as a base for raids. A mosque is established inside the church of Saint-Rusticus of Narbonne.

The military governors then launched expeditions to Aquitaine and Septimania in order to seize spoils: in 725, the successor of the late Al-Samh, Anbasa ibn Suhaym Al-Kalbi laid siege to the city of Carcassonne, which had to agree to give up half of its territory, to pay homage, and to make an offensive and defensive alliance with the Muslim forces. The Arab armies then conquer Agde, Beziers, Nimes and all the other Septimanian cities.

In 731, Uthman ibn Naissa (Mounouza), the sovereign Berber lord of the Eastern Pyrenees, separates from Cordoba, and founds his principality based on a Berber hegemony in Cerdanya (731).

The Berber ruler allies himself with Duke Odo of Aquitaine, who was then eager to stabilize his borders.

The Umayyad governor of Córdoba, Abd al-Rahman ibn Abd Allah al-Rhafiqi, appointed in 730, gathered an expedition to punish the Berber commander for his insubordination. Abd al-Rahman leads the expedition, surrounds Munuza in Cerdanya and has him executed.

Emboldened by his success, Abd al-Rahman then attacks the ally of the late Uthman ibn Naissa, Duke Odo of Aquitaine, who had just suffered the devastating offensive of Charles Martel on Bourges and the north of Aquitaine.

Abdul Rahman invades the south of Aquitaine and plunders the country. Odo reunites an army to oppose him, but he is beaten between the Dordogne and the Garonne River (battle sometimes called battle of Bordeaux).

Abddul Rahman continues his advance, marches on Poitiers, sacks and burns the Abbey Saint-Hilary. He then goes to Tours, with the intention of plundering the Abbey Saint Martin. However, Charles Martel, to whom Odo appealed after his defeat, also marches Tours after gathering an army of Frankish infantry.

BEING TOTALLY NON-RACIST AND EVEN NOT A TRUE FRENCH SINCE TRUE FRANCE IS put here what is appropriate: the eldest daughter of the Church*, human rights *, a host country*.

AND THAT IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT, OR NO LONGER, TO BE A TRUE FRENCH, THAT ONE'S ANCESTORS (EXAMPLE SEBASTIAN, PETER) HAVE HAD FOR KING LOUIS XIII, SOVEREIGN OF CANADA (well well ... discovered on the web!) AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 17th CENTURY, AT ATTANCOURT; NEAR THE CAISSES COUNTRY.

WE INSERT THE SOS RACISM VERSION OF THIS STORY IN OUR PAPER.

* Since the martyrs of Lyons 177.

* And the first amendment to the Constitution, you have heard of it ??

* As if many other countries on this Earth were not also host countries, free countries, etc.

Character idolized in the circles of the French extreme right-wing, Charles Martel was the father of Pepin the Short and the grandfather of Charles the Great, also called Charlemagne by contemporaries.

The name comes from Latin Carolus Magnus. In Germany, Charlemagne is called Karl Der Grosse

(Charles the Great) as in Dutch-speaking Belgium and Netherlands (Karl De Grote). Charles Martel was mayor of the palace, a kind of minister.

The historical mythology forged in the nineteenth century has it that Charles Martel saved Frankish Gaul and entire Christianity from an Arab-Muslim invasion. This statement is to be qualified for several reasons.

- The warriors beaten at Poitiers in 732 were not all Arabs. Coming from Muslim Spain, of course the chances are that they were predominantly Muslim, but alongside the Arabs of Syria, Muslim Spain of the eighth century also had many Berbers. Moreover, these were only the executives of an army, of which a large part was simply of Iberian-Visigothic origin. It appears indeed that the hostility to the Franks has been able locally to encourage collaboration with Muslims, some elements remaining attached to the Visigothic tradition.

- This raid was prevented by the intervention of Charles Martel, but his stoppage is not an important date in the history of Islam expansion.

- And we must especially not see in it a victory of good over evil, Charles Martel himself was one of the worst looters that Poitou has known.

- The maneuver of Charles Martel was mainly related to a struggle of influence between the Frankish dynasty in the North and the Duke Odo of Aquitaine; who was in a way the first defeated of the battle of Poitiers (he became the obligee of Charles Martel). This battle indeed sanctioned the influence of the North on the Southwest and the power of those who were not yet called Carolingians. This success increased the political influence of Charles Martel's family. This dynasty was never a French dynasty and is no more a part of the History of France than of Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Holland, Northern Italy, Liechtenstein, Austria or Germany.

-And finally, from a historical and military point of view, the real stop to Muslim expansion north of the Pyrenees was the capture of the city of Narbonne by the troops of Pepin the Short in 759.

In October 732, therefore, the two armies meet at a place between Tours and Poitiers, at the confluence of the Vienne and Clain rivers. For several days Charles Martel observed the enemy, who had adopted a resolutely offensive attitude and sought to engage in battle.

The powerful Frankish infantry spread over the plain; it was a wall of leather and iron, bristling with blades and tips.

The heavy cavalry of Odo, who came to rescue Charles Martel, mounted on Ardennes horses, much larger than the fast Arabian steeds, protected the flanks.

-A large contingent was standing back, ready to perform diversion maneuvers.

Abdul Rahman gave the signal for the first attack. Galloping impetuously, and with the war cry of Allahu Akhbar, thousands of horsemen rushed on the Frankish lines. The infantry of Charles Martel did not give way. His infantry and that of Aquitaine held on "as a rampart of ice" in front of the movements of the Muslim horsemen. Odo, with a large group of cavalymen, began to move away from the camp to attract the enemy and relieve the pressure that the infantry would undergo.

About four o'clock in the afternoon, the first-line Muslims heard screams from the rear. Odo and his horsemen had bypassed the battlefield, destroying their encampment and slaughtering the rearguard.

They rushed to ward off this unforeseen danger, and Charles Martel took the opportunity to give the signal for the attack. The "iron wall" began to move forward, compact, irresistible. He routed everything: Abdul Rahman himself was killed. The death of the chief revived the disagreements that existed among Muslims, and they retreated under cover of the night, which compelled the Franks to stop.

At dawn, after crossing a field covered with thousands of corpses, the Franks entered the deserted Arab-Muslim camp: all the survivors had fled under cover of darkness.

The wave of Islam did not go beyond the Loire River. In Poitiers, the Arab-Muslim impetus was already running out of steam. The dream fed by the Arabs capturing Byzantium backwards did not become reality.

It is thought that it is in memory of this clash that Charles was nicknamed "Martel," that is to say "the hammer."

Muslims, for their part, gave a name to the region where the confrontation took place. Although their losses were not important, they call it "the pavement of martyrs": Balat as-Shuhada.

It is difficult to pinpoint where this historic event took place. Sources agree to place the meeting on the territory of the city of Poitiers, so in northern Poitou. The Arab name of the battle, according to a source of the eleventh century, Pavement of Martyrs, makes clarifying things possible and placing it on the old Roman road between Tours and Poitiers, so on the right bank of the river Clain. All historians agree not to locate it in the immediate vicinity of Poitiers, because the Moulière Forest would have embarrassed Arab cavalymen. Some historians agree to place the location of the battle near the

hamlet of Moussais, on the current French town of Vouneuil-sur-Vienne. The many details given by the chroniclers make dating it accurately, possible.

The real importance of this battle has given rise to a typical French (or more exactly Franco-French) debate, very nice, but in which we are, of course, TOTALLY NEUTRAL for the different reasons explained above. We prefer to leave to the true French of today (we who are false Frenchmen) the care to look into the past of a people who was a great nation.

Historians who tend towards reducing its importance argue that the expedition of Abdul Rahman had the essential purpose of loot, not conquest. In addition, the general context seems to indicate a loss of impetus of Muslim conquest, after an uninterrupted century of victories. The Muslims fail in their third siege of Constantinople (717 - 718), and are also defeated in the East. The very size of the Empire arouses difficulties.

Kharijite revolts broke out in Mesopotamia and Syria (724 - 743), and caused the caliph to give up Damascus for Resafa / Sergiopolis (still in Syria).

The Umayyads are overthrown in 750.

But this failure of 718 before Constantinople did not prevent the conquest of the large islands of the Western Mediterranean in 720 - 724. It did not prevent either the attempt to conquer the South at least of Gaul in 721, since the chroniclers indicate that the Arabs had brought siege engines to capture Toulouse.

Regarding the raids tactics, several authors point out that these were both a means of reconnaissance of the terrain, and that several years of successful raids always resulted in a lasting annexation. Case of the Spanish conquest (711 - 720), but also of Iraq and Persia before.

On the importance of the expedition of 732, the specialist of the Merovingian civilization Jean Deviosse reports that it is a combined operation between the navy and the Arab cavalry. A fleet landed an Arab army in Camargue, which goes upstream the Rhone Valley and goes as far as capturing Sens not far away from Paris.

Abdul Rahman obviously expected to force his opponents to divide their forces and then travel long distances to stop him. Jean Deviosse also points out that Abdul Rahman had asked his people to give up part of the spoils to be more efficient during the battle (request rejected by his men); and especially, that he accepted the battle, that he could have refused if he only came for the booty, which was already considerable.

The victory had to be important because....

- The Arab-Muslim expeditionary gives up its booty.

- No other major expedition could reach the heart of Gaul thereafter.

This victory therefore is not the myth that has been made, but if Charles Martel does not save France that does not yet exist, he changes really the fate of Gaul. Pursued by the army of the king of the Franks, the Muslims and their Christian allies were forced to cross again the Pyrenees.

THE END OF MUSLIM SEPTIMANIA.

We know a number of walis, governors of the province of Narbonne. The first was Abd al-Rahman ibn Abd God al-Ghafiqi appointed in 720. Yusuf ibn 'Abd al-Rahman al-Fihri arrived in Narbonne in 734 and in 735, conquers Arles thanks to the rallying of Maurontius, Duke of Marseilles.

In 737, the Visigoths, who are still resisting in the vicinity of Narbonne (Minerves, Razès), show Charles Martel's troops how to cut in two the advancing Arab army which was going to come to the aid of besieged Narbonne, by taking the Berre pass which leads out of the Corbières between Portel and Sigean. The bulk of the Arab army is cut to pieces, taken in pincers by the Franks and Visigoths around Portel-des-Corbières. Other Saracens try to join Sigean and the Muslim fleet anchored at Port Mahon, and will experience another military disaster. The fleeing Muslim and settlers stationed by the sea, especially in La Clape, will be massacred.

In 752, the newly proclaimed King Pepin the Short leads a new campaign in Septimania. Pepin conquers Nîmes and subdues part of the region as far as the gates of Narbonne, a city before which he lays siege.

The Duke of Aquitaine, Waiofar, aware of Pepin's ambitions, then attacks the Frankish rearguard with an army of Vascons and forces the Franks to lift the siege of the city.

In 756, following the fall of the Umayyads in Damascus before the Abbasids, the governor Yusuf al-Fihri is defeated by Abd al-Rahman I before Cordoba. The latter took possession of all the Arab-Muslim dependencies in Europe by creating a new state, the emirate of Cordoba.

The siege resumed with greater vigor in 756. The city is finally retaken after negotiations between Pepin the Short and representatives of the local Visigothic population who finally revolt against the Arab garrison and opens the gates of the city in 759. This capture of the city of Narbonne leads to the conquest of the whole of Muslim Septimania, which will have therefore lasted 40 years. This struggle

was difficult in regions where the countryside was deserted by the population and where "an innumerable people" was taken by the invaders.

It is difficult to appreciate the reality of the Muslim settlement north of the Pyrenees, but from a historical and military point of view, it can be said that Narbonne (and not Poitiers) was the stopping point of the Muslim conquest in the Christian West, because Narbonne was the first peopling and settlement base in Gaul. The early victory of the Franks over the Berre therefore avoided too long a Muslim settlement, in contrast to what happened in Spain. Then, all the expeditions north of Narbonne were short-lived raids and not submission or settlement undertakings.

The last Muslim governor of Narbonne, Abd-er-Rahman ben Ocba (756-759), therefore only kept the Iberian territories from the Pyrenees to the Ebro River.

THE SOUTHERN PYRENEES RECONQUISTA.

(Not to be confused with the Reconquista come from Asturias.)

Context.

In 759 a new dynasty takes power, the Abbasids. The old Caliphate dynasty, the Umayyads, nevertheless kept all the western part of the Muslim empire, and especially the south of the Iberian Peninsula. The new Abbasid dynasty then negotiates with the Carolingian dynasty in order to encircle or destabilize the emirate of Cordoba.

In 777, the pro-Abbasid rulers of northern Spain contacted the Carolingians to ask for help against the powerful Umayyad emirate in southern Spain, led by Abd al-Rahman I.

Sulayman al-Arabi, the pro-Abbasid governor (wali) of Barcelona and Girona, sent a delegation to Charlemagne in Paderborn, offering his submission, as well as the allegiance of Hussein of Zaragoza and Abu Taur of Huesca in return for military aid. The Caliph of Baghdad at that time, Muhammad al-Mahdi, was preparing an invasion force against the Amir of Cordoba.

Charlemagne marched through the Pyrenees in 778 "at the head of all the forces he could muster."

His troops were welcomed in Barcelona and Girona and his men were joined by troops led by Sulayman al-Arabi. When the fleet and reinforcements promised by the Caliph of Baghdad turned back in front of Barcelona, Hussein of Zaragoza refused to surrender the city, claiming that there had never been a question for him to pledge allegiance to Charlemagne.

It is with two armies that Charlemagne crosses the Pyrenees: one, in the East, composed of Bavarians, Burgundians, Austrasians, Provençals, Septimaniens and Lombards crosses at the Perthus Pass. The army of the West, led by Charlemagne himself, is made up of Neustrians, Bretons, Aquitanians (newly organized territory between the Loire and the Garonne) and Gascons (from the south of the Garonne). As agreed the gates of Pamplona open before the Frankish army of the West, Abu Tawr makes his submission and gives Charlemagne his son and his brother Abu Talama as hostages as promised. Suleiman al-Arb then leads Charlemagne before Zaragoza, where the junction is made with the eastern army that had just taken possession of Girona, Barcelona and Huesca.

But in Zaragoza, Hussayn, who ruled the city with Suleiman, refuses to open the gates of the city to the Franks, claiming that there had never been any question for him pledging allegiance to Charlemagne.

Charlemagne did not want to waste any time elucidating the situation, at the risk of weakening his army, especially since he had received worrying news from Saxony. He therefore holds Suleyman hostage and sends the army of the east back.

Having learned, moreover, that the Banu Qasi have ousted Abu Tawr and taken Pamplona and are stirring the population. Charlemagne before crossing the Pyrenees then returns to Pamplona. But the Banu Qasi probably expected the destruction - or at least the weakening - of the Frankish army during the siege of Zaragoza. Surprised to see that it is intact, they let go. Charlemagne convinces the Navarii - defenders of Pamplona - to no longer obey them. The Navarii swear an oath to him. In order to prevent Pamplona from being the target of another bold surprise attack due to the strategic nature of its defenses, Charlemagne razes the city walls.

BATTLE OF RONCEVAUX PASS.

The annals of the time are silent on the Battle of Roncevaux Pass that followed. Those of later years begin to say a few words about it. The place of the battle remains in reality unknown, no archeological traces having been found.

There is consensus that somewhere in the Pyrenees the rearguard of the Frankish army was annihilated in 778.

There is no consensus on the identity of the attackers; some Mountain people Basques or Muslims (13th century Chronicle of Ibn al-Athîr) from Abd ar Rahman of Cordoba., even the duke of Gascony Lupo II (he will be hanged by Charlemagne in 778).

It is best to remember it as a great chanson de geste (4000 verses), with a moving and well-staged end.

Laisse 66.

High are the peaks, the valleys shadowful, swarthy the rocks, the narrows wonderful. Franks passed that day all very sorrowful, fifteen leagues round the rumor of them grew. When they were come, and Terra Major knew, saw Gascony their land and their seigneur's, Remembering...

But which as far as Islam is concerned shows great ignorance. According to our text, Muslims worship indeed a trinity, including Apollin and Termagant.

Laisse 188.

" All of them cursed Carlun and France the Douce. Then Apollin in his grotto they surround, and threaten him, and ugly words pronounce: "Such shame on us, vile god!, why bring you? This is our king; wherefore dost him confound? Who served you oft, ill recompense has found." Then they take off his scepter and his crown, with their hands hang him from a column down, Among their feet trample him on the ground, with great cudgels they batter him and trounce. f From Tervagant his carbuncle they impound, and Mahumet into a ditch fling out, where swine and dogs defile him and devour ».

Confusion which has no equal but that of Sura 19 verse 28 in the Quran confusing Mary mother of Jesus and Mary sister of Aaron. With this difference that the Quran is the word of God and Roland's song only a human work.

The Carolingians, however, remained present south of the Pyrenees, and the city of Gerona was captured in 785 but in 793 a powerful raid will be again led in Septimania by Abd al-Malik ibn Abd al-Wahid, who could burn the suburbs of Narbonne before being defeated near the confluence of the Orbieu and Aude river by the count William of Toulouse, the William with the Short-Nose of epics, the William of Gelonne of Catholic hagiography.

Louis of Aquitaine, the son of Emperor Charlemagne, will seize Barcelona in 801 and will thus create the Spanish March - the future Catalonia - putting henceforth back on the course of the Llobregat river the southern border of the Frankish empire.

Editor's Note. French being never in line with geography, even that of their country, let us remind them that Septimania is the former name of the region of "Douce France" whose metropolis is Narbonne; and that if the beautiful and noble Catalan language dear to our heart of a former citizen of Argeles is closer to the French language (of oc or oil) than (Spanish) Castilian; it is because the county of Barcelona has for a long time been part of the kingdom of France.

The Muslim danger for Europeans now comes in another form, that of the Islam of Cordoba.

In 978 Al-Mansur became vizier (Prime Minister) of the new caliph of Cordoba, Hisham II, and thus takes the reality of power. Unlike his predecessors, he stands out with his violence and religious intolerance. Many Jews and Mozarabs 1) take refuge in the states of the Spanish March. Their knowledge will enrich those kept in Catalan monasteries.

In 985, Al-Mansur attacked and looted Barcelona, then brought many slaves. Count Borrell II then asks for help from his suzerain Hugh Capet. The latter not deigning to answer him, the count de facto becomes independent. This event paradoxically marks the beginning of a phase of development of Catalonia that will set in motion the other States of the Spanish March. Borrell secures the territory, even if at first, he has to negotiate.

1) Arabic-speaking Christians, Christians who have become Arabic speakers.

THE CONQUEST OF THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA.

In the 9th and 10th centuries there will also be naval raids launched against the Christian Coast. Pechina, near Almeria, then Denia in the south-east of Spain, are changed into rear bases of a large-scale piracy but they are more ships chartered by true corsair contractors than official fleets of the Umayyad caliph or emir of Cordoba. Nevertheless, they make a permanent insecurity prevail between the Rhone delta and southern Italy. The occupation of Sicily from 827, that of Malta in 870, and finally that of the Balearic Islands in 902, will further worsen this danger, while Corsica and Sardinia find themselves dangerously isolated; their populations are forced to retreat into inland in order to live a pastoral life. Pope Leo III and Charlemagne measure the danger, but cannot prevent the attacks launched in 812, off Naples, against the islands of Ponza and Ischia; and the looting raid carried out the following year on the coast of Tuscany, against Centum Cellae / Civitavecchia.

The rivalries of the Christian dukes, furthermore, facilitate the task of those whom the chronicles of the time designate under the name of Saracens, Moors, "darkies" or, simply, pagans (sic). They can seize Taranto and Ponza Island in 840 then settle a base at Cape Licosa, near Salerno.

In 841, the fall of Bari precedes the attack launched in 846 against Ostia and Rome, where the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul outside the Walls are looted. According to the annals of Bertiniani and the Liber Pontificalis, the pope was even obliged to pay tribute to the attackers. Around 852, Pope John VIII (who was said to be a "popess") calls Christians to fight "infidels." He or she restores the defenses of Rome, but Bari is captured again, with the help of the Byzantines, only in 871, after having undergone thirty years of Muslim domination. In 880, it will be the turn of Taranto and the last Muslim place in the region, this of Santo Severino near Crotona, will fall in 886.

It will still be necessary to wait 890 and 916 to see the Muslim bases established in Agropoli near Salerno and the mouth of the Liri, recaptured.

Muslim pirates on the coast of Campania were responsible for a heavy toll. Each time, the Muslims crucified or immured the captured Christians. In 883 they had massacred the monks of Monte Cassino, and it was only after forty years that monasteries left by these monks could be reoccupied safely. The disappearance of these bases of operations does not totally remove the danger since Genoa is captured by surprise and plundered in 932, and that Saint Nilus the Younger must leave Calabria to take refuge in Monte Cassino in 980. Only the intervention of Pisan and Norman navies will definitely clean the area from Muslim pirates or corsairs. In the face of the threat that was becoming clear year after year, the Pisans and Genoese launched indeed the first "crusades", gathering under the banner of St. Peter, patron saint of fishermen, and by extension of seafarers.

The case of Sicily is particular in that Muslims managed to settle there permanently from 827. From 652 they had carried out on the island, then Byzantine, fruitful raids. In 669, they reoffend and plunder Syracuse which must agree from 740 to pay tribute to them from. The rebellion fomented against the Byzantine imperial authority by a certain Euphemios, led him to seek the help of the Aghlabid prince of Kairouan, but the conquest of Sicily will prove difficult. Palermo will be captured in 830, then it will be the turn of Messina in 842. Inland, the citadel of Castrogiovanni will fall in 859, but Syracuse, supported by the Byzantine emperor Basil I, will resist until 878. The last stronghold to continue the struggle, Taormina falls in 902 and sees its population massacred. The Arab-Muslim presence will be more important in the West of the island, while the Val Demone in the Northeast will remain a hotbed of rebellion never totally extinguished. Passed from the authority of the Aghlabid princes to that of the Fatimid caliphs in Cairo, Sicily was endowed in the person of Al-Hassan with an energetic governor, the first representative of the Kalbid dynasty to rule the island until 1040; which corresponds to a period of great prosperity or development of the island civilization. Threatened in 1038-1040 by an attempt of Byzantine recapture, the Muslims of Sicily will be divided and will make the mistake of involving in their quarrels the Normans settled in southern Italy since the beginning of the eleventh century. Recognized "Duke of Puglia and Calabria and future Duke of Sicily" by Pope Nicholas II, Robert Guiscard was given authorization to recapture the island from Muslims. From 1061, his younger brother, Roger, seized Messina. The fall of Catania in 1071, followed by those of Palermo in 1072, Taormina in 1079, and Syracuse in 1085, sealed the fate of the island, thus restored to Christendom by the Norman weapons.

Malta, which had become in the tenth and eleventh centuries, a valuable base of operations for Muslim pirates, and which the Byzantines had failed to recapture, fell in 1090 into the hands of Roger; but the population remains mostly Muslim, which explains the many Semitic traces found in the

toponymy and the Maltese language. A century and a half after the recapture of the archipelago by the Normans, Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen expelled in 1240 the last Muslims, forced to choose between conversion or exile.

EXPANSION TOWARDS NORTH.

The Ottoman Empire conquered Gallipoli, its first European territory, in 1347. It will then spread across the Balkans. In 1389 he won a decisive victory at the Battle of Kosovo Polje in Serbia (battle of the field of blackbirds), thus ending the existence of the kingdom of Prince Lazar Hrebeljanovic (canonized by orthodox church). Serbia was definitively annexed by the Ottomans after the fall of Smederevo in 1459. In 1453, under Sultan Mehmed II, the Muslim Turks seized Constantinople and put an end to the Byzantine Empire. The Turkish Empire will gradually establish its suzerainty over the entire Muslim part of the Mediterranean world.

The title of the Ottoman sultans is enriched in the fifteenth century with the old Turkish title of Khan, then that of caliph in the sixteenth century, that is to say, successor of Muhammad and leader of the Muslim community (Ummah) . The control they exert over their lands varies; the distant provinces of Tunis and Algiers, for example, recognize only formally his power. Others, like the Romanian principalities of Wallachia, Moldavia and for a time Transylvania, have been autonomous since the 15th or 16th century, and are only paying a tribute. The Empire also has large Christian populations in the Balkans and in Anatolia. He also recruited in them by force his main body of the army, the janissaries (distortion of Turkish *Yeniçeri* "new soldier"), established in the fourteenth century by Sultan Murad I. But many poor Christians (Slavs, Greeks, Armenians, etc.) go to Islam to no longer have to pay either *jizya* * (Turkish *cizy*) or *kharaj* * (*haraç*) and thus become "Turks." Many Turks in Turkey therefore have a European ancestry that Turkish speakers have not in Central Asia. The Empire reached its peak in the sixteenth century, under the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, whose armies reach Vienna in 1529 and 1532, but around which they will lay siege vainly. Conversely, this advance will mark the limit of the expansion of the Empire in the West (as Aden will set its limit in the south). The Empire develops a military navy , tries to impose itself in the Mediterranean to the detriment of the Italian cities, and even succeeds in it a while. The naval defeat of Lepanto in 1571, in front of the Spanish and Venetian fleets, puts an end to its supremacy. Reorganized by the grand vizier Sokollu Mehmed Pasha, the Ottoman fleet will, of course, remain a major power, and the Venetian possessions (Cyprus and some islands in the Aegean Sea) will gradually join the Empire, but trade in the Mediterranean will remain in the hands of West Europeans. The Ottoman Empire slowly declines from the eighteenth century, because it can no longer follow the rapid growth of European countries. In 1683, the failure of the last siege of Vienna will sound the death knell of its ambitions in Europe. In 1782, the Russia of Catherine II seized Crimea; without the Sublime Porte (as sometimes the Ottoman Empire is called, after the name of the monumental honor gate of the Grand Vizierate in Istanbul, seat of the government of the Sultan) reacts. In 1798, the French of Bonaparte gained a foothold in Egypt and stayed there for three years while claiming to be in line with a "friendship" for the Sublime Porte. This half-hearted attitude will much astonish the khedive (viceroy) of Egypt (Muhammad Ali) who will always mention his admiration for Bonaparte. In the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Empire - nicknamed (by Russia) "sick man of Europe" - will fall apart. In 1922, Marshal Mustafa Kemal Atatürk abolished the Ottoman Empire and founded in 1923, on the remaining territory, Anatolia and Eastern Thrace, modern Turkey or Republic of Turkey. In 1924, he will end the caliphate, thus erasing the last trace of the original Muslim religious institutions, the last symbol of the power of Islam! And the Congresses of Cairo in 1926 and of Jerusalem in 1931 failed to appoint another Caliph. An institution that, let us point it out, does not concern the Shiite world but only Sunnis.

* *Jizya* and *Kharaj* are taxes that concern only non-Muslims and more specifically Jews and Christians. The *jizya* is a poll tax (adult males, women are not supposed to have own resources) and *kharaj* a property tax on land having been owned by non-Muslims.

EXPANSION TOWARDS EAST (8TH-19th century).

THE CONQUEST OF THE SIND (now Pakistan).

The governor of Iraq, Al-Hajjaj ben Yusef, sent in 711 two thousand horsemen and camel drivers to conquer Sindh (lower Indus Valley). Commanded by Muhammad ibn-Qasim, then very young, they defeated the army of Raja Dahir. The rāja was killed, the soldiers beheaded and the region plundered. While Muhammad's warring was clearly at times brutal, he is supposed to have said of Hinduism that 'the idol temple is similar to the churches of the Christians (to the synagogues) of the Jews and to the fire temples of the Zoroastrians' (mā al-budd illā ka-kanā 'is al-naṣārā wa 'l-yahūd wa-buyūt nīrān al-madjūs). This 'seems to be the earliest statement justifying the inclusion of the Hindus in the category of ahl al-dhimma (dhimmi).

After the conquest, Muhammad bin Qasim's task was to set up an administrative structure for a stable Muslim state that incorporated a newly conquered alien land, inhabited by non-Muslims. He adopted a conciliatory policy, asking for acceptance of Muslim rule by the natives in return for non-interference in their religious practice, so long as the natives paid their taxes and tribute. In return, the state provided protection to non-Muslim from any foreign attacks and enemies. He established Islamic Sharia law over the people of the region; however, Hindus were allowed to rule their villages and settle their disputes according to their own laws, and traditional hierarchical institutions, including the village headmen (rais) and chieftains (dihqans) were maintained. A Muslim officer called an amil was stationed with a troop of cavalry to manage each town on a hereditary basis.

Everywhere taxes (mal) and tribute (kharaj) were settled and hostages taken — occasionally this also meant the custodians of temples. Non-Muslim natives were excused from military service and from payment of the religiously mandated tax system levied upon Muslims called Zakat, the tax system levied upon them instead was the jizya .

What is Jizyah? From the perspective of the communalist school, the jizya is the fee for dhimmah (protection), which entitles one to inviolability (ishma) , and residence in the Muslim state (sukna). But universalist jurists argue otherwise. For them, dhimmah and ishma are not subject to monetary exchange; they are inalienable universal rights that are granted at birth. From this perspective, as Muslims are required to pay zakat and other annual charities and taxes, non-Muslims are also required to pay taxes (in the form of jizya). For the Hanafi school, jizya is acceptable from all non-Muslims, including the People of the Book and non-Arab pagans, the only exceptions being Arab pagans and polytheists. For the Shafi'i school, jizya is acceptable only from the People of the Book and Zoroastrians and not from the followers of other religions because the Quran and hadith did not list them among those who are allowed to make peace with Muslims and pay jizya. Mughals and Ottomans, who followed the Hanafi school, indiscriminately collected the jizya from the followers of all religions (other than Islam).

Lane-Poole writes that, "as a rule Muslim government was at once tolerant and pragmatic. The preference of collection of jizya over the conversion to Islam is a major economic motivator. Hindus and Buddhists who were classified as Dhimmis had to pay mandatory Jizya. However Jizya is normally higher than the zakat to be paid by Muslims.

While proselytization occurred, given the social dynamics of areas of Sindh conquered by Muslim, the spread of Islam was slow and took centuries. No mass conversions to Islam took place and some temples escaped destruction such as the Sun Temple of Multan on payment of jizya. In the Arab settlers controlled areas of Sindh and Multan, conversion to Islam occurred only slowly, not on a massive scale. The majority of the population continued to remain Hindu who had to pay the jizya imposed by the Muslim state.

The great Muslim scholar Al Biruni (973- circa 1050) dedicated a whole book to India (he had learned Sanskrit) completed in 1032.

In it he distinguishes the beliefs of the people from the religion of the elites to whom he attributes the belief in one God and one revelation, the Vedas. What makes them almost People of the Book. Sharastani (1086-1153), a century later, saw in it Sabeans, who were certainly People of the Book but deviant. What did not simplify things.

TAMERLAN.

Tamerlane or Timur the lame, Timur the Great (born April 8, 1336, in present Uzbekistan, and died February 18, 1405, in Otrar/Farab in present-day Kazakhstan), is a Turco-Mongol warrior of the fourteenth century , conqueror of much of central and western Asia, founder of the Timurid dynasty that existed until 1507.

Become Emir of Transoxiana, Tamerlane is a formidable warlord, who will build an immense empire based on military power and terror. Historians often speak of a "Timurid catastrophe " so much his destruction and massacre were spectacular; estimates of the number of dead in its military campaigns

range from 1 million to 17 million people (about 5% of the world's population at the time). During his conquests, he did not hesitate to slaughter the entire population of the cities that resisted him, with the exception of the craftsmen he deported to Samarkand, his capital. Whence his reputation among pious Muslims as a patron of the arts and letters who made the greatness of Samarkand.

His apologists attribute to him an exceptional destiny well before his birth. In fact, his father, Taraghai, an old Turkish chief, a fervent Muslim, at the head of the Barlas clan, who was waiting for an heir, would have had a premonitory dream. An angel, in the guise of a handsome young man, appeared to him, handing him a sword. This dream was interpreted by the emir as the announcement that his son would conquer the world at the point of his sword.

It is also said that the child would be born with hands full of blood, thus reminding of the birth of Genghis Khan, as told in the Secret History of the Mongols.

His father, Taraghai, was at the head of the Barlas tribes. He was the great-grandson of Karachar Noyan and distinguished himself among the other members of his clan as the first to convert to Islam. Taraghai could have carried out the high military offices to which he was entitled, but like his father Burkul, he preferred to devote himself to his studies.

Under his paternal guidance, the young Tamerlane's education made him both a fan of outdoor manly training and an attentive reader of the Quran (1). At this time of his life, if we can trust his Memoirs (Malfuzdt), he was of a tender and sympathetic nature.

When he was sixteen years old, Timur put himself in the service of Kazghan, a Turk who assassinated the last Chagataid khan, Kazan. Quickly getting promoted, he became a military chief under his command. However, the assassination of Kazghan in 1357 delays his dreams of ascent.

Reacting to the death of the emir, the Khan of Moghulistan, Tughlugh Timur invades Transoxiana and tries to reunify the Chagatai khanate. Timur then decided to support him and was appointed Counselor to the new governor, Ilyas Khoja, son of the Khan, in 1361. But Ilyas failed to rally the Turkish Muslim populations or the aristocracy, and Timur fearing a revolt left Samarkand to join his brother-in-law Husayn, Kazghan's grandson. Thus he began his struggle for accession to the throne.

The death of Tughlugh made easier the recapture and the addition of a vast territory. But Tamerlane and his brother-in-law Husayn, at first associated, became rivals. At the end of 1369, Husayn was assassinated and Tamerlane, having been officially declared sovereign in Balkh, ascended the throne in Samarkand, the capital of his possessions.

It is to be noted that Tamerlane never gave himself the title of Khan, calling himself "emir al-kabir" ("high chief" in Arabic language). In addition, he placed on the throne of Transoxiana a "figurehead khan" who reigned, of course, BUT DID NOT RULE, Suyurghatmish, a descendant of Genghis Khan, in order to comply with Mongolian law. Finally, he took Husayn's widow, Saray Mulk Khanum, to whom he later will dedicate a mosque. This widow is the daughter of the Chinggisid khan Qazan. Timur becomes therefore "imperial son-in-law," güregen in Mongolian or kurgun in Turkish language, and can claim the lineage of Genghis Khan.

The next thirty years were spent in several wars and expeditions. Not only did Tamerlane consolidate his power at home by subjugating his enemies, but he also sought to expand his territory by encroaching on the lands of neighboring princes. His conquests to the south and south-west encompassed nearly all provinces of Persia (Iran), including Baghdad, Karbala and Kurdistan.

One of his most formidable opponents was Tokhtamysh, who, having taken refuge at Tamerlane's court, became the ruler of the eastern Kiptchak and the Golden Horde, and quarreled with Tamerlane over the possession of Khwarizm. Tamerlane supported Tokhtamysh when he invaded Russia and captured Moscow in 1382, but later Tokhtamysh turned against him and invaded Azerbaijan in 1385. It was only in 1395 at the Battle of the Terek River that he was finally defeated.

In 1383 Tamerlane took Herat, in Persia (in present-day Afghanistan), which after the death of Abu Said (1335), ruler of the Ilkhanate dynasty, was no longer controlled by any power.

In 1398, when Tamerlane was over sixty years old, Farishta told us that "informed of the commotions and civil wars of India," he "began his expedition into that country," and on 12th September "arrived on the banks of the Indus." He made 100,000 prisoners, immediately slaughtered (his soldiers made pyramids of enemy heads with them)...His passage of the river and upward march along the left bank, the reinforcement he provided for his grandson Pir Muhammad (who was invested in Multan), the capture of towns or villages accompanied, it might be, with destruction of the houses and the massacre of the inhabitants, the battle before Delhi and the easy victory, the triumphal entry into the doomed city, with its outcome of horrors, belong to the history of India.

In April 1399, about three months after leaving the capital of Mahmud Tughluq (Dehli), Tamerlan was back in his capital beyond the Oxus (Amu Darya).

The war with the Turks and Mameluks, which occurred on his return from India, was made famous by the capture of Aleppo and Damascus. He invaded Baghdad in June 1401; after the capture of the city,

twenty thousand townspeople were massacred. Tamerlane ordered that every soldier should return with at least two human heads to show, even that of their own wife if necessary. In 1402, he invades Anatolia and defeats Ottoman sultan Bayezid I at the Battle of Ankara. History tells us that when Bayezid was brought chained into Tamerlane's tent, he burst out laughing. "You're wrong to make fun of me, look what happened to me, it might as well happen to you! " To which Tamerlane replied, "I do not make fun of you but of the irony of God who shared the destiny of the world between a one-eyed and a lame! ".

The legend according to which Bayezid I was caged seems doubtful, but it is likely that Tamerlane kept him with him. His wife and daughters were transferred to Tamerlane's harem. Bayezid later died in captivity, probably committing suicide by poisoning. This victory probably saved temporarily (i.e., for about fifty years) the dying Byzantine Empire, defeating the Turkish forces that projected then the capture of Constantinople. After conquering Ayasoluk (Ephesus) in the autumn of 1402, Tamerlane also captured Smyrna from the Knights Hospitalers and massacred his inhabitants. In 1403 he devastated Georgia, destroying 700 towns, massacring the people and knocking down all the churches in Tbilisi.

In December 1404, Tamerlane undertook a military expedition against China, but the old warrior was attacked by fever and plague when he encamped on the furthest bank of the Sihon (Syr-Darya) and died in Otrar at the mid-February 1405.

Markham, in his introduction to the narrative of the embassy of Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo recounts that Timur's body was embalmed with musk and rose water, wrapped in linen, laid in an ebony coffin, and sent to Samarkand, where it was buried."

1) The question is, what did he retain (from this careful reading of the Quran)? An outstanding conqueror, who carried his victorious arms, on one side from the Irtysh and the Volga River to the Persian Gulf and on the other side from the Hellespont (therefore the Dardanelles in Western Asia Minor) to the Ganges, Tamerlane was extremely ferocious. According to Rene Grousset, "He represents the synthesis of Mongolian barbarism, and of this higher stage of the ancestral need for murder that is murder perpetrated in the service of an abstract ideology, by duty and sacred mission."

OTHER EXPANSIONS.

The last Islamic wave will be the one that will finally set out to conquer Black Africa and the Far East. Spectacular breakthrough, from Nigeria to Philippines. The architecture is certainly new, but it is military and religious: it is the reign of the art of know-how, more than of thought! There is a multiplication of mosque meters (mosque at the same time school), but the teaching is reduced to a narrow theology that rejects Protagoras' humanism and science, especially historical. It will be the triumph of faith and its dogmas over reason.

THE MUSLIM EXPANSION TODAY ACCORDING TO ISLAMWEB 2008.

Let us mention for example, the case of Elizabeth L. (who asked us not to divulge her real name because she has not yet informed her parents), holds a degree in political science, daughter of Caucasian British public figures; and a firm opponent of terrorism in all its forms. She climbed Mount Sinai at night to watch the sunrise from its summit: "It's the most peaceful and soothing place I've ever been to," she says.

"I could hear my feelings rising in me, and at a moment, close to the unreality, it seemed to me that they all converged at the same time."

On 4 January 2002, at 16.45, she went to the Regent's Park Mosque in central London and converted to Islam. It was easy for her. Two (Muslim) men served her as witnesses. Nine of her friends were also present, packed in the Imam's office; she pronounced in Arabic the words learned the day before from a cassette, words she will repeat 5 times a day tirelessly until the end of her life. "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his Prophet." Then there was a simple party at Ad-Dar in Edgware Road.

Elizabeth and her closest friends drink mint tea.

Why did she do that? "I know this sounds like a cliché, but God came to knock on the door of my heart. It's really what I felt. In many ways, it's too difficult to explain; it's a bit like finding love. "

It was, in other words, extremely personal. As she read the noble Quran and prepared to be converted, the 9/11 attacks nearly diverted her spiritual journey, despite the fact that it was proved that they were the work of a terrorist network. As far as she can remember, these events even gave her some sympathy. "Every act of terrorism is cowardly," she says. But I can understand why so many men and women are tired of the West. Capitalism is really oppressive.

Elizabeth is not a marginal, and she is certainly not the only one. There are many people like her, like Lucy Bushmill-Matthews, a graduate of Newham University, Cambridge, who mixed with Islam while still a student, with the aim of criticizing it but who found it "so simple and so logical that I could not reject it." She married, after her conversion, a British Muslim of Iranian origin.

In the United States too, the conspicuousness of Islam is a recent phenomenon. It is largely related to the religious dynamism of immigrants. Despite the documented presence of Muslims among black slaves; the history of Islam in the United States does not really begin until the waves of migration that have followed one another throughout the twentieth century, with a particular intensity since the 1960s; where Muslims from India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Afghanistan are now supplanting Muslims from the Middle East. Since the 1970s, these newcomers have embarked on the founding of mosques, schools, magazines and newspapers of all kinds; which shows a religious dynamism without comparison with the assimilationist tendency of Arab migrants (who were also often Christians) from the beginning of the 20th century. Censuses in the United States do not mention religious affiliation. This is why estimates of the size of the Muslim community vary enormously. The total number of Muslims in American society is most often estimated 6 million people. Nearly half of the Muslim population comes from conversions in the black community.

Hillary Rodham Clinton: "Islam is the fastest-growing religion in America, a guide and pillar of stability for many of our people..." (Larry B. Stammer, "First Lady Breaks Ground With Muslims," Los Angeles Times, May 31, 1996, p. 3).

Peter DeLaCrau's Commentary.

To convert to Islam is not to show a lot of intelligence but a lot of faith, so nothing to do with reason, and just as faith makes say nonsense, much faith makes say a lot of nonsense .

In France, when it comes to conversion of intellectuals to Islam, they immediately think of Rene Guenon and Roger Garaudy. And yet, let us dare to say it with Montaigne! We must not confuse intelligence and instruction, head on straights and head full of information. Even a Corsican shepherd or a Breton sea fisherman can have his head on straights if not full of information, especially facing forces of nature and seasonal cycles because soul is naturally pagan.

To convert to Islam is therefore not the evidence of intelligence! Even if by intelligence, we mean not what it makes possible, that is to say, the faculty of adaptation, but general knowledge and critical reflection; that is to say all the mental faculties making us able to discover the relations between things and facts. Finally, it should be noted that Rene Guenon's conversion was not performed in favor of orthodox (Sunni) Islam; but in favor of a very particular movement, moreover, considered as heretical by the Sunnis, that of Sufism, which has also Christian or even pagan roots. Sufism in fact has been involved with Christian monastic asceticism, Zoroastrian religion, even Buddhist or Hindu religion, and even certain Platonic ideas.

AND TOMORROW ?

When against the Greeks a barbaric sword is raised,
When the Titans of a later age, will rush upon us like snow,
As numerous as the stars when their constellations pasture the celestial meadows.

Ahmad Shamlu (1925-2000).

This is the strangest of times, my dear!
Whoever knocks at the door in the middle of the night
Has come to kill the light
We have to hide it in a closet.
Now the butchers are
Stationed on each crossroad
With a tree trunk and a cleaver
To engrave a smile on our lips
And a song on our mouths
We have to hide our pleasures in a closet.
Canaries are being roasted on fire
Made of lilies and lilacs
This is the strangest of times, my dear!
The victorious drunkard Iblis!
Is celebrating our mourning
We have to hide God in a closet.
Most crimes end up like this: we know the victim, but the criminal remains unknown.
The phenomenon is often due to cognitive biases that are to our brain what blind spots are to our eye.

Chinese proverb.

A long, long time ago, a famous poet of the Song Dynasty, Su Shi (1037-1101) climbed Mount Lushan. He discovered all its splendors except once he reached the summit, because of the fog. Hence his famous poem.

The mountain appears from different angles,
Far or near, high and low vary.
The true face of Mount Lu remains unknown
To whoever's in there.

Conclusion: Standing near a mountain prevents you from seeing the mountain. To put it another way, when you are on a mountain, you cannot see the whole mountain, and you miss its beauty.

Finally, when the mountain is beautiful, of course, could have specified Jean Ferrat (an admirable song of the 1960s) but the same reasoning works if it is ugly, covered with trash left by tourists, disfigured by the concrete of useless roads and ski resorts.

Closer to home there is also the proverb that tells us about THE TREES BECAUSE OF WHICH YOU CAN'T SEE THE FOREST. A metaphor that reminds us that, in life, sometimes a detail catches our attention and prevents us from seeing something larger, more global. The details make us lose sight of the whole... If we stick to a specific tree (the details) we no longer see the other trees in the forest (the whole).

Primary victimology is a multidisciplinary discipline where the analysis of the victim is studied in one's globality, but also in one's individual dimensions in order to understand, prevent and support the recovery of the victim, as well as of his or her entourage.

The aim of secondary victimology is to identify the aggressor(s) in order to put them out of harm's way as quickly as possible, treat or punish them, and do what is necessary to guarantee that this does not happen again.

In criminal matters, the details are of only one interest, to draw a profile of the criminal in order to put him out of action as quickly as possible and the technical arsenal used by the forensic police aims to answer three main questions:

What happened at the crime scene?

Why did these events occur?

What type of people may have committed such acts?

Benjamin Mendelsohn (1900-1998) in an article published in 1937 in the Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology; classified victims into 6 categories, of which only the first was unanimously agreed upon from the innocent, defined as being really innocent or having been in the wrong place at the wrong

time, and 5 other categories, encompassing most victims, those who would have contributed to their own victimization. This notion has been highly controversial and has led to the static state in that victimology is in today.

So why would we want to collect personal data on the victim if not to try to increase the responsibility of the victim and reduce the perpetrator's guilt in the act?

However, it should not be forgotten that, unlike primary victimology, secondary victimology, in conjunction with the deductive profiling method, only makes sense and is useful in the perspective of quickly putting the aggressor out of harm's way and treating him or her in order to prevent any recurrence of the offense.

To this end, the typology of victims (who are the first victims? The unbelievers the Christians the Muslims themselves) is certainly important; but this empathy for the first victims should not make the specialists in profiling criminal religious ideologies forget that what matters in the end: IT IS TO IDENTIFY AND REMOVE FROM THE SOCIETY...the culprit!

To appeal to emotion by speaking only of the victims (Muslim Christian or simply atheists?) and never of the guilty for fear of stigmatizing or conflating, triggering misplaced or mistaking target manhunts; is certainly a laudable concern but this sophism CAN...

-only make it impossible to arrest the guilty party or at least delay it considerably; and thus give him time to make still more victims. Now the victims should only be the avenging or accusing finger pointing in the direction of the culprit.

Below for the record what the truly monotheistic position should be, proof from any anger of any resentment of any inferiority complex of any jealousy of any need for revenge, in short philosophical and thoughtful .

"Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only me, O son of Kunti, but they do so in a wrong way because I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I accept it. I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend is in me, and I am also a friend to him" (Bhagavad Gita 9: 23-29, dialogue between the god Krishna/Vishnu and prince Arjuna).

Peter DeLaCrau has discovered nothing new or unheard about the origins of the evil. God, or more exactly a certain idea of God, has always been the greatest of the common dividers of Mankind. More precisely certain verses of the Quran followed literally, not to say blindly, at least without interpretation, taking us far from the initial or traditional meaning; the whole systematized, explained and justified by the new Kharijites, certain Jihad theorists or certain Takfirists (Salafism of action). The extreme danger of all these political Islams is that, like their Kharijite ancestor, they can have an attractive appearance, a revolutionary ideal well in tune with the ideas which haunt our societies (contestation of the bourgeois powers in place, refusal of compromise, anti-racism, etc.) that can attract the youth. For Kharijism indeed all men are equal and the leader of the community must be the best, "even if he is a black slave." If this is not the case he must be eliminated, like Ali in 661.

The book by Peter DeLaCrau contains no new fact.

Everything has been known for a long time, except for certain details.

The existence at the time of millions of Arab Christians in what was to become Jordan, Syria or Iraq (it is even the Christians of Hira who developed the Arabic script), made it possible to understand and to appreciate unequivocally from this time the various verses of the Quran.

The reasons why, with rare lucid and courageous exceptions, which will now, of course, fortunately multiply; the vast majority of those who know (tick the box: bishops journalists politicians abbots authors of books priests sportsmen artists, etc.) and who have only one flaw, their poverty or destitution (because they give everything to homeless persons) but to whom the will to resist with courage as in 1940, does not miss, did not say anything, or said the opposite, are the following

However the immense and ultra dangerous difference between original Islam or Salafism and the other religions, and which changes everything is that Salafist Islam touches many more aspects of private or personal life (food hygiene adoptions marriages inheritance jobs finances, etc.) than the other religions (except for ultra-orthodox Judaism which resembles it very much because of the arrival of Muhammad in Yathrib/Medina in 622).

Salafist Islam is in a way the most accomplished of the totalitarian systems.

As far as the very pious and very religious Muslims are concerned (we are not speaking here, therefore, of the "bad" Muslims, that is to say those who eat and drink a little of everything, who do not pray every day, etc., etc..... in short the equivalent of the Jews of Yom Kippur or Christians who go to church only to get married, to have their offspring baptized or to bury their dead) IT IS NECESSARY TO DISTINGUISH THE QUIETISTS FROM TAKFIRISTS OR DJIHADISTS.

Both are branches of SALAFISM, i.e., the most rigorous movement of Sunni Islam.

This religious family stemming from Sunnism (the main branch of Islam) advocates a rigorous practice of religion, close to its first followers (the term salaf designates, in Arabic, the "ancestors," in this case the first companions of Muhammad).

Obedience to Islamic law (Sharia), refusal of gender mixing and the wearing of the niqab (full veil) or abaya (black cloak covering the body) for women are some of the characteristics common to quietist Salafism and Takfirism.

BUT QUIETISTS are pacifists and do not seek to change the law, even if they do not recognize its legitimacy.

The problem is that Salafism can be an airlock to Takfirism. An airlock, because Salafist ultra-Orthodoxy offers an ideal ideological breeding ground for radicalization of its followers, and it is often in Salafist circles that Takfiris recruiters operate. Some imams are also likely to be engaged in a double-dealing especially since the practice of taqiya (cunning, concealment) is part of the Takfiri arsenal.

TAKFIRISTS (so called because of their propensity to throw the anathema, takfir, against other Muslims), on the other hand, are clearly distinguished from the quietists by their messianic ideology (that of the advent of a new caliphate and an apocalypse born of a new war between crusaders and Muslims on their holy land) and therefore their call to arms.

It is an Islam that is at once fundamentalist, non-legalistic and violent. The Takfiris claim to be an ultra-orthodox Islam whose laws take precedence over those of secular countries. Only Sharia law prevails, or at least an oriented interpretation of the rules laid down in the Quran.

An ultra-violent ideology, Takfirism does not distinguish between soldiers and civilians: only two worlds exist, dar al-Islam (the Islamic land, the Caliphate) and dar al-Harb (the land at war or to be conquered). The Takfiri readily describes himself as a 'lion' (the metaphor dates back at least to the late 1990s) and the communication of Takfirist organizations, such as al-Qaeda or the Islamic state, is based on the dissemination of bloody executions, the estheticization of war and the intimidation of enemies. The historical concept of Dar al-Sulh (the land of the truce, of cohabitation) has been discarded from Takfirist thinking which, on the other hand, considers any land where man once prayed turned towards Mecca as a land of disbelief (Dar al kufr) to be reconquered on the principle that what has been acquired by Islam remains acquired by Islam (Islamic irredentism). The truce it enjoys can therefore only be temporary, the ultimate goal remaining that this country should one day and definitively this time return to Dar al Islam.

Takfirism does not only target Christians and Jews. It also targets Shiites and Sufis, who are perceived as deviant Muslims. Takfiri ideology also allows for taking up arms against other Sunni Muslims if they refuse the hijra (emigration to Islamic lands) or do not submit to a certain interpretation of Sharia law. Takfirism idealizes the sacrificial death of one who has melted among the enemy. Called inghimasi ("the infiltrator"), he wears a belt of explosives on his person and fights to the point of (self) death, "as a martyr" (shaheed).

The "spiritual" father of Takfirism is Sayd Qotb (1906-1966). This militant of the Muslim Brotherhood *is the one who theorized during a stay in prison the obligation of armed jihad against the established powers, whether Christian or Muslim, marking a schism within Salafism.

It is to him that we owe the idea that "the passage to radical violence can be a religious obligation to fight against the political authority when the latter has lost its Muslim roots."

His ideology was built up in layers from a rereading of several radical historical Muslim theologians, including Ibn Tamiyya (1263-1328), a radical Syrian Hanbalite theologian, who in the particular historical context of the Crusades theorized the call for holy war against non-Muslims. His violent and simplistic sermons were a real success with the popular masses.

We therefore only denounce and call to fight here only those Takfirists whom we stigmatize; but as far as the quietists are concerned, we call to dialogue, directly or indirectly but firmly through the contents of our teaching of the religious fact OF WHICH SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIVITY AND CHARACTER MUST BE WITHOUT COMPROMISE. When I was a child in the 1950s, our country teacher asked us to correct the sentence "Joan of Arc heard voices" with the sentence "Joan of Arc thought she heard voices."

With those who practice taqiya (which is also known in Sunnism) like the Muslim Brotherhood, we call for the utmost caution and the greatest mistrust or lucidity in the debates.

And the same with the Shiite Muslims mutatis mutandis, for as far as the Shiites are concerned, since they have a clergy, a compromise of the same type as that imposed on the Jews by Napoleon in 1806 could be found.

Reactions advised to our readers depending on the case.

Bad Muslims (Muslims who are not very religious). No problem!

Salafists. Direct or indirect dialogues (via teaching) based on objectivity, science and 'history!
Takfiri. No pasaran!

Muslim Brotherhood. Distrust of Sioux and lucidity in debates. Yet we are far from seeing the abyssal intellectual and moral mediocrity of journalists or of the media-political class of today. Rather than learning to fight against common sense or the revolt of the people against the Empire, schools of journalism would do better to teach how to fight and flush out taqiya.

* The Society of the Muslim Brotherhood, shortened in Muslim Brotherhood, is a Sunni Islamic transnational organization founded in 1928 by Hassan el-Banna in Ismailia, northeastern Egypt. Composed of a military branch and an open organization, its official objective is the Islamic revival and the non-violent struggle against the "Western secular hold" and the "blind imitation of the European model" in the land of Islam.

The doctrinal corpus of the Muslim Brotherhood was constituted mainly with the writings of Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), considered one of the most important thinkers of radical Islamism.

The writings of Sayyid Qutb continue to have a strong influence on the Muslim Brotherhood - an influence that has been growing since the new geopolitical situation and the Islamic radicalization of the early 21st century. Qutb is regarded as one of the ideological inspirers of Al Qaeda: he is described as "the father of Muslim extremism," "the father of fighting Salafism."

Don't say you weren't warned !

AFTERWORD IN THE WAY OF JOHN TOLAND.

Pseudo-druids with fabulous initiatory derivation (the famous and indescribable or hilarious perennial tradition) having multiplied since some time; it appeared us necessary to put at the disposal of each and everyone, these few notes, hastily written, one evening of November, in order to give our readers the desire to know more about true druidism.

This work claims to be honest but in no way neutral. It was given itself for an aim to defend or clear the cluto (fame) of this admirable ancient religion.

Nothing replaces personal meditation, including about obscure or incomprehensible lays strewn in these books, and which have been inserted intentionally, in order to force you to reflect, to find your own way. These books are not dogmas to be followed blindly and literally. As you know, we must beware as it was the plague, of the letter. The letter kills, only spirit vivifies.

Nothing replaces either personal experience, and it's by following the way that we find the way.

Therefore rely only on your own strength in this Search for the Grail. What matters is the attitude to be adopted in life and not the details of the dogma. Druidism is less important than druidiaction (John-P. MARTIN).

These few leaves scribbled in a hurry are nevertheless in no way THE BOOKS TO READ ON THIS MATTER, they are only a faint gleam of them.

The only druidic library worthy of the name is not in fact composed of only 12 (or 27) books, but of several hundred books.

The few booklets forming this mini-library are not themselves an increase of knowledge on the subject, and are only some handbooks intended for the schoolchildren of druidism.

These simplified summaries intended for the elementary courses of druidism will be replaced by courses of a somewhat higher level, for those who really want to study it in a more relevant way.

This small library is consequently a first attempt to adapt (intended for young adults) the various reflections about the druidic knowledge and truth, to which the last results of the new secularism, positive and open-minded, worldwide, being established, have led.

Unlike Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which swarm, concerning the higher Being, with childish anthropomorphism taken literally (fundamentalism known as integrism in the Catholic world); our druidism too, on the other hand, will use only very little of them, and will stick in this field, to the absolute minimum.

But in order to talk about God or the Devil we shall be quite also obliged to use a basic language, and therefore a more or less important amount of this anthropomorphism. Or then it would be necessary to completely give up discussing it.

This first shelf of our future library consecrated to the subject, aims to show precisely the harmonious authenticity of the neo-druidic will and knowledge. To show at which point its current major theses have deep roots because the reflection about Mythologies, it's our Bible to us. The adaptations of this brief talk required by the differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, social status, etc. will be to do with the concerned druids (veledae and others?)

Note, however. Important! What these few notes, hastily thrown on paper during a too short life, are not (higgledy-piggledy).

A divine revelation. A (still also divine) law. A (non-religious or secular) law. A (scientific) law. A dogma. An order.

What I search most to share is a state of mind, nothing more. As our old master had very well said one day : "OUR CIVILIZATION HAS NO CHOICE: IT WILL BE CELTISM OR IT WILL BE DEATH" (Peter Lance).

What these few notes, hastily thrown on paper during a too short life, are.

Some dream. An adventure. A journey. An escape. A revolt cry against the moral and physical ugliness of this society. An attempt to reach the universal by starting from the individual. A challenge.

An obstacle fecund to overcome . An incentive to think. A guide for action. A map. A plan. A compass. A pole star or morning star up there in the mountain. A fire overnight in a glade?

What the man who had collected the core of this library, Peter DeLaCrau, is not.

- A god.

- A half god.

- A quarter of God.

- A saint.

- A philosopher (recognized, official, and authorized or licensed, as those who talk a lot in television.

Except, of course, by taking the word in its original meaning, which is that of amateur searching wisdom and knowledge.

What he is: a man, and nothing of what is human therefore is unknown to him. Peter DeLaCrau has no superhuman or exceptional power. Nothing of what he said wrote or did could have timeless value. At the best he hopes that his extreme clearness about our society and its dominant ideology (see its official philosophers, its journalists, its mass media and the politically correct of its right-thinking people, at least about what is considered to be the main thing); as well his non-conformism, and his outspokenness, combined with a solid contrariness (which also earned to him for that matter a lot of troubles or affronts); can be useful.

The present small library for beginners "contains the dose of humanity required by the current state of civilization" (Henry Lizeray). However it's only a gathering of materials waiting for the ad hoc architect or mason.

A whole series of booklets increasing our knowledge of these basic elements will be published soon. This different presentation of the druidic knowledge will preserve nevertheless the unity as well as the harmony which can exist between these various statements of the same philosophical and well-considered paganism : spirituality worthy of our day, spirituality for our days.

Case of translations into foreign languages (Spanish, German, Italian, Polish, etc.)

The misspellings, the grammatical mistakes, the inadequacies of style, as well as in the writing of the proper nouns perhaps and, of course, the Gallicisms due to forty years of life in France, may be corrected. Any other improvement of the text may also be brought if necessary (by adding, deleting, or changing, details); Peter DeLaCrau having always regretted not being able to reach perfection in this field.

But on condition that neither alteration nor betrayal, in a way or another, is brought to the thought of the author of this reasoned compilation. Every illustration without a caption can be changed. New illustrations can be brought.

But illustrations having a caption must be only improved (by the substitution of a good photograph to a bad sketch, for example?)

It goes without saying that the coordinator of this rapid and summary reasoned compilation , Peter DeLaCrau, does not maintain to have invented (or discovered) himself, all what is previous; that he does not claim in any way that it is the result of his personal researches (on the ground or in libraries). What s previous is indeed essentially resulting from the excellent works or websites referenced in bibliography and whose direct consultation is strongly recommended.

We will never insist enough on our will not be the men of one book (the Book), but from at least twelve, like Ireland's Fenians, for obvious reasons of open-mindedness, truth being our only religion.

Once again, let us repeat; the coordinator of the writing down of these few notes hastily thrown on paper, by no means claims to have spent his life in the dust of libraries; or in the field, in the mud of the rescue archaeology excavations; in order to unearth unpublished pieces of evidence about the past of Ireland (or of Wales or of East Indies or of China).

THEREFORE PETER DELACRAU DOES NOT WANT TO BE CONSIDERED, IN ANY WAY, AS THE AUTHOR OF THE FOREGOING TEXTS.

HE TRIES BY NO MEANS TO ASCRIBE HIMSELF THE CREDIT OF THEM. He is only the editor or the compiler of them. They are, for the most part, documents broadcast on the web, with a few exceptions.

ON THE OTHER HAND, HE DEMANDS ALL THEIR FAULTS AND ALL THEIR INSUFFICIENCIES. Peter DeLaCrau claims only one thing, the mistakes, errors, or various imperfections, of this book. He alone is to be blamed in this case. But he trusts his contemporaries (human nature being what it is) for vigorously pointing out to him.

Note found by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau and inserted by them into this place.

By respect for Mankind , in order to save time, and not to make it waste time, I will make easier the work of those who make absolutely a point of being on the right side of the fence while fighting (heroically of course) in order to save the world of my claws (my ideas or my inclinations, my tendencies).

To these courageous and implacable detractors, of whom the profundity of reflection worthy of that of a marquis of Vauvenargues equals only the extent of the general knowledge, worthy of Pico della Mirandola I say...

Now take a sheet of paper, a word processing if you prefer, put by order of importance 20 characteristics which seem to you most serious, most odious, most hateful, in the history of Mankind, since the prehistoric men and Nebuchadnezzar, according to you...**AND CONSIDER THAT I AM THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF YOU BECAUSE I HAVE THEM ALL!**

Scapegoats are always needed! A heretic in the Middle Ages, a witch in Salem in the 17th century, a racist in the 20th century, an alien lizard in the 21st century, I am the man you will like to hate in order to feel a better person (a smart and nice person).

I am, as you will and in the order of importance you want: an atheist, a satanist, a stupid person, with Down's syndrome, brutish, homosexual, deviant, homophobic, communist, Nazi, sexist, a philatelist, a pathological liar, robber, smug, psychopath, a falsely modest monster of hubris, and what do I still know, it is up to you to see according to the current fashion.

Here, I cannot better do (in helping you to save the world).

[Unlike my despisers who are all good persons, the salt of the earth, i.e., young or modern and dynamic, courageous, positive, kind, intelligent, educated, or at least who know; showing much hindsight in their thoroughgoing meditation on the trends of History; and on the moral or ethical level: generous, altruistic, but poor of course (it is their only vice) because giving all to others; moreover deeply respectful of the will of God and of the Constitution ...

As for me I am a stiff old reactionary, sheepish, disconnected from his time, paranoid, schizophrenic, incoherent, capricious, never satisfied, a villain, stupid, having never studied or at least being unaware of everything about the subject in question; accustomed to rash judgments based on prejudices without any reflection; selfish and wealthy; a fiend of the Devil, inherently Nazi-Bolshevist or Stalinist-Hitlerian. Hitlerian Trotskyist they said when I was young. In short a psychopathic murderer as soon as the breakfast... what enables me therefore to think what I want, my critics also besides, and to try to make everybody know it even no-one in particular].

Signed: the coordinator of the works, Peter DeLaCrau known as Hesunertus, a researcher in druidism. A man to whom nothing human was foreign. An unemployed worker, post office worker, divorcee, homeless person, vagrant, taxpayer, citizen, and a cuckolded elector... In short one of the 9 billion human beings having been in transit aboard this spaceship therefore. Born on planet Earth, January 13, 1952.

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3. History of the pact with gods volume 1.
4. Druidism Bible: history of the pact with gods volume 2.
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8. From Fenians to Culdees or "The Great Science which enlightens" volume 1.
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26. Rhetoric : the treason of intellectuals.
27. Small dictionary of druidic theology volume 1.
28. From the ancient philosophers to the Irish druid.
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36. Third part volume 4: What is Islam? Sounding the set QUR.HAD.SIR. and SHAR.FIQ.MAD.
37. Couiro anmenion or small dictionary of druidic theology volume 2.

Peter DeLaCrau. Born on January 13rd, 1952, in St. Louis (Missouri) from a family of woodsmen or Canadian trappers who had left Prairie du Rocher (or Fort de Chartres in Illinois) in 1765. Peter DeLaCrau is thus born the same year as the Howard Hawks film entitled "the Big Sky". Consequently father of French origin, mother of Irish origin: half Irish half French. Married to Mary-Helen ROBERTS on March 12th, 1988, in Paris-Aubervilliers (French department of Seine-Saint-Denis). Hence 3 children. John Wolf born May 11th, 1989. Alex born April 10th, 1990. Millicent born August 31st, 1993. Deceased on September 28th, 2012, in La Rochelle (France).

Peter DELACRAU is not a philosopher by profession, except taking this term in its original meaning of amateur searching wisdom and knowledge. And he is neither a god neither a demigod nor the messenger of any god or demigod (and of course not a messiah).

But he has become in a few years one of the most lucid and of the most critical observers of the French neo-druidic or neo-pagan world.

He was also some time assistant-treasurer of a rather traditionalist French druidic group of which he could get archives and texts or publications.

But his constant criticism both domestic and foreign French policy, and his political positions (on the end of his life he had become an admirer of Howard Zinn Paul Krugman Bernie Sanders and Michael Moore); had earned him moreover some vexations on behalf of the French authorities which did everything, including in his professional or private life, in the last years of his life, to silence him. Peter DeLaCrau has apparently completely missed the return to the home country of his distant ancestors.

It is true unfortunately that France today is no longer the France of Louis XIV or of Lafayette or even of Napoleon (which has really been a great nation in those days).

Peter DeLaCrau having spent most of his life (the last one) in France, of which he became one of the best specialists,

even one of the rare thoroughgoing observers of the contemporary French society quite simply; his three children, John-Wolf, Alex and Millicent (of Cuers: French Riviera) pray his readers to excuse the countless misspellings or grammatical errors that pepper his writings. At the end of his life, Peter DeLaCrau mixed a little both languages (English but also French).

Those were therefore the notes found on the hard disk of the computer of our father, or in his papers. Our father has of course left us a considerable work, nobody will say otherwise, but some of the words frequently coming from his pen, now and then are not always very clear. After many consultations between us, at any rate, above what we have been able to understand of them.

Signed: the three children of Peter DeLaCrau: John-Wolf, Alex and Millicent. Of Cuers.