

THIRD PART VOLUME II: FIRST APPROACHES TO 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, in their repertory (cf. the conclusion of the tale of the plunder of the castle of Maelmilscothach, 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 Milscothach iartain cech ni dobrethaigsid suide sin etir ecnaide 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]gad 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.

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PROLOGUE.

The fact is that there is no relevant archeological, epigraphic or numismatic evidence from the time of Muhammad, nor is there any reference to him in non-Muslim sources from the period previous to 632. For once, therefore, let us not begin with the beginning but with the end or, more precisely, with the subsequent stage, which is attested by testimonies other than Muslim legend or hagiography, first by the apologetic Christian text of the year 634, of North African origin, entitled *Doctrina Jacobi nuper baptizati* ("Doctrine of Jacob, recently baptized") which proves nothing with regard to Muhammad himself but proves that in 634 Common Era there were men and women using his name and not recognizing themselves in Judeo-Christianity.

N.B. The word Agarenes or Hagarenes means, in the Hebrew Bible, a non-Israelite people, descended from Abraham by Hagar, the Sarah's Egyptian servant, and later in the Byzantine literary language the Muslims, but Agarenes may designate, in Byzantine literature, all Muslim peoples, including non-Arabs such as Turks.

For Michael Cook (*Hagarism. The Making of the Islamic World*, Cambridge University Press, 1977); six clues mark the beginning of Islam and of the Quran: the appearance of an Arabic term alongside the Aramaic word to designate the companions of Muhammad (*muhajirun* instead of *mahgraye*); the end of the work in common between "Jews" and Arabs, and the collection 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 qibla, political conflicts centered on the themes of the Mahdi and the imamate, 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 erasure 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 evolution of the Muslim profession of faith, the shahada, bears the traces of an expression that 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 Gnostic people. It presents an early version of the profession of faith of Judeo-Christians and Gnostic people 1).

"I testify that God is one, and there is no God except him."

The expression is identical with the beginning of the initial shahada of Islam.

The first disciples of Muhammad testified indeed of their belief by saying: "I testify that there is no God but God, and that he has no partner." This expression could be reconstructed from graffiti and first unofficial Arabic epigraphs, almost always engraved on stone. It was formulated at a time when neither the word Muslim nor Islam existed, and Muhammad was not presented as a prophet.

Beit Shean is a very ancient city, probably founded around 3000 BCE, 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 partner, Muhammad is his prophet".

Between 690 and 735, therefore, there were two attestations or two types of shahada: "I testify that there is no God but God, and that he has no partner. Muhammad is his prophet"; but also: "I testify that there is no God but God, and that he has no partner. Christ is his prophet."

On the same Dome of the Rock, other inscriptions are in fact on the inside.

-On the south face, it is: "Muhammad is the servant of God and his messenger."

-On the north side there is: "O God, look to your messenger and to 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, is only the Prophet of God."

Precision "only" is a challenge to Christianity. There are two statements, "Jesus is his prophet and his servant." "Muhammad is his prophet 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 prophet."

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 form, in three propositions, which added Muhammad to the early expression.

In the papyri, the coins, the graves, the inscriptions and the Muslim texts, the mentions of Muhammad as a prophet are therefore progressively 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-term 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 retain only two: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is his prophet."

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 very little apt to become a slogan or a rallying sign. The affirmation of the single god, fundamental, was to be kept. Muhammad messenger of God and transmitter of the Quran was the heart of the new version. The third term could therefore be eliminated. The specification "He has no partner" was no longer so indispensable, especially since this expression could be considered as a consequence of the affirmation of the divine oneness. It is therefore this term that has been obscured, thus giving rise to the shahada we know today.

N.B. Warning to the reader. Look out, we present here the hypothesis of Hagarism only in order to incite our public to free oneself of the received ideas, in order to make its own opinion about the rise of Islam. The thesis of Patricia Crone and Michael Cook can be summarized as well. Jews settled in the area after the fall of Jerusalem manipulated or exploited local Arab tribes based on an alleged common origin going back to the mythical Abraham; in order to recapture the Holy Land and Jerusalem. Hence the appearance of Arabs who Judaized, or were Judaizing, even Judeo-Christians. The failure of this attempt (poorly documented by Crone and Cook) would have given rise to a more Arab-centered drift: an Arab national religion whose foundation would have been attributed to a prophet referred to as "the praised one" (Muhammad) portrayed as a new Moses. Let us remember from all this that there was at the beginning of Islam or at least very early, a tendency to place oneself in harmony with Abraham but also Jesus.

Other authors evoke the hypothesis that the Quran consisted initially in 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. It is true that the Koran is desperately 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 accustomed to 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.

Like the Christian New Testament, the Quran we know today is only a purely human construction, built as and when needed, refined or changed according to circumstances. For example, by the invention of the verses known as nassikh or abrogating (repealing verses known as mansukh or repealed). As we have seen, abundant evidence, from the hadiths and Muslim commentaries, show that there were many variations of reading between the copies of the Quran made by the companions of Muhammad. This goes against Muslims' frequent claim that the current text of the Quran is only a faithful copy of a divine original.

Quran and hadiths are therefore suspected texts, texts that were "adapted" to the ambitions of caliphs and imams. The caliphs recommended, for example, very early, to have recourse to "readings" of the Quran based on the oral tradition rather than on the written text.

Even in scriptio plena 2), the meaning of the Quran is often obscure. The introduction of diacritic 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.

The guiding conjectures were essentially formed by Tabari in 896, nearly three hundred years after Muhammad's death.

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. 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.

To return to the very life of Muhammad, many details are "problematic" such as the miracles attributed to him or that mark his epic: the miracle of the moon split in two (Quran 54, 1-2), the miracle of the spider and the two doves, the water he makes spring for his 1500 companions (Reported in Sahih Al-Bukhari, 3576, and Sahih Muslim, 1856), his night journey to Jerusalem mounting his magical horse

Buraq followed by his ascent to heaven (isra and miraj) etc. According to the sycophants of Islam in this respect (pitiful rivalry or pathetic jealousy), Muhammad beats the hero of the initiatory novel called "Gospel" (Yehoshuha Bar Yussef for the register of births), once and for all.

Bowersock, Glen Warren, Peter Robert Lamont Brown and Oleg Grabar think that these many details surrounding Muhammad's life of Muhammad represent a tradition of living narrative that is likely to have developed orally for a considerable period before it was given even in a relatively fixed form. Ideally, one would like to be able to check such an account against contemporary evidence.

1. Homily pseudo-clementines, 17, 15 and 16.
2. Writing of words with the inclusion of the usually omitted vowel letters.

THE PROBLEM OF THE SOURCES THEREFORE (NOT THAT OF ZAM ZAM).

Who is guilty of more wrong than he who forges a lie against God , or says: I am inspired, when he is not inspired in anything (The Holy Quran chapter 6 verse 93)?

The life of Muhammad was narrated late, about a century after his death, at the beginning of the Abbasid period, by a man named Ibn Ishaq bin Yasar ben Khiyar (707-773) born in Medina. Ibn Ishaq collected his information from the descendants of Muhammad's parents or friends, and then he wrote a book called *Sira nabawiya* or *Sirat al-Rasul* God (biography of the envoy of God). The original text written by Ibn Ishaq having been lost, all we have left is the review made by someone named Ibn Hisham, a few years later.

Modern historians all consider that, for the time of Muhammad, with the work of Ibn Ishaq, that of Tabari is also unavoidable. Doctor, mathematician, Tabari is based on the quotation of testimonies, whose uninterrupted thread (isnad) goes back to the favored witness. We have kept only about a tenth of them, in the form of a summary.

He wrote his chronicles a few years before his death. They were translated into Persian a few years later by the Vizier Bal'ami, but in a version cut off with the chains of transmitters and authorities on which Tabari was based. This Persian translation gained a considerable renown, was in turn translated into Turkish, and gradually replaced the original of which there are only a few fragments. The current Arabic version is actually based on the text of the Persian translator Bal'ami. Compared to Ibn Ishaq's book, that of Tabari is easier to read for a modern reader because it is much shorter and, as Zotenberg specifies it, rewritten in the modern way (the reading of the chains of transmitters in Ibn Ishaq is tedious for the lay reader). On the other hand, for a modern historian, the source that constitutes the work of Ibn Ishaq does not suffer from the passage by an intermediate translation (in Persian for Tabari), makes possible a work of cross-checking thanks to the very numerous chains of transmitters, and offers a much larger volume of documents. According to Hermann Zotenberg, the main historians have drawn from the Tabari Chronicle and for the history of the Umayyads, it remains the most important source of our knowledge.

The *Sira* or biography of Muhammad by Ibn Ishaq. The manuscript of Ibn Ishaq is now lost, a complete copy probably survived until the first third of the thirteenth century. The *Sira* of Ibn Ishaq is better known under the name of *Sira* of Ibn Hisham because the text of Ibn Ishaq having been lost, it is more known today only by the subsequent reconstitution that made Ibn Hisham, who has clearly specified throughout his work what was from Ibn Ishaq ("Ibn Ishaq says:") and what he added himself ("Ibn Hisham said:"). According to Abdurrahman Badawi, almost all of his notes deal with genealogy and philology, and Ibn Hisham has very little added on the historical narratives. The vast majority of historical content is from Ibn Ishaq: the name of *Sira* by Ibn Hisham is therefore abusive, if not faulty. He has, on the other hand, cut away, much, it seems. By his own admission he removed all that was before Ismael, the stories where there is no mention of Muhammad, which does not concern the object of the book or that does not explain it, the verses and poems "that no scholar in poetry knows," he eliminates passages by replacing them with "It is not appropriate to speak about it, the mention harms some people, al-Bakka'i does not recommend that we report" etc. Based on seventeen manuscripts, the reference edition of the *Sira* by Ibn Ishaq / Ibn Hisham is that of Ferdinand Wüstenfeld published in 1858-1859 (volume 1 containing the Arabic text of Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham) and 1860 (volume 2 containing an introduction, critical notes and indexes), and the most common reference translation is that of Alfred Guillaume, published at Oxford University Press in 1955.

Note that these sources, despite their obvious lack of historical reliability, remain unavoidable, because if we ignore them, the story of the rise of Islam would be contained in two sentences. Let us not forget, however, that Ibn-Ishaq's biography of Muhammad was mainly written to legitimize the power established at the time of its writing, that is, that of the Umayyad dynasty. At the very least, it is obvious that nothing in this *Sira* written by Ibn-Ishaq was to embarrass or disturb the caliph ruling at that time.

According to the great French specialist Alfred Louis de Premare, we must completely re-read these sources of Islamic origin on which we relied until now, to integrate them into a more open perspective (there are non-Muslim writings describing the period and making possible to better understand the Islamic corpus that has undergone long changes later to these events) as many data may be

questionable (we have at our disposal more than a million and a half million hadiths often contradictory); Ibn Hisham's Life of Muhammad in particular, which is a very political caliphal order, and which replaces that of Ibn Ishaq which was lost, is not reliable, in any case not verifiable. All life of Muhammad is therefore only a web of conjectures, do not forget it!

Most of the tradition was built during the Abbasid period, in the ninth century, when Islam tries to revisit its origins, too evanescent, to better face the other doctrines. From then on, all that remains is to invent. The historian's luck lies in the gigantic amount of texts produced on the subject. Sometimes difficult to access, they often contain erratic narratives, poorly controlled comments, unintentional information, that the censorship of tradition could not eliminate.

Historiography or hagiography built around the character of Muhammad, mostly by Persians converted to Islam, continues to guide our contemporaries in this field ; but a massive fact remains: the oldest dated Muslim sources we have on the history of the beginnings of Islam, do not date back less than two centuries from the events they claim to tell; and the few non-Muslim sources (Christian or Jewish) contemporary with the facts offer us a different view. Henry Lammens even went so far as to reject the entire biography of Mahomet as nothing more than a conjectural and tendentious exegesis of some biographical passages of the Quran, invented or worked out by generations of later believers. Let us consider non-Muslim sources precisely. Texts in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Armenian, Georgian, Syriac and Persian were recently found and translated. These documents give information about the beginnings of Islam dating from 10 to 30 years after the events (thirty years for the History of Heraclius by Sebeos) and not 200 like most Muslim texts, and sometimes even contemporaries of the events described.

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

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

A strong and vigorous scepter to break the pride of all the barbarians, and especially of the Saracens who, on account of our sins, have now risen up against us unexpectedly and ravage all with cruel and feral design, with impious and godless audacity. More than ever, therefore, we entreat your Holiness to make urgent petitions to Christ so that he, receiving these favorably from you, may quickly quell their mad insolence and deliver these vile creatures, as before, to be the footstool of our God-given emperors.

[The following 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. Unwillingly, indeed, contrary to our wishes, we are required to stay at home, not bound closely by bodily bonds, but bound by fear of the Saracens. (Christmas Sermon, 506 [p. 70])

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

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

The present circumstances are forcing me to think differently about our way of life, for why are [so many] wars being fought among us? Why do barbarian raids abound? Why are the troops of the Saracens attacking us? Why has there been so much destruction and plunder? Why are there incessant outpourings of human blood? Why are the birds of the sky devouring human bodies? Why have churches been pulled down? Why is the cross mocked? Why is Christ, who is the dispenser of all good things and the provider of this joyousness of ours, blasphemed by pagan mouths (ethnikois tois stomasi) so that he justly cries out to us: "Because of you my name is blasphemed among the pagans," and this is the worst of all the terrible things that are happening to us. That is why the vengeful and God-hating Saracens, the abomination of desolation clearly foretold to us by the prophets, overrun the places which are not allowed to them, plunder cities, devastate fields, burn down villages, set on fire the holy churches, overturn the sacred monasteries, oppose the Byzantine armies arrayed against them, and in fighting raise up the trophies [of war] and add victory to victory. Moreover, they are raised up more and more against us and increase their blasphemy of Christ and the church, and utter wicked blasphemies against God. Those God-fighters boast of prevailing over all, assiduously and unrestrainedly 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. (Holy Baptism, 166-167 [pp. 72-73])

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

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

Bishop of the Bagrationi, in his life of Heraclius, describes Muhammad as establishing a community including both Ishmaelites (Arabs) and Jews, with the Abrahamic origin as their common platform. Very little is known about the life of Sebeos. His dates of birth and death are unknown, but historians agree that he lived in the seventh century. He attended the court of Khosro II of Persia, then participated in the fourth council of Dvin in 645 as "Bishop of Bagratouni" or "Bagrationi." He would have written a History of Heraclius, but the authorship of this work is questioned.

In any case, this is what chapter XXX of this History of Heraclius, written about 661, tells us.

"I shall discuss the line of the son of Abraham: not the one born of a free woman, but the one born of a serving maid, about whom the quotation from Scripture was fully and truthfully fulfilled, "His hands will be at everyone, and everyone will have their hands at him" [Genesis 16. 11-12].

Twelve peoples representing all the tribes of the Jews assembled at the city of Edessa. When they saw that the Persian troops had departed leaving 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 the land of the Arabs to the sons of Ishmael. The Jews called the Arabs to their aid and familiarized them with the relationship they had through the books of the Old Testament. Although the Arabs were convinced of their close relationship, they were unable to get a consensus from their multitude, for they were divided from each other by religion.

In that period a certain one of them, a man of the sons of Ishmael named Muhammad, became prominent merchant [t'ankangar]. A sermon about the Way of Truth, supposedly at God's command, was revealed to them, and he taught them to recognize the God of Abraham, especially since he was informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history. Because the command had come from on High, he ordered them all to assemble and to unite in faith. Abandoning the reverence of vain things, they turned towards the living God, who had appeared to their father—Abraham. Muhammad legislated that they were not to eat carrion, not to drink wine, not to speak falsehoods, and not to commit adultery.

He said: "God promised that country to Abraham and to his son after him, for eternity. And what had been promised was fulfilled during that time when He loved Israel. Now, however, you are the sons of Abraham, and God shall fulfill the promise made to Abraham and his son on you. Only love the God of Abraham 1), and go and take the country which God gave to your father Abraham. No one can successfully resist you in war, since God is with you..."

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 [tokosiwk' pahanjest'suk' i ken zkalealn]".

The emperor rejected this. He did not provide a fitting response to the message but rather said: "The country is mine. Your inheritance is the desert [k'oy vichak zharhangut'ean anapatn]. So go in peace to your country." And 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" (allusion to the battle of Mu'tah in 629, Quran 30: 1-4?)

What to think of this story by Sebeos quite contradictory in itself ??

Muhammad appears in it as an orator or a leader presenting himself to his interlocutors as a preacher; who speaks not by expounding revelations allegedly reported by the angel Gabriel, but by reminding Jews of the God of Abraham and of the story of Moses! He therefore presents himself as a kind of Jew, but not a traditional Jew, for "they were divided from each other by religion."

Muhammad, this Ishmaelite (Arab) merchant, leader of the oasis is "informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history." He orders the elementary morality - not to speak falsehoods, and not to commit adultery. - a Jewish ban on dead animals, and another, the prohibition of wine. He is a talented speaker because he convinces Jews from Edessa to rally to his religion and to place themselves under his authority, persuading them that they will not give up Judaism by supporting his Reformation. Which shows to what extent confusion was still possible at the time.

It is important besides to remember here that Muhammad never claimed to found or bring a new religion. On the contrary, he has always pretended to intervene only to remind a forgotten ancient ancestral religion (the true one, according to him, of course).

With, of course, two different cases.

When he spoke to Judeo-Christians, Muhammad contented himself with saying that he came in order to rectify some of their memory lapses or some of their mistakes, even deliberate falsifications.

But it could be only otherwise when he spoke to pagans.

There, Muhammad had to teach them everything and to persuade them at first that the true religion of their ancestors had been that of Abraham of Isaac and Jacob; but that it was then completely denatured or canceled, whence a guilty fall in paganism.

As for the new divine revelations of which Muhammad made himself he intermediary, they were only intended to help him in his mission.

The word "Muslim" appears for the first time on the Dome of the rock, in 691, it enters the official use towards 720, it is used on a coin for the first time in 768, and on a papyrus in 775 only. Linguistic research shows that the terms Islam and Muslim do not come from Arabic, but from Aramaic.

Muhammad was therefore not a Muslim, since the word Muslim, like that of Islam, appears for the first time in the Islamic empire only in 691, on the Dome of the rock, sixty years after the death of Muhammad and it took so long to assert itself that it appears in non-Muslim documents only one hundred and fifty years after the death of the founder.

According to Michael Cook and Patricia Crone, its followers, during the life of Muhammad and at least ten years after the death of their leader, called themselves Mahgraye, a word that belongs to the Syriac language and has as Arabic equivalent Muhajirun. Its use was exclusive at least until 644. This term is attested from 640 in Syriac, and in 642 in Greek in the form *magaritai*, derived from Syriac. The meaning of this term is rather uncertain, and the notion of emigration that it evokes is perhaps to be taken in the metaphorical sense (converts, dissenters, those who retreat in the desert, those who do not see themselves in the society that surrounds them, those who live among themselves, or apart ...)

One of the first examples of the use of the word "mahgraye" in Syriac to describe Muslims is found in the book called "The Book of Caliphs" ending with the year 724. It uses the word "tayyayé" to evoke Muslims, with the exception of a passage where it is said that the empire founded by Muhammad is due to the Mahgraye. This passage indeed seems to come from a source much older and close to the beginnings of the conquest.

In 639, as we had the opportunity to see, there was a controversy between the Jacobite Patriarch John I of Antioch and emir ? governor of Homs, Syria, a former companion of Muhammad. In his 1915 translation, Father François Nau specifies that it was Amr ibn al As, the future conqueror of Egypt, and that the debate took place on May 9, 639. The patriarch wrote a report of this discussion that he sent to various Christian leaders in the region quite concerned about the turn of the events and this writing has reached us.

The emir, very anti-Christian, tried to convince the patriarch to rally the religion of the Arab army, and to bring his flock. It is remarkable that, throughout the course of the controversy, not once does the emir mention either the Quran, Muhammad, or Islam. His purpose was to convince the patriarch that Christ was indeed a prophet, but not God himself.

"Because we know that you are anxious and worried about us, due to the matter for which we have been called to this area, with our Father, Master, the Patriarch, the blessed and venerable, we inform you for your love that on the 9th of May of this month, on holy Sunday, we approached the glorious commander, the Amir.

The blessed Patriarch, the Father of the community, was questioned by him: "Whether the Gospel is one, and whether it is the same, without differences, which all Christians in the world hold to"?

The blessed one answered that it is one and the same among the Greeks, the Romans, the Syrians, the Copts, the Cushites, the Indians, the Armenians, the Persians, and the rest of all peoples.

Again he asked, "Since the Gospel is one, why is the faith different?"

The Blessed one responded, "Just as the law (Torah) is one and the same and it is accepted by us Christians and by you Mahgraye, and by the Jews and by the Samaritans, and each is distinct in belief; likewise concerning faith in the Gospel, each heretical group understands and interprets it differently, and not like us."

There too, the companions of Muhammad have for sacred book not the Quran, but the Torah, they are called mahgraye apparently and not Muslims.

This term is a Syriac word whose translation into Arabic is Muhajir, which means exodus, or emigration, perhaps in the metaphorical sense of the term (dissent, secession, life apart). The silence of the governor of Homs on Muhammad suggests that before that date, 639, Muhammad had never claimed to be a prophet, nor had he been presented in this way.

In other words, those who were to become Muslims did not yet draw their doctrinal references from the Quran, did not consider Muhammad as a prophet, his ideas or his words were not a doctrinal reference; and they did not bear the name of Muslims but that of emigrants, not in Arabic, moreover, but in Syriac: Mahgraye. Islam did not exist yet.

James of Edessa (d.708) three quarters of a century after the death of Mahomet wrote a letter to John the Stylite in which he also gives the Muslims their first name, Mahgraye.

"That, therefore, the Messiah is in the flesh of the line of David . . . is professed and considered fundamental by all of them: Jews, Mahgraye and Christians. . . . Mahgraye too, although they do not know nor wish to say that this true Messiah, who came and is acknowledged by the Christians, is God and the son of God, they nevertheless confess firmly that he is the true Messiah who was to come and who was foretold by the prophets; on this they have no dispute with us."

Ten to fifteen years after the death of Muhammad, the word mahgraye was translated by Muhajirun, which means "emigrants" in Arabic, and in the next half-century, in common use, the converts of Muhammad had the two names. In all the official Muslim documents, until around 720, the only term used was Muhajirun. The term Muslimum, with which we made Muslims, appears around 720 in the official Muslim texts, and around 775 in the Christian texts.

More convincing about the true origins of Islam is the strange use of the word "Sabeans" in the Quran and the beginnings of Islam, almost used as a synonym for Muslim. There are three kinds of Sabeans that should not be confused.

- The Sabeans in the land of Saba (Yemen).

- The Sabeans of Haran (present-day Turkey). A pagan syncretism.

- The Mandeans Sabeans who were, and still are (in Iraq) a Judeo-Christian and Gnostic-inspired group whose main rite is baptism.

They are the ones who are mentioned in the Quran, in rather favorable terms.

Chapter 2 verse 62: " Lo! Those who believe , and those who are Jews, and Nassara, and Sabeans - whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does right - surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them." Chapter 5 verse 69: " Lo! those who believe, and those who are Jews, and Sabaeans, and Nassara - Whosoever believes in God and the Last Day and does right - there shall no fear come upon them neither" .

Chapter 22 verse 17: " Lo! those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Sabaeans and the Nassara and the Magians * and the idolaters - Lo! God will decide between them on the Day of Resurrection. Lo! God is Witness over all things."

The only way to explain this place of honor attributed by Muhammad to the Sabaeans in question is to admit that he made them borrows comparable to those he made to Judaism and Christianity, a hypothesis that imposes itself as much as the contemporaries of Muhammad discovered, between this Sabeanism and the nascent Islam, analogies so strong that Muhammad and his first disciples were sometimes called Sabaeans. Wellhausen supposed that it was to Sabeanism that the ablutions which are previous to each one of the Muslim's daily prayers were borrowed. Since the ablutions have in none of the enumerated sects the particular form they have in Islam, it is to be believed that the Sabeans of the Quran constituted a Gnostic sect, distinct from the previous ones, and otherwise unknown. These particular Sabeans would have disappeared early, absorbed by Islam.

In short, a totally unexpected image of Muhammad or of the beginnings of Islam emerges. The Armenian chronicler of the 660s, Bishop Sebeos, in his life of Heraclius, describes Muhammad as establishing a community including both Ishmaelites (Arabs) and Jews, with the Abrahamic origin as their common platform.

Although there is no doubt that a man namedexisted, that he was a trader, that something significant happened in 622; there is no mention of Mecca, and the mention of the Quran makes no appearance until the last years of the seventh century.

* The Magians are the Zoroastrians or Mazdeans.

THE ASBAB AL NUZUL OR CIRCUMSTANCES OF REVELATION.

Who is guilty of more wrong than he who forges a lie against God or says: I am inspired, when he is not inspired in anything (The Holy Quran chapter 6 verse 93).

We believe that it is time to take men for responsible citizens who must have access to relevant information. From there, doubt, critical thinking, reflection and scientific work, can be implemented. Without a true effort to distribute these facts, there can be no possible dialogue between cultures and religions. Ignorance is the breeding ground for lies, manipulation and hypocrisy. We uns, today's Tolandian "high knowers," like those of Lucian of Samosata's time, have exactly the same point of view in this matter as the website entitled "the skeptic's annotated Quran": to better now Muhammad and the first Islam thanks to the modern historical methods. A historical site in the scientific sense of the term and bringing together a large number of works that have completely renewed our knowledge of the early years of Islam.

The main historians behind this project are...

Patricia Crone of Princeton University.

Michael Cook of the University of London.

Christoph Luxenberg of the University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands.

Not forgetting, of course, Alfred-Louis de Premare of the University of Aix-en-Provence and Edouard-Marie Gallez of the University of Strasbourg. My French pen-friends insist a lot about them.

These progresses in historical research have made it possible to base several solid conclusions, of which this opusculum does not pretend to be the discoverer, but only a reporter among others.

Below is a summary of the philosophy behind this website, to be consulted imperatively.

It shows that Islam is based on a political and religious system built, in two centuries for the most part, by very many people, under the overall control of the caliphs, from the Messianic and Millenarian ideas Judeo-Christian. This rather heterogeneous group kept on for fourteen centuries under cover of a power that forbade the application of reason to Quran and Islam; suppressed or massacred dissidents, destroyed discordant documents, "closed the gates of interpretation." It was the caliph Hakim who forbade in 1029 to practice *ijtihad*. Since that date, throughout Dar al Islam (in the land of Islam), any new proposal for interpretation (*bida*) is prohibited. It is only allowed to repeat what has already been said. This prohibition is actually applied, until today. Attempts to circumvent it are suppressed by violence, and are not taken into account by Muslims when they are done in free countries.

But all these protections are falling. Scientific tools exist, researchers are numerous, the Islamic suppression can be exerted only in Dar al Islam (in the land of Islam). In the developed world, Islam is powerless to prohibit or even slow down research.

In these three fields, Islam, based on the Umma that imposes the primacy of the collective over the person, is foreign to the modern world.

Finally, in its relationship with non-Muslims, Islam, for a thousand years, divides the world between Dar al Islam, land of submission to Islam, and Dar al Harb, land of war; in other words, countries where Islam is not the dominant religion; it thus bases its relationship with others on strength, not on love or even on respect: one neither loves nor respects those whom one claims to coerce.

We often hear that Islam is a religion like any other, that is to say, according to the dictionary, "a set of beliefs or practices whose object is the relationship of men with the divine or the sacred." Islam is indeed a religion, but it is also something else. Islam is at the same time *din*, *dunya*, *dawla*, religion, society, state. The Quran contains a large number of civil provisions: the status of women, that of *dhimmis*, the laws that forbid a Muslim to change his religion, those that forbid non-Muslims to publicly express their faith, and so on. These provisions and many others form the backbone of a society.

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul was a Nobel Prize in literature in 2001. He traveled to non-Arab Muslim countries, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan and Malaysia. These countries contain about 40% of all Muslims in the world, twice as many as all Arabs together. V.S. Naipaul published his observations in two books, *Among the Believers: An Islamic Journey* in 1981 and *Beyond Belief: Islamic Excursions among the Converted Peoples* in 1998. Here is what we can read in it: "No colonization had been so thorough as the colonization that had come with the Arab faith ... It was an article of the Arab faith that everything before [it] was wrong, misguided, heretical; there was no room in the heart or mind of these believers for their pre-Mohammedan past."

In Indonesia and Malaysia, local tradition architecture is now being replaced by Arabic architecture for places of worship, because the Malays and the Indonesians themselves consider that their own architecture is not Islamic enough.

The decisive confrontation takes place in the heads of Muslims, not between them and the rest of the world. It looks more like a civil war inside each person than an outside war. The modern world does

not besiege Islam, it has already begun to invade the interiority of every Muslim woman, every Muslim man.

A Muslim woman, a Muslim man, can reject modernity only by declining their own rationality, their own freedom, their own affectivity, the development of their own individuality. Some agree to pay this price, others do not. All today are facing a choice, to remain in a system that has been frozen for more than a millennium, manufactured by the power of the caliphs fourteen centuries ago to serve as an ideology for an empire based on armed force; or to join the values of humanity underway and to participate in the construction of the future.

We also have exactly the same point of view in this area as the website "Islam: Documents." Islam: Documents, presents to the public of all cultures, a database of hundreds of documents on the origins of Islam, its history and its current situation. We recognize willingly have had many problems with its French, we ask humbly forgiveness to the descendants of Vercingetorix, but we think nevertheless have managed to get out of it. Phew!

To understand the science of the circumstances of the revelation (asbab al nuzul) and of the abrogate or abrogating (al nasik wa al mansukh) it is important to know the following four sciences:

The clear and the equivocal: (al mohkam / motashabeh).

The Medinan and the Meccan.

The specific and the general.

The correspondence between the verses.

The al nasik wa al mansukh can be defined as the operation of repealing a precept through a religious argument and replacing it with another dictate. In order to better understand the reasons for this kind of abrogation, it is important to remember that the Quran was revealed in stages, according to the events and conditions that prevailed at the time of Muhammad (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam), and this, in order to facilitate to the first Muslims the transition between their pre-Islamic habits and practices and the noble path brought by the Quran. The purpose of this gradual revelation was therefore to be good for the soul of the new Muslims, in order to prepare them to accept the divine precepts that were revealed in successive ways. Thus throughout the period of Revelation, with the evolution of the living conditions, mentality and background, some revealed commandments were repealed to be replaced by commands more in tune with the new situation of the Muslims.

Within Islam, the challenge is to determine which verses are repealed and which are not. In theory, the most recent ones repeal the oldest dealing with the same subject, the last revealed giving the conclusion of the sequence of verses. However, the order of the verses as transcribed in the Quran is not the chronological order of their revelation. In this perspective, the debate on the order of the revelation of verses becomes a major issue.

A first set of data on the biography of Muhammad will be therefore formed by what is called in Arabic "asbab al-nuzul" or "circumstances of revelation."

The Quran is a corpus whose rare historical indications are only allusive: no narrative structure specifies who or what it is.

It was therefore necessary to provide the Quranic texts with the narrative framework which they lacked and to be able to say that it was in such and such a circumstance that such passage of the Quran, such chapter, such verse, was "descended" on the prophet. Hence the name of asbab al-nuzul, literally "occasional causes of the descent" of the Quranic verses, more usually translated as "circumstances of revelation."

We find a little the same phenomenon with the New Testament, and some passages of the Gospels; which have been obviously introduced into the original text to justify later positions in rituals or organization. See our essay on or more exactly against Christianity.

The ancient biographers of Muhammad lived at a time too remote from his epoch to have real data; far from being objective, these elements were based on tendentious fiction; moreover, their purpose was not even to know things as they really had happened, but to construct an ideal vision of the past. On the empty canvas of the verses of the Quran that needed to be explained, the scholars embroidered with great boldness scenes adapted to the desires or ideals of their particular group.

"La Sira" or "Life of Muhammad" is based on allusions or expressions contained in the Quran, but with the corrective that this substrate is not always identical, nor always so firm; so that the Midrash that is based on it also varies in meaning and appearance according to the date of the Quranic passages invoked. On the meaning of the word Midrash, see our essay on Judaism or against Christianity.

The Sira would be therefore only a kind of gigantic Midrash, in the image of the narrative comments of the Jewish exegetical tradition on the biblical texts. In any case, it is "a meaning" that it wants to deliver to men, and "History" must give way to this meaning. It is not, therefore, a document of history itself, but at best an interpreted history; it's "the Islamic history of salvation," John Wansbrough will say. Details of the life of Muhammad were invented to support legal doctrines.

As we have seen, the oldest elements we have on the life of Muhammad were compiled by Ibn Ishaq in 750, in other words, one hundred years after his death. The question of authenticity arises all the more because the original form of Ibn Ishaq's work is lost; and is available only in pieces in a later review done by Ibn Hisham (died in 834, two hundred years after the death of Muhammad). The many historical events supposed to have been the cause of some revelations (for example, the Battle of Badr), owe most likely some of their characteristics, occasionally their very existence, to the Quran. It is clear that storytellers were the first to invent the historical background of particular verses. The problem is that most of their information is contradictory. Just as in the case of Jesus, the further we get from the date of the facts, the more we have details or specifications. Waqidi (died in 823), who wrote many years after Ibn Ishaq (died in 768) always gives precise dates, names and locations, when Ibn Ishaq does not have any; stories of what triggered the expedition, various information to give flavor to the event. It is not surprising in these conditions that scholars love Waqidi very much: where else is it possible to find such marvelously precise information about everything you want to know? But, since this information was all unknown by Ibn Ishaq, their value is extremely doubtful. And if the false information has accumulated at this rate between Ibn Ishaq and Waqidi, it is difficult not to conclude from that that even more [false information] had to pile up over the three generations separating Ibn Ishaq from Muhammad.

There are other elements concerning the life of Muhammad, equally unreliable: the hadith, because there too, they were recorded very late, 100 or 200 years after the facts and we may legitimately express serious doubts about the authenticity or honesty of many of them. In general, the hadiths are not reliable sources because they were written down two and a half centuries after the fact; and during this time the caliphs had every opportunity to interfere in every way possible to change or modify the contents of it.

The hadiths are "sayings," "words," or "stories" ascribed to Muhammad, collected by an isnad (earwitness) and which would have arrived orally before being recorded in books named Sahih (the authentic, the trustworthy) or Sunnan. There are hadiths called qods that is to say sacred or divine. This word refers to hadiths reported by Muhammad, but which are directly attributed to God; they are thus distinguished from the traditional hadiths attributed to Muhammad himself.

The hadiths are classified as follows:

- Sahih: an authentic hadith is known as sahih (trustworthy) when it gets the agreement of all the specialists of the Tradition (muhammaditun).
- Hasan: a hadith can be known as hasan (good).
- Dhayf: a hadith can be known as dhayf (weak). In this case, it is usually apocryphal.
- Forged: a hadith can be known as mawduhu (invented) when it has no transmitter chain (isnad) even weak.

These last two categories constitute what Muslim scholars call the (mardud) inadmissible hadiths.

There are six main collections of hadiths among Sunnis, two of which are considered excellent, and they are called both sahih. The best known are those who follow below.

- The sahih of Al-Bukhari (810-870). Collection of 2602 hadiths (9082 with the repetitions).
- The sahih of Muslim (819-875).
- The collection of Malik Ibn Anas (712-795). Founder of the Malikite School (Madhhab). The al-Muwatta.
- The collection of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, founder of the Hanbalite School (madhhab). A Musnad.
- The collection of Abu Dawud (817-889): Kitab as-Sunnan.
- The collection of Ibn Maja (824-887). Sunan Ibn Maja.
- The collection of At-Tirmidhi (824-893). Sunan At-Tirmidhi.
- The collection of Al-Nasa'i (830-916).
- The collection of Shafi'i and Hanafi: Mishkat Sharif.

Shiites, too, have their collections of later hadiths, including the words of the imams of the line of Muhammad by Ali and Fatima.

- The collection of Yaqub al-Kulayni (864-941).
- The collection of Saduq Ibn Babuyeh (918-991).
- The collection of al-Hasan al-Tusi (995-1067).

Let us note lastly that the Ibadi (dissidence of the Kharijites) admit Sunni hadiths. However, the main collection accepted by them is the following one below.

- The al-Jami'i al-Sahih, containing barely 1005 hadiths.

As we have seen, there are six major compilations of hadiths, six "correct" or authentic collections of traditions, accepted by Sunni Muslims. The sahih of Bukhari al-Juti (810 - 870), the sahih of Muslim (819 - 875), the sunnan of Tirmidhi, the sunnan of Abu Dawud, the sunnan of Nasa'i, the sunnan of Ibn Maja. But there are also other sources authoritative or regularly consulted by Muslim scholars.

Among these are Ibn Hanbal (780 - 855) and Imam Malik (712 - 795). They each gave rise to a Legal School (Madhab) still followed today by a large part of Sunni Muslims.

Bukhari is the most famous compiler of hadiths, the one with the highest authority. He learned by heart, it is said, 200,000 hadiths, among which 2700 appeared to him genuine. He compiled his collection from oral traditions and published it two hundred and fifty years after the death of Muhammad. This collection is so prestigious that it is one of the two books on which a Muslim can put his hand in order to take an oath. The other book being the Quran.

The collection of Bukhari contains a little less than 8000 hadiths, many of which are identical, transmitted by several different chains of witnesses. There are 2762 different hadiths, or around 4000 if we count as different some texts which present only minimal differences.

Just after this author is Muslim, author of another collection of Hadiths. These two collections are declared sahih, which means solid, genuine. Apart from these two collections, no other Muslim book has been attributed this qualifier.

The sahih of Bukhari and Muslim are considered excellent, but it is good to remember that all these sources are actually very late and that we can therefore have serious doubts about them. Bukhari died 238 years after Muhammad, while Nasa'i died more than 280 years later!

Summary of Joseph Schacht's thesis on this subject: the isnad [chains of transmitters] going back directly to Muhammad, began to be widely used only around the time of the Abbassid revolution, half of the eighth century. Ironically, the more an isnad seems elaborate or formally correct, the more likely it is to be false. In general, he concludes, no existing hadith can be safely attributed to Muhammad, although some of them may still be rooted in his teaching. Schacht's arguments are supported by a formidable list of references, which cannot be easily dismissed.

Ignaz Goldziher, (1850-1921) for his part, has shown that a large number of hadiths, accepted even in the most rigorously critical Muslim collections, were forgeries of the late eighth and ninth centuries; and as a consequence, that the isnad [chains of transmitters] which supported them, must also be entirely fictitious. But if the isnad of the hadiths is suspect, then the isnad linked to the historical elements must be too. As Goldziher himself said it, "All intimate knowledge of the vast collection of hadiths arouses skeptical caution." He considers most of the hadiths as the result of the religious, historical and social development of Islam during the first two centuries. The hadiths would be useless as a basis for scientific history, and can only be used to study the leanings of the early Muslim community.

Hadiths were made for even the coarsest ritual details. Under the Abbasids, the manufacture of hadiths multiplied, with the express purpose of proving the legitimacy of their own clan against that of the partisans of Ali. Storytellers earned their living by inventing entertaining hadiths that the gullible masses accepted with amazing ease. But to attract the crowds, the storytellers stopped at nothing. The manipulation of hadiths has been reduced very early to the level of an economy: travels [in search of Hadiths] for example.

Traditions of hadith were expressed in a polemical way in order to refute a doctrine or a contrary practice. Schacht calls besides these traditions "counter traditions." The doctrines, in this polemic atmosphere, were frequently brought back, towards higher authorities: the traditions of the successors of Muhammad became traditions of the companions of Muhammad, and the traditions of the companions traditions of Muhammad himself.

Many Muslims are besides aware of the fact that fakes abound in this field. Even the six so-called authentic collections of hadiths, compiled by Bukhari and the others, are not as rigorous as one would have hoped. The six have variable criteria for considering a hadith as genuine or not; and it is wrong to think that the canonical authority of the collections of Bukhari and Muslim is due to the exclusively correct character of their contents, or to the result of scholarly investigations. Even a critic of the tenth century pointed to the weakness of two hundred of the traditions incorporated in their work.

Let's stop there this shooting gallery! It is understood; therefore, we may say of the life of Muhammad what the French Renan wrote of the biography of Jesus: "If we constrain ourselves, by writing the life of Jesus, to put only sure things forwards, it will be limited to a few lines."

In order to offer to our readers eager to know a little more than a few minimal lines on the subject, let's say it all clearly; we will nevertheless venture to try to use, but with the utmost caution:

- From the Quran.
- From the Sira (biography) of Muhammad due to the pens (reed pens) of Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham, Tabari, and others.
- From some hadiths of Bukhari, Muslim, etc.
- From some other works historically or encyclopedically oriented, such as the book of Ibn Kalbi, entitled Kitab al-Asnam, or the one entitled Muruj adh dhahab, of al Masudi.

The information on the life of Muhammad therefore is not lacking, but they are almost all Muslim, and marked by later apologetic or theological traits. The French Renan believed that the life of Muhammad, unlike that of Jesus, had taken place in the full light of history. It was an illusion risen from the very detailed nature of the traditional biography of Muhammad (Sira), but which is justified in no way by the critical study of sources.

The first of these sources being the Quran as we have seen.

The second is formed by a series of texts which enter the genre Sira (of life of Muhammad) and maghazi ("military campaigns" of Muhammad or of the first Muslims).

To this also are to be added the Quranic comments that give information, themselves also often questionable, about the circumstances of the revelation of certain chapters or Quranic verses: asbab al-nuzul.

Apart from the Quran, all these texts, even if they contain an old background of tradition, were collected and written, at best, in the eighth or ninth century. All require the researcher to resort to internal criticism. We have exactly the same problem with the four gospels and the beginnings of Christianity: most of the documents, including the four gospels, have been written at the very least several decades after the events; and not by direct witnesses, but by believers of the second generation.

The historian who looks the slightest bit into the biography of Muhammad in fact, is therefore very quickly confronted with a strange phenomenon, that of the duplicates. A certain number of episodes are reported to us so differently according to the sources that many authors come to regard them as distinct and separate events; though very similar in substance and even in detail. Unless, of course, it's the opposite. That said, once again, let's go, and let's start from the beginning, the pre-Islamic period; this, this one, in addition to its intrinsic merits, has the merit of clarifying the advent of Islam!

TO CITE A BLASPHEMY IS NOT BLASPHEME (Persian proverb) OR: HOW TO SPEAK OBJECTIVELY OF MUHAMMAD?

Mahamet or Mahomet (see below), a form passed by Latin or Turkish, of the Arabic Muhammad, "the Praised one," "the one who is the subject of praise," is indeed a figure that seems of a perfectly confirmed historicity. In Muslim circles, it is obviousness about which there is no doubt. Today, this leads some (the salafi) to want to live, to dress, to eat, to care for his beard or to brush his teeth; as they believe Muhammad did at the beginning of the seventh century in Arabia, in his hometown Mecca or, later, in his exile city: Yathrib / Medina.

The strength of the evidence is so powerful that, combined with the weakness of the stake - since it is a belief of the "others" -; non-Muslims, including in educational circles, have few questions about the historicity of Muhammad; or on all that the Muslim tradition of yesterday and today tells about it, in wordy narratives. We do not care to notice that this is not a character accessible to the direct historical assessment, but a figure to the construction of which each Muslim generation has also contributed. The almost sedimentary accumulation of gathered narratives focusing on this man is fascinating to study. As such, these narratives undoubtedly belong to a historical approach. But from the point of view of the current human sciences, they speak less of the Muhammad of history than of the generations who produced these representations and reconstructions. Each projects himself into his prophet and appropriates his figure, while believing that it is telling the truth of the character. From a social and religious point of view, it is an illusion, necessary perhaps, but an illusion anyway. Social psychology or contemporary anthropology are quite capable of deciphering these collective attitudes. They have nothing original. Besides. As foreign as Islam may sometimes appear in our Western societies, culturally - and even in spite of themselves - still very much pervaded with Christianity, it falls nevertheless under the category of religions like others. So, let us not write more about Muhammad than "around 610, first visions: first revelations transmitted by the Angel Gabriel"! Nor, concerning Abraham, that "he is the ancestor of the Prophet who descends from him by Ishmael."

In both cases, there is clearly a serious shift from the legend and myth to history.

These religious legends colonize surreptitiously the territory of history, without people beware of it. It has therefore become urgent to question the notion of historical fact. What we are told about a founding figure such as that of Muhammad, in a religious tradition of a millennium and a half, is this directly some history? Certainly not! We are told stories that represent a figure to which believers seek to identify.

As for the historians of today, who are interested in the same figure, woe to those who believe they can do without a contextualization of the character they are studying. By using the mythical stories that are spread (for their own use, and not for ours) some authors involved in the defense and depiction of their religion. We do not reach agreement with the myth. One identifies and studies it as such. And that's all!

With regard to the beginnings of Islam, today's historical history and its sister discipline, anthropology, are so absent; as much in the Muslim representation - to which one cannot reproach it, even if regrets it - that in the scholarly or semi-scholarly representation; that it is easy to be trapped by the almost inexhaustible mass of traditional stories about the rise of Islam and Muhammad.

The medieval Arabic sources we have, and on which we work, do not directly convey History, even if they strive to make themselves credible and can produce an effect of reality (case of any successful fiction). They are representations of history that respond to imperatives specific to their authors and their time. These works, which are used as a basis for the works of Arabist scholars today, do not speak to us beyond the centuries. They talk to themselves and their contemporaries. They answer questions that were asked in their time, and not ours.

Where is therefore the Muhammad of History of whom it can be supposed - only be supposed - that he existed? He remains to be discovered. Man of his time and his society, western Arabia of the beginning of the seventh century, it is still a character almost unknown and entirely to rebuild.

As for the religious leader as represented by the Muslim societies that have succeeded one another in time, in very varied environments and backgrounds, his various figures too, are to be discovered, each for itself. Just like the Qurann, the character of Muhammad has been the subject of many readings, each of which had its reasons, which the historian and the anthropologist of today must try to separate. The hypotheses to propose are to be built only according to the available documents and sources. We must also expect besides that the answers remain partial, as are the mutilated statues or shards that

archaeologists bring to light under the tells in the Middle East. Unlike the theologian or apologist, historians and anthropologists are not required to answer questions if they lack elements to provide a satisfactory answer.

So how to teach this absence that the historical discourse is far from filling? Faced with an overflow of legends that wrongly look history, we must try to take things into consideration. The early Muhammad is far from being the triumphant prophet and the model figure of later visions. But this necessary step back is all the more difficult to implement that we are attacking, not the ancients whose beliefs are past, but a still quite living environment; which defends its representations and his beliefs, and who wants to make it a timeless and absolute truth. 1)

The naivety of faith discovered and lived by young people [7 to 77 years old as it is said] can make them totally closed to the necessarily relativistic perception of a historical approach. This form of navel-gazing of an "I believe therefore I know therefore I say true," can only be countered by strategies very delicate to implement. They involve precise and in-depth knowledge. They ultimately pass by the direct use of the language of the texts concerned, what is not within the grasp of everyone. It is not a matter of undoing the believing, but of confronting it with others who have thought otherwise. 2)

At the very least, and despite the difficulties or uncertainties, it is necessary to be aware of the nature and extent of the problem. The beginnings of Islam and the character of Muhammad still largely belong to a terra incognita. What we believe we know must be subject to the criteria of anthropological and historical research. In order to reach the first layer of a probable historical reality, it is necessary to some extent to un-Islamize Muhammad, even the Quran itself. An overestimation of the Islam of the first period leads indeed to erase the early background, and to dehumanize its history.

So one could hypothesize a proto-Muslim phase that would respond to the sociologically tribal age of Islam, as it developed in Arabia itself, during the lifetime of Muhammad and a few decades later.

It is clear that, since, in the wake of the great conquests, Islam migrated out of its traditional habitat to form an empire, the religious and sociological conditions were no longer of the same nature. This is largely in a break with its origins and on the conversion lands of the Near East and Iran; that the Muslim religion rose and developed, that its dogmas were formed and that the figure of Muhammad appeared. The historical approach thus takes the opposite of the traditional religious view, which inscribes the representation of its history in an unfailing relationship of fidelity or continuity with its founding past.

1) See the use made today of anti-racism in order to, with the active or passive complicity by non-enforcement of laws - of political authorities - silence any radical criticism of Islam.

2) Such should be the spirit of the teaching of religious facts, and nothing else.

DOCUMENT 1: THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH ON MUHAMMAD IN THE 13th CENTURY.
(Entry dedicated to Pope Saint Pelagius in the golden legend by Jacobus de Voragine.)

It was about the year of the Lord 610, when Phocas was dead and Heraclius reigned in his place, that Mahomet a false prophet and sorcerer, began to lead into error the Agarenes or Ishmaelites, whom we call Saracens. This, as we read in a history of Mahomet and in a certain chronicle, came about in the following way.

A very famous cleric 1), who was angry because he had been unable to obtain the honors he desired in the Roman Curia, took flight to the regions beyond the sea and drew large numbers of followers after him by his deceptions. He met Mahomet and told him that he wished to put him at the head of his people. He then put seeds and the like into Mahomet's ear, and trained a dove to pick them out. The dove became so accustomed to this that whenever it saw Mahomet, it lighted on his shoulder and thrust its beak into his ear. Then the cleric called the people together and told them that he would put over them the man whom the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, would point out. He secretly released the dove, which flew straight to Mahomet, perched on his shoulder, and put its beak to his ear. Seeing this, the people thought it was the Holy Spirit descending upon him and bringing him the words of God. In this way, Mahomet deluded the Saracens, and under his leadership they invaded the kingdom of the Persians and swept through the eastern empire as far as Alexandria. This at least is the popular story, but the following account is closer to the truth. Mahomet drew up his own laws, into which he inserted certain things from both the Old and the New Testaments. He lied to the people, telling them that he had received these laws, with their elements from the sacred Scriptures, from the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove they often saw flying about over his head. The fact was that in earlier years he had plied the trade of a merchant and had traveled through Egypt and Palestine with his camels, dealing with Christians and Jews from whom he learned the Old and New Testaments. That is why the Saracens use the Jewish rite of circumcision and abstain from eating the flesh of pigs. To give a reason for the latter observance, Mahomet said that the pig was spawned from camel dung after the Deluge, and therefore was unclean and not to be eaten by a clean people.

The Saracens believe, as do Christians, in one and only one all-powerful God, creator of all things. The false prophet also taught, blending truth with error, that Moses was a great prophet but Christ a greater, the highest of all prophets, born of the virgin Mary by the power of God without the seed of man. He also said in his Alcoran that when Christ was a child, he created live birds out of the slime of the earth. But then Mahomet mixed in some poison, teaching that Christ had not truly suffered or risen from the dead: it was some other man who looked like Christ who had done this or at least had died.

Then there was a matron named Cadigan who ruled the province of Corocanica. Seeing this man who was accepted and protected by Jews and Saracens alike, she took it that the divine majesty was hidden in him, and, being a widow, she married him. Thus Mahomet became the ruler of that whole province. By his feats of magic he fooled not only the lady in question, but also the Jews and Saracens, so completely that he could publicly proclaim himself to be the Messiah promised in the Law. Thenceforth, however, Mahomet began to suffer frequent epileptic seizures. Seeing this happen, Cadigan was exceedingly sorry that she had married a most unclean man and an epileptic. Wanting to make her feel better, he soothed her with such speeches as this: "I often contemplate the archangel Gabriel as he talks with me, and I cannot bear the brightness of his face, so I grow faint and fall down." And she and the others believed it.

Elsewhere, however, we read that it was a monk named Sergius who instructed Mahomet. Sergius had fallen into the Nestorian heresy and been expelled by the monks, whereupon he went to Arabia and joined company with Mahomet. Still another source tells us that he was an archdeacon in the area of Antioch and was (so they say) a Jacobite: this sect practices circumcision and preaches that Christ was not God but only a righteous and holy man, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. All this the Saracens affirm and believe. In any case it was Sergius who (they say) taught Mahomet much about the Old and New Testaments.

Mahomet's father and mother had died and he spent his childhood years in his uncle's care. For a long time he, like all Arabs, practiced the cult of idols. In his Alcoran he testifies that God said to him: "You were an orphan and I adopted you, you long remained in the error of idolatry and I led you out of it, you were poor and I made you rich." The whole Arab people, along with Mahomet, worshiped Venus as their goddess, which explains why the sixth day of the week is sacred to them, as the Sabbath is to Jews and the Lord's day to Christians. Mahomet, enriched by Cadigan's wealth, was so emboldened that he thought of usurping the kingship of the Arabs;

but he saw that he could not achieve this by violence, particularly because he was looked down upon by his fellow tribesmen who were taller than he. So he decided to present himself as a prophet, in order to attract by his feigned holiness those whom he could not subjugate by brute strength. Thus Mahomet by pretending to be a prophet, gained control over the entire Arab nation, and they all believed him either willingly or for fear of the sword. This account is truer than what was said about the dove, and is therefore to be accepted.

Sergius then, being a monk, wanted the Saracens to wear the monastic habit, namely, the long outer garment without cowl, and to make many genuflections and pray at regular times, as monks do; and since Jews prayed facing west and Christians facing east, he wanted his people to face south. The Saracens observe all these rules today. Mahomet promulgated many laws dictated to him by Sergius, who took a great part of them from the Mosaic law. Thus the Saracens often bathe themselves, especially as a preparation for prayer: they wash the secret parts, the hands, arms, face, mouth, and all the body's members so as to be clean when they pray. In their prayer they confess one God, who has neither equal nor like, and Mahomet his prophet. They fast for one whole month in the year. For that month they take food at night but not during the day, so that from the hour when they can distinguish black from white until sunset no one dares to eat or drink or soil himself by contact with his wife. Once the sun has set and until dawn the next day, they are allowed food and drink and intimacy with their own wives. The sick and infirm are not bound by the law of fast. They are commanded to go once a year, as a profession of faith, to the house of God, which is in Mecca, and there to adore God. They must also walk around this house in seamless garments and throw stones through the windows by way of stoning the devil. They hold that Adam built this house and that it was a place of prayer for all his children and for Abraham and Ishmael until finally Mahomet took it over for himself and all his peoples. They may eat all meats except pork, blood, and carrion. They may have four legitimate wives at one time, and may repudiate any one of them and take her back again as many as three times, but must never exceed the number of four wives. It is licit for them, however, to have as many concubines or female slaves as they wish, and to sell them when they wish, unless one or the other is pregnant. Their law allows them to take wives from among their own kin so as to increase the offspring of the bloodline and to tighten the bond of friendship among them. When there is a contest over property, the person bringing the action must prove his case by the testimony of witnesses; the defendant must establish his innocence by oath. A man who is caught with an adulteress is stoned together with her; one who sins with any other woman receives eighty lashes.

Mahomet, however, made it known that God had sent him a message with the angel Gabriel, giving him permission to approach other men's wives in order to beget virtuous men and prophets. It happened that one of his serving men had a beautiful wife, whom he had forbidden to talk with his master. Then one day he found her in conversation with Mahomet and promptly sent her away. The prophet welcomed her and counted her among his other wives; but, fearing that people might murmur about this, he pretended that a paper had been brought to him from heaven, in which it was written that if someone repudiated his wife, she would become the wife of anyone who accepted her. The Saracens observe that as law to this day. [Editor's Question: Is this an allusion to the beautiful Zenob, wife of Zayd, Muhammad's adopted son?]

A thief is punished the first and second times by being whipped, the third time a hand is cut off, the fourth he loses a foot. Abstinence from wine at all times is prescribed. To all who observe these and other commandments, God, they declare, has promised paradise, a garden of delights watered with full-flowing streams, in which they will have everlasting dwellings. They will not suffer from cold or heat will dine on every kind of food will find instantly before them whatever they may ask for, will be clothed in multicolored silken robes. They will enjoy the company of the most beautiful virgins and will lie down amid all delights. Angels will stroll about among them acting as cupbearers, carrying gold and silver vessels and serving milk in the gold and wine in the silver, saying: "Eat and drink in gladness!"

Mahomet says that in paradise they will have three rivers, of milk, honey, and the best spiced wine, respectively. They will also see most beautiful angels, so large that it is a day's journey from one of their eyes to the other. For those who believe neither in God nor in Mahomet there will be, they assert, the pain of hell for ever. No matter what sins one may have committed, if on the day of his death he believes in God and Mahomet, the prophet will intervene at the judgment and the sinner, they say, will be saved.

The benighted Saracens affirm that this false prophet had the spirit of prophecy above all other men, and that he had ten angels helping and protecting him. They add that before God created heaven and earth, he had the name of Mahomet before his eyes, and that if Mahomet had not been destined to exist, neither heaven nor earth, nor paradise would ever have existed. They also

falsely assert regarding him that the moon once came to him, and he took it in his lap and divided it into two parts, then put it together again.²).

Moreover, they say that the poisoned flesh of a lamb was once set before him. The lamb spoke to him, saying: "Beware and do not eat me, because I have poison in me."³). Yet after many years poison was given to him and he perished.

(Entry dedicated to Pope Saint Pelagius in the golden legend by Jacobus de Voragine.)

1) The Nestorian monk Sergius or Bahira according to the versions. But it's only a hypothesis. It is certain that the bits of knowledge on Eastern Christianity of the time shown by Muhammad had to come from somewhere but why a single human source and not several? Also what's embarrassing in this whole story is...

-In Christian sources their obvious hostility a priori.

-In Muslim sources, their taste for the supernatural and the miracle.

2) Quran chapter 54 verse 1. Perhaps an eclipse.

3) Hadiths relating to the capture of Khaybar in 628.

DOCUMENT No. 2: THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF THE SAINTS OF THE LAST DAYS ON MUHAMMAD.

By James Toronto, Associate Professor of Islamic Studies and Comparative Religion, at Brigham Young University.

What is an appropriate Latter-day Saint attitude towards other religions' claims of divinely inspired prophets, scriptures, visions, and miracles?

"Be respectful of the opinions and feelings of other people. Recognize their virtues; don't look for their faults. Look for their strengths and their virtues, and you will find strength and virtues that will be helpful in your own life." THE GLORY OF GOD IS INTELLIGENCE!" (sic).

B. H. Roberts (1857–1933) also spoke on this doctrine: "While the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is established for the instruction of men; and it is one of God's instrumentalities for making known the truth yet he is not limited to that institution for such purposes, neither in time nor place. God raises up wise men and prophets here and there among all the children of men, of their own tongue and nationality, speaking to them through means that they can comprehend. ... All the great teachers are servants of God; among all nations and in all ages. They are inspired men, appointed to instruct God's children according to the conditions in the midst of which he finds them.

President Hinckley's emphasis on building interfaith understanding is rooted in fundamental gospel principles—humility, charity, respect for eternal truth, and recognition of God's love for all—taught by Jesus Christ and by ancient and modern prophets. The Savior repeatedly affirmed Heavenly Father's boundless concern for the well-being of each of His sons and daughters, as in the parable of the lost sheep (see Luke 15). In the parable of the good Samaritan, He taught that one of the keys to true discipleship is to treat others kindly and compassionately in spite of political, racial, or religious differences (see Luke 10:25–37). He denounced intolerance and rivalry among religious groups and the tendency to extol one's own virtues and deprecate the spiritual status of others. Addressing a parable to those who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others," Jesus condemned the pride of the Pharisee who prayed, "God, I thank you, that I am not as other men are" and commended the humility of the publican who implored, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (see Luke 18:9–14).

[Editor's note. Let us acknowledge James Toronto, to begin his hagiography, for actually choosing one of the best logia (singular logion) attributed to the character Jesus; the parable where he says he prefers the humble mortals aware of their limits to hubristic saints full of themselves.

For it is not those men, or those women who speak of God every day, who go to church every Sunday, and change their private home - private home, which is also as it happens, that of their spouse - ; in a sanctuary with walls covered with pious images, who are the best. The humble, unpretentious mortal who tries somehow to live as a man worthy of the name, but by going to Mass only once a year (or less); is better than a bigot sure of her good right and of her share of heaven after death. It also seems to us finally that this lesson of humility could have been usefully meditated by the Muslims, and that starting with Muhammad].

Contrary to Western civilization's stereotype of Muhammad as a false prophet or enemy of Christians, Muslim sources portray a man of unflinching humility, kindness, good humor, generosity, and simple tastes. Though he smiled often, it is said he seldom laughed because, as one famous hadith (report of Muhammad's sayings or actions) states, "If you knew what I know you would cry much and laugh little." His gentle humor is evident in the following story:

"One day a little old woman came to him to ask whether old wretched women would also go to Paradise. 'No,' he answered, 'there are no old women in Paradise!' Then, looking at her grieved face, he said with a smile: 'They will all be transformed in Paradise, for there, there is only one youthful age for all!'"

Muhammad dispensed wise and practical advice to followers. When a man asked if he needed to tie his camel up, since he already trusted in God's help and protection, Muhammad replied: "First tether it, and then trust in God." Some reports indicate that Muhammad's family were poor and often hungry, only able to afford coarse bread at times. His statement, *faqri fakhri*, "My poverty is my pride," reveals his joy in simple pleasures, and this saying was later adopted as a slogan by Muslim ascetics. He was especially fond of children, allowing his two young grandsons to climb on his back while he was performing prayers. A man once criticized him for kissing his grandson Hasan, saying, "I have 10 boys but have never kissed any of them." Muhammad answered, "He who does not show mercy will not receive mercy."¹)

In his last speech in the mosque in Yathrib/Medina, given on the day he died, Muhammad displayed humility and magnanimity in bidding farewell to his community after more than 30 years of sacrifice on their behalf: "If there is any man whose honor I might have injured; here I am to answer for it. If I have

unjustifiably inflicted bodily harm on anyone, I present myself for retribution. If I owe anything to anyone, here is my property and he may help himself to it. ... Nobody should say: 'I fear enmity and rancor of the Messenger of God.' I nurse no grudge towards anyone. These things are repugnant to my nature and temperament. I abhor them so."2)

For Muslims, hell cannot be eternal, thanks to Muhammad's intercessory powers. No Muslim will remain in hell forever, regardless of the seriousness of his faults and this, thanks to Muhammad.

This concept of the non-eternity of the hell sentences is a very strange idea that is very similar to that of the druids on the subject. For them, hell did not exist or at least could only be a, provisional, intended for certain individuals, before their reincarnation on this Earth, state of being.

Here is what T. R P. Hughes says in his entry on the word "intercession" (Arabic Shafa'ah) in his Dictionary of Islam.

The statements of Muhammad, as contained in the Traditions, are as follows. " He is most fortunate in my intercession in the Day of Judgment, who shall have said from his heart, without any mixture of hypocrisy, * There is no deity but God. "

"Three classes will intercede on the Day of Judgment, the Prophets, the Learned, the Martyrs." (Mishkat al-masabih, book 33, chapter 12).

« I will intercede for those who shall have committed great sins."

According to the Sunnis, the intercession of Muhammad is specially for those who have committed great sins (ahlu 'l kaba'ir), for the purpose of removing punishment ; but the Mu'tazilahs say the intercession of Muhammad is for the increase of merit, and not for the prevention of punishment (Sharh 'i Afuwaqif p. 588).

Pious Muslims, therefore, strive to follow the example given by Muhammad in all aspects of life: the manner of dressing, the toilet care, the table manners, the religious rituals, and the kindness to others. Muslim sources have multiplied the charisma, even the miracles that took place around his person from the cradle (as in the case of Jesus). Although the Quran makes him a mortal like the others, with time he became the object of a true idolatrous cult, having his own relics (his coat, his sandals ...). The third big traditional Muslim festival is indeed the mouloud /mawlid [al-mawlid an-nabawiya] the feast that commemorates his birth. This Muslim Christmas is celebrated during the fortnight previous to the birthday itself, the 12th day of the month of Rabi al Awal, third month of the Muslim calendar. In Egypt, for example, processions take place in the streets of towns and villages, with a lot drums and tambourines. Honey cakes are made as well as various colored pink or green candies. In Morocco, the festival of the mouloud was introduced in 1292, by the sultan Abu Yaqub Yussuf an-Nasr. Today, the mouloud festival is a holiday. This is not a canonical feast, it is even considered heretical in Saudi Arabia by some Muslim fundamentalists.

Historical documents reported through continuous chains of reporters going back to the genuine sources dating back to the time of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) and his Companions - may God be pleased with them -; recorded the smallest details of the Prophet's youth (peace and blessings of God on him) and the events he experienced during his childhood and youth. Muhammad (in Arabic "the praised one " the one "who is praised") was born in 570 in Mecca north-west of the Arabian Peninsula.

Asked about himself, the Prophet (saws) will say one day: "I am the fulfillment of the vow made by my father Abraham and the happy announcement made by Jesus. And my mother, when she was pregnant with me, one day saw a great light spring from her." Unlike other women, Amina felt nothing of the pain that usually accompanies women during pregnancy. The Prophet (saws) was born by leaning on his hands and raising his head to heaven. He was already circumcised and his umbilical cord was already cut, the angels themselves washed him and marked him with the seal of the prophets on the back, between his shoulders (Sheikh Salman Al-Qadah) 3).

Origin of the first name.

One day when the grandfather of the child, Abd al-Muttalib, was traveling in Syria, accompanied by three other men, they met on the way a rabbi who asked them which city of the Arabian peninsula they came from. When he knew that they were coming from Mecca, he told them that one day their prophet would come out of their city, and that he would be called Muhammad. Hoping everyone, it is a member of their family, they all decided to give that name to their next son or grandson who would be born and particularly Abd Al-Muttalib for his grandson (born from Abdallah his son and Amina his daughter-in-law).

The Muslim references indicate that after his birth, his breastfeeding was carried out by a named Halima As Sa'diya; for the great Meccan families then used to entrust their children to the women of the Bedouins, so that they might nurse them in the desert, they will be pervaded by their eloquence, and get taller in nature.

These references also tell us about the signs that appeared to the nurse and her husband after they welcomed the newborn baby at home. Their situation went from misery to ease; their sheep, until then rather puny, were changed into a remarkable dairy, and Halima herself now had breasts overflowing with milk. It is also said that the nurse's ass became the fastest in the caravan, and that her camel began to give more than enough milk for the whole family. Muhammad only sucked one of his nurse's breasts and always left the other to his milk brother; the sheep and ewes that Halimah brought back to the fold were always satisfied with their pasture, whereas this place generally gave nothing to the other animals.

[What the Muslim theologians deduce. This proves that Muhammad, according to his name Muhammad, was indeed the one who is protected by God. And this divine blessing followed the child wherever he went].

The young Muhammad, however, behaved like all the other children of his age. It is reported that one day, for a reason that the narrators do not mention, he bit the shoulder of Shayma, his suckling sister, with such vigor that the trace remained all his life. But she did not have to regret it! Later on, during an expedition, the Prophet's army made a certain number of prisoners, among them there was Shayma, his foster sister justly. When she then reminded to Muhammad of the incident which had taken place, showing her the mark which remained on her shoulder, she was immediately treated by him with all the consideration due to a blood sister.

His mother died when he was barely six years old.

Orphaned in early childhood, he lived a life of poverty as a youth, working as a herdsman for his family and neighbors, an occupation that gave him ample time and solitude to contemplate the deeper questions of life.

In Mecca Muhammad gained a reputation quickly as a trusted arbiter and peacemaker as indicated in the following account: "At one time the Quraish [Muhammad's tribe] decided to rebuild the Ka'ba [sacred shrine in the city], to reset the stones above the foundations. In one of the corners they wanted to put the black stone, but could not decide who should have the honor of placing it there. They would have quarreled violently if [Muhammad] the young man they all admired and trusted had not come by. They asked [him] to settle the dispute. He told them to spread a large cloak and place the black stone in the middle. They did so. Then, he asked a man from each of the four clans who were in dispute to take hold of a corner of the cloak. In this way, they all shared the honor of carrying the stone."

Khadija, she was a widow who was 15 years older than him and had made a fortune in the caravan trade, knew of his reputation for honesty and hard work, and she made the proposal of marriage that turned out to be a successful and happy one, producing four daughters and two sons. For the next 15 years, Muhammad was engaged with Khadija in running the family business and raising their family. Various anecdotes (hadiths) revealing the character of Muhammad.

Abu Dawud tells us that a Meccan named Abdallah ibn Abi'l-Hamsa, one day had asked Muhammad to wait for him in a street of the city, then, having forgotten it, only remembered it the day after tomorrow. He ran to the meeting place and found Muhammad still waiting for him. Legend or reality ?? Another Meccan, Qays ibn al-Said, reports that he was in trade contact with Muhammad for a time, and that he never had better partners. "If I told him anything during his trip, he would not go home until he had scrupulously settled what he owed me. On the other hand, if he confided something to me on my trip, when I came back, when all my other clients were asking me for news of their own affairs, Muhammad asked me, first of all, about my health and if all was well."

A trader from the Zubayd tribe came one day to sell something in Mecca. Amr ibn Hisham, later nicknamed Abu Jahl - about whom we will have besides, many incidents to recount - forbade the other traders to negotiate with him, and offered him, on the other hand, for his merchandise, a ridiculously low price. The influence of Amr ibn Hisham was such then in Mecca that no one dared to offer a better price for what he had to sell. The shocked Zubayd man then went to see Muhammad, who took his goods at the price he wanted (at the price asked by the owner), but then, of course, had a heated argument with Amr ibn Hisham, whose bad temper was proverbial. This incident was the first in a long series that would distance them from each other, to the point of making any reconciliation impossible.

The same Amr ibn Hisham bought one day something from a man of the Irash tribe, and would not pay what was agreed. The seller went to the Kaaba, and began to complain about him to everyone. A

bad joker therefore suggested to the Irashite to tell Muhammad, who was present, while adding that he alone could settle his affair with Amr ibn Hisham. It was only a mockery, the bad relations between the future prophet and Amr ibn Hisham having already become proverbial. The Irashite, who did not know him, went to Muhammad and asked him to help him. Muhammad got up at once, and, accompanied by the Irashite, went to Amr ibn Hisham.

After asking the reason for this visit, Amr ibn Hisham immediately paid what he owed the seller.

Later, he told his friends, surprised at such behavior, that when Muhammad knocked on his door, his whole house quaked on its foundations; and that he had seen behind him a giant camel, furious and enraged, with foam in the mouth. "If I had waited only one while for paying what I owed, this giant camel would have devoured me," he added.

Editor's note. We are still somewhat surprised by the reaction of Amr ibn Hisham who, in the episode of the miracle of the moon, appears on the contrary as a very realistic rationalist skeptic. (He attributes what the Meccans thought to see to a form of mass hallucination similar to that later of Fatima in Portugal in 1917, or localized hypnosis, see chapter 54 verse1. The Quran is very brief on the subject, but the hadiths of the later tradition tell us more about this miracle. An eclipse?)

The evolution of the economic, social and political conditions of Arabia during the time of Muhammad aroused a deep state of dissatisfaction.

The growing role of money, especially in Mecca, created social imbalances that shook tribal values. It seems that Mecca has become a real tax haven for big business men. Among the noble Arab families, for whom only the flawless genealogy and the pride of the name count, wealth is insolent. We can therefore understand that at the beginning of the sixth century, an Arab from Mecca felt "called" for a reforming this society where the widow and the orphan were despoiled, the weak stripped, the poor despised or humiliated.

Halimah, his old nurse, was very happy to see that Muhammad had a beautiful wife, a rich home, and all that was needed for a decent life. Her daughter-in-law treated her with great respect. Suhayl tells us that when Halimah came to see Muhammad after his marriage, Khadija gave him several camels.

According to Ibn Saad, Halimah also came one day to complain about the drought with Khadija, and this time she got from her 40 sheep, plus a camel.

It was during this period also that Muhammad often retreated into the solitude of the desert to pray, meditate, and worship. He had become dissatisfied with the corruption, idolatry, and social inequities that plagued Mecca; he sought for a higher truth that would provide peace, justice, and spiritual fulfillment for him and his people.

Like a certain number of Quraysh of his time, and especially his grandfather Abd al Muttalib, or at the example of certain Christian ascetics; Muhammad indeed since a long time used to retreat in a nearby cave on Mount Hira, five kilometers away from Mecca (now the Mountain of Light, Jabal al Nur); to calm his tormented spirit or meditate in it. When he returned from this retreat, he went first to the Kaaba, to do the seven ritual circles around his temple, before returning home.

"The Messenger of God used to take up residence in Hira in seclusion for one month each year. This practice, known as al-tahannuth, i.e. 'pious devotion,' was one performed by Quraysh before the coming of Islam" (Ibn Kathir, *Al-Sira al-Nabawiyya*, Volume I, p. 282).

While the Messenger of God was dwelling there for that month, he would feed all the poor who came to him. When the period of that month of devotion was concluded, the first thing he would do was go to the ka'ba, circumambulating around it seven times or so before proceeding to his own home.

"When the Messenger of God had completed his period of secluded devotion, he did as always, going first to the ka'ba and circumambulating it. There he met Waraqa b. Nawfal who was also performing the circumambulation, and Waraqa asked him, 'O nephew, tell me what you saw and heard.'" (pp. 292-293).

In 610 Common Era, when he was 40, his spiritual seeking and preparation reached a culmination.

According to Islamic history, one night while Muhammad was engaged in prayer and meditation on Mount Hira, the archangel Gabriel appeared to him to deliver a message from God (Arabic, God) 4) Three times the angel commanded that Muhammad "Recite! In the name of your Lord who created, created man of a blood clot. Recite! And your Lord is the Most Generous, who taught by the pen—taught man that he did not know" (Quran chapter 96 verses1–5).

For a period of 22 years, from 610 therefore to his death in 632, Muhammad received communications that he said were from God, by way of the angel Gabriel, and that he memorized verbatim and recited orally to his disciples. These oral recitations of God's mind and will are collectively referred to as al-Quran ("recitation") by Muslims.

There was no witness of this first apparition of the Spirit of God, but later, when it happened again; there were some, for during the twenty-three years that followed, a greater or lesser number of his faithful sometimes observed it.

However, Muhammad's preaching against idolatry, polytheism, female infanticide, and other religious and social corruptions met fierce opposition in Mecca.

His message was rejected in this early period in Mecca, and he and his fledgling community of converts, mostly a few family members and close friends, were shunned, persecuted, and even tortured.

Editor's note. The Muslim tradition gives only a few names, mostly slaves of Christian origin, including a mortal case (the owners tried not to damage goods too much). Muhammad meanwhile was not worried because of his social status.

Then a group of men came from the neighbor and rival town Yathrib and asked Muhammad to act as an arbiter in the quarrels which were ruining their town. Muhammad saw an opportunity to relieve the suffering of his followers and agreed to leave Mecca. First he sent his followers, and then he himself went to the town, which would thereafter be known as Madinat an-Nabi (City of the Prophet), or simply Medina.

As soon as the departure of the Prophet was reported, the Quraysh pursued him. His tracks ended in a cave. Was God going to give his last prophet to this horde of murderers? After the passage of Abu Bakr and Muhammad, a spider had immediately woven its web at the entrance of the cave, and a dove had laid eggs that she was hatching. What is weaker than a cobweb or a dove that broods her eggs? With so little, God troubled the Quraysh. The footprints led to this cave, but obviously, it was empty (since a dove had nestled right there, and that the spider's web clearly proved that nobody had entered it for a long time!) Further down, hidden in the cave, Abu Bakr tells Muhammad – may the greetings of God and his blessings be upon him- if only one of them look under his feet, then he will see us." But the Prophet replied, "What about two [persons] whose God is the third? "

According to Al-Halabi (see indeed the As Sira Al Halabiyah) the Prophet also said to his faithful Abu Bakr: "Do you know what would happen if they came to enter this cave? "What would happen? Look! And Abu Bakr saw the sea with a boat on it. "If they enter the cave, we will go out over there," the Prophet added, to reassure his companion!

There is an allusion to this situation in the Quran, chapter 9, verse 40. " If you help him not, still God helped him when those who disbelieve drove him forth, the second of two; when they two were in the cave when he said unto his comrade: Grieve not. Lo! God is with us. Then God caused his peace of reassurance to descend upon him and supported him with hosts you cannot see."

The Prophet and Abu Bakr found their guide, Abdullah Ibn Urayqit, and the shepherd of Abu Bakr, Amir Ibn Fuhayrah, and continued on their way. They passed near the tent of a woman named Umm Ma'bad Al al-Khuza'iyyah. The travelers were then exhausted. They asked Umm Ma'bad to sell them what to hold the rest of the way. But the woman, embarrassed, answered them: "By God, if I had something to give you, I would have done it for a long time and for free". The Prophet saw in a corner an old, emaciated she goat.

"And this she goat ?????? He asked. "It cannot give milk anymore! The Holy Prophet put his hand on the animal, which found all its vigor at once. Then he touched his udder which was filled with milk.

Muhammad took goat's milk and began offering it to his companions. Then he offered it to Umm Ma'bad, filled a bowl that he left for Abu Ma'bad (her husband) and was the last to take from it. Then the travelers continued on their way. When Abu Ma'bad returned, he was very surprised to see this bowl of milk, because he knew that their goat had not had it for months. The wife told him what had happened in describing Muhammad to him carefully and he exclaimed: "This is the man the Quraysh want to murder."

Umm Ma'bad and Abu Ma'bad embraced Islam later.

THE HADITHS ASCRIBE (AD NAUSEAM) MANY OTHER MIRACLES TO MUHAMMAD; HERE ARE A FEW.

Narrated Jabir.

During the siege of Medina [in 627], while we were digging the trench we came across a big solid rock. We went to Muhammad and said, "Here is a rock appearing across the trench." He said, "I am coming down." Then he got up, and a stone was tied to his belly for we had not eaten anything for three days. So Muhammad took the spade and struck the big solid rock and it became like sand. Having seen how hungry the Prophet was, I then asked to go home, and this authorization was granted to me. I said to my wife, "Have you got something (for him to eat?)" She replied, "I have barley and a she goat." So I slaughtered the she-kid and she ground the barley; then we put the meat in the earthenware cooking pot. Then I came to the Prophet when the dough had become soft and fermented and (the

meat in) the pot over the stone trivet had nearly been well cooked, and said, "I have got a little food prepared, so get up O God's Messenger you and one or two men along with you (for the food)." The Prophet asked, "How much is that food?" "A little bread and goat." He said, "It is abundant and good. Tell your wife not to remove the earthenware pot from the fire and not to take out any bread from the oven till I reach there." Then he said to those who worked in the trench": Jabir has prepared us to eat, go to his house ! "

When I came to my wife, I said, "God's Mercy be upon you! The Prophet came along with the Muhajirun and the Ansar and those who were present with them." She said, "Did he ask you how much food you had?" I replied, "Yes." So, let God and his Messenger deal with the situation! ! Muhammad arrived and said to his men (300 according to some): "Enter and do not throng." Then he started cutting the bread (into pieces) and put the cooked meat over it. He covered the earthenware pot and the oven whenever he took something out of them. He would give the food to his companions and take the meat out of the pot. He went on cutting the bread and scooping the meat (for his companions) till they all ate their fill, and even then, some food remained. Then he said (to my wife), "Eat and present to others as the people are struck with hunger" (Bukhari Vol. 5, Book 59, Hadith 427). Editor's note: What the devil! That resembles anyway very much the miracle of the loaves and fishes found in the four Gospels (Matthew 14-16); miracle which was itself a plagiarism of the miracle of oil and flour by the prophet Elijah in the Torah (1Kings, 17:12).

The miracle of Hudaybiyya (628).

This waterless well miracle was narrated by Bara b. Azib in Bukhari and Salama b. Akwa in Muslim. Barra b. Azib.

"There was a shortage of water in the well of Hudaybiya; there was not even a drop of water remaining in the well. The situation was informed to the Prophet Muhammad. The prophet came to the side of the well and sat down. He wanted a pot filled with a little water. After he made his ablutions with the water they brought to him, he rinsed his mouth and prayed silently. He poured the water which he used for making his ablutions and rinsing his mouth into the well. Then the well was left alone. Then, the well had water. Both the Muslims and their animals quaffed from that well. There were 1400 people .

Salama b. Akwa.

"We came to Hudaybiya under the command of the prophet Muhammad. There were a hundred soldiers in each one of the fourteen troops. There were also fifty sheep that needed to be watered but the well did not have enough water even for them. The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) sat by the side of the well and prayed. When he poured the water which he used for rinsing his mouth into the well, the water of the well increased. We both watered animals and got water for ourselves."

Editor's note . The two details that explain everything are obvious in the "sources" in question.

First, the well was not definitively and completely dried up, the level was very low, as if another troop had drunk here just before.

Second, on Muhammad's orders, everyone waited (until the well filled up again?)

Some time later Mahomet was able to return to Mecca, where his teachings were gradually adopted.

Among the miracles that took place during the Battle of Tabuk, we recount this one.

"We were left without water during the expedition of Tabuk. There were even people who slaughtered their camels and squeezed their internal organs for water. Abu Bakr (RAA) requested from the Apostle of God to pray for the rain. The Apostle of God raised his hands; clouds gathered and it rained so much that we filled our pots completely. Then, the rain stopped. When we turned and looked there, we saw that the rain did not reach beyond the borders of the encampment."

Editor's note. A very localized rain so! As often !

The raid against Tabuk also gave rise to another miracle.

It is reported through many chains of transmission from Umar b. al-Khattab, Abu Hurayra, Salama b. Akwa, Abu Amrat al-Ansari.

The army went hungry on the expedition of Tabuk. They referred themselves to the Noble Prophet (PBUH), and he told them: "Gather whatever food is left in your saddle-bags." Everyone brought a few pieces of dates and put them on a mat. The most they could put together was four handfuls.

Then, the Noble Messenger (PBUH) announced: "Let everyone bring his dish!" They pressed forward, and no one remained with an empty dish, all the dishes were filled. There was even some left over.

One of the Companions who saw this miracle later said: "If the whole world had come, the food still would have been sufficient."

[Self-plagiarism: see the chapter on the Battle of the Trench - Khandaq - in 627. The sickening plagiarism of a plagiarism of the gospel plagiarizing the Old Testament = a cubed plagiarism of the Bible therefore !].

The hagiographers of Muhammad also tell us about his extreme temperance and his privations, he was sometimes forced to "tighten his belt" as we say a little familiarly, especially during the siege of Yathrib / Medina in 627, as we could see. Muhammad cultivated his garden with his own hands, he mended his clothes [what were doing his many wives therefore?]. Sometimes months went without fire being made at home; barley bread, milk and dates were often his only food. 5)

In 632, at the age of 62, Muhammad died unexpectedly after a short fever. By any measure Muhammad was phenomenally successful during his career, even though his name and achievements have been the subject of controversy over the centuries in Western civilization. During the last half of the 20th century, however, non-Muslim historians have become more objective and complimentary, acknowledging that Muhammad's achievements in both political and religious realms assure him a place as one of the most influential figures in history.

MUHAMMAD'S TEACHINGS.

"When you make a dinner or a supper, do not call your friends, nor your brethren, neither your kinsmen, nor your rich neighbors; ... but when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and you shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense you" (Luke 14:12-14).

Muhammad's sayings clearly teach the practice of charity:

The Quran states that charity and compassion, not mechanical observance of rituals, define one's worthiness in God's sight (chapter 2 verse 177). 6)

Some examples of Muhammad's teachings on charitable giving and fasting will illustrate his manner of teaching and his central role in Muslim life.

"Smiling to another person is an act of charity."

"He who sleeps with a full stomach knowing that his neighbor is hungry [is not a believer]."

"Charity extinguishes sin as water extinguishes fire."7)

"None of you [truly] believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself."

"Each person's every joint must perform a charity every day the sun comes up: to act justly between two people is a charity; to help a man with his mount, lifting him onto it or hoisting up his belongings onto it is a charity; a good word is a charity; every step you take to prayers is a charity; and removing a harmful thing from the road is charity."

Muslims view fasting as having a dual purpose: to bring about a state of humility and surrender of one's soul to God, and to foster compassion and care for the poor in the community. Thus, fasting and almsgiving go hand in hand: denying of oneself cannot be complete without giving of oneself.

James A. Toronto, Associate Professor of Islamic Studies and Comparative Religion at Brigham Young University. WWW. Idumea. ORG. THE GLORY OF GOD IS INTELLIGENCE. BEATI PAUPERES SPIRITU!

NOTES

1 These anecdotes about Muhammad's personality are found in "And Muhammad Is His Messenger; The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety by Annemarie Schimmel (1985), pp. 46-49.

2 "The Life of the Prophet," Ja'far Qasimi, in "Islamic Spirituality," edited by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1991), p. 92.

3 Already circumcised even before being born, who can believe it? (Apart from Sheikh Salman Al Qadah of course.)

As for the seal of the prophets...in Syriac, the word implies only that Muhammad confirms the message of the prophets who preceded him. Unless it is borrowed from Manicheism (Mani, who died under torture in Gundishapur in Iranian Khuzestan in 276 claimed to be the last of the prophets).

4 Allah is the contraction of al-ilah, which means "the God." This is the word used by Muslims and Arab Christians to refer to God. Latter-day Saints, Arabic speakers, use this word fluently, it is used in the scriptures and by the Church in Arabic-speaking areas

5 But perhaps it is necessary to see here simply the usual way of living of the Arabs of his time, or the privations inseparable of an active and adventurous life. When we go to war or when we are on an expedition in the desert, we cannot feast much.

6 Regarding this moral or ethical, and therefore spiritual, obvious, inferiority of fundamentalist Islam, see what we have already written on this subject in our previous booklet.

Let us not forget that the high-knowers of the druidiaction condemned more severely the murder of a stranger, and therefore of the faithful 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, preserved by 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 ??? As far as we know, it doesn't. There is indeed, at least to the best of our knowledge, no Muslim equivalent of the surah of the good Samaritan or of the custom reported by Nicholas of Damascus, the surah of the good Samaritan or its equivalent the extraordinary custom reported by Nicholas of Damascus does not exist in the land of Islam. For it is without question, with the surah on the woman taken 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 as we are- (moral) superiority of (authentic) Christianity over Islam. Let's repeat it, because repetere ars docendi: there is no equivalent of the parable of the Good Samaritan or of the woman caught in adultery, in the Quran nor in the hadiths either.

The two other moral superiorities of theoretical Christianity, or even of the high-knowers of the theoretical druidiaction with respect to Islam, also theoretical, being fidelity to the spirit rather than to 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 mind over the letter, the distrust of the high knowers of the druidiaction towards any writing down of important things is well known ("they regard it lawful to commit these 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 expression of this principle in the four Gospels.

Gospel according to St. Mark 2, 23-28. 3 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?"

He 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."

As for the necessary distinction to be made between private or personal spirituality and social or political life, we could here, of course, at this point in our presentation, pastiche the Four Gospels by writing: We must render to Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto Boadicea (or Ambiorix or Vercingetorix or Arminius ...) what is Boadicea's (or Ambiorix or Vercingetorix or Arminius ...)

More seriously and more modestly, we will content ourselves with remembering that the high-knowers of the druidiaction of the time made the distinction between the public sacrifices which were only rarely with obligatory participation, or oenach (in Ireland) and the private sacrifices, which had to be very numerous since these barbarians were *admodum dedita religionibus*: greatly devoted to ritual observances. N.B. Caesar's exact phrase 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. "Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

This is one of the incontestable moral superiorities of theoretical Christianity, compared to Islam, even theoretical

We are in no way Christians, but we will nevertheless allow ourselves to point out here that this parable clearly separates religion or spirituality from politics or temporal power and it is without question with the surah on the woman taken in adultery (let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!); 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) superiorities of authentic Christianity; over Islam. But since the Church (of Jesus Christ and Latter-day Saints, etc., etc.) tells us the opposite!

7 Our friend James (Toronto) found these three first hadiths in "al-Arba'in al-Nawawiyya" (Nawawi's Forty Hadith) (1976), p. 56, 88, 98 and noted the two others on the occasion of conversations with Muslim acquaintances or friends.

THE ONLY PROBLEM, BUT IT IS CONSIDERABLE, IT IS THAT NOTHING PROVES THE TRUTH OF ALL THESE ANECDOTES (HADITHS) MAKING MUHAMMAD INTERVENE. IN ANY WAY, WHY

THE HADITHS SHOWING HIM IN SUCH A PLEASANT LIGHT WOULD BE TRUE AND THE HADITHS DEPICTING IT AS A CRUEL, LIBIDINOUS, PEDOPHILE, AND SHAMELESS MAN, FALSE? IT IS TRUE THAT THERE IS HARDLY HADITHS OF THIS KIND!

As the Holy Quran itself says: 6, 93: "Who is guilty of more wrong than he who forges a lie against God, or says: I am inspired, when he is not inspired in anything."

"Will they not then ponder on the Quran ? If it had been from other than God they would have found therein much incongruity." (The Holy Quran, chapter 4 verse 82.)

LET OUR MORMON OR MUSLIM FRIENDS WANT TO INDICATE US WHAT THE METHODOLOGICAL CRITERION IS MAKING ABLE TO DISTINGUISH, FOR SURE, THE AUTHENTIC HADITHS FROM THE FALSE, AS REGARDS MUHAMMAD. Inevitable conclusion: any analysis of a foreign system can only be produced by lay people.

Peter DeLaCrau.

DOCUMENT No. 3.

Below is an example of a website idolizing Muhammad in the same way as the Quran and containing so many lies or untruths about hadiths; that one wonders if it is really relevant for our society to continue to let such shameless brainwashing spread (under the supervision of Sheikh Salman Al-Qadah); and forming such an incredible insult to historical science, even to science in short, and therefore to humanity!

The particularities of the biography of the Prophet.

First: The authenticity. Through continuous human chains of transmission (isnad), made up of honest and trustworthy people who shared with the Messenger (peace and blessings of God upon him) moments of his life; then disciples of the Companions (Tabiun) having lived with them, having heard from them various anecdotes. These Companions, therefore, lived with the Prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) and participated in the development of his biography; many of them died only a very long time after the death of the Prophet (Peace and blessings of God upon him) and lived with their followers for many years.

Some of these companions lived until the year 100 of the Hegira [AD 721] and even a little beyond, as Amir Abu Al Tufayl ibn Wathilah died in the year 101 [AD 722]. Mahmud ibn Al Rabi in the year 99 [AD 720]. Abdullah ibn Bishr Al Mazini in the year 96 [AD 717]. Anas ibn Malik in the year 93 [AD 714]. May God be pleased with them!

The compilation of the Sunnah or tradition began officially under the reign of Umar ibn Abdul Aziz - may God grant him mercy - and the latter died in the year 101 [AD 722].

It is therefore certain that the continuity of the transmission of the Sunnah and the biography of the Prophet has never been interrupted; and that there never was a gap [break] between the compilation of the Sunnah and the teaching of the Messenger (peace and blessings of God upon him), then of the Companions and then of the disciples of the Companions.

-----PETER DELACRAU'S COMMENT: ON THE DEEPLY DUBIOUS AND INAUTHENTIC CHARACTER OF THESE TRANSMISSION CHAINS CALLED ISNAD, AND ON THE FALLACIOUS CHARACTER OF MOST HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS (1,600,000?) OF SUNNA HADITHS.

According to the former president of the Tehran University in the time of Shah, only 40 would be in fact genuine.

END OF THE NEW PUTTING INTO PERSPECTIVE, IN THE NAME OF THE DUTY OF TRUTH, BY PETER DELACRAU.

We will never insist enough on our will not to be the men of a book, but of at least twelve, like the Fenians in Ireland, our religion to us being only the religion of truth.

Secondly, the compilation of the Prophet's biography took place early. The compilation of the Sunnah began at the same time as that of the biography of the Prophet, very early, during the lifetime of the Messenger (peace and blessings of God upon him); and this through the writing of hadiths relating to the events that took place in his day. For example, the beginning of his prophetic mission, the beginning of Revelation; what he endured in Mecca before his emigration to Medina and before that, the emigration of some of his Companions to Abyssinia, his wives, his military expeditions and his travels; and many other things that relate to his person and his behavior in life. All these things are recorded in the Sunnah and his books.

As for the complete compilation of the biography of the Prophet, it began at the time of Muawiya ibn Abu Sufyan - may God be pleased with him -; when Abdullah ibn Abbas - may God be pleased with him - who died in the year 68 - [AD 689] taught his pupils the genealogy of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) as well as his military expeditions; and that his pupils wrote it down. Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Al As - may God be pleased with him - who died in the year 63 [AD 684] - did the same thing; like Al Barra ibn Azib - may God be pleased with him! - died in the year 74 [AD 695] -; he taught his students the military expeditions [maghazi] of the Messenger of God (peace and blessings of God upon him).

[Editor's note. Under the denomination of Maghazi, these pious doctors of Belief also rank the pogroms against the Jews that took place at Yathrib / Medina.

From the time of the Tabiun - those who lived with the companions, and learned from them - men began to write books on the biography of the Prophet; for example, the book of Urwah ibn Az-Zubayr ibn Al Awwam - died in the year 93 [AD 714] - he was the son of the illustrious Companion called Az-

Zubayr ibn Al Awwam - May God be pleased with him -. He wrote a book entitled "The Military Expeditions [maghazi] of the Messenger of God" (peace and blessings of God upon him). The main books written by the disciples of the Companions are: the book of Aban bin Uthman bin Affan - died in the year 105 [AD 726] - the son of the caliph of the Messenger of God (peace and blessings of God upon him)). He completed his book on the biography of the Prophet and the military expeditions before the year 83 [AD 704]; then the book of Wahb ibn Munabbih - died in the year 110 [AD 731] – a part of his book entitled "The military expeditions" (Al Maghazi) is in the city of Heidelberg in Germany. Like Musa ibn Uqbah - died in the year 141 [AD 762] - and there is also a copy of his book (Al Maghazi) at the Berlin Library in Germany; all lived with the Companions and took this information from them.

The two most complete books on the biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) are: As-Siyar Wa-al Maghazi by Muhammad ibn Ishaq - died in the year 151 [AD 772] -; and As-Sirah Nabawiyyah by Ibn Hisham - died in the year 213 [AD 834] -; both authors lived with the Companions of the Prophet and learned from them what they related.

LET US REMIND ONCE AGAIN OF THE OBVIOUS FACTS!

About Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisham. These elements that we have about the life of Muhammad were collected by Ibn Ishaq in 750, in other words, one hundred years after his death. The question of authenticity remains all the more critical as the original form of Ibn Ishaq's work is lost; and is available only in pieces in the still later review made by Ibn Hisham, who died in 834, two hundred years after the death of Muhammad. The many historical events supposed to have been the cause of some revelations (for example, the Battle of Badr), owe most likely some of their characteristics, occasionally their very existence, to the Quran. It is clear that the storytellers were the first to invent the historical context of some verses of the Quran. Most of their information is contradictory. Just as in the case of Jesus, the further we get from the date of the facts, the more we have details or specifications.

Third, completeness and clarity.

The details of the biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) are established in an integral and clear way since the marriage between his father Abdallah and his mother Amina bint Wahb until his birth, and the beginning of his mission; with all that he has lived before that, from the spreading of his message to his death. Anyone who wants to know the details of the Messenger's life (peace and blessings of God upon him) can easily succeed in doing this, and from many reference books whose content is verifiable and historical details authenticated in a scientific way.

The Messenger (peace and blessings of God upon him) as one of the Western critics has said - "is the only one who is born under the light." [This is the French Ernest Renan. Why not name it? We have known him better inspired actually. This illusion comes from the very detailed nature of the traditional biography of Muhammad]. The books of the Sunnah or dealing with the biography of the Prophet contain, as well as our noble Quran, all the details of the public and private life of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him).

We know the description of his appearance, his character and its manners, precisely. We know, for example, the color of his skin, the shape of his nose or nasal fossae, the shape of his mouth and teeth, the color of his hair, his size, his gait and his manner of sitting, his way of talking or laughing, his favorite food, his way of eating, drinking, even his marital relations, his behavior towards his wives. Better than that, the vestiges and remains of his house, as well as the grave in which he was buried, are still visible.

It is possible to ascertain all the characteristics attributed to him by modern scientific tools. The biography of the Prophet (peace and blessings of God upon him) has benefited from a preservation and a back-up such as we have never seen before, and such as we will never have for anyone after him . These three particularities give us the absolute certainty that this biography is indeed the biography of the last of the prophets, Muhammad son of Abdullah (peace and blessings of God upon him); and give us the scientifically founded certainty that he is well the last messenger sent by God to the whole Mankind.

N.D.L.R., one could, of course, laugh about all this, but considering the dramatic consequences for our species of such delirium; one wonders if the freedom of speech and to spread false good news (false

gospels) should not also have limits. Our conclusion will therefore be that taught by the Holy Quran itself.

"Who is guilty of more wrong than he who forges a lie against God, or says: I am inspired, when he is not inspired in anything?" (Holy Quran chapter 6 verse 93.)

"Will they not then ponder on the Quran ? If it had been from other than God they would have found therein much incongruity." (The Holy Quran, chapter 4 verse 82.)

DOCUMENT No. 4.

In 1718 John Toland had to decide on the case of the Gospel of Barnabas, a work describing the life of Jesus and which would have been written by his disciple Barnabas. The two oldest manuscripts, written in Italian and Spanish, were dated to the end of the sixteenth century, but from the Spanish text only one copy of the eighteenth century remains. The manuscript written in Italian includes 222 chapters, the essentials of which describe the ministry of Jesus.

In many respects, but not all, it is consistent with the idea that Muslims have of the Bible. This gospel is considered by the majority of scholars (including Christians and some Muslims) as a pious, late and pseudepigraphic fraud. Some, however, think it might contain remnants of a previous apocryphal work, developed to conform to Islam. This book should not be confused with the "Epistles according to Barnabas," which were probably written in the second century. There is no connection between the two books, whether in style, content, or history, except their supposed attribution to Barnabas. Concerning circumcision, the two authors adopt a totally different point of view: whereas "the epistle" rejects Jewish practices, "the gospel" is for Muslim practices. Nor should it be confused with "the Acts of Barnabas" which tell the story of Barnabas's travels, his martyrdom and his burial. It is thought that the latter was composed in Cyprus shortly after 431.

The Gospel of Barnabas contains anachronisms that make it impossible to write before the fourteenth century. Among these anachronisms, one can quote a coin of which the text speaks by presenting it as a coin of the Palestine of the time of Jesus, whereas it is about a coin of Muslim Spain (the "denarius," divisible in "minuti"). Another example, this pseudo-gospel speaks of "barons" a medieval title that was not current in the first century. It also contains geographical mistakes prohibiting it being written by someone who knows Palestine; for example, it describes a boat trip to a city located ... inland.

Prologue.

Barnabas, apostle of Jesus the Nazarene, called Christ, to all them that dwell upon the earth desire peace and consolation. Dearly beloved, the great and wonderful God has during these past days visited us by his prophet Jesus Christ in great mercy of teaching and miracles, by reason whereof many, being deceived of Satan, under pretense of piety, are preaching most impious doctrine, calling Jesus son of God, repudiating the circumcision ordained of God for ever, and permitting every unclean meat: among whom also Paul has been deceived, whereof I speak not without grief; for which cause I am writing that truth which I have seen and heard, in the intercourse that I have had with Jesus, in order that you may be saved, and not be deceived of Satan and perish in the judgment of God. Therefore beware of everyone that preaches unto you new doctrine contrary to that which I write, that you may be saved eternally. The great God be with you and guard you from Satan and from every evil. Amen.

Chapter I.

In these last years a virgin called Mary, of the lineage of David, of the tribe of Judah, was visited by the angel Gabriel from God. This virgin, living in all holiness without any offense, being blameless and abiding in prayer with fastings, being one day alone, there entered into her chamber the angel Gabriel, and he saluted her, saying: 'God be with you, O Mary.'

The virgin was affrighted at the appearance of the angel; but the angel comforted her saying: 'Fear not, Mary, for you have found favor with God, who has chosen you to be the mother of a prophet, whom he will send to the people of Israel in order that they may walk in his laws with truth of heart'.

Chapter 220. Jesus answered: 'Believe me, Barnabas, that every sin, however small it be, God punishes with great punishment, seeing that God is offended at sin. Wherefore, since my mother and my faithful disciples that were with me loved me a little with earthly love, the righteous God has willed to punish this love with the present grief, in order that it may not be punished in the flames of Hell. And though I have been innocent in the world, since men have called me "God," and "Son of God," God, in order that I be not mocked of the demons on the day of judgment, has willed that I be mocked of men in this world by the death of Judas, making all men believe that I died upon the cross. And this mocking shall continue until the advent of Mohammed, the messenger of God, who, when he comes, shall reveal this deception to those who believe in God's law.'

Having thus spoken, Jesus said: 'You are just, O Lord our God, because to you only belong honor and glory without end.'

Chapter 222.

After Jesus had departed, the disciples scattered through the different parts of Israel and of the world, and the truth, hated of Satan, was persecuted, as it always is, by falsehood. For certain evil men,

pretending to be disciples, preached that Jesus died and did not rise again. Others preached that he really died, but rose again. Others preached, and yet preach, that Jesus is the Son of God, among whom is Paul deceived. But we, as much as I have written, that preach we to those who fear God, that they may be saved in the last day of God's Judgment. Amen.

DOCUMENT No. 5.

The General Biographical Dictionary

Containing an historical and critical account of the lives and writings of the most eminent persons in every nation; particularly the British and Irish; from the earliest accounts to the present time.

A NEW EDITION,

Revised and enlarged by

Alexander Chalmers, F. S. A.

1812 - 1817

Mahomet, or Mohammed, founder of the system of religious imposture called Mahometanism, was born in the year 569, at Mecca, a city of Arabia, of the tribe of the Korashites, which was reckoned the noblest in all that country; and was descended in a direct line from Pher Koraish, the founder of it. Yet in the beginning of his life he was in a very poor condition; for his father dying before he was two years old, and while his grandfather was still living, all the power and wealth of his family devolved to his uncles, especially Abu Taleb. Abu Taleb, after the death of his father, bore the chief sway in Mecca during the whole of a very long life; and it was under his protection chiefly that Mahomet, when he first began to propagate his imposture, was sufficiently supported against all opposers, so as to be able, after his death, to establish it through all Arabia by his own power.

After his father's death, he continued under the tuition of his mother till the eighth year of his age; when she was also dying, he was taken home to his grandfather, who at his death, which happened the year after, committed him to the care of his uncle Abu Taleb, to be educated by him. Abu Taleb, being a merchant, taught him his business, and, as soon as he was of sufficient age, sent him with his camels into Syria; in which employment he continued under his uncle till the 25th year of his age. One of the chief men of the city then dying, and his widow, whose name was Cadiga, wanting a factor to manage her stock, she invited Mahomet into her service. He accepted her terms, traded three years for her at Damascus and other places, and acquitted himself in this charge so much to her satisfaction, that, about the twenty-eighth year of his age, she gave herself to him in marriage, although she was twelve years older. From being her servant, he was now advanced to be the master of both her person and fortune; and, finding himself equal in wealth to the best men of the city, he began to entertain ambitious thoughts of possessing the sovereignty over it.

Among the various means to effect this, none seemed to him more eligible than that imposture which he afterwards published with so much success, and so much mischief to the world. The extensive trade which he carried on in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, having made him well acquainted with both Christians and Jews, and given him an opportunity of observing with what eagerness they and the several sects into which the Eastern Christians then miserably divided, engaged against each other, he concluded that nothing would be more likely to gain a party firm to him for the attaining the ends at which he aimed, than the invention of a new religion. In this, however, he proceeded leisurely; for it was not till his thirty-eighth year that he began to prepare his design. He then withdrew himself from his former way of living, which is said to have been very licentious and wicked; and, affecting a hermit's life, used every morning to retire into a solitary cave near Mecca, called the Cave of Hira; and there continued all day, exercising himself, as he pretended, in prayers, fastings, and holy meditations. Thus he went on for two years, during which time he gained over his wife Cadiga, who was his first proselyte, by pretending visions which he had seen, and voices which he had heard, in his retirement. It is to be observed, says Dr. Prideaux, that Mahomet began this imposture about the same time that the bishop of Rome, by virtue of a grant from the tyrant Phocas, first assumed the title of universal pastor. Phocas made this grant in the year 606, and Mahomet in the same year retired to his cave to contrive that deception which he began in the year 608 to propagate at Mecca.

In his fortieth year, Mahomet began to take upon him the style of the Apostle of God, and under that character to carry on the plan which he had now contrived; but for four years, he confined his doctrines to such as he either had most confidence in, or thought himself most likely to gain. When he had gained a few disciples, some of whom, however, were the principal men of the city, he began to publish it to the people at Mecca, in his forty-fourth year, and openly to declare himself a prophet sent by God, to convert them from the error of paganism, and to teach them the true religion. On his first appearance, he was treated with derision and contempt, and called by the people a sorcerer, magician, liar, impostor, and teller of fables, of which he frequently complains in the Koran; so that for the first year he made little or no progress. But persevering in his design, which he managed with great address, he afterwards gained so many proselytes that in the fifth year of his pretended mission, he

had increased his party to the number of thirty-nine, himself making the fortieth. People now began to be alarmed at the progress he made.

Those who were addicted to the idolatry of their forefathers, stood up to oppose him as an enemy of their gods, and a dangerous innovator in their religion. Others, who saw further into his designs, thought it time to put a stop to them, for the sake of preserving the government, at which they thought he aimed and therefore they combined together against him, and intended to have cut him off with the sword. But Abu Taleb, his uncle, defeated their design; and by his power, as being chief of the tribe, preserved him from many other attempts of the same nature; for though Abu Taleb himself persisted in the paganism of his ancestors, yet he had so much affection for the impostor, as being his kinsman, and one that was bred up in his house, and under his care, that he extended his full protection to Mahomet as long as he lived. The principal arguments, which Mahomet employed to delude men into a belief of this imposture, were promises and threats, both well calculated to influence the affections of the vulgar. His promises were chiefly of Paradise, which with great art he framed agreeably to the taste of the Arabians: for they, lying within the torrid zone, were, through the nature of their climate, as well as the corruption of their manners, exceedingly given to the love of women; and the scorching heat and dryness of the country, making rivers of water, cooling drinks, shaded gardens, and pleasant fruits, most refreshing and delightful unto them, they were from hence apt to place their highest enjoyment in things of this nature. For this reason, he made the joys of his Paradise to consist totally in these particulars; which he promises them abundantly in many places of the Koran. On the contrary, he described the punishments of hell, which he threatened to all who would not believe in him, to consist of such torments as would appear to them the most afflicting and grievous to be borne; as, "that they should drink nothing but boiling and stinking water, nor breathe anything but exceeding hot winds, things most terrible in Arabia; that they should dwell for ever in continual fire, excessively burning, and be surrounded with a black hot salt smoke, as with a coverlet, &c." and, that he might omit nothing which could work on their fears, he terrified them with the threats of grievous punishments in this life. To which purpose he expatiated, upon all occasions, on the terrible calamities which had befallen such as would not be instructed by the prophets who, were sent before him; how the old world was destroyed by water, for not being reformed at the preaching of Noah; how Sodom was consumed by fire from heaven, for not hearkening to Lot when sent unto them; and how the Egyptians were plagued for despising Moses: for he allowed the divinity of both the Old and New Testament, and that Moses and Jesus Christ were prophets sent from God; but alleged that the Jews and Christians had corrupted those sacred books, and that he was sent to purge them from those corruptions, and to restore the law of God to that original purity in which it was first delivered. And this is the reason that most of the passages which he takes out of the Old and New Testaments, appear different in the Koran from what we find them in those sacred books.

Mahomet pretended to receive all his revelations from the angel Gabriel, who, he said, was sent from God, on purpose to deliver them unto him. He was subject, it is said, to the falling sickness, and whenever the fit was upon him, he pretended it to be a trance, and that then the angel Gabriel was come from God with some new revelations. These revelations he arranged in several chapters; which make up the Koran, the Bible of the Mahometans. The original of this book was laid up, as he taught his followers, in the archives of heaven; and the angel Gabriel brought him the copy of it, chapter by chapter, as occasion required that they should be published to the people; that is, as often as any new measure was to be pursued, any objection against him or his religion to be answered, any difficulty to be solved, any discontent among his people to be quieted, any offense to be removed, or anything else done for the furtherance of his grand scheme, his constant recourse was to the angel Gabriel for a new revelation; and then appeared some addition to the Koran, to serve his purpose. But what perplexed him most was that his opposers demanded to see a miracle from him; "for," said they, "Moses, and Jesus, and the rest of the prophets, according to your own doctrine, worked miracles to prove their mission from God; and therefore, if you be a prophet, and greater than any that were sent before you, as you boast yourself to be, do you work the like miracles to manifest it unto us." This objection he endeavored to evade by several answers; all of which amount only to this, "that God had sent Moses and Jesus with miracles, and yet men would not be obedient to their word; and therefore he had now sent him in the last place without miracles, to force them by the power of the sword to do his will." Hence it has become the universal doctrine of the Mahometans that their religion is to be propagated by the sword, and that all true Mussulmans are bound to fight for it. It has even been said to be a custom among them for their preachers, while they deliver their sermons, to have a drawn sword placed by them, to denote, that the doctrines they teach are to be defended and propagated by the sword. Some miracles, at the same time, Mahomet is said to have worked; as, "That he clave the moon in two; that trees went forth to meet him, &c. &c." but those who relate them are only such as are ranked among their fabulous and legendary writers: their learned doctors renounce them all; and

when they are questioned, how without miracles they can prove his mission, their common answer is that the Koran itself is the greatest of all miracles; for that Mahomet, who was an illiterate person, who could neither write nor read, or that any man else, by human wisdom alone, should be able to compose such a book, is, they think, impossible. On this Mahomet himself also frequently insists, challenging in several places of the Koran, both men and devils, by their united skill, to compose anything equal to it, or to any part of it. From all which they conclude, and as they think, infallibly, that this book could come from none other but God himself; and that Mahomet, from whom they received it, was his messenger to bring it unto them. That the Koran, as to style and language, is the standard of elegance in the Arabian tongue, and that Mahomet was in truth what they affirm him to have been, a rude and illiterate man, are points agreed on all sides. A question therefore will arise among those who are not so sure that this book was brought by the angel Gabriel from heaven, by whose help it was compiled, and the imposture framed? There is the more reason to ask this, because this book itself contains so many particulars of the Jewish and Christian religions, as necessarily suppose the authors of it to have been well skilled in both; which Mahomet, who was bred an idolater, and lived so for the first forty years of his life, among a people totally illiterate, for such his tribe was by principle and profession, cannot be supposed to have been: but this is a question not so easily to be answered, because the nature of the thing required it to have been transacted very secretly. Besides this, the scene of this imposture being at least six hundred miles within the country of Arabia, amid those barbarous nations, who all immediately embraced it, and would not permit any of another religion to live among them, it could not at that distance be so well investigated by those who were most concerned to discover the fraud. That Mahomet composed the Koran by the help of others, was a thing well known at Mecca, when he first published his imposture there; and he was often reproached on that account by his opposers, as he himself more than once complains. In the twenty-fifth chapter of the Koran, his words are "They say that the Koran is nothing but a lie of your own invention, and others have been assisting to you herein." A passage in the sixteenth chapter also, particularly points at one of those who was then looked upon to have had a principal hand in this matter: "I know they will say that a man has taught him the Koran; but he whom they presume to have taught him is a Persian by nation, and speaks the Persian language. But the Koran is in the Arabic tongue, full of instruction and eloquence." The person here pointed at was one Abdia Ben Salon, a Persian Jew, whose name he afterwards changed into Abdollah Ebn Salem, to make it correspond with the Arabic dialect; and almost all who have written of this imposture have mentioned him as the chief architect used by Mahomet in the framing of it: for he was an artful man, thoroughly skilled in all the learning of the Jews; and therefore Mahomet seems to have received from him whatsoever of the rites and customs of the Jews he has ingrafted into his religion. Besides this Jew, the impostor derived some aid from a Christian monk: and the many particulars in the Koran, relating to the Christian religion, plainly prove him to have had such a helper. He was a monk of Syria, of the sect of the Nestorians. The name which he had in his monastery, and which he has since retained among the western writers, is Sergius, though Bahira was that which he afterwards assumed in Arabia, and by which he has ever since been mentioned in the East, by all that write or speak of him. Mahomet, as it is related, became acquainted with this Bahira, in one of his journeys into Syria, either at Bostra or at Jerusalem: and receiving great satisfaction from him in many of those points in which he had desired to be informed, contracted a particular friendship with him; so that Bahira being not long after excommunicated for some great crime, and expelled his monastery, fled to Mecca to him, was entertained in his house, and became his assistant in the framing of his imposture, and continued with him ever after; till Mahomet having, as it is reported, no farther occasion for him, to secure the secret, put him to death. Many other particulars are recorded by some ancient writers, both as to the composition of the Koran, and also as to the manner of its first propagation; as, that the impostor taught a bull to bring it him on his horns in a public assembly, as if it had been this way sent to him from God; that he bred up pigeons to come to his ears, to make it appear as if the Holy Ghost conversed with him; stories which have no foundation at all in truth, although they have been credited by great and learned men. Grotius in particular, in that part of his book "De veritate, &c." which contains a refutation of Mahometanism, relates the story of the pigeon; on which our celebrated Orientalist Pococke, who undertook an Arabic version of that performance, asked Grotius, "Where he had picked up this story, whether among the Arabians, or the Christians?" To which Grotius replied, that "he had not indeed met with it in any Arabian author, but depended entirely upon the authority of the Christian writers for the truth of it." Pococke thought fit, therefore, to omit it in his version, lest we should expose ourselves to the contempt of the Arabians, by not being able to distinguish the religion of Mahomet from the tales and fictions which its enemies have invented concerning it; and by pretending to confute the Koran, without knowing the foundation on which its authority stands.

In the eighth year of his pretended mission, his party growing formidable at Mecca, the city passed a decree, by which they forbade any more to join themselves with him. This, however, did not much affect him, while his uncle Abu Taleb lived to protect him: but he was dying two years after, and the government of the city then falling into the hands of his enemies, the opposition was renewed against him, and a stop soon put to the further progress of his designs at Mecca. Mahomet, therefore, seeing all his hopes crushed here, began to think of settling elsewhere; and as his uncle Abbas lived for the most part at Ta'if, a town sixty miles distant from Mecca towards the East, and was a man of power and interest, he took a journey thither, under his protection, in order to propagate his imposture there. But, after a month's stay, finding himself unable to gain even one proselyte, he returned to Mecca, with a resolution to wait for such further advantages as time and opportunity might offer. His wife Cadiga being now dead, after living with him twenty-two years, he took two other wives in her stead, Ayesha the daughter of Abubeker, and Sawda the daughter of Zama; adding a while after to them a third, named Haphsa the daughter of Omar; and by thus making himself son-in-law to three of the principal men of his party, he strengthened his interest considerably.

In the twelfth year of his pretended mission is placed the esra, that is, his famous night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and thence to heaven; of which he tells us in the seventeenth chapter of the Koran; for the people calling on him for miracles to prove his mission, and finding himself unable to feign any, to solve the matter, he invented this story of his journey to heaven. The story, as related in the Koran, and believed by the Mahometans, is this. At night, as he lay in his bed with his best beloved wife Ayesha, he heard a knocking at his door; upon which, arising, he found there the angel Gabriel, with seventy pairs of wings expanded from his sides, whiter than snow, and clearer than crystal, and the beast Alborak standing by him; which, they say, is the beast on which the prophets used to ride when they were carried from one place to another, upon the execution of any divine command. Mahomet describes it to be a beast as white as milk, and of a mixed nature, between an ass and a mule, and of a size between both, but of such extraordinary swiftness as to equal even lightning itself.

As soon as Mahomet appeared at the door, the angel Gabriel kindly embraced him, saluted him in the name of God, and told him that he was sent to bring him unto God into heaven; where he should see strange mysteries, which were not lawful to be seen by any other man. He prayed him then to get upon Alborak; but the beast having lain idle and unemployed from the time of Christ to Mahomet, was grown so mettlesome and skittish, that he would not stand still for Mahomet to mount him, till at length he was forced to bribe him to it, by promising him a place in Paradise. When he was firmly seated on him, the angel Gabriel led the way, with the bridle of the beast in his hand, and carried the prophet from Mecca to Jerusalem, in the twinkling of an eye. On his coming thither, all the departed prophets and saints appeared at the gate of the temple, to salute him; and thence, attending him into the chief oratory, desired him to pray for them, and then withdrew. After this, Mahomet went out of the temple with the angel Gabriel, and found a ladder of light ready fixed for them, which they immediately ascended, leaving Alborak tied to a rock till their return.

On their arrival at the first heaven, the angel knocked at the gate; and informing the porter who he was, and that he had brought Mahomet the friend of God, he was immediately admitted. This first heaven, he tells us, was all of pure silver; from whence he saw the stars hanging from it by chains of gold, each as big as mount Noho, near Mecca, in Arabia. On his entrance, he met a decrepit old man, who, it seems, was our first father, Adam; and as he advanced, he saw a multitude of angels in all manner of shapes; in the shape of birds, beasts, and men. We must not forget to observe that Adam had the piety immediately to embrace the prophet, giving God thanks for so great a son; and then recommended himself to his prayers. From this first heaven, the impostor tells us, he ascended into the second, which was at the distance of five hundred years journey above it; and this he makes to be the distance of every one of the seven heavens, each above the other. Here the gates being opened to him as before, at his entrance he met Noah, who, rejoicing much at the sight of him, recommended himself to his prayers. This heaven was all of pure gold, and there were twice as many angels in it as in the former; for he tells us that the number of angels in every heaven increased as he advanced. From this second heaven he ascended into the third, which was made of precious stones, where he met Abraham, who also recommended himself to his prayers; Joseph, the son of Jacob, did the same in the fourth heaven, which was all of emerald; Moses in the fifth, which was all of adamant; and John the Baptist in the sixth, which was all of carbuncle: whence he ascended into the seventh, which was all of divine light, and here he found Jesus Christ. However, it is observed, that here he alters his style; for he does not say that Jesus Christ recommended himself to his prayers, but that he recommended himself to the prayers of Jesus Christ.

The angel Gabriel having brought him thus far, told him that he was not permitted to attend him any further; and therefore directed him to ascend the rest of the way to the throne of God by himself. This

he performed with great difficulty, passing through rough and dangerous places, till he came where he heard a voice, saying unto him, "O Mahomet, salute your Creator"; whence, ascending higher, he came into a place where he saw a vast expansion of light, so exceedingly bright, that his eyes could not bear it. This, it seems, was the habitation of the Almighty, where his throne was placed; on the right side of which, he says, God's name and his own were written in these Arabic words: "La ellah ellallah Muhammad rasul Allah;" that is, "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet," which is at this day the creed of the Mahometans. Being approached to the divine presence, he tells us that God entered into a familiar converse with him, revealed to him many hidden mysteries, made him understand the whole of his law, gave him many things in charge concerning his instructing men in the knowledge of it; and in conclusion, bestowed on him several privileges above the rest of mankind. He then returned, and found the angel Gabriel waiting for him in the place where he left him. The angel led him back along the seven heavens, through which he had brought him, and set him again upon the beast Alborak, which stood tied at the rock near Jerusalem. Then he conducted him back to Mecca, in the same manner as he brought him thence; and all this within the space of the tenth part of one night.

On his relating this extravagant fiction to the people the next morning after, he pretended the thing to have happened, it was received by them, as it deserved, with a general outcry and the imposture was never in greater danger of being totally blasted than by this ridiculous fable. But, how ridiculous soever the story may appear, Mahomet had a further design in it than barely telling such a miraculous adventure of himself to the people. Hitherto he had only given them the Koran, which was his written law; and had pretended to be nothing more than barely the messenger of God in publishing it, as it was delivered to him by the angel Gabriel. But now, learning from his friend Abdalla, that the Jews, besides the written law dictated by God himself, had also another law, called the oral law, given with it, as they pretend, to Moses himself while in the mount; and understanding that this law, which had its whole foundation in the sayings and dictates of Moses, was in as great veneration with them as the other; he had a mind for the future to advance his authority to the same pitch, and to make all his sayings and dictates pass for oracles among the Mussulmans, as those which were pretended to proceed from Moses did among the Jews; and for this end chiefly it was that he invented this story of his journey to heaven.

The story, however, whatever advantages he might gain by it when the imposture became more firmly established, was deemed at present so grossly ridiculous that it occasioned the revolt of many of his disciples, and made his stay at Mecca no longer practicable. But what he lost at Mecca he gained at Medina, then called Yathreb, a city lying 270 miles north-west from Mecca; which was inhabited, the one part by Jews, and the other by heretical Christians. These two parties not agreeing, feuds and factions rose at length so high among them that one party, exasperated against the other, went over to Mahomet. Thus we are told that in the thirteenth year of his pretended mission, there came to him from thence seventy-three men and two women. Twelve of these he retained awhile with him at Mecca, to instruct them in his new religion; then sent, them back to Yathreb, as his twelve apostles, to propagate it in that town. In this they labored abundantly, and with such success, that in a short time they drew over the greatest part of the inhabitants. Of which Mahomet receiving an account, resolved to go thither immediately, finding it unsafe to continue any longer at Mecca.

On the 12th day of the month, which the Arabs call Rabia, that is, on the 24th of our September, he came to Yathreb, and was received with great acclamations by the party which called him thither. This party is supposed to have been the Christians, and this supposition is confirmed by what he says of each of them in the fifth chapter of the Koran, which is one of the first he published after his coming to Yathreb. His words are these: "You shalt find the Jews to be very great enemies to the true believers, and the Christians to have great inclination and amity towards them." By which we may see into what a deplorable decay the many divisions and distractions which then reigned in the eastern church had brought the Christian religion, when its professors could so easily desert it for that gross imposture which an illiterate barbarian proposed to them. On his first coming to Yathreb, he lodged in the house of Chalid Abu Job, one of the chief men of the party that called him thither, till he had built a house for himself. This he immediately undertook, and erected a mosque at the same time, for the exercise of his new-invented religion; and having thus settled himself in, this town, he continued there to the time of his death. From this flight of Mahomet, the Hegira, which is the era of the Mahometans, begins its computation: Hegira, in. the Arabic language, signifying flight. It was first appointed by Omar, the third emperor of the Saracens, and takes its beginning from the 16th of July, in the year 622. Indeed the day that Mahomet left Mecca was on the first of Rabia; and he came to Medina on the 12th of the same month, that is on the 24th of our September; but the Hegira begins two months before, from the first of Moharram: for, that being the first month of the Arabian Year, Omar would make no alteration

as to that, but anticipated the computation fifty-nine days, that he might commence his era from the beginning of that year, in which the flight of the impostor happened, from which it took its name. The first thing that Mahomet did after he had settled himself at Medina was to marry his daughter Fatima to his cousin Ali. She was the only child then living of six which were born to him of Cadiga his first wife; and indeed the only one which he had, notwithstanding the Multitude of his wives who survived him. Having now obtained the end at which he had long been aiming, that is, that of having a town at his command, he entered upon a scheme entirely new. Hitherto he had been only preaching his religion for thirteen years together; for the remaining ten years of his life he took the sword, and fought for it. He had long been teased and perplexed at Mecca with questions, and objections, and disputes about what he had preached, by which he was often put to silence; but henceforth he forbade all manner of disputing, telling his disciples that his religion was to be propagated not by disputing, but by fighting. He commanded them therefore to arm themselves, and slay with the sword all that would not embrace it unless they submitted to pay a yearly tribute for the redemption of their lives: and according to this injunction, even to this day, all who live under any Mahometan government, and are not of their religion, pay an annual tax for a mulct of their infidelity; and are punished with death if they contradict or oppose any doctrine taught by Mahomet. After he had sufficiently infused this doctrine into his disciples, he next proceeded to put it in practice; and having erected his standard, called them all to come armed to it. His first expeditions were against the trading caravans, in their journeys between Mecca and Syria, which he attacked with various success; and if we except the establishing and adjusting a few particulars relating to his grand scheme, as occasion required, his time, for the first two years after his flight, was wholly spent in predatory excursions upon his neighbors, in robbing, plundering, and destroying all those that lived near Medina, who would not embrace his religion.

In the third year of the Hegira, A. D. 624, he made war upon those tribes of the Arabs which were of the Jewish religion near him; and having taken their castles, and reduced them under his power, he sold them all for slaves, and divided their goods among his followers. But the battle of Ohud, which happened towards the end of this year, had like to have proven fatal to him; for his uncle Hamza, who bore the standard, was killed, himself grievously wounded, and escaped only by one of his companions coming to his assistance. This defeat gave rise to many objections against him, some asked, how a prophet of God could be overthrown in a battle by the infidels and others murmured as much for the loss of their friends and relations who were slain. To satisfy the former, he laid the cause of the overthrow on the sins of some that followed him; and said that for this reason God suffered them to be overthrown, that so the good might be distinguished from the bad, and that those who were true believers might on this occasion be discerned from those who were not. To quiet the complaints of the latter, he invented his doctrine of fate and predestination; telling them that those who were slain in the battle, though they had tarried at home in their houses, must nevertheless have died at that moment, the time of every man's life being predetermined by God; but as they died fighting for the faith, they gained the advantage of the crown of martyrdom, and the rewards which were due to it in Paradise; both which doctrines served his purpose so well that he propagated them afterwards on all occasions. They have also been the favorite notions of the Mahometans ever since, and enforced especially in their wars; where, it must be owned, nothing can be more conducive to make them fight valiantly, than a settled opinion, that to whatever dangers they expose themselves, they cannot die either sooner or later than is predestined by God; and that, in case this predestined time be come, they shall, by dying martyrs for their religion, immediately enter into Paradise as the reward of it.

In the fourth year of the Hegira, A. D. 625, he waged war with the Nadirites, a tribe of the Jewish Arabs in the neighborhood; and the same year fought the battle of Beder, and had many other skirmishes with those who refused to submit: in all which he had sometimes prosperous and sometimes dubious success. But while his army was abroad on these expeditions, some of his principal men engaging in play and drinking, quarreled, and raised such a disturbance among the rest, that they had like to have endangered his whole scheme; and, therefore, to prevent any mischief of this kind for the future, he forbade the use of wine, and all games of chance.

In the fifth and sixth years, he was engaged in various wars, and subdued, several tribes of the Arabs. After so many advantages obtained, being much increased in strength, he marched his army against Mecca, and fought a battle near it the consequence of which was, that, neither side gaining any victory, they agreed on a truce for ten years. The conditions of it were that all within Mecca, who were for Mahomet, might have liberty to join themselves to him; and on the other side, those with Mahomet, who had a mind to leave him, might have the liberty to return to Mecca. By this truce, Mahomet, being very much confirmed in his power, took on him thenceforth the authority of a king, and was inaugurated as such by the chief men of his army.

Having thus made a truce with the men of Mecca, and thereby obtained free access for any of his party to go into that city, he ordained them to make pilgrimages thither, which have ever since been observed, with much superstition, by all his followers, once every year: and now being thus established in the sovereignty, at which he had long been aiming, he assumed all the insignia belonging to it; still retaining the sacred character of the chief pontiff of his religion, as well as the royal, with which he was invested.

He transmitted both to his successors, who, by the title of Caliphs, reigned after him: so that, like the Jewish princes of the race of Maccabees, they were kings and chief priests of their people at the same time.

In the seventh year of the Hegira, A. D. 628, the impostor led forth his army against Caibar, a city inhabited by Arabs of the Jewish religion and, after routing them in battle, he besieged their city, and took it by storm. Having entered the town, he took up his quarters in the house of Hareth, one of the principal inhabitants of the place, whose daughter Zainob, preparing a shoulder of mutton for his supper, poisoned it. Here those who would ascribe miracles to Mahomet, tell us, that the shoulder of mutton spoke to him, and discovered that it was poisoned; but, if it did so, it was, it seems, too late to do him any good; for Basher, one of his companions, beginning too greedily to eat of it, fell down dead on the place; and although Mahomet had not immediately the same fate, because, not liking the taste, he spat out again what he had taken into his mouth; yet he took enough to have a fatal effect; for he never recovered, and, at the end of three years, died of this meal. The maid being asked why she did this, answered, that "she had a mind to make trial whether he were a prophet or not: for, were he a prophet," said she, "he would certainly know that the meat was poisoned, and therefore would receive no harm from it; but, if he were not a prophet, she thought she should do the world good service in ridding it of so wicked a tyrant."

After this, he reduced under his subjection other towns belonging to the Jewish Arabs, and having increased his strength by these acquisitions to an army of 10,000 men, he resolved to make himself master of Mecca. For this purpose, pretending that the people of Mecca had broken the truce, he marched suddenly upon them, before they were aware of his design: when, being utterly incapable of putting themselves into any posture of defense against him, they found themselves necessitated surrendering immediately. As soon as it was heard among the neighboring Arabs that Mahomet had made himself master of Mecca, several other tribes made head against him, and in the first encounter routed his army, though greatly superior to theirs in number: but the impostor, having gathered up his scattered forces, and rallied them again into a body, acted more cautiously in the second conflict, and gave his enemies a total defeat, and took from them their baggage, with their wives and children, and all their substance.

After this, his power being much increased, the fame of it so terrified the rest of the Arabs, who had not yet felt his arms, that they all submitted to him. So that in this year, which is the tenth of the Hegira, and the 631st of our Lord, his empire and his religion became established together through all Arabia. He spent the remainder of the year in sending lieutenants into all his provinces, to govern in his name, to destroy the heathen temples, and all the other remains of the Arabian idolatry, and establish his religion in its stead. Towards the end of it, he took a journey in pilgrimage to Mecca, where a great concourse of people resorted to him from all parts of Arabia, whom he instructed in his law, and then returned to Medina. This pilgrimage is called, by his followers, the pilgrimage of valediction, because it was the last he made: for, after his return to Medina, he began daily to decline, through the force of that poison which he had taken three years before at Caibar. It had never been removed from his constitution, and at length brought him so low, that he was forced, on the 28th day of Saphar, the second month of their year, to take to his bed; and, on, the 12th day of the following month, he died, after a sickness of thirteen days. During his sickness he much complained of the meat which he had taken at Caibar; telling those who came to visit him, that he had felt the torments of it in his body ever since: so that, notwithstanding the intimacy he pretended with the angel Gabriel, and the continual revelations he received from him, he could not be preserved from perishing by the snares of a girl.

He was buried in the place where he died, which was in the chamber of his best-beloved wife, at Medina. Thus ended the life of this famous impostor, who was sixty-three years old on the day he died, according to the Arabian calculation, which makes only sixty-one of our years. For twenty-three years he had taken upon him to be a prophet of which he lived thirteen at Mecca, and ten at Medina, during which time, by his great address and management, he rose from the meanest beginnings to such a height of power as to be able to make one of the greatest revolutions that ever happened in the world.

This revolution immediately gave birth to an empire, which, in eighty years, extended its dominion over more kingdoms and countries than the Roman empire could subdue in eight hundred.

Mahomet was a man of a good stature and a comely aspect, and affected much to be thought like Abraham. He had a piercing and sagacious wit, and was extremely well versed in all those arts which are necessary to lead mankind. In the first part of his life, he was wicked and licentious, much delighted in rapine, plunder, and bloodshed, according to the usage of the Arabs, who have generally followed this kind of life.

The Mahometans, however, would persuade us that he was a saint from the fourth year of his age: for then, they say, the angel Gabriel separated him from his fellows, while he was at play with them; and, carrying him aside, cut open his breast, took out his heart, and wrung out of it that black drop of blood, in which they imagined was contained the fomes peccati; so that he had none of it ever after. This is contradicted, however, by two predominant passions, ambition and lust. The course which he took to gain empire abundantly shows the former; and the multitude of women with whom he was connected, proves the latter. While Cadiga lived, which was till his fiftieth year, it does not appear that he had any other wife: for, she being the origin and foundation of all his fortunes and grandeur, it is probable he durst not displease her, by bringing in another wife. But she was no sooner dead than he multiplied them to a great number, besides which he had several concubines. They that reckon the fewest, allow him to have married fifteen; but others reckon them to have been one and twenty, of which five died before him, six he divorced, and ten were alive at his death.

MUHAMMAD'S PERSONALITY BY JEAN-P. MARTIN.

FOREWORD FROM PEOPLE WHO HAVE READ SEVERAL BOOKS.

One of the most important theological principles in Islam is the perfection of Muhammad (Isma). This isma of Muhammad exceeds ad nauseam the principle of the pontifical infallibility of Catholics. Isma implies that Muhammad was preserved from all sin or error, in short that he was perfect. From the beginning of his public ministry for some Muslims, from his birth for others, as Jesus conceived without sin by Mary [singular idea of nature]. His perfection exceeds ad nauseam that of Jesus whose Christians admit that he was also a man, nothing but a man (principle of the double nature) with his moments of doubts of anger or weakness. The dogma of isma is an insult to human nature, a true blasphemy against God, having everything of idolatry and makes immoral fundamentalist Islam having nothing to do with reason, repudiating reason, therefore anti-mu'tazili.

OUR MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION IN THIS FIELD ALTHOUGH DOUBTLESS ENDLESSLY, WILL BE THEREFORE THAT OF THE MUSLIM TRADITION, IN OTHER WORDS, THE HADITHS.

The hadiths do not present the life of Muhammad in his chronological, natural, historical development, as the Sira (biographies of the prophet). Each one of them simply reports a singular act of the daily life of Muhammad, or quotes a word from him. Muhammad's life is thus divided into a myriad of moments. The Musnad of Ibn Hanbal contains, for example, 29,000 hadiths, that is to say 29,000 moments of the daily life of Muhammad, which have a paradigm value for the Muslim community. Every moment of Muhammad's life, even in his humblest and most intimate activities (eating, going to bed, sex); is an example or a norm because, for Islam, his life was totally in accordance with the word of God and his will. Every moment of Muhammad's life, taken one by one, is therefore a living commentary on the divine Word. He is like the crystallization in the realm of the visible and of the carnal of the immaterial will of God, and yet transcribed in his Book. Every act of daily life must be subordinated to the example of Muhammad, who is the ideal model, to be approved of God.

The life of the Prophet brings back to the first times. Did not Muhammad say in his farewell speech: wa inna z-zamana qadi stadara ka hayatihi yawma khalaqa Llahu s-samawati wa l-arda; ("Time has finished its cycle and it is like the day when God created the heavens and the earth")? (Ibn Hisham, Sira IV, 275). Muhammad sets the archetypal model of the basic activities of life as the civilizing hero of archaic religions. The civilizing hero moves in a primordial, mythical space. This is what happens in the Islamic tradition, mutatis mutandis. Muhammad's life is sacred or even mythologized. It moves in a floating, non-localized, very vague space-time. Very few hadiths provide precise historical or geographical indications. Chapter 4 of Bukhari contains 111 hadiths. Only 14 of these 111 hadiths allude, and still very vaguely, to a historical or geographical location.

On the birth and childhood of the future prophet of Islam, we know practically nothing. Yet Muslim and non-Muslim biographies all relate with many details his miraculous birth and his prodigious childhood. It is in fact reconstructions made two centuries later, at the time of the Abbasid caliphs, in the ninth century, to grow the character and endow it with glory. The reality was perhaps much less glorious. Does not the Quran simply say, in its chapter 93: "Did He not find you an orphan? Did He not find you destitute?"

A critical rereading of the Muslim sources nevertheless makes it possible to identify some of the PROBABLE causes that have, perhaps, gradually led the man Muhammad to the certainty of having been chosen to fulfill a divine mission.

And, first of all, the (probable) fact that his family having been part of the guardians of the temple in Mecca, Muhammad was immersed in the supernatural from his earliest childhood.

The personality of Muhammad may have even been influenced by the fate of his own father, who died prematurely, and who, as a child, was almost the victim of a human sacrifice. Muhammad referred to this story by declaring one day, "I am the son of two slain," thus referring to the myth of Abraham's sacrifice on his son (Ishmael according to the Muslim tradition); and to the human sacrifice which his own father narrowly escaped. According to some chroniclers, the father of Muhammad would be almost sacrificed on the altar of one of the divine couples ruling on the Kaaba of the time, Asaf and Naila.

Muhammad's grandfather, Abd al Muttalib, had sworn to sacrifice one of his sons if he could have ten. When he had his ten sons, he drew lots for one of them to know which would be the offering to the gods; and the lot designated Abdallah (the father of Muhammad)? He resumed the draw, and the lot again fell on Abdallah.

Abd al Muttalib then took the child and brought him to the foot of the statues to slaughter him as Abraham had wanted to do with his son in his time.

David Abbasi's note on this subject. "The challenge of the sacrifice of the son of Abraham has always seemed to me (and still seems to me) inexplicable; how can a man go astray so much? Abraham justifies his decision by a divine order by claiming that God Himself asked it, in order to put it to the test. But it cannot be admitted that God (omniscient and powerful) is so ignorant of the will and intention of men that he needs to put them to the test. If God is omniscient and learned, then he knows perfectly well to what extent he can count on the obedience of his children! Why test it? God, who knows everything about everything, does not need to give his creature an examination "(Siyavash AVESTA).

But let us return to our sheep.

The Quraysh exclaimed: "Abd al Muttalib! What do you want to do ? "

"Cut off his throat," he told them.

But they opposed it.

Abd al Muttalib then resorted to a clairvoyant in order to find a solution. She told him to proceed to a new draw that if it was still Abdallah who was designated , to replace him by ten camels, then to start again by adding ten camels whenever the spell would still designate Abdallah. The draw stopped to designate Abdallah only when there were thus 100 camels to sacrifice. Abd al Muttalib immolated them instead of the father of Muhammad.

The events of his infancy will be of paramount importance for the destiny of Muhammad, they will therefore mark the social morality of the Quran.

Muhammad was very quickly fostered by his mother, but in the hours that followed his birth it is undoubtedly concubines of the family who suckled him. The hadith tell us indeed that it was a slave of his uncle Abu Lahab, who then took care of him.

Muhammad in the house of Halima and Beni Saad.

The families of Mecca used to entrust their children to childminders who lived outside the city in the desert. They took them home up to a certain age and breastfed them.

There are several reasons for this practice.

- Traditional linguistic nationalism (refusal of interbreeding, etc.) During pilgrimages, people flocked from different regions, hence the mixture of different languages, which could corrupt the Arabic. The Arabs attached great importance to the purity of their language. The Quran besides sometimes echoes that and Muhammad himself seems to have shared this racism or fear of linguistic? Interbreeding? "I am the one among you who speaks Arabic best, I am Quraysh and fostered among the Beni Saad."

- Training and hardening of children by a life "in the hard way" outside Mecca. An outdoor life far from the diseases of the city.

The clan of the Saad ibn Bakr, a branch of the Hawazin tribe, went to Mecca. In this tribe lived a childminder named Halima. The clan arrived late in the city and the women had to raise only the poorest children of the ruling classes of Mecca.

Life in a Bedouin childminder could only be simple, very simple: the tribe spent the seasons in various places; the children watched the flocks on the pasture, and played together; women picked up the wood for the cooking, maintained their homes, and spun. We often contented ourselves with dates and milk; we sometimes ate vegetables, meat, and at fairs or visits to "big cities," like Mecca, some candies. There might be raids and intertribal wars, but our sources do not mention any concerning the Halima tribe. It seems that the health of the child was very delicate. Whenever he came to Mecca, with his childminder, to visit his mother and grandfather, he suffered from the change of air; and it is for this reason, it is said that his stay in the home of the childminder was prolonged beyond the ordinary. A big fair was held every year in the region, in Ukaz (east of Mecca). Halima and her infant were sometimes met there; and it is even reported that Halima one day asked an astrologer diviner of the tribe of Hudhayl, who was practicing his trade at the fair, to predict the destiny of the child (Ibn sad, 1/1, p 98).

Muhammad when he was a child was nervous and had a feverish temperament, so much that an Austrian doctor, Aloys Sprenger (1813-1893) believed to be able to explain the revelations of the Quraysh prophet by epileptic or hysteric fits (Aloys Sprenger, *Das Leben und die Lehre of Mohammad*, I-III, Berlin, 1869, second edition, I, pp. 207-268).

Long before Hippocrates, "great disease" was already considered as an intrusion of the sacredness into the mind of a person.

A kind of sudden possession, beneficial in the eyes of the ancient Greeks, maleficent for the Celts (baceuos).

Some scholars believe that Muhammad suffered from epilepsy of the right temporal lobe. In the acute episodes of the pathology, the individual hears voices and is subject to luminous hallucinations. When this pathology arises in a brain educated from childhood to religion as Muhammad, these physiological

impressions can be interpreted or lived as mystical experiences, and give rise to conversions or consequential actions. Let us think of St. Paul on the road to Damascus!

THE FIRST EPILEPTIC FIT OF MUHAMMAD.

When Muhammad was four or five years old, there was an event reported by Halima herself.

A few months after our return, while he was keeping the sheep with his foster brother, behind the tents; he came running to tell us: the Quraysh just been seized by two men dressed all in white, who put him on the ground and opened his breast.

We ran up. He was up and very pale. I hugged him and my husband did similarly. When questioned, the child said that two angels had come from God, opened his chest, removed his heart, removed the part belonging to Satan; and put the rest back in place after washing it with heavenly water, whose freshness he still felt. The angels then went to heaven.

Some Muslims (the m'utazilites for example) believe that this miracle is not to be taken literally, that it is in reality an image, a metaphor.

What is deduced by other Muslim theologians.

The meeting with the angels is not symbolic, but very real and the heart of Muhammad has been washed, cleansed, purified, by the angels. Denying it is unfounded, because Anas, one of the companions of Muhammad, related in a hadith reported by Bukhari that he saw the scar resulting from that. To deny this event is also very dangerous, because it heads towards rejecting the miraculous and divine side of the action of Muhammad on Earth and to make him only an exceptional man, whereas he was really sent by God. Accepting such a reading of the Sira could, step by step, lead to a questioning of all other Muslim miracles, including the greatest of all miracles in the world: the Quran (Muhammad Said Ramadan Al-Buti, *Fiqh As Sira*).

Shortly after this event, the childminder's husband, Al-Harith, told his wife that it might be better to return Muhammad to his mother.

"Halima," my husband said to me, "I am afraid that the child is suffering from some disease. Let's bring him back to his mother's house before his state gets worse.

What we did.

- What brings you, pleasant childminder? asked his mother. You want no longer to take care of him ? "Our child is now old enough and my duty is full," I said. But strange things happen to him, it is why I prefer to bring him back to you.

- What is it? she asked me. Answer me bluntly.

She didn't content herself with false pretenses and I had to tell her the whole truth.

- Are you afraid that they are evil spirits?

- Yes ! I replied.

- Then you can let me go and return in peace.

Thus ended this period of Muhammad's existence; his life with the Beni Saad, his fosterage among them, lasted two years. There is perhaps a distant echo of that in verse 233 of the chapter 2 of the Quran.

Should the next incident be placed at the same time, which seems to have had some significance? Baladhuri (1, § 263) reports that one day a violent quarrel arose between Abu Talib and his brother Abu Lahab. The latter threw his brother down, sat down on his chest, and slapped him. The young Muhammad ran to help Abu Talib, and then jostled Abu Lahab. Abu Talib got up and rushed upon his brother Abu Lahab; in turn, he sat down on his chest and covered his face with slaps. Abu Lahab spoke Muhammad shortly thereafter, saying, "I am also your uncle, like Abu Talib; why did you help him but not me? "

Other incidents of the same type later came to widen the gap between uncle and nephew.

For generations, the Meccans traveled abroad in Christian and Zoroastrian territories; and strangers transited via Mecca. There were no priests or monks in Mecca, but many Christians, slaves, lived there. The French Anne-Marie Delcambre even thinks that the famous Nestorius would have stayed in Mecca. What remains to be demonstrated. What is more certain is his brief stay in Petra.

Contact with neighboring civilizations, mainly Byzantine and Persian Sassanid, as well as the presence of Christian and Jewish minorities, made some question the traditional Arab religion. The Arabs, however, did not wish to be subject to the two great of the time, the Byzantines and the Persians, who embodied higher civilizations. The Arab who will answer this challenge we know him today with the name of Muhammad. He was intelligent and as realistic as possible (in chapter 22, verses 39 to 41, he accepts, for example, the principle of defensive warfare).

It is difficult to say today whether the art of writing and reading, recently spread in the Arabian Peninsula, was known by Muhammad. Muhammad in the Quran is often called ummi. Those who interpret this Arabic word as meaning illiterate are seriously mistaken. In the days of paganism, this

adjective simply meant all those who were not "people of the Book," as opposed to Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Sabians, etc. who had all their books.

Ignorant and primitive tribes or peoples, devoid with prophets of the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were therefore called ummiyoun in fact.

The term was therefore simply the Arab equivalent of the notion of goyim, gentiles or "people of nations" in relation to Judaism. It is for this reason that we find in the verses 157 to 158 of the chapter 7 in the Quran: "Those who follow the messenger, the ummi Prophet.....So believe in God and his messenger, the ummi Prophet."

"To be an ummi" did not mean to be illiterate, but without erudition (found in books); and this qualifier was not only attributed to Muhammad but also to all his tribe, or to other tribes, also without religion or book. The care with which the Arabs cultivated poetry and grammar does not permit denying them any intellectual culture, and it may be concluded from certain passages in the Quran that Muhammad himself had some knowledge of the art of writing. He used, however, usually secretaries who wrote under his dictation; his cousin Ali, Uthman, Zayd, son of Haritha, Muawiyah, Ubay ...

Muhammad when he was a child seems to have experienced some need. The orphan had to work very early to reduce the costs of the uncle who had taken him in. Later, he will accompany his caravans, and will become camel driver. In the good Arab society of the time, no notable himself milked the camels and did not place himself as steward, that is to say, in reality the servant, at a "manageress"; but this is what Muhammad did when he worked for a rich widow called Khadija, who had made a fortune in the caravan trade, and was no longer very young. She was nearly forty years old and probably did not remain insensitive to this young man then twenty-five to twenty-nine years old. That she had not been totally foreign to some Judaism or Judeo-Christianity - even to a heretical Christianity - is also likely. The Muslim tradition, for its part, will prefer to transfer this knowledge of the Scriptures from the first wife of Muhammad to a so-called cousin of Khadija, Waraqa, son of Nawfal, whom it makes a hanif, that is to say a monotheist neither Jew nor Christian. It does seem well that Waraqa was simply a Nestorian Christian.

The marriage took place in the year 595. He allowed Muhammad to become rich. In the space of ten years, Khadija gave birth to half a dozen children. The first was a son, Qasim, but he died when he was just beginning to walk. Qasim was probably born a few months later, in 596. According to Ibn Hazin (p. 38), Khadija began by calling his eldest son by the name of his ancestors, Abd al-Uzza (what meant worshiper of the goddess al-Uzza); but as Muhammad did not like such names, he changed it into Qasim (what means, "He who distributes, who gives handouts").

If from Khadija he had four daughters, the sons she gave him, on the other hand, died all in infancy, and this earned him the sarcasm of a male chauvinist background which having no male offspring was a shame (chapter 108 verse 3: Lo! it is your insulter and not you who is without posterity, understood, male).

Some argue that this verse proves that Muhammad did not worship the true god of the universe, but his counterfeit, since he never had a male offspring. In reality this is an allusion to the fact that in the Arab society at the time, having only daughters was equated with sterility. Muhammad therefore will be called abtar, literally "the one cut off," that is to say, impotent. Was called in this way the man without offspring, the castrated slave and donkey.

Muhammad incorporated in his version of the religion of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, which already contained many of them (some dating back to the Sumerians) beliefs and pagan rites, especially in the ceremonies of the pilgrimage to Mecca. [WHAT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A CRIME IN ITSELF. LET US SAY IT, THE PAGANS WERE MEN AND NOTHING OF WHAT HUMAN IS SHOULD BE FOREIGN TO US. THE TRUE CRIME AGAINST THE SPIRIT ONCE AGAIN IS TO MAINTAIN THAT ALL THIS COMES FROM GOD].

The hadiths show that Muhammad himself [like the Jesus of the Gospels] shared with his contemporaries innumerable superstitions, which went back to the paganism of his youth, of course.

Examples of some ridiculous Muslim superstitions.

Bukhari, Vol. 7, 747.

The shoe to put on or take off first?

Muhammad: "If you want to put on your shoes, put on the right shoe first and if you want to take them off, take the left one first."

Bukhari, Vol. 2, 158. The eclipses.

Muhammad: "The sun and the moon are two signs among the signs of God. God frightens his devotees with them ."

Many other gestures, the song of the muezzin, the raised hands, have an animistic origin, they were often performed in order to remove the evil spirits. Islam has preserved many customs of the pagan Arabs and especially these: polygamy, slavery, repudiation (repudiation and not divorce), circumcision. OTHER SOURCES OF QURAN.

His travels to Syria where he met Christians and probably even monks, his contact with the Jews and Christians of Mecca, and especially of Yathrib / Medina or elsewhere in Arabia; were for Muhammad as many opportunities to be pervaded with various information from these circles. The narratives on these contacts were, of course, immersed in a very apologetic atmosphere, since they often stage characters who immediately recognize on him the mark of the prophecy (what is more than suspicious); but there are too many materials in the Quran and the later Muslim tradition on this subject to be allowed to reject all of this completely, and to deny the existence of such sources of the Quran.

In the Quran the allusions or repetitions of Judeo-Christian themes (Adam and Eve, Noah, etc.) are innumerable, and the rites borrowed from paganism are just as numerous. Of course, from the point of view of the pious Muslims, the Quran among them looking like a revelation made directly by God, or by the Archangel Gabriel to Muhammad, there can't be a question of speaking of influence and sources. It is quite different in the eyes of men or women who, like us, seek only the truth.

Maxim Tyrius in the second century of our era: "The Arabians pay homage to I know not what god, which they represent by a quadrangular stone [the Kaaba]".

The pagan Arabs had several deities. These deities were materialized by stones, the most important of which was called the Black Stone. The Black Stone (a meteorite) was placed in a cube-shaped building (the Kaaba), near a sacred well (the Zamzam well), the whole inserted into a sacred enclosure (haram). The worship consisted mainly of circumambulation all around. These rites will be preserved by Muhammad (whose grandfather guarded this shrine and who had been impressed by its ceremonies).

In launching his first raids against the Roman-Byzantine or Persian empires, did Muhammad intend to subjugate or convert their populations? Or simply subdue and convert the Lakhmid and Ghassanid Arabs who guarded the borders of these two empires? Did he have a universal or Arab vision of the religion he had just founded?

Pilgrimage to Mecca and choice of Arabic as a chosen language, as well as various other clues, head towards showing that Muhammad did not really have, at least at first, a universal vision.

While originally, he probably did not see himself as a universal prophet, but only imagined himself as revealing his religion in Arabic to Arabs; the effect of the conquests and the wealth of the booty amassed, led him and his advisers to also send his message to non-Arabs, and to submit them to the yoke of Islam.

The secret design of the whole "religious" life of Muhammad, however, was to return as a lord and master, as a victor, in the pagan sanctuaries which had impressed him throughout his youth; especially the small Mecca temple of the Kaaba, as well as the other "holy places" in the Mecca of the time (Safa and Marwa). Despite the denials of the later Muslim tradition, blinded by the belief in the perfection of the Prophet (isma), which was gradually established, Muhammad certainly had to share the beliefs common to his environment.

He may have been a prophet perhaps characterized by a total isma (perfection), as idolatry which is attached to his person (and who does not honor Islam) has it, but he was also a man, and as a man, he was not above human weaknesses.

Criticism addressed to Muhammad by his voices, that is to say, by himself, or his contemporaries, or both at once (with the Quran, we never know very well).

Chapter N° 3 verse 60: (This is) the truth from your Lord, so do not be you of those who waver.

Chapter N° 6 verse 52. Repel not those who call upon their Lord at morn and evening, seeking His Countenance.

Do not reject those who pray morning and evening for the Lord, and seek his face.

Chapter N° 10 verse 94: And if you are in doubt concerning that which We reveal unto you, then question those who read the Scripture (that was) before you.

Chapter N° 15 verse 97: Well know We that your bosom is oppressed by what they say,

Chapter N° 20 verse 114: And do not hasten with the Quran ere its revelation has been perfected unto you, and say: My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.

Chapter N° 33 verse 1: O Prophet! Keep your duty to God and obey not the disbelievers and the hypocrites (what disbelievers, what hypocrites?)

Chapter N° 80 verse 1: he scowled and turned away because the blind man came to him; As for the one who is rich, you approach him eagerly and it does not matter if he does not purify himself. We find the expression "Nay I swear" in several chapters of the Quran. The chapter 75 for instance. It is usual to interpret it as follows: "What I say is so certain that I can refrain from affirming it by oath." That being said, Muhammad also precisely swears often, on the moon and the stars. This is not surprising, if we remember that his clan guarded the temple which contained the black stone, idol of the pagans in Arabia.

Ibn al-Kalbi (Kitab al-Asnam, entry Al Uzza p. 17) reports that Muhammad himself once sacrificed a white sheep in front of an idol representing Al Uzza; the animal had perhaps been provided to him by his aunts.

"I have offered a white sheep to al-'Uzza, while I was a follower of the religion of my people."

Bukhari volume 5 Book 58 number 169, also mentioned by Suhayli, 1, 146-147, adds that one day Muhammad met Zayd ibn Amr near Baldah; and that one of them - the narrator is not sure of whom - proposed to eat to the other some meat of an animal offered in sacrifice; but that it was answered him: I do not anything which you slaughter in the name of your idols.

Bukhari is clearer elsewhere (volume 7 Book 67 number 47) and he specifies that it was Muhammad who had offered this meat to Zayd Ibn Amr; and that it is therefore Zayd who refused to eat the meat of the animals sacrificed on these stone altars (ansabs).

In his commentary on the same hadith, Qastallani (Irshad, 8, 277) quotes Abu Yala, al-Bazzar and others, to conclude that it was the freedman of Muhammad, Zaid ibn Haritha, who had slaughtered the sheep on the altar dedicated to idols; and that it was Zayd ibn Amr, who passed by, who refused to eat of it by replying: I eat none but those things on which God's name has been mentioned.

For more details see our previous booknotes pages 128-129 and the monograph by Alfred Guillaume published in 1960 in the Journal of Semitic Studies (Manchester University Press) on the Yunus ibn Boukayr version of the life of Muhammad according to Ibn Ishaq.

Up to about forty years of age Mahomet believed in the religion of his ancestors, and was no doubt a follower of the worship of jinns. One of the verses quoted in the Quran is worth being mentioned on this subject, because it makes one think more of an astral pagan worship than of the god of philosophers (philosophical and thoughtful monotheism).

Chapter 53 verse 49: " And that He it is Who is the Lord of Sirius; And that He destroyed the former (tribe of) A'ad And (the tribe of) Thamud" etc., etc. See also chapter 7, verse 184. Chapter 34, verse 41.

Muhammad, moreover, was certainly influenced by the way of doing of ancient Arab diviners (kahin), who were said to be inspired by the jinn, and their obscure expression in rhythmic but also rhymed prose (saj), with their mysterious oaths based on natural phenomena - on the stars for example -; of whose some forms besides are found in the Quran (chapters 53,1, 100, 1-5).

Often, with members of his family (his wife Khadija for example), and following in this respect a well-established custom among his compatriots; he withdrew like certain hermits on the heights of Hira, a mountain near Mecca, in a sort of cave.

Muhammad ended up perhaps in self-persuading (or convincing himself) unconsciously that his ideas were of supernatural inspiration; and as he was apparently epileptic, it resulted from that some trances in which, a little like Joan of Arc after the death of her sister, or Abraham, he thought he heard voices. In the Middle Ages, in the East as well as in the West, epileptics were considered possessed by a spirit.

These lines of verse among the oldest of the Quran also resemble those of the pagan poets (called sahir) who looked like men also possessed by spirits. Hence the fact that Muhammad had to constantly defend himself in the Quran from being a poet or a kahin. Such accusations were indeed very plausible.

The Muslim tradition considers that certain Quranic verses (chapter 44, verses 1-4, chapter 97, verses 1 to 5, chapter 2, verse 185) indicate that Muhammad would have suddenly felt in him "a prophetic call." When he was about forty years old therefore, in 609 according to the official chronology, Muhammad would have had something like a vision or a hallucination, and would have heard the voice of a spirit ordering him to preach. But the details that are given by Muslim history about the circumstances of this Revelation, and about the way in which the revelations which followed have been made, fall within the legend, and not the history.

Since God does not exist, at least certainly not in the manner of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, any revelation of his splendor is by definition impossible; but what is possible, on the other hand, are physiological feelings due to his epilepsy. In the acute episode of the pathology, the patient indeed hears voices or is subject to luminous hallucinations. But the question is: who speaks when

Muhammad hears this voice resonate in him? (Same dilemma with Abraham or Joan of Arc.) In the oldest chapters of the Quran, nothing indicates who speaks, nor the origin of these revelations. The first "true" visions of Muhammad therefore took place at home, otherwise some details of the tradition could not be explained and particularly the one when his wife Khadija gives him a blanket (surah 74).

This detail is incompatible with a stay in the cave of Hira which was located 5 km away from Mecca anyway.

This is what Aisha 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."

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.

Another series of traditions gives as the frame to the visions of Muhammad a cave in the Jabal An Nour, Hira, located 5 km away 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 fellow men (Arabic tahannut); he also retreated in this place as some Christian hermits, on the heights overlooking the city.

The Muslims if they are happy to state these visions having as frame this cave called Hira, do not insist, however, on the eminently pagan (or Christian?) character of these retreats of the Tahannut type.

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).

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.

According to Tabari, after the famous night of the decree that occurred in 609 (the night when, according to other traditions, the Spirit of God appeared to Muhammad for the first time); The latter went down to the city to find Khadija his wife and told him: I'm afraid of becoming a possessed (majnun).

Why ? she asked him.

Because I have all the symptoms of the majanin (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.

An attempt at rational analysis by a Fenian who has read several books and not one.

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 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!")

The emergence of Muhammad as a religious reformer was therefore made gradually under the influence of various influences, external (contacts and relationships) or internal (epilepsy), but also periods of retreat and reflection. The Quran has left us a rather striking picture of the rejection of Muhammad by his own society, when he began to preach what he heard, or thought he has heard (like Joan of Arc): a general laughing stock welcomes his words. As for Jesus in Palestine (at least according to the four gospels), they responded to his visions with a laugh and sarcasm.

The people of Mecca think he draws his information from a stranger (chapter 16, verse 103). For them, he speaks like a diviner, a wizard, a poet, and his message resembles too much the "stories" of the Jews and Christians to be authentic. The announcement of the resurrection of the corpses after death, makes him worthy of being considered a majnun, a man whose spirit is possessed by a jinn. Chapter 37 verse 16: "When we are dead and have become dust and bones, shall we then, forsooth, be raised (again) ? And our forefathers ? Even Abu Talib his uncle [the one who took him in after the death of his parents] will refuse until the end to agree with this message.

The spreading of the Quran has, paradoxically, to begin with, a result contrary to that which was expected (17, 41): "We verily have displayed (Our warnings) in this Quran that they may take heed, but it increases them in nothing save aversion." See also chapter 16 verse 24. "And when it is said unto them: What has your Lord revealed ? they say: (Mere) fables of the men of old." [Editor's note. Allusion to the Bible presumably]. Chapter 37 verses 14 and 15: "And seek to scoff when they behold a portent. And they say: Lo! this is mere magic."

It must not be forgotten that Muhammad was especially a pragmatist (liar or forger says the text, chapter 16 verse 101: "And when We put a revelation in place of (another) revelation - and God knows best what He reveals - they say: Lo! you are but inventing. Most of them do not know."). The prayer was first said in the direction of Jerusalem. But frustrated by the lack of cooperation of the Jews and realizing that he would never be accepted by them as the messiah; Muhammad then had a

vision that ordered him to change the qibla (orientation) of the prayer (chapter 2, 142 and following) and to turn now towards the Kaaba of Mecca to say it. Other traces of this "pragmatism" of Muhammad are found elsewhere in the Quran. Muhammad went so far as to claim that the humanistic and tolerant synthesis he had tried to make prevail at the very beginning of his commitment (God, but also the three goddesses Al Uzza, Lat, and Manat, equated with female angels) had been inspired by Satan. He makes God, or more exactly, the Spirit who appears to him, say: "Never sent We a messenger or a prophet before you but when He recited (the message) Satan proposed (opposition) in respect of that which he recited thereof. But God abolishes that which Satan proposes" (The Hajj chapter - the pilgrimage to Mecca chapter - chapter 22, verse 52).

Muhammad smiles and the caliph executes, Germans say. At the beginning, in Mecca, Muhammad preached a relatively peaceful religion, focusing his message on faith and redemption. Did this moderation phase really correspond to what he thought? We may wonder, because as soon as his arrival in Yathrib / Medina, Muhammad made assassinate by his partisans a certain number of well-known political opponents, the most important thing in conditions of sometimes an unsustainable cruelty.

Some hadiths of Bukhari tell us how Muhammad answered whom asked him awkward questions.

"I heard the Prophet saying, "God has hated for you three things:

1. Vain talks (useless talk).
2. Wasting of wealth (by extravagance).
3. And asking too many questions (in disputed religious matters)". (Vol. 2 book 24 No 555)

"On that, the Prophet got angry and his cheeks or his Face became red " (Vol. 1, book 3 No. 91).

"The Prophet was asked about things which he did not like, but when the questioners insisted, the Prophet got angry " (Vol. 1 book 3 No. 92).

The first Muslims who had followed Muhammad to Yathrib / Medina (the muhajirun) were reluctant to wage war on their families who remained in the Meccan camp, what deeply irritated Muhammad. He very opportunely received the following revelations on this subject: "Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you" (Chapter 2, 216).

"If you do not go forth, God will afflict you with a painful doom, and will choose instead of you a folk other than you " (chapter 9 verse 39).

These verses of the Quran were used as a basis for establishing the theory of the obligation to make (holy) "war" : jihad.

Our religion to us being only a religion of truth, and as we are not people of one book, we allow ourselves to advise our faithful readers to look a little on this one, chapter 33 verse 36: "And 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 whosoever is rebellious to God and His messenger, he verily goes astray in error manifest" (Alley Oop, Move along, there's nothing to see here!)

One of the characteristics of Muhammad remains that in many circumstances he never clearly ordered what to do, but asked, or only suggested, his followers to do so.

With after, depending on the case, justification a posteriori by a divine revelation, or not.

One day, for example, the Prophet was told insulting remarks about him by the prince of Yathrib / Medina, Ibn Ubbay, who had only reluctantly accepted to become an ally of Muhammad. Umar suggested to him: "Ask our faithful Abbad Ibn Bishr to kill him! But Muhammad exclaimed, "What do you mean Umar? People will say then that Muhammad kills his guests! "

Ibn Ubbay denied anyway the insulting remarks in question, a oath in support. The Medinans supported him, and Muhammad forgot.

But later Ibn Ubbay behaved in such a way that this time even the Medinans disapproved of him.

Muhammad then told Umar: "If I had made him killed, on the day you advised me to do so, the Medinans would have trembled with rage. And now if I asked them to do it themselves, they would do it without hesitation. "

Another example is the battle of Nakhla in 623. This raid was indeed never categorically requested by Muhammad, who even condemned it at first, given the scandal it aroused.

It broke indeed all the rules in force at the time, although very explainable, given the socio-economic conditions of the Meccan settled in Yathrib / Medina; but it was later legitimized by a divine vision that Muhammad very opportunistically had shortly afterwards (chapter 2, verse 217).

In 627, during the battle of the trench, Muhammad will face the Meccans: thanks to a ditch dug around Yathrib / Medina, his men will win without having really fought; and it will be the turn of the third and

last Jewish tribe of the city, the Banu Qurayza, to be accused of treason. The accusation being purely military and political, the traditional tribal rules will be respected for the last time: it will be the official head of the Jewish tribe, an Arab prince converted to Islam and dying, named Sa'd bin Mu'adh, who will be responsible for deciding their guilt. The men will be beheaded and thrown into mass graves dug by the Muslims; women and children will be sold as slaves. And after the massacre, Muhammad will take as sexual slave one of the survivors, called Rayhana.

BRIEF OVERVIEW ON THE ARABIC LANGUAGE TO BEGIN.

Proto-Semitic is the Afro-Asiatic language from which the various Semitic languages such as Hebrew or Arabic are derived.

Semitic languages are characterized, among other things, by the predominance of trilateral stems and by the use of laryngeal, guttural and emphatic consonants.

Proto-Semitic was probably spoken in the Arabian Peninsula. The idea of placing the original home of the Semites here is based on the fact that the Canaanite, Aramaic and Arab tribes are considered as originating from the Arabian Peninsula. Akkadians are probably also native from it. The Akkadians are the Semites who left the oldest known written traces, carbon-14 dated of the 23rd century before our era. The oldest (pre-) proto-Canaanite inscriptions are carbon-14 dated of 1800 before our era. Proto-Semitic was probably spoken in the fourth millennium before our era. It is therefore approximately a contemporary of the common Indo-European.

Semitic languages are a group of languages spoken in ancient times in the Middle East, the Middle East and North Africa. These languages have been called "Semitic" since 1781, according to the biblical name of Shem, son of Noah. They form one of the branches of the family of Hamito-Semitic languages (also called Afro-Asiatic), spread from the northern half of Africa to the Middle East. The origin and direction of the geographical expansion of these languages remain uncertain, from Asia to Africa or from Africa to Asia.

Archaic Semitic languages such as Akkadian and Ugaritic have been attested for more than four millennia. The earliest Akkadian documents, in cuneiform script, date from the second half of the third millennium before our era and archeology discovers other Akkadian later documents until the beginning of our era.

The most widely spoken contemporary Semitic languages are Arabic (over 450 million speakers), Amharic (27 million), Hebrew (8 million), Tigrinya (6.75 million). Together with Maltese (400 000 speakers), they constitute today the only official Semitic languages, although other languages used in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Somalia, as well as the various Neo-Aramaic dialects of the Middle East, relate to this family.

The expression of tense has in each language - two poles: the action and the mode in which the action is accomplished. Tense and aspect. In fact, in each language, the verbal expression is a mixture of these two poles. Such language will insist more on the tense of action, while another language expresses more strongly how the action is perceived.

Each language has its own means for expressing the tense. To compare them would be an immense task that cannot be discussed here. Let us confine ourselves to the expression of the temporality peculiar to the grammar of the ancient Hebrew - the language of the Hebrew Bible, but the other languages of the same linguistic family (the Semitic languages) have a similar or analogous mode of expressing the temporality. Where Indo-European languages such as Latin, Greek, Celtic, English, French, German, etc., distinguish present, past and future, the ancient Semitic languages have an opposition of the type: completed and incomplete or "perfect" and "imperfect", i.e.: momentary (punctual) and "ongoing" (durative).

In fact, in ancient Hebrew, the completed was a punctual (of past as well as of the future) and the incomplete was a durative (of past as well as of the future). Thus, the time of an action was less expressed than the way in which the action was accomplished.

From there, of course, many translation difficulties. It is that a language is not simply a lexicon and a grammar: it is a way of feeling and thinking, a particular way of apprehending reality. Naturally, the vocabulary transcribes a particular division. Each language makes its own division. But, moreover, the expression of the tense marks - in each family of languages - an original and specific approach.

Unlike Indo-European languages, Arabic does not have a well-defined grammatical tense system. Some authors, such as Haywood & Nahmad (1962), have consequently characterized Arabic and other Semitic languages as being "deficient" when it comes to tense (pg. 440). However, it may be more precisely stated that Arabic is deficient only when it comes to the morphological expression of tense, not deficient in its ability to express and communicate tense information.

As Koffi (2015) explains, "All human languages are aware of time, but not all languages express tense grammatically. Classical Hebrew and many African languages do not have morphologically expressed tense," (pg. 170).

Arabic shares this feature with its Semitic sister language Hebrew.

Haywood & Nahmad's rather brusque treatment of the Arabic language's ability to communicate temporal information may be explained in light of another consideration, which is that the issues of tense, aspect and their constructions have received relatively limited attention in classical Arabic grammar.

Despite its extensive and sophisticated grammatical tradition which has been in place for more than a millennium (Ryding 2005: xvii), a detailed categorization of tense and tense construction remains notably absent from the classical Arabic grammar.

A quote from Ziadeh & Winder (1957) below captures the most commonly articulated understanding of the Arabic verb in relation to tense and aspect.

"We may note that Arabic verbs have only two 'tenses,' perfect and imperfect. In reality these are not tenses, for the distinction between them is not basically that of time. They indicate only whether action is complete or not. The perfect denotes completed action, and the imperfect denotes uncompleted [sic] action – irrespective of time. It is usually the case that the Arabic perfect is equivalent to the Indo-European past and that the Arabic imperfect is equivalent to the Indo-European present or future, but exact equivalents must be determined by the context."

ARABIC WRITING.

An abjad, or consonantal alphabet, is an alphabet noting only consonants (or noting principally consonants), as in Arabic or Hebrew.

The vowels of the words are expressed only by reading or by auxiliary signs of rare use, mainly diacritical signs. For such writing systems, therefore, we speak of a *scriptio defectiva*, "defective writing": the writing is in fact most of the time incomplete and requires the reader to already know a given word to read it correctly.

The majority of the scripts noting Semitic languages are abjads, for reasons related to the morphophonological structure of these languages, in which it is possible, knowing the appropriate grammar rules, to deduce the place and the timbre of the vowels. The long vowels of the abjads, however, are often noted by means of *matres lectionis* (consonants playing a vowel role), which means that there are few "pure" abjads.

N.B. In the abjads, it is common that the letters change more or less their form according to their place in the word.

A diacritical mark is a sign accompanying a letter or a grapheme. Compared to the grapheme, the diacritical mark can be placed above, under, in or through, after, in front of or all around.

Its purpose is to change the phonetic value of the letter (or grapheme); avoid an ambiguity between homographs; allow a more accurate reading.

In Arabic writing, where vowels are not written, diacritical marks are used to refine the reading.

The diacritical dots are for example graphical signs making possible to distinguish between them number of consonants of the Arabic language. The absence of these dots is a huge cause of ambiguities, a "t" for example can be read as well as a "b", "a" y, "a" th / t "or an" n ."

By comparison, it is much more rarely the case or in Aramaic.

In some respects, the Arabic alphabet is closer to the alphabet than to the abjad and the history shows that this abjad has not always been written as it is currently read.

It is generally considered that the Arabic alphabet is a derivative of the Aramaic alphabet in its Nabatean or Syriac variant, itself descendant of the Phoenician alphabet (alphabet which, among others, gives rise to the Hebrew alphabet, the Greek alphabet and hence, to the Cyrillic alphabet, Latin letters, etc.).

It seems that the Arabs borrowed the Nabatean alphabet as follows:

Sixth-fifth centuries before our era, settling of North-Semitic tribes and foundation of a kingdom centered around Petra, in present-day Jordan; the people in question, now called Nabateans, are probably speaking a form of Arabic.

In the second century of our era, the first testimonies of the Nabatean. The written language appears as an Aramaic (communication and trade language) tinged with Arabic. The Nabateans therefore do not write their own language. The written form is that of the Aramaic alphabet which continues to evolve.

The written form separates into two variants: one intended for inscriptions (called "monumental Nabatean") and the other, more cursive and whose letters join, for the papyrus; it is this cursive variant which, influencing more and more monumental writing, could have given birth to the Arabic alphabet.

The Arabic language replaces the Aramaic language in writing; the last inscription in Nabatean (Aramaic Arabic) dates from the fourth century.

The first attestation of a text in Arabic alphabet dates back to 512 of our era. It is a trilingual dedication (Greek, Syriac, Arabic) found in Zabad, Syria. The model used includes only twenty-two characters of which only fifteen have a different drawing, used to note twenty-eight phonemes. The language thus transcribed is some Nabatean Arabic.

The Nabatean model (if we consider that this is indeed the original model) was already, by dint of evolutions, characterized by many characters that had become fortuitously similar. Evolving from a cursive, the prototype of the Arabic alphabet accentuates even more these similarities. Moreover, if

the Nabatean has twenty-two phonemes, Arabic has twenty-eight of them; thus, among the twenty-two inherited letters, seven are ambiguous and six phonemes have no special letter: it was therefore necessary to use pre-existing letters, which became consequently ambivalent in fact.

It was in the seventh century precisely that one became aware of the limits of such an alphabet too ambiguous and not including enough signs for the sounds peculiar to the Arabic language: the Aramaic model has fewer phonemes than Arabic and the original writing therefore had to designate several phonemes with the same letter. From twenty-two signs, the alphabet had to rise to twenty-eight.

So new letters were created, simple variants of the old ones, which were distinguished by above-, under- or inscribed dots and that were placed at the end of the alphabet.

The use of such diacritical dots- whether they are used to distinguish letters already present or to create new ones - is probably an imitation of the Syriac and of the Nabatean.

It was among the Christian Arabs of Hira-Kufa that we imagined the most beautiful Arabic script, Kufic, which became the writing of the ancient Qurans. And it is among them that were imagined the first diacritical dots. Thus Uthman (644-654), with the help of Syrian scribes sent by Mu'awiya, could publish the 1st Quran. Uthman was related to the Christians of Syria by one of his wives, Nayla, who was of the Kalb's Christian tribe. His wife's father was also a Christian. From then on, Arabic had its writing and became very structured.

CLINICAL EXAMINATION OF THE QURAN.

Here below some texts by Peter DeLaCrau on the same subject, found by his heirs, then inserted here.

The Quran is a so-called supposedly and theoretically collection of the teachings of Muhammad given at the beginning of the seventh century. The refusal of Muhammad and / or his successors to proceed to a thematic regrouping of all these verses (we say verses but not chapters, because it is obvious that many chapters are made up of verses from different times) was catastrophic. Everything is not to be thrown from this book, judicious pieces of advice or sound maxims, imbued with common sense even of generosity, are not missing, and there are even verses of a great poetic force. But all this was chopped up and diluted in a stream of verses having nothing to do with each other, put end to end without reason and sometimes without a conducting thread; what gave us an inconsistent set, but then really inconsistent. The result of this dreadful mishmash does not shine by its philosophical depth or its humanism. See the hate speech against unbelievers, the physical violence it advocates for them, and the humiliating treatment of women. The structure of the text is nothing more than a litany of threats, repetitions and injunctions intended to pound or subdue the believer to a warlike and discriminatory morality. The visionary and poetic Quran is only mere imagination.

It is obvious that the numerous invective accusations or curses that are in this text form in counter-relief or by contrast a kind of self-portrait, or of an alternative portrait, of its true author or of its true authors.

The Quran makes it possible indeed to present with precision the whole range of interpretations of this discourse or of these behaviors made then by the inhabitants of Mecca. It is a way of indirectly giving voice to a group never heard, ignored, or constantly denigrated by the traditional Muslim discourse: opponents, adversaries, skeptics, proponents of other spiritualities, intellectuals of the time; renamed hypocrites, unbelievers, ignoramuses, Christians, and so on ...

Muslim writers indeed never hesitate to draw up a list of all the reproaches made to Muhammad, without thinking that the facts reported may have any reality. However, it is these discourses, if we think well about it, which reflect the opinion of the majority of the Meccans of that time.

A madman soothsayer and vaticinator, a poet (which is not a compliment at that time).

Quran 52: 29-30.

By the grace of God you are neither soothsayer nor madman. Or say they: (he is) a poet (one) for whom we may expect the accident of time ?

Quran 69 : 40-43.

It is not the poet's speech - little is it that you believe! Nor a vaticinator's speech - little is it that you remember! It is a revelation from the Lord of the Worlds.

An impostor.

Muhammad, of course, will be accused of not being sincere in his preaching: the false prophets were a multitude in the East, using their apostolate to get good and power. It is, of course, impossible to judge from the outset on this point, which was very soon subject to polemics. Eastern Christians in particular quickly found that the character, his private life and his expression, were the weak point of the Muslim doctrine. It is also a way to question the Quranic revelation itself.

Testimonies are numerous on this question of the spiritual swindle: the Quraysh had to have pieces of evidence, or elements of comparison with other preachers, Jews or Christians.

A liar, a trickster.

Quran 67: 9.

They say: Yea, verily, a warner came unto us; but we denied and said: God has nothing revealed.

Quran10: 37.

And this Quran is not such as could ever be invented in despite of God; but it is a confirmation of that which was before it and an exposition of that which is decreed for mankind - Therein is no doubt - from the Lord of the Worlds. Or say they: He has invented it ? Say: Then bring a chapter like unto it, and call (for help) on all you can besides God, if you are truthful. Nay, but they denied that, the knowledge whereof they could not compass, and whereof the interpretation (in events) has not yet come unto them. Even so did those before them deny.

Quran 35: 4 and 23.

And if they deny you, messengers of God were denied before you.

Quran 83 : 10-12.

Woe unto the repudiators on that day! Those who deny the Day of Judgment which none denies save each criminal transgressor, who, when you read unto him Our revelations, says: (Mere) fables of the men of old.

Quran16 :101.

And when We put a revelation in place of (another) revelation, - and God knows best what He reveals - they say: Lo! you are but inventing.

Quran 30 : 58.

Verily We have coined for mankind in this preaching all kinds of similitudes; and indeed if you came unto them with a miracle, those who disbelieve would verily exclaim: You are but tricksters!

A copier.

Quran 25: 4.

Those who disbelieve say: This is nothing but a lie that he has invented, and other folk have helped him with it, so that they have produced a slander and a lie. And they say: Fables of the men of old, which he has written down so that they are dictated to him morn and evening.

Quran 27: 68.

All this is nothing but fables of the men of old.

Quran 16 : 24 and 103.

And when it is said unto them: What has your Lord revealed ? they say: (Mere) fables of the men of old

.....

And We know well that they say: Only a man teaches him. His speech at whom they falsely hint is outlandish, and this is clear Arabic speech.

A wizard or a charlatan.

Another type of argumentation, which puts Muhammad in the pagan context, and which removes from the benefit of the revelation, by keeping to him that of clairvoyance and magic. Some of the Quraysh believe in magic, and for these Quraysh, Muhammad appears as a wizard or a magician.

Quran 46 : 7-8.

And when Our clear revelations are recited unto them, those who disbelieve say of the Truth when it reaches them: This is mere magic. Or say they: He has invented it ? Say : If I have invented it, still you have no power to support me against God.

Quran 38: 4.

And they marvel that a warner from among themselves has come unto them, and the disbelievers say: This is a wizard, a charlatan !

Quran 43 : 30.

And now that the Truth has come unto them they say: This is mere magic, and lo! we are disbelievers therein.

Quran 21: 3.

And they confer in secret. The wrongdoers say: Is this other than a mortal like you ? Will you then succumb to magic when you see (it) ?

Quran10 : 2.

The disbelievers say: Lo! this is a mere wizard.

A bewitched mentally ill person.

As the accusation is quite embarrassing, the Quran does not develop too much the theme. Dementia is not a defect in itself, in an archaic system of thought, it would even be an advantage, that in this case reinstates Muhammad in the context of traditional religion.

Quran 25 :8.

And the evildoers say: You are but following a man bewitched.

Quran17: 47.

We are Best Aware of what they wish to hear when they give ear to you and when they take secret counsel when the evildoers say: You follow but a man bewitched.

Quran 81 : 15-23.

Oh, but I call to witness the planets, the stars which rise and set, and the close of the night, and the breath of the morning that this is in truth the word of an honored messengeryour comrade is not mad. Surely he beheld Him on the clear horizon. And he is not averse of the Unseen. Nor is this the utterance of a devil worthy to be stoned. Whither then go you ?

The definition of the preaching by itself is made in the negative way, which is the sign that there is strong opposition to what Muhammad hammers home.

Quran 53, 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 the 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.

The creating power over the elements is one of God's traditional attributes, and Muslims do not deprive themselves of this argument. The Quran repeatedly asserts that God has the power of life and death throughout the world and, in particular, that He Himself manages the supply of men with water. (7: 57): "And He it is Who sends the winds as tidings heralding his mercy, till, when they bear a cloud heavy (with rain), We lead it to a dead land, and then cause water to descend thereon and thereby bring forth fruits of every kind."

See also chapters 15 verse 22 and 24 verse 43.

The ultimate dwelling of the believers (the Paradise) dangles a bucolic hydrography (13: 35): "A similitude of the Garden which is promised unto those who keep their duty (to God): Underneath it rivers flow; its food is everlasting." God being behind all things took on the initial hard work (21: 30). "Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were of one piece, then We parted them, and we made every living thing of water ? "

God the Creator, but also God agronomist (22 : 5): " And you see the earth barren, but when We send down water thereon, it does thrill and swell and put forth every lovely kind (of growth)."

See also chapter 22 verse 63, and chapter 25 verses 48 and 49. The prayers for rain are naturally well founded since (42: 28): "And He it is Who sends down the saving rain after they have despaired" and (71: 10-12): "Seek pardon of your Lord. Lo! He was ever forgiving. He will let loose the sky for you in plenteous rain ." And to silence the skeptics, nothing better than to ask them (56: 68): "Have you observed the water which you drink ? Is it you who shed it from the rain-cloud, or are We [God] the Shedder ?

Difficult to be more childish, but now.....!

THE GOSPEL OF ISLAM: THE HADITHS OR ANECDOTES CONCERNING THE LIFE OF MUHAMMAD (THERE WOULD BE HUNDRED THOUSAND OF THEM.)

Because the basis of all the aberrations of (traditional) Islam is mainly the 1,600,000 hadiths collected by tradition (according to the former director of the University of Tehran, only 40 would be really genuine). The obscurities of the Quran over the centuries have led Muslims to complete their teaching by referring to the facts concerning the life of the Prophet: the Sira (the life of Muhammad, written in the eighth century) and the hadiths. In addition to the Quran and the Sira, the other source of the Muslim religion is therefore formed by the Hadiths.

The hadith, perhaps even more than the Quran, is the fundamental building block of Islamic theology and thought. Not only will we find hadiths in the books of hadiths, but in every Muslim religious work: speculative theology (kalam), mysticism (tasawwuf), ethics and law (fiqh), etiquette (adab). These apocryphal hadiths have been collected by a certain number of imams or scholars in collections of which the best known are called "sahih" or "sunnan."

There are two main types of hadith, those of the prophet and those of his companions. The hadiths can be verbal, that is to say, reporting the words of Muhammad. The hadith can also report facts and actions only. According to Umar, for example, Muhammad recited every night a lot of prayers. The hadith can finally mention the tacit approval by Muhammad of certain words or the implicit approval of certain actions. It could happen, for example, that people evoke in front of him things dating from before their conversion. If Mahomet listened to them without saying something or showing his disapproval, his silence meant approval (silence means consent). Therefore, not only what Muhammad did or said, but even his silences or what he let do in his presence, without categorically condemning it, are therefore part of the hadiths. SUCH HADITHS CAN THEREFORE LEAD US VERY FAR.

For example, the Sunnah may contain elements that do not relate to the Quran or Muhammad, but to pre-Islamic Arabic customs. The main part of this Sunnah is nevertheless formed by all the actions and sayings of Muhammad, it is these collections of "sayings" of Muhammad (hadiths) or examples drawn from his life (Sira) that are called the Tradition by definition: the Sunnah. Hence, besides often, some confusion between both, between the Sunna (tradition with a capital letter) and the hadiths (the particular traditions of this or that anecdote).

For the writing of these hadiths, the eyewitnesses of the "people of the bench" (ahl al-suffa), the men with whom Muhammad talked from time to time, sitting on the bench that circled the mosque adjoining his apartments; then, these having disappeared, one referred to the "customs of the time of the prophet."

To these memories of no great interest, a considerable number of so-called memories, or "sayings," were gradually added; (out of more than 200 000 stories, people ended up retaining only 7 225 of them which are nonetheless dubious); and fables of all kinds. Even "miracles" were attributed to Muhammad.

A lightning trip Mecca-Jerusalem on a fantastic mount named Buraq for example as well as an ascent to heaven. During the early years of the Umayyad dynasty, many Muslims were totally ignorant in regard to ritual and doctrine. The rulers themselves had little enthusiasm for religion, and generally despised the pious and the ascetics. The result was there arose a whole class of individuals who shamelessly fabricated additional traditions for the good of the community and traced them back to Muhammad. They opposed the godless Umayyads, but dared not to say so openly, so that they invented further traditions related to the family of Muhammad, hence indirectly giving their allegiance to the followers of Ali.

Ignaz Goldziher: "the ruling power itself was not idle. If it wished an opinion to be generally recognized and the opposition of pious circles silenced, it too had to know how to discover hadiths to suit its purpose. They had to do what their opponents did: invent hadiths in their turn."

The influence of the authorities on the invention, the dissemination, or the disappearance of traditions, began very early. The Mu'tazili scholar Ibn Abi I-Hadid (1190-1258) in his book *Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah* has even written that Mu'awiya had stimulated a number of companions to narrate some Hadiths against Ali among whom were Abu Hurayra, 'Amr Ibn 'As, Mughira Ibn Shu'ba and 'Urwa Ibn Zubayr.

In some letters to his agents, Mu'awiya wrote, "The Hadiths regarding Uthman's virtues are being augmented in your cities, as soon as you received my letter, urge people to begin narrating the excellence of companions and caliphs and also narrate a Hadith contradicting any Hadith narrated concerning Abu Turab's (Ali) virtues."

This is clearly an official incentive to encourage the rise and spread of hadiths directed against Ali, and to retain or suppress those who were in his favor. The Umayyads and their followers had no qualms about promoting tendentious lies under the pretext of religion, and were only concerned to find pious authorities agreeing to cover such falsifications with their authority. These were never missing. At the end of the 9th century, al-Shafi made the fundamental thesis of "traditionalists" in Islamic law prevail. For him, the sunnah should not be the "idealized" practice such the "doctors of the Faith" wanted it is. The Sunnah, on the contrary, had to be identified essentially with the content of the "traditions" going back to Muhammad, even if such a tradition was transmitted by only one person in each generation; (what made it very suspicious - and for good reason - in the eyes of "doctors" from these schools). His thesis was that the "traditions of the prophet" (the sunnah of the prophet) should take precedence over the "traditions" of the Schools of doctors. These schools began by opposing a strong resistance to this "novelty," but they found themselves defenseless against the aggressiveness of the "traditionalists." They were thus also forced to be interested in the "traditions" produced (and generally invented) by their opponents.

The hadiths of Muhammad were, of course, the object of particular attention from his faithful. Even during his lifetime, a large number of his companions memorized them, but without being allowed, with the exception of a few of them, to write them down. This prohibition was justified by the desire to avoid any confusion between the divine revelation itself (the verses of the Quran) and the hadith, in the case where, for example, they would be transcribed together on the same material. Some, like Salman al Farisi, also feared that Muslims would be more interested in the life of Muhammad himself (the Sunnah) than in the Holy Quran revealed by God. It was not until the end of the seventh century, under the caliphate of Omar Ibn Abdelaziz, that orders were given to collect all the hadiths of Muhammad (sunnah) whose decisive summae were nonetheless only compiled in the ninth century ; and the Muslims attached themselves to the life of Mohammed to the point of idolizing him. The stake of the story of his life is therefore considerable. Muhammad became the absolute model to imitate in all and the fears of Salman al Farisi to see the sunnah (the traditions concerning the life of Muhammad) prevailing over the Holy Scriptures of the Quran, became realities.

This decision was of paramount importance for Islam. It killed the critical mind and favored the over-literal imitation (taqlid). We see the consequences in the attitude of today's fundamentalists, who reduce their belief in the stupidest mimicry. They ostentatiously wear a beard and a white dress like the Muhammad they imagine. They veil their wives and resurrect the most barbaric traditions of Arabia (the stoning?) These sayings, facts, and gestures, real or pretended, of Muhammad, allowed Islam to elaborate in many fields a dogmatic, new and perhaps unknown by the original Quran; for Muhammad, contrary to what we generally think, has not always pretended to be an example to be imitated by all. In some cases, he even granted himself privileges. Quran 33: 50: " O Prophet! Lo! We have made lawful unto you your wives unto whom you hast paid their dowries, and those whom your right hand possesses of those whom God has given you as spoils of war, and the daughters of thine uncle on the father's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the father's side, and the daughters of thine uncle on the mother's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the mother's side who emigrated with you, and a believing woman if she gives herself unto the Prophet and the Prophet desire to ask her in marriage - a privilege for you only, not for the (rest of) believers."

This is the historical origin of the "literary fiction" deriving from the "hadiths," but these "sayings" still constitute, today, the foundation of the "etiquette" of most Muslims.

According to al-Shafi, the Quran itself had to be interpreted in the light of the "traditions" and not the opposite. The consensus of "doctors" did not suit him, so he clung to the idea that the Muslim community could not agree on an error. This specious thesis was vague enough to justify the purpose he pursued. Such a concept left no room for the discretionary exercise of personal opinion. Still according to al-Shafi's thesis, human reasoning had to be reduced to making "correct deductions" and drawing "systematic conclusions" from "traditions." In fact, he was establishing a true intellectual dictatorship, a dictatorship much more rigid, much more implacable, than Nazism or Stalinism were.

By rallying to "traditionalist" theses, al-Shafi was trying to cut Islam from all forms of natural and continuous development. In this he was copying the most obtuse and conservative rabbis, the very ones who are at the head of the so-called ultra-orthodox Jewish movements.

The Sunnah - as it has come to us - does not really have much to do with the real life of Muhammad. But it had the perverse effect of banning the introduction of "novelties" or "innovation" (bi'da) in the practice of Islam. The strict observance of the sunna is beside considered as a sign of Islamic orthodoxy, at least, of course, among (majority) Sunni Muslims.

Even more than the Quran, the sunnah remains the bastion of Muslim conformism. It prevents any form of reformism and confines Muslims in an anachronism that separates them a little more each year from the rest of the world.

The collection of all these hadiths, of course, allowed to classify them and then to study them. The Muslim theologians who devoted themselves to this titanic labor are called Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidh, Ibn Majda, Nisa'i, Abu Dawud. But it also took a considerable amount of work to identify the meaning and the legal moral significance of it: the tafsir or comments of a doctor (as for the Talmud).

It is generally conceded that the criticism of the traditions as practiced by Mohammedan scholars is inadequate and that although many fakes have been eliminated by it; this traditional corpus still contains many traditions, which cannot be genuine. Every effort to extract from this mass, often contradictory, a genuine core by "historical intuition" has failed.

Ignaz Goldziher, in another of his fundamental works, has not only formulated his "skeptical caution" as to the traditions contained even in classical collections [the collections of Bukhari, Muslim, and others] but he has shown that the great majority of the so-called prophet's traditions are in reality documents. And documents not of the time to which they claim to belong to, but of the different phases of doctrinal development that took place during the first centuries of Islam. This discovery has become the cornerstone of any serious investigation concerning the hadiths.

Joseph Schacht's book confirms Goldziher's results, and even goes beyond them. A very large number of traditions in traditional and other collections were distributed only after the time of Shafi [Shafi is the founder of a very important Law School that bears his name. He died in 820]; the earliest corpus of legal traditions dating back to the Prophet appeared in the middle of the eighth century, as opposed to slightly older traditions of companions and other authorities, and to the tradition of the old legal schools. The traditions of the companions and of the other authorities have undergone the same process of growth, and therefore have to be considered in the same light as the traditions of the Prophet. The study of the isnads shows a clear tendency to progress backwards, and to claim an ever-higher authority, even to Muhammad himself.

Joseph Schacht (1902-1969) proves, for example, that a tradition existed in no way at a given time, by showing that it was not then used as an argument in a controversy that should have made it necessary a reference if it had existed at the time.

Example the Fiqh Akbar 1. The Fiqh Akbar 1 is the oldest Muslim legal document, written around 750, more than a century after the death of Muhammad. He presents the views of Islamic orthodoxy on the questions that then arose in legal matters. But it contains no reference to the Quran, whereas today Islamic law is entirely based on it. In 750, the Quran had long since gained considerable authority in Islam. Why this silence? It seems unthinkable, if the Quran had then existed in the sense that it is currently understood, that no reference was made to it. The most likely reason is therefore that the 800 verses setting legal rules, found in today's Quran, were absent from the Quran of 750 ?????????? For Schacht consequently, any legal tradition from Muhammad therefore is held to be unauthentic until proven otherwise, and be regarded as the mere expression, in the form of a fiction, of a legal doctrine expressed at a later date.

Schacht also criticizes the isnad (chains) that were often put together without checking. Thus we find a number of different names in otherwise identical isnad. Schacht has shown that the origin of Islamic law cannot be traced back more than a century after Muhammad's death. Islamic law does not derive directly from the Quran, but has developed from popular and administrative practice under the Umayyads, and this practice often diverges from the intentions even from the explicit words of the Quran. The norms derived from the Quran were only introduced into Islamic law in a second time. Thus, after a few generations, the interpretation of the Quran was definitively frozen. It is no longer a matter of interpreting according to the context or the goal sought by God, but according to what has been concretely revealed through the prophet. Venturing to explain or comment on a hadith is just as serious as trying to identify the meaning of a Quranic verse without having the necessary general knowledge and the (comparative) science of religions. The numerous and appalling aberrations in this

field, due to the lack of intelligence (lack of critical mind) or the ignorance in general of other peoples or cultures; have made practicing Muslims the first ones to provide themselves with the rods, with which they are regularly slaughtered by the stupid and wicked people; that is to say, by those who are neither journalists nor responsible politicians, nor rabbis, pastors, priests, intellectuals, or doctors.

THE FORMATION OF THE MUSLIM SCRIPTURES.

John Wansbrough, in two important but formidable books, *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation* (1977) and *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History* (1978); believed to be able to demonstrate that Quran and Hadith rose in reality from controversies between sects spread over a long period (perhaps two centuries). Beyond that, he demonstrated that Islamic doctrine in general, and even the figure of Muhammad itself, were modeled on rabbinical Jewish prototypes. That of Moses, for example.

These documents, which form the heart of the sunna ("tradition"), were promoted to the status of a source of the law, the example given by Muhammad, by word or action, having the force of law in the absence of a clear answer from the Quran. Even deeper, they were used to interpret the Quran. They play in the economy of Islam the same role as the Gospels in Christianity.

We cannot talk about the formation of the Quran, without mentioning the whole of the Islamic scriptures during this same period. Indeed, if we place ourselves in the perspective of the history of the texts, the two corpora of writings today canonical for Muslims; the Quran and the Hadiths rose together, although the shaping of the large corpora of hadiths is later than that of the Quranic corpus. Moreover, the Quran is not the only canonical reference source for Sharia, this one covering the different fields of the concrete life of the Muslim community: private law, criminal law, personal status, and so on. There are also the Hadiths, all the traditions dating back to the prophet of Islam, called Sunna, that is to say, "prescriptive practice." For example, the obligation of the five daily prayers is not so much defined by the Quran as by the hadiths. In the same way, to understand the current controversies on the Islamic veil, it is necessary to refer not only to the Quran; but also to a famous hadith (logion) attributed to the prophet of Islam, and saying that of the woman, you must see only the face and the hands. As for the stoning of adulterers, this punishment is not found in the Quran, but in the Sunnah.

PRINCIPLES OF OUR STUDY OF QURAN: ISLAM IS NOT ENTIRELY IN QURAN. THERE WERE LATER THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS, FOLLOWING ITS EXPANSION IN CHRISTIAN OR PERSIAN TERRITORIES. AND RECIPROCALLY, THE QURAN IS NOT ENTIRELY PASSED IN THE ISLAMIC LAW. SOME OF ITS DICTATES WERE VERY EARLY GIVEN UP, NEVER APPLIED.

The word "corpus" applied to the Quran is a little paradoxical, insofar as Muslims generally refuse this term, because the Quran is for them a sacred text descended from Heaven and not a work that would be the product of a human assembly.

And yet, the Islamic tradition itself speaks of "gathering," "collection," texts collected after the death of the Prophet. Basically, the term "corpus" does not say anything else and it can be used even if some Muslims today do not like it. Indeed, the mere reading of the Quran shows this character of collection of fragmentary texts, often juxtaposed, often without any real continuity from one to the other, even if their final juxtaposition can obey a certain intention.

That the term "corpus" can be applied to hadiths is even more obvious. Many of the great canonical corpora of the ninth century are entitled jami, "the one who gathers," and their literary units are discontinuous fragments, even when they are classified by themes.

We can therefore say, both for the Quran and the hadith, that these corpora were not only "collected," but also that they were the subject of an editorial activity as well as an elaboration, and therefore that they have a history. But to understand this history, we must consider it in three ways: it is a process over a long period of time, in a widened space, result of a collective work.

For Muslims, the totality of the Quran has been revealed (the appropriate term is "descended") during Muhammad's career, between 610 and 632. At first, modern Orientalist research has generally resumed this pattern, classifying the various chapters (suras) of the Quran as having been revealed successively in Mecca and then in Medina. French textbooks 1) generally repeat this type of reasoning, some even write, for example, "In 610, the Quran was revealed to Muhammad by angel Gabriel." This perspective, besides the use of a strictly denominational language all but objective and respectful of the opinion of others; does not take into account the editorial work that extended well after the death of the prophet of Islam, and whose Muslim tradition gives us multiple testimonies.

In the same way, it should be known that the formation of the corpus was made in a larger space than that of Mecca and Medina, which stretched from Hejaz and Yemen to Mesopotamia. Indeed, we are dealing with a process that begins in Medina, but continues after the conquest in Syria and Mesopotamia in particular, where are formed codices competing with that of Medina.

It is therefore a long period: it takes about a century for the establishment of an official Quranic vulgate, and a century more for that of the great canonical corpora of hadiths.

It is also a collective work, which will take into account the work of scribes whose Islamic tradition attests the existence and gives us the names. It is talked about the secretaries surrounding Muhammad, some of whom are ex-Jews who agreed with the new belief; another is of Ethiopian or Byzantine origin, next to Arabs of the North or South, Peninsula. Some traditions suggest that Muhammad receives his revelations from Heaven, but also from his secretaries! ?. After the death of the founder, the work of formation of the corpus continues, not only in Medina, but also in the new centers created by the conquest. This is the case of the new conurbation of Kufa in Iraq, which will see the establishment of a Quranic codex competing with that of Medina. Traditional narratives also evoke competing codices in Yemen and Syria. Muslims of the first generation, telling how the Quran was formed, did so with great freedom and even realism, and therefore seemed less rigid than many Muslims of today on this subject.

The intervention of the political power.

Throughout this period, the role of the political authority in this process has been considerable. All the great caliphs were involved in setting up these scriptures. They create commissions for gathering and finalizing texts, control the distribution of selected texts, suppress dissidents, and destroy competing versions. All this obeys a political aim: to safeguard the unity of a community, already torn by dissension, around a single power and around controlled texts. Indeed, the caliph is by definition "successor" of the Prophet and is invested with a dual function of religious and political leader of the community. Nostalgia for an ideal alliance between politics and religion still animates Muslim .

The relationship between the Quran and the hadiths.

These two words have today a definite technical meaning in the Muslim community: the Quran is considered by Muslims as the word of God, the holy book, and its dominant function is liturgical; the Hadiths are the set of traditions attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, they are considered as one of the sources of the prescriptive practice of the community.

When we place ourselves in the field of the history of the texts, and particularly that of the formation of Islamic writings; we are obliged to take into consideration a body of information which at first suggests some indecisiveness between the two words, Quran and hadith, and the realities they cover. The conclusions we can draw from this fall within the field of the successful research hypotheses. The researcher must first take into account the large diversity of Islamic sources at his disposal. There can be many indications of this initial indecisiveness. Here are some examples. A transmitter of tradition declares: "I have collected a lot of Quran from God's envoy" and he evokes in reality texts belonging today to the Hadiths.

Another example is the first Umayyad Caliph, Mu'awiya, wishing to counter opponents who refuse the exclusivity of the Quraysh 2) to claim the caliphate; declares, "There are people who transmit hadiths that are not in the book of God and are not reported from the messenger of God." The claim that political power is reserved for the Quraysh is a word attributed to Muhammad by the canonical corpora of hadith, but it is not mentioned in the Quran. In a book of Shiite controversy, attributed to an author of the mid-eighth century, we find twice an extract of the current Quran beginning with "Muhammad said." But for a pious Muslim, it is God or more exactly the archangel Gabriel who speaks in the Quran and not Muhammad. There are other examples of this kind.

The word "Quran" was originally a common noun whose origin we find in the Syriac language where it means "reading" a scripture in a liturgical setting. This suggests that the words or texts chosen to form the Quranic corpus were largely intended for a liturgical recitation. In early Islamic literature, the term "Book / Scripture of God" is used to refer to what we now call the Quran. The word hadith, at the beginning, has the very general meaning of "account, report, narrative," and it can be said that in its technical sense of "words" transmitted from Muhammad, it has kept its original meaning.

It is also necessary for us to put the Muslim scriptures back into their cultural background.

Without underestimating the elements of the Arab culture of the Peninsula which we find echoed in the Quran, we must note that Islam is in line with Jewish and Christian religious traditions. But we must not ignore the influence of elements of Zoroastrian origin. The Arab domain extended from the Peninsula to the banks of the Euphrates was largely crossed by all these currents. Whether it is Muhammad, the writers of the Quran, or the preachers, throughout this first century of Islam, all draw largely from the surrounding culture. In the texts of the Quran, we find a reformulation of biblical themes for the use of the new community. The term "biblical" in the broad sense should be understood to include, on the Jewish side, all the commentary literature surrounding the Bible: Targum, Midrash, Talmud, and on the Christian side, the Apocryphal Gospels as well as the themes of the Eastern patristic preaching. Contrary to the Christian usage of the earlier Jewish writings (the mention of the references to sources of the kind: "as it is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah" etc., etc.), the Islamic writings never mention their sources. In the Quran, everything is presented as a direct word of God, even when it is an obvious borrowing. It is the same in the hadiths where the re-use of such an

evangelical parable or of such a narrative of Jewish traditions is often presented as a word of Muhammad in person and this is not the least of the intellectual impostures of this religion. Let us add that these borrowings are often used in a polemic setting against Jews and Christians, and returned against them. This process is part of a general background where the different religious communities battled with scriptural quotations: Jews against Christians, Nestorians against Jacobites, Christians against Jews or Manichaeans, and so on. The first Muslims of the time, by forming their own writings, entered naturally this very general contentious mode of relationship.

1) We must be careful not to confuse the level of history with that of "holy history." A history textbook, when it deals with the beginnings of Islam, does not have to repeat the expressions of a denominational language. This applies as well to the history of the Hebrews as to the life of Jesus. However, it is important to leave the option of giving an account of the cultural and religious content by saying, "Muslims believe that, Muslim tradition reports that."

Let us take the example of the word "revelation." It is widely used to refer to the preaching of Muhammad while it already involves an act of belief from the one who uses it. This use should be banned from the remit of an objective teaching of the religious fact.

2) The Quraysh are the tribe of Muhammad.

WARNING TO THE READER (of our short essay).

"Will they not then ponder on the Quran ? If it had been from other than God they would have found therein much incongruity" (Holy Quran, chapter 4, verse 82).

"And when you see those who meddle with Our revelations, withdraw from them until they meddle with another topic. And if the devil causes you to forget, do not sit, after the remembrance, with the congregation of wrongdoers " (Holy Quran chapter 6 verse 68).

"Who is guilty of more wrong than he who forged a lie against God, or says: I am inspired, when he is not inspired in anything?" (Holy Quran chapter 6 verse 93.)

Al tanzil, "the descent," it is by this word that the Bedouins of the tribes in Arabia designate both the revelation of the Quran and the sudden downpour that makes the earth green in a few hours. The Quran is the "word of God" sent down on the earth like a beneficent rain, hardly retouched since its origins. This ideological conditioning, based on the idolatry towards the very person of Muhammad; justifies the true worship that Muslims nowadays dedicate to this collection of 6,000 or 7,000 verses that are quite heterogeneous, which has become a real taboo. Theological reason has taken precedence over historical reason, or even over Reason period, and the historical facts which contradicted this idea have been gradually eliminated, making thus any scientific or rational study of this collection almost impossible.

The Quran thus has a special status. For Muslims, the Christian equivalent of the Quran is not the Gospel or the Bible, which are only books, it is Christ himself, because he is co-eternal with the Father. Several verses of the Quran itself claim that it reproduces an original that in its flowery language archaic Arabic calls, "the mother of the book." For current Muslim scholars, this mother of the book is the initial copy, written by God, previously to the foundation of the world, on a table (t) of clay kept in Paradise.

For Muslims, the Quran is not an object of this world, but a text previous to this world, eternal as God, and in this respect almost the equal of God.

Before the world was created, the Quran was already present, what Muslim theology expresses by saying that the Quran is uncreated. The Quran is therefore written in Arabic, since from before the foundation of the world, because God speaks Arabic with the angels in Paradise. A little like the high-knowers of Diodorus of Sicily (Book V, 31) spoke the same language as the gods since they were homophonon.

It has not changed in one single letter since it was written down, and its language is so sumptuously poetic that it is inimitable.

The Quran is therefore not a book in the sense that Westerners usually understand this term. Its Arabic name "al Quran" which means "recitation" (or "dictation," depending on whether you put yourself on the side of the speaker or of the listener).

This text is the object among Muslims of a true cult (an idolatry more). A hadith (Mishkat al Masabih 3, p. 664) specifies : "The Quran is the greatest wonder among the wonders of the world ... This book is second to none in the world according to the unanimous decision of the learned men in points of diction, style, rhetoric, thoughts and soundness of laws and regulations to shape the destinies of mankind."

Editor's note. It goes without saying, we who are not man of a single book, but of many (12 as in the case of the Fenians if we want some symbol); that we do not agree with this value judgment on the Quran, which is on the contrary, in our opinion, a true cultural disaster for Mankind, a real disaster, a real insult to human intelligence!

Muslims revere the Quran with a respect that borders on idolatry and superstition. It is the Holy of Holies. It should never be put under other books, but always at the top of them, you are not allowed to drink or smoke while you read it aloud, and you have to listen to it silently. It can also be used as a talisman against disease and catastrophes.

With the exception of the Mu'tazili (a case to which we will return *) Muslims consider that these revelations and texts do not come out of a human brain even inspired (by God); but are only extracted or transferred from a kind of eternal heavenly matrix (a book?) written in Arabic, of which the archangel Gabriel has only transmitted fragments without modifying a single iota.

The Quran is not only the founding "book" of Islam, but also, and especially, according to Muslims, a set of sounds emanating directly from God (what explains why it is systematically taught in Arabic in Quranic "schools").

Editor's note. This thesis is attributed to Ibn Hanbal, who lived from 780 to 855. The afore mentioned thesis could not be proposed at the earliest in about 805, when Ibn Hanbal had a sufficient prestige. From 813 to 847, the Mu'tazilites, protected by the caliphs, even insisted on the contrary thesis. In 827, become powerful, they made outright prohibit the thesis of the uncreated Quran. But in 847, the

Mu'tazilites were massacred, then the theses of Ibn Hanbal had again their rightful place. It was only after 847 that the uncreated Quran thesis could be spread. It was generalized around 950, largely under the influence of Abu Hassan Ali al-Ashari, who lived from about 880 to 935. The verses that mention it contain words from clear Aramaic origin. At least according to Christoph Luxenberg.

* The Mu'tazili School, triumphant at the turn of the eighth and ninth centuries (under the caliphate of Harun Al Rashid) was eliminated in the ninth (what a pity!)

THE SCRIBES OF THE QURAN.

Forty-two according to Muslim tradition, some of whom, such as Abdullah ibn Abi Sarh, went so far as to modify the text dictated by Muhammad before fleeing and others, such as Zayd ibn Thabit, played a disputed role in the formatting or ordering of the notes in question during the reign of Abu Bakr.

First remark.

According to the Muslim legend, it is people without means who would have taken notes of the revelations of Muhammad, somehow privately. Although poor, they could read and even write Arabic. But the regions where poor people could read or even write Arabic are known by the history of Arabic writing and epigraphy. And the only place, where, at the beginning of the seventh century, the written Arabic language was sufficiently known and practiced so that common people could, too, use it, corresponds to the North of the Arabian Peninsula: Jordan, Syria, Palestine, Negev.

The scribes who, according to traditional Muslim history, have taken note of the speeches of Muhammad during the first ten years of Islam, are supposed to have lived in Mecca, in the Hejaz, in the center of Arabia, but the specialists agree that in this place, at this time, and until proven otherwise, almost no one knew how to write. Duly noted. It is not up to us, barbarian druids of the Far West, to settle such quarrels.

Second remark.

The first scribes of the Quran, according to traditional Muslim history, were modest people we said. The parchment, then two thousand years old, had passed into common use eight centuries before Islam, but was not affordable for them. Muhammad, still according to traditional Muslim history, was so little interested in the destiny of his speeches that he did not consider it useful to provide parchments or papyri to his auditors taking notes. Yet, he is said to have been, in Mecca, the husband of a very comfortable financially speaking merchant, and in Yathrib / Medina, he even had the means to finance armies. So he was rich enough to pay for copy material. But he did not do it, neither in Mecca, nor in Yathrib / Medina, whence the use of flat stones, camel bones or donkey, or even palm stipes, according to the Islamic legend.

N.B. These are just simple remarks from the barbarian Far Westerner druids we are.

The writing of the Quran.

Arabic writing was created from Nabatean 1) and Syriac 2) by Christian monks at Anbar, on the left bank of the Euphrates River, about sixty kilometers from Baghdad, about 400 ; about two and a half centuries before Islam. The inventors of this alphabet at that time were Chaldeans, descendants of the Babylonians, a non-Arab ethnic group, speaking a variant of Aramaic. They put their talent and their science at the service of the Arabic language spoken by the Arab tribes, mainly the Lakhmids, who was wandering on their territory. This writing then went on to Hira, on the right bank, from where it was gradually spread to the northern part of the Near East, where other Arab tribes were wandering, then to Jordan and Syria. The first Arabic inscription, in a scripture called Kufic, dates from the fourth century, and is found in southern Jordan. It is single for the time. No one has been found dating back to the fifth century. In the sixth century, however, the number of inscriptions increased, first in northern Jordan and northwestern Syria, then in the rest of Syria, Jordan, Palestine and Negev. Arabic writing was known and practiced at the beginning of Islam in the seventh century.

As we have seen, there was an Arab kingdom, the Ghassan kingdom, which covered Jordan and part of western Syria. These Arabs were Christians, more or less faithful allies of the Byzantines. In the sixth century, all inscriptions are found only in this kingdom, on its margins, and in the monasteries of Hira in Mesopotamia.

In the same sixth century, and also at the beginning of the seventh, the epigraphists found no inscription in the Hejaz, the region where Mecca is located; nor in any other place of Central Arabia, nor in Arabic nor in another language. The first, extremely rare, are dated one 20 years after the death of Muhammad, the other 40 years after, then 60. We must wait a good century before they multiply. The Arabic alphabet at the time of Muhammad did not distinguish between certain consonants: there were only sixteen letters for twenty-eight consonants and semivowels. Of these sixteen signs, only six had one meaning. The others had several of them, up to four for a single sign meaning b, t, j or n. This writing is called *scriptio defectiva* (defective, incomplete, writing). It is indecipherable, and can only be used as a reminder to those who already know the text. The Quran was originally written in *scriptio defectiva*.

We have found some complete Qurans, in *scriptio defectiva*, dated about 780 or 790, whose meaning is imprecise; as well as rare fragments, dated between 700 and 725, still under study, of which nothing can be concluded today.

Let's try to imagine what a writing without a vowel represents. Take for example the phrase "The sound is good." If we delete the vowels. We are left with "Th snd s gd."

With exercise, one gets used to the thing and, in a given context, each one restores the vowels intuitively so that the sentence has a meaning. By vocalizing these same consonants differently, we can nevertheless get something very different. Every mushaf or written Quran of this epoch can be read differently according to the short vowels that are supposed being between consonants. This obviously leads to a lot of uncertainty about the meaning.

The problem is complicated by the fact that in Arabic some letters are written in exactly the same way, and that only the points above or below the letter specify the pronunciation. One of the letters of the Arabic alphabet with a point above reads for example "n"; with two points above "t," with three points above "th"; with a point under "b," and with two points under "y."

A source of variants thus comes from the Arabic writing of the first period, before the general use of diacritic points. It is possible to read a word as an active or passive verb, as masculine or feminine, and the context sometimes admits several possibilities. There are hundreds of reading variants. In fact, there are thousands. Arthur Jeffery listed all the variants he found; more than 1700 of them are attributed to Ibn Masud. In 99.9% of cases, and like the one mentioned above, these variants have little impact on the text.

There are, however, some that arouse serious problems. Example chapter 5 (the chapter of the table spread) verse 60:

"Shall I tell you of a worse (case) than theirs for retribution with God ? (Worse is the case of him) whom God has cursed, him on whom His wrath has fallen and of whose sort God has turned some to apes and swine, and therefore served idols."

The Arabic text can literally mean that God has served idols (Al-Taghut). Indeed, because of these damned vowel points, the word "God" is the subject of the verb "to serve." There is therefore a problem somewhere.

Below are the different readings proposed by Ibn Mas'ud.

Wa man abadu al-taghuta .

Wa abadata al-taghuti.

Wa ubada al-taghutu.

Wa abuda al-taghutu.

Wa ubuda al-taghuti.

Wa ubidati al-taghutu.

Ubbada al taghuta.

For those who do not understand the mother tongue of God that is to say Arabic, we can specify that these alternative readings proposed by Mas'ud can be divided into three classes. The verb is made plural so that the monkeys and swine are "those who worship (the idol) al-taghut," or the verb is put in the passive tense so that "al-taghut is worshipped" by the monkeys and swine, or still the word abada is changed to a noun form making the monkeys and swine "slaves" or "worshippers of al-taghut."

Only the first reading kept the attention of scholars and the verse then becomes in their versions: "... God has turned some to apes and wine ... and therefore those who serve the idols (al-Taghut) ...

Some points and various marks, called diacritical, placed on or under the letters, then made it possible to differentiate between the various consonants represented by the same letter. Later still, the vowels were indicated.

The first diacritical marks appeared more than sixty years after the death of Muhammad, but almost a century more was needed by Persian grammarians to develop the system.

The writing with diacritical marks and vowels is called scriptio plena (full and complete writing). It can be read by readers who are unaware of its meaning, but according to the way in which diacritical marks and vowels are added to early writings, to pass from the scriptio defectiva we have just dealt with, to the scriptio plena, the meaning may vary.

An intermediate form, with diacritical marks, but no vowel, was first used in 694 by governor al Hajjaj, and met with strong resistance. None of the copies of al Hajjaj has survived until today, either in original or in copy.

The scriptio plena was generalized around 850, and, in the form of successive duplicates, copies of Quran dating from that time have come down to us. It was then, more than two centuries after the death of Muhammad, that the present text of the Quran was definitively fixed.

These first conjectures were not enough: the text became readable, but about 30% of the Quran cannot be understood, because of words or grammatical forms foreign to the usual Arabic. New conjectures have therefore been expressed by Persian scholars unaware of Arab culture, in order to give meaning to these obscure passages. It took eleven centuries to form but also discuss these new conjectures, and it was not until 1923 that the scholars in question came to agree on an edition that of Cairo. It took 1300 years to develop it. It is in this form that the Quran is published today. It is a translation in classical Arabic of a text that is incomprehensible in its original form.

This book is a collection of 6229 (or 6236) verses, but a tradition going back to Ibn Abbas counts 6616 of them). Verse is said *aya* in Arabic, what means "proof." Proof that what Muhammad says is true. Of course, this is not the case and these verses prove nothing at all, except perhaps the fact that Muhammad had a lot of imagination or a very good memory, but little critical mind; (the chapter of the elephant, chapter number 105, is for example a childhood memory of Muhammad, the good stories that told him his grandfather Abd al Muttalib on the evening in the evening).

Ibn al-Arabi himself acknowledged that the question of the number of verses forms one of the major difficulties of any serious study of the Quran; for there are some that are long, while others are short, and some that finish at the end of a sentence while others stop in the middle.

These verses are grouped into 114 chapters called *surahs*. This word, of uncertain origin, would originally signify "revelation," then "collection of several revelations" or "fragments of revelation." The order of the chapters was fixed only very late, probably in the Umayyad period, and this order has changed greatly over time. The titles of chapters do not necessarily have a direct relationship with their content: they are simply labels.

Last specification about the verses.

Many chapters, starting from the first, the *fatiha*, are introduced or begin with the words, "In the name of God, the Beneficent the Merciful."

Some publishers consider that this sentence or this phrase, thus highlighted, is also a –fully fledged– verse, the verse 1, therefore, of the chapter in question; others that it is only a quotation highlighted and not a part of the very text of the chapter. It can therefore sometimes exist a certain shift in the numbering of the verses according to the authors.

1. The Nabateans lived in a region whose capital was Petra today in Jordan.
2. Syriac is the variant of Aramaic spoken in Edessa.

THE QURANIC TEXTS GATHERING (THE VARIOUS COLLECTIONS OF QURAN).

The documents that form the Quran began to be collected after the death of Muhammad, on a date difficult to specify. About this collecting, the Muslim traditions are numerous and divergent. Their analysis, as well as some non-Islamic documents, lead to placing the date of these first collections ten to fifteen years after the death of Muhammad.

It might have been expected that the secretaries of Mahomet would systematically note the words of Gabriel recited by their master. Especially as they were preceded or accompanied each time by various physical manifestations quite spectacular. This was not the case, since the Muslim traditions indicate that the two secretaries who carried out these collections, after the death of Muhammad; had to look for notes made by others on flat stones, shoulder blades of camels or donkeys, veins of palm leaves. This indifference to the Quran in the years following the death of Muhammad is surprising. The scholars of Islam explain it by saying that so many disciples knew the Quran by heart that it was not necessary to take notes. But these disciples knew the text very badly, since violent dissensions, likely to degenerate into a civil war, broke out among the reciters, according to General Hudhayfa; who therefore asked Caliph Uthman to draw a reference text approved by the political authority. The Quran, however, was to be one, since it was supposed to come directly from God. It was therefore imperative to unify all these texts. This required compromises and adaptations. The previous examples and the evocations of multiple Qurans are some clues of them, but many other changes had to have been made, without leaving traces that can be noticed today. The proofs of reworking that remain are those that escaped the vigilance of the caliphs, or their power, when they were too widely disseminated to be eliminated.

The blind trust in the memory of early adepts, a reason invoked by current Muslim theologians to explain this absence of notes, is perhaps not the cause of the carelessness of Muhammad himself, nor of the caliphs before Uthman.

The earliest Muslim testimonies on the existence of the Quran date from 690 to 700, and the earliest Muslim descriptions of its mode of formation date back to 750.

The testimonies on the multiple gatherings of the Qurans and on the sorting or the destruction of the rejected versions, extend well beyond the so badly known initial period, and continue during the historical period that followed, better documented 2).

The traditions that attribute the first collection to Uthman appear only around 830, two centuries after the death of Muhammad. Their date makes them unreliable, especially about exactly what Uthman did. These multiple and late gatherings imply that the first Muslims did not consider the Quran as coming from God, nor transmitted by the Archangel Gabriel. If this text had unquestionably had such an origin, it would have been so valuable that its gatherings would have been neither late nor multiple. The dictation of Gabriel would have been taken from the beginning with the greatest care.

But it is true that there are verses which cannot have God or Archangel Gabriel as speaker.

There are a number of passages indeed that can in no case be attributed to God, and which are obviously from Muhammad. Starting with the first chapter (1, 1-7), the Fatiha that says: "In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful. Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, The Beneficent, the Merciful. Master of the Day of Judgment You (alone) we worship; You (alone) we ask for help. Show us the straight path, the path of those whom You have favored; Not the (path) of those who earn Your anger nor of those who go astray. "

It is not necessary to be a rocket scientist to realize that these words are addressed to God and are in no way a revelation that God gives to Muhammad; it is a prayer that Muhammad sends to his God, to ask for help and assistance, and not a message from Him.

A selfish and simplistic prayer like most prayers, and probably of Jewish origin. Or Christian (even if it is psychologically impossible to pray for one's enemies - sorry Jesus). Even pagan.

For Ibn Mas'ud, moreover, chapters 113 and 114 were not part of the Quran either, since they contain the words: "I seek refuge in the Lord ."

It is still more clearly, in chapter 6, 104: "So whosoever sees, it is for his own good, and whosoever is blind is blind to his own hurt. And I am not a keeper over you. "

"I am not a keeper over you ..." is it really God who speaks or Muhammad?

And in this same chapter No. 6, in verse 114, the one who speaks can only be Muhammad and not God or his spirit, it is obvious in view of the text.

"Shall I seek other than God for judge, when He it is Who has revealed unto you (this) Scripture, fully explained ?"

One could also cite chapter 111, whose words hide Muhammad's rancor against his uncle and opponent Abu Lahab, as well as against his wife, poorly. If they are unworthy of a prophet, they are unworthy of an omniscient and omnipotent God. Abu Lahab was a skeptic who already denied the divine nature of Mohammed's preaching.

According to the Muslim tradition, the Quran was not written by Muhammad; however, its syntax implies that a certain number of verses can only be pronounced by human beings. This is the case, for example, with blessings and curses.

Against Jews and Christians (Chapter 9, verse 30): "God (Himself) fights against them. How yufakuna are they! "

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.

And there are others like that, against the Jews, the hypocrites (the contradictors), the unbelievers, the devil.

There are also blessings concerning God himself which cannot be decently attributed to him, except to be unaware of his natural modesty: "So blessed be God the Best of creators! "(Chapter 23, verse 14). This verse of the Quran therefore implies here that there would be several creators, among whom the best would be God.

There are still other blessings of God to himself. It is clear that such syntax implies that the speaker is human: God cannot invoke himself personally to pray to destroy his enemies, or to get that he blesses himself. Before such aberrations Toland must roll over in his grave.

These verses are just some examples among many others.

The most famous Surah, the Fatiha, which begins the Quran, for example proclaims: " In the name of God.....You (alone) we worship; You (alone) we ask for help..."

It is obvious here that it is a believer who speaks, and not God himself.

The scholars of Islam propose a simple solution (in the way of Jehovah's Witness): it is enough to add, "say! " before these proclamations, so that they may be attributed to God. It would no longer be in this case the follower who would express himself, but God who would indicate the words he wants to hear spoken by the faithful.

And in fact it is indeed often the case. The word "say! ", at the head of verse or paragraph, is present 236 times in the Quran, with in addition 73 times in similar forms, for example, " Tell unbelievers! Or say to those who argue against you! »; even six times, after a purely formal question: "Answer! "

It would have been necessary then to introduce these words nearly 500 times in the text, to be able to attribute to God all that comes clearly from human authors, what is not the case.

But the fact is that some listeners have taken notes. There can be many reasons for this. The military successes and charisma of Muhammad were enough to make his speeches memorable without having to invoke other motivations.

The only thing historically sure is that, about fifteen years after the death of Muhammad, the caliph decided to collect what he could find to compile these different fragments in the same book. In order to decide, a large part of the authorities opted for a theoretically neutral order: the decreasing order of length. Some chapters are nevertheless sometimes followed by a longer chapter. In the Uthman's edition, the chapters were consequently arbitrarily classified according to their length, and not in chronological order. We find first the longest and, at the end, the shortest ones, with the exception of the first one, the Fatiha (the opening) which contains only seven verses in this case, and which is used as an introduction but also as prayer or blessing.

The kept fragments were therefore classified in order of decreasing length, without any worry or logic, neither of dating, nor of tackled subjects. The classification of fragments in order of decreasing length facilitates neither the understanding of the whole nor the visibility of the plan.

This aberrant ranking leads to countless difficulties. One of them is that the same themes are dealt with in scattered fragments, 29 for the story of Noah, 37 for that of Abraham, and so on.

Muslim scholars have therefore established a conjecture-based dating, but the lack of chronology in the Quran makes these conjectures uncertain.

One may wonder whether this disorder results from an incapacity of the writers, from their indifference to logic, or from a deliberate will. In the latter case, the intention of it should be identified. A presumption that this disorder was perhaps wanted is that some ancient Qurans, now destroyed, placed the surahs in an order different from the current Quran. We do not know if this order was logical, but it could not be in decreasing length like today's, since it was different from it [Suyuti, Itqan and Ibn al-Nadim, Fihrist].

The destruction of the rejected parts as well as the use of violence against their owners and their distributors, attested in the history of the Qurans, lead to the presumption that these parts also contained information to be removed.

The destruction by the caliphs of these original documents relating to the Quran was made openly, and is recounted in Muslim historical documents. The first notes taken by the hearers of Muhammad on improvised media and the notes of Hafsa, one of Muhammad's wives, were thus destroyed. The Qurans considered as dissidents were destroyed by Governor Hajjaj in 692. The notes of Fatima, the daughter of Muhammad, have disappeared, as well as many documents cited in later writings, but of which nothing is found.

At first sight, destroying the texts of Muhammad gathered by one of his wives or one of his daughters, is an intolerable act for Muslims. There must have been good reasons for that. Perhaps there were in them too many texts identifiable as Jewish or Judeo-Christian, including extracts from the Torah. Let us remind that Muhammad, according to Bishop Sebeos and his history of Heraclius, was "informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history."

A translation of the Quran was made in Syriac during the twelfth century, by Dionysius Bar Salibi, Bishop of Amid, (d.1171) in his treatise "Against the Muslims" preserved in the Mingana collection. The treatise against the Mohammedans is divided into three discourses (maimre), subdivided into thirty chapters. This last discourse, comprising chapters 25-30, is entirely composed of quotations from the Quran, translated into Syriac.

The text that Barsalibi translated was old and did not include all the changes introduced in the time of the caliphs. This translation shows that the early Qurans were different from the present one, and bore clearer marks of their Judeo-Christian origin.

Verse 171 of chapter 4 was drafted as follows: "The Messiah, son of Mary, the apostle of God, the Word and Spirit from Him, and He sent it to Mary; believe then in God and in His Messiah."

In the current version of the Quran, the end became: "Believe in God and his messengers."

In the early text, translated by the bishop of Amid, the messenger of God is still the Christ, as among the Judeo-Christians. In the Quran reviewed and corrected by the subsequent evolution of Islam, the expression "his Messiah" was replaced by "his messengers" in the plural, which leaves room for Muhammad. But after the previous sentence in the singular, mentioning only the Messiah, the next one, in the plural in the traditional Quran is illogical.

The same conclusion as before is needed: these verses were written after Muhammad became a prophet, transmitter of the Quran, therefore after 686.

Marwan Ibn al-Hakam, cousin of Uthman and governor of Medina under Mu'awiya, between 660 and 680, worked, according to some on collecting, according to the others on destroying, the texts gathered by Hafsa. It is perhaps necessary to understand that he was doing both. Abd al-Malik, a caliph at the beginning of the eighth century, claimed to have collected the Quran too, but in fact by adding new verses in it.

As a result, alternative Qurans were composed by choosing among the available documents. Among these we may mention Ibn Mas'ud's Quran and that of Ashari.

Andrew Rippin. Early Muslims stressed the Quran's divine origin and nature and praised its mode of revelation in comparison to that of previous scriptures, but they made a distinction between the heavenly Quran and the actual, "earthly" text possessed by the believers: the mushaf written in rasm. In fact, they considered the Quranic text in their possession, known as the "Uthmanic codex," as flawed and incomplete.

The distinction between the two versions of the Quran, one in heaven and the other the Uthmanic codex, is made quite clearly in a group of traditions dealing with the history of the Quranic text, which describe the way Quranic revelations were compiled into a complete version of the Quran in Muhammad's lifetime. According to these traditions, the various revelations were brought together around the end of the period of prophetic activity of Muhammad and the task of putting together the entire book was completed after a considerable time had elapsed. The process would have begun with the formulation of an annual version of revelations in the month of Ramadan, and would have ended with the formulation of a final and complete version not long before Muhammad's death (cf. Burton 1977: 192–5).

However, the final version of the Quran, critically reviewed by angel Gabriel, was not destined to become the text possessed by the believers, to wit the official canonical version edited according to accepted tradition in the days of the caliph Uthman. Rather, branching traditions created a continuous link between the intact revealed version dating from Muhammad's lifetime and the "pre-Uthmanic" version of the companion Abd Allah b. Masud (d. 652 or 653), a highly respected personality and an authority on the Quran. The claim that Abd Allah b. Masud's version is that of the original revealed text is articulated in Kufan traditions according to which Abd Allah b. Masud was actually present when the final version of the Quran was revealed to Muhammad.

The motivation behind these mainly Kufan traditions is quite clear: their aim is to replace the Uthmanic codex with an alternative version of the Quran, namely Ibn Masud's, which represented the original and authentic text going back to the days of Muhammad. Surprisingly enough this position, which casts doubt on the Uthmanic codex's reliability and sacredness, was not rejected out of hand. It was accepted by certain circles at the early stages of Islam, who went so far as to disseminate a tradition in which Muhammad himself appears to undermine the status of the Uthmanic codex text. He is quoted as saying: "Whosoever wishes to read the Quran pure as when it was revealed, let him read the version of Ibn Umm Abd," i.e., Ibn Masud's version (Ibn Abi Shayba 1989: VII, 184; Abu Ubayd 1995: II, 209; Burton 1977: 193).

Kufan preference for Abd Allah b. Masud's version as the only authentic Quranic text sanctioned by revelation was accompanied by strong expressions of disapproval towards Zayd b. Thabit, who was considered unfit to compile and edit the Quran, both because he was younger than Ibn Masud and because of his humble origins (see also Goldziher 1920: 10; Jeffery 1937: 20; Lecker 1997: 261–2). The traditions in question point out that Ibn Masud had learned seventy or more chapters of the Quran from Muhammad when Zayd b. Thabit was still a boy with two side-locks, or even just a seed in the loins of his infidel father. Thus, in one tradition, it is related that Abd Allah b. Masud gave a sermon in which he said: "I learned from the mouth of the prophet seventy-some suras when Zayd b. Thabit was still a youth with two side-locks and played with the youngsters" (Ibn Hanbal 1895: I, 411). In another tradition Zayd is not mentioned by name but Abd Allah b. Masud is reported to have asked: "Why don't you read [the Quran] according to the version of so-and-so?" to which he answered himself: "I recited seventy suras before the prophet and he told me I did well, at a time when the one whose version you would like me to recite was still a seed in the loins of an infidel" (Ibn Shabba 1979: III, 1006). The sharpest expression of opposition to Zayd b. Thabit and the version of the Quran which he edited is to be found in a tradition in which Ibn Masud rejects the Uthmanic codex because of Zayd's Jewish origins (Ibn Shabba 1979: III, 1008; Lecker 1997: 260).

The claim in the pro-Ibn Masud traditions that the Uthmanic codex is incomplete, is based on what canonical traditions say concerning how the Quran was compiled. These traditions, known by the name of "the collection of the Quran" (jam al-Quran), have been analyzed extensively, by Noldeke

(1909–38: II, 11–27, 47–62; Burton 1977: 141–2, 225–40) and many subsequent scholars, who attempted to reconstruct the history of the Quranic text using the available materials.

Whatever it be what was collected and published by the caliph Osman took the name Quran; and until today the Muslims do not use its name without systematically calling him karim (noble), hakim (full of wisdom), majid (glorious), azim (very great), etc. ; but there are alternative names: kitab (book) - kalam (speech) - nur (light) - dhikr (warning) - suhuf (leaves) - furqan (word which also qualifies the Torah), and other names of this kind. Each of these terms could have been the name of the holy book of Islam, but "quran" (recitation) became the best known.

The text of the Quran mentions the word Quran dozens of times. But how is it that this term is not associated with that of revelations? Is not it the third and the best revelation?

The same question arises about what was given to Moses and Jesus (Quran 2:53,57:27), that is, the Torah and the Gospel. There is no mention of "what was given to Muhammad." Same question again with "the parable that concerns them in the Torah and the one that concerns them in the Gospel" (Gospel in the singular). In these passages, the word as the concept of Quran is absent.

Simple questioning of the Western barbarian druids we are.

The traditional Muslim thesis derives this term from the stem qara, which in Arabic means, inter alia, to read, recite or proclaim, because Muhammad recited it to his listeners after having heard it proclaimed by archangel Gabriel.

Christoph Luxenberg has studied the oldest vocalizations of this word. They show that the Quan can in no way derive from the Arabic root qara, but comes from the Aramaic qeryan which means lectionary: a collection of extracts from sacred books, made for liturgical use. Before being definitively demonstrated by Luxenberg, this origin had already been considered by Nodelke; and his arguments were so convincing that the encyclopedia of the Quran, in his article Kuran, considers that the origin of Quran is in the Syriac-Aramaic Keryana (another spelling of Qeryan), which means "Reading of the Scriptures, used in the liturgy."

The Arabic etymology qara is therefore a late reinterpretation, of the same nature as the previous ones. First conclusions.

It seems that during the eighth century, a century and a few years after the death of Muhammad, the most important was done as to the theological foundations. The completion of this work is indicated by three facts.

- The generalization of the scriptio plena, full and entire writing, around 850, which definitively fixed the text of the Quran.

- The hundreds and a few verses pronounced by human speakers can indeed have been added only during the period when the uncreated Quran thesis was forbidden, therefore after 827.

- Lastly, it is over a period of 200 years that the disappearance of original documents is spread. It is logical to think that the destruction of the archives ceased when, the making of the Quran being completed so the new theology being put in place, it was no longer necessary to hide the traces of the work of manufacture.

From about 850 to the year 1000, for a century and a half again, there have been lawsuits against refractory scholars holding nonconforming texts. Then, with the disappearance of the last old documents, these processes became more and more rare.

Below is the judgment of a CHRISTIAN Arab philosopher on the Quran. Al-Kindi (full name Abd al-Masih ibn Ishaq al-Kindi). He lived at the time (around 825) when the caliphs and their scribes were still developing the Quran. Although he did not have access to non-Muslim documents about Muhammad or the Muhajirun, here is the judgment that he could make about this work.

" The result of all this is patent to you who have read the Scriptures, and see how in your book histories are all jumbled together and intermingled; an evidence that many different hands have been at work therein, and caused discrepancies, adding to the text, or cutting out there from whatever they liked or disliked. Are such, now, the conditions of a Revelation sent down from heaven?" (Risalat al-Kindi.)

The unity of the Quran lies only in the fact that the whole in principle has been reported, in fragments, during about twenty years. And by one man, Muhammad, who claimed that everything came from God through a supernatural creature (whom he was the only one to see and hear) in order to restore the "true religion"; already revealed in the Torah and then the Gospels, but perverted by some Jews or some Christians. Muhammad, who knew quite well the first part of the Bible (the Torah or Pentateuch) and a little the New Testament, especially in its apocryphal and Gnostic (Docetism) or Judeo-Christian versions of messianic type; has indeed always maintained that he received his revelations of the word of God by means of that mysterious spirit (which the later tradition equated with the archangel Gabriel, but after the facts).

- 1) Bukhari, Sahih, Book 66 (of virtues of the Quran), chapter 3.
- 2) Ibn Abu Dawud al-Sijistani, Kitab al-Masahif (Book of Quran manuscripts
- 3) Ibn Shabba, Tarikh al-Madina al-Munawara, History of Medina, the radiant city.

THE FIRST MUSHAF.

1. The Quran is a text. This is a text we have been talking about for a long time, but that very few people, except practicing Muslims, and still, know. And yet, it dates from the seventh century of our era.
2. The study of the Quran must be subject to the same rules of analysis or exegesis as those applied to other texts: grammar, syntax, literary context, historical background and cultural background, etc.
3. One of these rules is that when a book refers to something without giving an explanation; it means that the author (s) of this book consider (s) that those who will read it or hear it be recited ... will know what it is.
4. The Quran refers to gods, peoples, places, and things, which are not defined or explained anywhere except in the Quran itself.
5. The author (s) of the Quran therefore assume (s) that everyone already knew enough about this subject and that no further explanation was needed.
6. Certain passages in the Quran cannot be understood without reference to the historical and cultural background of pre-Islamic Arabia. Example the chapter "He frowned" (chapter number 80) and the chapter of the elephant (chapter 105).
7. Scholars use the history of pre-Islamic Arabia to explain the content of the Quran. The stories found in the Quran are taken from Arab legends or myths of the time, from Jews, Persians or Christians, in other words, they come from the men of this Earth and in no way from the Heaven. Their origin is not God, but mere human beings.

Editor's note. We can say exactly the same thing about the Jewish and Christian religions. The first chapters of the Bible were not revealed by God, but borrowed from Sumerian mythology. They do not come from Heaven, but from the Earth, and the rest is in keeping with (see our essay on Judaism). Gerd-Rudiger Puin, from the University of Saarbrücken, wonders if pre-Islamic sources could not have been involved in the formation of the Quran. The Quran, as we know, it is indeed a text from different oral traditions, and it was put in writing only several years after the death of Muhammad. This text is essentially composed of fables or myths, mixing the names, dates, events, and places, of the biblical corpus or of the Arab history, into a very composite fictional work. These stories (the 7 sleepers of the cave, the she camel, the men turned into monkeys or the night journey to Jerusalem of Muhammad on his magical mount called Buraq) are only recovery of pre-existing stories.

The materials of the Quran.

Some of these materials are distorted fragments of the Torah: the Quran contains some 6,000 verses, of which 502 relate to Moses, 245 Abraham, 131 Noah, others Adam, Lot, Israel, etc. In all, a quarter of the Quran is made up of materials from the Torah or the (mostly Apocrypha, Hebrew, etc.) Gospels. WHAT PROVES BY THE WAY THAT IT WAS TO BE MEANINGFUL FOR SOME OF THE MEN OR WOMEN WHO WERE THE TARGET OF THIS KIND OF STORY, SO THAT THERE WERE MANY LISTENERS AROUND MOHAMMED, EITHER JEWS OR CHRISTIANS OR BOTH AT THE SAME TIME.

One eighth of the Quran (800 verses) concerns the religious and social rules that structure Muslim societies.

Arab legends, such as those of Shuaib, Saleh, Hud, make up about two percent.

Jewish legends, such as the journey of Moses, or Persian, such as that of Dhu al-Qarnayn (the Romance of Alexander the Great) together make the order of one percent. The rest is formed with motivational speeches inciting to war, of exhortations, fragments of hymns, polemical speeches, etc. An example of a motivational speech.

Chapter 12, named after Joseph, is an excellent example. The detailed study of the sequence of the verses shows that it is by no means a story intended to instruct men or women who would not know this story; but an evocation intended for people who have already heard about it. Comments intersperse the story and follow it, to serve the speaker's purposes.

Ordinarily, when a sacred book reports a legend or myth, it does so in a consistent manner. Then, theologians or jurists study this story, and write comments or give interpretations. But in this example, the story is apparently already known by the listeners. And since it is a sacred text, the listeners hold it from another sacred book, different and previous to the Quran. This is what the speaker of the Quran explicitly says after completing his story 1):

"It is not an invented story but a confirmation of the existing (Scripture)."

Various comments interrupt the narrative 2): "Verily in Joseph and his brethren are signs for the inquiring."

Those who ask questions are those who are still not convinced by the preaching of Muhammad, still not convinced by Islam. They would do well to see in this story that when a man speaks with the

authority of God, be it Joseph or the orator, then the hearers who challenge him are always frightfully punished.

Another comment 3): " And God was predominant in his career, but most of mankind does not know." But the will of God, as the Quran says more than twenty times, is that men obey those who speak in his name.

The last ten verses of the chapter are a comment; in which the speaker declares that he does not ask his listeners for money, but that they must obey him, that nobody must call him a liar; that God saves who please him, especially those who speak in his name, therefore the orator himself; and that he punishes in the worst way the men who contradict the messengers of God. Those who have a touch of intelligence must therefore follow the teaching just given to them.

In short, it is a speech delivered by a human speaker. It was probably pronounced during his lifetime by Muhammad before 632, and included in the collection of Uthman, around 650.

1) Chapter 12, verse 111.

2) Chapter 12, verse 7.

3) Chapter 12, verse 21.

QURAN AND MYTHOLOGY.

Muhammad has used many stories and legends of his time, the mythology of his tribe or neighboring peoples (see the story of the Ad and Thamud for example). The Quran has borrowed its jinn (Arabic word meaning "genies") from ancient Arabic paganism. The Quran itself, moreover, acknowledges it: chapter 25 verse 5: "And they say: Fables of the men of old which he has had written down so that they are dictated to him morn and evening." Only chapter 105 (the "Ababil" birds that rout strangers attacking Mecca mounted on war elephants, casting on them clay stones) has perhaps a basis of truth.

We say "maybe" because there is a lot to debate.

Sura 105 does not speak of Abraha, nor of his son, nor of the Negus, nor of the Temple, nor of the Quraysh, nor of Mecca, nor of the Ethiopians.

Abraha is a historical figure, a ruler of Yemen in the 6th century.

According to Alfred-Louis de Premare, the data provided by external literary sources and inscriptions, concerning the Ethiopian intervention in Yemen [ca. 529-530], the reign of Sumuyafa' Aswa' [± 530-±535] and the seizure of power by Abraha [± 535] are as follows.

At the time of the Byzantine-Persian war of 527, after the massacre of the Christians of Najran by the Jewish Himyarite king Yusuf As'ar [= Dhu Nuwas in Arab traditions], the king of Ethiopia, who is Christian, intervenes in Yemen.

Yusuf and his troops are defeated and Yusuf flees or dies.

The Negus installs a new Yemeni king, a Christian, Sumuyafa' Aswa' [Esimiphaio in Procopius, from whom he demands an annual tribute, and then withdraws.

Around 535, a military rebellion in Yemen brought a Christian soldier named Abramos [=Abraha] to power. He was the former slave [doulos] of a Byzantine man who had settled for business in the region of Adulis (on the Red Sea in present-day Eritrea).

Abramos/Abraha made himself independent of the Ethiopian allegiance.

The Negus called Kaleb tries unsuccessfully to reduce the Abraha rebellion. The latter agrees to pay tribute to his successor. The Chronography of John Malalas, however, does not mention the reign of Sumuyafa' Aswa'; Abraha is said to have been placed directly on the throne by the Ethiopians, immediately after the death of the Himyarite king persecutor of the Christians in Najran.

One of Abraha's campaigns in Central Arabia (that of 552) is attested by a South-Arabic inscription found at Muraygan. Muraygan is located some 400 km south-south-east of Mecca, and some 200 km north-north-west of Najran. The inscription specifies the date of the expedition (662 Himyarite calendar = 552 of our era), and indicates that it was the fourth, in April, "when all the B. 'Amir revolted."

Procopius, too, speaks of Abraha's northward march, which would have remained without any real follow-up despite the efforts of Emperor Justinian to push him to attack the Persia. The inscription of Muraygan RY 506, seems to indicate two and even three expeditionary corps in the same movement: one led by Abraha against the Ma'add in Haliban, the two others sent by Abraha and led respectively by the Kinda in the valley of Du-Marh and by the Murad and Sa'd in the valley of Turaban.

Abraha thus seems to have been a significant king in the history of Arabia at the end of the Himyarite era: his name and the memorial of some of his actions and achievements are written on stone in contemporary chronicles; reminiscences of his reign are present in Arabic literature. This ensemble makes him a known and very real actor in the history of the Arab Peninsula in the 6th century of our era.

The account of Abraha's seizure of power in Yemen is most generally known through the versions given by Ibn Hisam, Ibn al-Kalbi and Tabari respectively, where they are situated within the framework of a set dealing with the attack on Mekka and Sura 105 [al-Fil].

But there are others, noticeably the narrative in the Kitab al Aghani (Book of Songs) by Abu-l-Faraj al Isfahani. Abu-l-Faraj is not bound by the concern for an exegesis of Sura 105 and, on the other hand, his sources appear to be essentially Yemeni.

In Tabari, as in Ibn Ishaq and Ibn Hisam, the relations on the reign of Abraha after the elimination of his predecessor end with a narrative on the expedition of the elephant, but there is nothing of the kind in Abu-l-Faraj al Isfahani and this silence of Abu-l-Faraj on Abraha's supposed attack on the Ka'ba seems well intentional. Our author has chosen to highlight the glories of pre-Islamic Yemen.

What is deduced by the people of many (12 for example, as among the Fenians, a symbolic figure) BOOKS.

A banal history of tanks stopped by an air attack as during the Gulf War? Muhammad would have had the vision or foreknowledge of the ravages of an American air attack on Iraqi tanks, and would have

transcribed this futuristic vision with the linguistic means of his time. Oh yes, it is true that it did not exist yet at the time.

Or, it is an allusion to the use of slingshots. The translation of the Arabic term - hajjaratin sijil - by "clay stone" is not very sure.

Muhammad may have just taken a little too seriously the good stories that his grandfather Al Muttalib told him at night in the evening around the fireside. What is annoying anyway is to believe in Santa Claus when you are forty years old. But nothing proves that these verses are well from Muhammad. They can very well have been inserted after his death by the pious hands of some more credulous first-generation Muslim.

The Quran, of course, also refers to Jewish or Christian mythology, since Islam is entirely based on the assumption that God has spoken to men through the biblical message, both Jewish and Christian. Some chronicles report that God would have had 124,000 prophets (Jehovah's Witnesses themselves speak of 144,000 happy few), but that only 316 of them would have had the favor to be apostles, the archangel Gabriel having transmitted them divine directives on this subject.

Really obeying the true God was enough to be a Muslim in the eyes of Muhammad (who never really dwelt at length on what was meant by "really obeying" or "true" god).

Muhammad having never claimed to found a new religion the nascent Islam refers consequently and in a positive way, although it is always in a fanciful or erroneous way, to the books previously revealed the "Tawrat" (Thora), the "Zabur" (psalms), "the Injil" (the Gospel). Muhammad cites all the great men mentioned in these books: Adam, Noah / Nuh, Abraham / Ibrahim, Moses / Musa, John the Baptist / Yahya and Jesus / Issa. Of these prophets, only some of God's envoys were allowed to promulgate a new religion. They are six or seven, depending on whether we count or not David: Adam, Noah / Nuh, Abraham / Ibrahim, Moses / Moussa, Jesus / Issa. But Islam also asserts that the genuine messages sent by God to these men were later completely distorted, changed, suppressed, or mutilated by Jews and Christians. What is perfectly correct in a way. See our essays on Judaism and Christianity. Finally, Muhammad is the "seal of all these prophets." No other revelation or evolution will be possible later after him. Idea borrowed from Manichaeism.

Several other characters are also mentioned in the Quran: Jacob / Yaq'ub, Joseph / Yusuf, Job / Ayub and David / Dawud.

The Quran even mentions Aaron, Solomon, Jonah, Zechariah, Ishmael, and Hagar (the handmaid of Abraham) saved from the desert by the water from the well of Zam-Zam, the murmuring water near the Kaaba, and finally Mary .

Chapter 3, verses 45-49: 3:45 (And remember) when the angels said: O Mary! Lo! God gives you glad tidings of a word from him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, illustrious in the world and the Hereafter, and one of those brought near (unto God). He will speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his manhood, and he is of the righteous. She said: My Lord! How can I have a child when no mortal has touched me ?" The continuation is more obscure and probably comes from the Infancy Gospel of Thomas- an apocryphal gospel - an allusion to clay birds that Jesus would have miraculously animated ... The rest (of verse 49) brings us back to familiar ground : healing of the blind, of lepers, and resurrection of the dead by Jesus.

Islam considers even a return of Jesus onto Earth (who will dare claim after that Islam owes nothing to Christianity?) Preceded by the arrival of a messiah called the Mahdi.

They are two distinct persons but they will work together (though traditions, on this point, have some contradictions) to fight evil and bring justice. The Mahdi as far as he is concerned will go from Mecca to Damascus. He will not overcome the false messiah (the antichrist) called Dajjal, (Arabic: al-massih ad-dajjal, the false Messiah), the antichrist; that some equate with the apocalyptic beast (Arabic: dabba, "beast") of the Quran, called the spy by tradition (Arabic: jassasa, spy) (22, 82); because it is Jesus who is supposed to come to overcome this false messiah. Then, Jesus and the Mahdi will remain on earth for a few years.

CHRISTIAN MYTH TAKEN OVER BY ISLAM.

The chapter of the cave, chapter 18 verses 9 to 26.

This is an old Christian myth about imaginary or very exaggerated persecutions.

The oldest version in the West is the one which appears in the DE GLORIA MARTYRUM by Gregory of Tours (6th century) who claims to have it from a Syriac translator.

Below is a summary of the version in Anglo-Norman of the 13th century by Chadri (Richard's anagram), a summary because Chardri embroidered a lot.

Ne voil pas en fables d'Ovide,
Seinnurs, mestre mun estuide,
Ne ja, sachez, ne parlerum
Ne de Tristram ne de Galerun;
Ne de Renard ne de Hersente
Ne voil pas mettre m'entente,
Mes voil de Deu e sa vertu,
Ki est pussant e tutjurz fu,
E de ses seinz, les Set Dormanz,
Ke tant furent resplendisanz
Devant la face Jesu Crist.
Car si cum il est escrit
Vus en dirrai la verité
De chef en chef cum ad esté.
Un empereur esteit pussant
En Costentinoble la grant;
Decius fu icil numez,
Orgeillus e pussant assez,
Mes de la lei fu mescreant,
Car en Apolin e en Tervagant
Aveit tute se entente mise.

What gives us in our current parlance

My Lords, I am not going to attempt here to recount the fables of Ovid, nor even, you should know, will we speak of Tristan or Galeron? nor do I want to expend my effort on stories of Renard or of Hersente 1) instead I want to speak of God and his virtue, who is powerful and always has been, and of his saints, the Seven Sleepers, who were so resplendent before the face of Jesus Christ. I will tell you the truth as it is written; point by point as it happened. Once upon a time there was a powerful emperor of Constantinople the great; named Decius, he was very hubristic and powerful, but in the matter of religion he was unbelieving, for he put all his faith in Apollo and Tervagant 2).

1) Characters from the Roman de Renart.

2) Survival of the Celtic Tarvos Trigaranos.

In short, the seven sleepers were born in the city of Ephesus. And when Decius the emperor came into Ephesus for the persecution of Christian men, he commanded to edify the temples in the middle of the city, so that all should come with him to make a sacrifice to the idols, and did do seek all the Christian people, and bind them for to make them do sacrifice, or else to put them to death; in such wise that every man was afeard of the pains that he promised, that the friend forsook his friend, and the son disowned his father, and the father the son.

And then in this city were found seven Christian men, that is to wit, Maximian, Malchus, Marcianus, Denis, John, Serapion, and Constantine. And when they saw this, they had much sorrow, and because they were the first in the palace that despised the sacrifices, they hid them in their houses, and were in fasting and in prayers. And then they were accused before Decius, and came thither, and were found very Christian men. Then was given to them space for to repent them, unto the coming again of Decius. And in the meanwhile they distributed their patrimony in alms to the poor people; and assembled them, and took counsel, and went to the mount of Celion, and there ordained to be more secret, and there hid them a long time.

And one of them administered and served them always. And when he went into the city, he clothed him in the habit of a beggar.

When Decius was come again, he commanded that they should be fetched, and then Malchus returned in great dread to his fellows, and told and showed to them the great fury and rage of them, and then were they sore afraid. And Malchus set before them the loaves of bread that he had brought, so that they were comforted of the meat, and were stronger for to suffer torments. And when they had

taken their refection and sat in weeping and wailing, suddenly, as God would, they slept, and when it came on the morn they were sought and could not be found. Wherefore Decius was sorrowful because he had lost such young men. And then they were accused that they were hidden in the mount of Celion, and had given their goods to poor men, and yet abode in their purpose. Then Decius thought what he should do with them, and, as our Lord would, he enclosed the mouth of the cave wherein they were with stones, to the end that they should die therein for hunger and fault of meat. Then the ministers and two Christian men, Theodorus and Rufinus, wrote their martyrdom and laid it subtly among the stones. And when Decius was dead, and all that generation, three hundred and sixty-two years after, and the thirtieth year of Theodosius the emperor, when the heresy was of them that denied the resurrection of dead bodies, and began to grow; Theodosius, then the most Christian emperor, being sorrowful that the faith of our Lord was so feloniously managed. God, merciful and piteous, seeing, would comfort them that were sorrowful and weeping, and give to them expectation and hope of the resurrection of dead men, and opened the precious treasure of his pity, and raised the foresaid martyrs in this manner following.

He put in the will of a burgess of Ephesus that he would make in that mountain, which was desert and rough, a stable for his shepherds and herdsmen. And it happed that of adventure the masons, that made the said stable, opened this cave. And then these holy saints, that were within, awoke and were raised and greeted each other, and had supposed verily that they had slept but one night only, and remembered of the heaviness that they had the day before. And then Malchus, which ministered to them, said what Decius had ordained of them, for he said: We have been sought, like as I said to you yesterday, for to do sacrifice to the idols, that is it that the emperor desires of us. And then Maximian answered: God our Lord knows that we shall never sacrifice, and comforted his fellows. He commanded Malchus to go and buy bread in the city, and bade him bring more than he did yesterday, and also to inquire and demand what the emperor had commanded to do. And then Malchus took five shillings, and issued out of the cave, and when he came all doubtful to the gates of the city, and was all filled with wonder. For upon every gate, he saw set up the sign of the cross; and therewith the city was garnished. And then he blessed him and returned to the first gate, and weened he had dreamed; and after he advised and comforted himself and covered his visage and entered into the city.

And when he came to the sellers of bread, and heard the men speak of God, yet then was he more abashed, and said: What is this, that no man yesterday durst name Jesus Christ, and now every man confesses him to be Christian? I trow this is not the city of Ephesus, for it is all otherwise built. It is some other city, I wit not what. He demanded and heard verily that it was Ephesus and then went to them that sold bread. And when he showed his money the sellers marveled, and said that one to that other, that this young man had found some old treasure. When they saw that he spoke not they put a cord about his neck, and drew him through the city unto the middle thereof. Malchus beheld them all, but he could know no man there of his kindred or lineage, which he had verily supposed that they had lived, but found none, wherefore he stood as he had been from himself, in the middle of the city. And when S. Martin the bishop, and Antipater the consul, which were new come into this city, heard of this thing they sent for him, that they should bring him wisely to them, and his money with him. And then the bishop and the consul marveled of the money, and they demanded him where he had found this treasure unknown. And he answered that he had nothing found, but it was come to him of his kindred and patrimony. The judge said to him: Let your kindred come and witness for you. And he named them, but none knew them. And they said that he feigned, for to escape from them in some manner. And then said the judge: How may we believe you that this money is come to you of your friends, when it appears in the scripture that it is more than three hundred and seventy-two years since it was made and forged, and is of the first days of Decius the emperor, and how may it come from your lineage so long since, and you are young and would deceive the wise and ancient men of this city of Ephesus? Then Malchus kneeled down before them and said: For God's sake, lords, say you to me that I shall demand you, and I shall tell you all that I have in my heart. Decius the emperor that was in this city, where is he? And the bishop said to him there is no such at this day in the world that is named Decius, he was emperor many years since. And Malchus said: Sire, hereof I am greatly abashed and no man believes me, for I wit well that we fled for fear of Decius the emperor, and I saw him, that yesterday he entered into this city, if this be the city of Ephesus.

Then the bishop thought in himself, and said to the judge that, this is a vision that our Lord will have shown by this young man. And then they went with him, and a great multitude of the people of the city with them. And Malchus entered first into the cave to his fellows, and the bishop next after him. And there found they among the stones the letters sealed with two seals of silver. And then the bishop called them that were come thither, and read them before them all, so that they that heard it were all abashed and filled with wonder. And they saw the saints sitting in the cave, and their visages like unto roses flowering, and they, kneeling down, glorified God. And anon the bishop and the judge sent to

Theodosius the emperor, praying him that he would come anon for to see the marvels of our Lord that he had late shown. And anon he arose up from the ground and came from Constantinople to Ephesus, and glorified God.

And as soon as the blessed saints of our Lord saw the emperor come, their visages shone like to the sun. And the emperor entered then, and glorified our Lord and embraced them, weeping upon each of them, and said: I see you now like as I should see our Lord raising Lazarus. And then Maximian said to him: Believe us, for forsooth our Lord has raised us before the day of the great resurrection. And to the end that you believe firmly the resurrection of the dead people, verily we be raised as you here see, and live. And in like wise as the child is in the womb of his mother without feeling harm or hurt, in the same wise we have been living and sleeping in lying here without feeling of anything.

And when they had said all this, they inclined their heads to the earth, and rendered their spirits at the command of our Lord Jesu Christ, and so died.

Then the emperor commanded to make precious sepulchers of gold and silver, and to bury their bodies therein. And in the same night they appeared to the emperor, and said to him that he should suffer them to lie on the earth like as they had lain before till that time that our Lord had raised them, unto the time that they should rise again.

It is in doubt of that which is said that they slept three hundred and sixty-two years, for they were raised in the year of our Lord 478, and Decius reigned but one year and three months, and that was in the year of our Lord 270, and so they slept but two hundred and eight years.

The relativity of time which passes differently according to the observers, is also evoked by the Irish legend of Bran son of Febal, of which K. Meyer and Nutt produced a very beautiful edition.

When Bran returns home and announces to everyone that he is Bran, son of Febal, the inhabitants of the country answer him that this character is long dead; but that the story of his departure to the land of fairies was transmitted after him.

ON THE REALITY OF THE PERSECUTIONS UNDERGONE BY THE FIRST CHRISTIANS SEE OUR PREVIOUS WORK ON, OR MORE PRECISELY AGAINST, CHRISTIANITY.

The Quran, like the Irish hagiography, borrowed much from the pagan mythology of its time, we said. This is also proven by the verses in this book on the two-horned man - or the fable of the Yajuj and Majuj people (Gog and Magog: the Giants and the Pygmies?) Devil take me if it is well Alexander the Great! For if this is the case, then it means that God blessed and encouraged an abominable pagan who claimed to be a son of god or a god himself. We are not going to pretend all the same that Alexander was a pious worshiper of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not really? The least that can be said is that the verses related to this illustrious hero (DHU AL-QARNAYN) are not sufficiently clear in themselves to fully grasp the historical significance and morality that emerges from them. Who in this text, for example, is designated by the word "God" or by the pronoun "We"?

Gabriel or the god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Not Alexander no, really!

Chapter No. 18 verses 83-100.

They will ask you of Dhu'l-Qarneyn(the man with the two-horned helmet). Say: I shall recite unto you a remembrance of him.

Lo! We made him strong in the land and gave him unto everything a road. And he followed a road till, when he reached the setting place of the sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring, and found a people there about. We said: O Dhu'l-Qarneyn! Either punish or show them kindness.

God said: As for him who does wrong, we shall punish him, and then he will be brought back unto his Lord, Who will punish him with awful punishment!

But as for him who believes and does right, good will be his reward, and We shall speak unto him a mild command.

Then he followed a road Till, when he reached the rising place of the sun, he found it rising on a people for whom We had appointed no shelter therefrom.

So (it was). And We knew all concerning him ??????????????

Then he followed a road till, when he came between the two mountains, he found upon their hither side a folk that scarce could understand a saying [of course, if they spoke another language!].

They said: O Dhu'l-Qarneyn! Lo! Gog and Magog are spoiling the land. So may we pay you tribute on condition that you set a barrier between us and them ?

He said: That wherein my Lord has established me is better (than your tribute). Do but help me with strength (of men), I will set between you and them a bank. Give me pieces of iron - till, when he had leveled up (the gap) between the cliffs, he said: Blow! - till, when he had made it a fire, he said: Bring me molten copper to pour thereon.

And (Gog and Magog) were not able to surmount, nor could they pierce (it).

He said: This is a mercy from my Lord; but when the promise of my Lord comes to pass, He will lay it low, for the promise of my Lord is true. And on that day we shall let some of them surge against others."

These verses of the Quran, obviously borrowed from the Romance of Alexander, clearly imply that the Gog and Magog people (Ya'joudj and Ma'joudj) exist (still) somewhere on Earth; and that the barrier built by Alexander-Dhu al-Qarnayn still protects us from them. Ibn Kathir thinks that the destruction of this protective barrier will take place after the coming of the Massih ad dajjal (the antichrist?)

Editor's Note: According to the text of the Quran, Dhu al-Qarnayn made a round trip between the west and the east; and this clearly shows that God, Archangel Gabriel, or Muhammad (in short the spirit that speaks in this text) believed that the Earth is flat; what is clearly implied by the idea that the place where the sun "sets" and the place where it "rises" are definite geographical regions. Of course, we know today that the Earth is round, so there is no fixed region for sunset or sunrise. This mistake, therefore, demonstrates that this text cannot have God as its origin, but that it is, like the Bible, of human origin, and therefore dependent on the knowledge or ignorance characteristic of its time. Would it not be simpler to admit that this story is only a web of nonsense (some myths the scientists say)? In any case, it does not honor Muhammad, nor the Quran nor Islam.

According to some Hadiths, this Surah was revealed to Muhammad following a trick question developed by the rabbis of Medina for the Meccan opponents of the Prophet of Islam, a trap in which Muhammad would have fallen because, after 15 days of delay (the time to gather information perhaps) he would have answered, but not in a historical way and, moreover, to a question concerning a NON BIBLICAL figure. So the evidence was produced that Muhammad had nothing to do with the lineage of Jewish or biblical prophets but was an impostor.

OTHER MIRACLES IN THE QURAN.

Below Yusuf Ali's analysis on this subject.

Chapter N° 2.

Verse 60: Jewish mythology.

Verse 65: Jewish legend.

Verse 125: Arab paganism.

Verse 158: Arab paganism.

Verse 189: Arab paganism.

Verse 194: Arab paganism.

Verse 196: Arab paganism.

Verse 197: Arab paganism.

Verse 198: Arab paganism.

Verse 200: Arab paganism.

Verse 259: Jewish or Christian legend.

Chapter N° 3 verse 49: Christian apocryphal text.

Chapter N° 7.

Verse 65: Arab legend of the Ad people.

Verse 73: Arab legend of the Thamud people.

Verse 85: Arab legend of the country of Midian.

Chapter N° 11 verse 59: Arab legend of the Ad people.

Chapter No. 18.

Verse 9: Christian apocryphal text. See the Infancy gospel of Thomas. Jesus making birds of clay fly. It is not because this story has been transposed to the Quran that it has become credible.

Verse 110: A Persian source ??

Chapter N° 74 verse 32: Arab paganism.

Some equivocal words of Muhammad, thrown into the midst of his people, and propagated by zealous partisans, may have given rise to the absurd account of certain miracles; like the ascent to Heaven of Muhammad, the moon split in two, and a host of others, that Muslims nevertheless count among their articles of faith.

Chapter 9 verse 40. God caused his peace of reassurance (shakina) to descend upon him and supported him with hosts you cannot see."

Allusion to the miracle of the spider which, by its web, protected Muhammad in the cave where he had hidden to escape the Meccans; (The cobweb woven just after Muhammad's entry into the cave made the pursuers believe that no one could pass recently in this place.) The hadiths also mention the intervention that day of a dove brooding her eggs.

Chapter 17 verse 1: the isra or night journey. Muhammad made in one night the (round) trip from the mosque in Mecca to another mosque far more distant (later equated with that of Jerusalem, wrongly besides). This verse remaining stingy with details, the later traditions will specify that Muhammad that night, would have made the trip on a winged mount, like Pegasus, called Buraq by the Muslim legend, which will give it a woman's head (hello the symbol!) Later traditions will add other details.

The Miraj. Muhammad ascends to the seventh heaven, on the invitation of the angel Gabriel. The departure takes place in Jerusalem (at the current location of the El-Aqsa Mosque). In the first heaven, he meets Adam. In the second heaven, he sees Jesus and Saint John, in the third, there is Joseph, in the fourth, Idris; in the fifth, Aaron, in the sixth heaven, he finds Moses and in the seventh, Abraham. Higher up there is God, but no man can see him. We only hear him writing.

Chapter 54 verse 1: the moon is split in two. The Quran is very short on the subject, but the hadiths of the later tradition tell us more about the circumstances of this miracle. Among the companions of Muhammad who narrated the story of this miracle, we find Ali and Ibn Mas'ud, Ibn Umar, Jubayr Ibn Motam, Anas Ibn Malik, Abdullah Ibn Abbas, Hudhayfah Ibn Al-Yaman (and many others) .

The Meccans once asked Muhammad to prove to them that he was sent by God. This took place five years before the Hegira in the presence of Al-Walid Ibn Al-Moghira, Amr ibn Hisham (nicknamed later Abu Jahl), Al-As Ibn Wael, Al-Aswad ibn Al-Muttalib, Nadr Ibn Al Harith and other inhabitants of Mecca. They said to Muhammad, "If what you say is true, then split the moon into two halves! Muhammad implored God and the moon split into two halves, one upstream of the mountain and the other downstream! This phenomenon occurred on the day of the full moon, and lasted from the afternoon to the night.

The pagans exclaimed: "Muhammad has bewitched us." One of them, Amr ibn Hisham [enough rational mind apparently] told them: "He has hypnotized us, but he cannot hypnotize the whole world. Ask the travelers who arrive from afar if they have also seen what you saw, if so, then he will have shown what he can do, otherwise it will mean that what you had before you is only an illusion." The Meccans followed this advice, but the travelers arriving at Mecca corroborated the story of the miracle. The Meccans came to the conclusion that it was truly "an exceptional magic!"

Chapter 94. Allusion to the fact that when he was six years old, Muhammad was "visited" by two angels who would have opened his chest (some surgeons angels?) They would then have washed his heart (to purify it from all stains) before putting it back in place (what obviously implies that the heart of this six-year-old child was already "sullied"!)

Chapter 105. "Ababil" birds rout strangers attacking Mecca mounted on war elephants, throwing clay stones at them (slingshot bullets?) The most rational hypothesis, the reminiscent of a passage from the Third Book of the Maccabees (6,17), the elephants would be those of Ptolemy IV of Egypt.

See also the reference to the night of Al Qadr - chapter 97 - when "divine decrees" and current events are settled for the coming year. This is probably a borrowing from ancient pre-Islamic legends. We are here in the field of "wonderful" stories related to the deities supposed to rule the world. The whole increased with some strictly personal considerations by Muhammad.

In the Quran itself, Muhammad affirms that God spoke to him through a "spirit" (which he will later present as archangel Gabriel).

The Quran (Qura = "recitation") therefore gathers the divine words that would have been communicated to Muhammad by this spirit for twenty-three years.

Did Muhammad well understand everything, has he not forgotten something from this revelation? Are, of course, questions that we may legitimately ask. The answer is in chapter 6 verse 38: we have neglected nothing in the Book.

The Quran was nevertheless revealed to Muhammad in fragments. "It is a Quran that We have divided so that you may recite it unto mankind at intervals, and We have revealed it" (chapter 17, verse 107). The Quran was not composed by Muhammad, who could barely read and even write (a few words and his name, but we will return to this point because it is very controversial and depends only on the meaning of the Arabic word "ummi") it was recited by him, in fragments, according to the circumstances, in order to bring a particular precision, from the age of about forty to his death, which occurred when he was about sixty years old, in 632 of our era.

The Quran is considered the "holy word of God" transmitted to the "prophet" by the usual "communicator" of the "Almighty" in the matter, later equated with Archangel Gabriel. For true Muslims, the Quran is the very word of God (whose mother tongue is therefore Arabic). They must respect this text "literally" without seeking to discover a "hidden meaning" (esotericism) and without ever changing it. The Quran is eternal and immutable.

First spread orally by the first followers of Muhammad, the Quran will be transcribed only after his death in the year 632. At least according to the Muslim legend.

Some think that he had to begin to be distributed at least partially; before, that is to say during the lifetime of Muhammad, for some parts.

Chapter 98 verses 2 and 3. "A messenger from God reading purified pages containing correct scriptures."

The expression "holy or purified pages" is clear, and can in no way relate to the heavenly tablets of the Law. This sentence of the Quran therefore implies the cohabitation or the coexistence of two very distinct elements:

1 Muhammad reciting the words of God transmitted by the creature that appears in his hallucinations, but also ...

2 Sheets where are noted a certain number of things (correct scriptures).

It is reasonable to think that the very first auditory hallucinations of Muhammad regarding religion were not written down because he had neither followers nor disciples. These texts of the first epoch were, moreover, neither very long nor numerous, what made it possible for Muhammad not to forget them. He often took them up again in his prayers or in his conversations. "Every year in the month of Ramadan, the prophet recited to the angel Gabriel the part of the heavenly clay tablet that had been brought down from the well-guarded tablet (al-lawh al-mahfuz) that had been revealed to him. He recited it before his companions, and it was recited before him. The last year Gabriel made him repeat it twice and the prophet understood that he would soon die."

A legend of course, nevertheless, it is indicative of a certain reality. On the other hand, later, after the period, of the beginnings and at least from 615, the literate faithful (there will be up to 29) will use to note the verses in writing; because from this date, five years after the first revelation, traces of writing exist. Of this, we are sure, because it is from this time that dates the conversion of the future Caliph Umar, seduced by the reading of chapter 20.

For lack of paper (it is not yet spread in the land of Islam), all materials are good: pieces of parchment, tanned leather, wooden tablets, camel shoulder blades, pieces of pottery, midribs of date palms ... The verses will be tidied then classified gradually, Muhammad specifying the location of the verses in the chapters, and the order of the chapters in the whole book.

The Muslim theologians explain (are we obliged to believe them?) that certain chapters were revealed to Muhammad at once, but others progressively; other chapters being then started in the meantime. Same thing among Christians with the action of the Holy Spirit in the hearts. (Why do simple when it can be complicated?)

By this oral but also written double-check, Muhammad ensures himself the preservation of the entire text. The faulty memories are compensated by the written texts, and conversely, the mistakes in copy are corrected thanks to the memorization of the text.

He recommended indeed that the faithful learn this text by heart; what they did, either in whole or in part only, and the existence of these "Ha fizun" knowing by heart the totality or at least a part of the Quran made it possible to be distributed. This supposedly divine word is indeed often versified, what makes easier memorization and psalmody.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE QURAN PRECISELY.

The Quran was revealed in Arabic to be understood, originally, by an Arab people: "Lo! We have appointed it a lecture, in Arabic that haply you may understand" (Chapter 43 verse 3). it is a revelation "In plain Arabic speech" (chapter 26 verse 195), " For Muslims; therefore, there is no more respectable language than this, because it is the language that God has chosen to speak to men ...

Anyone can say as much and on this account the person who scribbled this modest essay could very well write to his Scottish, Welsh, Irish, but also Galician, Swiss, or Auvergne friends ... *

"You are a chosen language selected among all (72 for Fenius Farsaid in Ireland), a priestly people wholly dedicated to the things of religion" (Latin "admodum dedita religionibus." Caesar, Commentaries Book VI, 16-18) .

The theme of the chosen language as that of the heaven after death is a universal theme, it is also found among the barbarians of the West.

Diodorus of Sicily (6, 31) has mentioned written out in full "They speak, as it were, the language of the gods" (they are "homophonon"). See also Lucian's testimony.

" What struck me as the most curious circumstance of all, Heracles's right hand is occupied with the club, and his left with the bow, how is he to hold the ends of the chains? The painter solves the difficulty by boring a hole in the tip of the god's tongue, and making that the means of attachment; his head is turned round, and he regards his followers with a smiling countenance. I did not know what to make of it, and was beginning to feel somewhat nettled, when I was addressed in admirable Greek by a man who stood at my side, and who besides possessing a scholarly acquaintance with their national science, proved to be not unfamiliar with our own. He told me, Noble stranger; I see this fresco puzzles you: let me solve the riddle. We Celts connect eloquence not with Hermes, as you do, but with the mightier Heracles. Indeed, we refer the achievements of the original Heracles, from first to last, to his wisdom and persuasive eloquence."

Question: From the seventy-two primordial languages which was first revealed by Fenius Farsaid?

Answer: it is not difficult: the Celtic language (Gaelic in Ireland).

Question: What is the reason we can say that Celtic is a chosen language?

Answer: it is not difficult: because it was developed by Fenius Farsaid (from the 72 primordial languages).

Question: did Celtic exist before being thus chosen?

Answer: Yes, since the first 72 languages in the world cannot be explained otherwise. All obscure sound existing in other languages has its place in Celtic whence its clarity which much more surpasses that of all other languages.

Let's repeat it, contrary to all foolishly racist remarks that could be said about the supposed "barbarian" character of this idiom, the Celtic was a great civilization language. The Roman jurist Ulpian even acknowledged in his "digests" that fiduciary documents in Celtic language could be as valid as those written in Latin or Greek. Celtic was therefore not a "barbariann" language and it was the original mother tongue of more than half of Europe at one time. Celtic is the only substrate (poorly known elsewhere) whose linguists are able to study the effects on later languages.

Celts then appeared as a people beloved by the gods (gesta dei per Gallos somehow); or, on the contrary, as dark diabolical titans at war with the gods of the whole world, according to the Greek legends, which are quite contradictory, it is true, about the Hyperboreans. A chosen language and not a race, because, let's say it again; in ancient history, language is the only sign or mark of what we now call nationality, apart from language, it is impossible to develop another criterion of identification. The language remains, despite difficulties of detail, the main if not the only criterion which we have in order to determine the nationality of an ethnic group or of an individual, with its precious and fragile auxiliary sciences that are anthroponymy and toponymy. But back to our subject !

* As to all true Celtic minded persons, let's not be foolishly racist, to stick to the Celts through their body is not enough!

QURAN AND KOINE.

Before continuing our chapter on the language of the Quran, it is appropriate to say few words about what is called a koiné in linguistics.

A koiné is a supra-dialectal language consciously developed to fulfill higher or more utilitarian functions than the naturally evolved idioms with simple and everyday functions.

By extension, the term koinè designates an autonomous variant of a language formed by the combination of various mutually intelligible dialects used by the population of a given territory, and which is superimposed on their use.

The koinè is an accomplished and often thought-out language (hence its ability to serve literature) and not a disparate language created for merely utilitarian purposes. It is therefore difficult to recognize the geographical origin of authors of texts written in a koinè.

The koinè can be only written (literature, administrative texts, legal texts, etc.) but also oral. In some cases, it can cover all fields of activity, from family life to arts, sciences and state administration.

The use of a koinè can go beyond the geographical area of origin of the language and serve as a lingua franca between speakers of different mother tongues, but a koinè also has the essential property of being a mixture of languages or dialects in contact, leading to the development of a new variety. As Trudgill (1986: 107-8) states, a koinè is a historically mixed but become stable dialect which contains elements from the different dialects that went into the mixture, as well as interdialect forms that were present in none. In other words, dialectal mixing, leveling and stabilization.

Two examples before moving on to the case at hand.

The lingua franca of the ancient Greek world. It was mainly derived from Ionian-Attic Greek into which forms of other dialects had penetrated.

The old French or language of Oïl (langue of yes). Oïl = yes).

The period from the end of the 11th to the beginning of the 14th century corresponds to a period of influence of medieval French.

The written koiné.

Various hypotheses have been developed to account for the fact that the graphic system of Old French is much less subject to variation than one might have thought. For the langue d'oïl zone at least, all texts were supposed to conform to a supra-regional written standard that allowed only a limited number of regionalisms. This standard was not based on any spoken dialect, but existed only visually as a "scripta."

From the ninth century onwards, phonetic and morphological variants would have been selected from several writing traditions of northern France to make a more or less standardized written language that would facilitate the dissemination of literary texts and even official documents. While admitting a certain latitude in its application, this written koinè would have been well established as a standard even before the 12th century, both in the royal administration and among literary authors.

The Florentine scholar Brunetto Latini wrote his Treasure Book in language of Oïl around 1265, and explains himself by declaring that it is the "parlure la plus délectable et plus commune à toutes gens »".

The Venetian chronicler Martino Canale assures, at the end of the thirteenth century, that "la langue franceise cort parmi le monde et est la plus delitable à lire et à oïr que nule autre" and Marco Polo writes in prison the account of his adventures in China directly in language of Oïl, or at least has it recorded in French by one of his cell mates Rustichello of Pisa.

The oral koiné.

As for the French language, it would come from the settlement in Paris in the 12th century of men and women coming from neighboring regions: Normandy Picardy Champagne.

THE FRANCO--FRENCH PROBLEM IS THEREFORE THE HIATUS BETWEEN THESE TWO KOINES, THE WRITTEN KOINE AND THE ORAL KOINE.

Let us now come to the language of the Quran.

What strikes us at once is that it is neither some Meccan Arabic dialect nor Medinan Arabic dialect, but that its grammatical structure is similar to the poetic or literary koiné of the pre-Islamic times.

The Arabic of the Quran indeed appears, not as a common language, but rather as a very elaborate level of language, because of its rhythms, its expressions, its vocabulary, its images in short of the style as a whole. It is enough to read the Quran closely, to realize that it actually contains several styles according to the suras: styles imaged with apocalyptic scenes, polemic in the fight against polytheists, legal concerning the rules of daily life, lyrical for prayers and faith. As no one has ever used these "levels" of language in everyday life, modern semitologists and philologists today believe that this language known to poets and soothsayers was in fact common to other tribes and differed in certain linguistic features from everyday speech.

Let us add that Mecca had contact with the city of Hira, in Iraq, which was an episcopal see from 410 and that according to some Muslim sources, the inhabitants of Ta'if and the Quraysh had learned the "art of writing" from the Christians of that city.

This common language, called koinè, was precisely the language in which the poets naturally expressed themselves and which enabled them to be understood by the greatest number of tribes.

The language of the Quran, because of its particular form of poetic prose, certainly differs from this koinè, but it is similar in structure and syntax.

As for the vocabulary, however, there have been many borrowings, for example from Syrian-Aramaic, the great cultural or liturgical language of the time in this part of the world.

An example is Sura 108 which is very ambiguous and thus translated by Regis Blachere, but still undeniably obscure:

"Truly, We have given you the abundance. Pray then in honor of your Lord and sacrifice! Verily, he who hates you is the disinherited one ."

Muslim exegetes see this as a marvel, but the Syrian-Aramaic reading of Luxenberg still gives us a more plausible text: "We have given you [the virtue] of perseverance; pray therefore to your Lord and persist [in prayer]; your adversary [Satan] is [then] defeated. "

Claude Gilliot hazarded the hypothesis that this would be a reminiscence of the First Epistle of Peter 5:8-9, according to the text of the Peshitta (Syriac translation of the Bible)". Why not ?

What is certain in any case is that Zayd Ibn Thâbit, the principal collaborator in the writing of the Quranic revelation, attended the (Jewish) school of Medina and knew Aramaic, Syriac or Hebrew according to version.

And that another secretary of Muhammad, Abdallah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sar'h boasted that he wrote what he wanted and not what Muhammad dictated to him.

Al-Nuzul by Al-Wahidi.

The Revelation Reason of Verse (93) from Surah (6).

This verse was revealed about 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh. This man had declared his faith in Islam and so the Messenger of God (God bless him and give him peace), called him one day to write something for him.

When the verses regarding the believers were revealed (Verily, We created man from a product of wet earth...) [23:12-14], the Prophet dictated them to him. When he reached up to "and then change him in a completely different creation) " Abd Allah expressed his amazement at the precision of man's creation by saying, "So blessed be God, the Best of Creators!"

The Messenger of God (God bless him and give him peace) said: "This ['Abd Allah's last expression] is how it was revealed to me." At that point, doubt crept into 'Abd Allah. He said: "If Muhammad is truthful, then I was inspired just as he was; and if he is lying, I have uttered exactly what he did utter." The man renounced Islam after that.

"In the tradition of the ancient grammarians, the sources of 'literary' or 'classical' Arabic are perfectly clear and admit that they gave rise to both pre-Islamic poetry and Quran. But we have to correct thus the Muslim theory on an essential point. The language of the Quran is not based on the dialect of Mecca, but on the idiom of "pre-Islamic" poetry. The latter is a Koinè that extends over a vast geographical area, probably exceeding the limits of the Arabic area.... The Arabic of the Quran is therefore the one used by pre-Islamic poetry.....The Quran, repudiating this or that dialect in the strict sense of the term, has chosen, for a transmission that is both intelligible and noble, the language that was used by pre-Islamic poets, a kind of literary Koinè, may have originated as a dialect of a limited region, promoted in any case, even before Islam, to the rank of a poetic, common language, whose area of extension extends from central and eastern Arabia, very far north, to the steppe margins of Syria and Mesopotamia.... It is believed that nomadism made the passage of this language possible from one region to another, not only in the area of 'Arabiyya, but also as far as Syria and Mesopotamia, to the court of the Ghassanides in Damascus and that of the Lakhmides in Hira. It was used by the poets of the Hijaz (cf. the 7 mu'allaqat of the Kaaba) ...having received the assent of the Quran, this Arabic will become the classical or "literary" Arabic as it is called today » (Synergies n° 2 - 2009 pp. 63-78 Mansur Sayah, Rasha Najem, Henda Zaghwan-Dhawa) .

NOTES ON THE PURE ARABIC THAT WAS USED TO COMPOSE THE QURAN.

In this book written in pure Arabic from immemorial time, foreign words abound, especially from languages known as "oriental" languages: Aramaic, Hebrew, Ethiopian, Persian. There is also a significant number of terms from the Latin and Greek languages, therefore from the territories of the Byzantine Empire. This vocabulary is the result of the frequent trade exchanges which took place between these different cultures or civilizations. Mecca and Arabia are favored transit areas.

Obviously, such a presence, so manifest, is an unparalleled denial contradicting the inanity of the racist myth of the Quran written in "pure Arabic."

Greek vocabulary.

Diabolos (Devil)> IBLIS.

Drakhmè (drachma)> DARAHEM.

Euuangelia (Gospel)> INGIL.

Hodos (road)> HUDA (way of salvation).

Hyakinthos (Hyacinth)> YAQUT.

Kalamos (reed)> KALAM (stylus).

Khartès (paper)> QIRTAS (scroll of parchment).

Khronon (time)> QURUN (centuries).

Kleida (key)> MAQALID.
 Magos (magian, mazdean)> MAJUS.
 Margaritès (coral)> MARGAN.
 Pyrgos (tower, fort)> BURUJ.
 Rhegma (tear)> RAQIM (abyss).
 Sema (sign)> SIMIYA.
 Tekhnè (art)> ATQAN (making with art).
 Xestes (moderation)> QIST (equity).
 Xestes (measure)> QASTAS (measure).
 Ziggigeris (ginger)> ZANJABIL.
 Zographia (painting)> ZUKHRUF.
 Latin vocabulary.
 Camisia (skirt) > QAMIS.
 Castrum (castle) > QASR.
 Centenarium (one hundred pound weight)> QINTAR.
 Cupa (cup)> AKWABUN (krater).
 Denarius (denarius)> DINAR.
 Historia (History)> USTURA (legend, ancient history).
 Palatium (palace) > BALAD.
 Romani (Romans)> RUM.
 Sigillium (seal)> SIJJIL.
 Stratum (street)> SIRAT (way).

Important and structuring words for the Islamic religious perspective come from Hebrew, Aramaic and Syro-Aramaic, known as Syriac or even from Ethiopian and Persian. Words, certainly, and not least: Qur'an (Quran), salat (prayer), surah (chapter), jahannam (Gehenna) or firdaws (paradise) ... The word mushaf (codex), which will become usual for the Quranic corpus, is an Ethiopian word, already spotted as such by ancient Arab philologists, like many others that they called the "Arabized" terms of the Quran. The word tur (mountain) is a Syriac word. It is with it that two chapters (95 and 56) begin in the form of oaths evoking respectively the Sinai and the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. The word safara (scribes), which refers to the doctors of the earlier scriptures, is the Arabization of the Jewish Soferim (chapter 80: 15). "Qintar" (chapter 3: 14) is of Byzantine origin; "Suradiq" (18: 29 smoke-covering), of Persian origin, "sundus" (18: 31 silk), of Persian origin.

What would be surprising, besides in the use by Muhammad of words of foreign origin when we know that, through his trade he was in contact with various populations (Persians, Byzantines, Abyssinians, etc. .); and that borrowing of foreign words cannot be more common in the history of languages. To name ideas or concepts that have begun to penetrate the Arab world, it is natural that the original word should have been used. What contradicts somewhat, of course, and again, the coarse racist thesis that the language of God is pure Arabic. Such linguistic racism is as inadmissible as the notion of chosen people. What a crime against the Spirit! As if God needed any language to communicate with human beings.

That a man like Muhammad in his lifetime needed a definite language to communicate with other men is normal; but that God (a pure spirit or an angel) needs a language to be understood is an anthropomorphic insult to the omnipotence of the latter.

It is considered to be the first prose book of the Arabic language although most of the verses ("ayat" in Arabic) are written so that they form rhymes (the outer form of the chapters is reminiscent of the style of pagan soothsayers).

The Quran is in fact mostly written in verse and the requirements of the rules of Arabic poetry (cadence, assonance, alliteration, repetitions and returns of sentences); have doubtless repeatedly put in Muhammad's mouth words different from those he would spontaneously have used if there had not been this necessity.

The difficulty of understanding certain terms exactly has, of course, fueled many controversies and doubts.

It is in any case a language incapable of specifying whether the verbs are conjugated to the second or the third person, to the active or passive form.

Ibn Abbas: " If you read something in God's book that you do not understand, then look for it in the poetry of the Arabs, for poetry is the register of the Arabs." And he sometimes quoted a line of pre-Islamic poetry where this word had been used. The clear and accurate good Arabic that the Quran evokes (16 :103; 26 :195; 41 :44) is probably more an allusion to the "poetic koine" of classical Arabic poetry as it was used in Mecca (cf. the 7 mu'allaqat of the Kaaba); than the dialect of the tribe of Muhammad (the Quraysh) in the state where it existed at the beginning of the seventh century. It is the

Arabic of the Quran, with a vocabulary of great wealth, that gave rise to classical Arabic, not the opposite! This classical Arabic will end besides in ousting the koine of Arab pre-Islamic poetry itself. Exactly in the same way that Luther, through his translation of the Bible, contributed to the emergence of German.

Christoph Luxenberg is the pseudonym of a German philologist analyst of the Quran. He is the author of *Die Syro-Aramäische Lesart des Quran: Ein Beitrag zur Entschlüsselung der Koransprache* (Syro-Aramaic Reading of the Quran: a contribution to decode the language of the Quran), published in 2000. This is a philological study in which a certain number of hypotheses are gone over with a fine-tooth comb, from which it emerges that the sources of the Quran would come from the adoption of Syriac lectionaries destined to evangelize Arabia.

Using his methodology, which consists in verifying rigorously if the Arabic terms do not have a Syriac equivalent, Luxenberg indicates that certain Quranic passages are badly translated. The expression "seal of the prophets" would mean for example only "witness of the prophets."

The verses on the *houris* are particularly difficult to understand. The starting point of Muslim commentators is the meaning of the word *hourī*. *Houris* are the ladies of the night that the Muslim paradise puts in the sexual service of the happy few; and this conjecture is used as a guiding thread for putting diacritical marks and vowels, or for seeking on this basis the solution of all the problems of these verses.

The commentators, among whom the most respected by Muslims is Tabari, have had to deploy a wealth of subtlety or imagination to find, within the framework they chose, a meaning comprehensible for these verses; and even more so that the proposed meaning is coherent from one verse to another. Despite so much effort, the result is not particularly convincing.

Example: the *houris* are called "*kawā'eb* or inflated" (chapter 78, verse 33). Would that mean they are obese? It would be sad for the happy few. A conjecture of Muslim translator provides a solution: it is necessary to imply "with swollen breasts," which would mean that they have big breasts. The translators, embarrassed by this anatomical precision, translate "*hourī* with round breasts." But even this more decent expression shocks some. A new conjecture comes to solve the problem: as teenagers tend to have apple-shaped boobs, "swollen breasts" means "teenager breasts." Suddenly, the expression "*kawā'eb* or inflated *houris*" is translated for us most often by "teenager *houris*."

Christophe Luxenberg thinks that the word *hourī* of the Quran comes in reality from the Aramaic stem *hur*, which means bunch of grapes, or wine by metonymy. In the Muslim paradise, therefore, the wine, not the girls, that is "red like ruby, red like coral," and girls do not have wide white eyes, but bunches of grapes have big white grains. It's not the girls' breasts that are swollen, but the bunches that are swollen with juice. Wine and vineyards were, for the Judeo-Christians, symbols of eternal life, hence their eminent place in the description of paradise.

The details of Luxenberg's arguments are too complex to be summarized here. Let us remember that his research in Aramaic grammar and vocabulary solves a large part of the problems of these verses in a simple way; without having to imagine interpretations by allegories, or by ad hoc hypotheses about what might have been the dialect of Mecca or the Arabic in paradise; or still by explanations that claim that white means black, or by subtleties that lead to say that white means maidens, and swollen "teenager."

It remains to know why Muslim commentators chose to start from the Persian root, and imagined very specious arguments to justify later interpretations that may be consistent with this first choice. This produces the feeling that they were sex maniacs, preoccupied with what the Quran speaks about in their interpretation; the repeated virginity of the girls in paradise, the size of their breasts, their faithfulness to the one of the happy few to whom they are attributed, etc., all things very little worthy of a sacred book.

As for the date, the sexual interpretation of the term "*hourī*" is attested by the hadith reported by Bukhari, around 870; "One's sight is perplexed while looking at them and also because of the intense blackness of their irises and intense whiteness of the sclerotic coat of their eyes" (the book of Jihad, chapter 6); and by the commentary of Tabari, in 896. It was thus formed before these dates, during the period when the Quran, the doctrine and the history of the first Islam, were in a period of development. This interpretation is therefore late, almost three centuries after Muhammad.

This is at least Christophe Luxenberg's thesis that we deliver here to our readers, with all reservations. It is not up to us, barbarian druids of the West, to settle all these quarrels between specialists.

Because of the revolutionary nature of his theses, the author had to adopt a pseudonym to avoid clashes with fundamentalist Islamic factions, openly disagreeing with the fact that we can try this kind of scientific study of the Quran.

Luxenberg remarks that the Quran often presents a very ambiguous and sometimes inexplicable language. He says even Muslim scholars find some passages hard to understand and have written many comments to explain these difficult passages.

Luxenberg criticizes the Western academic world working on the Quran, for having a timid and over-literal approach to the text, approach too often based on the work of Muslims more exegetical than objective, and thus, often biased.

Luxenberg argues that scholars should start their studies again, by ignoring old Islamic commentaries and using only recent linguistic and historical methods. His argument is that Muhammad preached concepts that were new to his Arab listeners; these concepts, Muhammad himself would have found in conversations with Jewish and Christian Arabs, or via the Christians of Syria (if it is admitted that he traveled). So if a word (or sentence) of the Quran seems unintelligible in Arabic, or can only make sense after far-fetched conjectures; this word (or sentence) could make sense – Luxenberg says – by looking at the side of Aramaic and Syriac.

He also states that the Quran is based on earlier texts, especially on lectionaries used in Christian churches in Syria; and that it was the work of several generations to have adapted these texts, to produce the Quran that we know today.

At the beginning of the third century, the Christians of Syria did not content themselves with sending their evangelical missions to neighboring countries, such as Armenia or Persia. They went as far as the far reaches of China and the west coast of India, in addition to the entire Arabian Peninsula, as far as Yemen and Ethiopia. It is thus more likely that, in order to bring the Christian message to the Arab peoples, they have used, among other languages, the language of the Bedouins, that is, Arabic. In order to spread the Gospels, it was necessary to use a mixture of languages. But at a time when Arabic was a set of dialects that did not have a written form; the missionaries had no choice but to resort to their own literary language and culture, that is to Syro-Aramaic.

Luxenberg concludes from this work on the Quran that it is PARTIALLY derived from a Syrian-Aramaic lectionary, containing hymns and extracts from the Bible, used in Christian liturgical services. This lectionary would have been translated into Arabic, with a missionary intention. It was not a question of inaugurating a new religion, but of spreading an older one.

Luxenberg did not "correct" the entire Quran according to these theses. He bases his conclusions on what he believes to be a representative sample of difficult passages.

Luxenberg, for example, asserts, as we have seen above, that the passage from Sura 33, which is usually translated "seal of the prophets," in reality means "witness of the prophets." By this reading, Muhammad is no longer the greatest of the prophets, the one who closes the lineage, but only a witness of those prophets who came before him.

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. The Arab scholars, few in number, spoke in Arabic and wrote in Aramaic. The situation was comparable to that of Europe at the same time when the scholars spoke in their vernacular language but wrote in Latin. The difficulties of the Quran become clear one seeks meaning from Aramaic. The Quran is not written in pure Arabic, but in an Arabic language so full of Aramaic that, for example, English or German is full with Latin.

Nine verses of the Quran state that it is a clear book 1). This does not prevent a tenth verse from saying that the Quran contains ambiguous verses (sura 3 verse 7).

"He it is Who has revealed unto you the Scripture wherein are clear revelations - they are the mother of the Book - and others (which are) allegorical."

This translation, according to the Muslim tradition, is based only on Arabic texts. Using Aramaic stems, Christoph Luxenberg arrives at another result: "He it is who has sent the book down to you. Of it a part consists of precise verses which are quasi the Proto-Scripture itself, and a part of other writings which are alike in meanings to these."

The translation of Luxenberg thus lifts the contradiction. It is no longer a question of a clear book containing obscure verses, but of a book formed, on the one hand, of direct quotations, on the other hand, of paraphrases. And, in fact, in the current Quran, 90% of materials from the Torah or the Gospel are paraphrases, not precise quotes. This shows that "the mother of the book" (umm al kitab) is not an uncreated original co-eternal with God, the tablet of clay kept in the Heaven (lawh mahfuz), what is chronologically impossible, but the Torah and the Gospel; from which some Christians drew quotations and paraphrases to form a lectionary for the use of Arab converts.

The date of writing of the first lectionary

According to Muslim traditions, it was Uthman who, around 650, began to put together the Quran, by collecting makeshift notes taken by listeners of Muhammad.

But the first lectionary had to be composed much sooner. Waraka, Khadija's cousin, was the main translator of Judeo-Christian texts in Arabic, and Muhammad relied on these translations, since his proclamation stopped at the death of Waraka, according to some authors. Bukhari adds indeed this indication 2): " But after a few days Waraqa died and the Divine Inspiration was also paused for a while." We can thus deduce that the lectionary in question was formed by translations or paraphrases due to Waraqa.

This first lectionary, bearing the name "Quran," was formed during the lifetime of Muhammad, probably between 620 and 630. Then, after the death of Muhammad, when the Muslims wanted to erase the memory of their initiator Waraqa and to rely on purely Arab sacred book; they took as their base the existing lectionary and added to it various speeches by Muhammad, inciting to war, wrangling, or exhorting, and over time, many other elements. According to the number of Quranic verses from the Bible, the original lectionary had a volume of about a quarter of the current Quran.

The original lectionary was therefore changed in order to become the founding book of Islam. The process began during Uthman's Caliphate, but its realization was spread a little over two centuries, during which the rewriting of the Quran continued, as well as the destruction of discordant documents or the execution of annoying witnesses. The 14 Umayyad caliphs made perhaps the most, the first 10 Abbasid caliphs completed the work by destroying the last discordant documents. The quality of their concealment work is indicated by the fact that no original document dating from the first century after the death of Muhammad has survived, and almost none dating back to the second century.

1) Chapter 5, verse 15. Chapter 12, verse 1. Chapter 15, verse 1. Chapter 26, verse 2. Chapter 27, verse 1. Chapter 28, verse 2. Chapter 36, verse 69. Chapter 43, verse 2. Chapter 44, verse 2.

2) Al-Bukhari, Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 3.

THE PROBLEM OF TRANSLATIONS PRECISELY.

The will of the author (s) of the Quran was clear at the beginning: to be heard and understood by the inhabitants of Mecca or Yathrib / Medina, therefore by human beings; not by Martians or aliens.

Ha, Mim.

By the Scripture which makes plain,

Lo! We have appointed it a lecture, in Arabic that haply you may understand.

(Chapter 43 verses 2-3.)

A revelation in plain Arabic speech.

(Chapter 26 verse 195.)

The Quran was meant to be understood by the inhabitants of Mecca and Medina, and proclaiming it in Arabic was obviously the only way to succeed in doing that.

Conservative currents claim that the Quran can only exist in Arabic and that it cannot and must not be translated. This assertion is often felt as a desire for Arabization rather than Islamization by non-Arabic-speaking populations. In the same way, the sermon of the Friday prayer could only be done in Arabic. Faced with the obvious uselessness of making a speech in a language that nobody understands in the assembly, it was necessary to make a compromise. Imams make the same speech twice, a first in the vernacular language and, often in abbreviated form, a second in literary Arabic.

The Muslim tradition wants the Quran to be read and commented on in the language of the prophet.

This is not the case in practice, of course, since Muhammad himself spoke a dialect quite different from the language currently used for teaching the Quran. Muhammad spoke the dialect of Hedjaz and more precisely the Quraysh, a sub-dialect of the Arabic in Hejaz, while the Quran is written in classical or literary Arabic. In many parts of the world, however, imams and marabouts persist in making it learned by heart by young children who do not even know this language. They learn to recite it without understanding anything. In addition to the Quran, these young Muslims have to memorize and then recite an impressive amount of more or less historical or legendary stories and commentaries relating to Muhammad as well as Muslim traditions. Educationalists point out the disastrous effect of such an effort of memorization which, on the one hand, leaves little room for learning anything else and, on the other hand, is always performed, of course, at the expense of the critical thinking.

Imams and marabouts may comment on the text in their own way since their pupils are unable to translate the basic text themselves. In any case, only a tiny minority of scholars have sufficient mastery of seventh-century Arabic to be able to understand the Quran and grasp its subtleties.

If there are any nuances in the translations of the Quran, it is, as we have seen, because the archaic Arabic spoken by Muhammad was an imperfect language in terms of writing; and, therefore, subject to interpretations according to the translators. However, we must not too much take offense about these differences, which do not affect the overall meaning of the text.

In any case, the Quran does not include esoteric formulas such as certain biblical texts (for example the Revelation of John). It is not a "key text" or a story, but only a series of affirmations, exhortations, allusions to the Bible or the Gospels, prohibitions, descriptions, recommendations ...

During the lifetime of Muhammad Salman Farsi (the Persian) made a translation of the Fatiha, the first chapter, so that it can be used by his fellow countrymen during the prayer.

The fourth caliph's own brother, Jaafar Abu Talib, translated some verses about Jesus and Mary during his interview with the Negus (first or second emigration to Abyssinia).

A translation into Berber was made around 754 but it was got out circulation in order to Arabize North Africa. A more complete translation in Persian was made in 956.

A Latin translation dating from 1143 was published in 1543, just after the fall of Constantinople.

But it was the Turks who first decided to massively break the tradition by translating the Quran into their language.

At the time of the founding of the Republic, the Ankara government decided to translate the book into Turkish, in order to make it available to everyone.

The Quran has now been translated into almost every language.

Of course, in ours.

The English translations being by definition multiple given the international situation, there are, of course, of them some that are excellent, in any case largely sufficient for a researcher.

French translations are of variable quality. Many of those at which we have had the opportunity to look are poor.

Let's take an example.

It is written in the Quran in verse 68 of chapter 6 (according to the numbering of the translation of Albert de Biberstein-Kasimirski, which is authoritative for French speakers) in Arabic; as all the Muslims in the world learn to recite it by heart in Quranic schools:

"When you see people busy discussing our signs, get away from them until they discuss something else. The Demon may, of course, make you forget this prescription, but as soon as you remember it, do not sit in the company of these unjust ones. "

This verse infringes the laws aiming to suppress any racist, anti-Semitic or xenophobic act, and which clearly state that any discrimination or incitement to hatred based on membership or non-membership of an ethnic group, nation, race or religion , is prohibited; but the problem is elsewhere.

As far as I am concerned, I found at least four different translations of this verse, some of them very nebulous or somewhat sugarcoated . Traduttore traduttore is often said, others add that Satan has always had a sector reserved for translators in his infernal kingdom.

However, we must not quibble about these translation details since, in any case, we do not have the original texts. It is therefore the overall meaning of the verses that matters, not their literal translation. Generally, good translators have the reflex to indicate, by footnotes, the nuances that can exist between the literal translation and the usual meaning of certain words.

Nevertheless, we must warn our readers against the incredible blindness afflicting some of these translators, 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 his brain (even intelligent and educated men often have a field where instruction and intelligence cease to function); some translators find a way to derive from their reading of the Quran very surprising and paradoxical conclusions about God, and more specifically the God of Abraham of Isaac and Jacob.

N.B. Muslims who contest the studies of the Quran made by persons who, like us, do not speak Arabic, read the Quran in a translation, should refrain 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 have been indicated, "black eyed houris," "teenage houris," or "girls white as to the white part of their eyes." Muslims who believe they are reading a text proclaimed by Muhammad are in reality reading a conjectural translation into classical Arabic.

THE TEXT RESHUFFLES (BY BREAKING UP OR NOT OF EXISTING CHAPTERS).

According to the Muslim tradition, Archangel Gabriel dictated the sacred verses to Muhammad and told him where they should be inserted in this or that chapter of the Quran. Various scholars think that this legend was developed to legitimize a posteriori the obviously arbitrary composition work of the Quranic chapters, based on revealed texts which originally had a thematic unit.

Bell and Watt have carefully examined many amendments and revisions, and think that the irregularity of the Quranic style proves that there were a very large number of changes in the Quran.

Beside the points already noted (chopped rhymes, as well as use of non-woven rhymes in the framework of the passage) there are abrupt changes of rhyme as follows.

- Repetition of the same word or rhyming in neighboring verses.
- Intrusion of an accessory subject in a passage otherwise homogeneous.
- Treatment different of the same subject in neighboring verses, often with repetition of words or sentences.
- Breaks in grammatical constructions, which gives rise to difficulties in exegesis.
- Abrupt changes in the length of the verses.
- Sudden changes of the dramatic situation, with pronouns changes from the singular to the plural, from the second to the third person, and so on.
- Juxtaposition of passages of different dates, with the intrusion of sentences transferred within earlier verses.
- Juxtaposition of apparently contrary statements.

Example, the Pharaoh in his pursuit of the Hebrews. As we have already had the opportunity to see, he is saved in some verses 1), drowned in others 2). The change in the alleged facts shows that these strata were accumulated over a period of time long enough so that coherence could no longer be kept; presumably because of the death of the first writers or of the loss of their memory before the intervention of the following writers.

For the record the Christian Al-Kindi (full name Abu Yusuf Yaqub Ibn Ishaq al-Sabah al-Kindi, not to be confused with the Arab, Muslim philosopher, of the same name) writing around the year 830, criticized the Quran in the same terms, let's remind of it.

"The result of all this is patent to you who have read the Scriptures, and see how in your book histories are all jumbled together and intermingled; an evidence that many different hands have been at work therein, and caused discrepancies, adding to the text, or cutting out there from whatever they liked or disliked. Are such, now, the conditions of a Revelation sent down from heaven?" (Risalat al-Kindi.)

The longest chapters are probably artificial syntheses due to a long process of reflection from Muhammad in collaboration with his secretaries.

But conversely, the shorter chapters are likely to be part of those spontaneously come to the mind of Muhammad during his hallucinations, visions or revelations.

Unless, of course, they result from the dismemberment of longer chapters.

THE SHUFFLES DONE BY MUHAMMAD HIMSELF.

Some of the stories in the Quran are extremely long; for example, Joseph's story. An entire chapter of 111 verses. Is it really possible that Muhammad remembered it exactly as it had been revealed to him? Was the memory of his companions really so infallible? Did they always understand what he was saying?

One of the arguments often put forward by Muslims to explain their idolatry of the Quran is the almost perfect memory that would have had Muhammad or his companions.

This argument leaves us perplexed and we wonder if these Muslims really know their own tradition (the hadiths of the sunna).

Sahih Muslim Book 004, Number 1182.

"Ibn Sirin reported Abu Huraira as saying: The Messenger of God (may peace be upon him) led us in one of the two evening prayers, Zuhr or Asr, and gave salutations after two rak'ahs and going towards a piece of wood which was placed to the direction of the Qibla in the mosque, leaned on it looking as if he were angry. Abu Bakr and Umar were among the people and they were too afraid to speak to him and the people came out in haste (saying): The prayer has been shortened. But among them was a man called Dhu'l-Yadain who said: Messenger of God, has the prayer been shortened or have you forgotten? The Apostle of God (may peace be upon him) looked to the right and left and said: What was Dhu'l-Yadain saying? They said: He is right. You offered but two rak'ahs. He offered two (more) rak'ahs and gave salutation"

Sahih Muslim Book 004, Hadith Number 1720 and 1721.

"A'isha reported that the Apostle of God heard a person reciting the Quran at night. Upon this he said: May God show mercy to him; he has reminded me of such and such a verse which I had missed in such and such a chapter."

It is clear, therefore, that Muhammad had a normal and by no means infallible or extraordinary memory.

Sahih Bukhari volume 6, book 61, hadith 550.

Narrated Abdullah: the Prophet said, "It is a bad thing that some of you say, 'I have forgotten such-and-such verse of the Quran,' for indeed, he has been caused (by God) to forget it. So you must keep on reciting the Quran because it escapes from the hearts of men faster than camels do."

The Qur'an itself was (in principle) transcribed only after the death of Muhammad; but he was perhaps the first to shuffle it, as the affair of the satanic verses or of verses about the stoning for adultery tends towards proving it. Certain chapters in fact have probably been revised by Muhammad himself in order to take into account events LATER to their writing, or to update them.

THE STORY OF THE CRANES: THE QISSAT AL GHARANIQ (THE SATANIC VERSES) A PART OF THE QURAN DELETED BY MUHAMMAD HIMSELF.

The verses were recorded in early versions of the Quran (those that were destroyed by order of the Caliph Uthman), but were nevertheless the subject of an oral transmission within several "heretical" branches of Islam.

In addition to the verses of Mecca and the verses known as Medinan, there is indeed also a third category of verses, the verses later removed.

Particularly, the so-called satanic verses, because they were whispered by Satan disguised as Archangel Gabriel and not by Archangel Gabriel himself. Certain verses of the Quran indeed suggest that Satan could interfere in the process of divine revelation.

Chapter 22 verse 52. "Never sent We a messenger or a prophet before you but when He recited (the message) Satan proposed (opposition) in respect of that which he recited thereof. But God abolishes that which Satan proposes. Then God establishes his revelations. God is Knower, Wise."

These verses therefore admit that the Devil can whisper to the prophets some verses ... let us say criminal and seriously erroneous. Besides, Abraham himself did not, at times, for example, and to quote only him, be more inspired by the Devil than by God. In any case, this is what the Catholic authorities (Bishop Cauchon) have insinuated about Joan of Arc.

The commentary of this verse by Al-Tabari maintains that verses 19 and 20 of chapter 53 are what remains of the maneuvers of the great Satan.

19. Have you thought upon Al-Lat and Al-Uzza?

20. And Manat, the third, the other ?

(Editor's note: Al-Uzza and Manat were the main goddesses of pre-Islamic Arabia, they had their triple crane-shaped statue in the Kaaba and other sanctuaries, for example in Galatia??.)

The first version of the revelation received by Muhammad would have been the following.

- 19: Have you thought upon Al-Lat and Al-Uzza

- 20: And Manat, the third, the other?

- 20 a: they are exalted cranes (goddesses),

- 20 b: whose intercession is to be hoped for.

At the moment when Muhammad recited this, in the midst of the Kaaba, all, including his first faithful, would have prostrated themselves before the representation of the said goddesses; and it was only later that the Spirit of God revealed that these verses came not from him, but from Satan having taken his appearance. Editor's Note: In other words, and to make things simpler, the situation having changed, Muhammad himself retracted his statements.

The last two verses:

- 20 a: they are exalted goddesses,

- 20b: whose intercession is to be begged;

were therefore removed by Muhammad personally, despite the strong protests from the people in Mecca.

- 19: Have you thought upon Al-Lat and Al-Uzza?

- 20: And Manat the third, the other?

- 20 a: they are exalted goddesses,

- 20 b: whose intercession is to be hoped for.

These verses prove that Muhammad was at one time tempted to propose a compromise to the inhabitants of Mecca by accepting as intermediaries between God and men this triad of Arab goddesses: the daughters of God named Lat, Uzza and Manat.

These last two verses would have been removed by Muhammad himself who would have replaced them with the following verses, what change everything of courses: verses 23 to 28.

They are but names

Which you have named, you and your fathers,

For which God has revealed no warrant.

They follow but a guess.

Lo! it is those who disbelieve in the Hereafter

Who name the angels with the names of females.

These new verses scandalized the pious inhabitants of Mecca who then reproached Muhammad for saying anything. It is in any case what suggests irresistibly the beginning of the chapter (chapter 53 therefore) that begins in this way: "

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 [the spirit equated later

with archangel Gabriel] has taught him, One vigorous [the spirit equated subsequently with Gabriel] and he grew clear to view” etc. Then further
“The heart did not lie (in seeing) what it saw. Will you then dispute with him concerning what he sees ?”

53:13 And verily he saw him yet another time

Let's move on to the fact that the prophet swears by a star (like the last of the pagans) and that this chapter clearly indicates that the inhabitants of Mecca took him for a madman (an astray man) ...

It seems well understood that in the beginning Muhammad tried to win followers among the Quraysh by keeping, under the higher god God, the secondary divinities of the Meccan sanctuary ... The choice made at the time by Muhammad was besides not deprived with a certain relevance because these three cranes, like the corresponding druidic goddesses, Banuta, Eriu and Votala in Ireland, symbolized perhaps the sovereignty of the country.

The triad must be understood not as the mark of limited arithmetic abilities, but as a manifestation of the multiplicity as a notion subordinate to unity. Tripleness represents the totality (the past, the present, the future, the sky, the air and the earth, thesis, antithesis and synthesis, etc.).

OTHER EXAMPLES OF VERSES REMOVED OR CHANGED BY MUHAMMAD HIMSELF.

Chapter 33 ("al Ahzab") was originally, according to a long-standing tradition, much longer than the one we have today at our disposal.

It had to be reduced from one of its parts.

This passage was probably a long attack or diatribe against the Quraysh, become embarrassing or irrelevant after Muhammad's reconciliation with his tribe.

Chapter 3, on the other hand, offers us an example of an addition made by Muhammad himself.

The initial text preached the creation of the Ummah (in the city of Yathrib / Medina).

The first addition (verse 103) is intended to remind the Ansar allies of the agreement to create this Umma.

The second (verse 110) is intended to cheer the faithful up in the situation that was previous (or later) to the battle of Uhud (the defection of Jews in the fight against the coalition besieging the oasis).

Many verses dating from the period spent in Yathrib / Medina besides were also added to try to convince the Jews of the authenticity of the mission of Muhammad.

It is obvious that certain verses were not inspired like those that were revealed in the episodes of epilepsy of Muhammad; but were added knowingly, in full knowledge of the facts, without any supernatural inspiration, according to the circumstances of the prophet's life, in order to justify, for example, his extramarital love. See chapter 66 verses 1-5, following the discovery (by his legitimate wives) of his affair with the Coptic Christian slave called Mary.

Many of the revelations of the Muslim eternal Divine Truth are in fact strangely enough related to the limited practical problems that occurred in Muhammad's private life.

What is dramatic in all that is that things so serious, so decisive, for Mankind (two billion Muslims today) are not supposed to be mere human words, and therefore fallible; but words emanating from the very mouth of the Spirit of God, therefore valid everywhere and forever.

Three cases therefore.....:

- Either they are verses inserted after the death of Muhammad.
- Or it is verses inserted during the very life of Muhammad by himself, or at least with his agreement, but without any divine intervention.
- Or it is nevertheless horresco referens, verses revealed by the Spirit of God, but taking over ideas expressed by mere mortals whether Muhammad or some of the first Muslims.

Which, in this case, would throw a strange light on how was working the famous archangel (the Holy Spirit would say the Christians). Which, in this case, would throw a strange light on the way in which a divine message can be developed.

VERSES DUE TO MUHAMMAD'S CLOSE RELATIONS.

Certain verses in the Quran, of Persian style, would be the translation of Zoroastrian gathas, Muhammad in this case having dictated these texts precisely to a slave of Persian origin.

The role of the secretary scribes working for Muhammad will never be overemphasized. Tradition places great importance on the shaping of the Quran. A character like Abdallah ibn Abu Sahr, who will end up in apostatizing Islam, flattered himself even one day to have written "Most merciful" and "always forgiving" when Muhammad had dictated "full of wisdom" and "exalted in power."

Some of the verses in the Quran are therefore the result of reflections or remarks, not from God or from the Muslim Holy Spirit (later equated with Archangel Gabriel), but from followers of Muhammad such as Umar, Ali or Hamza.

Some hadiths are very clear about this.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 6 : Book 60: Number 10.

Umar said, "I agreed with God in three things," or , "My Lord agreed with me in three things." I said, 'O God's Apostle! Would that you took the station of Abraham as a place of prayer.' I also said, 'O God's Apostle! Good and bad persons visit you! Would that you ordered the Mothers of the believers to cover themselves with veils.' So the Divine Verses of Al-Hijab (i.e. veiling of the women) were revealed. Sahih Bukhari 6:60: 313..

Ibn Umar reported Umar as saying: My lord concurred with (my judgments) on three occasions. In case of the Station of Ibrahim, in case of the observance of veil and in case of the prisoners of Badr. No revelation was sent down about this subject until Umar spied on Muhammad's own wives. Why did Umar do this? How did he know (or at least suspect) it would be "successful"? Why does God about toilet privacy so much that he revealed a verse pertaining to all Muslim women that will ever live? How can the Quran be the text that was in existence since before the world began, if God is taking suggestions for its content from Muhammad's contemporaries? If Muhammad is just a messenger, relating God's word, why did Umar ask Muhammad for the hijab (veil) revelation? Why did he not just pray to God and ask directly?

A common apologetic for this is that God was waiting for Umar to do this so that the situational revelation could come down. However this is not mentioned anywhere, thus there is no evidence for it. Moreover, Umar confirms that he came up with the idea first and then God "agreed with him."

Verse 14 of chapter 23 (blessed be God, the best of creators) is also probably due to Omar. As well as verse 98 of chapter 2.

Ditto for verse 16 of chapter 24 (the adultery of Aisha the wife of the prophet). But others attribute this verse to Zayd, to Abu Ayub, or to a certain Sad Ibn Mu'adh.

Verse 140 of Chapter 3 is due to a woman who learned that Muhammad had escaped death at Uhud (battle of Uhud 624). And verse 144 to a man named Mus'ab ibn Umayr.

On the day of the battle of Uhud, he carried the Muslim banner when his right hand was cut off, he took the standard in his left hand, and said: Muhammad is but a messenger. Will it be that, when he dies or is slain, you will turn back on your heels ????His left hand was then also severed and as he held the standard between the stumps of his arms, and he repeated this word until his death. The words he repeated every time he was struck were later revealed to Muhammad and completed, and became verses of the Quran.

(VOLUNTARILY?) FORGOTTEN VERSES

According to one report by the son of the second caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab, the present text of the Quran would be incomplete since much of it would have disappeared.

Abdullah b. Umar indeed reportedly said, 'Let none of you say, "I have got the whole of the Quran." How does he know what all of it is? INDEED MUCH OF THE QURAN HAS GONE. Let him say instead, "I have got what has survived."' (Jalal al Din `Abdul Rahman b. Abi Bakr al Suyuti, al-Itqan fi'ulum al-Quran, Halabi, Cairo, 1935, Volume 2, p. 25).

The Shia mention three other Sunni sources which quote this particular hadith from Abdullah ibn Umar. Tafsir Dur e Manthur Volume 1, p. 106.

Tafsir Itqan (Urdu), Volume 2, p.64.

Tafsir Ruh al-Mani, Volume 1, p. 25.

Some Sunnis claim that this is not what Ibn Umar meant. They argue that the word "lost" which Ibn Umar used, namely 'zahab,' actually means abrogation. They claim that what Ibn Umar actually meant was that much of the Quran has been abrogated.

Unfortunately for them this explanation doesn't really address the issue but quite the reverse raises major theological problems.

In the first place, why did God bother revealing much of the heavenly Quran to Muhammad when he knew full well that he would end up removing them completely without a trace?

Second, the Quran claims God always replaces abrogated texts with similar or better ones: "None of Our revelations do We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, but We substitute something better or similar: Know you not that God Has power over all things?" (S. 2:106).

Third, Muslim scholars are undecided as to how many verses have actually been abrogated or replaced:

Can they be so kind as to point out all the verses which replaced these missing citations? Can they produce the exact list of abrogating passages of the Quran for every verse or chapter that has been expunged from the Quran?

The very existence of certain hadiths (like those about stoning) proves that there were some words of Muhammad also inspired by God or his Holy Spirit (Archangel Gabriel???), but not appearing in the current canon in the matter, the Uthman's codex. It is enough to be a little immersed in hadiths to immediately understand that the current canonical Quran (Osman's) differs from the original message;

if ever there was one (the speech of the Spirit that appeared to Muhammad during his visions indeed was likely to change significantly, and some of his verses could repeal others).

Sahih Muslim Volume 3, Book 5 No. 2286.

"Abu Harb b. Abu al-Aswad reported that Abu Musa al-Ash'ari sent for the reciters of Basra. They came to him and they were three hundred in number. They recited the Quran and he said: You are the best among the inhabitants of Basra, for you are the reciters among them. So continue to recite it. (But bear in mind) that your reciting for a long time may not harden your hearts as were hardened the hearts of those before you.

We used to recite a chapter which resembled in length and severity to the chapter al Bara'at [Editor's note. This is the chapter of repentance, chapter 9, also called Tawbah]. I have, however, forgotten it with the exception of this which I remember out of it:" If there were two valleys full of riches, for the son of Adam, he would long for a third valley, and nothing would fill the stomach of the son of Adam but dust."

And we used so recite a chapter which resembled one of the surahs of Musabbihat *, and I have forgotten it, but remember (this much) out of it:" Oh people who believe, why do you say that which you do not practice" (chapter 61 verse 2 in the present Quran) and" that is recorded in your necks as a witness (against you) and you would be asked about it on the Day of Resurrection" (chapter 17 verse 13 of the present Quran).

This hadith mentions therefore a verse referring to "two valleys full of riches" and found in a chapter, which, in terms of its length, was similar to the chapter al Bara'at (At-Tawbah).

Now there is no chapter in the current Quranic canon containing a verse proclaiming: "If there were two valleys full of riches for the son of Adam, he would long for a third, etc., etc. ". This implies that there is no such chapter in Uthman's codex.

Another problem. This hadith (Hadith No. 2286 of Book 5 of Sahih Muslim) states that a chapter of mussabbihat * type would contain the following verses:

" Oh people who believe, why do you say that which you do not practice" and" that is recorded in your necks as a witness (against you) and you would be asked about it on the Day of Resurrection."

We find, certainly, the first verse, in chapter 61, 2 of the current Quran, and the second verse in chapter 17, 13, but there is no chapter of the current Quran including these two verses at the same time.

It therefore means that in Uthman's codex (which is the current canon of Islam) some chapters have been dismembered that some verses have been disjointed; to be inserted in places other than where they were originally; or then that a chapter is still missing.

Sahih Muslim. Volume 2 Book 4, Hadith No. 1433.

"God the Exalted and Great revealed (a verse) regarding those who were killed at Bi'r Ma'una, and we recited it, till it was abrogated later on, and the verse was like this: convey to it our people the tidings that we have met our Lord, and He was pleased with us and we were pleased with Him" (Anas ben Malik).

Another verse being no longer part of the current canon of Islam.

Sahih Muslim. Book 8, Hadith No. 3421.

" Aisha reported that it had been revealed in the Holy Quran that ten clear sucklings foster brothers and sisters and make the marriage unlawful, then it was abrogated (and substituted) by five sucklings and God's Apostle died and it was before that time (found) in the Holy Qur'an".

Aisha told us that it had been revealed in the Holy Quran that ten feedings of breast milk were enough to make siblings (of milk) and to forbid a marriage; then this verse was repealed and replaced by another verse referring to only five breastfeeding feedings. Then the Apostle of God died, but that was what was in his time in the holy Quran.

The problem is that neither of these verses is in the current Quran.

Sahih Muslim Book 004, Number 1316:

"Abu Yunus, the freed slave of A'isha said: A'isha ordered me to transcribe a copy of the Quran for her and said: When you reach this verse:" Guard the prayers and the middle prayer" (2 : 238), inform me; so when I reached it, I informed her and she gave me dictation (like this): Guard the prayers and the middle prayer and the afternoon prayer, and stand up truly obedient to God. A'isha said: This is how I have heard from God's Messenger (may peace be upon him)".

This hadith therefore preserved us the original state of the verse on the prayers (salats) of the time of Muhammad. "Guard the prayers and the middle prayer and afternoon prayer, and stand up truly obedient to God" and so on. But in the current canonical text (chapter 2: 238), this afternoon prayer, Salat Al Asr, is not mentioned.

This proves once again that words, verses, or entire chapters are missing in today's Quran.

Another authority regarding The Quran, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud.

There is no chapter revealed in God's Book but I know at what place it was revealed; and there is no Verse revealed in God's Book but I know about whom (Sahih Bukhari, volume 6, Book 61, No. 524). But Ibn Mas'ud also omits three chapters nevertheless appearing in the current canon.

The first is the Fatiha. Massoud regarded it as a simple prayer, not a chapter, but the last two are chapters 113 and 114.

As for the Fatiha, Ibn Mas'ud is right, since the Quranic text itself distinguishes this fatiha from the Quran itself. Chapter 15 verse 87: We have given you seven of the oft repeated (verses) and the great Quran.

More "annoying" is the fact that Mas'ud did not keep the last two chapters (113 and 114).

According to Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (see his commentary on Sahih Al-Bukhari), Mas'ud would not have included these chapters in his Quran; for Muhammad himself would have considered them only as incantations (some loricis in a way, St. Patrick could have said).

According to As-Suyuti (Al-Itqan fi Ulum al Quran, p. 186) Mas'ud would not have included these chapters in his Quran; for in his eyes nothing was to appear in the mushaf (the text of the created or earthly Quran) without the prophet's express order ... and he had not heard that it had ever been ordered.

Some Shi'ites anyway have in their Quran two more chapters, the chapters entitled al-Walaya (the saintly) and an-Nourayn; chapters which, according to them, originally appeared in the text, but would have been subsequently excluded in order to harm the son-in-law of the prophet, Ali.

Chapter of the saintly (al Wailaya).

" Believe in the prophet and the wali which we sent, they will guide you to the straight path.

A prophet and a wali (belong to) each other, and I am the all-knowing, the experienced.

Those who do (obey) God's covenant they (deserve) comforting paradises.

And those who if it read to them our verses, they contradict it.

They have a great place in Hell, if they called in the day of judgment: where is the unfair, the contradictory for the messengers ?!

But he has really and truly commissioned them, God will give them victory in the near future. Glorify the praises of your Lord, Ali is one of these witnesses.

This chapter of the Quran is mentioned in the book Dabistan i Mazahib written in Farsi (Persian) in the 17th century. This book has been printed many times in Iran. Its Sunni accusers claim that they are fakes of Zoroastrian origin.

To conclude on the question of the missing verses from the Quran, let us turn to Arthur Jeffery quoting Abu Ubaid Qasim bin Salam (770-838) and his book Kitab Fada'il al-Quran).

On Verses Missing from the Quran (The Muslim World, Vol. 28, p. 62). That a great many quite genuine proclamations, however, could no longer be included in the Quran, is certain.

Abu Ubaid al-Qasim b. Sallam (770-838), who studied under the famous masters of both the Kufan and the Basran schools, was the son of a Greek slave, and though born on the outskirts of the Muslim empire, became a famous teacher at Baghdad, renowned equally a philologist, a jurist, and an authority on the Quranic sciences. By reason of his early date and the reputation he had in the eyes of later writers, his chapter on the missing verses of the Quran therefore merits translation here.....

Ibn Abi Maryam related to us...from A'isha who said, "chapter Al-Ahzab (33) used to be recited in the time of the Prophet with two hundred verses, but when 'Uthman wrote out the codices he was unable to procure more of it than there is in it today."

Isma'il b. Ibrahim and Isma'i b. Ja'far related to us....Ubai b. Ka'b said to me, "O Zirr, how many verses did you count (or how many verses did you read) in Surat al-Ahzab?" "Seventy-two or seventy-three," I answered. Said he, "Yet it used to be equal in length to Surat al-Baqara (2), and we used to read in it the Verse of Stoning." Said I, "And what is the Verse of Stoning?" He said, "If a grown man and woman commit adultery, stone them without hesitation, as a warning from God, for God is mighty, wise.

'Abdallah b. Salih related to usthat Khaliya said—The Apostle used to recite to us the Verse of Stoning, "If a grown man and woman commit adultery, stone them unhesitatingly as a reward for their (illicit) enjoyment."

Hashim related to us—I heard az-Zuhri said....Umar was preaching and said, "Some people say, 'What is this about the stoning? There is nothing in God's book except a scourging,' whereas the Apostle stoned and we stoned with him. By God, were it not that people might say that Umar had added something to God's book, I would have written it in just as it was revealed."

Hashim related to us....that Umar said—"I indeed wanted to write on the margin of the codex: Umar b. al-Khattab and Abd ar-Rahman b. Auf bear witness that the Apostle of God stoned and we also stoned."

'Abdallah b. Salih related to u.....from Abu Waqid al-Laithi who said, "When the Apostle of God had a revelation we would come to him and he would repeat to us what had been revealed to him. One day I came to him and he said, God blessed and exalted be : "We have sent down wealth for the performance of prayer and the giving of alms, but if the man had a valley (full of wealth) he would want a second, and if he had a second he would want to add a third to them. Nothing indeed will really fill man's belly save the dust.

Hajjaj related to us...I heard the Apostle of God say the like of this, but I do not know whether it is Quran or not."

Said Abu 'Ubayd: These huruf that we have mentioned in these passages are among the extras, which the savants did not hand down, saying that they are similar to what is between the covers (of the Quran), because they used to recite them during prayers. Thus they did not consider as an unbeliever anyone who rejected them, even though they were recited in prayer, for they only passed judgment of unbelief against anyone who rejected what was between the covers, for that is what was in the Imam which Uthman caused to be written out with the approval of the Muhajirun and the Ansar. In short, a hundred verses would have been removed: the "satanic verses" as we have seen, but also, for example, verses ordering stoning for adultery and some others.

Muslim orthodoxy, however, maintains that the Quran of Uthman contains all the revelations delivered to the community, preserved faithfully, without change or variation, and that the acceptance of Uthman's canon was universal as soon as it was distributed.

* Mussabbihat chapters. Group of 5 chapters starting in the same way, chapters 57, 59, 61, 62, and 64.

**OTHER REALLY SATANIC VERSE THAT ONE, BUT ALSO REMOVED FROM THE QURAN HAPPILY:
THAT WHICH HAD BEEN REVEALED ON THE STONING.**

There was in the beginning in the Quran, at some point (divine) verses commanding the stoning of adulterers. It remains the memory of them in some hadiths.

Sahih Bukhari. Volume 8, Book 82, Hadith N° 817.

"Among what God revealed was the verse of the rajam (the stoning of married person (male & female) who commits illegal sexual intercourse, and we did recite this verse and understood and memorized it. God's Apostle did carry out the punishment of stoning and so did we after him. I am afraid that after a long time has passed, somebody will say, 'By God, we do not find the Verse of the rajam (stoning) in God's Book,' and thus they will go astray by leaving an obligation which God has revealed. And the punishment of the rajam or stoning is to be inflicted to any married person (male & female), who commits illegal sexual intercourse, if the required evidence is available or there is a conception or confession. And then we used to recite among the Verses in God's Book: 'Do not claim to be the offspring of other than your fathers, as it is disbelief or unthankfulness on your part that you claim to be the offspring of other than your real father, etc.'

This hadith therefore mentions a verse (about stoning), which is not in the current canonical Quran.

Sahih Muslim Book 017, Number 4206.

"The Holy Prophet entrusted the child to one of the Muslims and then pronounced punishment. And she was put in a ditch up to her chest and he commanded people and they stoned her. Khalid b Walid came forward with a stone which he flung at her head and there spurted blood on the face of Khalid and so he abused her. God's Apostle (may peace be upon him) heard his (Khalid's) curse that he had hurled upon the unhappy wretch woman. He said to Khalid, " be gentle. By Him in Whose Hand is my life, she has made such a repentance that even if a wrongful tax collector were to repent, he would have been forgiven. Then giving command regarding her, he prayed over her and she was buried." According to Sharia the stone shall not be so big so as to kill the person by one or two strikes, neither shall it be so small that it cannot be called a stone.

Thank God, this verse on stoning because of adultery, infinitely more satanic than the one that was received from the Devil about the goddesses and which was the talk of the Muslim town; no longer appears in the current canonical text of the Quran, stoning having been replaced by flogging. However, it is nevertheless, alas, still applied by many defenders of the Sharia law.

The former Catholic first in catechism that I am, will nevertheless point out that the attitude of the character of the four Gospels called Jesus, nevertheless shows infinitely more magnanimity about the adulterous woman, and this magnanimity can be summarized in a few words :

- Let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone (without comment)!

- Go and sin no more! (the Nazarene does not approve of the behavior of this woman to the point of advising him to continue, he reaffirms that in his eyes there was sin);

- but, back to square one: Let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone (without comment).

At least there is here really a religion of love, of so great a moral elevation that we may wonder if it is really well a traditional Jewish circle that this logion could have appeared. The least that can be said indeed is that it is not very orthodox (end of the tafsir on this subject of Peter DeLaCrau , deliberately repeated here).

VERSES ADDED LATER.

Conclusion : early Muslim scholars were more flexible than those of today particularly among Sunni and realized that entire parts of the Quran were lost, perverted, or that there were several thousand variants making it impossible to speak of a single Quran.

But if we admit that there were omissions, then why not additions? The authenticity of many verses in the Quran has been questioned by the Muslims themselves. Many Kharijites, that is Ali's disciples in the early days of Islam, found, for example, that the chapter relating Joseph's story (sura 12) was an offensive and non-Quranic erotic tale.

Once again we are facing the conjecture that there was a kind of reservoir of Judeo-Christian texts, dating back to the origins, in which the editors drew to add verses according to the necessities of the moment. Such a reservoir, formed at a time when God was not yet considered the direct author of the Quran, was not written in such a way as to present God as the speaker of these proclamations. The drafters of the various strata of the Quran drew in it some of their materials.

Most scholars believe that there have been interpolations in the Quran.

Some of these interpolations are innocent enough and have only been added to help understand some rare words that need explanation.

More serious are the interpolations of a dogmatic or political nature, which seem to have been added to justify the elevation of Uthman to the rank of caliph instead of Ali. But there are also some verses that have been added in the interest of the rhyme, or to link together unrelated short passages.

The Quran has been reworked by the successors of Muhammad.

Since it is not impossible that some verses were introduced into the Quran by the caliph Uthman; it is therefore probably from this epoch that dates the addition to the original text, in chapter 75, of verses 16 and following ones, since they speak of reading and not of recitation.

"Stir not your tongue herewith to hasten it. Lo! upon Us (rests) the putting together thereof and the reading thereof."

These verses can in no way be the transcription of what Muhammad could have said since we know that his "revelations" formed a merely oral teaching.

It is therefore not possible that Muhammad in his lifetime could speak of "reading the Quran," and these verses of chapter 75, like others, can only be apocryphal.

Only the mention, "Stir not your tongue by reciting the Quran ..." Could be acceptable here, not that which involves the reading of a book that did not exist during the lifetime of Muhammad.

Same thing for verse 23 of chapter 39.

"God has (now) revealed the fairest of statements, a Scripture consistent, paired, at which does creep the flesh of those who fear their Lord, so that etc.etc. "

It is not impossible that this verse is also apocryphal (for example to justify, a posteriori, the many repetitions peppering the Quran).

And it is undoubtedly also from this period that date the legends hadiths or others, recounting the various miracles that affected the life of Muhammad.

Notably, of course, his lightning trip on a fantastic mount with a woman's face and with wings, from the "Holy Mosque" in Mecca, to the "Farthest Mosque" of Al Aqsa, or "Heavenly Mosque."

But also chapter 94. When he was six years old, Muhammad was "visited" by two angels who would have opened his chest to purify his heart, before putting it back in place, clean from all defilement.

And chapter 9 verse 40. Muhammad hiding in a cave to flee the Meccans while going to Yathrib / Medina, a cobweb woven just after the passage of Muhammad makes the pursuers believe that nobody could pass at this place recently.

These interpolations are additions to the original text due to "pious" hands, as they say in Christianity, to characterize his innumerable hare-brained ideas, about some martyrs like the seven Sleepers of Ephesus, and even the apostles or their prophet Issa.

Unless, of course, these verses are really from the very mouth of the Spirit of God that appeared to Muhammad, a hypothesis that cannot be excluded with certainty when one is a believer.

What about verse 16 of chapter 64 (the mutual disillusion)? What is it doing in a chapter supposed to have been revealed in Mecca?

These verses may well have been dictated by Abu Bakr, Umar or Uthman.

The dating of the strata of the Quran.

As we have had the opportunity to see it, the very first stratum, bearing the name of Quran, is the lectionary formed during the lifetime of Muhammad, before 632, therefore, from translations or paraphrases of the Torah and the Gospel. It forms about a quarter of the current Quran.

About half of the current Quran is speeches collected by Uthman around 650, but spoken by Muhammad before his death in 632.

The verses that include the words Islam or Muslims date from after 691, because these words were introduced when these terms were created to replace those of mahgraye or muhajirun.

The interpolations that insert Muhammad into the Quran date from the time when Muhammad became a prophet, so anyway after 686, date of the earliest mention of the prophetic role of Muhammad; and probably much later, because around 720 his prophetic part was still not universally accepted in the lands of Islam 1). For the same reason, it is necessary to date from this epoch the verse which makes him a model to imitate, and those which precisely describe the acts that must be imitated; the marriage with the wife of his adopted son, the part of booty which comes down to Muhammad, and which then comes down to the caliph since the latter imitates Muhammad, the change of qibla, etc.

The 300 and some "say! Were added between 800 and 827.

The 100 and some verses where the "say! " are missing have (perhaps) been inserted after 827 and before the final fixation of the Quran, which occurred around 850.

The privileges mentioned by some verses of the Quran or some hadiths.

The Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs practiced the appropriation of booty, attributed themselves innumerable concubines, prepubescent wives, and even the wives of their own sons. How to justify such acts? There is a good solution. One verse of the Quran states that the Prophet is a model for all times and all men.

All that Muhammad did in these conditions is therefore good and must be imitated. It is therefore sufficient to invent a hadith or a verse in the Quran saying that Muhammad himself did so, so that the duty of imitation would lead the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, then their court, then all Muslims, to act in the same way. It is significant that the verses that order Muhammad to take for himself Zaynab, the wife of his adopted son Zayd 2), declare that Muhammad must seize this woman so that future generations will know that such an act is allowed) . The Caliphs' stranglehold on the text of the Quran led them to perhaps attribute to Muhammad some questionable acts that he may not have achieved.

1). As Hela Wardi at the Tunis El Manar University (the last days of Muhammad) has shown, the almost idolatry surrounding the person of Muhammad is obviously very late. The oldest papyri and epigraphic researches in the history of Islam, which have made considerable progress these recent years, give sometimes spectacular information in this direction. The study of the first graffiti of Islam shows that the name of Muhammad does not appear on any of the oldest writings that have been discovered in Arabia. The oldest mention dates from the year 121 of the Hegira, 738-739 CE, and appears in a prayer that combines him with Abraham: Amin rabb Muhammad wa Ibrahim (Amen, Lord of Muhammad and Abraham). Moreover, in the oldest documents on papyrus, it is attested that the first accounts date at least from the beginning of the eighth century. Only a papyrus fragment of eight lines dating from this period has reached us; in this document found in Khirbat al-Mird (northwest of the Dead Sea) and containing some details about the Battle of Badr (first victory of the Muslims against the "disbelievers" of Mecca in 624), the name of Muhammad is mentioned twice but, strange fact, it is not accompanied by the usual blessing expression: Salla llahu alayhi wa sallam (May the prayers and praises of God be with him).

For Hela Wardi it proves that the person of Muhammad himself was far from being idolized by the first generations of Muslims like Umar Uthman or Mu'awiya. To be convinced, it is enough to observe the treatment suffered by his direct descendants who are all dead assassinated in obscure conditions.

For Hela Wardi this situation would even explain by contrast the obsession of blasphemy among Muslims today. For her it is this feeling of guilt strongly implanted in the historical inconceivable one of the Muslims that would explain the outburst of passion that still arouses the slightest attack against this icon or idealized image.

2) Chapter 33, verse 37.

THE VARIANTS OF QURAN.

Despite the order given by Uthman to destroy all texts other than his, it is obvious that the other codices survived. As Charles J. Adams says, it must be emphasized that far from being a single text transmitted as it has been since the time of Muhammad; they are literally thousands of different readings of particular verses that were known during the first three centuries of the Muslim era. These variants even affected the Uthmanian codex, making it difficult to know what its original form was. Some Muslims have long preferred versions other than that of Uthman, for example, those of Abu Musa, Abd Allah Ibn Mas'ud, or Ubbay ibn Ka'b.

Ibn Warraq the origins of the Quran.

Major questions needing answers include:

- 1.How did the Quran come to us? [compilation and transmission]
- 2.When was it written and who wrote it?
- 3.What are the sources of the Quran? [the origin of stories, legends, and principles]
- 4.What is the Quran? [How do we determine authenticity?]

During the fourth Islamic century, three books were written by Ibn al-Anbari, Ibn Ashta, and Ibn Abi Dawud, each entitled Kitab al-Masahif, and each discussing then what was known of the missing codices. The former two are lost to us and known only in quotation; the third has survived.

Ibn Abi Dawud is the third most important Hadith collector. He refers to fifteen primary codices and thirteen secondary codices (the later were mostly based on Mas'uds primary codex).

-Codex of Ibn Mas'ud (d. 33) (pp. 126-129)

Ibn Mas'ud was an early convert. He participated in the exile to Abyssinia and Medina, was present at the battles of Badr and Uhud in 624 and 625, was a personal servant of Muhammad, and learned seventy suras from the very mouth of Muhammad. He was one of the earliest teachers of Islam, and was commended by Muhammad himself for his knowledge of the Quran.

He produced a codex that was used in Kufa, and many copies were made of it. He indignantly refused to give his codex up because he argued it was more accurate than Zaid ibn Thabit's. His codex did not include chapters 1, 113, and 114. He did not consider them a part of the Quran though he knew of them and offered variant readings of them. The order of his chapters was also different from that of Uthman's official codex.

-Codex of Ubai B. Ka'b (d. 29 or 34) (pp. 129-131)

Ibn Ka'b was one of the Ansar (Muslim of Medina and not come from Mecca). He was one of the secretaries of Muhammad in Medina and is said to have been one of the four instructors commended by Muhammad. His codex was dominant in Syria even after standardization. He appears to have been involved with the creation of Uthman's text, but tradition is garbled as to exactly how. He seems to have known the same number of suras as the authorized version, though the order is different. His personal codex never attained the popularity of that of Ibn Mas'ud's and it was destroyed early by Uthman.

-Codex of Ali (d. 40) (pp. 132-134)

Ali was Muhammad's son-in-law and supposedly began compiling a codex immediately upon his death. He was so engrossed in the task that he neglected to swear fealty to Abu Bakr. Some say he had access to a "hidden" store of Quranic materials. Ali's chapters divisions were very different from Uthman's so it is difficult to tell if material was missing or added. Ali supported nevertheless Uthman's recension and burned his own codex. It is hard to know if the variants ascribed to Ali's Quran concerned the original text or were in fact due to his interpretations of Uthman's codex.

We know very well that the many variations we have discussed above do not change much in the general lines of Muhammad's message.

What they prove by cons, if it was necessary, is that the current canon (the Quran of Uthman) IN NO CASE CAN IT BE THE EXACT GOD'S WORD (IF HE EXISTS).

In any case, we do not see why Arabic would be the mother tongue of God from time immemorial. God, if he exists, does not need a particular language to communicate with human beings, and men who relay his message can, and even have to do it, in all kinds of languages. This idea of an uncreated Quran, which has always existed only in the Arabic language, is a dangerous racist madness (a psychosis a neurosis would say the Mu'tazili???) that is quite comparable to the mortal notion of chosen people in Judaism. Both have been true cultural disasters for Mankind.

Whatever the fanatics of Islam say (fundamentalism make stupid), there have been variations or interpolations in the text of the Quran. Al Baidawi points out some of them in his commentary on the following passages: chapters 3: 100; 6 : 91; 19 : 35; 28 : 48; and 33 : 6.

Muhammad Hamidullah classifies these variations into four groups:

1. Variations caused by a scribe who makes an error while copying. Naturally, these are easy to find by comparing with other copies.

2. Variations caused by someone writing notes of explanation in the margin. "The style of the Quran was such that sometimes even the companions of the Prophet had to ask him for explanations. Sometimes they noted these explanations in the margin of their personal copies in order to not forget them. It is completely understandable that sometimes the scribe mixed the text and the commentary while trying to faithfully make a new copy from an old one. We know of the famous order of Omar, who categorically forbid the adding of commentary to copies of the Quran.

3. Variations caused by the permission originally given by Muhammad to recite the Quran in other dialects than that used by the people of Mecca.

Muhammad indeed tolerated some dialectical variations even for the text of the Quran. He said willingly, 'Gabriel permitted me to have up to seven different readings.' While guarding for himself and his fellow citizens a certain reading, he permitted the members of different tribes to replace certain words by their equivalents---better known in their tribe.

Later, when the Meccan dialect prevailed in the next generation, the Caliph Uthman found it useful to order the renunciation to the differences authorized by Muhammad himself, because, says Tabari, they were not obligatory, but only permitted. So there were copies made by men living in "outer areas" and kept by their descendants. "

4. Variations coming from the fact that for the first 150 to 200 years of Islam, the hand-written copies of the Quran were written without vowel marks, and without dots to distinguish between different letters written in the same way.

The differences between Ubai's codex, Ibn Mas'ud's codex, and Uthman's codex (which is the current canon for the Quranic message) also concern the content of the chapters.

Some examples.

Chapter 5 verse 89: current canonical text: "A fast of three days."

Ibn Mas'ud's version: "A fast of three SUCCESSIVE days ."

Chapter 6 verse 153: current canonical text: "This is my righteous way" (Wa anna haathaa siraatii).

Ibn Mas'ud's version: "This is the way of your Lord" (Wa haathaa siraatu rabbakum).

Chapter 33 verse 6: current canonical text: "The prophet is closer to believers than they are to each other and his wives are their mothers ."

Ibn Mas'ud's version: "The prophet is closer to the believers than they are to each other; he is their father and his wives are their mothers ."

Ubai's version : "The prophet is closer to the believers than they are to each other, he is a father for them and his wives are their mothers."

The qualifier "father" attributed to Muhammad himself is absent from the canonical Quran of Osman, but present in the Quran of Ibn Mas'ud and Ubai B. Ka'b .

There are hundreds of variant readings of this type. The information concerning this type of variant given by the classical authors is sometimes contradictory---some saying that the Quran of so-and-so had a certain addition---others denying it.

It is evident that the Quran was written only under Caliph Abd al-Malik (685 - 705) in Damascus at the dawn of the eighth century. When Islam has become a civilization of writing. With the Umayyads, Muhammad's religion turns into another world. It accompanies the development of a state in which writing becomes predominant. A "Muslim Quran" is thus put in writing, from fragments of orality preserved in the memories. The Muslim tradition, in the following centuries, will cover with a wealth of detail the origins of Islam, and will reconstruct a fictitious past. If we take for example the figure of angel Gabriel, the messenger of the revelation, so present in the post-Quranic tradition, we find that it is in fact almost absent from the Quran. It is the subject of only three mentions and, moreover, in late passages.

Under the influence of the great Quranic scholar Abu Bakr Ibn Mujahid (died in 936), there was then a definitive codification of the consonant system; and a limit imposed on the variations of the vowels used in the text, the result of which was the acceptance of only seven different systems. But other scholars accepted ten readings, and others twelve or fourteen.

Some of these "later" readings present significant divergences from the official interpretation. Just goes to show, the "word of God" is far from being heard in the same way by all Muslims.

The seven systems proposed by Ibn Mujahid offered fourteen possibilities, since each of the seven readings was traced through two different transmitters, that is to say:

1 Nafi of Medina according to Warsh and Qalun.

2 Ibn Kathir of Mecca according to al-Bazzi and Qunbul.

3 Ibn Amir of Damascus according to Hisham and Ibn Dakwan.

4 Abu Amr of Basra according to al-Duri and al-Susi.

5 Asim of Kufa according to Hafs and Abu Bakr.

6 Hamza of Kufa according to Khalaf and Khallad.

7 Al Kisai of Kufa according to al Duri and Abul Harith.

In other words, seven versions (slightly different depending on the vocalization or punctuation systems selected), but these minor differences obviously led to significant differences of interpretation between schools.

They kept for a long time a certain primacy, because they diverged only on aspects judged "secondary" by the caliphs.

Finally, three systems prevailed, that of Warsh (died in 812) going back to Nafi of Medina, that of Hafs (died in 805) going back to the named Asim of Kufa, and that of al-Duri (died in 860) going back to the named Abu Amr of Basra. In modern Islam, two versions seem to be in use: that of Asim of Kufa, through Hafs, which was given a kind of almost official seal because of its adoption by the Egyptian edition of the Quran at the beginning of the 20th century (the Cairo edition); and that of Nafi after Warsh, which is in use in parts of Africa other than Egypt.

The first official version of the Quran would therefore date from the Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik, because it would have much more consisted of a simple homogenization of the spelling under the rule of al-Hajjaj, governor of Iraq. The division into chapters (suras) and the titles of the chapter date probably from that period.

John Wansbrough also thinks that the Quran was not completed (at least in its final form) before the ninth century. The derivation of Islamic law from the scriptures was a phenomenon of the ninth century. Wansbrough therefore thinks that the Quran is rather the product of an organic development of originally independent traditions during a long period of transmission.

If there are currently variants in the text, they concern only the vowels and come from "readers" who pronounced differently; since the diacritical or distinctive points and the short vowels or the vowel signs were invented only after the beginning of the preaching of Muhammad.

Despite the homogenization of the spelling carried out at the initiative of the governor of Iraq, al-Hajjaj, during the reign of the caliph Abd al-Malik, quarrels over the authenticity of the text calmed only in the tenth century, after various schisms and massacres. The Shiites, the most important divergence within Islam, still believe that the verses concerning Ali were suppressed by the men of the usurping caliph ...

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QURAN AND HISTORY OF THE BEGINNINGS OF ISLAM.

The study of the Quran itself shows us that this book is a corpus, a compilation of fragmentary and often heterogeneous traditions; some of which may be old, but others bear the mark of its editorial history, far beyond the Caliphate of Uthman.

The name of Muhammad appears only four times in the Quran: twice to affirm that he is the envoy of God, once to say that the Quran "descended" on him; and once to say, in a particular context concerning an allusion to one of his contested marriages, that he is the seal of the prophets. This is the only case where, next to Muhammad, appears the name of one of his companions, Zayd. Apart from this Zayd, of which we will also hear elsewhere than in the Quran; nothing is said in this one about the great historical "Companions" appearing in any biography of Muhammad as being, by his side, some kind of co-founders of Islam: Abu Bakr, Omar, Uthman, Ali, and many others. Nothing about those who would have been his scribes, his intimates. Many times, it is referring to some of his wives, but in a very circumvented way, without a name being ever given. If we had to rely only on the Quran, we would be hard put to know who it is in this case, or especially I, what it is all about. The name of Mecca appears only once (48 : 24) about an event on which, to stick to the text, one wonders what exactly it is. The name of the Quraysh, the Meccan tribe of Mahomet, appears only once; in a small archaic and truncated text, difficult to situate in a specific context, where it is not even indicated that it was the tribe of Muhammad and of the main founding companions; this text of a few lines, which is currently chapter 106, has made a lot of ink flow and use much imagination on its possible interpretation.

We have two allusions to two military expeditions: a battle at Badr (3:123); a battle at Hunayn (9 :25); every time to say that God helped the Muslims.

The name of the city of the Hegira, Yathrib (the future Medina), appears once (33 :13-14), apparently in a difficult background (dissension and war), but the indication is merely allusive. It is very poor when one knows the importance of the hegira to Yathrib, which was the year 1 of the Islamic era. The name of "Medina" (al-madina, literally "the city," but there are other possible etymologies: Medinta, in Aramaic, Modin, from the name of the biblical village, starting point of the revolt of the Maccabees, etc.) ; this name therefore appears three times. If, however, it concerns the city of the prophet, that is to say, Yathrib, it is, each time, in merely allusive indications, without any specification being given to the background. If the word can designate Medina, one may wonder nevertheless, sometimes, whether it is the oasis city of the time of Muhammad (33 : 60, 9 : 101 and 120).

Moreover, if we thumb through the texts referring to events, or controversies, we usually come out with the question: who is talking to whom, of whom or what, and under what circumstances of time or place? There is no narrative framework, even fictitious, that can help us to see a little more clearly; and this is here one of the big handicaps of the Quran compared with the Gospels, which have a chronological framework, even if it is anything but authentic. Who are the "Sons of Israel"? Those of the old days or those of the beginnings of Islam? And in what times of these beginnings? Jews, Christians, hypocrites: who are they, at what times, and in what places? "The infidels say" ... who are these infidels? At this point in our presentation, it is necessary to "put an end " to two preconceived ideas that Muslims brandish as so many "proofs" of the divine nature of the Quran and of the fact that Muhammad was really sent by God.

1) If the Quran had been knowingly invented by Muhammad, he could not have believed it himself with such fervor for more than twenty years.

2) The Quran could not be written by Muhammad because no man has ever written a book in such a style and under such circumstances.

It is obvious that if you are a victim of psychiatric disorders causing hallucinations whether they are visual or auditory (or both together); you will be really convinced that you are in direct contact with God or one of his messengers!

Is there a man who founded a religion with a book, having believed for more than twenty years with fervor in what he said, but ... of which it would have been possible to demonstrate that this book was a lie invented ?

Is there a man who has written a book in a new style and unrivaled , a book he claims to be the word of God dictated to him in supernatural circumstances?

Well, the answer to both of these questions is ... YES!

And not only the answer is yes, but in addition this prophet is contemporary and still alive! The chauvinism of the French will be satisfied since not content with being contemporary and alive, this prophet is French.

The prophet having founded a religion by writing a book, having fervently believed for more than twenty years in what he said; but of whom we have managed to prove that his book was a lie invented, is called Claude Vorilhon. He calls himself Raël.

He made the headlines in early 2002, claiming to be at the origin of the birth of the first human clone. His religion, the Raëlian religion, is officially recognized by the Canadian Government. Now it is shown that the founding book of the Raëlian movement, "The book which tells the truth," published in 1973, is the plagiarism of a work of the late sixties.

Basic Muslims do not have the right to analyze this text, which they must content themselves with reciting in fragments and leaving the interpretation to imams, mullahs and other ayatollahs (who alone know the whole of the Quran by heart) and they must follow the instructions under pain of sanctions from their community.

Being neither Muslim nor basic, we will venture to do it.

If the Bible can ultimately be read as a kind of historical novel, the Quran, for its part, is a book without any logical plan. As the Frenchman Michel Houellebecq once said in a resounding anti-racist lawsuit against him, when you read really the Quran, you are devastated, devastated ...

The Quran is inimitable. For non-Arabic-speaking Muslims, this kind of speech resembles more an act of faith than a real, well-informed judgment made knowingly. Muhammad began to be exposed to the laughing stock, forced to flee the jeers. Never has a man been so much mocked as he was. He had to constantly defend himself and defend his ideas. The text we know today has kept many marks of this situation: critics, insults, and objections, from opponents, are often mentioned (to better be refuted or turned against of course). The Quran is not a text marked by a great philosophical serenity, but a text marked by the seal of controversy.

This text is far from being clear and the muddle of his ideas remains difficult to equal.

From a literary point of view, the Quran has little merit. Declamation, repetition, puerility, lack of logic and coherence, strike the unprepared reader at every moment. It is humiliating for the human intellect to think that this poor literature has been the subject of innumerable comments, and that millions of men are still wasting time in absorbing it. As a religious, moral, civil and political code (because among Muslims it is the source of all law and all science), the Quran flunks through insufficiency and obscurity; as an intellectual monument of the people who adopted it, and of the century that produced it, it is of poor value, and cannot stand comparison with any of the sacred books that Antiquity has left us. Its chapters can tackle a large number of seemingly unrelated topics. The same subject is dealt with in various chapters, under different, and sometimes even contradictory, aspects. The chapters do not really have thematic cohesion (except for the shorter ones, which sometimes have only three verses cf. chapter 108). They are simply classified in the Quran by decreasing length (apart from the first). The plan of the Quran is neither chronological nor thematic, since its only concern is to present the chapters in an order that can facilitate the learning by heart. Converting oneself to Islam is therefore not a proof of intelligence or reflection, but the proof of a great capacity to remember what is made recited by you, by heart.

Yes, indeed, even " though mankind and the jinn should assemble to produce the like of this Quran, they could not produce the like thereof though they were helpers one of another " (17; 88).

The Quran consists, as we have said, of 114 chapters written in rhymed prose, called suras. Of unequal length these chapters were arranged according to their length, the shorter ones being rejected at the end of the book. Each is divided into verses (ayat), and has received a name from a verse or episode that is told.

To analyze the Quran as it is now composed would therefore be absurd. It is necessary for this to group the chapters.

- Either by theme.

- Or by restoring the chapters in a chronological order. What amounts roughly reading this book from the end.

Various more or less concordant attempts have been made to reconstruct the chronological order. It reveals enlightening correspondences with events in the life of Muhammad, as reported by the Sunna. New interpretations of certain obscure passages could have been put forward in this way.

Each chapter and verse must be placed in the historical context in which it was revealed.

To understand and interpret the Quran, it is better to know the history of each verse. To isolate the Quran from its historical background, and from the traditions or legends that surround it, makes little sense. It is imperative to situate them in the background of the life of Muhammad (sira). This makes it possible to fill the gaps of the text, to better understand the allusions or even the "ambiguous" verses. It is not possible, of course, to find an order of which we may assure at 100% that it is the chronological order of origin; especially since it seems that some verses given in Yathrib / Medina have been incorporated into other given in Mecca, and vice versa!

However, whatever the chronological order that can be proposed for the chapters, it is preferable for the comprehension of the text to the current official order, only intended for its memorization. The Quran, however, remains a text difficult to read, because the division of the sentences into verse disrupts their reading; and quickly tires the reader who must constantly go back and forth in the text, in order to release the complete sentences from the succession of verses.

However, it is an indispensable exercise if you want to highlight the sometimes very different and contradictory ideas in these 114 chapters.

At the top of the book, forming the first chapter, is a prayer that is not strictly Muslim.

It is an invocation in seven verses, a praise to God who might as well be Jewish or Christian: the Fatiha.

IN THE NAME OF GOD,
THE BENEFICENT,
THE MERCIFUL.
PRAISE BE TO GOD,
LORD OF THE WORLDS,
THE BENEFICENT,
THE MERCIFUL.
MASTER OF THE DAY OF JUDGMENT,
YOU ALONE WE WORSHIP
YOU ALONE WE ASK FOR HELP.
SHOW US THE STRAIGHT PATH;
THE PATH OF THOSE WHOM YOU HAS FAVORED.
NOT THE PATH OF THOSE WHO EARN THINE ANGER
NOR OF THOSE WHO GO ASTRAY.

We can roughly divide the verses of this book into two categories: the verses revealed by Muhammad while he was still living in Mecca, the Meccan verses (Makki), and the verses revealed by Muhammad in Yathrib / Medina, the verses from Medina (madani). By convention, the scholars call in fact Meccan the Quran revealed before the Hegira, and Medinan, the one which was revealed after the Hegira, by reference to the cities of Mecca and Medina.

The Meccan chapters are about 19 / 30th of the Quran, while the Medinan chapters are 11 / 30th, out of a total of 114. Eighty-two are Meccan unanimously, twenty are Medina unanimously, twelve chapters are subject to divergences. In the "official" Quran, the chapters of Mecca - ninety-five - and those of Medina (twenty-four) are mixed together with no other order than the number of verses. In some cases, verses from the Medinan period are contiguous to others, older (of Meccan era). This bizarre classification gives the Quran an unattractive aspect, and it is difficult to relate the chapters to the events that marked the life of Muhammad. It also seems established that quite a few "revelations" are no longer in the "official" Quran, including the so-called satanic verses, those that evoke the stoning of adulterers (thank God!) etc.

The verses of Mecca, previous to Hegira, are generally shorter and most often located at the end of the Quran.

Those of Medina, after the Hegira, are generally longer and located at the beginning. They are differentiated by changes in style and vocabulary.

The Revelation made in Mecca is often presented as a violent diatribe against Meccan opponents who accuse Muhammad of being a sorcerer, a diviner, possessed by the jinn, sold out to foreign religions. In order to convince his family, his uncles, the members of his tribe, or other Meccans, Muhammad uses the accounts of envoys of God who had not been well received by their people. In the chapters of the first period, Muhammad vehemently defends himself to be a diviner possessed by a jinn. He appears as a messenger of God and not yet as a prophet.

The main idea of Muhammad, however, was not the proclamation of monotheism, but the announcement of the imminent approach of the Last Judgment; where God will reward the righteous (nice and smart) persons and punish the unjust (those who are mean and nasty) persons, an idea most likely borrowed from Christians.

The example of the punishment of the Sheba (34: 15-17) is an illustration of this threat. The Quranic text sees indeed in the wear of the dam of Ma'rib on the Dhana River, a punishment of God. At the time of the beginnings of Islam, more than seventy years later, this dam was indeed no longer in use, and had been taken back by the desert. The Quran does not give any historical information on what Muhammad saw from its remains. The purpose of these verses of the Quran is only to announce the apocalyptic punishment for the disbelievers or unbelievers, according to him.

Saba and Marib are just examples suitable for this announcement, as well as many others about the ancient disappeared peoples, the Ad, Thamud, etc.

Gustav Weill and Theodor Noldeke have established three divisions in the chapters revealed in Mecca. In the first group, the verses, short and very rhythmic, contain exhortations both simple and strong, whose meaning is often obscure, or unclear allusions. Many of these oaths are based on deified phenomena of nature. By the star rising or disappearing in the sky, and so on.

Others, more enigmatic, adjure men to think of their salvation. Chapter 96 is considered the oldest of them. This group of chapters corresponds to the first four years of Muhammad's mission.

The chapters of the second group are quieter. Oaths tend to disappear to make room for the expression: "This is a revelation from God" or the sentence "Say! " sent by the Muslim Holy Spirit (later equated with Archangel Gabriel) to Muhammad; who will repeat it in his recitations, in spite of the absurdity of the situation. The announcement of the Last Judgment gives way to monolatry and Muhammad finally breaks with the religious philosophy of his country fellow men. The chapters are getting longer. There are some indications, still rather vague, of the rules of behavior or of the rites, and allusions to the prophets who came before Muhammad. This group corresponds to the fifth and sixth years of the mission.

These legends relating to the prophets who came before Muhammad are multiplying in the third group of Meccan chapters. They include about 1500 verses and are meant to show that men who once refused to listen to the prophets were struck by God. The oath formulas have disappeared completely. God is often referred to by the word ar-Rahman ("the merciful"), a term that disappears from later chapters, perhaps because of its use by the Yamama's great competing prophet, Musaylima. This group corresponds to the end of the sixth year of the mission.

The revelations of Medina take on another tone, more legal. They stage no longer a simple messenger of God, a little non-conformist, but a great prophet who has politically triumphed; a prophet to whom his followers do not always obey nevertheless, and who has great difficulty with his wives, imposed by tribal strategy or married by inclination, even by simple need. The Medinan part, although having fewer chapters (between 20 and 30), is nevertheless the most important, because the chapters are very long (it is a question of organizing in the smallest details the life of the community). It is through them that the Quran begins, even if chronologically they come after. The Medinan chapters range approximately from chapter 2 to chapter 65 (with a certain number of exceptions, sizeable, it is true).

These chapters break completely with the previous period: Muhammad being no longer in opposition, but in power, our text gives up the argumentation. The Meccans are no longer country fellow men in error, but enemies that must be fought, conquered and converted, willingly or by force.

In addition to invectives and calls to fight against the infidels, the chapters of Medina define precisely the social standards that must be respected by all, believers and unbelievers. The 24 chapters of this period are often very long, especially chapters 2 to 5, and the verses that compose them sometimes have more than 10 lines.

Thus the Quran will end up in covering all the law and will bind indissolubly and irrevocably religion and politics in the lands of Islam.

As in the case of the Jews, the spirituality will become a law, a law of divine inspiration; and God will give his Last Judgment according to this Law which he has made known to men, and of which no one can say that he did not know it, at least in principle.

"Religion" is said in Arabic "din," an old Semitic stem that has the meaning of "judgment." This meaning is still that of the word in the first chapter of the Quran: yaumi al-din, the "Day of the last Judgment."

Editor's note. Some Muslim theologians admit, however, that there are cases where men may, in good faith, object that they did not know the said law.

In addition to philosophical thoughts, there are biblical, evangelical or ancient accounts, allusions to the human knowledge of the epoch; moral or hygienic prescriptions (how far God is not going to hide in?) 500 verses gather religious, civil and criminal regulations (but Muslims do not believe that according to the Quran, there are also other sources of law at home).

Many contradictory verses are noted in the Quran (especially concerning the "punishment" reserved for the disbelievers), unbearable repetitions (the story of Moses and Pharaoh repeated twenty times). Gabriel-Muhammad, himself, admits that some verses are not explicit, but symbolic or full of imagery (figurative: chapter 3 verse 7); and even that they sometimes cancel other verses (chapter 2 verse 106, known as verse of the abrogating-abrogated, "Nothing of our revelation (even a single verse) do we abrogate or cause be forgotten, but we bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. God is able to do all things ! ")

Some verses of the Quran are contradictory, we said. This one establishes freedom of conscience and worship and looks very pagan, very open or positive secularism 1): "No compulsions in religion."

Another forbids it, by imposing the death penalty to all those who do not believe or believe no longer in Islam 2): "Kill them wherever you find them" (Chapter 4, verses 89 to 91).

The contradiction is solved by the genial or basic idea of abrogation 3): when two verses are contradictory, the last one cancels and replaces the previous one; what is elementary, but what the Devil why God not been able to express himself from the beginning with the necessary careful use of words?

The problem is that the dating established by the scholars of Islam, and admitted today universally in this religion; make of all the moderate verses, without exception, verses struck with abrogation; and all the more violent verses, also without exception, abrogating verses.

N.B. These contradictions involve a drafting by successive strata, a moderate first, a violent second, the principle of abrogation restoring some coherence. This is the thesis of the Muslim scholars, who attribute the first stratum to the Meccan period, the second to the Medinan one.

What is certain in any case is that the Muslim concept of abrogation, verses repealed or repealing, mansukh or nasikh; makes it inevitable that there are at least two layers of composition in the Quran. It is probable that the violent stratum was inserted because of a change of policy, and that the verses inserting the notion of abrogation were inserted later still; to respond to those who rejected the violent verses in the name of the moderate verses of the initial period.

First example.

-One of the characteristic verses of the saint of the Meccan period is that which can be summarized as follows.

"Have your religion and I the mine" (i.e., open and positive secularism, let everyone do what he wants). Chapter 109.

-The characteristic verses of the new Moses of the Medinan period are thus stated. "Warfare in the sacred month therein is a great transgression, but to turn men from the way of God, and to disbelieve in Him and in the Inviolable Place of Worship, and to expel his people thence, is a greater with God " (chapter 2, verse 217).

" Advance the proven ones, or advance all together..... How should you not fight for the cause of God So fight the minions of the devil.....the Hereafter will be better for him who wards off evil (chapter 4 verses 71 to 77).

Second example.

The following verses of the Quran relate the must or wine to the highest spirituality.

Chapter 16, verse 67.

" And of the fruits of the date palm, and grapes, whence you derive strong drink and (also) good nourishment. Lo! therein is indeed a portent for people who make sense."

Editor's note. Some theological schools still allow the consumption of date must (nabid, known well before Islam). Chapter

Chapter 47, verse 15.

" A similitude of the Garden which those who keep their duty (to God) are promised: Therein are rivers of water unpolluted, and rivers of milk whereof the flavor does not change, and rivers of wine delicious to the drinkers."

Chapter 83, verses 24-28.

" 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,

A spring whence those brought near (to God) drink.

The prohibition of wine and alcohol was therefore only partial at the beginning: Chapter 4, verse 43.

" Draw not near unto prayer when you are drunken, till you know that which you utter, nor when you are polluted, save when journeying upon the road, till you have bathed. And if you be ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from the closet, or you have touched women, and you do not find water, then go to high clean soil and rub your faces and your hands (therewith). Lo! God is benign, forgiving, etc."

The prohibition was therefore only about the abuse of the consumption, about the fact that a believer cannot pray while being drunk.

On the other hand, the later verses are obviously at the origin of the prohibition of wine and alcohol in Islam. They contradict the verses before.

Chapter 2, verse 219.

" They question you about strong drink and games of chance. Say: their sin is greater than their usefulness ... "

Chapter 5, verses 90-91.

" Strong drink and games of chance and portal tombs (ansab) and belomancy (azlam =divining arrows) are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork."

The famous Abu Mihjan was imprisoned (and later exiled) by Caliph Omar, for writing: "When I die bury me by the side of a vine so that my bones may feed on its juices after death. Do not bury me in the plains because I am afraid that then I cannot enjoy wine when I am dead. I cannot enjoy wine when I am dead. Give me, o friends, some wine to drink; though I am well aware of what God has revealed about wine. Give me pure wine to make my sin bigger because only when it is drunk unmixed is the sin complete. Though wine has become rare and though we have been deprived of it , nevertheless I do drink it in deep drafts, I drink it unmixed and from time to time I become gay and drink it mixed with water. At my head stands a singing girl and while she sings she flirts; sometimes she sings loudly, sometimes softly, humming like birds in the garden "(Abu Mihjan).

1) Chapter 2, verse 256.

2) Chapter 4, verses 89 to 91.

3) Chapter 2, verse 106. Chapter 16, verses 101-103.

CONCLUSION ABOUT THE QURAN.

(The four traditional phases of the elaboration of the Quran.)

-Revelation to Muhammad in fragments spread between 610 and 632. Was Muhammad illiterate? The question has long divided the Orientalists. Most Muslims regard it as certain, in an apologetic perspective. But the epithet of ummi, ascribed to Muhammad in the Quran (verse 157 of chapter 7, Al Araf): "The ummi Prophet, whom they will find described in the Torah and the Gospel"; does not mean "who cannot read" but "who is not one of the people of the Book." Ummi Prophet therefore means: "Prophet sent to the Ummyyin (plural of ummi)" that is to say to the Arabs who do not know the Scriptures. As a trader, Muhammad was to be able to read and write at least a few words. It seems certain, however, that Muhammad did not write the Quran himself. The Islamic tradition represents him rather dictating the chapters, according to their revelation, to his relatives, who keep them in memory; or scribes who write on "pieces of leather, shards of pottery, veins of palm leaves or even shoulder blades of camels."

Three successive shaping (or "collections") of the Quranic text would have taken place after the death of Muhammad.

-So that the sacred text does not fade from the memories, the first caliph Abu Bakr (632 to 634) would have charged Zayd ibn Thabit, a secretary of Muhammad, to gather in writing all the fragments of the revelation; those which were recorded on material supports and those which were engraved in the memory of the first companions.

-A second collection would have taken place under the caliph Uthman (644 to 656). Struck by the differences in the recitation of the Quran, he would have decided to fix once and for all an official vulgate, from the "sheet" of Abu Bakr. Then he would have ordered to burn or destroy all the manuscripts and earlier materials. The caliph made copies of his vulgate and sent them to the main cities of the Empire: Mecca, Basra, Kufa and Damascus. But the Hijazian writing of then, too imperfect, does not prevent divergences of reading. At best, it offers a minimal support, acceptable by different readers. In addition, none of these Uthman's Qurans were found.

There are only three or four copies of the Quran dating back to the 7th century.

The one kept in the library of Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The one kept in the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul.

The one kept at the British Library in London (Ma'il manuscript).

The one discovered in Sana'a in Yemen by the German philologist Gerd-Rüdiger Puin. (The manuscript dates from around 680.)

-A final shaping was ordered by al-Hajjaj, governor of Iraq, during the reign of the Umayyad Caliph Abd al-Malik (685-705). It would have consisted of the homogenization of the spelling, but was, of course, much more in reality.

The progress of historical criticism has made it possible to refine somewhat this first sketch and now makes it possible to distinguish 4 phases in addition to the preaching of Muhammad himself, of course. SUMMARY.

First stage, at the request of the first Caliph Abu Bakr, spurred on by the future second Caliph, Umar (they needed a "DIN" to apply): the writing of Zayd ibn Thabit (632-644).

Zayd, with the help of other scribes, carried out an initial work of reviewing the preaching of the various witnesses and the notes they had written. He wrote a first series of verses. A commission of former companions of Muhammad was convened, what suggests that a certain consensus on the content should emerge among them. The role of the ubiquitous Zayd and his personality were nevertheless strongly criticized by other secretaries of Muhammad, such as Abdullah Ibn Masud, an early convert, who settled in Kufa in 639 and defender of an alternative text having his name.

A compilation of the writings of Zayd ibn Thabit fell into the hands of Hafsa, the daughter of Abu Bakr, a codex that she allegedly obtained either directly from her father or through her personal guard. In view of the events that followed, no trace of it has been kept and almost nothing of it is known (the governor of Medina Marwan ibn al-Hakam had it destroyed in 665).

The second stage was the censorship of the third Caliph Uthman (644-656).

The contestation of the work of Zayd ibn Thabit by some of the elders resulted in the circulation of different versions of the Quran. In addition, diacritical signs were not included in the compilation supervised by Zayd. Not only did the different Muslim factions in Syria and Iraq argue over the content of the compilations but also over the pronunciation of the words and the possible interpretations of the texts. Uthman therefore undertook a systematic work of standardization of the Quran so that there would be one and only one divine civil and penal code in his caliphate.

(DIN.)

Uthman had a copy of Hafsa sent to him and still asked the same Zayd ibn Thabit to write a new Quran from this first codex.

Years after the first commission, Zayd again summoned the surviving companions of Muhammad with the remaining fragments of notes. A Quran entirely favorable to Uthman was thus established by Zayd, the codex known as Al mushaf al Uthmani. Its writing was still of the rasm type, i.e., without all the necessary diacritical signs (dots) to remove ambiguities (what will be done in the 8th century).

The suras were arranged from the longest to the shortest without respecting any chronology between and within the suras, the verses often following one another in spite of common sense and any logical link. It is this narrative structure that forms the basis of the present Quran because Uthman imposed his new version of the Quran through the community and had most of the versions other than his own destroyed, the possession of a copy other than that of Uthman being punishable by death, including the Qurans of Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law, that of Ubay ibn Kab and that of ibn Masud.

Several centuries later, the Shiites were forced to settle for the Uthman version of the Quran, all their copies having been burned.

Third stage: the change made during the reign of the fifth Caliph Abd al Malik ibn Marwan (685-705) by the governor Al Hajjaj ibn Yusuf .

But the text of Uthman was still only a written aide-memoire because the Arabic script of that time was still defective, and the memorization of sounds was still necessary to decipher the Quran. Differences in reading therefore continued to arise, especially since the Quran parallel to Uthman's Quran had not yet been destroyed.

The role of the fifth Caliph Abd al Malik ibn Marwan and his governor Al Hajjaj ibn Yûsuf in the drafting of the present Quran remains very unclear. This governor, bloodthirsty and cruel, but also considered a very great poet, is said to have intervened directly in the drafting. He would not only have added other diacritical signs, but also changed the order of the verses and suras, and even added others. He would therefore have established his own version and ordered a new "collection." The Uthman Quran as revised by Al Hajjaj ibn Yusuf was sent to all the provinces of the country, and the other copies destroyed.

The development of the scriptural sources of Islam is thought to have taken place during the reign of the fifth Umayyad Caliph, 'Abd al-Malik, between 685 and 705, i.e. during the second half of the 1st century AH. In this regard, I refer you to the excellent work of the late Alfred-Louis de Premare. In much the same way as Christianity became the religion of the empire under Constantine, this Caliph, for political reasons relating to the legitimization of his empire, would have established, among other laws, the "official" Quran as we know it today, trying to eliminate the other versions. It was Abd al Malik ibn Marwan who also began to promote the image of the Prophet, whose first official mentions date back to his reign. The corpus of Hadith, the so-called Muhammad's corpus, originated in the entourage of this Caliph. It is he who also made Arabic the new language of the administration of the empire. Moreover, the very word 'Muslim' dates back to the reign of Abd al-Malik: before him, Muhammad's followers called themselves 'believers' (muslimun) or 'emigrants' (muhājirūn).

Fourth stage: the definitive establishment of the dogma of the uncreated Quran and of the various current readings of the Quran (during the 8th and 9th centuries until the beginning of the 10th century).

The turning point came under the Caliphate of al-Mutawakkil, the great persecutor of Mu'tazilites, Shi'ites, Christians and Jews, when the dogma of the Quran as uncreated word of God was made official. Since that time, it has been a dogma in Sunnism. For Sunni Muslims (the case of Sunni mystics is different), God manifests Himself through His Word made Book. On the other hand, the Shi'ite point of view is similar to that of the Christians since they consider the text of the Quran as a "silent, mute guide" while the Imam is called the "speaking Quran," i.e., the living Word of God.

It was also at this time that the Quran became the source of Muslim law, since it was previously considered primarily as a liturgical text. Example the Fiqh Akbar 1. As already mentioned, the Fiqh Akbar 1 is the oldest Muslim legal document, written around 750, more than a century after the death of Mohammad. It presents the views of Islamic orthodoxy on the legal issues of the day. However, it contains no reference to the Quran, whereas today Muslim law is entirely based on it.

Schacht considers that law as such was previously outside the realm of religion, and as long as there were no religious or moral objections to specific transactions and ways of acting, the technical aspects of law were indifferent to Muslims. Not only did the customary law of the Arabs, as modified and supplemented (by the Quran), largely survive, but Muslims did not hesitate to adopt the legal, commercial and administrative institutions and practices of the conquered territories and even their legal concepts and maxims, as long as they were compatible with the requirements of the new religious ideas being sacralized. . IN OTHER WORDS THE FIRST CALIPHS AND THEIR MEN WERE

NOT VERY INTERESTED IN THE QURAN AND IN ISLAM AS WE SEE THEM TODAY. IT WAS ONLY LATER.

BUT LET US RETURN TO THE ACTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEXT IN QUESTION.

The works of Christoph Luxenberg have recently renewed the state of the problem. It is certain now that the text that we have in our hands today under the title of Quran, has a complex and laborious history, and that it is not a question of putting in writing visions or revelations of Muhammad. The boundary between these visions or revelations of Muhammad as a prophet, and what is called the hadith, is far from being hermetic. It is porous, and all things considered, in one sense, we can say that the Quran is only a first collection, primitive, of hadiths.

So stated the thing may seem excessive and it is, but it is not devoid of a certain truth.

Origin and date of the Quran according to the Quraysh of Mecca.

Muhammad, Quran 25:4. "They say: This is nothing but a lie that he has invented, and other folk have helped him with it....fables of the men of old which he has had written down so that they are dictated to him morn and evening."

Some allusions describe the means by which the sayings of Muhammad were preserved. But to guess the part of what would have been written immediately, or kept in memory, is still very difficult. We only know that the general formatting was very late, and that the means to access it were varied and adventurous.

Muslim, Hadiths 17, 4192.

"One day revelation descended upon him, he felt the same rigor. When it was over and he felt relief, he said: Take from me!"

But we must remain wary of this "shortest way" from the speech to the text, carried out through a kind of shorthand.

Muslim tradition gives a special place to the circumstances that led to the shaping and writing of the mass of revelations.

In the seventh century Arabia, the notion of literal authenticity does not have the meaning we give it today. The prophet / scribe couple is the usual original background of the Eastern scriptural practice: each one fulfills his office, and the product of their collaboration is all the more authentic. In Medina Muhammad would have had up to 42 scribes or secretaries, ex-pagans or Christians, even Jews.

The most emblematic of them is undoubtedly Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh.

Abdullah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh was one of Muhammad's companions, and for some time scribe and secretary of the Prophet. He was writing down the Quran for Muhammad, but then he recognized that the latter was fabricating verses. He was quite educated and he was often suggesting to Muhammad how better to write some verses. He left Muhammad and eventually Islam. He went to Mecca, where he told everything to anyone. Abdullah, for example, said that he was writing "merciful" and "absolute" when Muhammad was saying: "wise" and "strong" (aziz->alim).

Muhammad therefore decided to kill him, even if he had previously promised not to kill anyone in Mecca. When the town was taken by the Muslim Armada, Muhammad decreed a general amnesty, with six exceptions (ten as of the list that you can find in Ibn Sa'd "Tabaqat," Vol. 2, page 168"). Even if Abdullah didn't commit any crime, he was in this list. He was captured (he had sought refuge in Uthman's house which was his foster brother), and thanks to the intercession of Uthman, being in front of Muhammad (who kept silent for a long while), he was spared. Ibn Ishaq (Sirah, p. 550) tells us that Muhammad was then asked why Abdullah was left to go. Muhammad would have replied: "I was expecting that one of you would behead him."

Questions now.

1) Why did Muhammad so readily accept Sarh's fragrant addition to his "revelations"?

2) If Muhammad so easily accepted the input of Sarh, could he not have accepted the input of his other scribes and spliced them into the Quran?

Modern scholars indeed have shown that the Quran's style has been broken, and recombined (see Bell for additional details on textual and stylistic flaws within the Quran).

3) Since Muhammad liked Sarh's addition, could Sahr not have also added other stories to embellish the Quran? Examining the composition of the Quran, we find that there are many stories borrowed from other religious sources: the Old Testament, the New Testament, other works of Judaism (the Mishnah, midrashic commentaries like they are found in Pirke of Rabbi Eliezer.....) pre-Islamic religious stories, etc.

4) If this story about Sarh were a fabrication, why did so many early Muslim writers document it?

Among the various secretaries who took these notes, there was also the Jew Zayd ibn Thabit.

Abd Allah b. Masud "I learned from the mouth of the prophet seventy-some suras when Zayd b.

Thabit was still a youth with two side locks and played with the youngsters" (Ibn Hanbal 1895: I, 411).

Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 85.

"I saw Marwan bin Al-Hakam sitting in the Mosque. So I came forward and sat by his side. He told us that Zaid bin Thabit had told him that God's Apostle had dictated to him the Divine Verse: 'Not equal are those believers who sit (at home) and those who strive hard and fight in the Cause of God with their wealth and lives.' (4.95). Zaid addedGod sent down a revelation to His Apostle while his thigh was on mine and it became so heavy for me that I feared that my thigh would be broken." Bukhari Volume 6 Book 61 number 509.

Narrated by Zayd bin Thabit. I started looking for the Quran and collecting it 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 Surat At-Tauba (Repentance) with Abi Khuzaima Al-Ansari, and I did not find it with anybody other than him....Then the manuscripts (copy) of the Quran remained with Abu Bakr till he died, then with Umar till the end of his life, and then with Hafsa, the daughter of Umar.

In the Itqan, Al-Suyuti discussed the number of witnesses and quoted the following from Ibn Ashta's Kitab al-Masahif:

"The people would come to Zaid ibn Thabit and he would only write a verse from two upright witnesses. Even though the end of Sura al-Baraa was not found except with Khuzaima ibn Thabit, he said: Write it, for God's messenger, peace and blessings be upon him, made his testimony as the testimony of two men; even though Umar brought the verse of stoning and it was not written because he was alone. (Ibn Ashta in Al-Suyuti vol. 1, 58.)

Bukhari Volume 4, Book 52, Number 62.

Zaid bin Thabit said, "When the Quran was compiled from various written manuscripts, one of the Verses of the Sura Al-Ahzab was missing which I used to hear God's Apostle reciting. I could not find it except with Khuzaima bin Thabit Al-Ansari, whose witness God's Apostle regarded as equal to the witness of two men."

Now a new question arises: the verses (9:128-129) were accepted with only one witness but that was not the case for the stoning verse that was brought by Umar. Why was it so? For what reason the prophet made Khuzaima's testimony worth the testimony of two men? Was Khuzaima more righteous than Umar?

Another Jewish secretary.

Muslim Book 038, Number 6693.

There was a person among us who belonged to the tribe of Bani Najjar and he recited Sura al-Baqarah and Surat Al-i-Imran and he used to transcribe for God's Messenger (may peace be upon him). He ran away as a rebel and joined the People of the Book.

A Christian secretary.

Volume 4, Book 56, Number 814.

Narrated Anas. There was a Christian who embraced Islam and read Surat-al-Baqara and Al-Imran, and he used to write (the revelations) for the Prophet. Later on he returned to Christianity again and he used to say: "Muhammad knows nothing but what I have written for him." Then God caused him to die, and the people buried him, but in the morning they saw that the earth had thrown his body out. They believed that what had befallen him was not done by human beings and had to leave him thrown (on the ground).

The Muslim tradition evokes therefore the somewhat chaotic story of hastily written writing and makeshift media, the whole collected just a few months after the death of Muhammad. The discrepancies between readers recitation (by heart), even the risk of violent disappearance of the last of them, during the civil war which broke out after the death of Muhammad, would have made necessary fixing in writing. A committee summoned by the Caliph Uthman then would have established a definitive text sent to the main bases of the conquerors outside Arabia (Basra, Kufa, etc.), the other versions being burned.

The text has nevertheless evolved over time, this is obvious. The current text of the Quran is not the one whose faithful believe it was revealed to Muhammad. For some writers like John Wansbrough, the Quran has reached the canonical form that we know to it only two centuries after the death of Muhammad, or under the dynasty of the Abbasid caliphs. It is important in this respect to realize the distance separating the background in which Abbasid historians and commentators wrote, from that in which the Quran was written. Between the 7th and the 9th century, the situation of the Arabs has indeed changed radically and especially thanks to Islam precisely. Conquest is the only objective historical fact, this conquest is a fact that nobody can deny. It quickly extended early Arabic Islam to other civilizations, including Persian, Mazdaean, or Christian. And the Arabs very quickly became more than ultra-minority in their own empire. What was a blessing for those who made the early history of Islam was a misfortune for those who wrote it; and the Muslims did not really bother about

their past until the ninth century, two centuries after the events. And especially, after changes of considerable scope.

Politically, first: two revolutions, those that brought to power the two dynasties: Umayyad (661), then Abbasid (750). Not to mention the passage, inside the first, of the Sufyanids to the Marwanids (685), occasion of a capital turning point. The Empire was now administered in Arabic, and no longer in the language of the conquered peoples and by the families of officials already in place. It had its own currency, without images and with an Islamic inscription. It claimed a strong religious identity, symbolized by the Dome of the Rock, in Jerusalem (691). All these historical evolutions have torn away Muslims from the original background in which the Quran was written. The grammarians and commentators of the Quran are no longer Arabs of Hijaz, but Persians living in Baghdad. They have no idea of the society or legal system of Arabia before Islam. And they know no other Semitic language than Arabic.

However, modern methods require, among other approaches, to take into account the study of neighboring languages, in this case Syro-Aramaic from the east, Syro-Aramaic from the west, Hebrew, and to a lesser extent measures Persian and Amharic. But Muslim scholars refuse to do so, because their theology requires staying in a self-referential framework, that is to say limited to only Muslim texts. Since it is established only within this limited framework, the approximate consensus of current Muslim scholars is scientifically inadmissible. It is nevertheless behind the generally accepted conjectures, and the choice of vowels and diacritical dots which seek to make these conjectures acceptable. All translations available today are based on these conjectures.

It is certain, moreover, that tradition reports only a part of the testimonies, and that these testimonies contradict one another. They diverge in particular as to the identity of the persons having collected the texts, of those for in the house of whom these texts were in deposit, as well as on the nature of these, collection or separate sheets.

It seems, moreover, that the distinction between the Quran Book of God, on the one hand, and the words attributed to Muhammad (hadith), has only been put in place gradually; and that the border between the two was long porous.

The Quran and some hadiths, among the oldest or the most authentic, would be like two crystallizations of the same magma, the book of God being considered originally only as a selection of the words of Muhammad. The Quran is a set of hadiths chosen for public recitation and the adjustment of this book seems to have constituted for a large part in this selective composition.

It is this initial indecision which explains, for example, why we find in the Quran dictates contained in the hadiths, but in a form such that they are comprehensible only in a background subsequent to the life of Muhammad. See the case of the truce to be observed during the holy months. Islam being then in full military expansion, the text of the Quran appears as well in phase with this new factual situation (it dwells no longer much at length on this problem of truce); while the farewell sermon (632) reported by the hadiths two centuries later, itself insists much more on this point (see above). So there is obviously a chronological shift, and in a rather paradoxical sense. The allusions to the thing in the Quran testify to a more recent situation than those evoked by the farewell speech recorded in the hadiths (wars of conquest). And so it is the concerns of the farewell sermon that seem older than the text of the Quran itself. Inescapable conclusion: the text of the Quran had to be lightened, or reduced, by the first people who had to distribute it.

This raises the question of the true author of the Quran. For pious Muslims, this author can only be God and he alone, and in no way Muhammad, who has only passively received a supernatural dictation. Non-Muslims are used to speak of Muhammad as the real author, possibly inspired. Ancient traditions, however, contain elements suggesting a collective work, not only of gathering revelations, but even in the writing of some passages. A great role seems, for example, to have been played by the future caliph Omar, whose son said: "At-Tirmidhi's Jami Volume 6 Book 46 Hadith 3682. Narrated Nafi': from Ibn 'Umar, that the Messenger of God (Peace be upon him) said: "Indeed God has put the truth upon the tongue and in the heard of 'Umar....No affair occurred among the people, except that they said something about it, and 'Umar said something about it".....except that the Quran was revealed in line with what Umar had said."

A careful examination of the tradition makes it possible to find numerous documents attesting that Umar, one of the two lieutenants of Muhammad, acts and speaks almost like the prophet too. In some cases, it is even he who has the last word over Muhammad. See the case of the veil. Islam, which is not at this time a true monotheism, would not be born from a single character, but of two?

The following hadith indeed seems to suggest God agreed with Omar on three things.

Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 1, Book 8, Hadith 395.

"My Lord agreed with me in three things:

-1. I said, "O God's Messenger, I wish we took the station of Abraham as our praying place (for some of our prayers). So came the Divine Inspiration: And take you (people) the station of Abraham as a place of prayer (2:125).

-2. And as regards the (verse of) the veiling of the women, I said, 'O God's Messenger, I wish you ordered your wives to cover themselves from the men because good and bad ones talk to them.' So the verse of the veiling was revealed.

-3. Once the wives of the Prophet made a united front against the Prophet and I said to them, 'It may be if he divorced you (all) that his Lord will give him instead of you wives better than you.' So this verse (66 : 5) was therefore revealed." (66.5).

The science of dating the texts (philology) has not yet fully applied to the Quran, and everything remains to be done in this field (while as for the Bible it is already well advanced).

The problem of the transcription and of the used alphabet.

The authenticity of the Islamic message is affirmed by interpreters and commentators of the ninth century. However, it is precisely these commentators who have finalized the definitive text of the Quran. How not to ask questions when one thinks that the diacritical marks were added to the text only from the tenth century; especially when one knows that in certain cases the meaning of a word changes radically depending on whether it is assigned the consonant of an a, an u or an i?

The original writing (that of the time of Muhammad) is called "defective." It ignores the notation of short vowels, which will only appear much later. But especially, it includes no diacritical marks: these dots above or under the letters, which differentiate for example the "b," the "n," the "y" and the "t." Often too, the long vowel alif is missing. Thus, the word ql without alif can be translated as "say! Or "he said." It is usually assumed that a continuous oral tradition helps dispel misunderstandings. Luxenberg has shown that it is not so: the existence of a tradition of this kind, on the contrary, would make incomprehensible many hadiths in which Muhammad endorsed several different readings (ahruf). It is therefore obvious that the background of the formation of the Quran is that of a culture of writing, we are no longer here in a world of oral traditions, but in a world of scribes.

We do not really know who, when, and under what precise circumstances the rules of punctuation and vocalization were established, because there are several contradictory traditions on this subject. Muslim writers have collected whole volumes of possible "readings" of certain words, but it is only by exception that they change its meaning. The same sign that can note the two long vowels a and i; nothing prevents us from pronouncing certain Quranic names in the same way as their biblical equivalents: Abraham and Satan, as Ibn Mas'ud already did, instead of Ibrahim and Shaytan.

There is also a passage of the Quran with a title, at the beginning of the story. The compilers of the time of Uthman have probably forgotten to delete it. Here it is. Mohammed, Quran 19, 1-3. K H Y A S. A mention of the mercy of your Lord unto his servant Zachariah.

ELEMENTS OF THEOLOGY.

CHILDISH ANTHROPOMORPHISMS AND INTERMEDIARY CREATURES DESPITE THE TAWHID.

By the Mu'tazilite on duty 1).

Many verses of the Quran refer to angels (malaika) as intermediaries (well in the best case) between God and men. Muslims claim that these angels are not intermediate creatures because they only execute the orders of God (who apparently cannot act without an intermediary and directly in the order of the world). Yet there is one of them who has disobeyed these orders from God.

Holy Quran Chapter 2 verse 34.

"When We said unto the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they fell prostrate, all save Iblis. He demurred through pride, and so became a disbeliever (mina al kafirina)"

It is true that his belonging to the world of (fallen) angels is disputed and that some Muslims like Ibn Kathir for that go as far as falsifying this sura by replacing the word "disbeliever" by "jinn" (mina aljinni) but it is not up to us, barbarian druids of the West, to tell pious Muslims what to think of the intermediary creatures between man (woman especially besides) and the higher being.

God or Muhammad in any case seems rather annoyed that some people see them as being female. Muhammad chapter 17: 40.

"Has your Lord then distinguished you by giving you sons, and has chosen for Himself females from among the angels? Lo! verily you speak an awful word!"

Muhammad chapter 43: 19.

"They make the angels, who are the slaves of the Beneficent, females. Did they witness their creation?"

Muhammad chapter 53 :26-29.

"How many angels are in the heavens whose intercession avails nothing save after God gives leave to whom He chooses and accepts. Lo! it is those who disbelieve in the Hereafter who name the angels with the names of females. Those who disbelieve in the afterlife give female names to angels. And they have no knowledge thereof. They follow but a guess, and lo! a guess can never take the place of the truth.

But while you are at falling into anthropomorphism why not some angels of female sex besides as in some paganisms? In the Middle Ages Ireland, angels (banshee) were well represented as being female. Simple question.

Angels are therefore spiritual beings, mentioned many times in the Quran and other related documents (hadiths). Unlike the jinn, they are not of Arab origin: it is an obvious external contribution (Jewish, Christian, even Persian). The most important ones have a name.

These angels are spying for God.

Chapter 13 : 11: "For him are angels ranged before him and behind him, who guard him."

Chapter 43: 80.

"Our envoys, present with them, do record."

Chapter 50, 17-18.

"When the two Receivers receive (him), seated on the right hand and on the left, he utters no word but there is with him an observer ready."

These angels torture the dead in their grave 1).

Chapter 8 verse 50.

If you couldst (only) see when the Angels take the souls of the unbelievers (at death) (how) they smite their faces and their backs (saying): "Taste the penalty of the blazing fire."

Chapter 47 verse 27.

But how (will it be) when the Angels take their souls at death, and smite their faces and their backs? Editor's note. The Muslim Mu'taziltes, unlike the Christians, did not believe that a dead person could go to hell before the last judgment in order to suffer in it eternal torments.

The angels have four leaders.

- Archangel Gabriel, charged with communicating the orders of God to the prophets such as Noah, David, Solomon, Abraham, Moses ...

Muhammad chapter 2 : 97-98.

"Who is an enemy to Gabriel! For he it is who has revealed (this Scripture) to your 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!"

Muhammad chapter 66 : 4.

"God, even He, is his Protecting Friend, and Gabriel and the righteous among the believers." (This is also a Medinan chapter and therefore not dating back to the beginnings of Meccan Islam.)

- Archangel Michael, who commands the elements (clouds, rain).

- Archangel [Israfil] , guardian of the heavenly trumpet which must resound at the end of the centuries for the Last Judgment.

- Archangel Azrael, charged with leading the souls of the dying to their judge.

But there are others: Nakir and Munkir 1), Jabarut and Malakut, Malik.

They are inferior to men since they have prostrated themselves before the first of them, according to the Muslim tradition (really forced besides since God had ordered them to do so). Only one, Lucifer (Iblis) having refused, he was changed into Devil or Satan (Shaitan) and expelled from heaven with his own.

But there are also angels intervening on the ground en masse, as in the battles (that of Badr in particular).

The demons.

Evil and cursed figures abound in the text of the Quran. Their status is not always well defined, and the insistence on these evil forces can bring the Muslim doctrine closer to that of Mani, very influential in the region on all types of beliefs.

Among the fallen angels, it is necessary to quote Harut and Marut, and if it is not Esdras, Uzayr or Ozayr 2).

Muhammad chapter 2 :102.

" Solomon did not disbelieve; but the devils disbelieved, teaching mankind magic and that which was revealed to the two angels in Babel, Harut and Marut."

Editor's note: Harut corresponds to Haurvata in the Persian Mazdaism of the Zoroastrians, and Marut to Amerata.

Sahih al-Bukhari Volume 2, Book 21, Hadith 245.

Narrated Abdullah : A person was mentioned and said that he had kept on sleeping till morning and had not gotten up for the prayer. The Prophet said, "Satan urinated in his ears."

Satan is the generic name of the Devil, of Aramaic origin (Shaytan). He is at this time considered as the one who perverts men. He represents in the tradition the danger for any Muslim (including Muhammad) of the temptation, evil, decay, and his intervention is suspected at any moment. The fear of his presence causes multiple superstitious reactions.

Iblis.

It is the traditional figure of the fallen angel, enemy of the deity. This proper noun comes from the Septuagint Greek "Diabolos," "the one who divides." In some other verses of the Quran, it falls under the category of the jinn. (Muhammad, Quran 15, 27-42.) The very anthropomorphic theme of "the fallen angel" is here very developed.

The word ifrit found in the Quran (27:39) is of Pahlavi origin. The borrowing would have been made long before Muhammad, for the (animist) pagan Arabs had already a vague notion of these shadowy beings, everywhere present and yet nowhere distinctly perceived: the jinns. The word jinn probably means hidden, veiled, or obscure. The jinns are the personification of what is mysterious in nature, its hostile and untamed side. They were feared by the pagan Arabs, and it was only with the advent of Islam that they began to be considered from time to time as benevolent.

For the pagan Arabs, the jinns were invisible, but could have various aspects, such as that of a snake, a lizard or a scorpion. If a jinn seized a man, he made him crazy. Muhammad himself, educated in the religion of his day, continued during all his life to believe in spirits 3). Professor Duncan Black Macdonald has also drawn a surprising parallel between the way in which the Quran was first revealed to Muhammad, and the way in which one of his relatives, named Hassan Ibn Thabit, also became an inspired or a poet.

"Hassan ibn Thabit was one of Muhammad's followers and, perhaps, the only poet to be a companion. Muhammad in general was opposed to poetry; the poets were mostly opposed to him; but Hassan upheld his cause with poetry of a kind, and was especially useful in replying to satirical and abusive attacks. But this Hassan, while still a young man was initiated into poetry by a female Jinn. She met him in one of the streets of Medina, leaped upon him, pressed him down, and compelled him to utter three verses of poetry. Thereafter he was a poet, and his verses came to him as to other Arab poets from the direct inspiration of the jinn. He refers himself to his "brothers of the Jinn" who weave for him artistic words, and tells how lines have been sent down to him from heaven in the night season. The curious thing is that the expressions he uses are exactly those used by Muhammad to consider the "sending down," that is, revelation, of the Quran. The story runs that Muhammad used to set up for him a pulpit in the mosque and stand by in evident enjoyment, while Hassan hurled from it stinging verses against his enemies. This was one of the few occasions on which Muhammad seems to have tolerated poetry, and his reported comment is significant, "God aids Hassan with the Holy Spirit so long as he is defending or boasting of the Apostle of God." Muhammad therefore ascribed to Hassan the same kind of inspiration that he had himself. Another point to observe is the close parallel between

the terms used in the story of Hassan's initiation and that of the first revelation to Muhammad. Just as Hassan was thrown down by the female spirit and had verses pressed out of him, so the first utterances of prophecy were pressed from Muhammad by the angel Gabriel. And the resemblance goes still farther. The angel Gabriel is spoken of as the companion (qarin) of Muhammad, just as though he were the Jinn accompanying a poet, and the same word nafatha, "blow upon," is used of an enchanter, or a Jinn inspiring a poet and of Gabriel revealing to Muhammad. It was, of course, the nightmare of Muhammad's earlier years - a fear of his own and an accusation of his enemies - that he was simply a poet possessed by a Jinn; it dictated his whole attitude to poets and poetry, and it is very plain how near the fact, the fear and accusation lay. He was in truth a poet of the old Arab type, without skill of verse, and with all his being given to the prophetic side of poetry. Add to this a strange jumble of Jewish and Christian conceptions, and you have the key to the person of Muhammad. (Source: Duncan B. Macdonald, *The Attitude of the Semites Towards the Unseen World; Prophecy as a Semitic Phenomenon and Especially Among the Arabs*).

Contrary to what the doctors in Muslim theology repeat, their description or idea of God is nevertheless full of anthropomorphisms (much more than in certain pagan sensibilities). To say of God that he is personal, beneficent and merciful, being already anthropomorphism. Bodily: he [God] is male (why not a goddess) and also moral. The God of true philosophers, himself, is beyond clemency or mercy. He is unspeakable.

1) Summary of some beliefs of the Mu'tazilites.

A. Denial of punishment and reward meted out to the dead in the grave and the questioning by the angels Munkir and Nakir.

D. They also deny the existence of the Recording Angels (kiraman katibin). The reason they give for this is that God is well aware of all the deeds done by his servants. The presence of the Recording Angels would have been indispensable only if God were not acquainted directly with their doings.

2) Ezra was a Jewish priest of the 5th century before our era, hyper racist (anti-Samaritan), commissioned by the great Aryan Emperor Cyrus to organize the repatriation of Jewish volunteers in Jerusalem. Real author of the Jewish Bible according to Spinoza.

3) Avicenna (Ibn Sina) was probably the first Muslim philosopher to categorically reject the very possibility of the existence of the jinn.

VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF MUSLIM THEOLOGY.

The subject remains inevitable and gives rise to multiple controversies. But it is always good to point out that, if Arabia is, at this moment, only on the periphery of major historical phenomena; the religion which is formed there has no other means of being constructed except by drawing from the other doctrinal, mythical and ritual collection of other cultures.

Instead of dealing with the issue globally, let us deal one by one with the exogenous elements present in the Muslim religion, and primarily in the Quran; who are neither from the Arab cultural background nor from God; and particularly with many legends, which then circulated throughout the Orient.

Muhammad heard, reproduced, distorted, disguised, adapted, many traditions which existed, from the Mecca to the Syria of that time. He has heard them in foreign languages, in bits, in a superficial way, without always understanding the ins and outs.

The legendary epic of Alexander in Central Asia.

The figure of Alexander the Great is in the Quran, under the name of two-horned one (Dhu al Qarnayn), which is surprising all the same. He is seen as son of Amon (hence the horns). His presence in these Quranic verses is a sign of popularity that few historical characters can equal.

It is through these wonderful stories (Alexander's romance) that Muhammad learned about him. The fact that the Macedonian is perceived here as one of the prophets or heroes of Islam, nevertheless arouses some problems.

Muhammad chapter 18 : 83-97.

They will ask you of Dhu'l-Qarneyn.

Say: I shall recite unto you a remembrance of him.

Indeed follows after 15 days of searching (the time that God finds the answer to this trick question 1) from the rabbis of Medina or the Angel Gabriel gathers information) an incredible story worthy of a B fantasy movie, but which honors hardly Islam.

1) And in this trap set up by the rabbis of Medina Muhammad, SINCE ALEXANDER THE GREAT HAS NOTHING TO SEE WITH THE BIBLICAL HISTORY AND THE PROPHETS OF ISRAEL.

THE VARIOUS NAMES OR ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

Just as the daughter of the famous Irish king Cunocavaros had a name or nickname Noichrothach meaning several shapes in one, and the god of the Bible too (Elohim, el elyon, el shaddai, Adonai, Jehovah, Yhwh, the tetragrammaton...); there exists in Muslim theology an official list of 99 names of God, most of which are, of course, only attributes, but others raise more problems because they seem to designate an entity that is significantly different from God.

Originally, the Rabb is the lord of a place: the power that dominates a place and makes it a sanctuary. This name is also given to priests in southern Arabia, which confirms the anthropomorphic origin of the expression. However rabb is the word used by Muhammad at the beginning of the Quran, much more than "God." Hence the whole series of "raab" below.

Rabba al hadhal beit: lord of the house.

Rabb al Ka 'ba: Lord of the Kaaba.

Rabb al falaqi: Lord of 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 has left the fortress where he was safe to take refuge in his kaaba to him, the hadiqa ar-Rahman). Musaylima advocated a kind of warlike Monophysite Christianity throughout central Arabia (Yamama).

Musaylima was contemporary with Muhammad. His name indicates that he was a member of the tribal confederation of the Bani Hanifa who was more or less Christianized, or at least sensitive to Christian influences. He was called by his many faithful, "The merciful one of Yamama."

His Mecca to him was a haram or sacred enclave in Yamama, called the Ar-Rahman's walled garden (hadiqa ar-rahman), which he had captured before the conquest of Mecca by Muhammad. This made him able to control a vast area of eastern Arabia, larger than that held by Muhammad at the time besides.

Musaylima did not deny the prophetic mission of Muhammad, he considered him the great prophet of the tribal confederation of the Quraysh in Mecca, but only wished to come with him to a kind of role sharing, Muhammad dealing with the regions of Mecca and Yathrib / Medina, himself taking care of the center and the east of Arabia.

In 633 the Muslims who wanted to put an end to this pre-Nicaean Monophysite Christianity which opposed their extension to the east, besieged his bastion of the Yamama (the Haram of Ar-Rahman) and Musaylima died in his kaaba to him on the occasion of the last fights, the weapon in his hand (yes, it was there that he had preferred to withdraw in order to protect the sanctuary rather than in his fortress located not far, a mistake which was fatal to him apparently).

All the faithful of Musaylima did not immediately become "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.

NB. Our fellow Muslims will forgive I hope that we did not give much credit to the insults with which they shower the unfortunate defeated (it is the ABC of the job of the objective historian) and that we strive instead to straighten out all partial or biased information of which he has been a victim since its defeat (woe to the vanquished said Brennus), our only religion not being that of the single god but that of the at least factual, truth. What is in the hearts of men his creatures, God alone knows, in our opinion, and it is left to him besides.

We can bet that if Musaylima had prevailed, the number of hadiths in the glory of his person would equal that of the hadiths idolizing Muhammad (isma), that there would be some to present Muhammad as a jealous poor liar ready to do anything in order to establish his supremacy and that his kaaba to him (his hadiqa ar-Rahman) would not have become a death garden (hadiqa al-mawt) but instead a great center of pilgrimage, still alive.

What strikes us nevertheless and at first sight is the resemblance of the careers of both prophets (the true one and the false one) as well as a large number of common points between their religious practices ... the reception of the revelation through archangel Gabriel, the possession of miraculous powers, the healing of the sick, and especially the use of the language of the saj (rhymed Arabic prose used since always by the soothsayers and other sacred personages in Arabia to express the revelations received in a supernatural way). Finally, it should be noted, moreover, that al-Rahman, the God of Musaylima, has become one of the most used names to designate God in the Quran. What a strange revenge for the vanquished! Which brings us back to where we started.

ABROGATOR AND ABROGATED IN THE QURAN (OR THE FALSIFICATION OF THE QURAN).

By Father Zakaria Boutros

Why return to this rule of abrogation, which we have already mentioned before? Because the rule of abrogation has practical, concrete consequences.

Below, for example, are some mansukh or abrogated verses (in fact all Meccan verses, when Muhammad was in opposition).

- 1) Chapter 2 verse 256: "There is no compulsion in religion."
- 2) Chapter 3 verse 20: "If they turn away, your duty is only to convey the Message".
- 3) Chapter 4 verse 63: "So turn aside from them, but admonish them."
- 4) Chapter 4 verse 81: "So turn aside from them, and put your trust in God."
- 5) Chapter 5 verse 13: "Forgive them, and overlook their misdeeds."
- 6) Chapter 6 verse 107: "We have not made you a watcher over them nor are you set over them to dispose of their affairs."
- 7) Chapter 7 verse 199: "Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the foolish."
- 8) Chapter 8 verse 61: "But if they incline to peace, you also incline to it."
- 9) Chapter 10 verse 99: "So, will you then compel mankind, until they become believers."
- 10) Chapter 13 verse 40: "Your duty is only to convey the Message and on us is the reckoning."
- 11) Chapter 15 verse 85: "So overlook their faults with gracious forgiveness."
- 12) Chapter 20 verse 130: "So bear patiently on what they say."
- 13) Chapter 35 verse 23: "You are only a Warner."
- 14) Chapter 41 verse 34: "Repel with one which is better."
- 15) Chapter 70 verse 5: "Be patient, with a good patience."
- 16) Chapter 73 verse 10: "Be patient with what they say, and keep away from them in a good way."
- 17) Chapter 88 verse 22: "You are not a dictator over them".
- 18) Chapter 109 verse 6: "To you be your religion, and to me my religion."

Why come back to the subject? Because the abrogation theory in the Muslim religion is fundamental, and it is impossible to understand a staunch practicing believer of this religion without having a thorough knowledge of this doctrine which is as important as the practice of *taqiyya*. You can indeed understand in a given way such or such passage of the Quran and make it a precept of life while it has been abrogated by another verse.

There are totally contradictory texts in the Quran, and the Quran itself admits it, moreover, unique or almost, case, among our sacred books (those of the human species), and it is besides an excellent example of what the collective psychology of Islam is. "Will they not then ponder on the Quran? If it had been from other than God they would have found therein much incongruity" (chapter 4 "the women," verse 82).

This phenomenon was noticed by the people of Korish in Mecca remained skeptical regarding Muhammad or members of his opponents as they said: don't you see Muhammad is bringing to his followers a commandment, then he cancels it and orders them to do something else? Today he says something, and next day he cancels it "....that's was also said the Jewish of Yathreb/Medina (Sayed Al-Kemny in his book *Islameyat* (Islamic issues) page 568).

Some testimonies also suggest that Muhammad may have been the first to use the concept of abrogation.

Sayed Al-Kemny (in his book *Islameyat* page 589) conveyed what was said by Al-Zahry: Abu-Imama told methat a group of the prophet's followers (PUH) told him that one of them wake up in the middle of the night wishing to recite a chapter of Quran he had memorized, he couldn't remember any of its verses except "in the name of God the most gracious, most merciful" so he came to the prophet (PUH) in the morning asking him about that chapter, others also came to him concerning the same matter, they all asked him, then he remained silent for an hour, then replied them saying "that was abrogated yesterday" (see Jamal Al-Din Ibn Al-Jozy: *the abrogates of the Quran*, page 589), The difficulty was solved by Muslim exegetes and theologians. The origin of the Abrogator and Abrogated concept in the Quran came indeed from the following verses.

The cow chapter 2:106: "Whatever verse do we abrogate or cause to be forgotten, we bring a better one or Similar to it"

The Bees chapter 16:101: "And when We change a Verse in place of another, and God knows the best of what He sends down, they say: "You are but a liar." Nay, but most of them do not know."

Thunder Chapter 13: 39: "God blots out what He wills and confirms what He wills. And with Him is the Mother (origin) of the book."

The Pilgrimage Chapter 22:52: " God abrogates that which Satan throws in."

When two verses contradict each other, the verse revealed last repeals therefore (deletes) the verse revealed first. Hence the importance in Islam of knowing whether a verse can be considered Meccan, that is to say revealed to Muhammad during his life in Mecca, or Medinan, that is to say revealed to Muhammad at the end of his life while he was governing Yathrib / Medina. This principle based on chronology is basic good sense that elementary common sense that is so lacking today in the West. Naskh, an-naskh, invalidation, abrogation, is therefore the technical expression designating the principle according to which Muhammad's visions abrogate (or change) others. The abrogated verse in this case is called "mansukh," the one that abrogates is called "nasikh." The abrogated verse (mansukh) is not regarded as erroneous, but as outdated or no longer relevant to the situation, in short subordinate to the abrogating verse (nasikh) considered to be more appropriate. This principle is referred to in the Quran itself, in verse 106 of chapter 2, 39 of chapter 13, 101 of chapter 16 and 52 of chapter 22. The important for who wants to understand Islam (who does not want to die ignorant) is therefore to well see what the verses that have been abrogated in this way are and which ones, therefore, must be applied. The problem is that the dating established by the scholars of Islam, and admitted today universally in this religion; made all tolerant and moderate verses, without any exception (those of Mecca), abrogated verses, and all the more intolerant, more violent, even warmongering verses, also without exception (those of Medina), abrogating verses (Peter DeLaCrau-religion.com - 2003-2005).

POINT OF VIEW OF A PIOUS MUSLIM *.

The practice of abrogation is a strong point of the Holy Quran, conferring on an absolute text a teaching method adapted to the relativity of the human condition. There are many contradictory verses in the Quran. This ambivalence allows Muslims to adopt their own "divine guidance," according to their inclinations. Those who love tolerance may quote excerpts from the Holy Quran that call for tolerance, and the impatient ones may quote others. Everyone can find what he wants in this wonderful book, which proves that it is in itself a TOTALITY, the miracle of the Quran, that's it!

The Religion-portal. com - 2003-2005.

Ibn Kathir mentioned in his exegesis (Tafsir part 1, page 104) narrated ibn-Garir a commented on the verse (whatever a verse do we abrogate....): this means transforming the lawful into unlawful and the unlawful into lawful, the permissible into impermissible and the impermissible into permissible.

There are therefore several categories of abrogated verses.

First category.he verses that are preserved in the very text of the Quran, but no have no longer any normative value.

In other words, such verses are considered invalid and their teaching worthless, though still appearing in the Quran.

Second category.The verses abrogated both in their precepts and in their calligraphy or recitation. In other words, they are verses that have disappeared even though they have been revealed to Muhammad. They no longer appear in the Quran, but are only mentioned by some hadiths. For the Muslim theologians, therefore, there are verses that have disappeared from the Quran, and are therefore never read again, but which nonetheless keep all their normative value.

Example the stoning of the adulterous and adulteress.

The very type of an abrogated verse removed from the Quran but whose validity remains according Sayed Al-Kemny and many others.

It did exist in the Quran indeed, at least according to the hadiths, of course, since these verses are no longer in the current text.

Imama Ibn-Sahl narrated that his aunt said that: the prophet of God (PUH) recited to us the stoning verse:" the sheikh (adulterous man), and sheikhah (adulteress woman) if they committed adultery, stone them, as a recompense of what they had committed of pleasure." But that verse is no more existing in the current Quran (see Jalal Al-Din Al-Suyuti: the perfection in the Quran's sciences part 2, page 26).

Sayed Al-Kemny mentioned the references for that story they are: Ibn-Kathir: the beginning and the end, part 7, page 83 and Abdul-Mohsen Sharaf Al-Din Al-Mosawy: AL-Nas Wa I Ijtihad, page 259.

Omer Ibn Al-Khatib said: God sent Mohammed (PUH) telling the truth , and gave him the book , of the verses revealed to him the stoning verse , so we recited , understood and realized it , the prophet (PUH) had stoned , and we stoned

with him (that's the stoning verse as mentioned by Omer : " the sheikh (adulterous man), and sheikhah (adulteress woman) if they committed adultery ,stone them " . Omer affirmed that saying: "I was about to write it by my own hands , but I didn't do that fearing that one may say that I wrote something in God's book."

One may ask, of course, what this story has to do with the abrogator and abrogated.

I say the relationship between the two is that Omer was acting in the light of an abrogated verse of the Quran that's": the sheikh (adulterous man), and sheikhah (adulteress woman) if they had committed adultery, stone them," in spite of being not written in the Quran, that's one of the dramatic examples of the abrogator and abrogated: that with abrogated calligraphy, and conserved verdict, or what is not existing in the Quran, but its verdict was still valid in Islamic Law , although Omer was trickery regarding the verdict of that verse , as he pushed the man to give a fake testimony for acquitting the accused.

According to Sayed Al-Kemny in his book Islameyat (Islamic issues) page 572, narrated on Ibn Al-Jozy in his book (the Quran abrogators page 35).

Sahih Bukhari. Volume 8, Book 82, Hadith N° 817.

Narrated Ibn `Abbas:... Umar sat on the pulpit and when the call makers for the prayer had finished their call, Umar stood up, and having glorified and praised God as He deserved, he said, "Now then, I am going to tell you...among what God revealed, was the Verse of the Rajam (the stoning of married person (male & female) who commits illegal sexual intercourse, and we did recite this verse and understood and memorized it. God's Messenger did carry out the punishment of stoning and so did we after him. But I am afraid that after a long time has passed, somebody will say, 'By God, we do not find the Verse of the Rajam in God's Book,' and thus they will go astray by leaving an obligation which God has revealed. But the punishment of the Rajam is to be inflicted to any married person (male & female), who commits illegal sexual intercourse, if the required evidence is available or there is conception or confession. And then we used to recite among the Verses in God's Book: 'O people! Do not claim to be the offspring of other than your fathers, as it is disbelief (unthankfulness) on your part that you claim to be the offspring of other than your real father.' And God's Messenger said, 'Do not praise me excessively as Jesus, son of Mary was praised, but...."

Sahih Muslim Volume 4, Book 17, Hadith 4206.

He (the Holy Prophet) entrusted the child to one of the Muslims and then pronounced punishment. And she was put in a ditch up to her chest and he commanded people and they stoned her. Khalid b Walid came forward with a stone which he flung at her head and there spurted blood on the face of Khalid and so he abused her. God's Apostle (may peace be upon him) heard his (Khalid's) curse that he had hurled upon her. Thereupon he (the Holy Prophet) said: Khalid, be gentle. By Him in Whose Hand is my life, she has made such a repentance that even if a wrongful tax collector were to repent, he would have been forgiven. Then giving command regarding her, he prayed over her and she was buried."

God or Devil thank you, this divine verse has been repealed or even withdrawn from the Holy Book. Another example, but diametrically opposed, of verse removed from the Quran: the adult who sucks the breast of a woman.

Actually, the adult sucking is a very strange story in the Quran, Sayed Al-Kemny says about it: the adult sucking is another example for the verses that are abated from the Quran, and now it is not existing in it, but it's still valid.

According to Aisha, the verse that originally mentioned ten sucking was replaced by a verse about five sucking, which they then recited with the Quran. Imam Abu-Jafar An-Nahhas confirmed that in his book (the abrogator and abrogated) saying that " Aisha was persistently admitting the existence of the adult sucking ."

Ibn-Al-Jawzi narrated the story of adult sucking in his book (the Quran abrogates page 37). Aisha would have said: the adult sucking verse, was under my bed , when the prophet (PUH) was sick ,we were very busy looking after him ,then a goat ate it , then the prophet (PUH) died that verse is among the recited Quran verses."

Aisha explained this very strange story of the adult sucking frankly! It was mentioned by Abu-Jafar Al-Nahhas in his book (the abrogator and abrogated, page 124) as he said: Sahla , the daughter of Sohil came to the prophet (PUH) saying: I had seen my husband (Abe Hozifa) is upset as he sees Salem (a servant of them) coming to e, the prophet (PUH), told her then you suckle him (meaning that to let Salem suck from you, in order to let him be like a son to you , so you wouldn't be able to sleep with him , so your husband will not be upset from him anymore!!!), she replied but how could I suckle a grown-up man ?, the prophet (PUH) said : I know well that he is a grown-up man ". And the story is saying that Sahla came later(after doing that act) telling him : really prophet of God , I didn't see in my husband's face anything I hate anymore!!!

Aisha knew about that way, Orowa said that she (Aisha) was asking her sister Om-Kalthoum, and her brother's

daughters to suckle the men, she wished to let them come to her.

Third category. Lastly, there are verses of the Quran that have been repealed both in their precepts and in their letter, calligraphy or recitation and whose existence is mentioned only by some traditions.

In other words, these passages have been removed from the Quran and no longer have normative values as in the case of the famous Satanic verses.

Abu-Baker Al-Razy commented on the chapter of (That with abrogated verdict and recitation) saying: God is doing that through causing them to be forgotten and he was removing them from their memory and ordering them not to recite or write them in the Quran, so by time they will be perished (see Jalal Al-Din Al Suyuti : the perfection in the Quran's sciences part 2,page 26). The question here is: why did God give those verses if he is going to cause them to be forgotten?

This commentary by Abu-Baker Al-Razy is a very good illustration of what the collective psychology of Islam is.

Of the 114 chapters of the Quran, it is estimated that about 70 out of 114 chapters of the Quran are concerned. 25 contain both repealing verses and repealed verses, 6 only repealing verses, and only 40 repealed verses. Estimates of the number of these repealed verses range from 150 to 550 (according to Father Zakaria BOUTROS, extrapolating from data provided by Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Ibiary in his book titled: The History of the Quran, p. 168).

Many doctors of Islam have also agreed to divide the abrogating verses and the abrogated verses into the following categories. Passivity with regard to aggression, authorization to fight against aggressors, order to fight aggressors, order to fight all non-Muslims, whether they commit aggression or not. The strength of Muslims being the only parameter to take into account for this.

Below, on the other hand, are some examples of nasikh or abrogating verses (Median verses, when Muhammad led the city).

Chapter 47, verse 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. That (is the ordinance). And if God willed He could have punished them (without you) but (thus it is ordained) that He may try some of you by means of others. And those who are slain in the way of God, He does not render their actions vain [they will be rewarded in the next world]".

Chapter 4 verse 89. " If they turn back then take them and kill them wherever you find them."

The most important of the abrogating verses is the one that it called "the word verse" (ayat as-sayf).

Quran, chapter 9, verse 5.

Slay the associators wherever you find them, and take them (captive), and besiege them, and prepare for them each ambush. But if they repent and establish worship and pay the zakat, then leave their way free. Lo! God is Forgiving, Merciful.

Tafsir of Peter DeLaCrau.

The Arabic verb used (fa-*uq'tulu*) clearly means to kill.

The word "associator" in the lands of Islam designates any person associating other gods with "God," clearly pagans, polytheists or henotheists, including druidicists, without forgetting the Wiccans, as well as Christians admitting the notion of Holy Trinity (God the Father God the Son and God the Holy Spirit Amen).

Muslim scholars like Ibn Salama (who died in 1020) agree that this verse of the Quran repeals some 124 more peaceful Meccan verses, as well as " every other verse in the Quran, which commands or implies anything less than a total offensive against the non-believers."

But in this respect the following verse is also quoted.

Quran, chapter 9, verse 29.

Fight against those who do not believe in God, nor in the Last Day, nor forbid that which has been forbidden by God and his Messenger and those who do not acknowledge the religion of truth among the people of the Scripture, until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel subdued.

Tafsir of Peter DeLaCrau.

Therefore Jews and Christians. The Arabic verb used (the imperative of *qatala*, the same verb that was used in verse 5, *qatilu* in this case) refers to the notion of combat but in the strongest sense of the term, possibly implying death.

On that last verse Zakaria Boutros mention for us the exegesis of Imam Al-Nasfy, then the exegesis of Imam Ibn Kathir.

1). Al-Nasfy said in his exegesis, part 2, pages 177,178:" Fight against those who do not believe in God, those who do not acknowledge the religion of truth: i.e., do not believe in Islam, which is the religion of truth..." among the people of the Scripture (a description of those who preceded, Jews and Christians)..."until they pay the Jizyah(a tribute paid by non-Muslims living in a Muslim State) i.e., as a recompense for their disbelief..." and feel subdued."

Meaning that they will pay it while being humiliated, i.e., one should bring the Jizyah(tribute), by himself, walking, not riding and delivering it himself while he is standing and the receiving one is sitting,

and hold the hoop around his neck or his garment saying pay the Jizyah (tribute),O zummy (Jew or Christian), shaking him and slapping him on the back of his neck.

2) Ibn Kathir said (volume 2, pages 135, 136) commenting on that verse:" Fight against those who do not believe in God, ".....this noble verse came in the beginning, to fight the people of the Scripture...as the prophet of God ordered to fight the people of the two Scriptures, the Jews and Christians, that was on the ninth year of Hijri calendar

"Until they pay the Jizyah(tribute), with willing submission" i.e. "through conquering and subduing them" and "and feel subdued." i.e... Being humiliated, despicable and degraded, so it is not allowed to support the people of Zima (the Jews and Christians) and never to lift them over the Muslims, as they are humiliated, inferior, feeble and wretched. As mentioned in Sahih Muslim," Don't start the Jews and Christians with salutation, if you encounter one of them in your way, force him to its narrowest part " so the prince (amir) of believers Omer Bin Al-Khatab(may God be pleased with him) had put those known stipulations in humiliating, degrading and conquering them

Sahih Muslim. The Book of Greetings Book 39 hadith 16.

Chapter: The Prohibition Of Initiating The Greeting With The People Of The Book, And How To Respond To Them.

Abu Huraira reported God's Messenger as saying: « Do not greet the Jews and the Christians before they greet you and when you meet any one of them on the roads force him to go to the narrowest part of it.

* Very good illustration of the collective psychology of Islam.

SUMMARY ABROGATING OR ABROGATED VERSES. AL-NASIKH WAL MANSUKH.

The Quran is an erratic text, abstruse, unscientific, and overflowing with contradictions.

It gives rise to multiple interpretations that are due to its progressive development in the turbulent background of the life of Muhammad (wars and truces, alliances and separations); as well as to its writing in a language that only a minority of scholars understands today.

The Quran establishes what is good and what is evil: more prosaically, it details precisely the rules of life in society, including the war law, trade law, family law, and hygiene. It is therefore never a question of using personal reflection (tafkir) which is already heresy or any morality. That's good, because the Quran says it, and it's evil because the Quran says it too, and too bad if it's shocking! What matters is submission to the divine will (the great Jaures must roll over in his grave!)

The Quran orders to submit to God (to submit to oneself is said aslama in Arabic, from this word comes Islam, name of the religion founded by Muhammad, as well as that of Muslim, current name of the faithful of Muhammad).

Islam is a religion of absolute submission to a deity. Muslim "prayer" is not a prayer in the Latin and Western sense of the term. The Muslim would not dare to pray to God, to ask him anything. He prostrates himself, he "worships," he submits (to the so-called divine will).

Such a design, impervious to all evolution, is not without raising enormous problems in a social and historical background that has become very different. Islam is not Islamism, Muslims and especially Muslim women are the first victims of it. Just as Jews are the first victims of the alienation that is Judaism.

In most cases, the verses, considered in isolation, are meaningless in themselves. We can then make them say anything, because the text is full of many contradictions.

Just as in the Jewish Bible (Old Testament) for any text saying "white," we can find corresponding passages affirming the "black," or others that recommend it only. And conversely.

What the theologians of Islam call the abrogating verses (nasikh) and the abrogated verses (mansukh). Just as in the case of the Jewish Bible or Torah, it often happens that Muslims, like Judeo-Christians, quote only the "white" passages relating to a subject, ignoring the verses, let us say darker ones, referring to the same theme.

Or the verses saying "black" will be given as the (immutable) "truth" and those who advocate the "white" will be considered as "another truth," but dated or outdated.

Muslims are often heard to claim that the Quran can only be understood by Muslims. Some go even further, saying that only "imams" can understand and comment on it.

Such claims are misleading and therefore do not resist a serious analysis. They are used only to deny any right, even theoretical, to non-Muslims, to study the Quran, and to analyze it, all the more reason, to criticize it.

Denying non-Muslims the right to study the Quran is unacceptable; since this book contains a considerable number of verses which are nothing more than comments of the Mohammedan Arabs on the Torah or the New Testament.

Indeed, many verses of the Quran, constituting by the book attacks against other religions, which formed the basis of the beliefs of the peoples in the Middle East at the time when Muhammad had his "hallucinations." The Quran is a violently anti-atheist, anti-agnostic, anti-pagan, anti-philosophy, anti-Jewish, work.

But if the Quran has been transcribed, it is precisely to be read by individuals who, a priori, did not know its meaning, no? It is enough to know how to read to understand the meaning of the chapters and of the verses which, according to the Quranic Law, are to be considered as they are written.

Quranic exegesis is relatively easy and falls just under common sense. A Christian, a Buddhist, a druid of Uderzo or in the manner of John Toland, or even an atheist - if he knows how to read - can understand the Quran in the same way as a man born in Islamic land. But he will be much more objective regarding the text. He will be in no way blinded by "traditions" as are "born" Muslims.

THE PROBLEM OF QURANIC CONTRADICTIONS.

Muhammad has always been very, how to say ??? Well, let's say "very pragmatic" (forger or liar are the words used by his opponents in the Holy Quran itself, but now). Let us say that he often put himself into practice the future Muslim principle of abrogation, on divine order, of course.

Some verses of the Quran are therefore contradictory.

EXAMPLE.

Verses on the wine. They contradict each other and without chronological order, it is difficult to know which ones should ultimately be applied.

Chapter 16 verse 67. Of the fruits of the date palm, and grapes, whence you derive strong drink and (also) good nourishment. Lo! therein is indeed a portent for people who have sense. Therefore wine and must of date are allowed.

Chapter 4 verse 43. Draw not near unto prayer when you are drunken [it is a minimum indeed] till you know that which you utter."

Therefore what is condemned is excess alcohol, drunkenness.

Chapter 2 verse 219. Strong drink and games of chance. In both is great sin, and (some) utility for men; their sin is greater than their usefulness.

Chapter 5 verse 90. Strong drink and games of chance and stone tables (ansab) and divining arrows (belomancy) are only an infamy of Satan's handiwork. Leave it aside in order that you may succeed.

OTHER EXAMPLES.

The verses that preach tolerance (Meccan period) are, to a large extent, contradicted by the verses that advocate violence and intolerance (verses revealed in Medina).

The verse of the sword or ayat as-sayf (Chapter 9, verse 5: "Kill the infidels, wherever you find them") contradicts for example the 124 Meccan verses more or less preaching tolerance and of which here is a very good example; chapter 109 on the problem of non-believers, which is part of the very first Meccan chapters. This chapter, in six verses, expressly states: "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 "(in other words open and positive secularism, let everyone do what he wants).

This beautiful Mecca program characterized by tolerance and open or positive secularism, and which actually constituted a very good start; is unfortunately repeatedly contradicted by many later nassikh verses, like those of chapter No. 10 quoted above (verse number 5).

Chapter 2, verse 217. "Warfare in the sacred month. Warfare therein is a great (transgression), but to turn (men) from the way of God, and to disbelieve in Him and in the Inviolable Place of Worship, and to expel His people thence, is a greater with God ."

Chapter 4 verses 71 to 77. "Advance the proven ones, or advance all together. How should you not fight for the cause of God? So fight the minions of the devil, the Hereafter will be better for him who wards off (evil)".

But the later verses logically cancel the older verses called "mansukh" when they are impossible to implement simultaneously. The fundamental problem in the lands of Islam in the event of contradiction is therefore to know which verse is revealed last, since the Quran does not classify the verses chronologically, but by size (from the biggest to the smallest).

TAQIYYA.

The sweet and smart people who make the opinion in our country (vicars, rabbis, parish priests, lawyers, doctors, architects, writers, and journalists or "responsible," of course, politicians) do not really know what is a sect is today, do not know the difference very well that there can be between cultural and religious. Let us go to their rescue by proposing them the following definition: the sect is the group that you cannot leave after having entered it except in a coffin *.

"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, Psychology of crowds). So there are collective psychologies, that of organized, structured crowds, but it is important to distinguish. The collective psychology of Nazism as an organized or structured crowd was not that of the members of the Nazi Party going from Hitler to Schindler. The collective psychology of Judaism is not that of Christianity and both are different from the collective psychology of paganism of two thousand years ago in this part of the world.

We will be retorted that Quran proclaims a religion of tolerance and the following verses will be invoked: "To you be your religion, and to me my religion" (109 : 6) or "no compulsion in religion" (2: 256), but these verses have only the appearance of tolerance, in regard to the order to kill those who change their religion. "" If they turn back then take them and kill them wherever you find them" (4: 89). So the question for our moral and political authorities is whether they are prepared to protect citizens from danger? The Frenchman Michel Lelong **and the German television channel ARTE often quote the verses of the Quran forming calls for peace or concord between "believers"; but while forgetting to point out that, in the mouth of Muhammad, as in all the Quran besides, the word "believer" only refers to the true believers, according to him, that is to say the Muslims! Verses 9-10, like verse 11, of chapter 49, to name but two, do not concern peace between religions and people of different faiths! Using these verses as trees for the wood, proves how much Father Michel Lelong ** and ARTE are? are ? Here again, we lack words to objectively describe the harm that such a speech can bring. (Because at this point, it cannot even be stupidity!) This kind of "automatic translator of the Quran" in reality contributes to seriously distorting the image that one must to have of the Muslim religion, in the eyes of those who are officially sweet and smart. And God knows that there are some of them at the controls of our country! (Editor's note. This is a classification of individuals in which do not fit, neither those who are sweet and stupid, or wicked and smart, even stupid and wicked, like us).

Taqiyya is an Islamic principle derived from a passage in the Quran (chapter 16 verse 106) that allows a Muslim living in a hostile environment to hide his beliefs, or to express certain forms of allegiance to kuffars; even in extreme cases, such as torture, to utter kufr's words if it is required from him, for God forgives what is said or done under duress. We are there polar opposite to the fanaticism of the first martyrs of Christianity who preferred to die (see fourth-century Donatist crisis in North Africa).

Here is what this verse of the Quran says: " Whosoever disbelieves in God after his belief - save him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with the Faith - but whosoever finds ease in disbelief: On them is wrath from God" (Quran , 16: 106).

In other words, he who is compelled to come to this extreme, while his heart remains full with the serenity of the Muslim faith, does not commit a sin, thus apparently denying his belief. Which, after all, is still more sensible than the immoderate taste for martyrdom, of certain Christians, refusing to take an oath to the Emperor, or to offer a sacrifice in his honor (see Tertullian and our essay on Christianity).

The 28th verse of chapter 3 of the Quran is often regarded as another passage in the Quran advocating dissimulation from non-Muslims or heretics.

Quran, chapter 3, verse 28. " Let not the believers take disbelievers for their friends in preference to believers. Whosoever does that has no connection with God (it be) that you but guard yourselves against them, taking (as it were) security."

Al-Tabari explains the meaning of Sura 3:28 in the following Tafsir: If you (Muslims) are under their (infidels) authority, fearing for yourselves, behave loyally to them, with your tongue, while harboring inner animosity for them... God has forbidden believers from being friendly or on intimate terms with the infidels in place of believers – except when infidels are above them in authority. In such a scenario, let them act friendly towards them."

Another renowned Muslim scholar, Ibn Kathir also wrote the following commentary on the meaning of Sura 3:28: 'O you who believe! Take not the Jews and the Christians as friends, they are but friends of each other. And whoever befriends them, then surely, he is one of them' (Sura 5:51). God said next,

'Unless you indeed fear a danger from them,' meaning, except those who in some areas or times fear for their safety from the disbelievers. In this case, such believers are allowed to show friendship to the disbelievers outwardly (but never inwardly).

Abu Ad-Darda narrated: "Let us smile to the face of some people while our hearts curse them." Al-Hassan: "Doing taqiyya is acceptable till the day of judgment." (Tafsir Ibn Kathir on Sura 3:28)

The fundamental importance of Taqiyya in Islam is also acknowledged in another authoritative Islamic source known as Al-Taqiyya Fi Al-Islam: "Taqiyya is of fundamental importance in Islam. Practically every Islamic sect agrees to it and practices it. We can go so far as to say that the practice of taqiyya is mainstream in Islam, and that those few sects not practicing it diverge from the mainstream...Taqiyya is very prevalent in politics, especially in the modern era."

From the commandment of God recorded in Sura 3:28, we can clearly deduce that Muslims are permitted to lie and act deceptively towards non-Muslims. And this conclusion is supported by the Tafsirs of prominent Muslim scholars. The Quran teaches that it is permissible for Muslims to literally deny their faith in order to protect themselves."

The rules and limits of taqiyya have been clearly defined by the fuqaha (the jurists of Islam). Taqiyya as it is conceived nevertheless poses a whole series of problems from the point of view of morality. Abu'Abdullah al-Qurtubi (1214-1273) and Muhyid ibn al-Arabi (1165-1240), for example, extended to the actions themselves the principle of taqiyya being based on the behavior of Muhammad himself in Medina, particularly with regard to the "political" assassination of the unfortunate Kaab ibn Ashraf (see our chapter of the volume 3 on the subject :the intellectuals named Abu Afak, Asma Bint Marwan, Ibn Sunna and finally Sallam Abu Rafi) .

The other best known political assassination of the era is undoubtedly that of Kaab Ibn Ashraf, one of the great Arabic poets of his time. Ashraf was a man from the Tayy tribe, his mother a Banu Nadir. He was therefore half Jewish. 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 was perhaps having accompanied some of his satires with verses teasing the women in question (including those of Muhammad?) The non-Muslims of Yathrib / Medina were regaled with his poems spread throughout the city. Muhammad, however, ordered his assassination, but again in an indirect way, by exclaiming: "Who will rid me from Kaab ibn Ashraf? The desire expressed by Muhammad was received as an order by several Muslims, including the poet's own foster brother.

Ibn Hisham, the life of Muhammad by A. Guillaume.

Kaab 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.

"Badr's mill ground out the blood of its people [..].

How many noble handsome men,

The refuge of the homeless were slain,

Liberal when the stars gave no rain,

Who bore others' burdens..."

Then Kaab returned to Medina and wrote erotic poems about certain Muslim women. To be fashionable and talk like today in France it seems that the poor harassed sexually Muslim women in the street and did not respect women.

The episode, largely developed by Ibn Ishaq, is unbearable with cruelty horror and sadism. Below is what Tabari says in History of the Prophets and Kings.

"The Prophet said one day, "Who will rid me of Ibn al-Ashraf?"

Muhammad b. Maslamah said, "I will rid you of him, O Messenger of God. I will kill him."

"Do it then," he said, "if you can.

" Muhammad b. Maslamah went back and remained for three days, neither eating nor drinking more than would keep him alive. The Messenger of God got to hear of this, so he summoned him and said to him, "Why have you left off food and drink?"

"O Messenger of God," he said, "I said something, and I do not know whether or not I can fulfill it."

"All that you are obliged to do is try," he replied.

"O Messenger of God," he said, we shall have to tell lies."

"Say what you like," he replied. "You are absolved in the matter."

Then Muhammad b. Maslamah, Silkan b. Salamah b. Waqsh, otherwise known as Abu Na'ilah, and the foster brother of Ka'b, 'Abbad b. Bishr b. Waqsh.....made a plan to kill him.

Before they all went to Ibn al-Ashraf, they sent ahead Silkan b. Salamah Abu Na'ilah and they spoke together for a while, and recited verses to one another.....

It was a moonlit night, and they went all forward until they reached Ka'b's stronghold. Then Abu Na'ilah called out to him.

He had recently married, but he leaped up in his blanket. His wife took hold of one end of it, and said, "You are a fighting man; a man of war does not leave his house at an hour like this." He replied, "It is Abu Na'ilah. If he had found me sleeping, he would not have wakened me." "By God," she said, "I sense evil in his voice!"

Then Ka'b said to her, "Even if a brave man is summoned to a sword thrust, he responds." He went down his room and spoke with them for a while, and they spoke with him. Then they said to him, "Would you like to walk with us, Ibn al-Ashraf, to Shi'b al- 'Ajuz, so that we can talk there for the rest of the night?"

"If you like," he said. So they set out together and walked for a while.

Then Abu Na'ilah thrust his hand into the hair of his temple, smelled, and said, "I have never known perfume to smell so good as it does tonight."

Then he walked on for a while, and did the same thing again, so that Ka'b relaxed his guard. Then he walked on for a while, and did it again, taking hold of the hair of both temples. Then he said, "Strike the enemy of God!"

Their swords rained blows upon him, but to no avail.

Muhammad b. Maslamah said later, "When I saw that our swords were of no avail, I remembered a long, thin dagger which I had in my scabbard, and took hold of it. By this time the enemy of God had shouted so loudly that lamps had been lit in all the strongholds around us. I plunged the dagger into his breast and pressed upon it so heavily that it reached his pubic region, and the enemy of God fell.

Al-Harith b. Aws b. Mu'adh had been wounded in the head or the leg, struck by one of our swords. We left, passing through the quarters of the Banu Umayyah b. Zayd and the Banu Qurayzah....Al-Harith b. Aws was lagging behind us, bleeding heavily, so we waited for him for a while, and then he came to us, having followed in our footsteps.

We lifted him up and carried him to the Messenger of God at the end of the night. He was standing in prayer, so we greeted him, and he came out to meet us. We told him that the enemy of God had been killed, he spat upon the wound of our companion, and we returned to our families.

The next morning, the Jews were in a state of fear on account of our attack upon the enemy of God, and there was not a Jew there but feared for his life.

The Messenger of God said, "Whoever of the Jews falls into your hands, kill him."

So Muhayyisah b. Mas'ud fell upon Ibn Sunaynah, one of the Jewish merchants who was on close terms with them and used to trade with them, and killed him.

Huwayyisah b. Mas'ud (his brother) at that time had not yet accepted Islam,- he was older than Muhayyisah, and when (the latter) killed (the Jew), he began beating him and saying, "Damn you, have you killed him? By God, you have much fat in your belly from his wealth."

Muhayyisah said, "I said to him, 'By God, if he who commanded me to kill him had commanded me to kill you, I would have cut off your head.' "

And, by God, that was the beginning of Huwayyisah's acceptance of Islam. He said, "If Muhammad had ordered you to kill me, you would have killed me?" and I replied, "Yes, by God, if he had ordered me to kill you I would have cut off your head." "By God," he said, "a religion which has brought you to this is indeed a marvel."

It is the least that you can say. What is shocking in this sad news item is that we were not at war. Because it goes without saying that deceiving the enemy during a war is a matter of common sense, but such dissimulation nevertheless raises a whole series of ethical dilemmas. According to Abu'Abdullah al-qurtubi and Muhyid ibn al-Arabi, Muslims are therefore entitled to behave like infidels and even worse - for example by prostrating themselves before idols or crosses and by adoring them, by making false witness and even by revealing to the unfaithful enemy the weaknesses of their Muslim brethren - as long as they do not go so far as to personally kill a Muslim.

We do not approve of the fanaticism of the first Christian martyrs like Polycarp in Smyrna or Saints Perpetua and Felicity in Carthage; and we are not among those who stupidly condemn the Muslim principle of taqiyya because we distinguish two very different situations carefully in this case: defense and proselytism.

Any concealment maneuver is legitimate if it is to defend oneself or to preserve oneself, if life (and goods?) are really threatened (in the case when you would tell the truth). Among the Shiites, taqiyya is besides a principle that guides them permanently as soon as they are confronted with someone who does not share their beliefs.

There could very well be a druidic or neo-pagan taqyya in such cases, the heroism of martyrdom (kission) being in no way demanded from anyone, in case of religious persecution, only voluntary fighters or professional militaries.

On the other hand, we strongly condemn the recourse to the dissimulation called taqiyya if neither the life nor the property of the believer are involved, when it is simply a matter of proselytism or non-military jihad. To resort to deception not in a defensive way but in an active way, while nothing threatens your life or your possessions, in order to convince unbelievers and to facilitate the conversions, is contrary to the Reda that is to say to the principles of any a little bit coherent druidic ethics.

* John of Damascus (676-749) once described Islam as the 101st Christian sect.

** Father Michel Lelong is not Father Zakaria Boutros.

SINS AND PECCADILLOS.

Let's say it immediately, Islam is very similar to Christianity on one point, the importance given to Faith more than works, even if the importance of ritualism in this religion is not to be neglected.

The archetypal original sin, if we may say, is the fact of not totally supporting the principle of absolute monotheism known as tawhid. The conscious and knowingly intellectual acceptance of intermediaries between man and the higher being, referred to as associationism or shirk, is the only truly unforgivable sin in the lands of Islam.

The Quran condemns the "disbelievers" as well as the "false believers", called "hypocrites", but not specifically the agnostics.

Concretely, in reality, history of Muslim theology is marked of doubts like the Mu'taziism.

In the sixth century, Burzoe, minister of the Sassanid king Khosrow I, expresses his doubts concerning the truth of the religions of his time, suspecting their teachings to be meaningless, and considering believers as the victims of an illusion.

This thought influenced Islam very early on, initiating a tradition of free thought and skeptical literature that led to the skepticism of Ismaili missionaries, as well as that of Al-Ghazali in the 11th-12th century. However, the doubt in Islam does not relate to the very existence of God, but to the definition of a practice of his worship on Earth. If, as the theologians of several religions and some philosophers like Plato or Plotinus think, the feeling of the single god is innate in human nature, there is no need for proof of its existence; revelations then concern only the modes of worship to pay him, first of all, by gratitude, and incidentally to get a possible redemption in eternal life.

However, it remains possible that, in the intellectual search for God, doubt as to his very existence is temporarily tolerated by Islam (either in the context of speculative thought, or in a moment of distress), but the condition remains to result lastly in the definitive monotheism, and thus the recognition submitted to God through the teachings attributed to Muhammad his prophet. Therefore, it is more particularly atheism and the Definitive agnosticism by principle, the agnosticism known as "strong", that is to say the unwavering refusal to recognize God, which are absolutely condemned.

These are the nuances found in the high-level debates, but it is enough to see the hateful faces of some Pakistani Muslims protesting against what they call blasphemy to realize that on the ground in Islamic countries one is far from these academic debates.

This is due to the conditions of emergence specific to Islam. If Muhammad, like Jesus, lived in monotheistic circles, he would not have reacted in this way. But here, for the greatest misfortune of the world, he was born into a polytheistic family and therefore posed himself by opposing, to the extreme, given his personal character, to this type of sharing of the sphere of forces that exceed man (while admitting jinn angels and demons nevertheless to respond to the eternal realization of evil in the creation of a god almighty and all goodness).

Concretely, this idea has nevertheless been taken over by rationalist Muslim theologians (there have been some, the Mu'tazilites for example) in the form of a "religious agnosticism," which asserts the existence of an impassable gap between God and his creation that he transcends, making impossible any prediction or knowledge about Him. In this, they partially join the strong or by principle agnosticism, which advocates to completely give up the reflections on the divine one. This partial agnosticism, by reminding of the human conceptual limits, agrees on this point with the so-called revealed religions. Indeed, revelation is not defined as an objective phenomenon freely observable by all, but as a divine "confidence" only addressed to a very restricted minority of humans lucky enough to be elected and to receive revelations inaccessible humanly, by God's grace. Outside the revelation, no one has the right in this perspective to affirm – all the more so to impose - any interpretation concerning questioning by principle beyond the human understanding; so that nothing can be expected from the scientific and rational analysis of these subjects (by principle Agnosticism).

Note by the children of Peter DeLaCrau. In reality, our father wavered between atheism (facing the God of Abraham of Isaac and Jacob) strong agnosticism and pantheism. It was his personal Bermuda triangle.

Now the seven deadly sins according to today's Islam (stated by Muhammad in a hadith) are the following ones.

- 1 Polytheism and idolatry.
- 2 The magic.
- 3 Murder of a Muslim.
- 4 The refusal to wage holy war in the name of God.
- 5 Spoliation of orphans.
- 6 Usury.
- 7 Slander against married women.

N.B. Because of the accusation of adultery against Aisha, Muhammad's favorite wife. Eighty lashes, almost as much as the adultery itself, which is worth a hundred.

On the ecology, the climate change, the disappearance of animal species, the space conquest, the problem of energy sources in the world, genetic manipulation, population explosion, new diseases; and so many other crucial issues for the future of our planet and mankind, NOTHING!

But let's detail this a little bit.

The ulama distinguish great sins (kaba'ir, which are generally only erased by repentance) and small sins (sagha'ir, which are also forgiven by the accomplishment of good works).

The census of great sins remains a subject of disagreement among theologians (some number seven, others seventy). But the most accepted view is that any sin for which a punishment (here below or in the Hereafter) has been explicitly mentioned in the Quran or the hadith is a great sin. It is thus generally accepted that the kaba'ir sins are murder, theft, fornication, the false accusation of fornication (four eyewitnesses are required), the consumption of alcohol or unclean food (pork); and flight from an army of enemies during a war.

But the first of these sins, the most serious, and which is somehow a mortal sin, is first and especially the sin described as "kufr," which consists in believing in things polar opposite of the Muslim creed or tawhid. For example, today, case of both our Wiccan friends and our Indian brothers. Or Hindus.

The shirk is almost inexpiable: this fault is the most serious that can be imagined according to the Quran.

It commands bloodshed, the murder being the punishment of infidels guilty of the most serious sin: "Slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for fitna (disagreement) is worse than slaughter "(Chapter 2 : 191). " Lo! God forgives not that a partner should be ascribed unto Him. He forgives (all) save that to whom He will. Whosoever ascribes partners to God, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin "(chapter 4: 48). You will find the most vehement of mankind in hostility to those who believe (to be) the Jews and the "associators" (chapter 5 : 82).

There are three types of tawhid and therefore three ways of violating it, each forming, nevertheless, a mortal sin.

Tawhid Ar-Rububiyya (oneness of lordship or management of events).

Tawhid Al-Uluhiyya (oneness of worship).

Tawhid Al-Asma wa-s-sifat (oneness of names and attributes).

In the Quranic usage, the man to whom the message of a prophet who was destined for him has come, and who has chosen to refuse to act on it, is said to be "kafir," in other words "he who is in the kufr" .

The Quran uses the word "kufr" both in terms of not recognizing the oneness of the Higher Being, and of recognizing his oneness; but not the prophetic character of one of his envoys: see Quran 4: 150-151, 3: 32. Since the time of Muhammad, is considered "kafir" or "in kufr" any man who has knowledge of his message, but chose not to follow it; (either because he has not been convinced of his veracity, or because, although convinced in his heart, he has, for one reason or another, refused to recognize and agree with it) .

"Kufr" is a word whose etymological meaning is "veiling" which simply means not to be a Muslim.

Either you are Muslim, and then you have the beliefs that God agrees; either you are not a Muslim, and you are a "kafir."

This is why the Quran uses the words "kufr" and "kafir" both for polytheists ("mushrikoun") and for People of the Book ("ahl ul-kitab"): see Quran 2: 105, 98: 6 These words also apply to atheists ("dahriyyun").

The category of "people of the Book" refers to Jews and non-Trinitarian Christians, those who consider Jesus only as a prophet (or as the Messiah). For Christians who believe in the Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit), the opinions of Muslim Law Teachers differ. For some they are not members of the People of the Book, for others yes (according to their level of consciousness).

In the kufr, there are indeed different levels: there are "veils thicker than others": "kufr aghlaz min kufr." There are "kufr" that have more points in common with the "iman" that is to say with the true belief than others.

When they were still in Mecca and that war was raging in Asia Minor between the Byzantines of Heraclius and the Persians of Khosrau II, Muhammad and his Companions wanted the Christian Byzantines to win over the Persians; while pagan Meccans wanted the opposite. Ibn Abbas specifies that this was due to the fact that the Persians were, like the Meccans, polytheists (reported by at-Tirmidhi, n° 3193, see also n° 3194).

Ibn Ta'imiyah concludes: Whoever adheres to a religion of the book ("ahl al-kitab") is closer to the truth than the one who is polytheistic ("al-mushrikin"). And the one who is polytheistic ("al-mushrik billah") is closer to the truth than the one who is an atheist ("al-muwattil al-jahid").

On the subject of the People of the Book, Ar-Razi writes that the "kufr" of Trinitarian Christians is thicker ("aghlaz") than that of the Jews. The latter differ about the recognition of Jesus and Muhammad as prophets of God, and the first differ on the recognition of Muhammad, certainly, but also the very design of monotheism. However, ar-Razi stresses, Christians have great qualities of the heart, including a certain detachment from this world and a dedication to others that they call "charity"; which, in a different way, joins what God approves for men, and of which he reminded in his message. A Christian who knew the message of Muhammad at the time but nevertheless chose in all honesty not to agree with it, is "kafir" (even if he is Unitarian and doesn't agree with the notion of Holy Trinity); that is to say, if he has veiled his face in relation to the belief that God approves. Non-Unitarian Christians do shirk akbar, that is to say they clearly associate other deities with the Higher Being who is God, as the quoted Quranic verse has said (9 : 31) .

And Christians who practice the worship of saints practice effectively a form of shirk comparable to that of pagan polytheists ("these saints must intercede for the sinners with God"). They can relate this invocation of the saints to pure monotheism only by making a subtle distinction between "worship of latrìa" - reserved for God - and "worship of dulia" - which can be practiced with regard to the saints. The fact is that Christians have remained very attached to the belief in some of God's messengers - such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus - and to scriptures of which an important part is of divine origin; counterbalance their shirk acts, and so they are considered as People of the Book, not as polytheists, by a large number of Muslim law teachers. Ibn Taïmiya: There is no shirk in the original religion of the People of the Book) [...] but Christians have introduced shirk in it. The prophet did not say of the People of the Book that they were "polytheists" ("mushrik"), but only said that they had associated other deities with the Higher Being ("shirk"), using for this a verb. They are not, therefore, on the positions of pure monotheism, but are not like the polytheists who worship idols and call them liars (all) the envoys of God.

The fact of associating other deities with the Higher Being among the pagan Arab philosophers.

Ibn ul-Qayim: "The Arab idolaters recognized the divine oneness with regard to the management of events ("tawhid ar-rububiyya") and the idea that God is the only creator of this world; they said that if they worshiped entities separate from his being, it was in order they bring them closer to Him ." "They never went so far as to say that there were two creators of the world, one of the good the other of evil, like the Zoroastrians."

The fact of associating other deities with the Higher Being among the Zoroastrians precisely.

There is a difference between Zoroastrians and Christians worshiping saints. Christians practice a shirk similar to that of the Arab polytheists before the advent of Islam, while the Zoroastrians practice a more serious form of shirk. They believe in two creating deities, managing, both on the same level, the affairs of the universe: not only Ahura Mazda, but also Ahriman. Their attachment to a book of heavenly origin is not enough to make that, like the Christians, they are, despite the presence of shirk akbar, considered as People of the Book. Moreover, it seems that their scriptures could not be preserved at a level similar to that of Christians. If the Zoroastrians also have scriptures, they have too much "fondness" for polytheism.

All this makes therefore that, because of the fact that they are attached to a book, of which a part is of heavenly origin, the Zoroastrians were nevertheless, in one of the verses of the Quran, distinguished from the polytheists: Quran 22.17 ; but, on the other hand, because their shirk is even deeper than that of the pagan Arabs, they are not included in the category of the People of the Book either.

The lesser jihad, in Islam, is the Holy War against the "infidels," and also, more broadly, the collective effort made by Muslims to make the precepts of their religion triumph.

Jihad is an obligation for every good Muslim. To be honest, nevertheless, let us acknowledge that Muslim theologians very quickly distinguished two types of jihad obligation.

Mandatory jihad for the community as a whole and not necessarily for the individual. Concerns the spread of Islam in the world. Fard Kifaya.

Mandatory jihad for individuals. In case of defensive war. Fard ayn.

"O Prophet! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be stern with them. Hell will be their home" (Holy Quran 66:9).

"Go forth, light-armed and heavy-armed, and strive with your wealth and your lives in the way of God! That is best for you " (Holy Quran (9:41).

These verses, these chapters, exist, and they are repeated hundreds of millions of times: every time a child learns the Quran by heart.

Whole sections of the Quran are written to incite men to fight, and all means are used for that: terror of the Last Judgment and of the Hell, prospect of loot, divine favor, etc.

The effort deployed gives the measure of the lack of envy to fight among Bedouin or "hypocrites" Arabs.

Chapter 2, verse 216: "Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you, and it may happen that you love a thing which is bad for you. God knows you do not know!! "

Numerous verses of the Quran enjoin Muslims to fight infidels until they pay the tribute (jizya) intended for Christians and Jews, after being publicly humiliated; until they convert, leave, or are all killed, as for others, those who associate other entities with the higher Being, or who fall into atheistic materialism. Chapter 9, verse 29: "Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture as do not believe in God nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which God has forbidden by his messenger, and follow not the Religion of Truth, until they pay the tribute [the jizya] readily, being brought low." This verse, and many others, are those to which the imams refer when they consider it is the time to call their faithful for the Holy War. Below are some other excerpts from these warlike verses.

Chapter 2, verses 191-193: " And slay them wherever you find them, and drive them out of the places whence they drove you out, for fitna (sedition against God) is worse than slaughter. And fight not with them at the Inviolable Place of Worship until they first attack you there, but if they attack you (there) then slay them. Such is the reward of disbelievers. But if they desist, then lo! God is forgiving, Merciful."

Chapter 9, verse 123: "O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are near to you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that God is with those who keep their duty (unto Him)".

These verses are to be meditated by all those who imagine that only a few fanatics lead the fight against the "infidels." Not only are these men not fanatics, but they are, on the contrary, good Muslims, since they follow the precepts of their religion; moreover, they know how to drag in their wake those Muslims who seem moderate: the Quran orders them to do so.

Muslim society is a warlike society, where the caste of soldiers (accessible to all) is favored. The Quran glorifies the warriors who fight "in the way of God," that is to say, armed, for the spread of Islam. As an exception to the principle that Muslims are only brothers (chapter 49, verse 10) these warriors of God are superior to those who do not fight.

Chapter 4, verses 95 and 96: "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. Unto each God has promised good, but He has bestowed on those who strive a great reward above the sedentary; degrees of rank from Him, and forgiveness and mercy ."

The necessity of obeying only the dictates of God and in no way another power (unless it complies with Shari'a, and attends to its application) lies in the very notion of Islam. Etymologically speaking, it means "submission" (to God).

For Islam, the world is therefore divided in two: Dar el-Islam and Dar el-Harb.

Dar el-Islam is the "territory of Islam." It corresponds to all parts of the world where political power belongs to Muslims. Dar el-Harb is the "territory of war." It corresponds to all the rest, that is to say to all the countries where political power does not belong to Muslims (even if Muslims live in them).

The decisive factor in distinguishing Dar el-Islam from Dar el-Harb is not the majority presence or not of Muslims, but the question of whether they hold political power or not. Even if they are 1% of the population, we are in Dar el-Islam if this 1% has the power; even if they are 80% of the population, we are in Dar el-Harb if they do not have the political power.

Let us specify, finally on this distinction between Dar el-Islam and Dar el-Harb, that there is a particular mode of the latter: Dar el-sulh. Dar el-sulh (truce territory) is a subset of Dar el-Harb (territory of war). If for Islam the world is divided between Dar el-Islam and Dar el-Harb, socially speaking and as with the Jewish notion of a chosen people (Jews and non-Jews or goyim) it is divided between two categories of men; Muslims and others, the "infidels."

All the Muslims of the world form the Ummah: the great community, supposed to be superior to all the others: chapter 3, verse 110: "You are the best community that has been raised up for mankind."

Among believers, in principle, no distinction should be made: "Believers are but brothers" (Chapter 49, verse 10). On the other hand, among the infidels, as we have seen, Islam makes a fundamental distinction between the "People of the Book" and the "Associators."

The people of the book are the infidels who believe in a divine revelation - other than Islam - contained in a book. In other words, Christians and Jews (possibly also Zoroastrians).

The Associators are those who attach to the Higher Being who is God of other entities: so they are the henotheists or the polytheists, in short the pagans. The atheists themselves are equated with them, for want of anything better.

For Islam, these polytheistic or atheist henotheists are even more sinful than the People of the Book, because the latter are monolatrous, like Muslims. To associate God with other entities is even the worst sin for Islam, it is mortal by definition.

The lot of atheists or pagans (Buddhists, Hinduism, Shinto, and others) is therefore either conversion to Islam, expulsion or death. Moreover, the Quran provides a special penalty for those who in addition would have opposed Islam: chapter 5, verse 33. "The only reward of those who make war upon God and his messenger and strive after corruption in the land will be that they will be killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land. Such will be their degradation in the world, and in the Hereafter theirs will be an awful doom."

Islam is not spirituality based on the peaceful coexistence of religions (such as the philosophical or thoughtful paganism of the type god of the Western philosophers) or intended to organize it (as secularism) because its purpose is that (as soon as possible) there is only one worship paid to the deity (an Umma a Dar al Islam a commander of the believers and then only sharia *).

As we have seen, the holy war is a duty and a normal means of spreading the divine message. This is what emerges from the study of the very texts of Islam (Quran hadiths Sira), therefore of its true nature. It is not the Muslims who are called Islamists (Taliban and others of Qaeda or Daesh) and who are presented as extremists, who pervert the message of Islam; because they are in fact simply real Muslims who apply literally the message. The Orthodox (that is, those who are "completely in line" with God's message) are they, and it is the so-called moderate Muslims who practice their religion badly. All those who are familiar with the very texts of Islam know that violence and fanaticism come directly from its sacred texts (Quran, Sunna, Sira) and not from the madness of Islamists; who content themselves to follow what they believe to be the word of God and that they hammer home around them; so that those Muslims who want to remain human can be so only by more or less being in contradiction with many of the imperative, and very clear, precepts of their religion, in other words, by denying part of it.

Some people, and especially some journalists, such as those of the Franco-German TV channel ARTE, base their fanciful hope for a moderate Islam on the possibility of another interpretation of the texts of the Quran and of the hadiths of the Sunna. But their hope is vain for two reasons.

The first is that you cannot interpret in a hundred different ways a text very clear in itself.

When the Quran clearly spelled provides that a husband must beat his wife who refuses to obey him ("Men are in charge of women, because God has made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). As for those from whom you fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them" (Chapter 4, verse 34) or that the thief's hand is to be cut off ("As for the thief, both male and female, cut off their hands ," chapter 5, verse 38); however we turn these verses, we cannot make them say the opposite of what is clearly stipulated in their text.

And it is even less possible, of course, to change these texts, to reform them, since they are supposed to be the word of God. Now no man can pretend to imagine better than God what is right. To do so would be, for Muslims, to commit a horrible blasphemy. When somewhere in the world, moderate Muslims come into conflict with hard Muslims, it is always these Muslims who ultimately prevail. On the one hand, because they are the most aggressive, but also and especially, on the other hand, because they have for them the legitimacy of the non-abrogated texts of the Quran and of the Sunna; thanks to which they can only win the support of the majority of the people who always see in these texts the word of God (what it is not yet!)

Second reason finally! The reaction or absence of reaction of the Muslim street in the lands of Islam....It is enough in order to be convinced to see the spontaneous reaction of many Muslims the evening of September 11, 2001. It is also enough to see after these first spontaneous reactions, the absence of a categorical condemnation of these deadly attacks by the majority of Muslims; and even attempts to excuse and justify these barbaric acts in the name of an alleged guilt of the United States.

Editor's note. A Muslim friend insisted on having us insert his point of view on the subject. Out of respect for his naivety, we accede to it.

It is necessary for Muslims not to be mistaken in the designation of the ideas that they have to face. Like the companions of the Prophet in Mecca, they must reason in terms, on the one hand, of proximity of beliefs and values, and, on the other hand, of greater friendship of one or the other towards them.

We must reason in terms of "more or less closeness of beliefs." Thus, when people whose parents and grandparents were Muslims, become Christians because they lack knowledge about missionary criticism; it is indeed, from the Muslim point of view, an abandonment of the "iman" or true faith, for "kufr." We cannot stop these people from doing this, but it saddens us terribly. On the other hand, when people whose parents and grandparents were Christians - and believed in God, even admitting

the notions of Incarnation and Trinity - become atheists; it is leaving a "kufr" for a "kufr aghlaz minh" in other words a kufr even worse.

Which of the two has beliefs closer to Islam: the follower of Christianity, even post-Nicene or the adept of materialistic atheism? As Muslims, we are saddened to see that a significant portion of the people in the West are gradually abandoning Christianity - including and especially at the level of the belief in God and in a final judgment after death - to fall into agnosticism or atheism.

There was a time when the Prophet (peace be upon him) made a truce with the Meccan polytheists who no longer had the moral possibility to attack him. The truce signed, the Prophet was able to solve the problem of the Jews of Khaybar, whose inhabitants, yet People of the Book, had resisted him a year ago, and did not seem to be about to stop, quite the contrary.

Editor's note. About this Jewish problem, because that's of what it's question. Our French friend, in this case is simply, it seems to us, talking about the anti-Semitic pogrom unleashed against the Jews of this region, and the acts of barbarism that ensued. End of the editorial note.

Here the Prophet signs a truce with those who no longer have the possibility to fight him, but are polytheists; there he goes to war against those who do not stop resisting him despite being part of the People of the Book.

We can draw another parallel with our situation today. If, at the level of beliefs, Christianity is closer to the Muslim faith than atheism, it happens that some polytheists, even some atheists, are closer, but this time at the level of the relations with Muslims, that some Christians. The fact is that some of them are unfortunately led by a true crusade spirit while there are polytheists who have no particular hate feeling towards Islam (I know personally several of them). There are also atheists who have nothing against Islam and who say: "Islam is a religion in which some humans still believe; because they could not yet get rid of it, as we did in relation to Christianity. It is up to them to continue in this way: to them their beliefs, to us our non-belief. And too bad for them: they do not know what they are losing.

In some countries, it is also better for Muslims to be neighbors of atheists of this kind - who regard Islam as a purely sociological and anthropological fact, but have friendly human relations with Muslims- than of people members of Christian fundamentalist groups, who proclaim loudly that Muhammad was an antichrist, and that the eradication of Islam must be a top priority.

* This disappearance of the political power replaced by the only reign of the (religious) Law is what differentiates Islam from the other, religious, dictatorships, of the type one god one people one land, or political dictatorships of the type Nazism or socialism in one country (Stalin).

APOSTASY IN ISLAM.

In other words choosing another religion OR NO LONGER BELIEVING.

A big "overstatement to talk about religious freedom, that is to say, to follow the religion of one's choice, after having eventually changed it, as Abraham and Moses did in the various myths depicting them.

Yes, because Abraham Moses and Muhammad did start by abandoning the religion of their fathers, didn't they?

The point of view of the Muslim tradition is simple. God commanded us to be Muslims and no one becomes a Muslim by accident. To become a Muslim you have to pronounce the shahada with full knowledge of the facts.

Apostasy in the land of Islam (Arabic: riddah, or irtidād, ,retreat, regression, going backwards) is commonly defined as the fact that a Muslim consciously abandons Islam whether through words or deeds. This includes the act of converting to another religion or becoming an atheist or agnostic.

The general rule is as follows.

Any belief, act or word that amounts to mocking God, the Books revealed by God, the Prophets sent by God, the angels of God, the rites or symbols of Islam, the religion approved by God (such as pilgrimage or mosques), God's promise (of Paradise) or His threat (of the punishment through hell) is misbelief.

Examples of apostasy through belief.

Apostasy through belief is, for example...

- Believing that God is powerless or ignorant,
- Believing that God is a body, a light or a soul.
- Believing that drinking alcohol is allowed by God or stealing is allowed by God.
- Believing that God has not made the 5 prayers, the fast of the month of Ramadan, the zakat or the pilgrimage obligatory.

To contradict Islam by deeds. Some deeds do indeed go out of Islam.

For example, burning the Quran or throwing away Muslim theology papers deliberately.

Countering Islam with words

For example, denying the existence of God.

The Arabic word for "apostate" is murtadd, which refers to those who turn their backs on Islam. The words irtidād and ridda both refer to apostasy. Ridda seems mainly used to define the apostasy that changes the Muslim faith into unbelief (kufr in Arabic) while irtidād refers to the passage from Islam to another religion. A person born of Muslim parents, but who later gives up Islam, is called murtadd fitri - the term fitri meaning natural, but also instinctive, congenital, natal, innate. One who converts to Islam but later abandons it is a murtadd milli, from the word milla which designates the religious community. The Murtadd Fitri can also be considered as someone abnormal, denatured, who reverses the natural course of things, and whose apostasy constitutes a voluntary and obstinate act of betrayal towards God and the true believers; as well as a treacherous desertion of the community. The murtadd milli as for him is a traitor towards the Muslim community, who is guilty of a brutal and violent act of secession. Any denial of any principle of Muslim beliefs is considered a potential apostasy.

According to traditional legal doctrine, the apostasy of Islam includes not only the explicit renunciation to the Islamic faith (be it for another religion or any form of irreligiosity: deism, agnosticism, atheism, antitheism etc.), but also any act or word that implies disbelief, such as denying a "principle or belief" of Islam. Muslim jurists have not expressed general rules for establishing disbelief, but rather have drawn up lists, sometimes long, of words and deeds which they consider to be apostasy. The rules relating to apostasy do not apply, of course, to persons who have been forced to speak or perform acts of disbelief in order to preserve their lives (Taqiyyah or Kitman = no lapsi crisis in Islam)....

If Islam advocates and encourages conversions to Islam, it is not the same in the opposite direction.

The conversion to another religion is as serious as the major sin in the eyes of Islam, that is the unbelief or shirk (paganism), even when you convert to one of the religions officially admitted by the pact of dhimmitude like Judaism Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Sabianism of Mandeian type, in the lands of Islam (Dar al Islam) it is tantamount to return to the original evil and deviant paganism. In other words, a Muslim converted to one of these book religions does not enjoy any of the even only theoretical guarantees of the dhimmi status. His membership in the category of men or women entitled to live in lands of Islam is NOT RECOGNIZED (it would be too easy).

The three cases of execution of a Muslim.

The life of the Muslims is worth more than that of the infidels. This is why the killing of Muslims is forbidden by several special dictates from the Quran.

Chapter 4, verse 93." Whosoever slays a believer of set purpose, his reward is hell for ever..... God has cursed him and prepared for him an awful doom."

From the Quran and from the Sunna, that is to say from the life of Muhammad, recorded in the form of short stories (the hadiths); of which we must remind once more here that their legal value is as high for Muslims as that of a verse of the Quran, as soon as they are considered authentic. Here are some of them.

"If all the beings on the earth and in the skies come together to kill a believing person, God puts every one of them to Hell" (Hadith reported by Tirmidhi, Diyat 8, 1398).

"The destruction of the world is lighter on God than the killing of one Muslim man" (Hadith reported by Muslimi).

"In the sight of God, killing a believer is worse than the termination of the entire world"(Hadith reported by Nasa'i).

This ban is lifted, of course, in the three cases where Sharia law provides for the death penalty, even for a Muslim.

1) The Talion Law. If a Muslim has committed murder, the law of retaliation (an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth) must be applied to him and therefore he must be killed (chapter 2, verse 179). This execution may be carried out by a member of the victim's family (chapter 17, verse 33). And this is precisely what images several times broadcast on television channels in September 2001 showed. Slaughtering by a family member of the victim, under the aegis of the Taliban, of an Afghan man who committed murder. Once again, we see here that the Taliban, far from distorting the message of Islam, apply it on the contrary literally.

2) Adultery. A man or woman who has committed adultery in a sure way suffers death as punishment. (The simple fornication, or sexual debauchery, is also heavily punished: "The adulterer and the adulteress, scourge you each one of them (with) a hundred stripes. And let not pity for the twain. And let a party of believers witness their punishment "(Chapter 24, verse 2).

3) Lastly, apostasy as we have just seen. A Muslim does not have the right to leave Islam. The denial of his religion by a Muslim (apostasy) is punishable by death. It is for this reason that men like Salman Rushdie (the author of the book entitled "The Satanic Verses," considered blasphemous by Muslims) are threatened with execution at any time; or like the Pakistani Ibn Warraq, author of "Why I'm not a Muslim."

These three cases of execution of Muslims result as much from the Quran as from the Sunna, through several hadiths like this one. "It is not permissible to spill the blood of a Muslim except in three instances: the married person who commits adultery, a life for a life, and the one who forsakes his religion and separates from the community." [Hadith reported by Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS

In the Quran

Several verses speak of apostasy, and although morally condemned, no earthly sanction is advocated. Quran chapter 2 verse 256: "No compulsion in religion ...". This quote has become today the most famous of the Quran, since it is widely publicized, in the press, on the radio, on television [even Pope Benedict XVI quoted this verse, in his famous speech of Regensburg, September 12, 2006].

How to understand this famous formula about the compulsion in religion, since so many Quranic verses call for compulsion in religious filed?

Chapter 9, verse 29. "Fight against such of those who have been given the Scripture [that is, Jews and Christians] as do not believe in God nor the Last Day[this is for atheists, Freemasons and free thinkers], and forbid not that which God has forbidden [this is for all those who consume wine and eat pork] by his messenger [Muhammad], and follow not the Religion of Truth [i.e., Islam, according to the Quran], until they pay the tribute readily [and personally]" being brought low."

Chapter 2, verse 193. "And fight them until sedition [fitna] is no more, and religion is for God."

Muslims who continually repeat and repeat this verse, "No compulsion in religion ..." in order to prove that Islam is tolerant are either Islamists practicing taqiyya or useful idiots of Islam , because the verse in question is abrogated by those who follow.

Quran chapter 4.

Verse 89.

They long that you should disbelieve even as they disbelieve that you may be upon a level (with them). So choose not friends from them till they forsake their homes in the way of God; if they turn back (become apostates) then take them and kill them wherever you find them!

Verse 90

Except those who seek refuge with a people between whom and you there is a covenant, or (those who) come unto you because their hearts forbid them to make war on you or make war on their own folk. Had God willed He could have given them power over you so that assuredly they would have

fought you. So, if they hold aloof from you and do not wage war against you and offer you peace, God allows you no way against them.

The Quran thus provides for exceptions to the general rule of the death penalty for apostates, but it is still very far from displaying love and tolerance towards them. Hell, therefore the worst eternal sufferings, is promised to them, and the tone regarding them is extremely hard.

Chapter 2 verse 217. They question you with regard to warfare in the sacred month. Say: Warfare therein is a great (transgression), but to turn (men) from the way of God, and to disbelieve in Him and in the Inviolable Place of Worship, and to expel His people thence, is a greater with God; for sedition [fitna] is worse than killing. And they will not cease from fighting against you till they have made you renegades from your religion, if they can. And whosoever becomes a renegade and dies in his disbelief: such are they whose works have fallen both in the world and the Hereafter. Such are rightful owners of the Fire: they will abide therein.

Chapter 3 verse 90. Lo! those who disbelieve after their (profession of) belief, and afterward grow violent in disbelief: their repentance will not be accepted. And such are those who are astray.

Chapter 4 verse 137. Lo! those who believe, then disbelieve and then (again) believe, then disbelieve, and then increase in disbelief, God will never pardon them, nor will He guide them unto a way.

Chapter 16 verse 106. Whosoever disbelieves in God after his belief - save him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with the Faith - but whosoever finds ease in disbelief: On them is wrath from God. Theirs will be an awful doom.

Various suras thus evoke apostasy but without mentioning any sanction in this world.

On the other hand, this is not the case with the hadiths.

Many hadiths call for or imply the death penalty.

Sahih Muslim Book 28 hadith 34.

The Book of Oaths, Muharibin, Qasas (Retaliation), and Diyat (Blood Money)

Chapter: When it is permissible to shed the blood of a Muslim

'Abdullah (b. Mas'ud) reported God's Messenger as saying: It is not permissible to take the life of a Muslim who bears testimony to the fact that there is no god but Allah, and I am the Messenger of Allah, but in one of the three cases: the married adulterer, a life for life, and the deserter of his Din (religion), abandoning the community.

Sahih Bukhari Volume 9 Book 83 Number 17.

Narrated by Abdullah. God's Apostle said, "The blood of a Muslim who confesses that none has the right to be worshipped but God and that I am His Apostle, cannot be shed except in three cases: for murder, a married person who commits illegal sexual intercourse and the one who reverts from Islam (apostate) and leaves the Muslims."

Sahih Bukhari Volume 9, Book 84, Number 57.

Narrated by Ikrima: Some Zanadiqa (atheists) were brought to 'Ali and he burned them. The news of this event, reached Ibn Abbas who said, "If I had been in his place, I would not have burned them, as God's Apostle forbade it, saying, 'Do not punish anybody with God's punishment (fire).' I would have killed them according to the statement of God's Apostle, 'Whoever changed his Islamic religion, then kill him.'"

Sahih Bukhari Volume 6, Book 61, Number 577.

Narrated Ali: I heard the Prophet saying, "In the last days (of the world) there will appear young people with foolish thoughts and ideas. They will give good talks, but they will go out of Islam as an arrow goes out of its game, their faith will not exceed their throats. So, wherever you find them, kill them, for there will be a reward for their killers on the Day of Resurrection."

Fiqh of apostasy.

All the Muslim legal schools consider that the apostasy must be punished with the death penalty being base based on the reputed genuine hadiths of Bukhari, because they offer a perfectly clear legal opinion on the precise sentence, contrary to the Quran, which enumerates especially the reasons for hating apostates.

The only noticeable difference between these schools is the status of the crime in question. Most give him the status of hadd, that is to say, crime against God, which makes its sentence absolutely indisputable (the death), while Shiite and Hanafite schools do not give it this status, they wish to modulate the penalty. These two schools say that women should not be executed, but imprisoned and beaten regularly (at the time of each prayer among Shia, every three days among the Hanafites) until they repent and become again Muslims or die of it. Everything is in the nuance.

Civil penalties.

In Islam, apostasy has traditionally been regarded as both a religious and a civil crime; the penalty for the former includes capital punishment or imprisonment, while the latter is punishable by civil penalties. Therefore, in all the madhahib of Islam :

- The apostate's property is seized and distributed to his Muslim parents.

In the event that the entire family has apostatized or if there are no surviving Muslim relatives recognized by the Shariah, the property of the apostate shall be seized by the Islamic State.

- The marriage of the apostate is annulled (faskh).

- The children are taken away from the apostate and become wards of the (Islamic) State.

Handwritten notes of Peter DeLaCrau found by his children and inserted by them at this place.

The notion of apostasy has disappeared from the Western world, where you may perfectly evoke the idea of renouncing Christian beliefs or becoming a non-practicing Christian. And of course, there are no criminal penalties for people wishing to embrace another religion.

In Islamic countries, on the other hand, the consequence of this demand borders on death outright.

Al-Shafi, founder of one of the four Orthodox Schools of Law in Sunni Islam, interprets chapter 2 of verse 217 of the Quran as a recommendation of the death penalty against apostates.

" And whosoever becomes a renegade and dies in his disbelief: such are they whose works have fallen both in the world and the Hereafter. Such are rightful owners of the Fire: they will abide therein. " Al-Thalabi and al-Khazan agree on this, and in his commentary on this point, Al-Razi also asserts that the apostate must be put to death.

Islam, like all the laws of all civilizations before it, has banned murder. Chapter 5, verse 32: "

Whosoever kills a human being for other than manslaughter or corruption in the earth, it shall be as if he had killed all mankind."

This verse is one of those often cited by those who want to reassure Westerners, by presenting Islam as less violent than it really is. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, an imam has even inscribed this verse in large letters on the front of his mosque. However, these imams who want to reassure, always omit carefully to specify two things.

First of all, they readily quote verse 32 above, but never the verse that comes right after, verse 33 of this same chapter number 5. " The only reward of those who make war upon God and his messenger and strive after corruption in the land will be that they will be killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land."

Until the end of the 19th century, the overwhelming majority of Sunni and Shia fuqaha agreed that apostasy was a crime, a sin and an act of treason punishable by death, usually after a period of waiting for the apostate to repent and return to Islam.

As of 2014, the laws of various Muslim-majority countries still prescribed for the apostate (Arabic Murtadd) sentences ranging from imprisonment to execution . In some countries, Sharia courts use the civil code to dissolve the apostate's marriage and deprive him or her of custody or inheritance rights. In recent years, three internationally recognized States have executed four people for apostasy of Islam: Sudan in 1985, Iran in 1989 and 1998, and Saudi Arabia in 1992. In 2013, the apostasy of Islam was covered by the criminal laws of 23 Muslim-majority countries. According to a Pew Research Center survey conducted between 2008 and 2012, the proportion of Muslims supporting capital punishment for the apostate ranged from 0.4% in Kazakhstan to 78.2% in Afghanistan.

THE RIDDAH WARS.

Riddah means rejection but it remains to be seen what was rejected by those who were the object of the so-called riddah wars recounted in the literature of the expeditions (al-Aswâd al-'Ansî, Talîha ibn Khuwayli, Musaylima al-kadhdhâb and the prophetess Sajah).

Let us, first of all, start by being clear.

The only regions that were truly more or less Muslim at the death of Muhammad were the cities of Madinah, Mecca and Taef. Basically, the Hijaz or northwest coast of the Arabian Peninsula.

The other regions of Arabia had only concluded alliance or submission agreements with Muhammad, and so for them it was only a matter of politics.

Many Bedouins had signed these agreements, which had been forced by a balance of power largely favorable to Muslims.

Others had signed for economic reasons.

Others signed because they were fascinated by Muslim power.

Others because they had simply followed their leader.

The payment of the obligatory Muslim alms, the zakat, seems to have played a role.

A few words from each one now and of the maneuvers proceeding.

Al Aswad al Ansi (630) in the south (Yemen). According to Muslim tradition, al-Aswad was only a soothsayer (kāhin), claiming to speak on behalf of Allāh or al-Rahmān and practicing prestidigitation. These are tendentious data, no doubt developed late by Muslim theologians, as we shall see. In all likelihood, al-Aswad's monotheism was of Jewish inspiration. In Yemen, polytheism, which had been rejected officially for nearly two and a half centuries, had only a very marginal place, and the sources explicitly indicate that al-Aswad was acting in the name of the one God.

W. Montgomery Watt rightly thinks that it is likely that his monotheism is influenced by Christianity or Judaism existing in Yemen, and not from Islam, for he was never said to have become a Muslim.

Tulayha (630) in the south. Tradition gives two images of the character not easily reconcilable. On the one hand, it presents Tulayha as a great tribal chief, with all the required qualities, a courageous warlord, seer (kāhin), poet, orator, composer of rhyming prose and erudite in genealogy. On the other hand, it stigmatizes the opponent of Muhammad as an opportunist and a ridiculous imitator. In this register, Tulayha's conversion to Islam in the year 9 of the Hegirian era (631) seems highly dubious. It is reminiscent of the even more implausible conversion of Musaylima. It is a question of showing that the false prophet, when he meets Muhammad, cannot but bow to the true faith, but that he is doubly perverse, since, now enlightened, he persists in error. It can be assumed that the flattering description and the favorable anecdotes come from traditions handed down and spread from the family and tribe of Tulayha, while the attacks come from political and religious opponents.

Two clues suggest that the doctrine of Tulayha was inspired more by Judaism than by Christianity.

Tulayha received his revelations from dhū-Nūn, "the (Man) with the Whale," a nickname for Jonah.

The second clue is that he was sometimes given the title "Lord of Khaybar," an important Jewish oasis in the northern Hijāz.

N.B. Tulayha's supporters were not necessarily driven by religious considerations. One source indicates that their primary goal was to stop paying taxes to Muslim state.

How long did his vocation date back to?

First of all, let us point out that there were Christians in the region. A poem by Labid ben Rabia mentions in it simandres, a kind of xylophone to call the faithful to prayer, which implies the presence of Christian settlements in the region. The king of the region Hawdha b. Ali was probably also a Christian.

Prince Hawdha b. Ali having died in 630. Musaylima succeeded him and thus became chief of the Hanifa tribe.

There are a number of indications that Musaylima's career began before that of Muhammad.

First of all, there is the fact that several traditions keep him alive for a very long time. One rather far-fetched tradition even states that Musaylima adopted the name Rahman before the birth of Muhammad's father, 'Abdullah.'

Others point out that it was already the subject of controversy even before Muhammad's emigration to Yathrib/Medina. Indeed, Muhammad in Mecca was accused by some of his opponents of being inspired by a man from Yamama called al-Rahman.

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 Meccans then sent a delegation to the Jews of Yathrib to find out more about him and 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).

The revelations of Muhammad's rival prophets have not been preserved for us, except for a few fragments attributed to Musaylima.

In his own Quran besides he made fun of the incredible chapter known as the elephant (sura 105), according to various authors.

"The elephant. What is the elephant? And who shall tell you what is the elephant?

He has a ropy tail and a long trunk. This is a mere trifle of our Lord's creations."

Another verse of Musaylimah, alluded to in Ibn Kathir, where it is described as a riposte to the Quranic chapter 103 (it has a similar rhyme scheme): O hyrax (Wabr), O hyrax! You are only two ears and a chest, and the rest of you is digging and burrowing.

NB. We may doubt the objectivity of the information given the context.

What we have been able to safeguard from the fragments of the Quran of Musaylimah shows us nevertheless that besides prose, of course, he also used much, and like the Quran of the Makkan period of his rival Muhammad, the verses of the saj' type of the kahana (soothsayers) or of the shu'ara (poets: singular sha'ir).

He invokes the wonders of the universe: the sun; the darkness of the night; meteorological phenomena: rain - the familiar animals, frightening or strange: the wolf; the ibex; the ram and the sheep; the elephant; the most remarkable fruits and plants: pomegranates; grapes; basil; bitter plants; precious materials: silver; glass; gold; silk; the wonders of humanity: the pregnant woman.

As far as the ideal of life is concerned, let's say that Musaylima tried to found an ideal society that was rigorous from the point of view of morals (no wine, no more sexual relations after the birth of a boy).

Christian ROBIN: Musaylima was trying to create an ideal community, settled in a space enjoying special divine protection (haram). He sets up small rural communities called "allies' hamlets."

The aim is to eradicate iniquity and protect the weak and oppressed. Muslim traditionalists like to point out the failure of the project.

Musaylima was forced to look for allies and began negotiations with Sajāh,

Sajāh needs to be persuaded by, declaring that God never granted prophecy to Rabīa (on which the Banu Hanīfa, the tribe of Musaylima, depend), but only to Mudar (i.e., the tribal confederation of which Tamīm and Quraysh, the tribes of Sajāh and Muhammad, are members). She accepts lastly when Musaylima offers her in addition the year's harvest of Yamāma.

Rahman's followers crushed two armies of Allah's fighters before being in turn defeated but not annihilated in the battle of the enclosure or haram of Ar Rahman in 632 (hadiqa al mawt in Arabic).

Saja lastly in the north. The prophetess of Tamīm, a large tribal confederation whose territory extends a few hundred kilometers north of al-Hajr (today al-Riyād). whose activity is deployed mainly among the Christianizing tribes of Northeast Arabia, originating from the most Christianized tribe in Arabia, that of the Taghlib, through her mother. She is therefore Christian, or at least well informed about Christianity.

Sajāh will have a rather short career. She appears shortly after the death of Muhammad in 11 of the Hegira (632-633), at the head of a tribal coalition that wants to attack Medina. The battle which is engaged following a revelation ends in disaster. She then decides to join Musaylima. A source reports that the two prophets recognize the legitimacy of their respective missions and decide to reunite their supporters and their temporal interests by sealing their agreement with a symbolic marriage.

INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE ESCHATOLOGY.

Scriptural bases the Quran.

Chapter 35 verse 33.

Chapter 36 verse 56.

Chapter 37 verse 42, 48.

Chapter 38 verse 51.

Chapter 47 verse 15.

Chapter 55 verse 52, 56, 68, 70, 72, 74.

Chapter 56 verse 11-38.

Chapter 78 verse 33.

Etc. Etc. Etc.

These chapters of the Quran outline the contours of a simplistic doctrine. The Quran describes in great detail the paradise and pleasures that await believers (at least the men).

In this they are very similar to the Celtic stories and legends on the other world (no mystery in there, except a common human nature) since what has remained to us of this immense oral literature are the legends intended for the nobles and the warriors. Farmers and druids had to have their own legends about it; but the druids were a tiny minority more over defeated by Christianity, and the peasants had no social importance. So we have only received legends about the warrior's paradise. What brings us back to Islam .

Each blessed will have as a reward " Houris whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them" (chapter 55: 72-74).

The sacred text also extends to "the fire of Hell" which awaits unbelievers (chapter 35: 36).

There the druids were less categorical.

Hermann Usener. *Scholia in Lucani bellum civile/Commenta Bernensia. Liber I* (1869).

451 "Druids deny that souls can perish

[Driadae negant interire animas]

OR GO TO HELL"

[Aut contagione inferorum adfici] and

454 "They do not say that the Manes exist"

[Manes esse, not dicunt].

For the rest Muslims, like Christians, admit a particular judgment and a general judgment.

THE FIRST JUDGMENT OF THE SOUL.

Immediately after an adult person has been laid in the sepulcher, his grave has been covered and closed, and the people who attended the burial have withdrawn, the soul, separated from the body, returns to it and revive it. There are two angels, one black, the other blue; called Munkir and Nekir, who question the deceased on his faith, and ask him who is his lord, his prophet, his religion, his qibla, the good works he has done, etc.

If the deceased answers satisfactorily, he immediately receives the assurance of eternal bliss, and his soul begins to enjoy the first fruits of bliss; if not, black angels announce to him his eternal damnation, and beat him incessantly with ardent clubs.

The result of this interrogation is recorded in a book which will be reproduced in the General Judgment.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

The latter will take place somewhere in Sham (Syria). The angel Gabriel will hold to a true and real balance, whose pans will be larger than the surface of the heavens; the works of the human beings will be weighed by the power of God, and with such precision, that the balance will make known even the atoms, so that a precise knowledge and a perfect justice can ensue. The book of good works will be put down in the pan of light, brighter than the stars, and the book of evil deeds cast into the darkness pan, which has a horrible aspect; the beam of the balance will show instantly which of the two prevails and to what extent. After this examination of the balance, all the bodies will pass over a bridge over the eternal fire, the width of which is narrower than the finest hair, and the deck more acute than the edge of a razor; it is impossible to stand on it without the help of the all-powerful hand of God.

The unbelievers and the wicked will tremble on it at the first step, and thus will fall into hell but God will strengthen the feet of the faithful and they will cross this bridge with the rapidity of the bird that cuts through the air and will enter Heaven.

There are also Muslims who say that at the end of time God will divide human beings not in two groups but in three: the good, the bad and the weak, that is to say those who have hesitated between good and evil; that God will ask the good no explanation; and that he will receive them without

examination in the heavenly abode; that for the weak; he will count with them benignly and mercifully; but that for the wicked he will require an exhaustive and rigorous account of their iniquities.

Their books teach that the main topic on which the questions will run will be faith and revelation.

God will question the faithful about their prophets, that is, about the truth of their mission and the nature of their doctrine.

He will question the infidels about their infidelities, and ask them why they accused his envoys of lying.

He will question the heretics about the succession of their spiritual guides and about tradition, blaming them for rejecting the true successors of the prophet and the true meaning of the revelation.

They add that only those who have lived in the true religion (i.e., Islam) will be questioned about their works.

The common opinion is that God will pronounce the verdict himself. There are, however, some Muslim authors who think that it would be an insult to the goodness of God to believe that he could condemn to hell with his own mouth; that God will send nobody to hell, but that hell will attract and swallow its prey by himself.

A very common opinion among Muslims is also to believe that Muhammad will intervene as an intercessor for all peoples who have embraced his doctrine, either to get heaven to them or greater glory in eternity, or to soften and make shorten the torments of those who will have badly lived.

The Iranians being Shiites, associate with this role of intercessor Ali and other imams from his lineage, they intercede especially for Shiites, of course. They even assure that the intervention of Fatima, only daughter of Muhammad and wife of Ali, will be very effective that day. In a Shiite work (*Les seances de Haidari* 1845), she is often called the Queen of the Last Judgment.

Editor's note. What makes think a lot of Christianity. The theme of the Chinvat Bridge, which is a metaphor of Zoroastrian origin, can be found even in some medieval Irish visions (*Fis Adamnain* or *Vision Adomnan*).

Which proves that ideas about the afterlife and the gods did not wait for the modern world to circulate.

This eschatology is therefore common to the three revealed mass religions: all of them are aimed at the end of this world and the certainty of the arrival of a new one. Obviously, even if this dogma, essential and unavoidable, is today approached far away from the general public, it has not disappeared for all that.

Of the three, Islam is the religion most affected by this madness, the recent example of the Islamic State that has struck in Iraq and Syria in the second decade of the 21st century is the proof of that. Its writings are full of apocalyptic descriptions written to impress, especially the weakest minds.

The end of time.

Muhammad Quran 81: 1-4, 12-14.

When the sun is overthrown,
And when the stars fall,
And when the hills are moved,
And when the camels big with young are abandoned,
And when hell is lighted,
And when the Garden is brought nigh,
Then every soul will know what it has made ready.

The last judgment.

Muhammad, Quran 80: 33-42.

But when the Shout cometh
On the day when a man flees from his brother
And his mother and his father
And his wife and his children,
Every man that day will have concern enough to make him heedless (of others).
On that day faces will be bright as dawn,
Laughing, rejoicing at good news;
And other faces, on that day, with dust upon them,
Veiled in darkness.

HELL HEAVEN AND LIMBO OR PURGATORY (AL ARAF).

The eternal pair Paradise / Hell. The Muslim texts are lavish in representation of these two environments proposed to men (and jinns). The influence here again is Jewish and especially Christian, but adapted to an Arab audience, living in a desert environment. Muhammad has used all the resources of his imagination and of his talent to construct the most complete and effective representations possible of these two antithetical environments. The descriptions, mentions or allusions are innumerable. Here, the intended audience apparently is basically male, if we consider the delights that are promised to the lucky elected. It is also and especially made up of warriors as gullible as zealous in their work. All the rhetoric of hell has been built around the image of fire, and that of heaven around the liquid element, and therefore deploys from here a vast range of atrocities or voluptuousness. The effect is all the more powerful on the audience. The binary distinction between elected and damned remains recurrent, mechanical, but terribly effective.

Another belief, stemming from the Judeo-Christian millenarianism of Messianist type, since Orthodox Judaism had nothing similar 1), is indeed passed in Islam: the heaven that awaits the elect after their death is imagined in the image of the earthly society, perfect after the victory of the Righteous. The pleasures of the table promised by the Judeo-Christians in their Heaven become in Islam rivers of milk, honey, wine or pure water, as well as delicious fruits. As for the pleasures of the flesh, they are abundantly detailed.

Muslim clerics in the West, but not in the land of Islam, say that these descriptions must be understood metaphorically. If so, why such a host of sensual details?

Each Muslim is provided with one or more houris (up to 70 for the most deserving). Each houri is in love with the one to whom she is attributed, they are all the same age so that no Muslim is jealous of another and they are all teenagers, or are provided with big boobs (according to the translations). They are cloistered under their tent so that no one has the temptation to look at another Muslim than the one to whom she is attributed. In any case, the houri of a Muslim never looks at another. She spends her eternal life lying on a bed so that the Muslim who comes under his tent can take action more quickly. (Some translators put seat instead of bed, modestly. In fact, it is a bed. A seat would be besides inconvenient for the activity of the houri). Before being attributed to a Muslim, she was not touched by a man or a jinn). She is perpetually a virgin, so that the Muslim has the pleasure of deflowering her every time.

These verses are written in a language that is particularly difficult to understand, and moreover, the first Qurans were in scriptio defectiva, a script so primitive that its only purpose was to be used as a tickler or those who already knew the text by heart. For those who do not know it, this writing is most often indecipherable. The deciphering of these verses was proposed more than two hundred years after the death of Muhammad, by grammarians who did not know the meaning of them, and who made conjectures. The hypersexualized image presented above is the one that has its rightful place throughout Dar al Islam (in Muslim country). Consensus being a criterion of truth in this religion, such a design becomes law.

Other Zoroastrian texts also resemble those of Islam regarding their idea of heaven.

One of the Zend-Avesta fragments, called the Hadhokht Nask, describes the destiny of a soul / mind after death.

The soul / mind of the Righteous spends three nights near the corpse and at the end of the third night, the soul / mind sees its component properly soul (daena) in the form of a beautiful maid, a beautiful fifteen-year-old young virgin. She was transfigured as a reward for her good deeds. Then both go to heaven. This vision resembles the Hindu story of the Apsarasas, who are described as "seductive celestial nymphs living in Indra's heaven" and who often serve as dancers for god-or-demons, but who also welcome the soul / mind in heaven. They are in Indra's heaven the rewards offered to heroes who have been killed in action.

Some Hindu accounts also evoke the Muslim idea of heaven, with its picturesque and voluptuous scenes of houris or virgins, which so scandalized the first Christian commentators. In the heaven, these girls are offered to warriors who died fighting for Islam.

Many terms used in the Quran to describe Paradise are clearly of Persian origin: ibriq, ewer, water jug; ara'ik, bed or couch. The Arabic word "hourī" virgin may also be Persian "hur," whiteness, used metaphorically to describe a beauty with very light skin. [See also all that we have written about the Celtic design of the Vindomagos in our essay on druidism, and especially on the equation: white = beautiful, but it is not up to us, barbarian druids of the West, to decide].

The German specialist Christophe Luxenberg makes a Syriac word meaning "reason" which is much less exciting.

We find in Pahlavi texts that every corner of Paradise looks like a garden in spring in which there would be all kinds of flowers and trees. This reminds us of the Muslim vision of the Garden of Delights (chapter 56:12-39, 76: 12-22, 55:46 and following). " But for him who fears the standing before his Lord there are two gardens [?] Of spreading branches [?] wherein are two fountains flowing [?] wherein every kind of fruit in pairs is" .

Christian writers have looked very early at the eschatological themes developed by Muhammad. They have retained, with great rigor and often irony, the most scabrous aspects of them. A little as if old neurotics began to consider the work of a young psychotic.

Theophanes the Confessor (760-818).

"He taught his subjects that he who kills an enemy or is killed by an enemy goes to Paradise; and he said that this paradise was one of carnal eating and drinking and intercourse with women, and had a river of wine, honey and milk, and that the women were not like the ones down here, but different ones, and that the intercourse was long-lasting and the pleasure continuous."

Agapius of Hierapolis (tenth century).

"Muhammad commanded his community to believe in prophets and messengers and in what God had sent down upon them and that they should believe in Christ, the son of Mary - saying that He was the apostle of God, His Word and His Servant, and His Spirit - and in the Gospel, and in Paradise....He told them that there was in paradise eating, drinking, marrying, streams of wine, milk and honey, the hours of the dark eyes who had not been touched by men or jinn."

Infernal visions.

In the Quran and in the Hadiths indeed, the unquestionable talent of Muhammad or of his followers is deployed on the subject. The book abounds in descriptions of atrocities for a large number of people, disbelievers, apostates, "hypocrites," Jews, Christians, pagans. According to Muhammad, hell will soon be full.

Many passages in the Quran describe hell precisely.

Chapter 15, verses 43-44: "And lo! for all such, hell will be the promised place. It has seven gates 7), and each gate has an appointed portion."

Chapter 39, verse 71: " And those who disbelieve are driven unto hell in troops till, when they reach it and the gates thereof are opened, and the warders thereof say unto them: Came there not unto you messengers of your own, reciting unto you the revelations of your Lord and warning you of the meeting of this your Day ? they say: Yea, verily. But....."

Chapter 78, verses 21-26: "Lo! hell lurks in ambush, a home for the rebellious.They will abide therein for ages. Therein taste they neither coolness nor (any) drink save boiling water: reward proportioned (to their evil deeds)".

This Hell, called Jahannam or Gehenna, has therefore seven gates 2) and is intended primarily for the disbelievers.

The names of the various levels of the distress abode are all quoted in the Quran but scattered in several chapters and dozens of verses according to their content. Their order is perhaps the following one , from the highest level (light punishment) to the lowest degree (awful doom) according to Al-Dahhak (8th century).

1) A fire for sinners among the Muslims.

2) A purgatory for the sinner among the Christians.

3) A purgatory for sinners among the Jewish.

4) The burning fire for renegades.

5) A place for witches and fortune-tellers.

6) Furnace for the disbelievers.

7) A bottomless abyss for hypocrites, like the Pharaoh and people who disbelieve after the miracle of the table performed by Jesus or Muslims who are outwardly believers but inwardly infidels.

In the Muslim tradition, there is a mid-limbo mid-purgatory place called Al Araf (chapter 7, verses 46-49). On the day of judgment, all humans will be resurrected by God and will stand and naked on Earth. Those whose weight of good works will be greater than that of the evil ones will go to Heaven and those whose evil deeds will be heavier than the good ones will go to Hell. Those whose good and bad

deeds have an equivalent weight will end up on Al-Araf, a word whose meaning is difficult to determine. An Arabic equivalent of the Chinvat Bridge in Zoroastrianism? It is not for we uns, druids, to explain to the followers of this mass religion what this image means since for us hell does not exist (elsewhere than on Earth, at times: holocaust by bullets, slavery, etc.).

- 1) For orthodox Judaism it was to be a simple earthly restoration and in this world of the glory of Israel, work of a warrior messiah.
- 2) For the record Dante's hell will have 9 gates.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING OXYGEN CYLINDERS.

DOCUMENT 6.

Fortunately, there have been men to save the honor of mankind.

Here are two examples.

Paul Heinrich Dietrich von Holbach (in French Paul Thiry, Baron d'Holbach) born on 8 December 1723 in Edesheim and died on 21 January 1789 in Paris.

A recognized scholar, d'Holbach was a member of the academies of Berlin (1752), Mannheim (1766), St. Petersburg (1780), among others.

Starting in 1760, he began writing philosophical works, often under an assumed name or under the name of a dead person to avoid trouble with the authorities.

Some of his works were reviewed and corrected by Diderot, such as the *System of Nature*, which Diderot would later annotate and complete with a final chapter entitled *Abrégé du code de la nature*.

The publication of his *System of Nature* had an enormous impact: the government referred it to Parliament, which sentenced the book to be burned at the foot of the Great Staircase of the Palace on August 18, 1770. The *Sacred Contagion* was also burned, along with four other of his books.

Numerous books were subsequently published to refute the theses of the *System of Nature*.

But if we go back a little in time, there is also Ibn al-Rawandī (827 - 911) a medieval skeptic of Persian origin. According to another skeptical poet, Ma'arrī, Ibn al-Rawandī would have addressed God in this way (he was referring to Islam and religion in general): "You give man the means to live as a stingy old man would. Had a man done such a sharing, we would surely have said to him: "You have swindled us."

Ibn al-Rawandī was a friend and student of Abū 'Isā al-Warrāq, the Manichean "Zindīq." They would have been expelled together from mu'tazilite School. None of his books have survived him, the only traces of them are in the critical books written in response to him or in the writings of admirers. His most famous work is "*Kitāb al-zumurrud*" (Book of the Emerald).

Around 851-852 Ibn al-Rawandī became close to the Shiites, and then became closer to the Manicheans, the Jews and perhaps also the Christians but what is most remembered about him is his atheism.

Some consider him to be a Shiite heretic, a mu'tazilite who has become mad, an Aristotelian (a disciple of Aristotle) or a radical atheist.

DOCUMENT 7.

Al-Khayyāṭ' sums up his most famous book as follows

« Among his books is the book known as Kitāb al-Zumurrud, in which [Ibn al-Rāwandī] mentions the miraculous signs (āyāt) of the prophets, peace upon them, such as the signs of Abraham, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, God bless them. He disputed the reality of these miraculous signs and claimed that they were fraudulent tricks (makhārīq) and that people who performed them were magicians and liars, that the Qur'ān is the speech of an unwise being (kalām ghayr ḥakīm), and that it contains contradictions, errors and absurdities. He included in it a chapter entitled: "Against the Muhammadans in particular," meaning the community of Muhammad."

DOCUMENT 8.

AN EASTERN TALE.

At some distance from Bagdad, a hermit, renowned for his sanctity, passed his days in an agreeable solitude. The neighboring inhabitants, to obtain an interest in his prayers, daily flocked to his hermitage, to carry him provisions and presents. The holy man, without ceasing, gave thanks to God for the blessings, with which providence loaded him. "O God!" said he, "how ineffable is your love to your servants. What have I done to merit the favors that I receive from your bounty? O Monarch of the skies! O Father of nature! what praises could worthily celebrate your munificence and your paternal care! O God! how great is your goodness to the children of men!" Penetrated with gratitude, the hermit made a vow to undertake, for the seventh time, a pilgrimage to Mecca. The war which then raged between the Persians and Turks could not induce him to defer his pious enterprise. Full of confidence in God, he sets out under the inviolable safeguard of a religious habit. He passes through the hostile troops without any obstacle; far from being molested, he receives, at every step, marks of veneration from the soldiers of the two parties. At length, borne down with fatigue, he is obliged to seek refuge against the rays of a scorching sun; he rests under the cool shade of a group of palm trees. In this solitary place, the man of God finds not only an enchanting retreat, but a delicious repast. He only has to put forth his hand to gather dates and other pleasant fruits; a brook affords him the means of quenching his thirst. A green turf invites him to sleep; upon waking he performs the sacred ablution, and exclaims in a transport of joy: "O God! how great is your goodness to the children of men!" After this perfect refreshment, the saint, full of strength and gaiety, pursues his way; it leads him across a smiling country, which presents to his eyes flowery hillocks, enameled meadows, and trees loaded with fruit. Affected by this sight, he ceases not to adore the rich and liberal hand of providence, which appears everywhere providing for the happiness of the human race. Going a little farther, the mountains are pretty difficult to pass; but having once arrived at the summit, a hideous spectacle suddenly appears to his view. His soul is filled with horror. He discovers a vast plain laid waste with fire and sword; he beholds it covered with hundreds of carcasses, the deplorable remains of a bloody battle, lately fought upon this field. Eagles, vultures, ravens and wolves were greedily devouring the dead bodies with which the ground was covered. This sight plunges our pilgrim into a gloomy meditation. Heaven, by special favor, had enabled him to understand the language of beasts. He heard a wolf, gorged with human flesh, cry out in the excess of his joy: "O God! how great is your goodness to the children of wolves. Your provident wisdom takes care to craze the minds of these detestable men, who are so dangerous to our species. By an effect of your Providence, which watches over your creatures, these destroyers cut one another's throats, and furnish us with sumptuous meals. O God! how great is your goodness to the children of wolves!"

DOCUMENT 9.

APOLOGUE

There is a vast empire, governed by a monarch, whose strange conduct is to confound the minds of his subjects. He wishes to be known, loved, respected, obeyed; but never shows himself to his subjects, and everything conspires to render uncertain the ideas formed of his character.

The people, subjected to his power, have, of the character and laws of their invisible sovereign, such ideas only, as his ministers give them. They, however, confess, that they have no idea of their master; that his ways are impenetrable; his views and nature totally incomprehensible. These ministers, likewise, disagree upon the commands which they pretend to have been issued by the sovereign, whose servants they call themselves. They defame one another, and mutually treat each other as impostors and false teachers. The decrees and ordinances, they take upon themselves to promulgate, are obscure; they are enigmas, little calculated to be understood, or even divined, by the subjects, for whose instruction they were intended. The laws of the concealed monarch require interpreters but the interpreters are always disputing upon the true manner of understanding them. Besides, they are not consistent with themselves; all they relate of their concealed prince is only a string of contradictions. They utter concerning him not a single word that does not immediately confute itself. They call him supremely good; yet many complain of his decrees. They suppose him infinitely wise; and under his administration everything appears to contradict reason. They extol his justice; and the best of his subjects are generally the least favored. They assert, he sees everything; yet his presence avails nothing. He is, say they, the friend of order; yet throughout his dominions, all is in confusion and disorder. He makes all for himself and the events seldom answer his designs. He foresees everything; but cannot prevent anything. He impatiently suffers offense, yet gives everyone the power of offending him. Men admire the wisdom and perfection of his works; yet his works, full of imperfection, are of short duration. He is continually doing and undoing; repairing what he has made; but is never pleased with his work. In all his undertakings, he proposes only his own glory; yet is never glorified. His only end is the happiness of his subjects; and his subjects, for the most part want necessities. Those, whom he seems to favor are generally least satisfied with their fate; almost all appear in perpetual revolt against a master, whose greatness they never cease to admire, whose wisdom to extol, whose goodness to adore, whose justice to fear, and whose laws to reverence, though never obeyed! This empire is the world; this monarch GOD; his subjects mankind.

DOCUMENT 10.

The paragraphs 136 to 139 of the masterpiece of d'Holbach, *THE GOOD SENSE*, published in 1772.

You incessantly repeat that the truths of religion are above reason. If so, do you not perceive that these truths are not adapted to reasonable beings? To pretend that reason can deceive us is to say, that truth can be false; that the useful can be hurtful. Is reason anything but a knowledge of the useful and true? Besides, as our reason and senses are our only guides in this life, to say they are unfaithful, is to say that our errors are necessary, our ignorance invincible, and that, without the extreme of injustice, God cannot punish us for following the only guides it was his supreme will to give.

To say, we are obliged to believe things above our reason, is ridiculous. To assure us, that upon some objects we are not allowed to consult reason, is to say that, in the most interesting matter, we must consult only imagination, or act only at random. Our divines say, we must sacrifice our reason to God. But what motives can we have to sacrifice our reason to a being, who makes us only useless presents, which he does not intend us to use? What confidence can we put in a God, who, according to our divines themselves, is malicious enough to harden the heart, to strike with blindness, to lay snares for us, to lead us into temptation? In fine, what confidence can we put in the ministers of this God, who, to guide us more conveniently, commands us to shut our eyes?

137. Men are persuaded that religion is to them of all things the most serious, while it is precisely what they least examine for themselves. In pursuit of an office, a piece of land, a house, a place of profit; in any transaction or contract whatever, everyone carefully examines all, takes the greatest precaution, weighs every word of a writing, is guarded against every surprise. Not so in religion; everyone receives it at a venture, and believes it upon the word of others, without ever taking the trouble to examine.

Two causes concur to foster the negligence and carelessness of men, with regard to their religious opinions. The first is the despair of overcoming the obscurity, in which all religion is necessarily enveloped. Their first principles are only adapted to disgust lazy minds, who regard them as a chaos impossible to be understood. The second cause is that everyone is averse to being too much bound by severe precepts, which all admire in theory, but very few care to practice with rigor. The religion of many people is like old family ties, which they have never taken pains to examine, but which they deposit in their archives to have recourse to them occasionally.

138. The disciples of Pythagoras paid implicit faith to the doctrine of their master; he has said it was to them the solution of every problem. The generality of men is not more rational. In matters of religion.... Faith relieves the weakness of the human mind, to which application is commonly painful; it is much more convenient to depend upon others than to examine for one's self. Inquiry, being slow and difficult, equally, displeases the stupidity of the ignorant, and the ardor of the enlightened. Such is undoubtedly the reason why Faith has so many partisans.

The more men are deficient in knowledge and reason, the more zealous they are in religion.

A profound ignorance, boundless credulity, weak intellect, and warm imagination, are the materials, of which are made bigots, zealots, fanatics, and saints.

139. Religion is an affair of custom and fashion. We must do as others do. But, among the numerous religions in the world, which should men choose? This inquiry would be too painful and long. They must therefore adhere to the religion of their fathers, to that of their country, which, having force on its side, must be the best.

Christianity, growing out of Judaism, very humble in its obscure origin, became powerful and cruel under the Christian emperors, who, prompted by holy zeal, rapidly spread it in their empire by means of fire and sword, and established it upon the ruins of paganism. Mahomet and his successors, seconded by Providence or their victorious arms, in a short time banished the Christian religion from a part of Asia, Africa, and even Europe and the gospel was then forced to yield to the Koran.

In all the factions or sects, which, for many ages have distracted Christianity, the best argument has always been that of the strongest party.....

DOCUMENT 11.

Official Gazette, February 12, 1895.

In the form of society which was previous to ours, there was at least harmony between the ideas and the facts, between the things and the words: there was a social hierarchical order as there was a matching religious hierarchical order; there were a social resignation and a religious resignation; there was a scale of creation, at the top of which were the higher powers and God, as there was a scale of the society, at the top of which were the noble one, the priest and the king; and there was neither fraud nor ambiguity: the serf knew that he was in front of God equal to the noble one; but he also knew that, from the order of the same God, as long as he would be on earth, he would be a serf. There was no social hypocrisy.

What, on the contrary, characterizes the present society, with the result it is unable forever to be taught itself and to be expressed itself in a moral rule, it is that there is everywhere in it an essential contradiction between the facts and the words. Today, there is not a single one great word which has its true meaning, full and honest: brotherhood - and the fight is everywhere; equality - and all the disproportions go increasing; freedom - and the weak are given over to all the power games; property, i.e., close and personal relation of the man and of the thing, of the man and of a portion of nature changed by him, used by him - and here is that property becomes more and more a monstrous fiction which gives the natural forces over to some men, some natural forces of which they do not even know the law, and human forces of which they do not even know the name! Yes, everywhere the emptiness, the hypocrisy of the words. More than one century ago, Diderot had a presentiment of these nearest falseness, when he said in one of his revolutionary thoughts: "To have slaves is nothing; but what is intolerable, it is to have slaves while calling them citizens!"

"What is to be safeguarded first and especially, what is the inestimable good conquered by man through all prejudices, all sufferings, and all fights; it is this idea that there is no sacred truth*, that is to say forbidden to the investigation of Mankind; it is this idea that the greatest thing is the sovereign liberty of the mind; it is this idea that no - inner or outer - power, no power or dogma, is to limit the perpetual effort and the perpetual search for human reason; the idea that Mankind in the universe is a great investigative committee of which no governmental intervention, no plot - heavenly or earthly - should ever restrict or distort the operations; this idea that any truth that does not come from us is a lie; that even in the support we give, our critical sense must always remain awake, and that a secret revolt must be mingled with all our affirmations as well as all our thoughts; that if the very idea of God took a palpable form, if God Himself stood up, visible, over the multitudes; the first duty of man would be to refuse obedience, or to treat him as an equal with whom one discusses; but not as a master we are suffering! This is the meaning and greatness of our teaching, and quite strange are those who come to ask Reason to abdicate, on the pretext that it has not, and may never have, the total truth; quite strange those who, under the pretext that our approach is uncertain and stumbling, want to paralyze us, throw us into the night, out of despair for not having full clearness. " (Jean Jaures).

QURAN AND SCIENCE.

AND, FIRST OF ALL, WHO “INVENTED” SCIENCE ?

Islam also had a golden age of science which preceded the European Scientific Revolution and contributed to it. From the eighth to the thirteenth century, the Muslim empire became indeed a true hub for scholarship, bringing together ideas from India, Greece, and China and improving on them. Renowned scholars like Ibn-Sina (Avicenna), Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Farabi, Ibn al-Haytham (Al Hazen), Khayyam, al-Kindi, and al-Razi broke new ground in optics, medicine, chemistry, mathematics, and astronomy, thus paving the way for the European Renaissance. Muslim, Jewish and Christian scholars worked side by side in translating come from all the world's knowledge into Arabic and Persian, causing Baghdad, Córdoba and Cairo to become global intellectual hubs. Scholars dug into the works of Aristotle, Euclid, Plato, and the Indian and Chinese philosophers. Much of the European Renaissance was built on both Arab scholars like Avicenna and Averroes as well as ancient Greek texts regained via the Islamic world.

Just as some Hindu fundamentalists claim everything in science originated in India, so too some Muslim televangelists portray for us everything significant in science as coming from the Islamic world. In reality, the Islamic Golden Age was one important link in a gradual process of discovery which included ancient Greece, Egypt, India, China, Rome, Europe, and the modern world. It is foolish to try to “claim” science for one religion. Dr. Abdus Salam, the first Muslim Nobel laureate in science, wrote: “There is only one universal science; its problems and modalities are international and there is no such thing as Islamic science just as there is no Hindu science, nor Jewish science, no Confucian Science, nor Christian Science.”

Islam televangelists like Zakir Naik claim for Islam everything from the invention of world maps to soap, from coffee to the number zero. The number zero provides a good case study. Since the Arabs did introduce the concept of zero into Europe, the modern numbering system became known in Europe as the “Arabic numerals.” However, the Arabs themselves received the concept from India. The first printed record of the Hindu-Arabic number system is not an original work at all, but a translation of an Indian book, the *Brahmasphutasiddhanta*, written in 628. Al-Khwarizmi and al-Kindi are essentially responsible for popularizing the Indian method.

Similarly, while the word “algebra” comes from Arabic *al-jabr*, its origins can be traced to the ancient Babylonians. Trigonometry was not invented by Omar Khayyam as some allege, but it was a branch of mathematics which goes back 4000 years. Algorithms were first used by the ancient Babylonians, Euclid and Eratosthenes and later developed by al-Kindi.

The televangelist of Islam that is Zakir Naik claims that the first people who drew the world map were the Muslims. He is probably referring to the 1513 map of Piri Reis, which represents one small step in the gradual development from Ptolemy's world map to modern cartography. And apparently, Naik has not heard of Ptolemy, the Greek scholar who drew the first known world map five hundred years before Islam.

It has been said that Jabir ibn Hayyan “invented” distillation in 800. Actually, Aristotle mentioned the process and Pliny the Elder (died 79) spoke of a kind of primitive still, used to perform distillation. Furthermore by the 3rd century, Maria, the Jewess, as she was known, had apparently developed a forerunner of the modern alcohol still. Besides Egyptians were using distillation in the 3rd century to produce alcohol. What Jabir did was to invent an alembic still – not discover the process of distillation. The spherical earth was not discovered by Arab scholars but by the ancient Greeks. Aristotle provided evidence for the theory in the 4th century. In calculating the size of the Earth, Eratosthenes managed to get within 800 km of the actual figure in 250. It is a myth that people widely believed the earth to be flat before the age of exploration but by the 1st century Pliny stated that just about everyone was in agreement that the earth was round.

Gunpowder – A traveling Muslim science museum in the UK claimed that: Though the Chinese invented saltpeter gunpowder, and used it in their fireworks, it was the Arabs who first worked out that it could be purified using potassium nitrate for military use.

What's odd about this is that saltpeter is already potassium nitrate! Maybe the Arabs produced a more purified form of saltpeter. In reality gunpowder was developed in China around the 7th century and it was brought west either along the Silk Road or by the Mongols. In any case, the Chinese were already using rockets as weapons in the 11th century, long before any other such recorded use. Flight has been credited to Abbas ibn Firnas for making a reasonably successful glider flight in 875. However, there are Chinese accounts of manned gliders dating back as far as 500 before our era and functional parachutes twenty-one centuries ago. The first aircraft must be credited to Clement Ader (October 14, 1897, the first motorized - but uncontrolled - takeoff of a heavier than air machine).

Carpets, checks and windmills likewise predated Islam and originated in Persian or Central Asia. It has been claimed that gardens for beauty were invented by the Arabs, but that entirely ignores the ancient Hanging Gardens of Babylon and the gardens of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Coffee was popularized by the Abbassids but first exported from Ethiopia, where tribesmen used to chew the bean to help keep them alert on hunting trips.

In conclusion, we must reemphasize that Islam's Golden Age played a valuable role in mankind's progress, but it both contributed to and depended upon other major civilizations that existed at that time.

These achievements (in the first few centuries of Islamic history) coincided with the point of greatest open-mindedness to and cooperation with other civilizations like Greek and Indian civilization. It was a time when Muslim scholars studied and incorporated the great works of other civilizations, interacting with their scholars and incorporating their philosophies. The greatest scholars of Muslim history like Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd had a great fascination for the traditions of other civilizations, and for that result were besides condemned as heretics by the Muslim clergy. Al-Ghazali wrote a scathing criticism of the period's greatest scholars for their fascination with "un-Islamic" Greek scholars rather than the Quran. Al-Haitham's works were burned by clerics for their astronomy and Ibn Rushd was banished for his unorthodox embrace of philosophy. [Incidentally, the early authoritative Quranic commentators of Islam's Golden Age such as Tabari, Qunubi, Razi, Ibn Taymiyya and Qutb, had a very high view of the scriptures of the Christians and Jews, asserting that true Quranic teaching confirms the overall textual integrity of the Injil and Tawrat, and that Jesus may well have been crucified and resurrected as the Injil teaches.]

Eventually Al-Ghazali's opinion won out and the clergy censored all outside learning as "Jahiliyya" ignorance and devilish temptation and demanded that the scholars only study "pure" Islamic subjects. The Imam described mathematics and medicine as Fard al Kifaya ;that is to say he decisively placed those as secondary to religion: ilm. We find this mindset continuing today in the form of fundamentalist Bucailleists like Zakir Naik who are obsessed with finding science exclusively in the Quran and Islamic history, while showing antagonism to people of other faiths. The great irony is that though they boast most loudly about the Golden Age of Islam, it is precisely their mindset that deprived the Golden Age of its openness and led to its decline.

An example of this opposition to outside ideas and learning is seen in medieval Islam's response to the printing press invention. Soon after Gutenberg's invention of the modern printing press, Sultan Bayezid II banned it from the Ottoman Empire in 1485, and no printing press was established in the Arab world for three hundred and fifty years. The only printing presses in the Near East were therefore those run by Christians and Jews. Consequently this ban proved disastrous to the development of science and technology in the Arab world.

FAITH AND REASON IN ISLAM.

Holy Quran chapter 6 verse 68: " When you see those who meddle with Our revelations, withdraw from them until they meddle with another topic. And if the devil causes you to forget, do not sit, after the remembrance, with the congregation of wrongdoers..."

Caesar book VI chapter XIV: " They likewise discuss and impart to the youth many elements respecting the stars and their motion, respecting the extent of the world and of our earth, respecting the nature of things, respecting the power and the majesty of the immortal gods."

Lucan book I. " To you alone it is given the gods and celestial powers to know or not to know."

The question we will discuss here is that of the latitude offered to reason in the face of a written document: how far can it go to understand this document in the light of the background?

A short (very simplified) overview of some major trends that have emerged in this regard, yesterday and today, in the area of Muslim civilization.

1 Free thought ("zandaqa").

The term zandaqua means in Persia, heterodox doctrines, or those who follow religions previous to Islam: Mazdaism, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and by extension all kinds of materialistic freethinkers, expressing themselves by poetry most often, including atheists.

Will be convicted on this charge:

- Ibn Al Muqaffa (died in 760).
- Bashar Ibn Burd (died in 785).
- Abu Nuwas (died in 810).
- Al Mutanabbi (died in 965).
- Mansur Al Hallaj (mutilated and then burned alive in 922).
- Al Ma'ari (died in 1057).
- Al Suhrawardi (died in 1191).

As well as some ulemas, including the founder of the sharia himself, Ibn Hanbal (who was thrown in jail in 833) when the caliph Al Ma'mun will establish mu'tazilism as a state religion.

The term "zandaqa" then began to refer to a man who calls himself a Muslim, but says he does not need to refer to the Quran. Islam has also had its rationalists (a tiny minority, it is true); some rationalists who believe that the Quran was received by a man of a given time and culture; therefore that it must be interpreted in the light of human intelligence or current knowledge.

2. The mu'tazilism.

In the ninth and tenth centuries, a new School will emerge, the Mu'tazili School, a continuation of the Qadarite leanings, and essentially professing the free will of the human being. The Mu'tazili for example did not fear to read the Greek philosophers, and to develop arguments based on reason and logic, to "dialogue" with theologians of other religions. Among the theses supported by the Mu'tazili, let us retain these.

-The Tawhid (the essence of God). Al-Ashari expounds the Mu'tazilite design of God, emphasizing that it supposes the non-existence of attributes in the divine essence. God is inaccessible and transcendent (Tawhid). God is single, no one is like him; he is neither body, nor individual, nor substance, nor accident. He is beyond time. He cannot live in a place or in a being; he is the subject of no attribute or qualifier applying to creatures. He is neither conditioned, nor determined, nor begetting, nor begotten. It is beyond the perception of the senses. The eyes do not see him, the gaze doesn't reach him, the imaginations don't understand him. It is a thing, but not like the other things; he is omniscient, all-powerful, but his omniscience and omnipotence are not comparable to something created. He created the world without pre-established archetypes and without auxiliaries.

The Quran is not a divine attribute, so it is created by God. To say that the Quran is the uncreated Divine Word, manifested in time in the form of a speech in Arabic, is equivalent to say what Christians think of the Incarnation; namely that Christ is the uncreated divine Word, embodied in his flesh. The controversy does not appear at the level of the divine Word itself, but at the level of the mode of its manifestation. The divine Word became flesh in Christ for Christians, it is simply speaking in the Quran.

- Al-Adl (the divine justice).

God can want only good, and therefore does not want or command evil. It is the man who creates his own acts and is therefore responsible for evil otherwise the idea of reward and punishment in the hereafter would be meaningless. How to explain the passages of the Quran that affirm the divine Mashi'a (the fundamental Will of God), that is to say the fact that everything that happens to us is written in advance in a heavenly register? For the Mu'tazilites, this mashi'a expresses only the divine knowledge itself, that is to say the eternal design and the creating genius of God. But it does not

involve acts of volition (irada) nor acts of command (amr). The object of the mashi'a is the being, not the act.

- Promises for the Hereafter (wa'd and wa'id).

The believer who dies without repentance in a state of major sin is doomed to eternal hell. The Mu'tazilite design is focused on justice and very little on the mercy of God. The sinner who has remained faithful to God and the unfaithful sinner are not treated in the same way, for God has promised a reward to believers and a punishment to unbelievers.

- The intermediate situation (al-manzila bain al-manzilatain).

During his life, the sinner (fasiq) is neither truly believer (mu'min) nor truly unbeliever (kafir). We must first distinguish light faults (sagha'ir) from serious faults (kaba'ir). The former do not lead to the exclusion of the sinner unless he reoffends. In the latter it is still necessary to distinguish those which fell within unbelief (kufr, the kafir is an infidel in the absolute sense) and others which, while excluding the sinner from the community, do not make him an infidel.

- The moral imperative (al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf).

The principles of justice must be put into practice not only personally, but also at the community level, in social behavior. Every Muslim has the duty to command the good by the tongue and even by the strength of his stick (but never with bloodshed).

The Mu'tazilite leaning claims nevertheless to be Muslim, and it also opposed the free thought "zandaqa" mentioned above. For Ibn Taymiyya, it did not leave the community ("lam yakfur"), but it does not in conformity with the Sunni authenticity of the companions of the Prophet.

The Mu'tazilism is the most important School of speculative theology (kalam) in Islam.

The point of view of modern Muslims.

These leanings correspond globally today to what were the Mu'tazilite leanings yesterday. The texts of Quran and Sunna are still considered as references, but it is the pre-established rational tradition that is used as a prism through which they are read and understood. The Mu'tazili sensed the data of Islam through their rationalist tradition, did not believe in the weighing of actions in the hereafter, and made a forced interpretation of the texts speaking of this weighing. Some Muslims also sense Islam today through the training they have received. "The verses about the veil of the Muslim woman are genuine and we believe in them," they say, but Muslim law allows the background is taken into account. The wearing of the veil is one of the things related to the background of yesterday. It is no longer necessary today.

The point of view of pious Muslims.

Most of those who reason in this way do not do so because they refute the texts of Islam. They are based on a true principle - "Muslim law allows the background is taken into account" - but do not know in which field it is possible to change a rule according to the background, and where this is not possible. And if they do so, it is not by refusal the essential rules of Islam; but it is because, although they have got an advanced training in Western thought, they have not, on the other hand, received enough advanced training in Muslim theology. They sense Islam through the prism of their training, and refer, certainly, to the sources, but by reading them through the Western keys for understanding. The terms "religious," "cultic," "civil," "law," for example, are not understood by them according to the meaning they have in Islam, but according to the meaning they have in the West. Those who have got a more advanced training in Islamic theology must convince these brothers with appropriate preaching.

The question that arises today is the latitude that can be offered to reason in the reading it makes of the scriptures, and in its taking into account of the background. As we have seen above, three major branches can be distinguished today: Modernist Reformism, Reformism within genuineness and Traditionalism. The media are very interested in the leanings modernist reformism, because it is a thought that has integrated Western thought patterns; and who wants, for Muslim countries, an Islam in the image of what has become Christianity in Western countries. But the majority of Muslim men and Muslim women in these Islamic states do not intend to fall into the modernist leanings, which basically correspond to what the Mu'tazilite leanings were formerly. The majority of these Muslim men and Muslim women, on the contrary, want to head in the light of what they are sure it pleases God.

METEMPSYCHOSIS AND METAMORPHOSIS IN THE MUSLIM RELIGION.

Some definitions to begin.

"Is it not very natural that all the various metamorphoses with which the earth may be said to be covered, should have led the Orientals, whose imagination is so luxuriant, to imagine that our soul/minds passed from one body to another? An almost imperceptible point grows to be a worm, and this worm becomes a butterfly; an acorn changes to an oak, an egg to a bird; water becomes clouds and thunder; wood is turned into fire and ashes: in a word, all nature is more or less a metamorphosis. Souls being accounted tenuous forms, were soon concluded to partake of that property, which was sensibly seen in denser and heavier bodies. The metempsychosis is perhaps the most ancient doctrine in the known world, and still prevails in a great part of India and China.

It is likewise very natural that those ancient fables, collected and embellished by Ovid in his admirable work, took rise from the several metamorphoses with which our eyes are conversant.

The very Jews have not been without their metamorphoses. If Niobe was changed into marble, Hecuba, Lot's wife, was turned into salt. As Euridice was detained in hell for looking back, a like indiscretion cost Lot's wife her human nature. The country town in Phrygia where lived the hospitable Baucis and Philemon, is changed into a lake; the same submersion has befallen Sodom. Anius's daughters turned water into oil; the Scripture mentions a change something similar, but more sacred and real. Cadmus was turned into a serpent, and the like was seen in Aaron's rod.

The pagan deities very often assumed a human disguise; and when angels appeared to the Jews, it was always as men; with Abraham they partook of a repast. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, says, that the messenger of Satan cuffed him: *Angelos Satana colaphisei me*" (Philosophical Dictionary.)

The idea of metamorphosis of humans into animals has influenced Muslim food laws.

Ancient Muslim sources refer to the transformation of Christians 1) or Muslim sinners 2) into apes and swine. In the case of Christians and Muslims, this is not found in the Quran itself - as for the Jews - but in texts glossing or commenting on the Quran.

These beliefs already existed in pre-Islamic Arabia. It was then commonly accepted, as well among Arabs as in other peoples [and especially the Hebrews, for example. Editor's note] that human beings could be changed into animals, statues, or stars, by a supernatural action - generally corresponding to a divine punishment. 3)

In North Africa, during the Muslim Aghlabid dynasty (9th to 11th centuries), Jews were required to wear a piece of cloth representing an ape at the level of their shoulder; while Christians, they, had to wear a picture of swine. These representations should [also] appear on the front doors of their homes. In Spain, Jews were described as "apes" and Christians as "swine and dogs" by Muslims [especially in times of war or conflict. Editor's note].

Jews are often equated in the religious, educational, and public, Muslim discourse with "descendants of apes and swine" (sermon of the Sheikh of Al-Azhar, Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi, main authority of the Sunni Muslim world, in April 2002).

This very particular form of spirituality obviously has its source in the basic texts of the Quran, in hadiths (traditions about the life of Muhammad); as well as in the most reliable compilations of traditions brought together by Al-Bukhari and Muslim [both also evoking metamorphoses into mice and lizards]. Ancient Arab literature (adab) also mentions the changes of Jews into other animals 3) But let us return to our Quran

Chapter 2 verse 65. "And you know of those of you who broke the Sabbath, how We said unto them: Be you apes, despised and hated!"

Chapter 5 verse 60. "God has turned some to apes and swine."

Chapter 7 verse 166. "So when they took pride in that which they had been forbidden, We said unto them: Be you apes despised and loathed! "

The atheistic spiritualist that I am cannot help, having arrived at this place of our essay on Islam, to quote the hadith that some traditions attributed to a rabbi of 2000 years ago.

One Sabbath he 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?"

He 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."

Another time he went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse him, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. He said to the man with the shriveled hand, "Stand up in front of everyone."

Then he asked them, "Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they remained silent.

He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored" (Mark 2: 23-28; 3: 1-5).

All these stories of Jews who do not respect the Sabbath Day have no interest whatever, except to show us the strange design of God that monolatres, Jews or Muslims have.

Most of the commentators take the writings literally and maintain that the Jews were physically changed into apes and pigs, as explicitly stated in the Quran. Only one Quran commentator, Mujahid (Mujahid bin Jabir al Makki, d. circa 718-722) wrote that the Jews were not physically transformed, but that change was metaphorical, as in Quranic adage about the Jews being like "an ass carrying books" (62:5). According to Mujahid, it was not their external form that was changed; rather their hearts were changed [and their souls came to resemble those of apes]. However, according to the other commentators, Mujahid is alone in this view.

The most common explanation for the change of Jews into apes and swine, indeed, attributes this phenomenon to non-observance of the Sabbath.

Jews who were transformed into animals are largely identified as residents of the village of Iliya, situated on the Red Sea coast. The commentary of the Quran tells the story of how God made great schools of fish appear on Saturday and disappear before nightfall, to test the Jews' faith and obedience to his commandments. This was too much to bear, and therefore they found ways of getting around the divine prohibition against fishing on Saturday. Ibn Abbas, a cousin of Muhammad and one of the first Quran commentators, wrote that one Jew secretly caught a fish on Saturday, tied it with a string, and threw it back into the water after tying the string to a stake in the ground. The next day, he pulled the fish in and ate it. When he saw that he was not punished, he repeated his actions on the following Saturday, and on the Saturday after that. Eventually, the neighbors noticed the smell of the fish from his cooking, and began following his example. For a long time they ate in secret, and God did not hasten to punish them, but when they began to fish openly and sell their prohibited catches in the markets, then they were punished.

Al-Tabari mentions another tactic to circumvent the prohibition. One Jew who craved fish dug a pit with a channel leading from it to the sea. On Saturday, he opened the channel so the waves would wash the fish into the pit. On Sunday, the man cooked the fish. The aroma of the cooking fish reached the neighbors, who followed his example, and it soon became common for the Jews to eat fish caught on Saturday. When the sages warned them, they claimed they were fishing on Sunday, when they removed the fish from the pit, and not on Saturday, when they opened the channel.

Not all the Jews acted in the same way. The Quran commentators identify three groups: some of the Jews sinned and violated the divine precept not to fish on Saturday; some warned the sinners of God's punishment and forbade them from continuing to do so. The others held their tongues; although they did not eat the fish that the sinners caught on Saturday, they also did not forbid the sinners from sinning.

In such a situation, when the sinners refused to stop sinning, those who followed the divine precept decided that they were unwilling to live in the same village with the sinners and built a wall between them. One day, the sinners were not seen leaving their gate. Those who observed the divine precept climbed the wall and went to check the houses, and found them locked. When they opened the doors, they found that everyone – men, women, and children – were turned into apes. "They locked their houses at night, when people lock themselves in, and awoke as apes." The 13th-century Andalusian Quran commentator, Al-Qurtubi, said that the aforementioned apes identified their relatives remained, approached them, smelled their clothes and cried. The humans, in contrast, could not identify their relatives, but told them: "Didn't we forbid you [from violating the word of God]?" The apes nodded their heads in assent." According to some commentators, the young people of the village became apes while the elderly became pigs.

In his doctoral dissertation "The Sons of Israel in the Quran and in the Muslim Hadith Tradition," Sheikh Muhammad Sayyid Tantawi explains the Jews' transformation into apes and pigs in the Quran in another way. In explaining verse 5:60, Tantawi says that the Jews asked Muhammad what prophets he believed in. He then enumerated Abraham, Ishmail, Isaac, Jacob, the tribes [sic], Moses, and Jesus, and said that he did not differentiate between them. At the mention of Jesus, the Jews denied his prophecy, saying: "We do not believe in Jesus or anyone who believes in Him [that is, Muhammad], and we do not think our religion is worse than yours." The Quran therefore clarified the evil of the

religion of the Jews, whom "God cursed and against whom He was wroth, and He turned some of them into apes and pigs."

Recently, the Hamas monthly Falastin Al-Muslima published a series of articles on how God punished Jews. One chapter was devoted to the punishment of transforming them into animals. The series' author, Ibrahim Al-'Ali, takes the approach of most Quran commentators, explaining that the change was actually physical. He writes: "Goddid not mete out the punishment on any nation besides the Jews. The significance of the punishment is an actual change in the image of the Jew, and the perfect transformation from a human condition into a bestial condition – an actual change from human appearance into the form of genuine apes, pigs, mice, and lizards... The transformation was actual, as it is not impossible that the omnipotent God, who created man in his current human form, would not be capable of changing the Jew from a human into an animal..."

As the 14th century Quran commentator Ibn Kathir says, every deed has its appropriate recompense. The Jews conspired to fish on Saturday, preparing hooks, nets, and poles ahead of time. The Jews' subterfuges were outwardly like the truth, but in essence opposed to it – and their reward was thus suited to their deeds.

The Jordanian researcher Sallah Al-Khaledi develops the same idea : The logic of this transformation is that God wanted them to be humans who would live as real people and actualize their humanity in the best possible way. But when they rebelled against God's laws, they rejected the divine grace, and thus relinquished their humanity and honor and turned spiritually into animals. Then God therefore changed their form into apes, and turned them into real animals, [thus] creating a correlation between the spiritual and physical images."

Al-Qurtubi explains that two approaches developed among clerics on this matter. According to the first, all apes today are the offspring of the sons of Israel. Proponents of this first approach are based on hadiths which say that Muhammad warned against the harm that can be caused by the consumption of certain animals such as mice and lizards; for they may have been changed children of Israel.

According to the second approach, the apes who used to be Jews left no offspring. Therefore, today's apes, pigs, and other animals are the offspring of animals in existence before the divine punishment. Ibn Abbas, for example, maintained that anyone whose form was changed lived for no more than three days and did not eat, drink, or propagate.

Ibrahim Al-'Ali (In Falastin Al-Muslima) writes that Jews who were turned into apes, pigs, lizards, and mice were also punished by not being able to reproduce. But he adds, "the extinction of Jews punished with transformation does not mean that their punishment had ended. The punishment left its impression in the souls of the Jews who came after them: and this profoundly affected their ways of behavior."

Jews invented the theory of evolution in order to rid themselves of the shame of the ancient punishment: " ?... Since Jews felt disgrace and shame because of this special punishment, that changed them into the brothers of apes and pigs, they attempted to dispel this accusation from themselves, in despising the entire human race by saying that [man's] origin was in animals, and that it developed over time from an ape to human form (by means of the theory... of the Jewish ape Darwin)."

EDITOR'S NOTE. IS IT NECESSARY TO POINT OUT THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF THE EVOLUTION OF SPECIES IS TODAY THE BEST EXPLANATORY FACTOR THAT CAN BE BROUGHT TO MANY PHENOMENA; AND THAT THE DARWINISM CORRECTED IN NEO-DARWINISM IS A GOOD THEORIZATION OF IT.

1 See the comments on chapter 5 verses 112-115, of the famous Al-Tabari (tenth century). Al-Tabari explains that the apostles were turned into apes and pigs, or, in another version, only into pigs, because they did not obey the divine orders; and this, in spite of the miracle sending down, at their request, a table laden with food from the heavens.

2 Muslims too were threatened with being turned into apes and pigs. For Jews and Christians, this punishment was a thing of the past, but for Muslims it would be meted out on Judgment Day. In his article "Apes, Pigs, and the Islamic Identity," U. Rubin indicates that the Muslims threatened with being turned into animals were not ordinary sinners, but those whose sin had a Jewish or Christian nature. The mention of a punishment connected to Jews and Christians was aimed at fighting Jewish and Christian influence in Muslim society. Islamic identity being based on unity and morality; any Muslims imitating Jews or Christians constituted a threat to it.

3 In his 9th century treatise *The Book of Animals*, the greatest of these authors, Al-Jahiz, writes that it is generally thought that the cheetah, eel, white-ant, mouse, and lizard were originally Jews. He mentions the tradition telling how a sage saw a man eating a lizard and said to him: "Know that you have eaten one of the sheikhs of the sons of Israel." He does not say why they were changed into animals, but does add that proof of this is that "the lizard's foot resembles the human hand."

4 *Falastin Al-Muslima* (London), September 1996, pp. 54-55.

5 Isma'il Ben Amer Ibn Kathir (died 1373).

BUCCAILLEISM.

Faith and science are modes of knowledge different. Just as it would be ridiculous, in a scientific discussion, to want to prove one's thesis by an oath taking God as witness, so is it ridiculous in the field of faith to want to prove a dogma with the help of a scientific truth. This is what buccailleism strives to do.

Ironically enough, it was a non-Muslim French doctor who first inspired this whole trend. Maurice Bucaille, after being hired as a family physician to King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, published in 1976 a book called *The Bible, the Qur'an and Science* in which he argued that the Quran was in conformity with Science unlike the Bible. After that a Yemeni politician named Sheikh Abdul Majed Zindani then started the well-funded "Commission on Scientific Signs in the Quran and Sunna" based in Saudi Arabia and became the chief global proponent of Buccailleism.

Zindani was a friend and mentor to Sheikh Osama bin Laden, who was one of the first fans of Buccailleism and even funded its 'research.' Zindani's co-authored a textbook on Embryology has Sheikh Osama bin Laden listed as a primary "sponsor."

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, Buccailleism is "in some ways the Muslim counterpart to Christian creationism" although "while creationism rejects much of modern science, Buccailleism embraces it."

« After having compared the scientific data with the statements of the Scriptures, I presented in the first edition of this book in 1976 conclusions that initially formed for me a huge surprise : the Quran certainly contains no proposal contradicting the best established knowledge of our time and it left no room for the ideas of the time on the dealt topics. But, moreover, a great number of facts that will be discovered only at the modern time are evoked there, to such an extent that on November 9, 1976 I could present to the Academy of Medicine a statement..... The observations of modern man on the absence of scientific mistakes are in complete harmony with the Muslim Exegetes' ideas about the revealed nature of the Quran, a consideration which implies that Allah[God] could not express an inaccurate idea... as for the Quran there is no opposition but harmony between Scripture and modern knowledge, humanly inexplicable harmony".

Outside religious circles, Buccailleism has met with disdain. One critic has unearthed a humorous parody "discovering" similar cryptic scientific miracles in Virgil's *Georgica* poem. Using identical reasoning to that of Bucaille and Naik, he identifies one scientific discovery after another in just the first few lines of his poem.

Since the publishing of *The Bible, the Quran and Science* in 1976, Bucaillists promote the idea that the Quran is of divine origin, arguing that it contains scientifically correct facts.

Here is one common example from Zakir Naik: *The Quran and Modern Science: Compatible or Incompatible?* Published 2001 by Darussalam.

MOONLIGHT IS REFLECTED LIGHT: It was believed by earlier civilizations that the moon emanates its own light. Science now tells us that the light of the moon is reflected light. However this fact was mentioned in the Qur'an 1,400 years ago in the following verse: "Blessed is He Who made Constellations in the skies, and placed therein a Lamp and a Moon giving light." (Al-Quran 25:61). The Arabic word for the sun in the Quran is *shams*. It is also referred to as *siraj* ... The Arabic word for the moon is *qamar* and it is described in the Quran as *munir* which is a body that gives *nur* i.e., reflected light... This proves that the Quran recognizes the difference between the nature of sunlight and moonlight.

The problem with Naik's argument is that *nur* simply means "light"; there is absolutely no sense of "reflected" in the word in any Arabic dictionary or lexicon. If, for the sake of argument, we adopt Naik's new definitions, then God, bearing the attribute *an-Nur*, must be merely "reflected light," while Muhammad, called "a lamp (*siraj*) spreading light" in Sura 33:46 is the original source of light. It all begins to sound rather blasphemous.

In addition, it was known at least a thousand years before Muhammad that the moon's light is reflected light. When Aristotle (384-322 before our era) discussed the earth's shape, he proved its sphericity by arguing that during a lunar eclipse the earth's shadow on the moon is seen. And centuries before Muhammad (pbuh), the Jews knew that the moon is "borrowing its light" from the sun (Philo, 1st century) that "the light of the moon must be derived from the light of the sun" (Midrash Hagadol, mid-1st century).

Naik has attempted to evade this unavoidable conclusion by dividing God into two parts: 1) a *siraj* light, and 2) a 'reflector' or niche which reflects 'God part 1' and produces *nur* (*nauzubillah*!)

He builds this bizarre idea on a reinterpretation of the lamp verse (24:35). But his interpretation utterly contradicts the interpretation of all the sahaba (Ibn Abbas, Ibn Mas'ud, Ubayy bin Ka'b, etc.), who all correctly interpreted the niche and glass as the believer's heart in which the light of faith burns. None of the sahaba ever had the audacity of dividing God into two separate parts, one part of God a burning wick and the other part the reflecting niche. Zakir Naik's tafsir is ridiculous and his idea is blasphemous.

On the other hand, Naik alleges that the Torah incorrectly teaches that the moon emits light: God made two great lights—the greater light for the day and the lesser light for the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the space to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness (Genesis 1:16-18)

Naik's argument is ridiculous, for it is perfectly acceptable to call the moon a "light"—the verse nowhere calls it a "source of light." In that case one might as well criticize modern people for using the expression "moonlight." The Hebrew word "light" (a'or) covers both direct and reflected light (Proverbs 15:30). And Ezekiel 32:7-8 and Matthew 24:29 hint that the moon's light is dependent on the sun's primary light.

The Qur'an also contains a somewhat problematic description of the moon, for it says that there are seven layered heavens, with the lowest one containing the stars²⁷ (though we now know that stars are found throughout the cosmos). However Sura Nuh 71:15-16 places the moon in the middle of these seven heavens, which puts it in the space much farther away than the nearest stars in the lowest heavens.

Likewise, claims have been thrown about black holes, embryology, geology and astronomy.

Dr. Zakir Naik perceives a miracle of premature scientific knowledge in the following passage: "And before Solomon were marshaled his hosts – of jinns and men and birds, and they were all kept in order and ranks. "At length, when they came to a (lowly) valley of ants, one of the ants said: 'O you ants, get into your habitations, lest Solomon and his hosts crush you (under foot) without knowing it.'" [Al-Quran 27:17-18]

"In the past, some people would probably have mocked at the Quran, equating it with a book of fairy tales in which ants speak and communicate to each other sophisticated messages. In recent times, however, scientific research has shown us several facts which assist in this way, which were not known earlier to humankind" (Zakir Naik).

Naik does not quote the wider context of this passage, in which Solomon also discusses political and theological affairs with a Hoopoe bird and an Ifrit Jinn as well.

Incidentally, the ancient biblical account of Solomon does not portray him talking with ants, hoopoes and Ifrits, but rather portrays him as follows: "He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's science, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom." (1 Kings 5:13-14).

Editor's note. Perceiving that ants communicate is called common sense, something perceived independently by most inquisitive ten-year-olds.

Zakir Naik alleges that the Bible speaks of a literal 24-hour day creation while the Quran would teach a symbolic six-age creation. This is clearly untrue.

The problem with Bucailleism is that it portrays God as weak, unable to be straightaway clear. For example, if God intended to communicate us the shape of the earth, why didn't he just put a verse in that says, "Have you not considered how we made the earth not flat, but a ball, which revolves around the sun?" And if God intended to predict the television, he could have clearly said, "People shall be able one day to watch images on boxes in their dwelling places." Elsewhere God speaks very clearly! Nomanul Haq (Penn State University) is a leading critic of Bucailleism who attributes the rise of Bucailleism to a "deep inferiority complex" among Muslims humiliated by European colonialism and bidding to recapture faded glories of Arab Muslim world science.

Reputed Muslim Theoretical physicist Parvez Hoodbhoy of Pakistan wrote even: "the problem with such claims to ownership is that they lack an explanation for why quantum mechanics, molecular genetics, etc., had to await discovery elsewhere. No reason is offered as to why antibiotics, aspirin, steam engines, electricity, aircraft, or computers were not first invented by Muslims. But even to ask such questions is considered offensive."

Abu Ammar Yasir Qadhi, popular speaker and Yale graduate: "There are not scientific allusions buried under every third verse in the Quran, waiting to be unearthed by some zealous and imaginative Muslim!" (An Introduction to the Sciences of the Quran)

Turkish philosopher and physicist Taner Edis writes: "Quran science [Bucailleism] is pathetic....

And regarding the very concept of "Islamic Science," Dr. Abdus Salam, Pakistani Nobel laureate Physicist writes: "There is only one universal science; its problems and modalities are international

and there is no such thing as Islamic science just as there is no Jewish science, nor Hindu science, no Confucian Science, nor Christian Science."

AND AS FOR US LET US BEGIN BY POINTING OUT THAT THE QURAN REFERS STILL TO THE OLD SUMERIAN MYTH OF THE DIRECT CREATION OF MAN BY GOD FROM CLAY.

Scientific part of the Quran chapter 6: 2.

" He it is Who has created you from clay, and has decreed a term for you. A term is fixed with Him. Yet still you doubt!"

Scientific part of Quran chapter 6 : 98.

" And He it is Who has produced you from a single man (Adam), and (has given you) a habitation and a repository. We have detailed Our revelations for a people who have understanding."

Needless to say, we know very well now that man did not appear in that way.

WARNING ABOUT WHAT FOLLOWS.

OUR INTENTION HERE IS IN NO WAY TO MOCK THE DESIGN OF THE WORLD ADMITTING THE EXISTENCE BETWEEN MAN AND THE HIGHER BEING WHATEVER HIS NAME (GOD THE FATE THE DHARMA ALLAH JEHOVAH THE TETRAGRAMMATON, ETC.) OF INTERMEDIARY BEINGS (WHATEVER THEIR NAMES: GODS ANGELS DEMONS SPIRITS, ETC.)

IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE MUSLIM RATIONALISTS THAT THE MUTAZILITES WERE AND AFTER THEM THE PHILOSOPHER AND DOCTOR AVICENNA AS WELL AS IBN KHALDUN SAW IN THEM RATHER SOME ALLEGORIES.

THE JINNS.

The Quran mentions the jinns many times. Here are some examples.

Chapter 72. Al Jinn.

"It is revealed unto me that a company of the jinn gave ear, and they said: Lo! we have heard a marvelous Reading [the Quran], which guides unto righteousness, so we believe in it and we ascribe no partner unto our Lord. And (we believe) that He - exalted be the glory of our Lord! - has taken neither wife nor son, and that the foolish one among us used to speak concerning God an atrocious lie. And lo! we had supposed that humankind and jinn would not speak a lie concerning God - And indeed individuals of humankind used to invoke the protection of individuals of the jinn, so that they increased them in revolt against God); and indeed they supposed, even as you suppose, that God would not raise anyone (from the dead) . We had sought the heaven but had found it filled with strong warders and meteors.

And we used to sit on places (high) therein to listen. But he who listens now finds a flame in wait for him; and we do not know whether harm is boded unto all who are in the earth, or whether their Lord intends guidance for them. And among us there are righteous folk and among us there are far from that. We are sects having different rules. And we know that we cannot escape from God in the earth, nor can we escape by flight. And when we heard the guidance [the Quran], we believed therein, and whosoever believes in his Lord, he fears neither loss nor oppression. And there are among us some who have surrendered (to God = who became Muslims) and there are among us some who are unjust. And whosoever has surrendered to God, such have taken the right path purposefully. And as for those who are disbelievers, they are firewood for hell.etc. etc."

Chapter 18 verse 50.

"And (remember) when We said unto the angels: Fall prostrate before Adam, and they fell prostrate, all save Iblis. He was of the jinn, so he rebelled against his Lord's command. Will you choose him and his seed for your protecting friends instead of Me, when they are an enemy unto you ? "

Chapter 55 verse 74.

"Whom neither man nor jinn has touched before them."

Etc., etc.

The jinn and the Quran therefore.

If we stick to the Quran, the following description can be proposed. The jinns have in common with men to have been created to worship God, to have had prophets, to be tempters even for the prophets and, if they have gone astray to be punished and to go to hell. They are mortal. The jinns therefore are only creations of God. They cannot be considered as equal or directly involved in his transcendence. They were created of subtle fire, without smoke and that before the men who themselves were created with silt and clay. Unless it is a metaphor, the jinns have a heart, eyes and ears. Their strength is greater than that of men and their speed of movement can be almost instantaneous. They can produce concrete objects in the human eye; that's how they worked for Solomon.

It may have happened that jinn abused men and that the latter even worshipped jinn. Between them, sexual intercourses are possible. Their association remains powerless before the will of God. The jinn cannot know the unknowable even though some of them have listened to the Quran and have converted.

The Jinns and the Hadiths

To our knowledge, the most consistent synthesis of the remarks made about the jinn is that of Toufik Fahd. First inhabitants of the earth but having done evil, the jinn were hunted by an army of angels. Driven back they were confined in certain places, particularly the desert or uninhabited regions, the groves, thickets and more generally the places not frequented by men. This was not without some conflicts; with men but also between them. Bilal, companion of the Prophet, reports that having followed him with water one day while the Prophet was isolating himself, he heard words that he did not understand. The prophet explained that he had arbitrated between Muslim jinn and associating (pagan) jinn about a settlement area. Another conflict is reported, this time between a tribe of men and a tribe of jinns. A man having killed a jinn, the jinn killed men and the latter killed all scorpions, snakes, insects until the jinn asked for peace.

A hadith relates these words of the Prophet: "God created the jinn in three categories, the first is made of snakes, scorpions and reptiles, the second resembles the wind in the atmosphere, the third resembles men and is likely to be rewarded and punished. " It has been said that a woman came to see the Prophet and asked him to free his son from a jinn "who floors him morning and evening." The Prophet put his hand on the chest of the child, who vomited a small animal.

The tradition relates that the Prophet said that bones were used as food by the Muslim jinns. It is also reported that jinn feed on odors. The jinns are invisible but some animals can see them, including

dogs and donkeys. We have seen that they can, however, take various forms. Of these, the snake shape is common. Witness this story quoted by Fahd. Pilgrims came across a snake that was writhing in the dust, and it was not long before it died, one of them took a rag, wrapped it with it, dug the earth and buried it. Arrived at Mecca, a man came to meet them and asked, "Which of you dealt with Amr ibn Jabir. "We do not know him," they answered. "Who," the man said again, "took care of the snake (jann)? May God reward him for us, it was the last of the nine jinns who heard the Quran from the very mouth of the Prophet. "

Another hadith relates the story of a jinn who went out with a man's wife taking the form of the latter. One day the jinn brought him to the threshold of the first sky. There the man heard a voice saying, "There is power and strength only in God. What God wants is happening; what he does not want does not happen. Back on earth, the man (a Persian) recited what he had heard, and the jinn burned to ash. Comments.

The elements known from hadiths are much more numerous and more precise than those revealed by the Quran. We will see later that those who are conveyed in popular culture are even more detailed. All, however, bear witness to an invisible and hidden world, as indeed the root of the word indicates it (jenna), coexisting with that of human beings and whose destinies sometimes intersect.

These two worlds strangely are partly alike; like human beings, jinns live in society, quarrel, have sex (what distinguishes them from angels and demons), eat, drink, form alliances and make war, have different beliefs, and so on. The differences are also striking by their inverted symmetries; men live in cities, jinns in desert or given up places or in the places for whom men have little attraction, even repugnance, ruins, sewers, toilets, etc. Men eat flesh, jinn feed on bones. The men are heavy and slow, the jinns are rather airy and fast. The jinns seem to populate the domains of the unknown, the unexplored or the deserted, the mysterious and the unmentionable, the dark side of things. It is here that men and jinn meet, in uncertain areas, in ambiguous feelings, in places where misfortune and death are roaming. Beyond the fears they arouse, the jinns give men meaning to their fears and misunderstandings. In a way they can sometimes be our companions in misfortune.

In the same way the world of the jinn and the world of human beings are not thought as separate, hermetic. On the contrary, it may be more accurate to say that it is the same world but inhabited by one or the other at different levels. In the invisible itself, cultural representations do not always differentiate so clearly the jinns from other entities such as angels, ghwal (male ogres: ghouls, female ogres: ghula), ifrit, marid, shayatin. These, however, are generally imagined as closer to demons and belonging to the Iblis group. The latter certainly corresponds a little more to the Devil of the Christians in spite of the phonetic proximity of shaytan and Satan.

Are there males and females among the jinns?

When Muhammad entered the toilets, he recited the following invocation: "O Lord, I ask protection from You against male demons and female demons" (Hadith transmitted by Anas and reported by Bukhari and Muslim).

This clearly shows that there are males and females among the jinns.

Do jinns have sex and offspring?

Holy Quran chapter 55 verse 74: "Whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them ."

Holy Quran chapter 18 verse 50: " Fall prostrate before Adam, and they fell prostrate, all save Iblis. He was of the jinn, so he rebelled against his Lord's command. Will you choose him and his seed for your protecting friends instead of Me, when they are an enemy unto you ?"

The first verse shows that the jinns have the ability to deflower virgins so to have sex. The second shows that the jinns have descendants from these sexual relations, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, it clearly proves that Iblis is a jinn and not an angel as some claim.

Generally, the alliance between man and jinn gives immense power to this or those who participate in it, human or jinn. The jinn can also oppose the man, what represents one of the two cases, in good or evil, but they can both, two by two or more, create gigantic forces by supplementing each other, there too, in good as in evil. Under these conditions, either man submits the jinn, by the will of God, in the sense of good, or alone by his knowledge (that God has given him). He is in evil when the objectives pursued are contrary to the moral and spiritual laws imposed by God, or when he does not admit that his science was given to him by God. Generally, both things are related. The Quran considers that man is superior to jinn. The mystics have analyzed these notions very deeply, and they say that they belong to the world of secrecy. This means that the essential discoveries on these issues should not be divulged because they can be used by the evildoers.

Religion of the jinns.

The jinns are on this point like human beings. They can be Christians, Jews, or Muslims [and therefore also atheistic materialists if we understand the reasoning, poor things ! Editor's note]. Muslims among the jinns are just like Muslims among men; some are pious, others are perverts, others follow the Sunna of the Prophet while others innovate in a reprehensible way . And " among us there are righteous folk and among us there are far from that. We are sects having different rules "(Chapter 72, verse 11).

Scholars are unanimous on the entry into hell of the disbelieving jinn. Imam Ibn Taymiyya has well established that the unanimity of scholars agree on the fact that disbelieving jinn will be punished by the fire of hell and the most prevailing opinion on the destiny of the believing jinn is that they will go to heaven.

CONCLUSION.

With the angels and the demons (shayatin) the jinns form a sort of triptych of non-human entities, usually invisible but that can be perceived under certain particular conditions. In fact, the border between these entities are sometimes blurred or ambiguous. Jinns are not demons, but they can be treated like that if they have done evil. Thus Iblis, whose Hebrew and Christian equivalent is rather Satan, is counted among the jinn in verse 50 of Sura 18 while he is counted among the angels in verse 34 of Sura 2. Iblis that many authors compared with the Greek diabolos, linguistic ancestor of the Christian Devil. In the same way we know that certain brotherhoods, the Gnawa for example, use the word mluk as equivalent to jinn whereas we can recognize the same root (m.l.k.) as that of angels.

THE JINN UNIVERSE ACCORDING TO JAY ALFRED

(Our invisible bodies, Brains and realities, Between the moon and the earth.)

The famous Islamic cosmographer and Persian physician who lived in the thirteenth century, Zakariya ibn Muhammad ibn Mahmud Abu Yahya al-Qazwini, states that jinns "are aerial animals, with transparent bodies which can assume various forms."

If we strip away the folklore and superstitions that have mired the science of the jinns through more than a millennium, we will see that there is probably a kernel of truth.

Genie is an English translation of the Arabic term "jinn." The English word comes from the French "génie," which meant a spirit, from the Latin "genius," which meant a sort of personal guardian angel assigned to each person at birth. Islam teaches that there are 3 main intelligent life forms: angels, jinns and humans. Angels are made of light. The fifty-fifth chapter of the Quran states that jinns are made of "smokeless fire" and humans are made of clay (like that used in pottery). In modern terms, humans are carbon-based or water-based, jinns plasma-based and angels are photonic life forms. Jinns have been created before humans and appear to have undergone some form of Darwinian evolution.

Muslims believe that jinns have the power to fly and size shift by fitting into any space. It is interesting to note that the popular depictions of a "genie" often show a large giant whose body tapers into a vortex and who, despite his size, is able to squeeze into Aladdin's lamp or a small bottle.

Jinns are also believed to be able to shape-shift and therefore can appear to humans as snakes, scorpions, cattle, donkeys, birds, and other animals.

Some writers think that jinns are in fact plasma life forms, for example, Dr. Ibrahim B Syed, a Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of Louisville.

This concept of plasma is a relatively modern one. The term "plasma" was coined by Irving Langmuir around 1929 and modern plasma physics only began in the twentieth century. A thousand years ago this concept did not exist. But the term "smokeless fire" captures rather nicely this idea. Fluorescent lamps and neon signs (which are composed of plasma) would probably have been described as "smokeless fire" or "fire without smoke" thousand years ago.

Jinns cannot see human beings clearly but only as blurred images. However, just like humans, the perceptual ranges of some jinns may be wider giving them intermittent access to the human world (just as some humans have intermittent access to the jinn world). It would not be surprising if these jinns are considered "psychic" in their own world - being the few who are able to communicate with a strange species called "humans." The majority of jinns probably consider humans as ghosts living in a parallel Earth.

Like human beings, jinns are entrusted with responsibilities (careers, family life, etc.). Many jinns accepted the mission and message of Muhammad when they heard the Holy Quran read by the Prophet while performing "Fajr salaah" in Ukaz. Muslims believe that jinns, just like humans, congregate into different religions and come together in different groups, sects and cults such as Muslims, Christians, Jews and even presumably atheists, among human beings. They would have their own mosques, churches and temples - as reported by some persons who have had near-death experiences. In other words, jinns operate in societies, communities and within political systems and are startlingly similar to humans. Their plasma-based civilization has probably a longer history than ours.

Every person is assigned a personal jinn called a "qareen". The Prophet Muhammad's qareen would be converted into a "good" Muslim jinn on listening to a recitation of the Quran because, among other things, it was "beautiful." This shows that jinns can be persuaded by arguments to change their behavior and that they are intelligent life forms with a sense of morality and even aesthetics. Muslims believe that jinns will be rewarded for their righteousness and be punished for their wickedness just like humans. Jinns, like humans, will be judged on judgment day and be sent to heaven or hell according to the moral quality of the life they completed. They are therefore obviously thinking beings with free choice. Hence, they would also have a conscience.

Jinns make up only one category of life forms composed of "smokeless fire" according to Islam. The other categories include the Janns, Shaitans, Ifrits and Marids. Some writers believe that the jinn

evolved from the more primitive Jann. The process of (Darwinian) evolution therefore presumably also occurs among the jinn.

Editor's note. The purpose of this article is to gain a historical perspective into how certain categories of plasma life forms were viewed by Muslims through their sacred literature.

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.

ON THE NATURE OF IBLIS.

To know if this Iblis is an angel or a jinn remains a mystery. The commentators and thinkers of Islam have repeatedly tried to define this strange character. If the Mu'tazilite exegete Az-Zamakhchari (died in 1144) claimed that Iblis was nothing but a jinn; other thinkers, such as the Shafi'i qadi Al-Baidawi (died 1286), tried to show that he had in reality a two-fold nature, angel and jinn.

The problem is that the Quran presents Iblis as a being created from fire (just like the jinns) and that the hadiths describe the angels (mala'ika) as beings of light. The question, therefore, is why and to what extent did Iblis feel concerned by a divine order explicitly given to angels and not to jinns?

Many scholars of the Islamic faith believe that Iblis was a jinn raised to the rank of angel for his loyalty to God, his bravery and his fighting spirit. The historian At-Tabari (died in 923) presents him in his Chronicle as a jinn devoted to the divine cause, who was given the command of the Earth before the arrival of Man. What would explain to a certain extent his presence during the creation of the human being, and the fact that he was concerned by the divine order to prostrate before him.

Other Muslim theologians have attempted to demonstrate the need for a universal order established by God and concerning the status of his creatures. They say that the angels, being impeccable beings, totally devoted to their Lord, they cannot rise against him. The requirement of coherence established by this universal Order is such that it is necessary to admit the necessity of having, within the community of angels, a disobedient creature; prefiguring the peccability of some of them, and therefore the beginning of Humanity.

This theory, very little developed in the classical tradition, has its origins in Christian theology where the devil appears as a fallen angel.

At the present time, no answer satisfies the different Schools of thought except to simply believe that Iblis cannot be anything but a jinn.

AL SHAITAN AND PREDESTINATION.

Iblis having become al-shaitan, the question then arises of knowing what his share of responsibility is in human acts, and what place he holds in the dualist system that characterizes Islam.

Presented as the Enemy (Al 'adu), the Stoned (Al-Rajim), the Idol par excellence (Taghut) adored by the Meccans through the worship of the trinity of goddesses named Allat (al-Lat), Al-Uzza and Manat; Al Shaitan is the personification of Evil, but he is not the absolute master of it.

Some thinkers have seen in the episode of the Creation the starting point of the empowerment of Man in his actions. Just as God breathed Adam's mind, the shaitan, tempting him, breathed him with his own evil breath. So much so that evil is now in Man, and no longer only inspired by the shaitan.

Chapter 4 verse 79. " Whatever of good befalls you it is from God, and whatever of ill befalls you it is from yourself."

In the same way, Shaitan does not appear in the Quran as the master of Hell, but on the contrary, as only one of its inhabitants. He is not the Lord of Evil par excellence, but simply his first agent. What leaves man to his free will and choice to go towards Darkness or Light.

This design of the part of the shaitan was well explained by Thomas Aquinas. " The devil is the occasional and indirect cause of all our sins, in so far as he induced the first man to sin, by reason of

whose sin human nature is so infected, that we are all prone to sin. He is not, however, the direct cause of all the sins of men."

The shaitan being likened to a jinn, the command of these creatures is attributed to him as long as they have an evil spirit from their origin. For the Hanbali jurist Ibn Taimiyya (died in 1328), the shaitan is even the first jinn at the origin of others, just as Adam is the first man at the origin of human beings. Basic Dictionary of Islam. Islam admits the existence of jinns, invisible spirits, who, like men, were created to worship God: "I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me (chapter 51 verse 56). "And the jinn did We create aforetime of essential fire" (chapter 15 verse 27). "And the jinn did He create of smokeless fire " (chapter 55 verse 15). They have eyes, ears and a heart; it is written about those of them who are evil: "They have hearts with which they understand nothing; they have eyes with which they do not see, they have ears with which they do not hear." There are female jinns, but also male jinns, therefore able [like the Dusios/Dusii of the Gallic druids] to mate with human females; at least according to chapter 55 verse 56, which refers to " those of modest gaze, whom neither man nor jinn will have touched before them."

There are good and evil jinns. As men, they will die and be resurrected, and gathered on the day of the Last Judgment. Iblis' army will be thrown into the fire: "O you assembly of the jinn and humankind! Came there not unto you messengers? "(Chapter 6 verse 130). " I shall fill hell with the jinn and mankind together " (chapter 11 verse 119).

Other jinns are, on the contrary, submitted to God. There are even preachers among them. They will go to Heaven like those who listened to the recitation of the Quran made by the Prophet on his return from Ta'if (where he had gone to preach, vainly, the good word to the inhabitants of this city, and ask at the same time their help). " We inclined towards you certain of the jinn, who wished to hear the Quran and when it was finished, they turned back to their people, warning " (chapter 46 verse 29). The jinns have indeed their own community. They populate places where there is water, uninhabited places, houses in rubble, and every other deserted places. Popular belief apparently attributes to them some corporeality; they can be in the form of animals or humans.

Some jinns insidiously perform their harmful role with men as they had once done with the prophets. They forged lies that they whispered to the messengers of God by enveloping them in a pretty language. "We appointed unto every prophet an adversary - devils of humankind and jinn, who inspire in one another plausible discourse through guile" (chapter 6 verse 112).

A little like the Celtic druids, the pagan Arabs admitted the existence of the jinn, but by associating them with their creating God. They saw in them sons or daughters of the Lord: "They ascribe as partners unto Him the jinn, although He did create them, and impute falsely, without knowledge, sons and daughters unto Him "(chapter 6 verse 100).

Iblis was considered a brother of God, and the angels some children born from female demons having sexual intercourses with the Lord. " They imagine kinship between him and the jinns, whereas the jinns well know that they will be brought before (Him) " (chapter 37 verse 158).

Modern Mu'tazilites consider the jinns are an allusion to the existence of microbes. Such ideas are not shared by the majority of the Muslim opinion, which, to escape the influence of these demons, recommends seeking refuge in God; reciting the following two chapters: " 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 "(chapter 113). " I seek refuge in the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind, from the evil of the sneaking whisperer, who whispers in the hearts of mankind, of the jinn and of mankind "(chapter 114). Jinns that have a proper noun are of unequal importance according to the brotherhoods. In Morocco, Aisha Quandisha (Kandisha), also popularly named Lalla Aisha, Aisha sudaniya, Aisha Gnawiya, whom at least one person in each family has met, is described as a fascinating , but also terrifying, woman. Dressed in sumptuous clothes, she can hide her breasts that hang and her camel (or goat, or mule) feet. Tireless seducer, woe to him who sleeps with her without having discovered her identity or having protected himself by stabbing a knife in the ground; she diverts many men who are thus doomed to celibacy or, if they are married, see their married life struck by misunderstanding, impotence, sickness, sterility. Westermarck linked her with the goddess Astarte or Ishtar, and even made the connection then between Kandisha and qedesha, the sacred prostitute in the Near East of antiquity.

Such assumptions are in practice unverifiable, but even if they are proven, this would explain nothing. A worship or simply a cultic representation cannot be imported and then continue only if they coincide with pre-existing elements of the host society. Aisha Quandisha is a complex figure, which condenses not only male fantasies, but also female fantasies; from the phallic and castrating mother, as a hag, to the ideal mistress as a fatal beauty, the one in which man gets lost. She can also represent the

invisible rival. Her "official" husband, jinn Hammu Kaiu, is a little modest despite his affinity with slaughterhouses, blood and butchers.

The works on the Gnawiya, Jilala, Hamadsha or Issawa brotherhoods, suggest some kinds of correspondence table linking this or that jinn (having a proper noun) with a day of the week, a color, an air of music, a plant, a perfume; even such and such a characteristic being manifested for example during the ritual possessions, or locatable in the symptoms of the patients. The precision and the rigor of this instituted knowledge oppose the vagueness of the popular representations. Multiple variations are nevertheless evident according to the various brotherhoods and / or regions.

The "standard" interlocutors generally distinguish the person only beaten by a jinn (madrub) from the one who is really possessed (mamluk), but this distinction is often covered by the generic term majnun, which does not necessarily refer to the pathological register.

It can also mean something like inspiration, for example that of the poet, or that of the saint.

The jinn can beat, inhabit, possess, wear. The associated terms are respectively: madrub, maskun, mamluk and malbus.

Josep Lluís Dieste, from a more linguistic approach and on various terrains (countryside, cities, migration), proposes the following categories:

- Bewitched: mashur.
- Beaten: madrub (beaten in general); matrush (slapped).
- Possessed: mamluk but also maskun (inhabited), makhtuf (carried away) [Health and rituals in Morocco. Josep Lluís Dieste].

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

National League of Muslims in France, B.P. 39, 91 103, Corbeil-Essonnes CEDEX. France.

"Salvation lies in the invocation of the name of God, since authentic traditions say that the Prophet (PBUH) pronounced the formula "in the name of God" and mentioned God in all circumstances; as when eating, drinking, riding on his horse, undressing, cohabiting with his wives, etc.

Ibn Taymiyya (Majmu al-Fatawa, 19/42): "When the jinn attack a person, they should be told of the rulings of God and his Messenger, proof should be established against them, and they should be commanded to do what is good and told not to do what is evil, just as should be done in the case of people, as God says : 'And We never punish until We have sent a Messenger to give warning (Quran 17:15).

"If the jinn does not leave after being addressed in this manner, then it is permissible to rebuke him, tell him off, threaten him and curse him, as the Messenger of God did with the Shaytan when he came with a falling star to throw it in his face" (Bukhari).

You may also resort to the reading of the Quran, especially of the throne verse ; about which the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: " Whoever recites it will remain under the protection of God and no Shaytan will be able to approach him until" as well as to the recitation of the two protection prayers (chapters 113 and 114).

As for the intervention of the psychiatrist who does not take into account what we said above in the treatment of epilepsy fits, it is useless. Praise to God, Lord of the universe!

National League of Muslims in France, B.P. 39, 91 103, Corbeil-Essonnes CEDEX.

COMMENTARY BY PETER DELACRAU: HELP! HOW CAN SUCH OBSCURANTISM BE STILL POSSIBLE TODAY ON THIS PLANET? SEND IMMEDIATE A PSYCHIATRIST TO THE NATIONAL UNION OF MUSLIMS IN FRANCE, URGENTLY!

WHITE MAGIC AND BLACK MAGIC IN ISLAMIC LANDS.

The ancient as well as modern great traditional biographical-bibliographical lists of the Muslim area, show it: the "magic knowledge," understood here in an extensive sense, encompassing magic, witchcraft, astrology, and divination techniques, take up a place far from being marginal in Muslim civilization. It has developed there and historically has progressed alongside religious sciences (nagliya-s) or secular sciences (aqliyy-s) without it always implies a frontal conflict with one or the other. Although a true historical sociology of knowledge in the Muslim area remains to be done, we know, thanks to existing research, that there was constantly "infiltration" not to say "interpenetration" between various modes of rationality; in the great operations explanatory of the nature, of the world and of the destiny of the men which is accomplished in them. A component of importance has been what is generically called, perhaps restrictively, the "occult sciences," and even more so the modes known as "folk," unlearned, of representation and interpretation of the universe and of its future. However, this type of knowledge and the cognitive and symbolic stakes involved, as has long been true of hagiography too, have until now been relatively removed from historical (at least "historian") investigation; both from that of the positivist orientalism and that of the modern rationalist or reformist Muslim intellectuals.

As it was suggested, a good testimony of the extent, or even at certain historical moments of the relevance, of magical knowledge in the culture of Islam; is given by the well-known lists of Ibn al-Nadim (Fihrisit, 10th century) or of Hadji Khalifa (Kashf az-zunun, 17th century) where large sections are devoted to it. As for the history and the philosophy of knowledge, Ibn Khaldun (died in 1406) gives one of the most revealing analyzes of the role of magic in Islam. Analysis that forbids considering the knowledge that it builds and even more the practices that are rooted in it, as totally and radically cut off from the other modes of knowledge; especially those who are based on some spiritual aptitude, the mystical or hagiographic experiment, for example. Ibn Khaldun himself was concerned with the problem that we consider here as central that of the constructed or to build, border, between magic and religion, to take again the classic sociological designation of it; in a background where belief in the reality and the power of invisible and superior beings makes impossible an absolute demarcation between traditional , rational, knowledge, and esoteric, not based on reason, knowledge. In Islam the notion of "unknowable mystery" of creation (ghayb), as it is intended and ruled by God alone, is a decisive notion. The field of knowledge and action which is its corollary is a field necessarily cross-disciplinary, where interfere at the same time, and not always concurrently, various types of actors; prophets (including previous to Islam and Muhammad), Shiite imam-s, saints, speculative religious men, theologians, rationalizing philosophers, and magicians.

Jan and Shayatin: etiology and sihr. In the native environment of Islam, and therefore for the prophet and in the Quran, the sihr (magic) is an incontestable cognitive and empirical reality; of which, we could say, it is only question, since the revelation instituting Islam, of circumscribing the field of truth or legitimacy. Hence this fundamental and as inaugural paradox of the Islamic religious system: magic is real (haqq), but can be falsehood (batil); real in its phenomenological and empirical manifestations; false in its ontological and axiological foundations.

The background of this paradoxical concept got from the pre-Islam supernaturalism that Islam, in this field as in many others, has largely renewed, by appropriating and adapting it.

A series of narratives and of objective descriptions gives, in the Quranic text, a kind of etiology explaining the reality of magical knowledge and power. Here is a summary of them.

After the creation of Man by God, Iblis, supernatural being whose nature is controversial (fallen angel or rebellious jinn?) refused to recognize his pre-eminence by disobeying the divine order to prostrate himself before Adam. (chapter 17: 61 and following ones); and thus was expelled from the heavenly sphere with part of the angels who followed him. Since then, the universe of immaterial powers has been divided into two categories: the one, the angels, are obedient and faithful to God, propitious to the Man that they help to guide towards him; the others, demons rebellious and hostile to Man, constantly seek to drive him away from him or to corrupt him, especially by their sihr, literally understood here as a malignant and enchanting seduction. They are the processes of this "bewitching" that constitute in Muslim cosmogony the body of magical practices. These beings, Jan (or according to the transcription passed in the current language: jinn), Shayatin, Shaitan and Iblis in particular, derive their knowledge and, therefore, their power from a kind of fraudulent operation. They used to sit at the gate of heaven closest to God and to listen to the heavenly crowd, from this place. From the fragments of the "heavenly knowledge" which came to them, they drew means of power that they handed over to certain men (the kahin before Islam, the sahir) (chapter 37, 6 and following ones). Same thing with the two fallen angels, Harut and Marut, who taught magic to the Babylonians (chapter 2 verse 102) 1). But protective angels on guard constantly chase these evil beings with shooting stars.

Other verses, too numerous to be mentioned here (21: 81 and following, 27: 15-45, 34 : 10 and following, 38: 29 and following), point out quite explicitly the issues related to the existence and the paradoxical reality of magic for the new religion that is Islam.

In particular, it is asserted in them that this magic power-knowing has a fundamental limit: the omniscience and omnipotence of God which forbids the jinn to access the supreme mystery precisely (34: 14). Moreover, to what these spirits capture fraudulently from Heaven, and which is "true," it is indicated that they add, by communicating it to men, "fabrications" with a "bewitching" power; so the jinns are behind the "lies of all impostors" (affak), "poets" (sha'ir) and false prophets in Arabia before Islam (26: 224).

It is not useful here to insist on this enchanting power of the word, a reality that the Quranic text very clearly underlines and that the later exegetes will analyze 2). The universe of magic as it is represented and even as we have the experience of it, both before and after the establishment of Islam, is a universe where language is creative. This is, moreover, in perfect harmony with the fundamental cosmogonic data of Islamic religious culture; is not creation itself a question of "divine word" said and followed with effects? The universe is populated by spiritual beings endowed with a certain power, beneficial or evil, who put themselves at the disposal of certain men and take action under the effect of their incantations, "binding words" with undisputed effects.

It is besides significant that the prophetic revelation itself, as the Quran testifies to it, was first received by its Meccan recipients as falling within sihr; that is to say, for the culture of time and place, enchantment through words, and, therefore, proceeding from magic (khana, generic term before Islam).

Muhammad was first under significant accusations from this point of view. He would have been a kahin (in Arabia of the time: celebrant and / or diviner in relation to the jinn), therefore possessed by a demon who inspired him his message (majnun, mashur); his message would have been some sihr (magic) or "dreamlike extravagance" (adghat ahlam); or, still and more significantly, some "poetry" endowed with an effective power: shi 'r, of which we should note here the assonance with sihr, assonance which is also a semantic contiguity.

This mode of reception of the "Message", culturally relevant at the time, was at least strengthened by the way equally adapted to the dominant ideology, according to which Muhammad let the "inspired revelation" be said through him. A process close to what we today call "automatic writing," well known in pre-Islamic Arabia, and so familiar to the prophet that he himself believed in recognizing its effects in the first signs that manifested in him.

Karen Armstrong is unequivocal in this regard. "Muhammad was himself horrified to think that he might have become a mere disreputable kahin whom people consulted if one of their camels went missing. A kahin was supposedly possessed by a jinn. Poets also believed that they were possessed by their personnel jinn. Thus, Hasan ibn Thabit, a poet of Yathrib who later became a Muslim, says that when he received his poetic vocation his jinn had appeared to him, thrust him to the ground and forced the inspired words from his mouth. This was the only form of inspiration that was familiar to Muhammad, and the thought that he might have become majnun, jinn-possessed, filled him with such despair that he no longer wished to live. He despised indeed the kahins, whose oracles were usually unintelligible mumbo jumbo, and was always very careful to distinguish the Quran from conventional Arabic poetry..... But he had another vision of a being which, later, he identified with the angel Gabriel... This was no pretty naturalistic angel, but an overwhelming ubiquitous presence from which escape was impossible.... Muhammad therefore had had that apprehension of the numinous reality, which the Hebrew prophets called kadosh, the holiness, the terrifying otherness of God.But unlike Isaiah or Jeremiah, Muhammad had no established tradition to support him. The terrifying experience seems to have fallen upon him out of the blue and left him in a state of profound shock. In his anguish, he turned then instinctively to his wife, Khadija. (Karen Armstrong. Muhammad: A Prophet for Our Time pp. 137-138).

Editor's note. We leave quite voluntarily to our friend Karen Armstrong, the entire responsibility, in both directions besides, of her bringing together between kahin and kadosh, Muhammad and Jeremiah or Isaiah. Formally the structure is nevertheless identical.

Subsequently, Muhammad himself had to undergo in person, at least on one occasion, the effects of a spelled spell (hallucinations and sexual impotence) due to a Jew in Medina; and of which it will be delivered, forty days later, says the Tradition, only by the intervention of two angels appeared in human form. The sira ("biography of the Prophet") will seize all these elements to make them a theme redacted from this magic tone for the first time.

Divine essence, magic essence, a border problem. One of the major issues of the successive exegesis that attempt to explain the Quranic message, even if they remain contrasted in their hermeneutic or doctrinal choices; was to try to insert a strict demarcation; between the universe of

"true religion" ("Revelation," prophetic attributes and corollary canonical data), and that of "magic," seductive, wily, even false.

A series of Quranic accounts is, we believe, to be considered as the narrative matrix from which dogmatic and apologetic analyses will be formed; distinguishing what is prophetic, or its hagiographic substitutes, hence of a divine essence, and what is of purely magical essence; especially the stories relating to the prophets (an biyya, plural of naby) and "envoys" (rassul) previous to Muhammad, and their "miraculous proofs" (mujiza).

Ibrahim (Abraham) defying Nimrod, Musa (Moses) and his struggle against the wizards of Pharaoh, Suleiman (Solomon) and his mastery of nature through jinn subordinate to his enterprises, Yahya (John the Baptist) and the circumstances of his birth; Issa (Jesus) who in some apocryphal gospels breathes life into clay birds.

The object of these developments of various orders, theological, juridical, philosophical, and even historiographical, is to define the ontological border to be drawn between supernatural manifestations, which are to the highest degree ambivalent in their form. All are, however, some ayat of God, literally "wonders" or "marvelous signs" of his power. This border, as it was gradually and, let us repeat it, in a contrasted way, developed; is not first properly speaking theological in nature, nor based on the vocabulary and methods of kalam (Muslim speculative theology). We have more than clues to assert that it was first expressed on dogmatic and even legal grounds; that is, in terms of legal status, lawful (halal) or unlawful (haram), that scholars have always tried to distinguish; but which have always had an intermediate zone which could be said of irreducible ambivalence, data peculiar to the structure of the system of thought in Islam; (for example, different in that from historical Christianity, which has developed a completely different attitude towards magic and especially witchcraft).

Despite the symbolic stakes of such a fixation of meaning and because of what we would call internal compulsions of the Islamic system, both cultural and structural, the Quran does not give a univocal and exclusive definition of the generic concept of sihr.

Similarly for the few formal prophetic traditions, unanimously accepted as genuine.

-The seven destructive sins: making anyone or anything a partner with God; practicing sorcery; killing a living being without justification whose life has been declared sacred by God; practicing usury; misappropriating the property of an orphan; running away in a battle; and slandering chaste, innocent, believing women."

-“Kill every sorcerer, for this is the punishment ordained by God.”

The prohibition of certain forms of magic is, from the outset, attenuated, at least nuanced, by the prophetic example itself (of which it should be remembered that it constitutes, in Islam, the second source of Law) .

Beyond the ambivalence of the beginning of the prophecy of Muhammad, already mentioned, Tradition teaches us that the latter, like his environment, believed, authorized, and even practiced himself also, forms of magical intervention. Essentially the ruqya 3), which can be translated by the etymological meaning of "charm (s)"; and which consists of the incantatory pronunciation or of the writing, in the form of a talisman, of various magic formulas, Quranic excerpts known for their virtue, specific names of God, etc.; effective for the release of a spell, the protection against the evil eye, or the cure of certain affections of natural or supernatural, origin. He went so far as to say that the "good" ruqya could change the destiny decreed by God (qadar) while being part of it 4); thus inserting a decisive notion that we will find as central, ethical rather than theological, the "good (khair)", opposed to "evil (sharr)". Many other examples of these prophetic practices that legitimize, exist, at the edge of the natural (here medical) and of the magical; of which the sira has made a subgenre very popular and very much in use today: tibb an-nabawi (the medicine of the prophet).

It is historically undeniable that this ambivalence could only be absorbed, let us say contained, by the gradual development of a criterion and therefore of a border, of an infra theological nature, that is to say, ultimately ethical, even psychological. This central criterion is relative not to nature, but to the effect of the magical act, whether cognitive or practical, and to the intention (niyya) that generates this effect. The immense "jurisprudence" (fatawi, nawazil) which has developed throughout the Muslim area, with more or less extension, and which is, in this matter as in others, an excellent indicator of the tensions between the doctrinal norm and the practices; shows how the dogmatic positions of the "doctors of Law" (fuqaha) oscillate all from this criterion. Without going into details, which, moreover, remain to be classified, it may be pointed out, for example, that the great Ashari teacher Juwayni (who died in 1085) is more extensive, for he admits much more of these practices than an Ibn Khaldun; which distinguishes between "natural magic" and "unlawful talismanic arts" 5), even more than an Ibn Taymiyya (died in 1328).

At the center of this major criterion of the lawful or unlawful nature of the act of magic is the beneficial or maleficent character of its object; and, consequently, the intention to realize the good or the bad for

its recipient, others as well as oneself. And it is only at a logical level in a way superior that a properly theological criterion therefore intervenes; whether the magical act in question requires or not, in its principle and in its deployment, explicitly or implicitly, elements of shirk [association of other powers with the power of God], that is to say, a manifest impiety, a sacrilege.

Muhammad inaugurated therefore himself a kind of doctrinal control over the content of the magic formulas that he considered tolerable: show me your ruqya - your incantations - he often said to his companions.

"The Prophet permitted incantations with Quranic recitations, and supplications, as long as they do not include Shirk 6) or meaningless words. Muslim narrated in his Sahih that Auf bin Malik said: We used to use incantations in the pre-Islamic era, so we asked the Messenger of God: What formula should we recite now for that purpose? He said: Let me hear what you say..... his conclusion was: There is no harm in incantations as long as they do not include Shirk in them 6."

To summarize or even to schematize the Islamic common place in the field, a magical act can be considered lawful when it does not aim at the evil spell (first level). Or if it consists of techniques produced by "natural" means peculiar to the magician or even got by the recourse to superior forces like the jinns for example; without implying a marked attack on the dogma of the omnipotent oneness of God, whose will alone is the ultimate cause of all things (second level).

This is undeniably here some lawful white under which for example the magic deployed in the service of King Solomon falls.

The spectrum of the means used by this magic ranges from the physical phenomena produced in the imagination of its witnesses (close to conjuring); to particular psychic phenomena (love, rejection, protection, etc.) generated by the magician's only force, which is a power of his word. A major source for this type of magic, still insufficiently studied, especially in its widespread distribution still attested today in the Muslim area, is the Ghayat al-hakim ("The Goal of the Sage") of Maslama al-Majriti; a Madrilénian of the tenth century, Latin Picatrix, both a book of analysis and collection of magic recipes, quite generally considered lawful.

The same double criterion plays to determine or disqualify the unlawful magic, the "black magic" or sorcery properly speaking, of demonic origin; and which, according to tradition, goes back to Iblis himself (or his daughter), power of evil and eternal tempter, inseparable from men. In the lawful magic what acts in the first place is the mind of the man (the nafs, the soul /mind of the magician, Ibn Khaldun notes); his sagacity, his skill, his personal flair and his knowledge of the universal nature, including that of the jinn; without undermining the basic divine attributes. In black, unlawful, magic, the human actor, the sahir, resorts to the demonic inspiration and moves to action supernatural forces oriented towards the evil spell (first level) thus affecting the dogmas of belief (second level). This requires a technicality or even a disposition of the soul / mind that cannot be got, say the theologians, resumed in this by the jurists, only at the cost of a radically sacrilegious compromise with the demons rebelling against God and hostile to men .

The Quran (2: 102) insists on this somewhat original and disqualifying datum, for example by indicating that the human agents of these evil forces are always warned of the impiety involved by their actions. A jurist of the importance of Ibn Taymiyya 7) gives many examples, griping with didactic realism, of the transactions that certain sorcerers make with the demons. Some incantatory conjurations addressed to the demons, spirits of the dead or planets, compelling these forces to achieve evil or essentially impious designs, for invoking others than God for the deployment of his power and effects.

Here again there is some ambivalence: a margin remains open for the lawful in terms of borderline magic action. It is quite widely accepted that to adjure these demons and subordinate them to the good, in the name of God, especially for exorcisms, is permissible; and, according to our hagiographic sources, widely practiced by many charismatic characters who, in the representations as in the collective practices of the whole of the Muslim world, operate in figures structurally and functionally equivalent to those of the "mystagogues"; to speak like John Toland. That is to say magicians and wizards handling the supernatural that Islam has as an integral , cosmogonical, theological and even eschatological, part, of his system.

It was up to the so-called al-Ghazali 8), who died in 1111, to give, just as for Sufism, speculative thinking and spiritual practice, a rather widely accepted and therefore definitive kind of synthesis on magic. For him, magic is based on the theoretical and practical knowledge of certain properties of sublunary and superior elements. Coupled with a particular natural disposition of the magician, this knowledge is not inherently blameworthy. But its practice is risky, even perilous, for the true belief, and therefore in lands of Islam, ideologically and politically threatening also from the point of view of the public law; it always includes virtually, evil spell, and it is often dangerous, when it is not based in its principle on an impiety which discredits it essentially (in particular some shirk 6).

Ibn Khaldun, in the 14th century 9), taking over both of them, especially the Razi exegete, will go further in the reasoned analysis of the means of knowledge and of the magical and divinatory practices; in which he says himself to believe for having personally experimented the concrete effectiveness of them. For him, the essential force of magic lies in the nafs ("soul / mind") of the magician, but it is not given to him from the start, unlike the prophets and saints "loved by God"; an ontological and psychological distinction to which Ibn Khaldun gives a fundamental theoretical importance. The principle in action is not the same: a magician is not born a magician, whereas a prophet or a saint is predestined. The magician gets and develops his power by enslaving mysterious forces lying in the properties of certain things, certain numbers or letters, or in higher spiritual entities. Whereas to the prophets and saints, also producers of "extraordinary wonders", everything is given by God, without an external recourse and in a design always well ordered. The souls / minds of the prophets are able to cut oneself off from human spirituality and their wahy, "revelation," proceeds from this property: they get an angelic spirituality and access fragments of divine knowledge through angels.

Thus, like some saints, their quasi-substitutes, they get the power to influence the physical universe. This power is of divine essence, divinely directed, turned in its sensible effects towards God and towards Good. Whereas the magician's knowledge and action are of an external origin, virtually demonic and turned towards evil. And it is this, which is a principle, which radically distinguishes, for Ibn Khaldun 10) the "prophetic miracle" (mujiza) or the "wonder" of a saint (karama); granted to a messenger of God or to one of his awliya ("relatives," that is to say, saints) for a legitimate and commendable purpose; of the magical act which is often only an "effect" of power. True in its phenomenal manifestation, but virtually false in its foundation, especially since it is usable for evil.

From its origin supernaturalist religious system, and therefore including strong structural and cultural compulsions, with decisive consequences; Islam, as a set of dogmas and doctrinal standards, here again, as far as magic is concerned, has historically always to make concessions to representations and practices that pre-existed. Or existed, not necessarily in its margin, but in its very interstices (the ethnographic observation testifies to that). Then to see gradually develop, through a series of oppositions, the judgments that will become, consensually, but not always, its own. It remains that for the universe of magic as distributed knowledge or attested as well as uncontested practices, the Muslim religion experiences, in its constitutive ambivalence, like the other monolatrous mass religions, a universal sociological difficulty. That of sustainably integrating into its dogma means of thinking or acting on the universe that belongs to men, and which have their own spontaneity and dynamics.

1 Basic verse for the conception of magic as it will develop later in the Islamic tradition.

2 Especially Fakhr ad-Din al Razi, who died in 1209, in his great commentary entitled Mafatih al-Ghayb, a reference commentator regarding Quranic passages relating to knowledge and magical practices; more particularly and significantly in the popular editions of his work still printed today.

3 Ruqya, refers to the process, but also to the physical object; plural ruqa.

4 As we have had the opportunity to see it, the evil eye really exists [but there is a way to prevent it] a hadith ascribed to Muhammad says.

5 We would say today: demonic magic, using external forces.

6 Idea of the divine one associating to the supreme being other entities such as angels or subordinate gods, even saints.

7 See his Majmu al-Fatwa al-kubra, works, legal or theological consultations, epistles or opuscles, in 34 volumes; and in which very significantly, the subject "sihr" is dealt with at the very beginning; where

he develops his orthodox theodicy and where tawhid ("oneness of God") as well as divine attributes are in question.

8 In his major work: *Ihya ulum ad-din*.

9 In his *Muqqadima* (Prolegomena), especially in Chapter 6, but also in his more specifically written work on some of these questions: *Shifa as-sa'il li-tahdhib al-masa'il*.

10 Unlike an Avicenna, for example.

RUQYA AND DU'AS.

The du'a is a non-official and therefore free prayer.

The ruqya is a form of exorcism or white magic peculiar to Islam. It is a set of spiritual methods that consists in remedying occult diseases, such as possession, by reciting Quranic verses.

The word ruqya comes from the verb raqa which means to rise. This term was used in pre-Islamic Arabia to designate the words or acts used by those who healed non-natural diseases. Ruqya is used to fight against black magic (called sihr) and to exorcise demonic possessions. It consists of reading selected verses from the Quran. Recitation can also be used to bless water or oil that will be used as a drink or an anointing.

In the Muslim doctrine and law, these practices are both forbidden and permitted. The Quran itself constantly points out that Muhammad was considered a sorcerer by his opponents. For them, it was to be more obvious than to consider him a prophet. And Muhammad sometimes acts in a very particular way, ranging from the simple superstitious practice to the magic of great style, in front of numerous audiences, at the time of the battles in particular. The throwing of pebbles, earth, dust, is by an apotropaic or divinatory procedure, typical of the most archaic mentalities. This type of stupid word is due more to the general retardation of mentalities than to that of a single man. But the character of Muhammad can take a lot, and the influx of documents makes him endorse a multitude of nonsense sacralized by time and use. These documents are probably much later, but they indicate that the public admits these practices and the existence of the "evil eye." The list that follows sets out some situations in which magic, witchcraft, manipulation of supernatural forces, are at stake, with at the heart of all that Muhammad himself.

Object change.

Ibn Ishaq. Ukkasha fought until he broke his sword. He came to the Apostle who gave him a wooden cudgel telling him to fight with that. He brandished it and it became a brilliant weapon. God gave him victory while he wielded it.

Muhammad healer or thaumaturge.

Al-Bayhaqi (994-1066) stated, in the Dala'il an-Nubuwwah (The Signs of prophethood), "Abu Sad al-Malini informed us quotingfrom his grandfather Qatada b. al-Numan, that his eye was wounded at Badr and that its pupil came down on his cheek. They were about to slice it off, but asked the Messenger of God who said they should not do this. He then said a prayer for him, covering his cheek with his palm. And later you could not tell which of his eyes had been struck!"

Dust throw.

Sahih Muslim Book 019, Hadith Number 4392.

The Messenger of God got down from his mule, picked up a handful of dust from the ground, threw it into their (enemy) faces and said: May these faces be deformed. So they turned back fleeing and God the Exalted and Glorious defeated them, and the Messenger of God distributed their booty among the Muslims.

Pebbles throw.

Sahih Muslim, Book 19 hadith number 019, 4385.

Then the Messenger of God took (some) pebbles and threw them in the face of the infidels. Then he said: "By the Lord the infidels are defeated."

Bukhari Volume 7, Book 71, hadith number 637.

Narrated Al-Aswad: I asked Aisha about treating poisonous stings (a snakebite or a scorpion sting) with a Ruqya. She said, "The Prophet allowed the treatment of poisonous sting with Ruqya."

Bukhari Volume 7 Book 71 hadith number 632.

Narrated Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri Some of the companions of the Prophet came across a tribe among the tribes of the Arabs, and that tribe did not entertain them. While they were in that state, the chief of that tribe was bitten by a snake (or stung by a scorpion). They said (to the companions of the Prophet), "Have you got any medicine with you or anybody who can treat with ruqya?" The Prophet's companions said, "You refuse to entertain us, so we will not treat (your chief) unless you pay us for it." So they agreed to pay them a flock of sheep. One of them (the Prophet's companions) started reciting Surat-al-Fatiha and gathering his saliva and spitting it (at the snakebite). The patient got cured and his people presented the sheep to them, but they said, "We will not take it unless we ask the Prophet (whether it is lawful)." When they asked him, he smiled and said, "How do you know that the sura al-Fatiha is a good exorcism (ruqya)? Take it (flock of sheep) and assign a share for me."

The evil eye.

Bukhari, volume 7 Book 72 hadith 827.

God's Apostle said: the evil eye is a fact," and he forbade tattooing.

Talismanic prayer.

Muhammad, Quran 113.

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.

Talismanic words.

Bukhari Vol. 6, Book 61, Hadith 535

Narrated Aisha: Whenever God's Messenger became sick, he would recite the suras 113 and 114 and then blow his breath over his body. When he became seriously ill, I used to recite these two suras and rub his hands over his body hoping for its blessings.

Bukhari Vol. 6, Book 61, Hadith 536.

Aisha narrated that whenever God's Apostle went to bed every night, he used to cup his hands together and blow over it after reciting the three suras "the Unity" , "the daybreak," "Mankind" (112,113,114), and then rub his hands over whatever parts of his body he was able to rub, starting with his head, face, and front of his body. He used to do that three times.

ISLAM AND EXORCISM.

Arabic literature and Quran refer abundantly to the jinn chapter 72 is entitled "The jinn"; chapter 6 verse 100 reproaches the Meccans for making them companions of God; Verse 128 of the same chapter states that they were able to deceive the human beings, verse 158 of chapter 37 that men have somehow attached them to God. Chapter 55 verse 15 adds that God would have created them from a smokeless fire. We will retain that this superstition is inscribed in the Quran, that the jinns are officially recognized by Islam and that all the consequences of their existence have been studied by the pious Muslims. "Their legal status [according to Islamic law] has been discussed from every angle; and their possible relations with mankind, especially with regard to marriage and property, have been studied."

These primitive superstitions held out well in [Muslim] Arabia, spread even in the rest of the [Muslim] world, and often combined with other superstitions, sometimes much more sophisticated.

Avicenna (Ibn Sina) was probably the first great Muslim philosopher to categorically reject the very possibility of their existence.

The Muslim rationalists, and they are obviously right, as we will see, denied the real existence of the jinns. The Mu'tazilites, and in their wake the philosopher and physician Ibn Sina (known in the West as Avicenna), the historian and sociologist Ibn Khaldun, among others, saw rather allegories in them.

This Muslim belief generating, alas, as we have seen, a certain number of mental illnesses, all Muslims not being Mu'tazili unfortunately, we believe worth saying here a few words about it.

The extreme codification attached to these phenomena, even in their paroxysmal aspects, such as trance or possession, shows clearly that these are not mere psychic chaos. But the Muslim or Quranic idea of jinn should not obscure other representations about mental illness, not only in the Arab-Berber world, but also more widely in the Islamic world. Doctors as famous as Avicenna (Ibn Sina) or Rhazes (al Razi) were not indeed Arabs, but Iranians. We must therefore take into consideration a world that goes from Bukhara to the Cordoba of Averroes (Ibn Rushd) by integrating the Greek heritage, a world that for centuries has been one of the main vectors of rationality. No one can forget the role of transmission, elaboration, and influence, that the Arab sciences had on the development of the medicine known today as Western medicine. The reference to representations of illness related to the supernatural sphere should not obscure those which, for centuries, have been based on anatomy, physiology or pharmacology.

In the very inside of the Muslim world, an expression that must be understood here as we would do with the expression Christian world; that is to say, as a kind of predominant cultural area that does not presuppose perfect unity or homogeneity, even on the religious level alone; In this respect, we must distinguish between the theological references (the Quran and the hadiths), the particular knowledge of specialists (healers- fkihs) and popular lore. These are several levels whose interrelations are not obvious. Between the theological corpus referring to the Quran and the hadiths, on the one hand, and representations known as popular, on the other hand; there is indeed the experimental and initiatory lore of the various brotherhoods, such as the Gnawa, Jilala, Hamadsha or Issawa.

National League of Muslims in France. B. P. 39, 91 103 Corbeil-Essonnes CEDEX. France.

The question of the possibility for jinn to access the human body has recently been raised, because this access in principle is impossible given the difference in constitutions. Man was indeed created from clay [Editor's note: Help! How can one still ignore at this point the reality of the evolution of species?] and jinns from fire [Editor's note: once again help, help!] Moreover, the demons can only stir up some plots, because God did not give them a decisive power over Man. What do you think of ?

Answer: Praise God!

The possibility for jinn to enter the human body is attested.

1 In the Quran and in the Sunna.

2 By the consensus of the Community.

3 But also in reality.

Only Mu'tazili contest this possibility, because for them, the scientific arguments prevail over those drawn from Quran and Sunna.

From his real name Iblis, al Shaitan - translated as "Satan" - is the personification of evil and temptation. Known and recognized as such by all religions, the nature of Shaitan remains mysterious. The name "saytan" derives from the root sh-t-n, which means "to divert someone from his purpose." Already used in pre-Islamic Arabia, we find an identical verb in Hebrew, translated as "to accuse, to oppose" strongly used in rabbinical writings and generally in the Jewish tradition.

Many commentators of the Quran believe that Shaitan is a later name than Iblis, and that the two words, even if they have a common core, do not refer to the same meaning.

The name Iblis appears regularly in the account of the Creation. This name of Greek origin, "diabolos," is the one found in the story of Genesis dealing with Adam and Eve, who knew many Greek versions. The presence of such a name in the Quran has somewhat confused traditional commentators.

Archeological research has made it possible to understand the strong Hellenistic and Christian influence in pre-Islamic Arabia, particularly in northern Arabia. This explains therefore the presence and use of this name to tell the story of the Creation in the Quran.

Iblis is the character by which God, according to the Quran, introduces the notion of Evil in the history of Mankind. While he has created Man, he asks his angels to bow down before his new creature. All obey with the exception of Iblis who swells up with hubris and tells God that he is worth more than this creature made of clay. God therefore chases him away from Heaven, but before that, he accepts the pact Iblis proposes to him, that is to say, to tempt the human communities that will succeed each other on earth, with the exception of the most faithful servants.

Iblis then sets out in search of his first stratagem and incites Adam, settled with his wife in the Garden of Eden, to taste fruits of the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. This will be here the first act of temptation that will cause Iblis of having the name al shaitan (satan).

The commentators of the Quran distinguish Iblis and Shaitan by describing the first as hubristic and disobedient, and the second as a tempter. The latter is given legions of shayatin, jinns become demons, dedicated to the single mission which comes down to the Devil: to divert Mankind of his initial destination, the Heaven.

ISLAM AND MODERN SCIENCE.

COSMOLOGY: is the Earth Flat or Round?

Before Copernicus, most civilizations thought that the earth was more or less flat and supported by something in space. For example, the druids imagined it as a round and curved shield floating on an ocean with poorly defined outlines symbolized by a ram-headed snake...

Aristotle (384-322 before our era) and Ptolemy (2nd century of our era) had nevertheless understood that the earth is spherical, and Aristarchus (circa - 280) had determined that the earth revolved around the sun.

"Do you not see how God causes the night to pass into the day and the day to pass into the night?" (Quran 31:29)

Dr. Zakir Naik explains that the above verse miraculously teaches a round earth, because only if the earth was round could the day gradually become night. In fact, the Quran is simply stating what common knowledge is that the day doesn't instantly become night. To further support his claim, Naik uses the verse: "And after that He spread the earth " (79:30).

Naik does next what he often does to prove his point, he invents a new "meaning" for Arabic words. Words that are known for hundreds of years are suddenly redefined for no reason other than to prove the scientific miracle. The keyword in sura 79:30 has always been translated, "spread out." However, Naik argues that the word dahaha means not "spread out" but "ostrich egg," so he translates this verse as, "And the earth, moreover, has He made egg-shaped."

Before Bucaille, no Arab scholar ever translated the verse this way; including scholars like Yusuf Ali, Pickthall, Shakir, Asad, and Dawood who have dedicated their lives to translating these verses correctly. Who must we listen to—serious experts of Quranic Arabic, or a Saudi-sponsored television evangelist like Zakir Naik? As Abdul Rahman Lomax pointed out, this egg reinterpretation of the word dahaha is "nonsense," for the earth is the exact opposite of an egg shape; compressed at the poles (oblate spheroid) rather than elongated (prolate spheroid).

Several passages in the Quran have always been historically interpreted to indicate a flat earth.

"And the earth – We have spread out (like a carpet)..." (15:19).

"Did we not spread the earth like a bed?" (78:6).

"Have they never observed the sky above them, and marked how We built it up and furnished it with ornaments, leaving no crack in its expanse? We spread out the earth and set upon it mountains." (50:6-7)

"Do they never reflect on the heaven, how it was raised on high? The mountains, how they were set down? The earth, how it was made flat?" (88:18-20).

Renowned commentator Al-Jalalayn's tafsir on this verse reads, "As for his word sutiha, 'laid out flat,' this on a literal reading suggests that the earth is flat, which is the opinion of most of the scholars of the Law, and not a sphere as astronomers have it..."

Likewise, the prominent Egyptian Shafi'i theologian Imam al-Suyuti also taught that the earth was flat. Pillars Upholding Heaven.....

The Quran does not explicitly deny the existence of pillars upholding Heaven, it says only in a number of verses that they are not visible to the human eye.

"God is He who raised up the heavens without pillars that you can see..." (13:2; also 31:10).

Ibn Kathir's commentary on this verse reads, "There are pillars, but you cannot see them," according to Ibn 'Abbas, Mujahid, Al-Hassan, Qatadah, and several other scholars."

At a time when scientific knowledge (especially that concerning the mechanisms of the universe) was still in its infancy; the law of economy or parsimony was more in favor of the religion, which provided simple answers to the complex questions that men asked themselves. The complexity in question was simply referred to the "other world," the divine world of the etiological tales. Non-human or superhuman creatures were behind the phenomena that the man observed without being able to explain them. Etiological tales and legends provided an answer to the innumerable "why" coming to mind. It was some philosophical and thought out paganism before the expression is invented (religion of 12 books like among the Fenians in Ireland).

With the advent of the Book religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam), the answers were limited to the writing and their interpretations. It is difficult to say whether it is due to the lack of reactivity (or willingness) from the religious authorities, or to the extraordinary speed of the development of science in the Age of Enlightenment but the fact remains that the gap between the scientifically observable phenomena and the explanations provided by these religions has widened to the point that science qualified more for the Occam's law of economy.

The most relevant example is the theory of evolution: it makes us able to report the complexity of living beings without external, divine, intervention, without "great architect" in the Voltaire's way to regulate the impressive machine that is biosphere.

Moreover, anthropology, ethnography, and more generally all the Human sciences, make it possible to explain the religious concepts without recourse to a divine intervention, these concepts and the worship then getting a value essentially symbolic, didactic, and social. Science now makes it possible to construct a thought as complete as religious thought but without the intervention of God (s).

But Occam's razor is unfortunately not a very incisive tool, because it does not give a clear operating principle to distinguish between the hypotheses according to their complexity. On the other hand, if the principle of Occam's razor is an effective methodology for getting a good predictive theory, it does not guarantee the accuracy of an explanatory model. This nuance between predictive theory and explanatory theory is well brought to light by this famous dialogue reported by Ian Stewart and Jack Cohen.

Napoleon: Monsieur de Laplace, I do not find any mention of God in your system?

Laplace: Sir, I had no need of that this hypothesis.

Other scientists having lamented that Laplace does without a hypothesis which had "the merit of explaining everything," Laplace replied to the Emperor: Hypothesis God, Sire, explains everything indeed, but does not predict anything. As a scientist, I must provide you with works that make predictions possible."

In order not to lose face or their followers, religions have adopted several attitudes.

- To supervise scientific minds very closely so that they remain theologically correct, possibly by the strong-arm tactics. This attitude, common in the Middle Ages, and which found its grand finale under the Inquisition with the Galileo trial (condemned to retract, he will die a few years later, under house arrest), has fortunately disappeared.

- To refuse to admit theories widely accepted by the scientific community, by adopting a literal reading of the scriptures. This way of thinking still exists today, the most famous being the creationists for whom the world was created by God in six days.

- To take a step back, except for the most important, with the scriptures, which should no longer be interpreted literally. The passages in contradiction with Science are presented as texts full of imagery, symbolic, metaphorical, allegorical, which are to be read figuratively as an illustration of the divine message. This attitude, which leads to a kind of schizophrenic split, is the most common in the mass religions.

- To make the scriptures agreeing with science. As the Scriptures are, by definition, intangible, it amounts to interpreting them, to "discovering" in cryptic or even trivial texts, scientific truths that God would have revealed to men. In other words, the Scriptures would also be and all the same some science books !!! This last attitude is called scientific concordism.

Scientific concordism is a method of thinking which consists in bringing religious dogma closer to science. 1) At each great new scientific discovery, concordists try to make "concord" precisely, at any price, their sacred texts, with science. The search for coherence takes place through new interpretations of the Scriptures, the lack of precision of the latter being attributed to the pre-scientific state of those who wrote them. A variant, which is called concordism of the "stop gap God," consists in appealing to the divine one to explain the gaps of scientific theories, it is also the idea that science can lead to religion. Example: the divine creation for the Big Bang and the precision of the universal constants.

Some writers like Denis Alexander distinguish three types of scientific concordism.

Concordism type A makes attempt to extract scientific information from its scriptures. Such an approach is very common in the Muslim community where it is known as *l'jaz`ilmiy* ("miraculous scientific content") theory. For example, it is maintained that the speed of light can be calculated from Quranic verses, and that other passages reveal the genetic code and the second law of thermodynamics. Such approaches appear to stem from a strongly modernist perspective in which scientific knowledge is held in high esteem and therefore, ipso facto, "holy books" are deemed to contain such knowledge. It should be noted that in every case the supposed derivation of scientific insights from religious texts occurs only after the scientific discovery in question, not before.

Concordism Type B makes no attempt to extract science from the passages in question, but instead seeks to interpret these texts in the light of modern science.

Concordism type C emphasizes that all truth is God's truth and that it's therefore healthy and good for science and theology to engage in active dialogue, seeking where possible to allow both disciplines to complement each other.

Concordism type D consists in saying that science and theology have their own legitimacy as methods of inquiry, and that they are constructing their own models of reality without mutual interference. In short no concordism at all!

Nowadays, it is undoubtedly among Muslim fundamentalists that concordism is the most active. A book, "The Bible, the Quran, and the Science: The Scriptures Discussed in the Light of Modern Knowledge," , today abbreviated in "the Quran and modern science," is very popular among students since 1976. It has become the reference of Islamic concordism. Its author, Maurice Bucaille, is a French doctor converted to Islam (which is not a proof of intelligence we have already noticed, but of the blindest faith!) Bucaille tries to show how the Quran, despite the vast overview of the topics covered, contains no contradiction with science. Conversely, according to him, of course, the Bible contains "monumental scientific mistakes" (what is totally true besides). This Frenchman who honors hardly his nation (it is true that the French nation no longer exists); goes even further by claiming that the Quran contains scientific truths that were only discovered much later, or even very recently. Who could reveal them to Muhammad (the fact that he was a simple ummi = illiterate ? shepherd is then put forward), if not God himself? We can also quote the work of Harun Yahya (pseudonym of Adnan Oktar, a "Turkish intellectual"), Miracles of the Quran, which goes in the same sense.

Some examples.

The Big Bang: chapter 21, verse 30.

"Have not those who disbelieve known that the heavens and the earth were of one piece, then We parted them."

Counter-lay No. 1. Yes, but the Earth appeared several billion years after the Big Bang. And the word "parted" moreover is hardly appropriate to describe what followed, and produced our planet.

The expansion of the universe (after the Big Bang and still today with the galaxies moving away).
Chapter 51 verse 47.

"We have built the heaven with might, and We it is Who make the vast extent (thereof)".

Counter-lay No. 2.

In other words, the sky is huge. Man has been able to think about it for a long time. And the druids in their time long before Muhammad had already thought about it.

The end of the world: the black hole or the implosion (Big Bang inverted).

Chapter 21, verse 104.

"The Day when We shall roll up the heavens as a recorder rolls up a written scroll. As We began the first creation, We shall repeat it. (It is) a promise (binding) upon Us. Lo! We are to perform it."

Counter-lay No. 3. Images already used by Judaism and which equates the world with a book (scroll) that is closed when the story is over. In any case, we are not there yet.

The orbits of the Earth, the Moon and the Sun.

Chapter 21, verse 33

"And He it is Who created the night and the day, and the sun and the moon. They float, each in an orbit."

Counter-lay No. 4.

The apparent motion of the sun and the moon that any human being can observe from Earth. The druids first. The Quran is, of course, silent on the motions of the Earth, which are much less obvious, it took centuries to notice it.

The part of the mountains: to be some pillars that ballast the Earth.

Chapter 21 verse 31.

"And We have placed in the earth firm hills lest it quakes with them."

Counter-lay No. 5.

??????????? The mountains prevent nothing. They are only the result of the meeting of two tectonic plates. In addition, they weigh little more on the earth than a crumb of bread on a table.

The part of the mountains: to be some pillars that prevent the sky from falling.

Chapter 78 verse 7.

"Have we not made the earth an expanse and the high hills bulwarks ?

Counter-lay No. 6.

Same remarks as before. It is rather a poetic metaphor (comparison with a tent ??)

The movement of mountains: plate tectonics.

Chapter 27 verse 88.

"And you see the hills you deem solid flying with the flight of clouds."

Counter-lay No. 7.

The old Jewish theme of the revelation (the day when the trumpet will sound) to scare or try to convince those who do not believe in God. In any case, these movements of the earth's crust do not only concern the mountains, but also the plains. It would have been even better to say that the mountains rise from the ground.

The aquatic origins of life.

Chapter 21 verse 30.

"We made every living thing of water "?

Counter-lay No. 8.

Water is essential to life. To give no more water to a man or an animal, to no longer water a plant, is to condemn them to death. Elementary observations. The druids had even been as far as deifying it, so ??

Embryology: the reproductive system

Chapter 23 verse 13.

"Then placed him as a drop (of seed) in a safe lodging."

Counter-lay No. 9.

The womb of the mother, for those who believe that children are born in cabbages, in roses, or are brought by storks. In any case, the second essential element in the process is missing: the ovum.

Embryology still: the implantation of the ovum and the development of the fetus.

Chapter 23 verse 14.

"Then fashioned We the drop a clot, then fashioned We the clot a little lump, then fashioned We the little lump bones, then clothed the bones with flesh, and then produced it as another creation. So blessed be God, the best of creators!"

Counter-lay No. 10.

Maurice Bucaille & Keith L. Moore have popularized the idea that the Qur'ān miraculously foretells the discovery that the embryo develops through stages:

Indeed we find the following four stages outlined in the Quran.

1. Nutfā: sperm.

2. Alaqā:clot.

3. Mudagha: piece or lump of flesh.

4. Adaam: dressing the bones with muscles.

It is alleged that since these stages were only discovered in the 19th century, the Quran contained a prediction. However, since the expression 'blood clot' cannot describe any embryonic stage, Bucaille reinvented the word alaqā to mean "that which clings" or "leech-like substance."

But there are many problems with this argument:

First history indicates that these stages were not unknown at Muhammad's time. The writings of Hippocrates, Aristotle and Galen all give the same stages of development: sperm, menstrual blood, flesh, bones, then flesh growth around bones. This Greek science was well known around Arabia, and one of the (supposed) Muhammad's companion Harith ben Kalada had studied medicine at Jundi-Shapur, so he was thus intimately acquainted with the medical teaching of Aristotle, Hippocrates and Galen.

Second, the word *alaqa* does not mean “leech” ; it means ‘clot ’ simply, what fits the stages of embryology according to ancient Greeks but doesn’t fit the today scientific description. Both Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Qayyim understood the *alaqa* as clotted blood, as have all translators for the past fourteen hundred years until today.

Third, modern embryology indicates that muscle mass (stage 4 above) appears before any bones are calcified . The bones aren’t “clothed with flesh”; they start to emerge and solidify within the already-existing muscle mass.

Fourth, a Sahih Hadith from both Bukhari and Muslim expands on the Quranic stages of development, saying that the first three stages all last for forty days. But even Dr. Bucaille is forced to admit, “This description of embryonic development does not agree with modern data.”

Fifth. Zakir Naik quotes American obstetrician Joe Leigh Simpson supporting this “miracle” [of the Quran] . Dr. Simpson later described these out-of-context comments as “silly and embarrassing.”

In short, it is difficult to be more imprecise to talk about the fertilization of an ovum by a spermatozoon and about what follows, a fetus.

They are only vague, approximate, or simplistic explanations, which are a real insult to universal human intelligence, culture, and civilization.

There are also many presuppositions about the meaning in which words are used, concordists 1) choosing in general systematically, the meaning that corroborates what they want to prove, and not the usual meaning of the word in question. What is neither very scientific nor much objective. We can make an allegorical text say what we want, especially a posteriori. If God exists, what interest would he have had to hide from our understanding such truth ?? Very Tolandian question. All this would make us smile if many Muslim students do not let themselves be seduced, fascinated or manipulated by these rather risky theses, and which do not honor Islam very much.

These manipulations amount to locking the Muslims in their dogmas to prevent the observation of (scientific or not) reality comes and contradicts their beliefs.

1) Scientific concordism , in its Christian form, appeared in the nineteenth century, with the reinterpretation of the episodes of the Creation and of the Flood, aimed at making them a scientific presentation of geology and paleontology. The "days" of Creation must be understood, for example, as geological eras, etc.

ISLAMIC ANTHROPOLOGY.

HUQUQ ALLAH (ISLAM) AND HUQUQ AL-IBAD (HUMAN RIGHTS).

The first right of God is, of course, that of being worshipped by mankind.....

Muslim mysticism is what has led and still leads, a large number of sweet and smart people, to convert to this religion. It is a Christianized Islam, "cristianizado," to use the title of a great Spanish Orientalist, Asin Palacios. But how to speak of this mysticism without mentioning Mansur Al-Hallaj, born in 858, nicknamed by some the Christ of Islam? He was born in Iran. What he advocated was the love of God to ecstasy. A trial was opened against him in 910. Imprisoned until 922, the date of his death, he was then taken onto the square; some executioners cut off his hands and feet, and then flogged him with five hundred lashes. He was put on the cross. Beheaded, his body was sprinkled with oil, burned, then his ashes scattered. His head was exhibited at the top of a spear, on a bridge of the Tigris for two days. Sufism, the mysticism of Islam, is violently condemned by all fundamentalists, be they Sunni or Shiite. The Sunni Muslim has an instinctive repulsion for Sufism, which he sees as a Christianized Islam. The American or the Islamophile European 1) on the other hand, is subjugated by Sufism for reasons radically opposite to that of the fundamentalist Muslim (for whom the only Islam is the one which is based on the law!) In land of Islam, takfir, or personal reflection, is already a heresy.

The Universal Islamic Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed at UNESCO on 19 September 1981, which indicates in a note of final explanation that the term "law" means sharia; that is to say, the totality of the ordinances issued from the Quran and the Sunna (traditions), as well as any other law deduced from these two sources by methods judged valid in Islamic jurisprudence; as well as the "Islamic Declaration of Human Rights in Islam" of 5 August 1990, also subject to the provisions of Sharia law; are irreducibly opposed to the concept of Human Rights, based on the principle of equality between the sexes and human beings.

We must dare to say it: there are no human rights in Islam in the sense that we understand it in the West, not even a Fir Fer in the manner of the Irish in the Middle Ages. Some passages in the Quran are meaningful. Formalistic Muslims (also called fundamentalists or Islamists) claim that piety commands a literal reading of the Quran. They are bearded and dressed to resemble the image they have of Muhammad! They force their wives to veil themselves.

Others, but very minority, start again the same fight as the Jews or the Christians of old to leave the Middle Ages and claim an adaptation to our time of the religious practices. It is not because Aisha shared the bed of the prophet when she nine years old that we must, as requested by anti-racists in some countries or in France, legalize the marriage of girls at this age! It is not because the Quran accepts slavery that it must be kept in the twenty-first century!

Moreover for Islam even the Free Man is slave (abdi) servant of God, and he has no right by himself. Only God has rights (Huquq Allah) , only God is Lord (rabb). Man has only duties. Man being the slave of God, the most beautiful name for him is that of Abdallah (slave of God). Man is not, in himself, subject to rights. This idea of Man (unrelated to a god who created him) who could have rights, simply because he is Man (Protagoras : Man is the measure of everything), is inconceivable and unbearable for Islam.

It is the fact of being a Muslim believer who gives him the right to be respected, not the fact that he is Man. That an atheist, a disbeliever, a sinner, a homosexual, an adulterer, may have rights too, that a woman can have the same rights as man, is unthinkable for Islam. In the land of Islam, even the believer of other religions does not have a status identical to that of the Muslim.

Etymologically speaking, the Irtidad or apostasy means a return to the past. The irtidad is the deliberate and without any compulsion, diversion, of the adult and conscious Muslim, from Islam to non-Islam.

In Islamic law, apostasy (irtidad) is punishable by death. It is classified by the Quran in mortal sins 2). Chapter 3 verse 90: " Lo! those who disbelieve after their (profession of) belief, and afterward grow violent in disbelief: their repentance will not be accepted."

Chapter 4, verses 137: " Lo! those who believe, then disbelieve, and then increase in disbelief, God will never pardon them."

Chapter 16, verses 106: " Whosoever disbelieves in God after his belief - save him who is forced thereto and whose heart is still content with the Faith - but whosoever finds ease in disbelief: On them is wrath from God. Theirs will be an awful doom."

In the West, it is obvious that democracy is synonymous with secularism. It is a question of obeying not a divine law, but the laws of "conscience and reason." It does not matter the origins of this secular morality, be it Christian become secularized, Greco-Roman, Buddhist or to be honest an indistinct and pagan and polytheistic mixture. The secular citizen has a religion and this religion is the "secular civil religion of the states." The central place is no longer God, but Man and religion itself it is a matter of individual conscience. But this, for Islam, is the negation of the separation of the sexes, the denial of

the Muslim / non-Muslim distinction, the denial of the distinction believer/unbeliever. It is the negation of the distinction between good and evil, between the sacredness and the corruption, the negation of the distinction between God and the Devil. Democracy and its big words go against the philosophy that underlies Islam.

According to the English activist Maryam Namazie who founded in 2007 in London the Council of Ex-Muslims of Britain, Muslim law is thoroughly unequal. The Muslim is above the non-Muslim, believer above the atheist, the man above the woman, the free man above the slave. Muslim law is against freedom. To leave Islam is not one of the freedoms admitted by society, in the land of Islam, change one's religion either. There is also no freedom in sexual matters or in the field of behavior. Nor is there any brotherhood in the Western sense of the term. The Muslim is the brother of the Muslim believer, but he does not feel himself brother of the Christian, or brother of the Jew. Still less brother of an atheist or of an impious one.

And when Saudi Arabia forbids the practice of religions other than Islam on its territory, it is only through enforcement of the words of Umar according to which (hadith) several religions cannot be tolerated in Arabia! The Vatican did not oppose the building in Rome of a big mosque financed by Arabia. When will be the reciprocity in this area and the construction in Mecca of a big cathedral financed by the pope? So far Saudi authorities have banned not only the construction of churches, temples, synagogues, but even the mere celebration of a non-Muslim cult, including privately, under penalty of imprisonment!

Since September 11, 2001, nice and smart people (the journalists of the French-German TV channel Arte for example) repeat that this is not Islam, that the Quran is a message of peace or love, that this is a political downward slide, a disease! A bad fever somehow! But if the Quran was only a word of compassion, gentleness, and forgiveness, valid for everybody and for all times, why these verses authorizing retaliation or prescribing the fight? Why these dictate about amputation for theft, flogging for adultery? Why this authorization of polygamy, even accompanied by warning, why these verses about repudiation, even if it is the most hateful lawful one? Why this different treatment made between man and woman in inheritance and testimony? Why this permission given to the husband to beat his wife, even if it is a last resort and lightly? Why this chapter on loot and spoils of war? Why this reminder of the massacre of the third Jewish tribe of Medina? Why these binding verses on women's dress? Why the verse on menstruation termed defilement? Why all these verses stigmatizing the Jews? Why these invectives against those who sow corruption on Earth?

If the Quran mentioned nothing like this, if Muhammad's life and his behavior contained no trace of calls for revenge; in short, if the Quran, the Sunna (imitation of Muhammad) were above all suspicion concerning what is reproached to Islamist fundamentalists; how could the latter justify the imposition of the veil on women, the polygamy, the punishment of flogging for the adulterous woman, the amputation of the hand for theft? These verses are well in the Quran. They have never been removed from the text and the Muslim, even the most moderate, can read them. It is inaccurate, and especially not very judicious, to let non-Muslims believe that these are mere inventions, without religious foundations, from Muslim fanatics, of excited people, sick people, mad of God; and this in Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Pakistan....

Tafkir wal-Hijra (curse or flight). Intolerance is not an empty word in the Islamic States and this arouses, besides, the question of non-reciprocity, since Islam is admitted everywhere; but that this is not the case for other religions in the lands of Islam (which, moreover, in the eyes of Muslims, proves that only their religion is important).

But Islam and science will you say? Islam is much more concerned with technology than with science. The Islamic world is no longer a creator of science since the 17th century. Has it really been so? It experimented especially theoretical sciences, theorized especially by the Greeks. They are the Greek sciences that developed the understanding Greek scholars in Islam, thanks to translations by Eastern Christians, often from Syriac, but sometimes directly from Greek. As for the scientific spirit that once radiated in the Muslim cities, it is largely a myth. It especially characterized a very small elite fascinated by Greek philosophy, and those men of letters who had only the word of Aristotle in their mouths were called heretics or repulsed by the people and by theologians.

The caliph Al Ma'mun, whose mother was Persian, who had encouraged the translation movement in Baghdad, and who supported the mu'tazilites to the extent of practicing a real inquisition (Mihna), was called "prince of disbelievers." Reasoning reason has never really flourished in the lands of Islam (Dar al Islam), it is considered a blameworthy innovation (bida'a), a heresy, and it is totally foreign to the original message of Islam. The Muslim intellectual who cannot console themselves for the disappearance of their golden age, forget that this golden age was not exclusively Muslim; that it was the result of cosmopolitanism, of foreign contributions due to India, Persia, China; and that it is a

perfect heresy with respect to Islam originating in Mecca or Medina. The famous Arab mathematician Thabit Ibn Qurra bin Marwan al-Sabi al-Harrani (Harran 836 - Baghdad 901) was for example Sabian and one of the most famous astronomers of his time, Al Battani too (born in Harran around 858). Editor's note. These Harrani Sabians should not be confused with the Mandaean Sabians. It is only by "mistake" and although Caliph Al Ma'mun was not fooled, they were admitted as members of the Muslim category "people of the Book."

1) In any case, Islamophobic American (or European) cannot exist, because being Islamophobic is not good, and it is therefore prohibited by law or by our president.

2) Kafir (plural kufar) designates the unbeliever, the apostate and the atheist. Can also refer to heretics and all kinds of political dissidents.

GOD AND MEN.

In the Quran as well as in the Bible, God boasts of having made whole peoples disappear: the Ad, the Thamud, the people of Lot, the Midianites. Each time, God practices total extermination, not sparing children!

7 : 4: How many a township have We destroyed! As a raid by night, or while they slept at noon, Our terror came unto them.

19 : 74: How many a generation have We destroyed before them, who were more imposing in respect of gear and outward seeming!

20 : 128: Is it not guidance for them (to know) how many a generation We destroyed before them, amid whose dwellings they walk ? Lo! therein verily are signs for men of thought.

Such indoctrination can prevail only over malleable brains in search of an authority that reassures them and gives them a compensatory supremacy. If the Quran does not shine by the pedagogy of its teachings, it has the merit, and it does not hesitate to boast of it, of the clarity of its intentions.

A clearly expounded doctrine with such childish assertions is all the more easily debatable. The existence of evil is the principal, and sufficient, obstacle to religions and to the notion of a God who good ruler of the universe. To take refuge behind the "mystery of God" which is inaccessible to us by definition, "Satan" or "free will," is only an abdication of religions facing their inability to provide a coherent view of the world. Conscious of this obstacle, the Quran adopts a strategy of attack where the believer must be kept within the religion, by the fear, the threat and the indoctrination, by means of a litany of injunctions. Without any call for broader reflection, conformist and routine prayer remains the best way to show everyone's affiliation to Islam. But "God" being considered the master of a universe arranged by himself, the explanation of evil remains a theological problem, insurmountable for religions. Despite some clumsy papering over the crack based on Devil or free will, the incoherence of this almighty God remains blatant. The Quran admits this divine fault from the 2nd chapter, one of the richest.

The infidels appear to be beyond the reach of divine wills (2: 6): "As for the Disbelievers, Whether you warn them or you warn them not it is all one for them; they do not believe." But the editor catches up immediately after saying that this disbelief is precisely what God himself wants (2 : 7): "God has sealed their hearing and their hearts, and on their eyes there is a covering. Theirs will be an awful doom." This observation of failure is repeated (36 : 10): " Whether you warn them or you warn them not, it is alike for them, for they do not believe."

A guru can captivate his followers by dazzling them with sweet promises, but also by deluging them with apocalyptic threats. The Quran, like the Old testament, chooses the warlike path, the only refuge of absurd theses. He rewards his reader with an incredible outpouring of visceral hate for the unbeliever (56, 40 to 61) sinking a little deeper into the mud of his discriminatory morality. An ideology that can be summed up in a compilation of threats and prohibitions, accompanied by the inquisitorial observation of its own followers (Hisba) , shows its inability to propose a coherent and hopeful philosophy. The cattle that are difficult to keep in the cloisters of belief, has its slightest misdemeanor inevitably punished (59: 4). " Whosoever is opposed to God (for him) verily God is stern in reprisal," to keep the believer on the right track of prayer (71: 28). " My Lord! Forgive my parents and me and him who entereth my house believing, and believing men and believing women, and do not increase the wrongdoers in anything save ruin."

Yet the action of God seems limitless (50 : 38): " And verily We created the heavens and the earth, and all that is between them, in six Days, and nothing of weariness touched Us." This rhetoric is more like the desperate correcting of an absurd situation than like a coherent vision of the world.

God having "sealed their hearts," it would be legitimate to expect to see him free men from this blindness, but the divine goodness of the Quranic god is expressed by a completely different way (2: 10): " In their hearts is a disease, and God increases their disease. A painful doom is theirs because they lie," see also 2 :14: "God (Himself) doth mock them, leaving them to wander blindly on in their contumacy." To let an established situation last is not, however, proof of a particular power.

God, despite his universality, is not the only actor, but must face (or avoid) Satan. Each one looking after his own interest , this false God tries vainly to gather his flocks (3: 175): " It is only the devil who would make (men) fear his partisans. Fear them not; fear Me, if you are true believers. " Failing to make the world good, the Quran tries pitifully to justify the state of the present situation (5: 14). "We have stirred up enmity and hatred among them till the Day of Resurrection" [it is true that it is apparently addressed to Christians, but still]; and the injunction of chapter 5 verse 40 is no more convincing: " Knowest you not that unto God belongs the Sovereignty of the heavens and the earth ? He punishes whom He will, and forgives whom He will. God is able to do all things.

These curious positions of the Quran can only suggest that God does not want a whole mankind following his religion.

In the same way (16: 93): "Had God willed He could have made you (all) one nation, but He sends whom He will astray and guides whom He will." The God-Satan competition, a sign of divine powerlessness, resumes in 19: 83: "See you not that We have set the devils on the disbelievers to confound them with confusion? "

There is something to be lost in this incomprehensible maze where unbelievers are as much as the believers some puppets in the hands of God. The inconsistency of the Abrahamic theology in this respect is flagrant.

The absurdity reaches its height when we learn that God has desired unbelief before miracles (7:101): " Thus does God print upon the hearts of disbelievers (that they do not hear)". Is this a very obvious theology? In the same way, farther (7: 178): " He whom God leads, he indeed is led aright, while he whom God sends astray - they indeed are losers." It looks more like a tautology! Rather than submitting the unbeliever to miraculous facts that would shatter his skepticism, the Quran hits him with threatening prophecies never verified (13:31). " Had it been possible for a lecture to cause the mountains to move, or the earth to be torn asunder, or the dead to speak (this Quran would have done so). Nay.... Do not those who believe know that, had God willed, He could have guided all mankind," Editor's note. The author to whom we borrow this analysis of the Quran forgets the story of the miracle of the moon. It is true that the latter did not convince, and that the fellow countrymen of Muhammad, who apparently had their feet firmly on the ground, especially Amr ibn Hisham nicknamed later Abu Jahl, by the Muslims, rather thought that it was a case of hypnosis or collective hallucination.

The point of view of pious Muslims.

Among the best-documented miracles witnessed by the Quran itself is the separation of the moon in two parts. "The Hour drew nigh and the moon was rent in twain," reads verse 1 of chapter 54 (entitled, "The Moon"). In addition to the testimony of the Quran, the Islamic tradition has given us many other testimonies of this miracle. This astronomical phenomenon is mentioned in all compilations of hadiths whether in Al-Bukhari, in Muslim, or in others. This is also why it is unanimously approved by all the exegetes. No other Prophet before Muhammad had accomplished such a miracle.

What is it about ?

One day the Meccans asked Muhammad to prove to them that he was sent by God. This happened five years before the Hijra in the presence of Al-Walid Ibn Al-Mughirah, Abu Jahl (Amr ibn Hisham), Al-As Ibn Wael, Al-Asswad ibn al-Muttalib, An-Nadr Ibn Al-Harith, and other pagans in Mecca. They said to Muhammad, "If what you say is true, then split the moon into two halves! "

Muhammad therefore addressed God so that he grants him what they had asked. Then the moon split into two halves, one beyond the mountain and the other on this side! This phenomenon occurred on the fourteenth day of the lunar month, the day of the full moon, and lasted "as long as there is time between the afternoon and the night." Abu Jahl –Amr in Hisham), then said: If he has bewitched us, he cannot, however, bewitch the whole world in the same way. Therefore, let us ask travelers coming from other countries if they have also seen what we have seen. The Meccans followed this wise counsel, but all the travelers arriving at Mecca only corroborated the account of this miracle. The Meccans then said, "It's prolonged magic! "

Editor's note. We should say today like today: a collective hallucination of the kind that occurred in Fatima on Saturday, October 13, 1917. For ten minutes, the sun disc will have a strange behavior that was called "the dance of the sun." But back to our sheep, it's the case to say, since our three little friends of Fatima were shepherds.

THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK (AHL AL-KITAB).

The most perverse of the inventions of Muslim theology is that of "People of the Book." It does not mean that Islam recognizes the value or anteriority of their religions, but that it has provided Christians, Jews, Sabians, and Zoroastrians with a special legal category giving the right to dhimmi status; that is to say, by means of discrimination, to keep their life and their property, instead of death or slavery, to which are promised the kafirs ummiyun, or pagans, or atheists, or agnostics, or (multi-religions) laymen.

In the lands of Islam, everything is centered around the Quranic notion of "People of the book" (ahl al-kitab).

There are people who are members of it and therefore have a place in the land of Islam, a little place, a status of second-class citizens, dhimmitude, and others, the ummiyun kafirs, who have no place in it. One of the specificities of Islam is that it includes Jews, Christians, Zoroastrian or Mazdean Magians, as well as an other undefined community, the Sabians, in the same religious category called by it "people of the Book" by alluding to the fact that these communities had, or still have, holy writings, as opposed to peoples who do not have sacred texts in the strict sense of the word (ummiyun), what was the case, for example, of the pagans in Mecca.

What are the People of the Book? Only Jews and Christians? Or also the followers of certain other religions? Whoever believes in the existence of one god, but has not yet chosen his religion, that is, who is not atheist, but only agnostic, can he also be considered as a member of the people of the book mentioned by the Quran? ??

The Arabic word kafir at first refers simply to not believing that Muhammad was the last prophet of the single creating god, so it concerns Jews as well as Christians as well as the pagans of Arabia. The Quran, moreover, uses this term in reference to the People of the Book who chose not to believe in Muhammad as to the pagans: Quran 2 :105.

The Quran refers to the conscious, willed, and willful absence of such a belief, by the term "kufr" (a word that etymologically means "veiling," it simply means at the outset not being a Muslim), but it uses this term also about not believing.....

- In God.

- In the message sent by his last prophet (Quran 48: 13).

- And about not believing in each of the other messengers sent by God previously (4 : 150-151).

According to the Hanafite school, the People of the Book are those who fulfill the following three conditions.

1. To claim to be in line with a religion that has been revealed by God.

2. According to Fiqh as-Sunna, Volume 2 p. 382, the Doctors of Islamic Law unanimously consider that the Jews, as well as the Christians, not followers of the notion of Trinity, are well members of these "People of the Book" ("ahl al-kitab") of which speaks the Quran. And who are concerned with the first two conditions we have just seen: to refer to scriptures that were at the origin scriptures authentically left by a messenger of God.

3. And not to be (again) become polytheists.

Opinions are divergent opinions, on the other hand, concerning believers in the Holy Trinity, Zoroastrians, Sabians.

Are Christians believing in the Trinity members of the category of the People of the Book despite their belief in the divinity of Jesus?

The answer to this question obviously depends on their design of the nature of the aforementioned Jesus: divine or simply human, or the two combined in the same person.

According to some (but these are very isolated opinions - tafarrud -) only Christians who hold Jesus as a mere prophet can be considered members of the "People of the Book"; and not as bringing together in him a divine nature and a human nature. In other words, Christians who do not believe in the notion of the Holy Trinity.

As for the others, those who believe in the Incarnation and / or the Trinity, therefore in the divinity of Jesus, they are not members of the People of the Book. Or at least, if they are members of them, a Muslim is not allowed to marry a woman who shares their view of Jesus's role. Abdullah ibn Umar, about the marriage with a Jewess or a Christian, said: "

"God has made it unlawful for the believers to marry ladies who ascribe partners in worship to God, and I do not know of a greater thing, as regards to ascribing partners in worship, etc. to God, than that a lady should say that Jesus is her Lord although he is just one of God's slaves."

Reported by Al Bukhari, Vol. 7, Book 63, Hadith 209.

A little bit like the pope, bishop, but servant of the servants of God, therefore. See the last Catechism of the Catholic Church (page 5 introduction).

For the vast majority, even if the Christian believes that Jesus has a divine nature, that is to say even if he is Trinitarian, he nevertheless continues to be a member of the "People of the Book." This opinion is undoubtedly the one that is the most consistent with the Quran. "O People of the Book, do not speak of Trinity anymore" (Quran 4 :171).

This verse proves that the Quran itself always calls "People of the Book" of Christians believing in the Holy Trinity.

Ibn Hajar notes that one of his masters (Al-Baqillani) has one day deduced from the hadith 6 volume 1 book 1 of Bukhari (about a letter allegedly sent to the Emperor Heraclius) the ruling "that whoever believes in the religion of the People of the Scripture (i.e., Judaism or Christianity) is to be considered as one of them in the legal rulings of marriage and eating their slaughtered animals (sic, what Romanticism !) even if they entered the religion after it was corrupted. The proof is that Heraclius and his people (the Romans) were not from Banu Israel; rather they had accepted Christianity after it had been corrupted and distorted (to the extent that it bore little resemblance to the original monotheistic message of Jesus).

Despite this, the Prophet addressed them as people of the scripture, signifying that they should be considered as such.

This negates therefore the notion that 'People of the Scripture' is a term specific to the Children of Israel or those whose ancestors embraced Christianity before its distortion (Fath Al Bari Tafsir sahih Bukhari chapter 1 hadiths 1-7).

Let's come now to the Sabians. Are the Sabians people of the book?

The Quran speaks of the Sabians ("as-Sabioun") in a few verses: 2 : 62; 5 : 69; 22 : 17. Who are these mysterious Sabians? Ibn Kathir speaks of them as men who believed in one God, and according to some it was the reason why the Meccan pagans called Muhammad and his Companions "Sabioun" (Tafsir of Ibn Kathir, commentary on verse 2 : 62).

Are the Sabians members of the people of the book or not? Opinions are divided.

Yes according to Abu Hanifa, for him the Sabians were indeed members of the People of the Book (Al-Hidaya, Volume 2, page 290).

No for Abu Yusuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hassan, for them the Sabians were not members of the People of the Book (Al-Hidaya, Volume 2, page 290, footnote).

As we have seen from the Hanafite School, to be members of the People of the Book it was necessary to fulfill the following three conditions.

1. To claim to be in line with a religion that has been revealed by God.
2. To refer to scriptures which were initially Scriptures genuinely left by a messenger of God.
3. Not to be (again) become polytheists (Fiqh as-sunna, volume 2, page 382).

If there is any disagreement between Abu Hanifa and his two pupils about the Sabians, it is not because of a difference of opinion about this definition; but because of the uncertainty of our knowledge of what the Sabians really were (fahm ul-waqi). According to Abu Hanifa, the Sabians were monotheists, according to Abu Yusuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, they were astrolaters (see Al-Hidaya, Volume 2, page 290, footnote).

IN FACT, ALL DEPENDS IF YOU SPEAK OF THE SABIANS IN HARRAN (Turkey) OR OF THE MANDEAN SABIANS (South of Iraq).

Are Zoroastrians in the category of the People of the Book now?

Ibn Hazm and the Zahirite School, as well as Abu Thawr, think that Zoroastrians are indeed People of the Book. These scholars use the following reasoning: only the People of the Book can be treated as adh-dhimma, and Muhammad never concluded such contracts of dhimmitude with idolaters. But he accepted the Zoroastrians as ahl adh-dhimma (see our chapter above devoted to the Sabians).

Some Muslims even think that Zoroaster was perhaps also a prophet, sent by God to the ancient Iranian world, in any case, that the teaching of Zoroaster was apparently in conformity with that of the true messengers of God.

On the other hand, for others (especially the theologians of the Hanafite, Malikite, and Hanbalite schools), even if they refer to the message and the book brought by a reformer who may also have been a prophet of God; Zoroastrians cannot be considered as People of the Book. Over time, they have made so many changes to this original message that it is no longer possible to regard them as monotheists. They believe in two deities, one of good, Spenta Mainyu, the other of evil, Ahriman; and worship to fire.

Only the People of the Book can be treated as ahl adh-dhimma, and Muhammad never concluded such dhimmitude contracts with idolaters. But he accepted the Zoroastrians as ahl adh-dhimma".

Regarding this argument, and therefore that the Prophet never established a contract of dhimmitude with idolaters, Ibn Qayyim believes that this does not mean that it was impossible to do so. If the Prophet did not do it, it was simply because the idea of this type of contract was revealed to him only in the year of Tabuk, that is to say in the year 630. In other words, at a time when idolatrous Arabs had already converted to Islam [for some] . Either had already concluded other types of treaties with the Prophet, for others.

As for the hadith stipulating "Follow the same sunna (tradition) with them that you follow with the people of the Book" (Malik's Muwatta, chapter 17, zakat, hadith No. 43), if it is authentic; on the contrary, it proves that the Zoroastrians are not People of the Book, since it is asked to act with them as one acts with the People of the Book. This implies that Zoroastrians and People of the Book are two different entities. Ibn Abbas besides, about the Byzantine offensive against the Persians in the seventh century, event mentioned by the Quran in chapter 30: 2-6, reports that the Meccans wanted the Persians to be victorious because they too were people who worshipped statues; while the Muslims wanted the Byzantines to be victorious "because they were People of the Book like them" (reported by At-Tirmidhi, Book 44, hadith no 3193).

STATUS CONCLUSION: THOSE WHO ARE CLOSE TO THE ORIGINAL MESSAGE OF ZOROASTER ARE WELL MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK, BUT THOSE WHO FOLLOW A PATH HAVING MUCH GROWN APART NO!

As we have seen, to really be members of the People of the Book, you must fulfill the following three conditions.

1. To claim being in line with a religion that has been revealed by God.
2. To refer to scriptures which were initially scriptures genuinely left by a messenger of God.
3. Not to be (again) become polytheists (Fiqh as-sunna, volume 2, page 382).

It is because they do not fulfill, or fulfill no longer, this third condition, that the Zoroastrians are not held for People of the Book by some.

But here comes a question. How is it that the Muslim theologians, who think that the Zoroastrians have received Scripture from God; but can no longer be considered as members of the People of the Book, because they have become dualistic (a god of Good Spenta Mainyu and a god of Evil Ahriman); nevertheless consider Christians as always members of these same People of the Book? While they began to believe in the divine nature of Jesus and in the Trinity, which is also some polytheism? Why do not these theologians come to the same conclusion with regard to Zoroastrians and Christians? Because Christians continue to want there to be only one God.

The three persons, according to them, are distinct, but form only one God. The omnipotence of God has for result that he can be one in three persons. They believe in the Incarnation, but say that it is because of his omnipotence that the One God was able to become flesh in the person of Jesus, in whom both a human nature and a divine nature coexisted. All this is very complicated, and Christians themselves call this a "mystery," but it is quite significantly different from the dualism of the past or present Zoroastrians so that they can continue to be considered members of the People of the Book by Muslims.

Note of a man of twelve books and not of one.

Interesting reasoning! On this account, you may say the same thing of the ancient druids who, like the original Zoroastrians, refused all dualism (an Evil distinct from the Good and in the struggle against it), and also believed in a single Higher Being; but a single superior being whose omnipotence was such that he could be one in many (the hypostases called Taran / Toran / Tuirean, or Mabon / Maponos / Oengus, and even Lug. In short, a holy poly-unity before the word is invented !). The omnipotence of this Higher Being also made it possible for him to become flesh, from which certain exceptional beings in whom was cohabiting at the same time a human nature and a divine nature: the Hesus / Cuchulainn in Ireland for example, to quote only him.

DEFINITIVE CONCLUSION: The People of the Book are a part of the whole of those who are not Muslims ("kafirun") because of the fact that they too are more or less monolaters; that they refer to one or more authentic messengers of God previous to Muhammad; that they, too, have Scriptures from these messengers of God and always containing certain genuine teachings. The Quran therefore recognizes that they have a certain number of points in common with Muslims, and that it is therefore permissible for the Muslim to marry a woman who is a member of their community ((but not the contrary, of course, Muslim women remaining reserved for Muslim men).

The agnostic, the one who says that God exists perhaps, but that we can know nothing about him, and the deist, the one who believes in God, but does not refer to the message of any particular envoy of God; on the other hand, do not belong to the Muslim category of the People of the Book.

GOD AND THOSE WHO DO NOT BELIEVE (AS IT IS NECESSARY).

The main target of this book, the infidel has all the vices usually attributed to the enemy. He is deceitful, sly, mocking, contemptuous, aggressive, bellicose, and naturally follows other myths or none, that is to say, does not admit the authority of God. The term infidelity refers to all non-Muslims, be they Jewish, Christian, polytheistic or non-believing. And mistrust towards converts is necessary.

In Chapter 2 alone, the chapter of "The Cow," appear more than forty verses attacking those who do not believe in Islam. They are the verses : 7, 10, 13, 18, 27, 39, 59, 61, 65, 79, 81, 85, 88, 98, 104, 114, 119, 159, 161, 165, 167, 171, 174, 178, 179, 191, 194, 206, 217, 221, 244, 257, 270.

TRANSLATIONS IN OUR LANGUAGE GIVEN WITH RESERVATIONS; BUT THE GENERAL MEANING OF ALL THESE WORDS IS VERY CLEAR AND UNEQUIVOCAL.

Awful, painful, ignominious, doom, distress, misfortune, eternal fire, hell-fire, hell, apes, foolish, mute deaf and blind, no one must defend them, curse of God, anger of God, enmity of God, law of retaliation , hunt them kill them fight them etc.etc.

From the start page 2 of chapter 2 sets the tone with no less than six verses marked with violence (7-10-13-18-24-27). The around forty verses of this kind listed in the chapter, which contains 286 of them, give the average ratio of 14%, or 1, 6 per page. This chapter 2 is a torrent of hate unleashed on the infidels, announcing their drowning and submerging their cities. A painful punishment is reserved for them, because they have called Muhammad a liar, and such an evil is healed by fire (2: 24). " Guard yourselves against the fire prepared for disbelievers, whose fuel is of men and stones." See also verse 39: " But they who disbelieve, and deny Our revelations, such are rightful Peoples of the Fire. They will abide therein." The faithful are called for joining their curse against the disbelievers to that of their God (2:159). " Lo! Those who hide the proofs and the guidance which We revealed, after We had made it clear to mankind in the Scripture: such are accursed of God and accursed of those who have the power to curse."

See also verse 161: " Lo! Those who disbelieve, and die while they are disbelievers; on them is the curse of God and of angels and of men combined." And so that things are clear (2: 257): " As for those who disbelieve, their patrons are false deities (taghut: the term is actually difficult to translate). They bring them out of light into darkness." This divine hatred is reminded a little further (2: 276): " God does not love the impious and guilty."

One would like to believe that this first (since the Fatiha is not counted) but principal, chapter, is not representative of the whole, and that the tone changes in those which follow. But it is not so, and one can even realize that it is not the worst, that the whole book is visibly peppered with the same threats; and that the flair to express its violence continues to grow [Editor's note. Here again the translations vary according to the authors, but the general meaning remains unequivocal].

Perish in your rage! (3 : 119), that He may cut off a part of those who disbelieve (3 : 127), that God may blight the disbelievers (3:141); cast terror into the hearts of those who disbelieve (3: 151), we must fight the minions of the devil (4: 76), seize them, kill them wherever you find them (4: 89-91). Their only wages will be to be killed, crucified, or to have an opposite hand and foot cut (5: 33), soul for soul, eye for eye, nose for nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, law of retaliation for wounds (5: 45); they will also be entitled to a burning drink and to hell (6: 70), to the pangs of death (6 : 93); God destroys the cities when the inhabitants remain pagan (6 :131), exterminates those who deny signs or miracles (7:72); smite them on the neck, smite them at the joints (8 : 12), it is not you who kill them, it is God (8 : 17); the angels will strike their faces and the base of their back (8 : 50), a prophet does not have to make prisoners before having overcome (8: 67); the pagans are only defilement (9: 28); gold and silver will be incandescent in the fire of Hell to mark their foreheads, flanks, and backs (9 : 35); to them the yoke (13: 5), we invade their country and reduce its extent on all sides (13 : 41). We will kill the unjust (sinners?) and settle you in their place on this earth (14: 13-14); Hell is before him, and he is made to drink a festering water, which he sips but can hardly swallow (14 : 16-17); You will see them together in chains, Their raiment of pitch, and the Fire covering their faces (14: 50); God made it experience the garb of dearth and fear (16: 112); they will be showered with water like to molten lead which burns the faces (18: 29); God made them as reaped corn (21:15); But as for those who disbelieve, garments of fire will be cut out for them; boiling fluid will be poured on their heads, Whereby that which is in their bellies, and their skins too, will be melted; and for them are hooked rods of iron. Whenever, in their anguish, they would go forth from thence they are driven back therein (22: 19-22). Editor's note. There we cannot help but think of the sadomasochistic visions of hell that we discover in Irish literature (from Saint Fursey to the Lucidary by Honorius of Autun, etc. see our opusculum devoted to the subject).

The infidel appears, in chapter 55, as a narrow mind, with a systematic negation, where every verse of the Quran is followed by "Which is it, of the favors of your Lord, that you deny ? ??? ". A skillful process to equate unbeliever with an obtuse and incurable character.

It is not only annoyance that we feel as we progress in this impressive inventory, but consternation and fright. The number of verses showing violence is at least 550 for the whole book, plus a hundred other verses less outrageous, but rather unkind for those to whom they are addressed. These 650 more or less violent therefore verses lead to the overall ratio of 10% of 6235 verses of the book, or 1, 8 on average per page. Such a frequency confers the Quran a very special character.

Some examples.

The chapter entitled "the women" chapter No. 4.

Verse 74: " 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."

Verse 160: " Because of the wrongdoing of the Jews We forbade them good things which were (before) made lawful unto them, and because of their much hindering from God's way, and of their taking usury when they were forbidden it, and of their devouring people's wealth by false pretenses, We have prepared for those of them who disbelieve a painful doom."

Those who think that Islam is a religion of love like others are seriously mistaken, and fail as much by ignorance as by naivety. They are involuntarily accomplices of a dreadful tragedy.

The chapter entitled "The table spread," chapter N ° 5.

Verse 17: They indeed have disbelieved who say: Lo! God is the Messiah, son of Mary. Say: Who then can do anything against God, if He had willed to destroy the Messiah son of Mary, and his mother and everyone on earth ?"

Verse 33. "The only reward of those who make war upon God and his messenger and strive after corruption in the land will be that they will be killed or crucified, or have their hands and feet on alternate sides cut off, or will be expelled out of the land."

Verse 60: "Worse is the case of him whom God has cursed, him on whom his wrath has fallen and of whose sort God has turned some to apes and swine, and who served taghut."

Reminders of the editorial board. The word taghut is difficult to translate. It may designate all the deities. There also seems to be a syntax error in this verse about the subject of the verb "served". God would have served the taghut?

The chapter entitled "Spoils of war," Chapter No. 8.

Verse 12: "I will throw fear into the hearts of those who disbelieve. Then smite the necks and smite of them each finger."

Verses 38-39: "Tell those who disbelieve that if they cease that which is past will be forgiven them; but if they return (thereto) then the example of the men of old has already gone. And fight them until fitna is no more, and religion is all for God."

Verse 65: "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 of those who disbelieve."

The chapter entitled "Repentance," chapter 9.

Verse 5: "Then, 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."

Editor's note. These are very clearly verses designed originally to be applied to the pagans of Mecca from 620 to 630. But what prevents them from being applied, for example, to today's Indians? ?

Outside the sacred months in question, of course. And Christians with their idea of Trinity, too, are in a way some tritheists, therefore some polytheists. Would it be legitimate to attack them from the moment when it is not during these famous sacred months, which have caused a lot of ink to flow?

Verses 29-30: "Fight (sic) against such of those who have been given the Scripture as do not believe in God nor the Last Day, and forbid not that which God has forbidden by his messenger, and follow not the Religion of Truth, until they pay the tribute readily, being brought low. 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 perverse are they!

Editor's note. The mention "being brought low" is important. It implies not only that non-Muslims of Judeo-Christian denominations must pay a specific tax (called jizya), but also that they must do so UNDER HUMILIYING CONDITIONS FOR THEM.

As for perverse, this kind of thing resembles much the story of the man making fun of the mote in his neighbor's eye, while a beam is in his own. Or the story of the pot calling the kettle black.

Let us also point it out that the translation of the Arabic verb qatala by "fight" (imperative qatilou) is a pleasant euphemism to say, "kill."

Verse 123: "O you who believe! Fight those of the disbelievers who are near to you, and let them find harshness in you, and know that God is with those who keep their duty (unto Him)".

Chapter 31 verse 6: " And of mankind is he who pays for mere pastime of discourse, that he may mislead from God's way without knowledge."

Chapter 36 verse 69: " And We have not taught him poetry, nor is it meet for him."

Literature and poetry are therefore not favored by the Quran, and we understand better the use of public book burning in Muslim lands.

The chapter entitled "Banning," chapter No. 66.

Verse 9: "Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be stern with them. Hell will be their home."

A bit of freshness to clear your mind now.

The true druids, apparently, like Scot Ériugena, did not believe in this notion of hell.

Bernese Scholia commenting on Lucan's *Pharsalia*.

Hermann Usener. *Scholia in Lucani bellum civile/Commenta Bernensia. Liber I* (1869).

451 "Druids deny that souls can perish

[*Driadae negant interire animas*]

OR GO TO HELL

[*Aut contagione inferorum adfici*] and

454 "They do not say that the Manes exist"

[*Manes esse, not dicunt*].

Point 25 of the small list appended to the Council of Leptines in 743, under the Latin title of *indculus superstitionum et paganiarum* (of course, it is a matter of condemning or denigrating all this) goes clearly in this direction; it evokes the imagining that every deceased is a saint.

And in 851, John Scotus Eriugena also noted in his "On predestination": God foresees neither punishment nor sins: they are fictions. For Eriugena also, therefore, hell does not exist, or then he calls it remorse.

As far as we are concerned, we refuse to consider, even for a single second, as being the supreme message of THE supreme wisdom; a text which stipulates that abusive accusations of adultery shall be punished by 80 lashes, that a wife of a prophet convicted of adultery shall be sentenced to the double punishment of that of another woman; that the Prophet must receive 20% of the spoils made during a holy war, etc., etc., etc.

Besides we refuse to consider anything as the last word of God ("or seal of prophecy"). Either he does not exist and there is no last word at all, or he exists and it is a blasphemy to claim to cut him off (= action of the Holy Ghost).

Finally, we refuse to associate with God a text that precisely says that nothing should be associated with God at all. If God exists, he is the one who wanted us not to be able to apprehend him without associating something with him (text or object or person or idea or phenomenon).

Moreover anyway, contrary to what one believes, or pretends to believe generally, Islam, it is not the Quran. Or more exactly Islam is not only the Quran, it is also

- The fact that some verses of this book have been abrogated by others (*El naskh wa el mansukh*).

- The life of Muhammad (in that it may have as exemplary, by virtue of the principle of *isma* or infallibility of the prophets: Muhammad in this case is a saint who has never been wrong).

- As well as hundreds of thousands of anecdotes (*hadith*) about him.

What changes everything!

THE ZOROASTRIANS.

Only one verse of the Quran (22, 17) refers to the Zoroastrians (majus). "Lo! those who believe (this revelation), and those who are Jews, and the Sabaeans and the Christians and the Magians and the idolaters."

It is not known for the moment whether this is a mention from Muhammad himself (recollection of direct meetings on his part or hearsay); or if it is an interpolation made after the death of Muhammad by a Muslim living in vassal territory of Persia and not wanting to deprive himself of this fruitful source of taxes (the Zoroastrians were to be part of the upper classes in the population, therefore of the richest, compared to pagan Arabs).

A hadith also tells us that Muhammad himself would have accepted the dhimmitude tax (jizya) paid by the Zoroastrians of Hajar (region of Saudi Arabia between Riyadh and Qatar).

Abdu Rahman ibn Awf reported: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, accepted tribute from the Magians of Hajar.

Source: Sunan At-Tirmidhi 187. Grade: Sahih (authentic) according to At-Tirmidhi.

Malik's Muwatta. Chapter 17: Zakat.

Hadith no: 42.

"I have heard that the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, took jizya from the Magians of Bahrain that Umar ibn al-Khattab took it from the Magians 1) of Persia and that Uthman ibn Affan took it from the Berbers."

Hadith no: 43.

Umar ibn al-Khattab mentioned the Magians 1) and said, "I do not know what to do about them." Abd ar-Rahman ibn Awf said, "I bear witness that I heard the Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, say, 'Follow the same sunna (tradition) with them that you follow with the people of the Book.' "

Hadith no: 46.

The people of dhimma (dhimmis) and the Magians 1) do not have to pay any zakat.....This is because zakat is imposed on the Muslims to purify them and to be given back to their poor, whereas jizya is imposed on the people of the book to humble them.

A (probably apocryphal) letter attributed to Muhammad tells us the same thing. To note, in this letter, Bahrain is the name given to the region of Arabia located between the present Bahrain and Kuwait.

In 628 Muhammad would have dispatched to the "Persian" governor of Bahrain a letter inviting him to embrace Islam. In reply, Al-Mundhir bin Sawa wrote the following letter.

"God's Messenger (Peace be upon him)! I received your injunctions. Prior to this, I read your letter, which you wrote to the people of Bahrain extending to them an invitation to Islam. Islam appealed to some of them and they entered the fold of Islam, while others did not find it appealing. In my country, there live Zoroastrians (Majusi) and Jews, and therefore you may inform me of the treatment to be extended to them."

Muhammad's answer.

To the governor of Bahrain. In the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful: From Muhammad the Prophet of God to Munzir bin Sawa, may peace be on you!..... I accept your recommendation regarding the people of Bahrain. I forgive the offenses of the offenders. Therefore, you may also forgive them of the people of Bahrain whoever want to continue in their Jewish or Zoroastrian (Majusi) faith, should be made to pay Jizia. (Sultan Ahmed Qureshi, Letters of the Holy Prophet, Karachi 1983.)

Is it possible ?

There exist Persian loan words in Quran such as firdaws (paradise).Iranian worships existed in pre-Islamic Arabia on account of Sasanian military presence along the Persian Gulf and South Arabia and on account of trade routes between the Hejaz and Iraq. Some Arabs in northeast of the peninsula converted to Zoroastrianism and several Zoroastrian temples were constructed in Najd. Some of the members of the tribe of Banu Tamim had converted to the religion

Zoroastrianism was also present in Eastern Arabia and Persian-speaking Zoroastrians lived in the region. They were known as "Majoos" in pre-Islamic times. The religion was introduced in the region including modern-day Bahrain during the rule of Persian empires in the region starting from 250 before our era. It was mainly practiced in Bahrain by Persian settlers. Zoroastrianism was also practiced in the Persian-ruled area of modern-day Oman. The descendants of Abna, the Persian conquerors of Yemen were followers of Zoroastrianism. According to Serjeant, the Baharna people may be the Arabized descendants from the original population of ancient Persians (Majus) as well as other religions.

We owe well our brothers Guebres or Parsis a few words about their so dangerous spirituality (almost a monolatry, brrrr!) When it falls into the wrong hands. Fortunately, like Judaism, it is transmitted mainly from parents to children only.

The fact is that the influence of Persian Zoroastrianism on Islam is evident, especially in the number of daily prayers that must be performed by the faithful Muslim, or the eschatological belief in the mizan, or balance pan on which the souls of the dead are judged (Quran: s.21, v.47). Moreover, the Quran places Zoroastrians at the same level as Jews, Sabians and Christians.

According to the Muslim tradition, the soul of the deceased must take a bridge thin and sharp as a razor blade to access the paradise. The righteous cross it with success, the others stumble and fall into hell. This idea is found in Zoroastrianism, and its trace resurfaces even among Hindus, because of the cross influences between Persian and Indian peoples.

Another example is the houris 2) reserved for supposedly deserving warriors of Islam, or heavenly virgins offered to their sexual fantasies, suggesting a Zoroastrian origin. In Zoroastrianism, just as in Druidism, the guardian angels (daena) are feminine, and we can easily imagine the mental confusion that these charming creatures had to cause in the minds of barbaric conquerors far from their home, in this blessed Mesopotamia where everything exudes sex and pleasure ...

What is interesting in the history of religions is to see how much they make it possible to better understand the societies from which they emanate, as much in their aspirations as in their fears. Equally exciting is to follow their development and to discover the different influences that have more or less determined them through their evolution.

The oldest religion of monotheistic essence is the Zoroastrianism or Mazdaism with which the Judeans will be brought into contact in Babylon in the sixth century before our era and which will influence more and more the religious orientations of the time.

Zoroaster is historically presented as the reformer of the religion of the Aryans, this group of Indo-Europeans who will settle and become gradually established in the current Iran or the surrounding regions from the twelfth century before our era. Upon their arrival, they seemed to be polytheists with important magical traditions and demons to be feared. The whole of their mythology is close to the Vedic tradition as well as that of their distant cousins, the Hittites and Hurrians of Mitanni who were previous to them in the Middle East. Probably born in northeastern Iran, it is difficult to say in what time Zoroaster lived. Researchers suggest dates from the 12th to the 7th century before our era. The earliest date is based mainly on the very archaic idiom used in the Gatha, a collection of Avestan literature where Zoroaster expresses himself. According to these texts, he seems to speak to peoples who deal mainly with livestock and not really agriculture, which could confirm the seniority of this date. Zoroaster in his reformation opposes the omnipresent magical rituals and the too bloody and violent sacrifices. He wants to give religion a moral and religious significance. He says he speaks in the name of the god Ahura Mazda, god of light, symbolized by the fire, to whom he opposes an enemy and dangerous principle, Ahriman. Ahura Mazda will give its name to Mazdaism. This religion has a sacred book, the Avesta, attributed largely to Zoroaster. It is riddled with mysterious words that seem to have been intentionally used to prove that it is a revelation by God himself. We are therefore in the presence of the first so-called revealed religion. The sacred book is called "the book of the revelation of the truth." With the zurvanism that will be a schism, the main message will be preserved but with a closer link between Ahura Mazda and Ahriman since we are in the presence of twins born from the same cosmic egg.

Beside Ahura Mazda, a good and compassionate god, there are light angels or Amesha Spentas, and the Vazatu, kinds of hypostases of the god that are reminiscences of the Vedic cult. Among these Vazatu, we find Mithra, already invoked by the Hurrians and Hittites and whose growing importance will give rise to the contemporary Mithraism of early Christianity. Ahriman, too, has assistants, the Devas, the devils who in subsequent monotheisms will be called Satan, Shaitan, Iblis, Beelzebub, Lucifer, etc. It is also interesting to know that in Hinduism, cousin religion, the Devis are instead benevolent gods.

In the Gatha, an essential collection of the Avesta, is affirmed the immortality of the soul, an immortality that has nothing to do with the Gehenna or Jewish Sheol, the latter being similar to the abode described in the Akkadian texts (descent of Ishtar into the underworld). In Avesta eschatology, the immortal souls, after a discriminatory passage, the Chinvat Bridge, which corresponds to the judgment, will be directed to hell, purgatory or paradise (paradise comes from the word "paradesa,"

which means "garden" (in old Persian), destination of the blessed ones. The resurrection of the body is also promised at the end of time in a world released from evil.

The judgment that decides the destiny of souls is linked to the fact that in Mazdaism, man is free to choose "good or evil." For Zoroaster and unlike the subsequent dualistic religions, we must not withdraw from the world but consider it as the sphere where light is fighting against darkness and therefore in doing good deeds.

The man, for Zoroaster, is therefore endowed with free will and contrary to the religions of the time, he is not the plaything of the Fate, he can choose between "the light and the lie." The code of morality is simple, only is righteous and good the man who does not do to others what he does not judge suitable for himself. There is also a notion, new for the time, of intolerance, because for Zoroaster, the worst sin is unbelief and apostasy. As in Christianity (of a bygone era) and in Islam, the apostate must be put to death.

It is also interesting to talk about the salvation of women in Zoroastrian society. While in the Achaemenid Persia of Cyrus, they enjoyed an egalitarian situation, owning property and managing them, they will see their situation change from Darius, especially in the upper classes. It is very difficult to know if this is due to Mazdaism or to Semitic influence, but this change in status prefigures Muslim seclusion. On the other hand, what is attributable to Mazdaism is the rise of a big sexual puritanism. Fornication and adultery cannot be forgiven. Onanism is punished by the whip. This for the time unusual puritanism will continue largely in monotheism.

Mazdaism knows the existence of a clergy, the Magi, who, as in Judaism, is the fact of a tribe; this is characteristic of an Indo-European world that divides populations in castes with definite social offices. The Magi, who did not deal primarily with magic and divination, developed a high spirituality so well known in the Middle East of the time that Christian Gospels thought it best to refer to them as witnesses of the birth of Jesus.

Mazdaism also has the notion of a cosmic order. Time is divided into twelve millennia with four periods of three thousand years; at the end of the fourth period, Zoroaster must reappear in the form of the "savior" who brings the victorious reign of Ahura Mazda. This may partly explain the millenarian side of Twelver Shi'ism, which has gradually taken the place of Mazdaism and is characterized by the expectation of the return of the hidden Imam.

Historically, the victory of the Muslims over the Sassanid Persians in 636 contributed to the direct connection of Islam with Zoroastrianism. At this time of gradual crystallization of the Quran, whose definitive version does not appear until much later, a penetration of Muslim dogmas by Zoroastrian concepts has necessarily occurred. Let us not forget that the Muslims did not hesitate to borrow from Judaism many of their beliefs and rites, so that their receptivity to Zoroastrianism already had a precedent.

But with the occupation of Iran, the Muslim invaders will face a major problem: the massive presence of a population new for them, but having know-how useful and that can make much money for the tax authorities. Hence, without doubt, the introduction on this subject of a word concerning them in the Quran, in a very late verse (22:17). This apparently at first sight favorable status will not prevent the quick elimination of the bulk of the Mazdean population, by conversion or expulsion (forced exile in India of the Parsis). The Islamic tradition, in fact, as a whole, will quickly reverse the trend, and will prove very unfavorable to the "Magi."

1) Our sources use the word "magian" to refer to the Mazdean followers of Zoroaster's religion. May our readers want to rectify automatically.

2) If the term does not come from a Syriac word meaning grape as Christoph Luxenberg thinks.

THE SABIANS 1)

Mandeism is a contemporary, Baptist, monotheistic, and Gnostic religion with only a few thousand members.

At the base of the doctrinal system of the Mandaeans, there is a dualism opposing the "world from above" and the "world from below," the "place of light" and the "place of darkness," what does not prevent God from intervening through creation, as in biblical accounts. Creation which continues through the permanent action of the Deity and of its revelation by the "Heavenly Envoy." According to Mandaean tradition, John the Baptist is this envoy and their main prophet. The Mandaeans worship Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Shem, Aram and especially John the Baptist.

It is the last movement heir to the "Baptists," whose existence is evidenced from the end of the first century in many Christian texts 2) and in Flavius Josephus. Mandaeans are members of the only truly Baptist current that has persisted to this day. It is possible this current is an heir to the Elkasate movement. However, the Mandaeans do not seem to come from the Nazarene who recognized Jesus as Messiah, but precisely of a Baptist group who refused this recognition.

Prior to 2003 and the outbreak of the Iraq war, the vast majority of Mandaeans (about 65,000) lived in Iraq, especially along the lower Tigris and Euphrates and near the Shatt-el-Arab (common part of Tigris and Euphrates Rivers), with a significant minority in Iran in Khuzestan. Most have since dispersed, particularly towards Iran, but also Syria, Jordan and Western countries. In Iraq, they are endangered.

The word Mandaean is related to the gnosis (Aramaic Manda means "knowledge," just like Greek gnosis). Mandaeans are called Manda'iyya in Arabic.

The oldest of the Mandaean manuscripts date from the sixteenth century, but the analysis of their texts and particularly of the lists of scribes who copied them can go back to the second century.

According to their traditions, their community would have formed around John the Baptist, they could be among those who did not join Jesus. According to them, and especially the Haran-Gawaita, their departure would have taken place in 37-38.

Robert Eisenman points out that this follows shortly after the suppression of Pontius Pilate against a group of Samaritans who have gathered together, taking up arms on Mount Garizim following a man whose name Flavius Josephus refuses to mention, but whom some Fathers of the Church call Dositheos (perhaps the Dositheus who according to many ancient Christian writers, would have attempted to succeed John the Baptist after his execution, as he was one of his thirty disciples).

Finally, it was Simon Magus who would have taken the head of the Baptists refusing to recognize Jesus as Messiah and who could have stayed in Palestine. Their departure from Judea could also result from the terrible suppression of the Revolt of the Exiles known as Kito's War (115-117) or the suppression that followed the defeat of Bar Kokhba's revolt and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 135.

According to most historians, Mandaeans migrated from the south of the Levant to Mesopotamia in the first centuries of our era and are of pre-Islamic origin. They are Semitic and speak an Eastern dialect of Aramaic known as Mandaean. They can thus be linked to the "Nabateans of Iraq," who spoke Aramaic and were pre-Islamic indigenous inhabitants who had carved for themselves Arab kingdoms during the collapse of the Seleucid kingdoms (late 2nd century before our era) in the south of Iraq and in the north (Mosul, Erbil, Nisibis, Edessa, Harran).

The Mandaeans seem to have settled in northern Mesopotamia, but the Mandaean religion was mainly practiced around the lower Euphrates and Tigris rivers and the rivers that surround the Shatt-el-Arab, a part of southern Iraq and the Iranian province of Khuzestan. They are called Sabians by the neighboring population and in the texts of Islamic writers. They are probably part of those who are called Sabians in Islamic literature from the eighth century and who according to these authors live in Kutha (south of Ctesiphon and Seleucia), Kufa (a little further south), in Characene, in the city of Mesene (ancient Charax Spasinu on the Shatt-el-Arab) and Mosul (now Kurdistan). All of these cities in Iraq were located on the banks of the Tigris or Euphrates and are in the area where Mandaeans still lived before the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The Mandaeans of Iraq were referred to as Sabaeans, Sabians or Sabaya ("Baptists") by the surrounding population. This name emphasizes the importance taken in this "sect" by the rites of baptism. It is also of this third name that the contemporary Muslim authors prefer.

The first known occurrence of the term Sabian, appears at the beginning of the second century, in the Book of Elkasai which is dedicated to the Sobai by its author. It designates the Baptists to whom this book is addressed. The name Sabians is evidenced in the writings of Muslim authors since the 8th century, to designate groups of "Baptists" living along the courses of the Tigris and Euphrates. From the tenth century, some Muslim jurists wonder whether they should be counted among the "People of

the Book" (Jews, Nazarene and Sabians) mentioned in the Quran, what gave the right to practice one's religion, on payment of a special tax, the jizya. However, this interrogation is especially expressed against the "Sabians of Harran (Carrhae in Latin)" 3) who lived more to the west (south of Edessa, current Urfa), whereas this status does not seem disputed to the Sabians in the Shatt-el-Arab.

THE QURAN AND THE SABIANS.

Muhammad, Quran 2: 62.

Lo! Those who believe, and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabians - whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does right - surely their reward is with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.

Muhammad, Quran 5 : 69.

Lo! those who believe, and those who are Jews, and Sabians, and Christians - Whosoever believes in God and the Last Day and does right - there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve.

Muhammad, Quran 22 : 17.

Lo! those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and the idolaters - Lo! God will decide between them on the Day of Resurrection.

Why so much consideration from Muhammad for these mysterious Sabians? Only possible explanation: because he had to feel relatively close to them on certain points. Muhammad had to borrow from them loans comparable to those he borrowed from Judaism and Christianity; a hypothesis which is all the more important since the contemporaries of Muhammad saw between Sabianism and his ideas, analogies so strong that he and his early followers were often called Sabians.

Who are these Sabians, whom Muhammad considers as close relatives of the followers of revealed religions? It can only be determined by conjecture. The word seems to derive from the stem saba'a that would be equivalent to saba'a, "to be immersed in water, to wash oneself"; therefore it would designate a sect characterized by its lustrations: such as Mandeans, Elkasaites or Hemerobaptists (a Jewish sect close to the Mandeans). It does not seem to be one of these groups. Wellhausen supposed that it was from Sabianism that the lustrations before each of the Muslim's daily prayers were borrowed. But the lustrations having, in any of the sects in question, a form comparable to that which they have in Islam, the Sabians of the Quran were to constitute a Gnostic sect, distinct from the previous ones, unknown of our sources for the moment. And this Sabianism had to disappear early, probably absorbed by the nascent Islam precisely. Its similarity with the Islam of origins is evidenced by the fact that, according to the great encyclopedic dictionary of the Arabic language (Lisan al-arab), some expressed their conversion to Islam with these words: "We have now become sabians: sabi'nâ!"

1) There are three kinds of Sabaeans not to be confused.

-The inhabitants of the country of the Queen of Sheba, in other words, Yemen (pagans then Jews or Christians).

-The Sabaeans of Harran (southeastern Turkey).

-The Sabaeans or Mandeans a Baptist sect that made a strong impression on Muhammad.

2) The specialists of the analysis of the first Christian texts (Gospels, New Testament) detect in these texts the fact that all the followers of John the Baptist did not join Jesus.

3) The Syriac-speaking Sabaeans in Harran venerated Hermes Trismegistus as god of the pantheon and inventor of the Sabaeen ritual, and this pagan worship is evidenced until the 9th century. The Hermeticism of the Sabaeans lies in the fact that they preached a primitive Hellenistic philosophy, attributed to the "three Hermes" of Lower Egypt, Chaldea and Upper Egypt. Although they did not have a "revealed book," the Harran Sabaeans used the Hermes-Idris prophetologic connection as a means of imposing the recognition of their worship as religion of the book officially accepted by the Muslim State. In this sense, the Sabian apocalyptic doctrine announced to the Muslims that Hermes would return as Mahdi, and that Agathodemon would be the judge appointed by the deity to preside over the Last Judgment.

THE SABIANS OF HARRAN 1).

In 830, the Caliph Al Ma'amun, approaching Harran 1), realized that its inhabitants were neither Muslims, nor Jews, nor Christians. Frightened, they turned to a Muslim jurist who gave them the salutary advice to declare themselves Sabians, in order to benefit from the equal treatment established by Muhammad between this sect, which had fallen into oblivion, and Jews or Christians. The subterfuge succeeded, even if Ma'amun was not fooled, but his Mu'tazilite leanings made him broad-minded and curious about everything...

He changed his personal library into the "House of Wisdom" (Bayt al-Hikma), one of the jewels of which was soon to be Thabit ibn Qurra, who translated into Arabic the seven laws of Hermes or Kitab nawamis Harmas...

"The all is mind; the universe is mental.

"As above, so below, as below, so above."

"Nothing rests; Everything moves; Everything vibrates."

"Everything is dual, everything has poles and everything has its pair of opposites; Like and unlike are the same; Opposites are identical in nature, but different in degree; Extremes meet; All truths are but half-truths; All paradoxes may be reconciled."

"Everything flows, out and in; Everything has its tides; All things rise and fall."

"Every cause has its effect; Every effect has its cause."

"Gender is in everything; Everything has its masculine and feminine principles."

Here below an excerpt from the Syriac writings of Thabit Ibn Qurra by Gregory Bar Hebraeus, a 13th century high official in the Syriac Orthodox church. Ibn Qurra praises paganism as a primordial civilization.

"Although many have been subjugated to error by means of torture, our fathers, by the hand of God, have endured and spoken valiantly, and this Blessed City has never been defiled with the error of Nazareth. We are the heirs and the transmitters to our heirs of heathenism, which is honored gloriously in this world. Lucky is he who bears the burden with a sure hope for the sake of heathenism. Who has made the world be inhabited and filled it with cities except the good men and kings of heathenism? Who has constructed harbors and canals? Who has made manifest the occult sciences? On whom has dawned the divinity which gives divinations and teaches the knowledge of future events except the wise men of the heathen? It is they who have pointed out all these things, and have made to arise the medicine of souls, and have made to shine forth their redemption and it is they also who have made to arise the medicine for bodies. They have filled the world with the correctness of modes of life and with the wisdom which is the beginning of excellence. Without these of heathenism, the world would be an empty and needy place, and it would have been enveloped in sheer want and misery."

According to Al Masudi who quotes him at length in his *Kitab Muruj al dhahab*, pp. 247-248, the Muslim qadi of Harran, Ibn Ayshun al Harrani, an intelligent and educated man, who died after the year 912, would have composed a long poem on the beliefs of the Harranians known as Sabians; he talks about their last temple and its four underground chambers, where representations of the celestial bodies or the superior figures rose, as well as their mysteries. He recounts that the Sabians used to bring their young children down into these subterranean chambers and lead them in front of these statues. The emotion of these children would then express into a sudden pallor and other alterations of their faces, when they heard the strange sounds and unknown words that seemed to come out of the statues; thanks to the mechanisms and acoustic tubes arranged for this purpose.

Temple guards, hidden behind the wall, spoke different words; and the sound of their voices, transmitted by these tubes and a device of reeds and pipes, leading into the interior of these hollow, human-shaped statues, seemed to come out of the statues themselves. By this stratagem, similar to that employed by the ancients, they captured reason, secured the obedience of the faithful, and dominated both religious communities and kingdoms.

In 933, the qadi Al-Istakhri, Muhtasib or police chief of Baghdad, asked the authorities for the extermination or conversion of the Sabaeans of Harran who will disappear little by little from history after the death of their last religious leader, Hukaim Ibn Isa Ibn Marwan (d. 944).

According to Abu Hanifa, the Sabians were monotheists, according to Abu Yusuf and Muhammad ibn al-Hasan, they were astrolaters (see *Al-Hidaya*, Volume 2, page 290, footnote). In view of the contradictory information provided by Muslim authors, particularly Al-Masudi (*kitab Murudj al dhahab* and *kitab al-tanbih*), it may be thought that their religion was conceived and practiced differently according to the milieus. There was the popular religion, at a very questionable intellectual level, described as a superstition by Arab authors, and there was a high-level spirituality of the Neo-Platonic philosophy type. In other words, the difference between astrology and astronomy, between herbalism and medicine.

The latter group, of which Thabit ibn Qurra was the archetype, was represented after him by Malik ibn Uqboun and his friends, whom al-Masudi met in 943-944.

They showed al-Masudi, carved on the doorknocker of the place where the Sabians met, two inscriptions, identified as quotations from Plato in the Syriac language, which his guide, Malik ibn Uqbun, and others translated for him.

He who knows himself becomes a god,
and

Man is a celestial plant.

Indeed, man resembles an upside-down tree,
whose roots are turned towards the heaven and whose branches [plunge] into the earth

"The Sabians of Harran thus saw themselves as a universal civilizing force of immemorial origin, prior and superior to the religion revealed to Abraham after he left the city, to Zoroaster also after his departure, to Christ, and to Muhammad, they saw themselves rather as the direct heirs of the Chinese, the Indians, the Iranian Kayanians,³) the Babylonians, the Egyptians of the time of the Pharaohs, and the ancient Greek astrolaters. Their prophet, Hermes, was Iranian, Babylonian and Egyptian; his apostles were Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle, whose message was taken over by Porphyry and Proclus. To facilitate their astrolatry and earthly life they studied astrology (Ptolemy), astronomy (Ptolemy and Theon), alchemy and medicine (Galen). Their esoteric Neo-Platonism influenced the alchemists Jabir ibn Hayyan and Ibn Wahshiyah as well as the Ismailians, their study of Greek science strongly influenced the development of the beginnings of science in the land of Islam. Like Proclus, they fortunately combined the mystical and the rational, even if it was mainly their grotesque rituals that focused much of the attention of their contemporaries and the investigations devoted to them.

1) Ex Carrhes, today southeastern Turkey.

2) Note added by the heirs to Peter DeLaCrau. The Muslim empire of the 8th century is indeed the only example in the world of an empire built only through defensive wars, the Muslims having been and still being the most persecuted religious community in the world because the truth disturbs. Thousands of Muslims were for instance forced to cross the Red Sea in 615 to take refuge in Ethiopia and Muhammad died in atrocious suffering poisoned by a Jewish woman from Khaybar. The Sassanid Empire and the Roman Empire had made a secret agreement to attack the Muslims, taking advantage of the death of the Prophet, and the Egyptian Copts also. Even today, imams are still being expelled everywhere and the wearing of Muslim religious symbols by women is forbidden.

3) Mythical kings of Persia.

ISLAM AND THE JEWS.

The subject remains inevitable and gives rise to multiple controversies. But it is always good to point out that, if Arabia is, at this moment, only on the periphery of major historical phenomena; the religion which is formed there has no other means of being constructed except by drawing from the other doctrinal, mythical and ritual collection of other cultures. The influence of Persia besides in this field will be another essential factor in the construction of Islam, far beyond the life of Muhammad. It is made obvious in the Quran and in the legends, by the appearance of wonderful characters from this rich cultural background.

Instead of dealing with the issue globally, let us deal with one by one with the exogenous elements present in the Muslim religion, and primarily in the Quran; who are neither from the Arab cultural background nor from God of course; and particularly with the numerous legends, which circulated then throughout the Orient.

Muhammad heard, reproduced, distorted, disguised, adapted, many traditions present, from the Mecca to the Syria of that time. He heard them in a foreign language, in bits, in a superficial way, without understanding the reality of the doctrines, and often on the part of heterodox Christians. No need to look further for the explanation of the change of these doctrines in the Quran.

The Muslim tradition insists on the existence, at Yathrib / Medina, of Jews from the beginning or almost hostile to Islam.

We had the opportunity to see ...

Q) that the very existence of these Jews as Jews, in the rabbinic sense of the term, is questioned by some; since there is no material trace of the existence of these tribes apart from the documents pertaining to the Muslim tradition.

B) That their hostility to Islam is far away from having been immediate. They were still waiting for the announced Messiah.

It seems surrealistic today that Jews and Muslims could have collaborated one day on good terms. Do not the speeches of Muhammad, repeated in the Quran, call the Jews as falsifiers of the Scriptures 1), apes 2), swine 3), cursed by God 4).

Three questions therefore are to be addressed: was it always so; if no, on what basis could initial peaceful coexistence be established, and why did such a situation end?

The "Jews" who got along so well with the original Muslims were probably people who considered themselves true Jews but whose religion was rejected by the Orthodox rabbis.

There remains the third question. Why did the companions of Mahomet, a few years after accepting the Jewish or Judeo-Christian religion, and after the death of Mohammed, so reject Judaism?

THE QURAN AND THE JEWS.

Chapter 4 verse 160: "Because of the wrongdoing of the Jews We forbade them good things which were (before) made lawful unto them, and because of their much hindering from God's way, and of their taking usury when they were forbidden it, and of their devouring people's wealth by false pretenses, We have prepared for those of them who disbelieve a painful doom."

Chapter 5, verse 64: "The Jews say: God's hand is fettered. Their hands are fettered and they are accursed for saying so."

Some scholars think that Muhammad was illiterate. Others are convinced of the contrary. It seems unlikely, considering its social origin, that Muhammad did not receive a minimum of education. He came from a respectable family, and it is unthinkable that a rich widow could have entrusted him with the management of his property if had he been unable to read or write.

Everything depends on the exact meaning of the term ummi plural ummiyun in this context since Muhammad is repeatedly in the Quran called prophet ummi or prophet of the ummiyun. But it seems that it is only the Arab equivalent of the Jewish concept of Goy plural Goyim.

The first impression felt by any reader of the Quran nevertheless is that Muhammad mainly received the material of his ideology, and of his religious practices, from the Jews in the Hejaz. On almost every page there are episodes of Hebrew history, or legends familiar to the Jews, or details of the Law and rabbinical usages; or still arguments that say Islam is the faith of Abraham and Moses.

Where and when therefore did Muhammad get his knowledge of Jewish history, laws, and traditions? Two important passages in the Quran suggest that he had a foreign teacher.

In chapter 25, verse 5, opponents of his action blame him for giving too much credit to old stories that have been reported to him by a third party. Muhammad does not deny his earthly teacher, but he insists on the divine origin of his inspiration. In chapter 16, verse 103, the Spirit that appears to him relates to him: " And We know well that they say: Only a man teaches him. His speech at whom they falsely hint is outlandish, and this is clear Arabic speech! "

Some have claimed that this mentor could have been a rabbi. Others obviously thought of a Persian as Salman al Farisi. Of whom we know nothing historically sure.

In any case, as far as Judaism was concerned, Muhammad did not need a teacher. It was enough for him to walk a little in certain districts of Yathrib / Medina. In addition, Arabs who had come into contact with Jewish communities already knew their customs. Pre-Islamic poetry besides refers them abundantly. And the first chapters of the Quran show that Muhammad was initially positively impressed by the Jews and their religion; that he did all he could to seduce them, by adopting their practices (for example by choosing the direction of Jerusalem for prayer). While trying to convince them that he was only perpetuating the tradition of their prophets.

This was not the case as shown by many mistakes or contradictions of the Quran in this regard. Let's take an example.

In the Quran, Myriam, sister of Aaron and Moses, daughter of Imran, is the same person as Mariam, the mother of Jesus, but one thousand two hundred years separate the two characters. The names are similar but not identical. In the time of Moses, the Jews spoke Hebrew, but twelve centuries later the people had given up that language and adopted a variant of Aramaic. Hebrew had become a sacred language only used in liturgy and spoken by priests, like Latin in the Middle Ages. Aaron's sister's name was Myriam, which means "beloved of God" in archaic Hebrew, while the mother of Jesus was Mariam, meaning "princess" in Aramaic.

There is necessarily a reason why the Quran confuses Mariam and Myriam.

A popular explanation is that Aaron's sister would have lived a thousand two hundred years before getting married, remaining young and beautiful. Nobody was surprised, because God did not want anyone to be surprised. Popular circles are not always very rational, they do what they can to understand, but Islam is not reduced to them. There are also doctors and scholars.

These offer a more acceptable explanation: in the manner of speaking of the Semites, the words "daughter of Imran" (chapter 66, verse 12) can mean Imran's descendant. This way of thinking is quite logical, but there are still elements that do not fit into this hypothesis. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is in the Quran the daughter of Imran's wife (chapter 3, verse 36), and in no Arab text is the expression "daughter of the wife of X" to say descendant of X. Similarly, Mary is called in the Quran "sister of Aaron" (chapter 19, verse 28) and no Arabic text says sister of X to say descendant of the father of X. There is also the difference between Myriam and Mariam. The resemblance of the two names is only approximate. This can be understood because in Arabic the meaning is essentially given by the consonants, which are the same. But the vowels y of Myriam and a of Mariam are different, and even in the primitive alphabet of the beginning of Islam, y and a have different notations.

In short, the Jews were not convinced by Muhammad's explanations, and the initial wait-and-see attitude quickly turned into a polite refusal even hostility for all kinds of other reasons.

-The "Christianity" of Muhammad.

- His Arab paganism (Mecca).

-His many other contradictions with traditional Jewish teaching.

-His sometimes scandalous private life (his marriages his wives Aisha's supposed adultery....).

-The opportunism of his revelations (which came always or almost at the right moment).

-etc., etc.

JUDEO-CHRISTIANS.

We will call Judeo-Christians in this chapter the Jewish communities recognizing Jesus as the messiah but not going so far as to equate him with God as do the present Christians who are for the essential Trinitarian (believing in the holy trinity).

Judeo-Christians in the Quran 1).

"If they had observed the Torah and the Gospel and that which was revealed unto them from their Lord, they would surely have been nourished from above them and from beneath their feet. Among them there are people who are moderate, but many of them are of evil conduct."

There are, therefore, among those who are concerned with the Torah and the Gospel, Jews and Christians, who "exaggerate." The first because they totally reject Christ, going too far in the negation, the second because they think he is God, going too far in his veneration. This is why both do not enjoy the goods of the Earth and Heaven. However, there are some moderates, neither too much deniers like the Jews, nor excessively devoted to the worship of Jesus like the Christians, who "are no longer moderate " about him , by declaring it God 2). These moderate people, who recognize Christ, but as a man only, are Judeo-Christians, some Nazarenes.

Another verse concerns them 3): "We have appointed you a middle nation."

It is not Muslims, as the doctors of Islamic belief argue, since those who are "middle" are by definition moderate. Now the verse quoted above shows that these moderates are "People of the Torah and Gospel," the Gospel in the singular, in other words, Judeo-Christians. It is difficult to argue that the term "moderate believers" can refer to one group in a verse, and to a completely different group in another.

Some translators move away from the precise terms of the Arabic text, which are "a middle nation," and translate either through "intermediaries," thus interpreting this word as meaning that Muslims are intermediaries between God and other men; or sometimes "moderate Muslims," as if convinced Muslims were anti-jihad. The word moderate, in chapter 4, verse 171, according to the context that cites the Torah and the Gospel, clearly means that the extremes are the Jews too much deniers regarding Jesus and the Christians too committed in his adoration; therefore that the moderates are the Judeo-Christians whose theology departs from these extremes.

This is therefore a very good example of the uncertainty of Muslim scholars' conjectures about the interpretation of the Quran. For some, these moderates are Muslims intermediaries between God and non-Muslims, for the others these moderates are anti-jihad Muslims. In other words, even for Muslim law teachers, the exact meaning of the Quran can be uncertain.

The Quranic term *mushrikun* (the one that associates, implied: that associates someone or something with God), does not mean only idolater, nor polytheist, as the Muslim commentators of today say, but also designates the Christians accepting the notion of the Holy Trinity.

There are indeed several reasons to think that *mushrikun* often means Christian, and not simply polytheist or idolater.

The first is that the witness of John of Damascus studied below dates from a century after the facts, whereas the traditional Islamic interpretations are evidenced only more than two centuries later.

The second is the analysis of the verses of the Quran, which shows that in these verses the meaning is "Christian" in the strict sense of the term.

If we refer to the whole Quran, calls to worship a single god are repeated 271 times. There are cases where it is not Christians. In other cases, it may be exclusively Christians, but the context does not require it. And finally, this context indicates that in 74 of these cases, people labeled polytheism are indeed exclusively Christians.

As we have said, the quotation from John of Damascus shows that, in 746, this term also aims well at the Christians 4). " Moreover, they call us *hetairiastas* (associators?) because, they say, we introduce an associate with God by declaring Christ to the Son of God and God."

And the following verse shows that the associators are indeed Christians 5):

They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! God is the Messiah, son of Mary. The Messiah (himself) said: O Children of Israel, worship God, my Lord and your Lord. Lo! whosoever ascribes partners unto God, for him God has forbidden paradise. His abode is the Fire. For evildoers, there will be no helpers. It is therefore perfectly clear that in this verse the associators are Christians, for only Christians affirm that the Messiah, that is Christ, is also God. As associators, they are considered impious and doomed to the fire of hell.

In the same chapter, ten verses later, verse 82 states 6): "You wilt find the most vehement of mankind in hostility to those who believe (to be) the Jews and those who associate [someone or something with

God]. And you will find the nearest of them in affection to those who believe (to be) those who say: Lo! We are nasara."

We find the associators, who, like in the above-mentioned verse, are among the most hostile to Muslims, who are righteous who will go to Paradise. As for the nasara, who do not associate, they are so close to Muslims that they are their best friends.

This is consistent, but the Muslim tradition makes things contradictory by claiming that the word *mushrikun*, which meant Christian in verse 72, now means idolatrous in verse 82. To this first inconsistency, it adds a second: Christians, designated by the word *mushrikun*, associators, in verse 72, are now called *nasara* in verse 82. A third incoherence is added: in verse 72 Christians are abominable associators doomed to hell, in verse 82 they become so fair and respectable that they are the best friends of Muslims. These inconsistencies seek to hide the true meaning of verse 82: the best friends of Muslims are the Judeo-Christians (*nasara*) and not the Christians.

The attempt to conceal the presence of the Judeo-Christians by claiming that this word (*nasara* or *nazarenas*) simply designates Christians is also obvious in verse 51 of the same chapter: "O you who believe! Take not the Jews AND THE NASARA (Nazarenas) for friends."

Given the context, the word *nasara* or *nazarene* has here the meaning of Christians. But the exegetical analysis shows that the mention "and the nasara - nazarenas -" is an interpolation that is betrayed by a break in rhythm, as Antoine Mousali clearly showed in his book entitled "The cross and the crescent."

Apart from the rupture of rhythm, that it is an interpolation is proven by the fact that it introduces into this passage an incontestable incoherence. In verse 82 the Nazarenas are the closest to the Muslims through friendship, in verse 51 they are so hateful that they are like the Jews.

The other mentions where *nasara-nazarene* seems to mean Christian are also interpolations, detectable by the same breaks in rhythm, and the same inconsistencies of the context.

Joseph Azzi has identified a certain number of them.

The texts concerning Waraqa ibn Nawfal the cousin of Khadija also show that *nasara* or *nazarene* could not mean Christian in the current sense of the term. Waraqa was *nasara* or *nazarene*. He was, with Muhammad, "one of the leaders and guides of the Arabs" according to Al Halabi (dealing with the marriage with Khadija). If he had been a Christian in the current sense of the word, he would have proclaimed the divinity of Jesus Christ, which would have made him an "associator." It would have been impossible for him to be a leader and a guide for those who doomed the associators to hell. Waraqa was therefore not a Christian, but a member of a church close to Judeo-Christianity, Nestorian perhaps.

Conclusion: The translation of "*nasara*" by "Christian" conceals the presence of Judeo-Christians in the Quran, and leads to the inconsistencies in question.

- 1) Chapter 5, verse 66.
- 2) Chapter 4, verse 171.
- 3) Chapter 2, verse 143.
- 4) John of Damascus, Tractate. The 101st heresy.
- 5) Chapter 5, verse 72.
- 6) Chapter 5, verse 82.

MUHAMMAD'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS JEWS AND CHRISTIANS.

This big chapter of our work takes into account an unavoidable working hypothesis: to consider Islam as a form and a religion coming from a Jewish and Christian background, whether or not it is a constituted, institutional Judeo-Christianity.

Religious systems invent little and copy much. It remains to find the traces of that.

In his *Islamic Salvation History* Oxford 1978 John Wansbrough did it by finding in the Quranic corpus all the standard phrases, recurrent, the "formulas" as he says, used as borrowing from elsewhere and which are used by all religious literature of the time, with very polemical character.

In this sense, the Quran is an accumulation of concepts from elsewhere or from nowhere, collected haphazardly, and all the more detectable for the historian. They are, these concepts, torn from their original doctrines and devoid of their early meaning. A raid of widowed words and orphaned ideas.

Islam therefore begins as a heresy of Christianity, a sect, among others, but for reasons that are not all cleared up, has been more successful than others, and has crushed them.

We will try to distinguish what appears to be Christian in the origins of Islam, what appears as Jewish, and what appears as a synthesis already formed between the two.

Islam thus appears as it was in its infancy, a small eschatological movement, struggling for its survival, handling instruments at its disposal. That's at least how Wansbrough sees the rise of Islam

Let us insist, however, that the thesis presented here should not be considered as the point of view of Christians or Jews trying to claim and recover some kind of debt that Islam and Muslims claiming to be in line with it would owe to them. The process which is undertaken here is not doctrinal or clerical, and we do not back any school parish nor synagogue.

The Quran mentions the revelations eight times. In seven cases are then indicated "the Torah and the Gospel" (the Gospel in the singular). The eighth mentions "the Torah, the Gospel, and the Quran" (chapter 9, verse 111), but modern exegesis shows that the words "and the Quran" are a later addition. According to official Islam, there would have been three revelations: that of the Jews, that of the Christians, then that of the Muslims, the last; which is also the best, the one that corrects the mistakes deliberately inserted in the first two by some Jews or Christians.

N.B. Muslims maintain that they, too, have received a revelation. It is conceived as the transmission of a pre-existing text. In this transmission, the prophet plays no active role. He only receives something that he repeats as if it was dictated. Unlike the Bible, which Christians say "inspired," the Quran is uncreated. It is the uncreated Word of God.

Jewish revelation is expressed by all Jewish writings, Christian revelation by the whole New Testament, Muslim revelation by the Quran.

Jewish sacred writings consist of the Torah which contains five books, Prophets (Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, etc.) and Other Writings (Psalms, Wisdom, Song of Songs, etc.) in total 42 books.

The question is: why does the Quran mention only the five books of the Torah?

The same question arises for the New Testament. There are four gospels and not one. Why the singular Gospel? Why, then, the Acts of the Apostles, the Revelation of John, the canonical Epistles, are omitted?

The answer is obvious: because the Judeo-Christian influence which was mainly exerted on Muhammad were those of dissident Jewish or Christian groups, not admitting the totality of these canonical writings, and admitting only one part of them.

And, of course, what Muhammad announced was not a first coming of the Messiah, but the return of Jesus, raised in heaven for six centuries (Quran chapter 4:157); the Quranic text clearly indicates (eleven times) that the Messiah is Jesus-Issa 1).

As Jacob of Edessa (died in 708) writes to John the stylite.

"That the messiah is of the Davidic descent, everyone professes, the Jews, the Mahgraye [Aramaic transliteration of Muhajirun, the first name of Muslims] and the Christians ... That the messiah is, in the flesh, of the Davidic descent ... is thus professed by all of them, Jews, Mahgraye and Christians, and regarded by them as something fundamental ... The Mahgraye too ... all confess firmly that he [Jesus] is the true messiah who was to come and who was foretold by the prophets; on this subject they have no dispute with us, but rather with the Jews."

Except that the "second coming" is announced by Muhammad in a warlike and apocalyptic perspective: "I inquired and heard from those who had met him that there was no truth to be found in the so-called prophet, only the shedding of men's blood. He also says that he has the keys of paradise, which is incredible." (The *Doctrina Jacobi* is an anonymous text of the 7th, supposed to have been written in 634.)

Eschatological and warlike speeches, Muhammad certainly held some of them at Yathrib / Medina before launching his troops in the attempt or attempts to conquer Palestine (defeat of Mu'tah in 629) ; probably even that he developed some of them upon his arrival in the oasis city in 622, as the Chronography of Theophanes Confessor (beginning of the 9th century) suggests it.

"] He taught his subjects that he who kills an enemy or is killed by an enemy goes to Paradise; and he said that this paradise was one of carnal eating and drinking and intercourse with women, and had a river of wine, honey, and milk, and that the women were not like the ones down here, but different ones, and that the intercourse was long-lasting and the pleasure continuous; and other things full of profligacy and stupidityAt the beginning of his advent, the misguided Jews thought he was the Messiah who is awaited by them, so that some of their leaders joined him and accepted his religion while forsaking that of Moses."

What generally deceives the commentators of these two texts is that they consider it impossible, a priori, for Muhammad to announce the coming or the return of the Messiah; but why would God have taken Jesus-Issa out of this world (Quran chapter 4 :157) by keeping him in Heaven, if it were not just to send him back as soon as conditions would permit?

With regard to the Christian Arab tribes, the skill of Mahomet was not less. It has been forgotten today: during the first centuries, the prospect of the return of the Messiah-Jesus occupied an important place in the Christian hope, especially in the Semitic world. In addition, in the face of exclusively Arab interlocutors, Muhammad had to allow himself to be more critical of the Rabbinic Jews, to see in this regard the themes widely present in the Quran.

In short, with him, the Christian Arabs might think that God had perhaps inspired him with a particular project, linked to the imminent return of the Messiah.

Besides its sacredness, one of the peculiarities of the Quran is that it appropriates and Islamizes a whole series of biblical characters. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, David, Solomon, Job, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Zechariah, John the Baptist, Jesus, Elijah, Elisha, Ishmael, Jonah, and Lot; are mentioned there (see for example the sura 6, verses 83 to 86), but as Muslims. Sura 3, 67, for its part, says explicitly: "Abraham was neither Jew nor Christian. He was completely subjected to God (Muslim). As noted by Anne-Marie Delcambre and Daniel Sibony 2), the text plays on the double meaning of the word Muslim, which means "subjected but also "Muslim." This peculiarity of the Arabic language makes the Quran able to Islamize all the great figures of the Bible and to perform a real reversal of the traditional chronology of the religions. The Quran "welcomes" Jesus, Moses and the Hebrew prophets in a special way: he welcomes them, after making them Muslims.

Thus Islam "swallows" or encompasses all what is previous to it, and changes a posteriori a whole series of biblical characters into Muslims.

For someone familiar with the Bible, the characters mentioned in the Quran seem both identifiable and distorted. Abraham is not Ibrahim, nor Moses, Musa.

When Muhammad linked Allah's name to the myths of Judaism and Christianity, it was a way for Islam to claim it as his own. In the light of the events that followed, the claim that Islam is the original religion of all previous prophets can be seen as an attempt to appropriate the narrative of other religions. In other words, Islam keeps the names of the leading figures of Judaism and Christianity, but it changes their content, emptying them with their Jewish and Christian past.

Another characteristic trait of the Quran is that while repeating many biblical stories (which he sometimes changes or simplifies), it claims that Jews and Christians falsified their texts. As they refused to recognize the prophethood Muhammad, they are accused of being unfaithful to what God had given them, and of falsifying the "message" that God had already made "descend" on them.

This accusation of falsification against "people of the book" is repeated many times in the Quran (chapters 2: 59; 2 : 75; 2 : 79; 3 : 70-71; 4 : 46; 5 : 13; 5 : 41). The falsification (tahrif) of the Scriptures is considered by Islam as an extremely serious form of "corruption" or "forfeiture" (fasad), which can be punished by the death penalty.

The Quran therefore considers the two Testaments, the Torah and the Gospels, as false and falsified; it intends to restore the true Scriptures, the genuine texts, the texts as they existed before their falsification by Jews and Christians.

The great envoys of God, Moses, David, Jesus, transmitted just as literally as Muhammad the books that were dictated to them, Torah, Psalms, Gospel (singular). Adam, Seth, Abraham also produced books. But, the point is crucial, these real or imaginary books are not held true by Islam, because their text has been falsified. Jews and Christians manipulated their writing and twisted their meaning. Moreover, the Quran contains all the truth, even if they were authentic, they could not bring anything new.

As a result, Muslims do not recognize the value of revelation documents older than their own. The true Torah, the genuine Gospel, should not be sought elsewhere than in the Quran. The true disciples of Jesus are the Muslims.

It is therefore abusive to claim that the Quran recognizes the divine character of the earlier scriptures. The Torah and the Gospel, as understood by the Quran, were texts similar to his, before the Jews and Christians make them something else, especially to conceal the announcement of the coming of Muhammad.

Indeed, according to Quranic rhetoric, the Torah and "the Gospel" (in the singular) that God has "revealed" are not those to which Jews and Christians refer; since, in the meantime, these texts have been falsified, by the very hand of some of them, the Quran does not recognize any divine or sacred character to the earlier texts as such, but it only recognizes it in the Scriptures that the Jews and the Christians would have received before they falsified them. The texts of the Bible are therefore never read as such in mosques.

That the Quran reports many stories about biblical characters is therefore not unrelated to the fact that it considers the two Testaments false and even falsified. The Quran is meant to restore the true scriptures, quite simply.

Islam recognizes to the biblical prophets an irreproachable moral conduct (isma). On the other hand, those who call themselves their disciples - whether Jews or Christians - are impious, impure, men, some forgers.

1. The nine occurrences, including two doubles where the Quran indicates that the Messiah-Masih is Jesus, are as follows: chapter 3 : 45; chapter 4 :157-171-172; Chapter 5 : 17-72-75; chapter 9 : 30-31. Of these occurrences, four use the expression "Messiah-Jesus" (al-masih Issa): chapter 3 :45; 4 :157-171; chapter 5 :17.

2) According to Daniel Sibony and his works: "There is no major verse of the Quran whose content is not found in the Bible or the Talmud (except those who speak of Muhammad, since he came after these texts) ". He adds that "the God of the Quran, Allah, wants to be the God of the Jews once he has decided to reject them forever" and he assumes that "the hatred of the Quran against the Jews is the exact counterpart of the fact that he has taken full possession of them and does not bear it."

MUHAMMAD AND CHRISTIAN BELIEFS.

The main affirmation of Muhammad remains the exclusiveness of the god of the Bible, that of the Jews and Christians (2: 136). Islam is a religion revealed through biblical prophets and Muhammad (45:16) and this revelation has a general character (6:90). God is transcendent, un-begotten, without descent, eternal (112). He is creator, being almighty (59: 24). He created the world in six days and submitted it to Mankind (16 : 12, 31 : 20) [anthropocentrism therefore!]

Muslims are required to believe in the existence of angels (2: 177), created to glorify God (16:49). To some, God has entrusted the mission of bringing the divine revelation in this world (48 :51), Gabriel and Michael (2 : 97, 66 : 4) and especially to Mary (19 :16; 3 : 42).

But there are rebellious angels: the shaytans, that is to say, the adversaries. Chapter 7 verses 10 and following tells of the fall of the angels and of the temptation of Adam [note that Eve is never mentioned]. Every child, at birth, is contaminated by the devil, but man can make his salvation by following the path of God. Muhammad, on the other hand, also believes in jinns, half-human, half-demonic beings, unknown to the Judeo-Christian tradition (41 : 25).

The Last Judgment is the other essential theme of the preaching of Muhammad (4 :162). He gives of it a description according to the Jewish revelation tradition, without setting the date (69:13, 81 :1-14).

God will resurrect men (80:22) and gather them together (4:172; 64 :9-10); all their deeds will have been recorded (17:13; 45 :29); believers will be on the right and the ungodly on the left (56 : 8-9). The angels may intercede for the righteous (chapter 53, verse 26) [Origen and Monophysite Churches admitted this type of intercession]. Muhammad will be present and testify against unbelievers (4 : 41).

A Christian theme par excellence, effective, even if often the common misunderstands it, the theme of the resurrection of the dead is therefore vigorously resumed by Muhammad who has integrated in the Quran on this subject a popular and simplistic legend from Judeo-Christian origin supposed to illustrate the theme of the resurrection, and, perhaps, inspired by the ruins of certain cities before which he sometimes passed.

Muhammad, Quran 2 : 259.

" Or (bethink you of) the like of him who, passing by a township which had fallen into utter ruin, exclaimed: How shall God give this township life after its death ? And God made him die a hundred years, then brought him back to life. He said: How long hast thou tarried ? (The man) said: I have tarried a day or part of a day. (He) said: Nay, but thou hast tarried for a hundred years. Just look at your food and drink which have not rotted! Look at the bones, how We adjust them and then cover them with flesh! "

There is here a strange adaptation of the tradition of the Seven Sleepers in Ephesus, a popular Christian legend spread throughout the East. The story of seven martyrs falling asleep in a cave near the city of Ephesus to escape persecution, and who wake up a few hundred years later. The long and famous chapter entitled "The Cavern" also remembers it. The legend (see above a summary of the 13th century Anglo-Norman version by Chardri) was notably spread by the Nestorians, whose influence on the nascent Muslim doctrine is well known.

This chapter is important because it introduces the notion of resurrection into the doctrine, which in this case is clearly inspired by Christian writings. The text is very popular among the Muslim audience: hope is more preached in it than hatred.

Muhammad, Quran 18 : 9-15. " Or deem you that the People of the Cave and inscription are a wonder among Our portents ? When the young men fled for refuge to the Cave and said..."

The Christian theme of the resurrection of the dead integrated into the infernal images, in order to constitute the picture of the supreme fright: the judgment by God and the punishment of all the impious. Muhammad, Quran 25 : 3.

" Yet they choose beside Him other gods who create nothing but are themselves created, and possess not hurt nor profit for themselves, and do not possess death nor life, nor power to raise the dead."

Muhammad, Quran 45 : 24.

" And they say: There is nothing but our life of the world; we die and we live, and nothing destroys us save time; when they have no knowledge whatsoever of (all) that; they do but guess. And when Our clear revelations are recited unto them, their only argument is that they say: Bring (back) our fathers, then, if you are truthful ! "

Hell is a blazing fire (56 :42-43, 69: 30-31), according to the Old Testament, taken over by the New one.

But heaven is a superb garden where an eternal banquet takes place; the elect enjoy young and virgin houris (56 :12-23, 35-38). [We met similar descriptions - except houris – in Origen, Papias, St. Irenaeus or in the writings of Ephrem the Syrian, in a more or less symbolic language].

MUHAMMAD AND THE GREAT FIGURES OF CHRISTIANITY.

a) Old Testament characters. Muhammad equates himself with the prophets by considering himself as an envoy of God (Arabic: *rassul*) and a repeater or prophet (*nabi*) of the word that was spoken to him by God. This message, Muhammad calls it gospel or "good news" (27: 2). The prophets, of whom Jesus is the penultimate before Muhammad, announced the Torah and the Gospel, which are truthful messages (3: 3-4). Muhammad cites neither Isaiah, nor Jeremiah, nor Ezekiel, nor Daniel (we suspect here a Samaritan influence, or Ebionite, influence, for this Judeo-Christian sect did not take these four prophets into consideration). Muhammad venerates Abraham father of Ishmael, ancestor of Arabs (16:120). The Quran takes over the biblical history of this patriarch, particularly the sacrifice of his son, whose commemoration is the greatest feast of Islam: Eid-el-Kebir. Abraham is the first Muslim (Muslim = submitted to God, 3 : 95). He and Ishmael founded the Kaaba in Mecca, and Abraham asked God to send a prophet to this city (2 : 129). What is, of course, totally inaccurate, is it necessary to remind of it?

Repetere = ars docendi. Anima naturaliter pagana.

We can't totally rule out, of course.

That Abraham really existed.

That he passed through Mecca at a given time of his existence.

That he built there the kaaba.

That he spread from there the purest philosophical and thoughtful monotheism.

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.).

Because the Quran also tells the great episodes of the story of Moses (with whom, of course, Muhammad identifies himself) (7:103-154; 20 : 9-98; 28 : 7).

b) New Testament characters.

On the childhood of Mary, the Quran adopts the line of the Protevangelium of James. Even before the birth of Mary, her mother, who is expecting her, vows to God what she bears in her; and thereafter she places her daughter and the offspring that will be born from her under the protection of God, to preserve them from Satan the stoned (3 : 35-36). Mary's childhood takes place in the (unspecified) "sanctuary" where the old Zachariah takes care of her and always finds her provided with food. God gives Zachariah the grace of having a son John (Arabic Yahya) (see 3 : 38-41 and especially 19, 1-15 which reminds of the beginning of the Gospel according to St. Luke, with the previous sterility of his wife and muteness). The Quran refers to the drawing of lots of which the Protevangelium of James speaks in order to know who will take care of Mary when she will become a woman (3 : 44).

The Annunciation and the birth of Jesus are evoked in two different passages. A messenger, the Spirit of God having taken human form, comes to find Mary: the unanimous Muslim tradition sees in this spirit of God the archangel Gabriel, because in Arabic, the Spirit, even when the Muslims speak of the Holy Spirit, is always an angelic creature. The narrative is done from one end to the other to emphasize the miracles of Jesus, the first, of course, being that of his virginal birth. The insistence on virginity as well as on the purity of her mother being a way of underlining this miracle. It will be "A sign for men and a mercy of God" (19: 21). Newborn Jesus will begin to speak immediately. "I am the slave of God. He has given me the Scripture and has appointed me a Prophet, and has made me blessed wheresoever I may be, and has enjoined upon me prayer and almsgiving so long as I remain alive, and (has made me) dutiful towardS her who bore me, and has not made me arrogant, unblessed" (19 : 30-34).

The birth itself takes place at the foot of a palm tree whose Mary will eat miraculously the dates and which will let a trickle of water flow on the ground (19 : 23-26). The setting and the wonder are the same as during the flight to Egypt, in the apocryphal gospel of pseudo-Matthew. The text dates from

Mecca and does not yet contain the more precise indications that the Quran will then have in Yathrib / Medina, on the titles and the mission of Jesus.

The other story beginning with the Annunciation is indeed longer. Mary is hailed by the angels. She was chosen among all the women in the universe and purified. The titles of Jesus are given: He is a word of God. His name is "the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary" (3:45). "His" word (the word or the verb of God) and a spirit emanating from Him (4 : 171). The mystery of Jesus is that of the creating power of God. Like Adam, Jesus was born without a father (3 : 47 and 59). His mission is described in this new context in more detail. God will teach him Scripture, Wisdom, Torah, and the Gospel. He is sent to the Children of Israel (and to them only). He declares true the Torah that was before him (according to the translation that is adopted), declares lawful some of what was declared unlawful (3: 48-50). He proclaims that God is his Lord and that of his disciples: that they therefore fear God and obey his prophet, Jesus. Jesus performs miracles. He speaks in the cradle, gives life to clay birds (see the apocryphal gospel of Pseudo-Matthew), heals the born blind and the leper, raises the dead, "with the permission of God," always specifies the text insistently. He sees what his disciples hoard in their homes. A passage describes Jesus praying God to send down from heaven a table spread (5 : 114). Is it a reminiscence of the miracle of the loaves and fishes or of the Eucharist? Hard to know.

When the opposition increased, Jesus appealed to his apostles, determined to defend him; the text makes a brief allusion to the plot of the Jews and to God who foils them. The apostles are designated by a word meaning "whites." Would there be an allusion to the white clothing of the members of certain Baptist sects? (3 : 52-54).

The death of Jesus of which the text speaks, or his calling to God (can it be also read) have been problematic (3 : 55). A late verse claims that the Jews did not kill Jesus, did not crucify him, but "were put in the presence of some resemblance" (could we say, to translate two Arabic words which caused a lot of ink flow). As in Gnostic Christianity, the Muslim tradition has always considered that there was a substitution of person, a double changed into Jesus and crucified in his place. God's plan of salvation has no room for the cross (4:157). Jesus was only raised to heaven by God (3:55).

The Quran vigorously protests against the idea that Jesus is more than a man (5: 17 and 72). He categorically refuses everything that seems to make God the Father "the third of a Trinity" (5: 73). And while presenting Mary as one of the two model women (antithesis of the wife of Pharaoh), examples for those who believe (66 : 11-12); it strongly denies that Jesus and Mary can be like two deities next to God: Jesus never demanded this from his disciples (5:116). On the other hand, Jesus announces the coming of Muhammad (61 : 6) at least according to the Quran. Muslim commentators generally cite in this place the text of the Gospel according to John speaking of the Paraclete.

The Quran praises Christians who have priests and monks, but the following verse shows that they are Christians converting to Islam (5: 82-85). On the other hand, it is severe for the monks and the rabbis who hoard and do not make expenses "in the way of God" that is to say for the cause of Islam, its poor and its wars to be financed (9 : 34-35).

c) The character Jesus.

In his Medinan period, Muhammad calls Jesus "the word of God" (3 : 39-45), "spirit of God" (4 : 171), "spirit of holiness" (2 : 87 and 253, 5 : 110). By spirit (ruh), it is necessary to understand "breath," because Jesus emanates from the divine spirit of the angel Gabriel breathed into Mary.

Nine times, Jesus is called al Massih: the Messiah.

Muhammad, however, reproaches Christians for having made "mistakes " on the person of Jesus. First mistake: the Incarnation. God "did not beget and was not begotten" (112: 3). At the end of his life, Muhammad will even attack Christians more directly: They said, "The Messiah is the son of God. May God destroy them "(9 : 30).

Second mistake: the crucifixion (because there was a Crucifixion of course if we rely on Occam's razor principle). Jesus is not dead in the sense that men ordinarily understand it. As soon as he fulfilled his mission, God "raised" him (3 : 55; 5 : 117). It is a "double" that God has substituted for him on the cross, thus deceiving the Jews and the first Christians (4 : 156-158). Muhammad may have undergone here the influence of Docetism, a Christian orientation of the second century which taught that Jesus had only the appearance of a man, and which inspired the Acts of John, an apocryphal text probably composed in the second half of the second century.

Believing neither the Incarnation nor the Crucifixion, Muhammad never speaks of the Redemption, especially since he does not really admit the Hebrew notion of original sin either.

It is certain that Muhammad made a special place for Jesus. Islam, based on the clear separation between God and creation, makes an exception for Jesus, whose nature, without being divine, is in some ways superhuman.

Moreover, about him, Muhammad varied according to the circumstances. When he opposed the Jews, he insisted on the special privileges of Jesus; when he criticized Christians, he emphasized the only

human nature of Jesus. But Muhammad nevertheless declares himself announced by Jesus (see the evocation of the Paraclete in the Gospel according to St. John). Both are therefore prophets of the universal community created by God.

d) The notion of Trinity.

The thought of Muhammad is more complex on this point. It is necessary to take again one by one the verses of the Quran which speak about it, and in the chronological order if possible.

In 4 :171, Muhammad declares: "The Messiah, Jesus son of Mary, is a spirit emanating from him. Do not say three. The man Jesus is therefore a "word" and a "spirit" emanating from God. Muhammad never made this statement explicit and he remains silent on the third person of the Trinity. He remains firm only on the non-divinity of Jesus, proven by the fact that he ate (5: 73-75).

In 5:116, Muhammad attacks a sect of Christian origin for whom the Trinity consisted of God, Jesus and Mary. This belief was close to the tritheism professed by the school of Edessa, and according to which, in the triad Father-Son-Spirit, each person was a deity. The initiator of this teaching was a Monophysite condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 557. Mary was equated with the Spirit by Marianist Gnostic sects spread in Arabia in the fourth century and disappeared some time later.

Origen, in his commentary on St. John, quotes a "Gospel of the Hebrews," written in Aramaic, according to which the mother of Jesus is at one with the Holy Spirit: this gospel was especially known among the Ebionites.

C) The evolution of Muhammad facing Christianity.

It is possible that Muhammad had known some areas where Christianity was widespread, Syria for example, in the company of his caravan driver uncle; or more precisely after his marriage with Khadija, when he himself went on the roads of Meccan caravans, where he could meet hermits (24 : 35-36). And when Muhammad confided his first revelations to Khadija, she took him to one of her cousins, Waraqa ibn Nawfal, brother of a woman who had had relations with the father of Muhammad. Now Waraqa was a Hanif, that is to say, a man "obedient to God" and who knew the Bible very well. In Mecca, Muhammad never said something against Christians. At the end of his Meccan period, he adopted the belief in the virginity of Mary and proposed Jesus as an example to the Meccans (43 : 57). He even announced that differences between Muslims, Jews and Christians would one day fade away, all having to return to God (21 : 92-93).

After the Hegira to Medina in 622, Muhammad first maintained that Jews and Christians would be saved as Muslims (2: 2-5). But he was not long in opposing the Jews by insisting on the virginity of Mary and the exceptional character of the nature of Jesus. However, in the first months of his stay in Yathrib / Medina, he also began to be wary of Christians (2 : 9).

In 631, Muhammad received in Yathrib / Medina an embassy composed of about sixty Monophysite Christians from Najran, an important commercial oasis city in Yemen, who came to make an alliance with him. Among these public figures were theologians, and this delegation was led by a bishop. Muhammad allowed one of them to celebrate mass in his own mosque. But he was not convinced by the religious arguments of his interlocutors. However, he signed an agreement with them promising to respect their freedom of worship in exchange for financial assistance.

Muhammad continued his controversy against the Jews in Yathrib / Medina, whom he finally expelled by dint of pogroms, continued his attacks against the Christians by criticizing them more and more. To both, he reproached for following falsified Scriptures (2: 75-146); he even sometimes doomed Christians to the fire of the Gehenna (5: 65 and 73, 98 : 6). But, on the whole, he remained more indulgent with the Christians than with the Jews (3: 55, 5 : 102, 61: 4).

JESUS' PLACE IN ISLAM.

Christians can smile when they realize that the Quran was composed from non-canonical but popular Christian legends, offering a very superficial and naive idea of Jesus. The allusion to the clay birds is very instructive.

The (apocryphal) infancy gospel (2: 3-5).

This text, written in Arabic, was at the time of great renown throughout the East: it has no value in Christian dogma, but remains very popular by its theme, and that down to Mecca.

When he was five years old, Jesus was playing near the ford of a stream. He was pouring water, by directing it to a puddle, in order to make it clear. Then he took some clay from it and shaped twelve birds. It was the Sabbath Day and many children were playing with him. A Jew saw him engaged in this activity with the children, and he went to his father Josephfather, to accuse Jesus by saying:

- He made clay with water and made birds, while we are the Sabbath Day when nothing is allowed.

Joseph, having arrived, reprimanded him by saying to him:

- Why do you do what you are not allowed to do on a Sabbath?

But after he heard him, Jesus clapped his hands and made the birds of clay fly, saying,

- Go, fly away my friends and remember me, you who are alive.

The sparrows flew away, screaming. Having seen this, the Pharisee was amazed by that, he went to tell that to his friends.

What gives us in the Quran.

Muhammad, 3, 49. Lo! I come unto you with a sign from your Lord. 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. I heal him who was born blind, and the leper, and I raise the dead, by God's leave etc.etc.

At the beginning of the preaching of Muhammad (in the first years of the sixth century, therefore), Christianity dominated the Middle East, but in various forms. Monophysitism, considering Christ as only of the divine in nature, existed in Syria, Egypt, Nubia, and Ethiopia. Nestorianism, seeing on the contrary in Christ nothing but a man, was met in northeastern Syria and in Iraq. In Arabia, these two doctrines (condemned by the general councils of the sixth century) were found. A Monophysite community, related to Ethiopia, existed in Yemen; Nestorians, in connection with the Persian Empire, lived on the shores of the Persian Gulf. It must be added that there were also powerful Jewish communities in important oases of the Hejaz. And that among the polytheistic Arabs lived monotheistic hermits, neither quite Jewish nor quite Christian (hanif?) All these branches were side by side thanks to the caravan trade.

But for the Judeo-Christians or the Gnostics, the death of Christ aroused an unresolved problem: on the one hand, according to them, he had not died on the cross, having been replaced by Simon of Cyrene; on the other hand, having visited the hell to release the righteous of the past, he was therefore well and truly dead. Islam inherited the same contradiction: Christ was replaced on the cross, so he is not dead 1), but he nevertheless announced his death, so he died well 2).

For Judeo-Christian messianists, Jesus was only a prophet, but particular, because at his baptism in the Jordan, he had been "invested" with the spirit of an angel, or of the first of the archangels ; what made him the Messiah, charged with leading the army of the Righteous men to the conquest of the world.

The Muslims kept the idea that he was only a prophet within a long lineage, following Noah, Abraham, Lot, Moses, etc., but preceding Shu'ayb, Salith, Hud, and Muhammad. He is however exceptional: it is he who, as we will see, shortly before the end of time, must help the Mahdi to lead the Muslim armies to the conquest of the world. Thus, in Islam, Jesus has a special role that even Muhammad cannot take on. There is no justification for this special status.

The Messianic concept of Mahdi is accepted by all branches of Islam. This is a character who is supposed to appear a little before the end of time and the Last Judgment. He will take up arms will conquer the entire planet in the name of Islam will establish the millenarian kingdom of justice and abundance for the benefit of Muslims. According to the Sunnis, he will be an ordinary man, the son of an ordinary woman; according to the Shiites, it is Ali's twelfth descendant, and he is already alive, but has been hiding for more than twelve hundred years, and he will appear when his time is come. Sunnis say that soon after the appearance of the Mahdi, Jesus will come back onto earth and will fight with him. In this case, Jesus and the Mahdi are two different persons.

There is, however, a divergent opinion, that of Ibn Khaldun, who was the greatest of the historians, geographers, and philosophers of history, in Moslem land. Ibn Khaldun quotes Anas ibn Malik. The latter lived from 612 to 709, or 712 according to sources. He was one of the first companions of Muhammad. He is mentioned besides in 128 hadiths belonging to the two most respected sources of

Muslims, the collections of Bukhari and Muslim. He is the first transmitter of 2286 hadiths out of the 19,305 transmitted by one of the first 13-rank transmitters.

According to Anas ibn Malik, the Mahdi will be the Christ himself.

According to the date on which Anas ibn Malik lived, the idea which makes Jesus the Mahdi come back on earth is the oldest. It was only at a later date, when the tradition of Anas ibn Malik was lost sight of, that Jesus and the Mahdi became two different persons.

For Muslims, Jesus, mentioned in about fifty verses of the Quran, is therefore the Messiah, a great prophet, but not the Son of God. Jesus escaped crucifixion, an ordinary man, Simon of Cyrene, having been crucified in his place; then God raised him to Heaven, from which he will return one day, to participate in the conquest of the Earth. The only difference in this respect between Judeo-Christian of the Messianist type and Muslims today is that, for the former, Jesus will take command of the Army of the Righteous; while for the latter (with the exception of the archaic opinion of Ibn Khaldun), he will limit himself only to help the leader of this army, which will be the Mahdi, "the one who is guided (by God)". Islamic theology says almost nothing about the Mahdi. Jesus must return from Heaven to help him, in indefinite way, to conquer the Earth in order to universally impose Islam. And that's all !

Al Bukhari is the Islamic author with the greatest authority. Let us point out that, to take an oath, a Muslim must put his hand either on the Quran, or on the collection of Hadiths by Bukhari, with the exception of any other book. Just after this author is Muslim.

Both contain this proclamation of Muhammad himself: "By him in Whose hands my soul is in his hand, Jesus the son of Mary will soon descend" 3).

As we have already had the opportunity to say it, the Muslim scholars classify the hadith into 4 categories, good, acceptable, weak, false. This hadith belongs to the first category. This category is itself divided into six levels. But this hadith belongs to the first, the best, because it appears identically in the collections of Bukhari and Muslim.

It is therefore remarkable, and very surprising, that it is not Muhammad who is to return from heaven for the final war imposing the ideal society according to Islam, to the whole earth, but Christ. The Muslims say that it is Muhammad who is the greatest of the prophets, the last before the end of time, the center of their religion, and yet it is not he who is supposed to return from Heaven.

Jesus, in spite of the fifty or so verses that the Quran gives to him, plays no role in the devotions, nor in the ordinary teaching, nor in the usual practices of the Muslims, and yet it is he who must return for the final war. There are obviously here two different juxtaposed traditions, but it is clear that one of the founding traditions was kept hidden; as suggested, among other things, by the destruction of the notes of Hafsa and the disappearance of those of Aisha during the development of the Quran.

With regard to the role of Jesus in the final conquest of the earth, there is a striking contrast between the accuracy of the Judeo-Christian theology of the messianist type, and the vagueness of the Muslim tradition. For Judeo-Christian Messianists, there were a number of very specific steps; the emigration of the "helping God" to the desert, the conquest of Jerusalem, the rebuilding of the Temple, the return of Christ, who becomes the commander-in-chief of the Judeo-Christian armies; the final war aimed at imposing the ideal society according to the Judeo-Christians of the messianist type to the whole Earth. For the present Muslims, the Mahdi is an indeterminate person of whom nothing is known, and Jesus returns to help him we don't know too much how.

In early Islam, therefore, Jesus was probably viewed as a warlike Messiah charged with spreading Islam, by force of arms, all over the world. It was exactly the design of the Judeo-Christian of messianist type. This first idea was covered by a second, which gives the Mahdi the role of Jesus. However, the presence of Jesus being too rooted in the tradition of which Islam is derived, the return of Christ has remained an Islamic idea, nevertheless become contradictory; if it is the Mahdi who must conquer the Earth, the return of Jesus becomes irrelevant.

The concept of Mahdi has remained a powerful idea in Islam until today. The Mahdi is considered a social reformer restoring the purity of origins, leading to a perfect society, what the millenarian component by definition is; and as a warrior destined to conquer the world, what the messianic component is.

A number of Muslim political leaders have also used the prestige of Mahdism by proclaiming themselves Mahdis. These Muslim leaders who declared themselves Mahdis (the last one being a Muhammad Ahmad ibn Abd Allah, Sudan, at the end of the nineteenth century) imitated the Jewish leaders who had proclaimed themselves Messiah during the Jewish wars that devastated the Palestine from the years -4 to +135. It is the same school of thought, using the same concepts of messianism and millenarianism.

A third idea nevertheless appeared in Islam, according to which it is the whole of Muslims who must, through jihad, perform this conquest of the Earth to impose the ideal society according to Islam. It is

this design which has finally prevailed, and which makes the first two irrelevant: the appearance of the Mahdi becomes as useless as the return of Jesus.

The presence of Christ and the absence of Muhammad in the final war of Muslims, as well as the vagueness which surrounds these ideas in Islam; are presumptions, as far as Jesus is concerned, that the ideas of the companions of Muhammad in this field were very close to that of the Judeo-Christian of the messianist type; and that these have been hidden, but cannot be totally eliminated. This implies that Judeo-Christian theology still played a great role in a rather early period of Islam, and that, as a large number of followers knew it, it was impossible to make it entirely disappear.

1. Chapter 4, verse 157.

2. Chapter 19, verse 33.

3. Al Bukhari, Sahih, book 60 (of the prophets) chapter 49.

"By Him in Whose Hands my soul is, surely (Jesus) the son of Mary will soon descend among you and will judge mankind (as a Just Ruler); he will break the Cross and kill the pigs and there will be no Jizya (i.e., taxation taken from non-Muslims). Money will be in abundance so that nobody will accept it, and a single prostration to God (in prayer) will be better than the whole world and whatever is in it."

Abu Huraira added, "If you wish, you can recite (this verse of the Holy Book): -- 'And none of the people of the Scriptures (Jews and Christians) must believe in him (as an Apostle of God and a simple human being) before his death ???? And on the Day of Judgment He will be a witness against them.'"

Another big stupidity!

ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY.

Muhammad, Quran 16 : 103.

And We know well that they say: Only a man teaches him. His speech at whom they falsely hint is outlandish, and this is clear Arabic speech.

Editor's Note. One is lost in conjectures on the nationality of this mysterious stranger who would have greatly influenced Muhammad. A Christian monk named Sergius ? An anonymous Jew of Medina? Some think it may be Salman the Persian, a rather mythical character. Anyway, if it's Salman, he was a Christian. The Muslim legend also spoke of the monks Bahira and Nastura, who would have discovered the signs of a prophetic mission in Muhammad as a child. Christian counter-history, from John of Damascus (around 650 - 750), effectively argues that Muhammad would have attended an Arian monk, that he does not name, and who would have whispered everything.

As we have seen, in the founding text of the Quran, Christians will be regarded first with a favorable eye, perhaps because the author had frequented them during his youth and had kept of them a good memory. But gradually the words will become harsher and in the end, the break will be consummated on the doctrinal level.

An allusion to baptism?

Muhammad, Quran 2 : 138.

The anointing of God?

(We take our) sibghat ? from God, and who is better than God at sibghating. We are his worshippers. Monks.

Muhammad, Quran 3 : 113.

They are not all alike. Of the People of the Scripture, there is a staunch community who recite the revelations of God in the night season, falling prostrate (before Him). They believe in God and the Last Day, and enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency, and vie one with another in good works. These are of the righteous. And whatever good they do, they will not be denied the meed thereof. God is aware of those who ward off (evil).

Muhammad , Quran 5 : 82.

You will find the nearest of them in affection to those who believe (to be) those who say: Lo! We are Christians. That is because there are among them priests and monks, and because they are not hubristic

Muhammad, Quran 24 : 36-8.

(This lamp is found) in houses which God has allowed to be exalted and that his name shall be remembered therein. Therein do offer praise to Him at morn and evening. Men whom neither merchandise nor sale beguile from remembrance of God and constancy in prayer, etc.

Muhammad, Quran 57: 27.

Then We caused Our messengers to follow in their footsteps; and We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow, and gave him the Gospel, and placed compassion and mercy in the hearts of those who followed him. But monasticism they invented - We ordained it not for them - only seeking God's pleasure, and they observed it not with right observance.

Muhammad develops in his preaching a Christology, of course, but derived from Eastern Christianity, and more particularly Syrian, where, here and there, Gnostic, Docetist or Monophysite influences come through. The development of this new character insistently named "Jesus son of Mary" is used as a foundation for the Muslim design of the Christ of Christians (a Muslim prophet) and for Christianity (an incomplete or faulty Islam).

The result for the Christ figure is simple: like all prophets, Jesus is only a slave of God. The figure of the Virgin is lowered noticeably, and the Christians condemned for having engaged in a form of religious association, that is, for having associated other deities with the Higher Being. The dogma of the Trinity itself is also considered an abomination, denounced sharply by Muhammad. He considers that this central point of Christian doctrine is a form of tritheism, therefore a polytheism.

Gnostic influence and even precisely Docetist. The negation of the suffering endured by Jesus on the cross.

Muhammad, Quran 4 : 156-157.

And because of their disbelief and of their speaking against Mary a tremendous calumny; 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; and lo!

Muhammad, Quran, 9 : 31.

They have taken as lords beside God their rabbis and their monks and the Messiah son of Mary, when they were bidden to worship only One God.

The rejection of the Trinity.

Muhammad, Quran 5 : 73.

They surely disbelieve who say: Lo! God is the third of three; when there is no God save the One God.

If they do not desist from so saying, a painful doom will fall on those of them who disbelieve.

The inclusion of Mary into the Trinity.

Muhammad, Quran 5 : 116.

And when God says: O Jesus, son of Mary! Did you say unto mankind: Take me and my mother for two gods beside God ? he says: Be glorified! It was not mine to utter that to which I had no right.

As we have seen, several verses of the Quran refer to Christian practices that existed at the time in Arabia. The Quran alternates praises and reproaches, quotes the Bible almost literally, or looks for its sources elsewhere, takes over well-established dogmas to either contradict or distort them. Through this reinterpretation of Christianity, Islam has entered a fundamental religious debate with historical orthodox or not, Christianity.

CHRISTIAN CHRISTIANS.

The vigorous anti-Trinitarian or anti-Holy Trinity criticism of the Quran shows that Muhammad did not deal only with Judeo-Christians, but that he had to deal with, or at least heard of (and negatively) of Christians in the usual sense of the term, ancestors of Reformists or Orthodox Catholics.

It is sometimes said that Christians and Muslims have the same God, or that the differences between them are not essential; and must not disguise the fact that they both affirm the existence of one God, even if they name him differently. God and Jehovah would be, in a way, synonyms. Similarly, we sometimes hear that Christianity and Islam "share" Jesus, that he belongs to both religions.

This concern for reunification, this search for common points, is very commendable: they proceed from a desire for brotherhood or dialogue, and generally denote in those who express them the sincere wish to be open and tolerant. But are they based on knowledge of texts and history? Are not these wishes wishful thinking? How does Islam envisage its relationship with Christianity in the usual sense of the term? More specifically, how does the Quran, the sacred text of Muslims, regard today's Christians and their scriptures?

Let us first remark that Christians and Muslims do not consider their sacred texts in the same way at all. For the former, they are revealed text, for the second of an eternal, uncreated, untouchable text. This is already a significant difference.

What about Jesus in this case? Muslims call him "Issa" and claim to admit him as a prophet. But what is Jesus?

Christian Christians are indeed impressed by the place that Jesus occupies in the Quran. But it is not the one to whom they gave their faith. The Jesus of the Quran repeats what the previous prophets, Adam, Abraham, Lot, etc., had announced : indeed, all prophets have the same knowledge, and proclaim the same message, which is Islam. All are Muslim. Jesus is sent to preach the oneness of God. He protests that he is not an "associator" 1). "Do not say three." He is not the son of God, but a mere creature. Since it is inconceivable for Islam that an envoy of God can be defeated, Jesus is not dead on the cross. A double has been substituted for him. This Christology, from the point of view of today's Christian doctors, presents mixed marks of Nestorianism and Docetism.

The Jesus of the Quran is a Muslim who calls his own followers to reject their idolatry, and accuses Christians of manipulating the scriptures.

It is therefore wrong to say that the Issa of the Quran is at one with the Jesus of the Gospels. This Jesus, reduced in the Quran to be a purely human prophet, has a status in total disharmony with what the Gospels relate as they are in principle interpreted by the Christian thinkers or the Fathers of the Church.

In the Quran, Jesus is the only prophet who is presented as not agreeing with the doctrines of his own community. Chapter 5, verse 116, is a real slap for Christian Christians, whose beliefs are rejected without even being properly expressed: "And when God says: O Jesus, son of Mary! Did you say unto mankind: Take me and my mother for two gods beside God ? he saith: Be glorified! It was not mine to utter that to which I had no right.

In other words, the Jesus-Issa of the Quran rejects his own followers, the Christian Christians, by accusing them of having distorted the Scriptures. He intends to separate from the perverted beliefs of his supporters! In fact, what is the last straw is that, in the Quran, Jesus accuses his followers - the Christians - of ascribing him words that he would never have said 2).

The Quran refuses a crucified Christ, as he refuses a risen Christ; for him, Jesus is only a prophet, neither more nor less than the others.

Issa in the Quran appears out of space and time, without reference to Palestine. His mother, Mary, who is the sister of Aaron 3), gives birth to him under a palm tree. Then Issa performs several miracles that seem to be taken from the gospels known as apocryphal. He announces the future coming of Muhammad. He will be the witness by definition on the day of the resurrection.

The Jesus of the Quran has little to do therefore with that of Christians in the usual sense of the term (Reformists Orthodox Catholics ..) according to the Quran, his message was pure Islam, submission to God (chapter 3 : 84); he received his revelation of Islam in the form of a book, the Injil or "Gospel" (chapter 5: 46); his mother, Maryam, was the sister of Aaron and Moses (chapter 19: 28); he also announced the coming of Muhammad (chapter 61 : 6); he has neither been slain nor crucified, and those who affirm the contrary lie (chapter 4 : 157); on the day of the resurrection, Issa himself will witness against the Jews and Christians who believe in his death (chapter 4 : 159).

The Jesus of the Gospels is the foundation on which Christianity has developed. By Islamizing him and making him a Muslim prophet who would have preached the Quran, Islam takes away from Christianity in the usual sense of the term all reason to be (it does the same to Judaism besides).

In the Quran, Christians are called "associators" 1). For Islam indeed , Christianity is not a true monotheism because of the Trinity, which would consist, in this case, in "associating" God, Jesus and Mary.

Needless to say, Christianity has never considered the Trinity in this way, and this is a distortion of one of its major dogmas.

As we have seen, the Gospel of the Hebrews was one of the main liturgical texts of the Judeo-Christian of messianist type. Origen and St. Jerome independently, quote the verse below taken from the Gospel in question.

Origen, Commentary on John, 2:6.

If anyone should lend credence to the Gospel of the Hebrews, where the Savior Himself says: "My Mother, the Holy Spirit took me just now by one of my hairs and carried me off to the Mt. Tabor." Origen quotes this twice and Jerome five times.

Jerome, Commentary on Isaiah, 11:9.

After repeating the quote, he says: "No one should be offended by this, because 'spirit' in Hebrew is feminine, while in our language [Latin] it is masculine and in Greek it is neuter. In divinity there is no gender."

Aphrahat quotes another passage from the Gospel of the Hebrews: "As long as a man has not taken a wife, he loves and reveres God his father and the Holy Spirit his mother, and he has no other love.

This way of speaking explains the confusion of God or Muhammad: for Judeo-Christians, the "mother of Jesus" was a metaphor for the Holy Spirit. Muhammad ignoring the metaphor, takes the words "mother of Jesus" literally, and sees Mary there. So he imagines that Mary would be part of the Trinity in question, and concludes that she would be a goddess.

" He does not beget nor was begotten" (Quran chapter 112 : 3).

This assertion at the beginning was intended only to counter the religious philosophy of the tribes of pre-Islamic Arabia, according to which God had three hypostases, some female angels called al-Lat, al-Uzza, and al-Manat (chapter 53/ 19) but the Muslims also applied it very quickly to the person of the Trinity whom Christians call Jesus Christ.

The incarnation represents one of the greatest doctrinal conflicts that can exist between the two religions. In this field the Quran openly mocks the Christian faith: " The Christians say: The Messiah is the son of God. God (Himself) fights against them. How perverse, are they! "(Chapter 9 verse 30). When Muslims speak of the (Christian) Trinity, they think of the polytheistic worship of three gods like Taranis, the Morrigena, or Hesus, among the druids. They therefore reproach the Christians for doing as the pagans, that is to say, to associate other deities with the higher God, and thus to commit what they call the sin of association or shirk, which is considered as mortal among them.

" Lo! God forgives not that a partner should be ascribed unto Him. He forgives (all) save that to whom He will. Whosoever ascribes partners to God, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin "(chapter 4: 48).

The Quran therefore is also raised against the notion of triad by rejecting any possibility of being a god-man (the divinity of Jesus). Jesus was only a man, he did not die on the cross, only his appearance was crucified (Docetism). Note, however; even if some Christians (particularly Catholics) worship the Blessed Virgin (hyperdulia), they have never made her a person of their divine triad. The third person of the Christian Holy Trinity is not the Virgin Mary, but the Holy Spirit.

For the Quran the "associators" are guilty of an irreparable sin, the only one that is unforgivable.

Chapter 4 : 116: " Lo! God pardons not that partners should be ascribed unto Him. He pardons all save that to whom He will." Christians are mushrikun, that is, men guilty of shirk ("associationism").

To the accusation of falsification of the Scriptures (tahrif), the Quran thus adds that, even more serious in the eyes of Muslims, of association with God of other entities (shirk). The doctrine of the Trinity belongs to polytheism, and a painful destiny awaits those who believe in this dogma (chapter 5: 73).

The "associatorss" are (with the Jews) "the fiercest enemies of the believers" (chapter 5: 82).

This corruption does not concern what men have done with the Scriptures given by God, but what they say about God himself. In the order of corruption, the tahrif is high, but with the shirk, this is almost inexpiable: this fault is the most serious that can be imagined according to the Quran.

In view of all what is above, these words of Father Antoine Mussali sound like a warning. We must have the humility but also the courage to say that between Christianity and Islam, there is on the theological level no common point of dialogue. How can Christian Christians dialogue with a religion that energetically rejects the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, in short everything that constitutes the very essence of Christianity?

We can only dialogue if the partners of the dialogue we are looking for have respect for each other, if everyone knows their own history and recognizes that of the other, if everyone is animated by the concern for historical truth. Christians, for their part, have an interest in learning more about their

religion, which they very often do not know well, but also of Islam, which they know even more badly. Reading the Quran is within everyone's reach, and it's already a good start. In order not to mix everything up and to be fooled by pernicious formulas, even if they seem conciliatory ("Islam welcomes Jesus," "Christians and Muslims worship the same God"); one must learn about, learn about Islam, and not be content with the too often hear banalities; "Islam is a religion of peace or tolerance," "Jihad means effort on oneself for spiritual perfection," "The terrorists who claim to be in line with Islam have absolutely nothing to do with Islam," etc.

Lets us conclude, with Alain Besancon, knowing that what he writes also applies to Belgium. The installation of the Quranic religion was carried out slowly and silently. It is only recently that our fellow citizens have suddenly understood that it aroused a very serious problem, since it is, in the long term, the birth on their territory of another country, of another civilization. Surprised, they react in a non-coordinated way, as we saw during the discussions on the acceptance or the prohibition of the Muslim veil in the public schools. They have the excuse of having been little or badly informed. They were afraid to fall under the charge of religious intolerance, even racism, although it is not at all a question of race but of religion.

If they were Christians, they read literature often written by clerics very much committed to defending the values of Islam, to point out the common points that they perceive between this religion and theirs. These books could be read as an involuntary propaganda for Islam. It has not always been so. Several great classical authors have established between Islam and Christianity an assessment of theological incompatibility. Thus John Damascenus and Thomas Aquinas.

Care should be taken to expunge from contemporary Christian discourse expressions so dangerous as "the three Abrahamic religions," "the three revealed religions" and even "the three monotheistic religions" (because there are many others). The falsest of these expressions is "the three religions of the Book." It does not mean that Islam refers to the Bible, but that it has organized for Christians, Jews, Sabians, and Zoroastrians a special legal category, "People of the Book," entitling them to the status of dhimmi; that is to say, by means of discrimination, to keep their life and their property, instead of death or slavery, to which kafirs, or pagans, are promised 4).

That such expressions are so easily used is a sign that the Christian world is no longer able to make a clear distinction between its religion and Islam 5).

Gideon. Blog note the chantducoq. Brussels.

Jacques Ellul said that, faced with the expansion of Islam, "we must not react with racism, orthodox closure, persecution or war. There is to be a reaction of spiritual and psychological nature (we must not to be carried away by our guilty conscience) and of a scientific nature. What is it exactly? What is correct? The cruelty of the Muslim conquest or the gentleness, the benignity of the Quran? What is correct in terms of doctrine and in terms of application, of everyday life in the Muslim world? » 6)

Jacques Ellul wrote, "We cannot open a book or newspaper, Reformist or Catholic, without finding profound studies on the excellence of Islam; the need to dialogue with it, listen to its questions, take his demands seriously. It is the joyful opening to Islam, to Muslim thought, to Muslim piety ."

Jacques Ellul indeed criticizes Christians to be passionate about these poor Muslims while Islam is a colossal power that uses its poor shamelessly. Conversely he reproaches Muslims with their bellicose mindset, which, according to him, is inscribed in the very heart of their religion.

Few Western intellectuals or journalists have subscribed to these remarks, and Jacques Ellul, despite his high philosophical standards and his undoubtedly valuable works, has remained a lone man in this struggle against the dialogue with Islam.

But other voices have risen, and I will say here with reason fortunately, against a form of dialogue that avoids all the essential questions, which wants to hide the real differences, which wants to avoid a realistic confrontation.

Note by Peter DeLaCrau. Our friend R. Foehrle, the author of this study, is a vicar of The Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine (C.A.C.A.L.). What he is expounding is the Christian point of view on the issue. As far as we are concerned, we prefer to be like the Fenians of the Green Erin, and not stick to one book. Here is what we will content ourselves to say in summary of the debate Islam / Christianity.

This is the structural debate in which a later religion addresses some reproaches to an earlier religion. The arguments used concern the legitimacy of the "schism" of the new religion facing the old one, and the status which is to be recognized to a "revelation" previously unknown. In this debate, the oldest religion always attacks the very existence of the new religion, its doctrines and its different practices. In order to keep its position, the ancient religion defends itself against the most recent one by denying particularly the revealed character of the new belief.

1) Someone who associates with God other entities or other persons, spirits, sons, daughters, etc.

2) What is not completely wrong by the way! See our analysis of the Gospels, which are more of a lawyer's advocacy than a report taken on the spot.

3) As we have already had the opportunity to say, this is, of course, a mistake of God, or of Muhammad. The mother of the Nazarene is mixed up with another. In the Quran, Myriam, sister of Aaron and Moses, daughter of Imran, is the same person as Mariam, the mother of Jesus. Now, one thousand two hundred years separates the two characters. The names are similar but not identical. In the time of Moses, the Jews spoke Hebrew, but twelve centuries later the people had given up that language and adopted a variant of Aramaic. Hebrew then became a sacred language used in the liturgy and spoken by priests, like Latin in the Middle Ages. Aaron's sister's name was Myriam, which means "beloved of God" in archaic Hebrew, while the mother of Jesus was Mariam, meaning "princess" in Aramaic.

4) Like us, like me, who compiled all this information.

5) No longer able to see a number of realities, or to call things by their name, to call a spade a spade. But leave there the Belgium dear to our friend Gideon. Today too, the bigger it is, the less a French intellectual is able to see or recognize it. The characteristic of the contemporary French intellectual (journalist, politician, stage director) is that he is able to see a fly for miles but unable to see an elephant under his nose, a cow in a corridor, or the forest behind a tree. This abnormality of vision has a name for the body: presbyopia.

6) Jacques Ellul, *Islam and Judeo-Christianity*. 2004.

RECENT CONVERTS.

Semantic specification to begin with. In Arabic the word "converted" corresponds to the notion of a "client" as it was understood in Antiquity, i.e., a former slave freed by his master BUT WHO REMAINS HIS OBLIGOR. OR THAT OF HIS FAMILY.

As time passed, a new category of population emerged: non-Arabs converted to Islam. These converts were first to be adopted by an Arab clan, to become somehow the ex-slave of it, because the conversion was first social, and not religious. The convert (Persian, North Semite, Christian, Jewish, Coptic or Berber) had to seek his entry into an Arab family.

In principle, they should enjoy the same rights and the same advantages as the Arabs, since he was a member of the community of believers, the umma; but in practice their status remained much lower than that of the Muslims by birth, the "old Muslims," what sometimes led to revolts on their part against the ruling power and the public figures. In the East, these second-class Muslims are called muwallad, in Spain muladi (from the Arabic muwalladoun) hence later the opposite: the Mudejars. 1)

Recent Muslims were subjected to all sorts of tax, social, political, military, and other restrictions. The conversion of a whole village or district leading as for the taxes serious losses for the Muslim state; the mawali or muladi too often will continue to be subject to the tax of the dhimmis (Arabic jizya), in one form or another. The fight for equal rights among Muslims was therefore one of the main problems of the first centuries of Islam (see Ibn Abd Rabbih 860-940). An all the more stupid racism that Islam has become a great power then only by adopting the Persian administrative principles, Indian medicine, and Hellenistic philosophy, do not forget it!

In Spain, the revolts of Muladi (recent converted) were almost permanent against Arab-Berber immigrants who had carved to themselves large estates farmed by Christians, serfs or slaves. Tax extortions and expropriations started continual insurrectional centers of muladi and mozarabs (Christian dhimmis) throughout the Hispanic Peninsula. The rebel leaders were then executed by crucifixion and insurgents slaughtered with swords.

Editor's note. As for pagans, idolaters and atheists, like you and me, then it is very simple, nothing is planned in the Muslim world; not even work to pay taxes or rehabilitation through a second-class citizenship (the dhimmitude reserved for the People of the Book). You have the choice between the suitcase or the coffin (anti-racist tune known since decolonization, last case Zimbabwe).

In 1970, the Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, supposed author of this manifesto, pointed out in his Islamic Declaration (Islamska Deklaracija) reissued in Sarajevo in 1990 (Johnstone quote from memory): "There can be no peace or coexistence between the Islamic faith and non-Islamic societies and political institutions." And in his conclusion, he made it clear that the Islamic movement must and can take power as soon as it is morally and numerically capable of destroying the existing non-Islamic power.

The concealment of jihad and dhimmitude in the West has helped to freeze ethno-religious conflicts without resolving them. Only a calm criticism of this Muslim imperialism will one day clear the way for reconciliation with the peoples who were its victims. This step is essential to get recognition of a non-Islamic national legitimacy, which alone can cancel jihad. This field of reflection has hardly been approached. The deliberate forgetting of history, or worse, its perversion by an erroneous design of tolerance or anti-racism, has liberated the venomous return of the past. In the former Yugoslavia, this repression of history even triggered a war.

The five centuries of harmonious and peaceful coexistence under Islamic rule, invoked by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, belong to the theological dogma of the perfection of sharia and dhimma. The Orthodox Serbs consider this regime to be that of massacre, looting, slavery, deportation, or exile of the Christian population; a regime justifying the usurpation of lands and the denial of their rights; therefore, the opposite of a peaceful multi-ethnic coexistence based on a social and political justice system. In this way, two conceptions of history, those of the dhimmi victims, and those of the victors (of the jihad) collide.

In their age-old wars of emancipation or liberation, the Orthodox Serbs found in their Muslim fellow-citizens most fierce adversaries, attached to their religious privileges and to their humiliating dominion over the Christians. During the Second World War, the Axis forces invaded Yugoslavia and imposed a Nazi Croatian state (Ustasha), to which Bosnian Muslims collaborated. Under the leadership of the Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al Husseini, they formed military corps, such as the 13th (Hanjar) Waffen SS Division.

These Slav Muslims actively participated in the politics of Ustasha Croats and Nazis, in the genocide of hundreds of thousands of Serbs, Jews and Gypsies. The atrocities committed shocked even the

Germans. Women, children, old men, were killed with axes, impaled, buried alive, suspended on meat hooks, buried in pits under quicklime after being savagely mutilated.

If our leaders finally decided to apply the existing laws, if the Third World and anti-racist lobbies ceased to give fallacious hopes to the most fundamentalist Muslims; reasonable and moderate Muslims, who are the majority, would only want to live peacefully.

Editor's note. "It is true that a multiracial society is by definition a multi-racist society and that multicultural society can only ever be an ephemeral or transitory stage of society. But the main problem comes from the slow process of erosion in the Humanist, Democrat or Republican, camps, under the blows of anti-racism, or more exactly of an antiracism misunderstood, without reflection and purely passionate (the majority of cases); values related to freedom and respect for the imprescriptible rights of men, women or children. Too much anti-racism kills anti-racism." A convinced non-racist: Peter DeLaCrau.

1) As our movement is totally non-racist (that is, in no way obsessed with race issues), we will gladly say a few words about it here.

Mudejar is the name given to Spanish Muslims who became subjects of Christian kingdoms after the 11th century, during the period of tolerance. The Mudejars spoke Castilian; if they had forgotten their mother tongue, however, they continued to write but with Arabic characters, hence the term Aljamiado. The Reconquista, which ended in 1492, with the capture of Granada, and the annexation of Castile, left on the Spanish land several hundreds of thousands of Muslims. According to the agreements of surrender, the Grenadian Moors are authorized to preserve their religion: "Asentado e acordado that ningún moro o mora no haga fuerza a que se torne cristiano ni cristiana" ("It is settled and agreed that no Moor man or Moor woman will be forced to become a Christian man or Christian woman...their will shall be followed."

Some Muslims, aware of the difficulties of cohabitation, prefer to go into exile; others will stay.

The surrender agreements will be more or less respected as long as the influence of the archbishop of Granada, Hernando de Talavera, lasts. But a hardening of the Church takes place under the influence of Cardinal Francisco Jimenez de Cisneros, confessor of Isabel II and Archbishop of Toledo (1495). The tax and religious pressures led the Mudejars of Granada to revolt in 1499. It quickly spreads to the surrounding mountains.

After the taking back of control by the crown of Castile, the Mudejar of Granada are forced to choose between conversion to Christianity and exile. In 1502 Cisneros extends the measure to all the Kingdom of Castile, with the implicit support of the Catholic kings. In 1526, in retaliation for the revolt of the Germanias of the Kingdom of Valencia, and to thank God for the favorable outcome of the Battle of Pavia, Charles V ordered by decree the massive baptism of Muslims of all the Crown of Aragon. Although the validity of these baptisms was discussed for decades, the practice of Islam became officially prohibited in all Spanish territories. The former Muslims who remained in the Peninsula and their descendants will be referred to as Moriscos.

The distribution of Moriscos within Spain is rather irregular. Of negligible presence in Catalonia, they represent about one eighth of the population of Aragon and a quarter of the population of the Kingdom of Valencia, they reach more than 55% in the Kingdom of Granada.

There is a Moorish nobility that keeps titles, offices and riches. In municipalities where a traditional organization (aljamias) persists, Moorish culture is preserved thanks to the solidarity of all. Mostly crypto-Islamic, the Moriscos submit themselves externally to Christian traditions, but keep between them their culture and their tradition of origin. By decree passed in 1526, between the State and the Moorish municipalities, they get, in exchange for the payment of a tax of 40 000 ducats, the removal of the Holy Office.

Cohabitation between populations who did not speak the same language and did not share the same culture became difficult.

In 1535, under the pressure of Charles V, Pope Paul III established a condition called "purity of blood" (limpieza de blood). Anyone wishing to access certain important positions in Spain had to prove that he did not have a Jewish or Muslim ancestor for at least four generations. This condition will become a law that will be repealed only in 1865.

With the arrival on the throne of Philip II, the situation of the Moriscos becomes more precarious. Around Philippe II, two schools clash: some think that the assimilation of the Moriscos takes time, but eventually succeed. Others are leaning towards total expulsion from this population. A program of expulsion and reconquest of the land was set up in 1559. In 1567, measures were taken to make the Moriscos lose their cultural identity: ban on the veil, prohibition of the Arabic language, and destruction of Arabic texts. Despite the protests of some Moriscos, who assure the king of their fidelity, these laws are applied without distinction.

However, even spread over the rest of Spain, even impoverished and dispossessed of their land, the Moriscos remain a thorn in the side of the Spanish Church. Philip II, desirous of forming an alliance with the countries in North Africa against Barbarossa, had shown a relative leniency. The arrival on the throne of Philip III precipitates the end of the Moorish population. Under the influence of the Marquis of Denia and of the Duke of Lerma, Philip III signed on September 22, 1609, the decree of expulsion of all the Moriscos of Spain. This decree, prepared by various movements of troops, is applied with speed but also intransigence.

Only Moorish women married to old Christians are allowed to stay. The deportation is done in appalling conditions. Men, women and children walk from inland to the coast, forced to pay for their own food and water. They are then embarked in galleys which land them on the coasts of North Africa.

The number of deportees will be so great that authorities had to call on private carriers, who sometimes do not even wait for arriving on the coast to land the Moriscos. Some authors claim that the human losses resulting from this deportation amounted to 75%. Jaime Bleda, inquisitor adviser to the Duke of Lerma, reports for example that "it is certain that of the thousands of Moriscos who left this kingdom of Valencia, not even a quarter survived."

HERESIES AND ORTHODOXY. IN THE BEGINNING WERE POLITICO-RELIGIOUS OPPOSITION GROUPS.

(Summary of the thesis of Dr. Claude Gilliot).

Sects (in Arabic *firqa*, singular *firqa*): politico-religious movements or schisms grown within Islam that were different from the ideology supported by the Sunni caliphate of the Abbasids; and which were the subject, especially in the tenth and twelfth centuries, of treatises presented today as treatises of heresiography; among them those of al-Ashari, Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi (died in 1038), Ibn Hazm, and al-Shahrastani.

To use the terms "heresy" and "heresiography" about these "sects" is, in fact, inaccurate, because these movements with diverse opinions, risen from internal rivalries and dissension, were never condemned by a magisterium claiming orthodoxy. The Muslim scholars of the Middle Ages who were interested in the question, contented themselves to present them in their diversity justifying their enterprise by a hadith attributed to Muhammad: "My community will be divided into seventy-three sects. All will go to hell with the exception of one."

Defining the "sect" that will be saved by locating others in relation to it was nevertheless the stated objective of one of these authors (al-Baghdadi), while the others claimed to be engaged in mere descriptive statements.

The first attempts to create a common ground, a Muslim "paradigm," which would have summed up most of what Islam is supposed to be, came from theologians who later on were considered deviationists. Such as the kharijites 1), especially ibadites 2), of Kufa and Basra, the murji'ites 3) of Kufa or Basra, and especially the qadarites 4) and the mu'tazilites 5) without forgetting the various forms of Shiism. Abu Hanifa (who died in 767), among others, was ranked among the "people of justice" (*ahl al-adl*), opposed to "people of blameworthy innovations" (*ahl al-bida*) 6); he was counted among the Murji'tes in theology, but he is nonetheless considered as the founder of the first Sunni legal "school." Let's not forget the case of "Haschichin or Assassins" 7).

It will be understood already that it is necessary to give up a simplistic schema which wants that at the beginning there was an orthodox Islam, let us say Sunni, supposed to be faithful to the teaching and the practices of the prophet. And after that, following conflicts and struggles, various sects would appear, which would have broken this beautiful, idyllic, mythical unity, we will say.

In the beginning, were neither Sunnism nor Shiism, but an Islam that was trying to find itself, and that could have been thereafter entirely Sunni or simply Shiite, or only kharijite, or something completely still! Just as, moreover, Christianity could have been only Monophysite, or Arian, or Melkite, or "Catholic."

Again, let us repeat it because *repetere ars docendi*, at the beginning was not an orthodoxy, but an Islam that was trying to find itself, and continued to do it, especially during the first four centuries of the Muslim era. "Orthodoxy" was formed over a rather long period of time, and on the basis of a consensus established by scholars in religious sciences, with the collaboration (or sometimes against the will) of the established powers both Shia and Sunni communities.

Contrary to an idea still rooted well, at the beginning of Islam, there was not Sunnism; a slow creation, and all in all quite late, which occurred mainly in reaction to the Mu'tazilism at the end of the eighth or at the beginning of the ninth century, even still later.

We cannot go into details in this brief essay on Islam, so we will content ourselves to mention the first great division (schism) that took place (concerning the succession of Muhammad).

-We know, for example, that one of the first converts to Islam, husband of one of the daughters of the first caliph Abu Bakr, al-Zubayr ibn al-Awwam, after the assassination of the third caliph (656), Uthman ibn Affan; took sides against Ali and associated himself with Talha ibn Ubayd Allah, also one of the first converts; which was notably a member of the committee which appointed Umar as caliph. He hoped to become caliph himself, and hoped for it again after the assassination of Uthman. Supporters of al-Zubayr, Talha, and Aisha were defeated by those of Ali (Shi'at Ali) in the battle known as "Camel" battle.

-The governor of Damascus, Mu'awiya, claimed revenge for the murder of Uthman, made himself proclaimed caliph, and therefore entered into open conflict with Ali, the new caliph. The troops of Ali and Mu'awiya clashed at the Battle of Siffin in 658. Ali's soldiers were almost victorious, but he made the mistake of accepting an arbitration which was ultimately unfavorable to him. This was reproached to him by a part of his followers, who then separated from him, hence their name, the kharijites.

-Others, it seems, refrained from deciding, in other words, from condemning Uthman, Ali, al-Zubayr, Talha, Aisha, and the others; therefore it is said about them that they "withdrew" (*itazala*) or "postponed" their judgment (*arja'a*) 8). With time, but also with new divisions within these groups, will be added to this first "separation," or, on the contrary, "abstention," theses which, by accumulating, will

end in producing various bodies of theological, or even sometimes legal, doctrine. However, there was for all that no doctrinal continuity between the initial debates, which most often originated in "political" quarrels (or in fights for succession to the government of the community) and the later body of doctrines. This is why, therefore, the name "sects" will be preferred to that of "political-religious opposition groups."

The tradition on sects attributed to Muhammad.

Islam being literally haunted by the principle of "divine oneness," and the unity of the community being to reflect this "oneness" of God, the divisions within the community have always seemed unbearable. In Islam, only the community is important, but it could not be ignored that to the generation of the Companions had succeeded an era of schism (*furqa*) and "sects" (*firaq*).

It is not surprising, then, that Muhammad himself was given the following hadith early on: "The best of the community are those who belong to the generation to which I was sent" 9).

It was fitting indeed that Muhammad, by a kind of divine foreknowledge, had foreseen the divisions to come!

To the above-mentioned tradition have been added other hadiths, still attributed to Muhammad himself, and which are important: "The Jews have divided into 71 or 72 sects, and my community will be divided into 73 sects" . Or still: "The sons of Israel have divided into 72 sects. It will be the same for you, and all these sects will go to hell, except one. " Even: "The Jews have divided into 71 or 72 sects; Christians in 71 or 72 sects. My community will be divided into 73 sects.

In the Quran, the notion of individual opinion has a very negative connotation, because it threatens the unity of the community: chapter number 11 verses 118: " And if your Lord had willed, He verily would have made mankind one nation, yet they cease not differing, save him on whom your Lord has mercy." Very soon, however, a word was circulating which tried to justify dissensions otherwise scandalous: "The differences of opinion of the Companions of the Messenger of God are a proof of the mercy [of God]". This maxim even became a hadith attributed to Muhammad personally: "The differences of opinion in my community are a proof of the mercy [of God]".

This point of view was vigorously fought by the Mu'tazilites since they claimed to rely only on reason. For the mu'tazili qadi Abd al-Jabbar for example (tenth century), if God had created Man for disunion, he would have then predetermined him automatically to the damnation, which is not possible! Heresiographers have tried to bring order to the exposition of Muslim theological divergences. Al Shahrastani, among others, for whom the differences of Islamic theological groups in competition could be reduced to four major fields.

1 Divine attributes and design of divine Oneness

2 Divine Justice and Providence, especially in relation to predestination and free will.

3 The divine promise and threat (eschatology and judgment) and related issues of true belief and definition of the true believer.

4 The revelation, the prophetic mission, and the right to be the leader (imam) of the Muslim community.

It is according to these four major criteria that Al-Shahrastani tried to order his book, or to classify Muslim (but also non-Muslim) religious groups; the Qaraites, the Mu'tazilites, the *sifatiya* (those who recognize attributes to God), the Kharijites (who defined themselves as the only true believers) and the Shiites. Then he also added to them the followers of the predestination or adepts of the divine compulsion (*jabriya*), the *murji'ites*; and the *ahl al-furu* (those who deal with derived issues or disagree on legal judgments or on the issues that require an effort of personal reflection, *ijtihad*).

Who is Orthodox? The "people of the hadith," those who reject speculative theology and claim to say of God only what the Quran and the prophetic tradition recognize?

This is not so simple, as both Sunnis and Shiites often consider them to be predestinationists. Very "pious" transmitters of hadiths have often been accused of being corporealists (*mujassima*) in other words anthropomorphists (*mushabbiha*), even of being "literalists" (*hashwiyya*). Yet, these "hadith people" have earned a good reputation in Sunni circles facing the Shiite political challenges. It is to show his loyalty to the "followers of the sunna and of the right path" (*al-sunna wa l-istiqa*); that the dialectical theologian al-Ashari (died in 935) will write a profession of faith to answer that of the Hanbalite "literalist" al-Barbahari (died in 941).

The Hanbalite jurist Ibn Taymiyya (who died in 1328) was repeatedly accused of being an anthropomorphist. Did he not come down one day from his pulpit to show "how God can come down from heaven?"

Are Orthodox the Asharite dialectical theologians fervent defenders of the sunna (doctrine and practice of Muhammad, his companions and the " pious elders")? One might think so, but that is very deceptive.

The Ayyubids worked hard to propagate the Shafite Law School and to favor it at the expense of others; this is what Saladin did for example (1169-1193). In addition, they regarded the Asharite theological school as the only sunna that should be followed. The Asharites became very powerful in Egypt and Syria. Only the Hanbalites, regarded here as both a legal current and a theological school opposed to speculative theology, resisted this onslaught. Saladin passed an edict which was to be read in all the mosques, according to which was to be punished whoever approached the problem of letters and sounds; in other words, the question of whether the letters and / or the pronunciation of the Quran were created or uncreated.

In Damascus, at the time of the Ayyubid al-Malik al-Adil Sayf al-Din (1196-1218), probably in 1199, the tradition Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi was even almost sentenced to death; for having professed on the divine attributes and on the Quran, opinions that disapproved the learned doctors of the Law who resorted to the metaphorical interpretation. "He was attached to the sunna, according to the rule of the Elders. He spoke about the attributes of God and the Quran in a way that was rejected by scholars who were proponents of allegorical interpretation. They defamed him, and insisted that his execution should be made lawful but the Kurdish leaders intervened in his favor. He went to Egypt and remained there without being noticed until his death." The cause of this banishment seems to have been his doctrine on the possibility for God to descend on earth, and his doctrine on divine attributes. He was accused of "corporealism" (that is to say of anthropomorphism in the end). According to Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzi, apparently there would have been unanimous agreement of the Muslim doctors of the Law to excommunicate him by a fatwa 110), but Dhahabi disputes it. Ibn Rajab (died July 14, 1393) also corrects the point of view of Sibṭ Ibn al-Jawzi, stating that this decision was in reality only taken by some Asharite teachers.

Historically speaking, Orthodoxy was formed over a rather long period, and based on a certain consensus established between learned Sunni and Shiite doctors of the Law, but it was often, it is true, in reaction against some "schismatics." And the most common way to build this "orthodox" creed was the help of the ruling politicians. Renowned Muslim theologians who managed to win one or more sovereigns, tried to make eliminate their rivals; but the reverse could also happen, namely that sovereigns relied on a particular group of theologians to reverse the influence of others.

Before attempting to sketch an approach to the relationship between orthodoxy and heterodoxy in Islam, let us now say a few words about heresiographic or better, doxographic literature in this religion. In a rather schematic way, we can distinguish in this case three types of writing, but it is a distinction that is more related to their titles than to their actual content, even if each one of them has its own specificities.

A) There are, first of all, the writings called *Kitab al-maqalat*: Book [expounding] the [different] doctrines.

The oldest works of this type are undoubtedly those of the kharijites Yaman b. Ri'ab (or Rabab) (8th century) and Abu Yahya ben Kamil ben Talha, an ibadite (subgroup of the kharijites), contemporary of the previous one.

Then comes that of the Shiite, who was also a Mu'tazilite during a time, Abu Isa al-Warraq (tenth century). He was the first to develop some ideas about which we may sometimes wonder if he really agreed with them. He was a rationalist for whom the divine commandments, it seems, could be deduced from reason. It must be said that at the time the very person of the prophet (the man Muhammad) played only a subordinate role in the Muslim religion.

Abu Isa al-Warraq thought that if the great religious figures of before, like Moses, had resorted to the artifices of magic to convince their interlocutors; it was only because all the men of this time believed in it more or less, but there was no reason that Muhammad himself too should use it. Abu Issa al-Warraq also expressed doubts about the mu'tazili theodicy: if God is really good, then there is no need for chastisement.

To the list of these authors must be added a Bagdadian mu'tazilite, Zurqan (died in 891), who occasionally refers to a work by Hisham ben al-Hakam (died in 795 or 796); an eminent representative of the imamite (Shiite) speculative theology (*kalam*) of his time.

One of the most famous *Kitab al-Maqalat* is that of the Mu'tazili Abu I-Qasim al-Balkhi known as al-Ka'bi (died 931), the text of which was found in Yemen and later published in 1974.

The most quoted work, however, is that of the Sunni dialectical theologian, who was previously mu'tazilite, Abu I-Hassan al-Ashari (died in 935); the "*Kitab al-Maqalat al-islamiyyin wa khtilaf al-mussallin*" [the "Book expounding the doctrines of the Muslims and the divergences of the men are praying"].

B) *Koutoub al-firaq* [the books of the groups, of political-religious opposition].

The Twelver Shiite Abu l-Qasim Sa'd b. Abd Allah al-Ash'ari al-Qummi (died August 7, 913) composed a work that was published, in the title of which are the words al-maqalat and al-firaq. Al-Maqalat wa l-firaq (Book [expounding] the [different] doctrines of Muslims and various groups). At about the same time, an author of a great Shia family, Abul Qasim Husayn ibn Ruh al-Nawbakhti, wrote a book on the same subject, which was also translated. The Sunni Acharite, Abu Mansur al-Baghdadi (died October 14, 1037), composed for his part a book entitled "al-Farq Bayn a l-firaq" (the difference between sects or religious groups).

C) The works called Kutub al-Milal wa al-nihal (religions and sects).

It is worth mentioning in this field the general survey of the Andalusian, man of letters, theologian and Zahirite jurist, Ibn Tlazzm, entitled: "The Criterion to distinguish the adepts of the religions, the people subjected to the passion and the denominations."

The great classic which is the work of the theologian and philosopher of Asharite leanings but with pronounced Ismailian orientations and opinions, al-Shahrastani (died in 1153) Kitab al-Milal wa al-Nihal; has been the subject of an excellent translation, cleverly annotated, under the title of "the book of sects and creeds." His author is an excellent connoisseur, not only of the history of the Muslim doctrinal currents, but even of that of the Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Manichaeans, etc. His work besides makes us able to better understand the various philosophical doctrines of the Ancients.

Other writings are more or less of the genres presented above, even if their titles suggest more a refutation than an expounding of the doctrine of the opposing rival groups; case among others, of the book entitled "Warning and Refutation of the people of desire and Innovation" by Abu'l-Husayn al-Malati (died in 987).

Is it necessary to specify that every treatise of Muslim theology also contains, more or less, refutations of opposing theological theories? It will be enough to be convinced to consult the published works, as well as the big Quranic commentary of the one who is considered as the founder of another current of Sunni speculative theology, different from that of al-Ashari: Abu Mansur al-Maturid (died in 944). They abound in information on various religious groups.

Finally, even some of the works of the Muslim scholars who are most opposed to speculative theology (Kalam) are also a valuable source of knowledge of the history of doctrines; insofar as they keep track of the lost theological theories they refute, or of certain lost texts. Such was, for example, the jurist, Syrian Hanbalite polemicist traditionist, Ibn Taymiyya (died Sept. 26, 1328), great adversary of dialectical theologians, philosophers, many forms of Sufism, "popular" religion, etc. Some of his treatises or legal and theological decisions (fatwa-s) and there are many, are real mines in this field.

1) Those who are left, the Arabic verb kharaj, go out. Designates Ali's followers from the very beginning, but having then abandoned him.

2) Kharijite sect bringing together many non-Arab Muslims, including Berbers.

3) Those who reserve the judgment to God. Only God can judge, and will judge the day of the last judgment, that which is true and false in Islam and no one can judge that another is unfaithful. For them, free will is limited, that is to say that man is partly forced to act. Faith is enough to save sinners from hell, faith being more important than deeds than what circumstances lead to experiment.

Therefore they oppose the Kharijites.

4) The Qadarites were thus called by their adversaries because they professed that there is no divine predestination, of human acts; because they were supposed to say that there is no qadar (predestination) of deeds. However, in some texts, it is the proponents of predestination who are on the contrary described as Qadarites, or professing qadar, in other words, the predetermination of human acts. As to the Mu'tazilites, agreeing too with free will, they showed they were in the continuity of the Qadarites only to better establish the principle of the antiquity of their doctrine facing their adversaries; without their articles of faith being limited to this one theological principle.

5) The rationalists of Islam.

6) Another of the serious sins in Islam is indeed bidah or novelty (compared to tradition, i.e., heresy). The word bidah, new idea (heresy) refers to any innovation in general. In the religious context of Sunni Islam, innovation is suspect because it does not respect the dictates of God or Muhammad, but diverts believers from the religious practice as it was fixed. The revelation having ended with the death of Muhammad, no addition to religion can be tolerated.

"This is My straight path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest you be parted from his way." Quran (6 :153).

A hadith is still more explicit. The Prophet said: "The truest of speech is the Book of God, the best guidance is that of Muhammad and the worst affairs are newly invented matters." Or still: "If somebody innovates something which is not in harmony with the principles of our religion, that thing is rejected" (Hadith narrated by Al-Bukhari Vol. 3, Book 49, hadith 861 and by al-Muslim under No. 1718).

The commemoration of the birth of Muhammad himself, the festival of Mulud, is for example considered by the Saudi ulamas as a condemnable heresy, because it was not instituted by the Prophet or his companions. As a result, they see in this practice, rightly so, an imitation of the Christian celebration of the birth of Christ: Christmas.

7) Literally "hashish lovers." This word originally refers to the Ismaili sect of the Nizari, which raged in Syria and Persia for more than two centuries, and which terrorized, plundered or assassinated, without control or shame. Their spiritual leader bore the name of Hassan al-Sabbah, and he was nicknamed the "Old Man of the Mountain" (born in the middle of the eleventh century and died in 1124), also known as the "Master of Alamut." He will become the "guru" of this New Preaching (Dawa Jadida), by the Tangible Proof (Hujja) and will use Indian hemp to manipulate his troops or launch them into punitive expeditions against the rulers of the time. For the old as-Sabbah, assassination was the only way to make the true religion triumph. The Assassins, however, grouped together only a few hundred men who were promised a much more illusory Eden than the artificial paradise they were indulged.

8) The word originally refers to the political-religious movement, made up of supporters of "abstention" (irja); that is to say, of those who thought that Muslims should refrain from proclaiming their solidarity, or their disapproval, with regard to Uthman, Ali, Talha and al-Zubayr. The name thereafter included those who identified belief with inner adherence or profession of faith, with the exception of works. For them, the works were not part of the faith. It is nevertheless difficult to see a real "doctrinal" continuity between what the Muslim authors call "the first murjia" and those who later separated works from faith.

9) This hadith is, of course, completely false, and Muhammad could never say such things. But later, Muhammad was idolized to the extent of attributing to him all the pseudo-prophecies that follow. As if he could have foreseen the next events!

10) Some Muslim scholars went to see the governor of the citadel and said: "Abd al-Ghani al-Maqdisi misleads the people; he professes assimilationism." They reproached him various statements on the question of the letters and sounds of the Quran. To persist in seeing in the very essence of God the possibility for him to descend on earth is to affirm about God that he can move. But as for the question of letters and sounds, of the Quran, what he says is not attested in Ibn Hanbal; he only said that the Quran was the word of God, that is to say, not created. The commander of the citadel, therefore ordered that his pulpit be broken, and he went to Baalbek, and to Egypt; where the learned men issued about him a legal decision [fatwa] declaring that he corrupted the beliefs of the people, that he professed anthropomorphism, and therefore that one could shed his blood. According to Sibti ibn al-Jawzi the doctors of Belief all agreed with this fatwa.

THE TWO MUSLIM INQUISITIONS.

THE MORALITY POLICE OR HISBA.

We can also trace back to Muhammad the morality police called Hisba, which is intended to order good or forbid evil according to Islam, i.e., to punish any violation of Muslim morality (mainly in terms of trade at the beginning, then morality later on).

Not to be confused with....

THE MIHNA.(833-851).

In Arabic Miḥnat Kḥalaq al-Qur'ān " test [concerning] the creation of the Quran ").

It is in fact a period of fifteen years during which the Hisba had its powers extended by decision of Caliph Al-Ma'mun who introduced a law on apostasy and, indirectly, the inquisitorial version of the Hisba.

THE PRECEDENTS.

At the beginning of the reign of Caliph Al-Mandi (775 - 785) appeared the first muhtasib, price controller; charged with Hisba, whose mission was to hunt down apostates and other heretics. This caliph invented a new dialectic in this field, and ordered the composition of books of replicas against atheists or heretics.

The repression of heresies in Islam (zindiq = heretic) is a chapter of Muslim history very little known in the West. For Islam, the heretic (= zindiq, plural zanadiqa) must be punished with death, like any individual who leaves the Islamic community, the umma.

The term zindiq was first applied to those who followed dualistic doctrines inspired by Iranian religions, such as Manichaeism, while professing Islam. The zindiq was therefore a heretic, guilty of zandaqa (heresy). This expression was later used to describe all those who deviated from orthodoxy, or whose beliefs might threaten law and order.

These heretics belong in general to the old Persian families assimilated by Islam who, following the same path as the shu'ubiyah (a social political sect with a nationalist leanings), find an interest in the revival of the Persian religious traditions; and who, from this point of view, react against the purely Arab character of the Muslim system. Then they are freethinkers, who set themselves against the despotism of the Islamic dogma, and who admit only the moral law. Among these, there is a kind of monastic asceticism foreign to Islam, which is explained by the influence of Buddhism.

Strangely, however, were declared such only the opponents of the established caliph, as evidenced by the impunity granted by Harun al-Rachid (786 - 809) to a notorious heretic like Abul-Atahiya; while he will evict the powerful family of the Barmekids by using this grievance. We can therefore consider that in each of these cases, Hisba has proven to be in fact an instrument of political suppression under cover of a crime against God or against the people.

The first heretic to be put to death was a man named Jab Ibn Dirham. He was executed around 742.

There were, alas, many others: Ibn Al Muqaffa (executed in 760), Ibn Abi-l-Awja (executed in 772), Salih Abd Al-Quddus (executed in 783) , Hammad Ajrad. These are just a few names. Many others were victims of Islamic totalitarianism, and often paid their lives for freedom of thought (cf. Atheism and secularity in the Arab world. Philip Zuckerman).

The notion of zindiq ended up encompassing all kinds of freethinkers, atheists or materialists.

Averroes himself was exiled for heresy, and his books burned publicly in Cordoba (already, when they hear the word culture, they reach for their gun). He was not a bad Muslim, yet. He subscribed to the deportation for Christians suspected of sympathy with the Reconquista of their brothers; and harsh bodily punishment for recent Muslims considered as second-class subjects or inferior Muslims: the mawali or muladi (Arabic muwalladun), keeping some "Christian" habits.

THE MIHNA.The facts. According to Christian DECOBERT (THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN THE FIRST CENTURIES OF ISLAM).

Al-Ma'mûn had had a difficult reign, fighting first against his brother al-Amîn for supremacy on the imperial territory, fighting local revolts of submitted populations, in Syria, Iraq, Egypt, controlling the `Abassid legitimists after his rapprochement with the `Alids party. At the end of this turbulent reign, however, the unity of the empire was secured the revolts had been suppressed, the legitimists had been calmed down. At the beginning of 833, al-Ma'mûn was at Raqqa on the Euphrates. He decided to write to Ishâq ibn Ibrahim, his representative in Baghdad, to question the qadis of the city on the question of the creation of the Quran. The letter basically said that the religion of God must, by law, be fulfilled in every respect and true belief must triumph; in particular, belief in the fact that the Quran is created, for it is said in the text itself: "We have appointed it a Lecture, in Arabic" (XLIII, 3); the common people (al-`amma) mislead the believers by claiming that the Quran is pre-eternal

(qadîmawwal), uncreated; these common believers think that they make a link to the Sunnah and thus call themselves the people of the true religion, of the truth of the law, whereas they are only the people of unbelief, the "tongue of the devil". .. Another letter from al-Ma'mûn arrived at Ishâq, enjoining him to send seven eminent traditionists (hadith scholars) to him. This was done. The traditionists, having agreed to profess that the Quran had been created, were allowed to return home. Similar letters were sent to Egypt and Syria.

THE HANBAL CASE.

In Baghdad, where new traditionists and jurists were questioned - sometimes rudely, hence the name given to the event, mihna, 'ordeal' - there was some resistance: two men, Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Muhammad ibn Nûh, declared that the Quran was uncreated. In chains, they were sent to Tartous, where al-Ma'mûn was now, on their return from a war campaign against Byzantium. But the news of the Caliph's death came: they were sent back to Baghdad. Muhammad ibn Nûh died on the way; when they arrived in Baghdad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal was thrown into prison. Al-Ma'mun was succeeded by his brother, al-Mu'tasim (833-842). Although less concerned than al-Ma'mûn with rigorously enforcing the dogma of the creation of the Quran, he kept Ibn Hanbal in prison, and for two and a half years. Ibn Hanbalfut was flogged, and at the end of this "ordeal" he was released: had he finally given in and declared that the Quran was created, as many historiographers have believed? Had he, on the contrary, been released under the pressure of the Baghdad crowd which supported him? The real reason does not matter here. The mihna lasted still, but more and more softly. Al-Wathîq (842-847), son of al-Mu'tasim, had other fish to fry, such as the secession movement of Ahmad ibn al-Aghlab in Ifriqiyya (present-day Tunisia). And al-Mutawakkil, brother of al-Wathîq, put an end to the episode as soon as he arrived in power. It will be no longer spoken of the Quran. The last imprisoned scholars were released, the "martyrs" rehabilitated. The doctrine of the Quran was definitively established in Islam...

THE END OF THE MIHNA AND THE RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL HISBA.

Researchers attribute the mihna to the close association of al-Ma'mun with the main Mu'tazilites of the time. Among the Mu'tazilites, al-Ma'mun appointed Ahmed ibn Abi Du'ad, an eminent Mu'tazilite who later became a chief qadi, to high positions in his administration. Because of Ibn Abi Du'ad's background as a scholar of theological principles through rational argumentation and his rigorous advocacy of the mihna under the next two caliphs, some scholars have concluded that his influence ultimately led al-Ma'mun to act and implement the mihna in the last year of his life.

But this may have been only a consequence of the evolution of al-Mamun's religious ideas.

Other scholars attribute al-Mamun's intellectual evolution to his Shite inclinations. In fact, he would have acted as an imam.

Recent research on the mihna suggests that al-Ma'mun may have simply used the issue of the created or uncreated Quran as an opportunity to reassert Caliphate authority over religious matters. The abandonment of this policy around 850 will signal the end of caliphal claims to religious orthodoxy and thus put an end to this second case of specifically religious persecution in this region of the world (5 centuries after those of Decius and Diocletian).

THE APPEARANCE OF (RELIGIOUS) LAW SCHOOLS INDEPENDENT OF THE CENTRAL STATE (MADAHIB) AND THEREFORE DIVERSE.

THE CALIPHS ARE AGAIN UNINTERESTED IN ISLAM AS A RELIGION.

THE PROBLEM OF THE HISBA AND OF THE SECULARISM.

9 December 1905 law on the Separation of the Churches and State.

Title I: Principles. Article 1 «under the provisos enacted hereafter in the interest of public order."

Article 2 "The Republic does not recognize, pay, or subsidize any religious sect. Accordingly... »

The problem is unsolvable in a political construction which, by definition and constitutionally speaking, forbids any interference in the religious domain; since Islam is not originally and predominantly (Sunnism and Shiism combined) * A RELIGION (see footnote **).

In the sense in which it is usually understood in Indo-European or Western thought.

And this for three reasons.

But a way of life or even a policy (especially as regards the external relations of the Muslim Community called Ummah).

The first is that Muhammad never intended to found a religion, a new religion, but to reform a pre-existing religion (Judeo-Christianity). As far as we can know through the Quran the hadiths and his life. Passed down through the generations that followed him.

The best evidence is that he allowed Jews and Christians to continue their worship. Under conditions (the status of dhimmis, i.e., second-class citizens).

The second of these reasons is that Muhammad, although he started out "in opposition" in Mecca, the city of his childhood, died as a head of state, head of the city-state of Yathrib/Medina. Islam thus spent very little time in opposition (12 years?) Unlike Christianity, which only became the official religion in Armenia in 301?, i.e., three centuries later. In the rest of the Roman Empire, it was not legalized until 313 and only became the state religion in 324.

The third of these reasons, finally, and it is undoubtedly a consequence of the first, is that Christianity, even if it was not necessarily what its founder wanted (see its condemnation by the Roman authorities for having wanted to be " king of the Jews "), from the beginning, as soon as it separated itself from Judaism, carefully distinguished the spiritual level from the temporal one. Various passages from the four gospels thus support this distinction. The best known of these is the famous " Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Matthew 22:21). But there are a few others (Matthew 6:1 to 18: withdrawing in one's room to pray, fasting in secret, etc.).

The distinction between spiritual and temporal has therefore always existed, not in the DNA of Judaism, but in the DNA of Christianity.

However it has been quite different for Islam. Unlike Jesus in Jerusalem, Muhammad in Yathrib/Medina quickly prevailed over the Jews and Munafiqun, and he did not die crucified but in his bed like Louis XIV as a head of state respected, even feared, in the whole of western Arabia.

Four passages of the Quran, moreover, forbid any distinction between temporal and spiritual, these are the following verses, which ask Muslims to forbid evil and to order good (still according to the Quran): 3,104; 3,110; 7,199; 9,71.... This is what is called hisba, a duty whose execution can be individual (farḍ al-'ayn) or collective (farḍ al-kifāya) by delegation to competent authorities.

In fact, in a political construction that by definition and constitutionally speaking prohibits any interference in the religious domain; it would not be up to the State to intervene by changing the content and substance of the religion in question in order to adapt it to its requirements; but it would be up to the parties in opposition and to the intellectuals, even in the extreme limit to the teachings of the religious fact in schools, to relativize it in the minds of their fellow citizens, by cultivating in its regard the most vivid free atheistic or agnostic thoughts. As the philosophy of the Enlightenment of yesteryear did in the past with regard to Christianity, for example. Now the problem, and we are coming back to this, is that in our country the vast majority of intellectuals and political opponents are not at all willing to do so, even do quite the opposite. It's just if we don't have to apologize for not being, for never being, a Muslim; for not being seduced by Islam, for not considering conversion. I prefer Jean Jaures's speech on the idea of God (February 12, 1895, applause).

Stage conclusion then. In the unconscious of a native Arabic speaker, religion is a law, A DIN.

The immense and ultra dangerous difference between Islam and the other religions, and which changes everything, is that Islam touches many more aspects of private or personal life (food hygiene adoptions marriages inheritance jobs money, etc.) than the other religions (except for ultra-orthodox Judaism of the Haredim, which resembles it very much because of the arrival of Muhammad in 622 at Yathrib).

It is in a way the most accomplished of the totalitarian systems.

We were once reproached for having compared the Hisba or police of Islamic morals to the GPU and the Soviet gulags (number of victims from 1917 to 1991, 18 million zeks or detainees, 3 million dead). But it is important in this respect to distinguish two different things, the number of victims and the reasons for their imprisonment or death.

20 December 1917 creation of the Cheka, which in 1922 will become the GPU (GPU not Gestapo).

Raymond Duguet in 1927 diffused the first testimonies outside Russia in his work devoted to the Solovki Islands. The work was paid in food: 800 g of bread and 80 g of meat for the strongest elements; 400 g of bread and 40 g of meat for the less able-bodied. Execution of a bullet in the neck. Mortality rate in the Kolyma from 1937 to 1938 10% of the zeks.

According to Alexander Zinoviev, many people were sent to the Gulag for what could be described as anecdotal, absurd and uninteresting facts (having put a jacket on a bust of Lenin because there was no coat hanger in the room, or having wrapped fish in a newspaper representing Stalin), or even without a reasoned accusation, simply because the local branches of the Cheka-GPU-NKVD had an "arrest plan" to keep.

Compare this with the number of victims of the Medieval Inquisition executed by the secular power, which at the time knew what it had to do in case of condemnation by the Church. According to the figures of the sentences of Bernard Gui, inquisitor in Toulouse for 15 years, from 1308 to 1323, out of 633 sentences, only 40 persons were handed over to the secular arm, therefore to be burned at the stake (the Inquisition, which in theory could not carry out the death penalty, sent the sentenced person to secular justice). From the end of the 13th century, the burning at the stake was more and more exceptional; it was also a sign of the failure of the Church, unable to bring back lost souls.

As far as the number of victims is concerned, the comparison between Hisba and the Inquisition is difficult for two reasons.

The first reason is that there were four different Inquisitions.

-The medieval Inquisition introduced in the ecclesiastical courts by Pope Gregory IX in 1231 ;

-The Spanish Inquisition, which was under the Spanish crown, founded in 1478 and suppressed in 1834, and the Portuguese Inquisition, under the Portuguese crown, which also operated in the colonies of these countries;

-The Roman Inquisition (Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition), founded in 1542, replaced by the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office in 1908.

The second reason is that in the collective imagination the Inquisition caused millions of deaths, which is not the case of the Hisba.

--On the other hand, in terms of the number of victims, perhaps the Gestapo should be compared [we are not talking here about the Shoah, which, from the Shoah by bullets of the Einsatzgruppen to the gas chambers, caused between 5 million (Raoul Hilberg) and 6 million (symbolic figure) dead, and, moreover, died in atrocious conditions]: the unfortunate ones did indeed experience hell on earth] because contrary to popular belief, the Gestapo was not an all-pervasive and omnipotent police (Chris. McNab, *The SS: 1923-1945*, Amber Books Ltd. Page 163).

The popular picture (sic) of the Gestapo with its spies everywhere terrorizing German society has been rejected by many historians as a myth invented after the war as a cover for German society's widespread complicity at that time.

Detlev Peukert, Robert Gellately, Reinhard Mann, Inge Marssolek, René Otto, Klaus-Michael Mallmann and Paul Gerhard, which by focusing on what the local offices were doing has shown the Gestapo's almost total dependence on denunciations from ordinary Germans, and very much discredited the older "Big Brother" picture.

Of the 84 cases in Würzburg of *Rassenschande* ("race defilement"—sexual relations with non-Aryans)...

45 (54%) were started in response to denunciations by ordinary people.

2 (2%) by information provided by other branches of the government.

20 (24%) via information gained during interrogations by the Gestapo.

*Sufism is an ultra-minority religious current more or less considered heretical and is no more representative of Islam than the Quran of the Mormons or of Jehovah's Witnesses are of Christianity. As for Mu'tazilism, do not speak more of it, it disappeared in the twelfth century with the closing of the gates of the *Ijtihād*.

**Semantics note. The notion of religion is difficult to define in our civilization. Just as in others, where it is only synonymous with tradition, custom, etc. Let us say, to make things easier, that we will define it here as a personal spirituality. The transcendence that an individual can recognize.

However, this is not the case in Semitic languages where the term for religion is *DIN*; literally THE LAW. Hebrews *Din*, *Dat*. *Dini-kashrut* = the laws of *kashrut* = the laws of food.

Judaism is therefore THE LAW OF MOSES.

I

dem in Arabic where *Din* can designate religious practice and religion in its entirety

On the other hand, in the Quran when Islam is called "Abraham's religion" the word used is *milla* and not *dīn*.

EDITOR'S NOTE. One of the slogans of the Algerian GIA was *al-islām dīn wa dawla*, "Islam is both religion and state."

EPITAPH.

The spilled blood, Federico Garcia Lorca (translated from Spanish).

Oh, white wall of Spain!

Oh, black bull of sorrow!

Oh, hard blood of Ignacio!

Oh, nightingale of his veins!

No. I will not see it!

No chalice can contain it,

No swallows can drink it,

No frost of light can cool it,

Nor song nor deluge of white lilies,

No glass can cover it with silver.

No. I will not see it!

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

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 !

WHAT MUHAMMAD THOUGHT OF WOMEN IN GENERAL.

In a way, Muhammad was a "city dweller," a caravan driver become trader, who had broken with the traditions of the nomads. After his death, some of these traditions took over and supplanted the Mohammedan commandments. Most of the conflicts that arose during the first century of the Hegira are only a reflection of the rivalries between the Bedouins and the urban bourgeoisie, the same that Muhammad had been able to attend after his rich marriage. The problem still arises today. The Quran had authorized polygamy, but what was originally considered by Muhammad as a kind of dispensation from use, quickly became one of the essential characteristics of the Islamic code of marriage. In other words, the exception became the rule.

This resulted in a definitive deterioration of the status of married women in Arab-Muslim society. This is very clear if we make the effort to compare it with what it was in pre-Islamic society.

Whether queen (as Ashait, wife of Pharaoh Mentuhotep II) or simple servant, the woman of ancient Egypt is everywhere in the art. She appears as a being who participates in all the aspects of daily life, including political and religious aspects. In Pharaonic Egypt, fundamental equality governed the relations between the sexes. Many historians believe that an ancient civilization had no more esteem for women than Egyptian civilization. But since the Islamization of Egypt, the status of women is that of all Muslim women.

And yet, it is thanks to a woman that Islam was able to see the light of day! This woman was Khadija, the first wife of the prophet. Widow and rich, she makes the young Muhammad able to devote himself to his vocation. Without knowing it – and perhaps unwittingly - this woman contributed to the misfortune of her sex by promoting his social and political rise. If it were not the seriousness of the subject, today's Muslim women could laugh at it.

Doings or words of the life of Muhammad are therefore problematic, insofar as the Muslim religion is based on the Quran; but also on the "sayings or anecdotes" (hadiths) which tend towards presenting Muhammad as perfect, as a model of perfection to follow (isma).

Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 9, Book 88, Hadith 219.

When the Prophet heard the news that the people of Persia had made the daughter of Khosrau their Queen (ruler), he said, "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler."

Sahih Bukhari, vol. 7, Book 62, hadith 33.

The Prophet said, "After me I have not left any trial more severe to men than women."

Sahih Bukhari, vol. 7, Book 62, Number 126: The Prophet said, "I looked at the (Hell) Fire and saw that the majority of its residents were women."

Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 7, Book 62, Hadith 133

They asked, "Why is it so, O God's Messenger?"

He replied, "You curse frequently and are ungrateful to your husbands. I have not seen anyone more deficient in intelligence and religion than you. A cautious sensible man could be led astray by some of you."

The women asked, "O God's Messenger! What is deficient in our intelligence and religion?"

He said, "Is not the evidence of two women equal to the witness of one man? This is the deficiency in her intelligence. Isn't it true that a woman can neither pray nor fast during her menses? This is the deficiency in her religion."

Al-Tirmidhi Hadith 285 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah.

The Prophet (saws) said: If I were to command anyone to prostrate to anyone other than God, I would have commanded women to prostrate to their husbands

Al-Tirmidhi Hadith 284 Narrated by AbuAli Talq ibn Ali.

The Prophet (saws) said: When a man sends for his wife for the satisfaction of his need, she should go to him even if she may be occupied in baking bread.

Al-Tirmidhi Hadith 286 Narrated by Umm Salamah.

The Prophet (saws) said: If a woman dies while her husband was pleased with her, she will enter Paradise.

Al-Bukhari Vol. 4, Book 54, Hadith 460

If a husband calls his wife to his bed and she refuses and causes him to sleep in anger, the angels will curse her till morning.

Women are so despised or belittled that a verse in the Quran enjoins men, in case their wife makes a serious mistake, to no longer accept her in their bed and to beat her (but with moderation of course).

"Men are in charge of women, because God has made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which God has guarded. As for those from whom you fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them. Lo! God is Great" (4 :34).

The Muslim religion has turned women into slaves and denies them all humanity. They are only objects of consumption. Women are only heaps of flesh for the pleasure of men. And for their pleasure to be greater, these pieces of flesh must come in various forms.

Women are not human beings since they are a tilth ("go to your tilth as you will"). With this divine authorization (granted by verse 223 of chapter 2) Muhammad himself would have added, "no woman can fulfill her duty towards God until she fulfills her duty towards her husband. If he asks her (for intimacy) even if she is on her camel saddle, she should not refuse" (hadith quoted by Taslima Nasreen). This version was narrated by Ibn Maajah, and was classed as sahih by al-Albaani..

MUHAMMAD AND WOMEN.

The doings of the life of Muhammad are problematic, insofar as the Muslim religion is based on the Quran; but also on "sayings or anecdotes" (hadiths) which tend to present Muhammad as perfect, as a model of perfection to follow (isma).

According to his admirers in swoon before him (Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 6, Book 60, Hadith 311) or his courtiers Muhammad had a soft, clear voice, and spoke so slowly that you count the letters of the words he uttered. He took care of his hair and let a pretty beard grow, which he perfumed, as well as his hair, which often touched his shoulders. The upper part of his waist was long, and when he was sitting with other people, he was always taller than his surroundings. He was handsome, and for one of his disciples "He was even more beautiful than the moon of the fourteenth night."

NB. Christians have never said so much about their messiah, even though he is the son of God. According to them. The New Testament is silent on this subject. Except after his death and resurrection.

Muhammad was always dressed cleanly, even elegantly, and put on the best perfumes. Muhammad besides said of himself that he had chosen three things in this world: perfume, prayer and women.

Another source of permanent criticism of Mahomet was indeed the question of his wives.

The pre-Islamic pagan Arab society allowed polygamy, but if we understand correctly, Muhammad wanted to be the continuator of the Jewish and Christian message, not the continuator of the pagan message. Muhammad besides clearly rejected some pagan customs of the time, such as belomancy or the use of arrows to know the lot (chapter 5, verse 90); and even at first adopted the customs of the Jews, as well as their dietary restrictions (chapter 5, verse 3). But Jews practiced no longer polygamy. Muhammad was certainly conscious of contradicting himself by advocating this situation and his entourage of Jewish Arab origin too. Tabari, in his chronicle, reports that in addition to his fifteen wives recognized by all authors; there are five other probable wives, five women whom he has only coveted, and finally two sex slaves, one of whom Mary the Copt gave him a son, Ibrahim, who died at the age of two. Tabari also notes in the same account that Mohammed left nine widows, despite the rule of marriage in Islam which only allows four simultaneous wives.

But let's start from the beginning, the women he did not have.

MUHAMMAD AND THE WOMEN WHO HAD NOT HAD.

Contrary to the tireless repetition of the sermons, we no longer dare say Christian, of the French Lelong, or of the German television channel Arte, Arab women were not all systematically abused before Mohammed.

There were, then, in the country, Christians and Jews, who loved their daughters a little better, or who treated their wives a little better. It is enough to remember the case of Khadija his first wife to understand that women in pre-Islamic society could be, in many respects, better off than Muslim women today.

A few cases, according to Tabari - Umm Hani, a daughter of Abu Talib, one of her cousins.

Muhammad asked for her hand, but she refused on the pretext that she had children. - Zabaah, daughter of Amir: Muhammad asked his son Salama for her hand. He was told that he had to ask his mother's opinion and the wedding did not take place. Muhammad also asked the hand of Umm Habiba, a daughter of Abbas, but Abbas pretended that he was his foster brother, and the marriage was not made. Muhammad finally asked in marriage Jamrah, the daughter of Haras, but his father pretended that she had a fault to refuse.

MUHAMMAD AND THE WOMEN HE HAD.

Before his entry into politics, Muhammad had only had the wealthy Khadija as a wife, his eldest of fifteen years (probably for fear of losing everything in case of divorce, because among the Meccans the property of the woman was still his full and entire property, even in case of marriage). But he had only from three sons died in infancy, and four daughters, one of whom, Fatima, lived long enough to give him grandchildren: two boys, Hasan and Husein. Until then he had been monogamous. No doubt for fear of losing everything and being ruined in case of infidelity on his part as we have seen, but once Khadijah six feet under, everything changes.

It is certain that this descent only by the girls was badly felt by Muhammad personally, and that, the first successes coming, he sought to put many wives and concubines in his bed to have male heirs. Muhammad then married, by policy or taste, many women of his tribe, from the families of his main Meccan followers. Just two months after Khadija's death, he began to build a "political" harem. First with Aisha, the daughter of his most faithful friend, and first successor, Abu Bakr. The marriage of Aisha is recounted in the official texts of the Islamic tradition. Muhammad married her a few months before leaving for Yathrib / Medina, when he was in her fifties, and she a six-year-old girl.

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 5, Book 58, Number 234.

Narrated by Aisha. The Prophet engaged me when I was a girl of six (years). We went to Medina and stayed at the home of Bani-al-Harith bin Khazraj. Then I got ill and my hair fell down. Later on my hair grew (again) and my mother, Um Ruman, came to me while I was playing in a swing with some of my girl friends. She called me, and I went to her, not knowing what she wanted to do to me. She caught me by the hand and made me stand at the door of the house. I was breathless then, and when my breathing became Allright, she took some water and rubbed my face and head with it. Then she took me into the house. There in the house I saw some Ansari [Medinan Muslim] women who said, "Best wishes and God's Blessing and a good luck." Then she entrusted me to them and they prepared me (for the marriage). God's Apostle came unexpectedly to me in the forenoon and my mother handed me over to him, and at that time I was a girl of nine years of age.

Sahih Bukhari vol. 5, book 58, number 236.

Narrated Hisham's father: Khadija died three years before the Prophet departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed that marriage when she was nine years old.

Sahih Bukhari Vol. 8, Book 73, Number 151.

Narrated 'Aisha: " used to play with the dolls in the presence of the Prophet, and my girl friends also used to play with me. When God's Apostle used to enter (my dwelling place) they used to hide themselves, but the Prophet would call them to join and play with me" (Fateh-al-Bari page 143, vol. 13 :The playing with the dolls and similar images is forbidden, but it was allowed for 'Aisha at that time, as she was a little girl, not yet reached the age of puberty).

Sahih Bukhari Volume 1, Book 4, Number 229.

Narrated 'Aisha: I used to wash the traces of semen from the clothes of the Prophet and he used to go for prayers while traces of water were still on it (water spots were still visible).

Fateh Peter DeLaCrau. If Muhammad had founded his religion today, the media would have been unleashed against him by accusing him of being a horrible pedophile, but at the time it only shocked a few prudish Puritans. In Shari'a-enforced countries (Iran, for example), this love story of Muhammad with a nine-year-old girl even determines the legal age of marriage.

Muhammad therefore also strengthened his position with regard to a number of tribal groups through a series of well-calculated marriages, while satisfying his liking for women and a high sexual hunger; which, in the eyes of the Muslim tradition, is by no means considered a defect. Would he not have said that among the four qualities God had given him were generosity, "violent force" and "frequency of coitus"? According to another version, he had the potentia ad conjunctionem of forty men, forty, the perfection figure! What is especially symbolic! But Muslim sources nevertheless tell us that besides he often met each of his wives the same night. For what a result?

Among them there was Sawda, a strong woman who had left her husband in Ethiopia, but who was a good cook, Hafsa, the daughter of Umar, Juwayriya, the daughter of the chief of the Bani al-Mustalaq (a war prisoner), and some widows like Umm Salama.

Muhammad also had sex slaves (de facto wives) including a Black woman named Mary (a Coptic Christian from Ethiopia) who gave him a boy, Ibrahim (the latter lived only a few months); and a young Jew named Rayana, as we have seen, after having her husband executed. In 628, he abducted another seventeen-year-old Jewish girl, Safya, whom he also took as de facto wife. In 639, after returning to Mecca to reconcile with his clan, he took another wife, Maymuna, the sister of his uncle Abbas's wife. And even another wife, Umm Habiba, daughter of the powerful Abu Sufyan, thus becoming the son-in-law of the richest man in Mecca.

Many of Muhammad's marriages were therefore political marriages, but concerning sex, Muhammad had neither rules nor compulsions. Some of his behaviors in this field even aroused the disapproval of a part of his entourage, and his private life has had a great influence on several of his ideas, therefore on the revelation of Islam to the world.

Indeed, even though most of his marriages responded to a political interest (in order to conciliate alliances with other clans); his desire was expressed on many occasions, as illustrated by his adventure with Zenob bint Khuzayma, thirty years old), the wife of his own (adoptive) son Zayd ben Haritha. One day when he had seen Zenob washing herself, Muhammad was dazzled by her beauty, and he wanted her. But, still a prisoner of his petty-bourgeois scruples, Muhammad would first have spoken to Zenob, who would have thought it a good idea; and then to his adopted son, who would gladly have accepted (at least according to Islamic tradition) to separate from his young and beautiful wife, in order to please his adoptive father.

Following this episode, which was much talked about, especially by the munafikun , Muhammad in this case having always hated the hypocrites, God who does things decidedly well, officially ordered him to take her as a wife; in order to demonstrate to the world that adoptive and biological children should not

be confused. A timely (!) divine revelation therefore descended from heaven to abolish the adoption and allow him to marry his daughter-in-law: "O Prophet! Lo! We have made lawful unto you your wives unto whom you hast paid their dowries, and those whom your right hand possesses of those whom God has given you as spoils of war, and the daughters of thine uncle on the father's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the father's side, and the daughters of thine uncle on the mother's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the mother's side who emigrated with you, and a believing woman if she gives herself unto the Prophet and the Prophet desire to ask her in marriage, a privilege for you only, not for the (rest of) believers." (Chapter 33, verse 50, but there are also verses 2 to 37.) When was revealed the Quranic verse allowing Muhammad to postpone the turn of bed of the wife who wanted it for the benefit of another one (chapter 4, verse 128 ? on a proposal of Sawda), and when he declared that God had allowed him to marry his adoptive son's wife, Aisha said to him ironically....

Sahih Bukhari, Vol. 6, Book 60, Hadith 311.

"I used to look down upon those ladies who had given themselves to God's Messenger and I used to say, "Can a lady give herself (to a man)?" But when God revealed: "You can postpone (the turn of) whom you will of them (your wives), and you may receive whom you will [Editor's note. The Ethiopian slave Mary?] . And whomsoever you desire of those whom you have set aside (her turn temporarily) it is no sin on you (to receive her again)." (V.33:51) I said (to the Prophet), "I feel that your Lord hastens in fulfilling your wishes and desires."

After having taken Zenob, Zayd's wife, his adopted son, in his house, Muhammad married her, organized a party, and gave sheep to eat to his guests; once the meal was over, Muhammad stood up so that the guests knew that the party was over and that they had to leave. Therefore everyone went away, except for a few who stayed to talk to Zenob.

Muhammad therefore goes out himself to make them understand that they must leave, but after returning, having found that they were still chatting with his wife (or his wives), the following verse was then revealed to him. " O you who believe! Enter not the dwellings of the Prophet for a meal without waiting for the proper time unless permission be granted you. But if you are invited, enter, and, when your meal is ended, then disperse. Linger not for conversation" (chapter 33 verse 53).

Chapter 66, 1-5, was also revealed unexpectedly (!) to allow Muhammad to leave his wives if he wanted, to sleep with the very Christian Mary (the black slave that had been offered to him as a gift). Tabarsi. Muhammad was in the room of Hafsa the daughter of Omar. Hafsa went out to visit her parents. Muhammad then brought his Coptic Christian slave named Mary into the bed of Hafsa, and slept with her. This Mary was a gift made to Muhammad. (Yes, at that time, and the founder of Islam was never offended by that apparently, you could offer human beings as a gift, just as if they were furniture or animals.) When Hafsa came back and learned the thing, she made a scene to the prophet of God by reproaching him for having slept in her own bed with a black smelling bad. Muhammad asked him for forgiveness and yielded his sex slave to Abu Bakr, but made his wife promise not to tell others about it. But Hafsa did not keep his promise and told other wives about it. Jealous (one understands them, polygamy has never been an enviable situation for women, there is only God and Muhammad to believe the opposite); Aisha the daughter of Abu Bakr, Hafsa the daughter of Umar, Asma the daughter of Osman, Umm Habiba the daughter of Abu Sufyan and Zenob the ex-wife of Zayd conspired. So that Muhammad no longer sleep with his concubines, and especially with the Black Christian called Mary. Muhammad gave in and promised not to sleep again with her. Then he changed his mind and, fortunately, God intervened once more to defend his prophet against those termagants and shrews who had not understood anything.

From where, then, the famous divine directive No. 66 verses 1-5: O Prophet! Why ban you that which God has made lawful for you, seeking to please your wives ? And God is Forgiving, Merciful etc.etc. Muhammad, therefore, had between fifteen and twenty official wives, whom he married in an atmosphere of scandals and rivalries attested, as well as dozens of sex slaves (de facto wives), the majority of whom were prisoners of war. After each victory, the Muslims seized the possessions of the vanquished, but also divided their wives and daughters. Even mothers. After the battle, Muhammad himself was the first to choose the woman he liked, by throwing his coat on her. Most of the wives or de facto wives that Muhammad brought back from his raids were women of great beauty, whose husbands he had murdered, or whose husbands were still alive; but in this case the wife was still obliged to become his sex slave. According to Mohammad Ibn Jarir Tabari, the first husband of the beautiful Safiya was called Salam. After his death, and since she was beautiful and well built, she had many suitors and remarried with a Jewish merchant called Kinana. During his raid against the Banu Nadir at Khaybar, Muhammad made this Kinana be tortured then beheaded, and when he saw the prisoners, he threw his mantle on Safiya, who became his thing (Life of Muhammad by A. Guillaume page 515).

As this phenomenon increased and as the number of sex slaves of Muhammad increased similarly unceasingly, God had, at one point, forbid Muhammad to take new "wives," or to change them.

"It is not allowed you to take (other) women henceforth, nor that you should change them for other wives even though their beauty pleased you, save those whom your right hand possesses" (Chapter 33 verse 52).

As we have already seen, we never know clearly with the Quran, who speaks and to whom, but in this case, it seems very sure that it is God who spoke.

There are three chapters and more than a hundred verses relating to Muhammad and his harem of pious and virtuous wives. Chapter No. 4 Heading the women precisely - No. 33, the chapter heading the clans, and the chapter No. 66, entitled banning.

A frequent phenomenon in the Quran, many of its verses do not correspond to divine commandments valid for all eternity, but to much more temporary or ephemeral problems, those that Muhammad personally faced then. For example, the chapter No. 33.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM.

First of all, let us note that if there is an entire chapter of the Quran dedicated to women, that is to say, explaining to Muslim men how to treat their wives (Chapter N ° 4 heading An-Nisa); it exists no symmetrical or reciprocal chapter, that is, explaining to the Muslim women how to treat their men. The Quran, and not an abusive interpretation of the Quran, as many pseudo-intellectuals or pseudo-heads believe or pretend to believe, considers that woman is inferior to man, that she must be virtuous, good wife, always consenting to her husband, in a word, submissive.

In the Quran, the female sex is systematically combined with paganism or devil.

Chapter 4 : 117: " They invoke in His stead only females; they pray to none else than Satan."

Chapter 53 : 27: " Lo! it is those who disbelieve in the Hereafter who name the angels with the names of females."

Editor's note. They do not believe in the survival of the soul / mind after death, but they believe in the existence of angels. Strange! But not impossible! See the early Hebrew religion.

Muslim commentators rely on certain verses of the Quran to show that cunning, deception, and cheating are intrinsic to female nature. Not only does she not want to change, but she is by nature unable to change: she has no choice.

Chapter 12 : 23: "And she, in whose house he was, asked of him an evil act. She bolted the doors and said: Come! He said: I seek refuge in God! Lo! he is my lord, who has treated me honorably. Lo! wrongdoers never prosper."

Chapter 12 : 28-29: " So when he [the husband] saw his shirt torn from behind, he said: Lo! this is of the guile of you women. Lo! the guile of you is very great. O Joseph! Turn away from this, and you, [woman], ask forgiveness for your sin!"

Let us note in passing that in the Quran and therefore in the land of Islam, a woman is worth only half a man.

Chapter 2 : 282.

"And call two witnesses from among your men, two witnesses.

And if two men be not at hand,
then a man and two women."

Lastly, it should be remembered in passing that the Quran is mainly addressed to men, because when the text is also addressed to the believing women, it is stated.

Chapter 2 : 222: "They question you concerning menstruation. Say: It is an illness, so let women alone at such times and do not go in unto them till they are cleansed."

Chapter 2 : 228: " They (women) have rights similar to those (of men) over them in kindness, and men are a degree above them. God is Mighty, Wise! [Editor's note. What God is doing here?]

Chapter 4 : 34: " Men are in charge of women, because God has made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which God has guarded. As for those from whom you fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them. Lo! God is ever High, Exalted, Great "(Editor's note. Once again what is God is doing here?)

The Quran allows Muslims to have up to four legitimate wives (chapter 4: 3: marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if you fear that you cannot do justice (to so many) then one (only) or (the captives) that your right hands possess); not on the condition of being able to treat them in a perfectly fair manner (only the nice and smart people read this in the text), but provided they have a clear conscience in this field. For the presumptuous who doubts nothing and especially not him, everything is allowed. Anyway, reality has, once again, caught up with the fiction of nice and smart people, since polygamy

WAS PRACTICED DE FACTO AND REMAINS STILL PRACTICED, BY MEN, WHOSE ISLAM IS CONTESTED BY NOBODY.

Christian or "leftist" (or "rightist," we do not know very well today) propagandists of Islam, may struggle to try to present us a "politically correct prophet" (see the last issue of the French-German channel TV Arte on this subject); History and Quran itself are there to contradict them.

Sahih Bukhari vol. 5, book 58, number 236.

Narrated Hisham's father: Khadija died three years before the Prophet departed to Medina. He stayed there for two years or so and then he married Aisha when she was a girl of six years of age, and he consumed that marriage when she was nine years old.

In the twentieth century, Habib Bourguiba, the charismatic leader of Tunisian independence, banned polygamy in his country; arguing that no man, with the exception of Muhammad (because of isma of

course) could show a real equity between his wives. This interpretation of the Quran has not been imitated by other countries with Muslim majority (Turkey aside) and polygamy is officially accepted in them.

The status of women is one of the great scandals generated by the Quran. The ideal woman according to the Quran is closer to the subject slave than to a person able to decide on his life (7: 189). "He it is Who did create you from a single soul, and therefrom did make his mate that he might take rest in her. And when he covered her she bore a light burden, and she passed (unnoticed) with it." We will never say enough the harmfulness of the Sumerian myth of Adam and Eve.

The primacy of man comes from his first appearance (4: 1): "O mankind! Be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate."

Islam affirms, of course, that women must be treated "with justice and respect," but it is wishful thinking by definition, since it is also said in the Quran that "Men are in charge of women, because God has made the one of them to excel the other"(4:34).

As we have seen, this inferiority of the woman in the Quran is largely confirmed by Islamic law: her testimony accounts for only half of that of a man (except in cases of abortion, judged specifically female).).

This same inequality of treatment prevails in the inheritance (4 : 176): "Unto the male is the equivalent of the share of two females." The scorn in which women are held breaks out in this equivalence. How can one treat the woman "with justice" and, at the same time, reduce her inheritance to half of that of a man!

ISLAMIC VEIL AND QURAN.

Let us first note that such clothing was also originally intended for Christian women, according to this quote from St. Paul who has the merit of recognizing that it was well a mark of subjection with regard to women.

First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 14 verse 33 and chapter 11, verse 7.

"A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God but woman is the glory of man. For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. It is for this reason that a woman ought to have authority over her own head, because of the angels ????"

In Islamic lands the wearing of the veil distinguishes the free woman (hurra), from women of inferior status.

The different types of Islamic veils. Several ways of wearing the veil are indicated by Tabari and there are many types of veil depending on the country and the traditions. Here are a few.

-The hijab is the veil that covers the hair. It is found among other things in the Maghreb countries.

-The niqab is a light veil, placed on the nose, which conceals only the lower part of the face.

-The burka covers the whole body from head to toe. It also hides the face, women can see only through a kind of grate in front of the eyes.

-The chador same thing but the face is not masked.

A frequent phenomenon with the Quran, many of its verses do not correspond to divine commandments valid from immemorial time, but to much more temporary or ephemeral problems, those that Muhammad personally faced then. For example, the chapter No. 33. In view of the preceding verse, the 55 (it is no sin for your wives to converse unveiled with their fathers or their sons, etc.) it is clear that verse 59, the verse on the Islamic veil ("O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them, etc.") was first revealed to them.

The Spirit having thought it wise to add "and to the women of the believers" logical with themselves Muslims are also right to say that this verse applies equally to all Muslim women. So, let's repeat it: these verses of the Quran were at the origin of the revelations concerning only the private life of the prophet, but they were then extended to all the believers (God must be happy).

What the Quran specifically says therefore about this damned Islamic veil.

Chapter 24.

Verse 31.

And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their khimar over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women (of their community), or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigor, or children who know nothing of women's nakedness. And let them not stamp their feet so as to reveal what they hide of their adornment.

Verse 60.

As for women past child-bearing, who have no hope of marriage, it is no sin for them if they discard their (outer) clothing in such a way as not to show adornment. But to refrain is better for them. God is Hearer, Knower.

Chapter 33.

Verse 53.

And when you ask of them (the wives of the Prophet) anything, ask it of them from behind a hijab. That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts.

Verse 59.

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to youdnin...

their...jalabihina... close round them....That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed. God is ever forgiving, Merciful."

And the woman submissive having to flee the male gaze does not have to hope for emancipation in heaven according to Muslim mythology about the houris. Women are only goods whose value depends on their submission to Islam (60 : 10). "If you know them for true-believing women, send them not back unto the disbelievers. They are not lawful for them (the disbelievers), nor are they (the disbelievers) lawful for them."

Notes. ". Khimar, "headscarf covering the head." A hijab is a veil in the sense of curtain in general.

Julbab: a word of the same family as jellaba = "dress."

We leave to the monolaters of Islam or Judeo-Christianity the task of determining exactly what the expressions "draw their khimar over their bosoms" and "to yudnin their jalabihina" imply. This debate, as far as we are concerned, we barbarian druids from the far west, does not interest us!

Stone notes of Peter DeLaCrau found on a notebook page. And inserted by his children at this place. Veil: the state of the problem.

Quran, chapter 24, verses 30, 31.

" And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their khimar over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons."

The word generally translated "veil" here is the Arabic word "khimar" which means "mantle" or "mantilla." As for the term expressed by "bosom," it is the Arabic word "juyub", that other translators convey by cleavage, chest, breasts.

Quran, chapter 33, verse 59.

O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them. That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed.

The word conveyed "veil" here and in many translations, is the Arabic term jalabibihinna, of jalabib which is the feminine plural of jilbab (the Maghreb jellaba or the Egyptian jellabiya, which means "dress," "garment" (or "shawl"?)

The different types of Islamic veil.

The word hijab refers more particularly to the veil that some Muslim women place on their head by leaving their face visible.

In Iran, its name is chador and does not hide the face or clothes of the woman.

When the face is covered, it is spoken of niqab, burqa, even chadri.

In Afghanistan, and in parts of Pakistan or India, burqa or chadri hide the whole body, and only show the lower legs, covered with pants (the woman under her veil is dressed in pants covered a dress falling just below her knees), occasionally her arms and hands. They are also called integral veils.

Nuances.

The niqab lets see the eyes, leaves a crack for the eyes.

The burqa lets see the eyes if we can say only behind a kind of grate.

But what the hell! Why was not God clearer?

The debate and the interpretations generally relate to the parts of the body to hide, which come under the interpretation of the Muslim concept of awra (the parts of the body to be concealed in the name of modesty from the sight of others, after puberty).

For nubile women, it is, for most commentators, the whole body, except, according to the authors, hands, feet.

Abu Hanifa is of the opinion that the woman's feet are by no means awra while Malik ibn Anas or Ahmad ibn Hanbal consider that the woman's feet should be hidden (based on post-Muhammad opinions).

General problem: only a few dozen hadiths, out of the hundreds of thousands reported by tradition, are perhaps genuine, that is to say words, facts and gestures (or absence of words or reaction) of Muhammad.

Questions now.

What did Jonathan Swift want to make understand with his story of people tearing each other to pieces in order to know whether to break the boiled eggs on the larger end, or on the smaller end ("Little-Endians" and "Big-Endians" in Gulliver's travels)?

What is the interest of holding forth ad infinitum on the meaning of this or that term necessarily divine in the mouth of Muhammad (to distinguish a true Islam, magnificent and, of course, having to win general approval, from a false Islam which would be itself to be firmly condemned)?

And if we left a little God aside, or out of all this, relying only on the natural law of our ancestors (recht aicnid) and the freedom (which stops as everyone knows where others begin)? Would not be the life of men made easier?

Does not a society have the right to oppose some manifestations, unquestionably religious (for example human sacrifices 1), complete and voluntary nakedness around the Kaaba in Mecca, etc.) if the latter injures too much some of its values?

One of my distant cousins in Canada sent me the following update about the hijab.

"In Egyptian villages and other Arab countries, some activists threw acid on the faces of women who refused to wear the veil; the next day, all the women of the village were veiled. Rachad Antonius, a sociologist, during the report "The revealing veil," TV5, March 11, 2007.

After schools, courts and workplaces, hijab activists are now attacking sports clubs. Two new incidents occurred this spring concerning the wearing of this scarf in competitions.

In what way can a simple piece of cloth on the head constitute a legitimate impediment to participate in a sport?

In fact, if these veiled Muslim women (who represent between 8 and 10% of Muslim women) are so attached to this veil, it is precisely because it is not just a piece of fabric. To try to see clearly, ask us why the hijab is a problem, while specific outfits, such as Indian or African outfits, do not seem to bother anyone. Even the veil of Benazir Bhutto, the former president of Pakistan, did not provoke any hostile reaction. So it is not the difference that disturbs [contrary to what the anti-racists claim], but what is then expressed by this specific type of veil.

Kill the beauty of the world ...

When a Muslim woman chooses to wear the hijab - and thus hide her neck, her ears, and the slightest bit of hair - rather than another type of headscarf, a simple headband or a symbolic medallion of Islam; she does not only express her Muslim identity, but the choice of a certain type of Islam, that is, integrist or fundamentalist Islam. She takes a step that sets her apart from other Muslim women, and indicates that she is now making her religion pass before any other consideration.

This choice of life regards only the individual concerned, but if the choice is made freely, we must accept the compulsions that come with it. In this case, we do not have to ask that all of civil society - from employers to sports clubs - or public institutions such as schools and hospitals, change their rules to adjust to this choice.

If I enter a mosque, I have to take off my shoes; in the same way, Muslims must accept the rules of the game outside their religious universe.

A bloody shroud ...

But there is worse. The hijab has its history, and this story is not always rosy; it is even rather red. The current wave of claims linked with the hijab comes from the 1979 Khomeinist revolution in Iran. The fundamentalist movement subsequently reached the countries in North Africa. In the eighties and the beginning of the nineties, thousands of Iranian, Egyptian, Algerian, and Afghan women were raped, disfigured with vitriol, or slaughtered for not wearing the veil. Muslim fundamentalism then spilled over into Europe and then on this side of the Atlantic.

The first case of hijab at school came in 1994 in Quebec, whereas at the beginning of the nineties no hijab were seen in Montreal, despite the fact that 45,000 Muslims already lived there. Of course, immigration is no longer the same.

But it is also necessary to know that a country like the Turkey of Ataturk, of which 99% of the population is Muslim, as well as the Tunisia of Habib Bourguiba, have prohibited the wearing of the veil in their public institutions. Shah's Iran had done the same and Egyptian women also called for its ban. Algeria before the Islamic Salvation Front, and the Palestine of the seventies, did not know this type of veil.

You cannot ask us to ignore or forget this reality. Viewed from this angle, the hijab appears as a shroud; its trivialization and its expansion consecrate the victory of the fundamentalists. That some Muslim women claim it in the name of a certain "spiritual process" does not change that fact.

Explain us why the spiritual process suddenly passes in the form through the wearing of this imposed garment. If, on the other hand, it was really a question of expressing a spiritual path, why would this be only the lot of women, and why is it imposed on non-Muslim women in Islamist states?

The hijab is in fact an instrument for regulating the relationship between the sexes. This is the beginning of the thread of religious fundamentalism: pull this thread and all the rest comes with it. A democratic society must know how to set its rules and limits and not yield to those who want to make their religious principles prevail over all the rules of social life, and this to the detriment of secular civil laws.

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Islam has perpetuated until today an archaic, unjust and unequal vision of the rights (or rather lack of rights) of women. For a Muslim of strict observance, the woman is nothing more than a kind of slave who must totally obey her "master."

The problem of the veil in Islam highlights the same type of hypocritical behavior, the same propensity to play on words or to refer to local practices that were not specifically Muslim at the origin.

The wearing of the veil among women in the Middle East is in fact a very old custom. We find traces of it in the laws established by Tiglath-Pileser I, king of Assyria in the twelfth century before our era (see Essay on Judaism).

Article 40 of this code spells out clearly who should and should not veil.

Married women, widows and Assyrian women must not have their heads uncovered when they go out into the street. Daughters of status must be veiled, whether by a veil, a robe or a [mantle]; they must not have their heads uncovered.

A concubine on the street with her mistress is to be veiled. A hierodule who has gotten married must be veiled on the street, but a single hierodule must have her head uncovered; she may not be veiled. A harlot is not to be veiled; her head must be uncovered. Any man who sees a veiled harlot is to apprehend her, produce witnesses and bring her to the palace entrance. Although her jewelry may not be taken, the one who apprehended her may take her clothing. She will be caned (fifty stripes) and have pitch poured on her head.

If a man sees a veiled harlot and lets her go rather than bringing her to the palace entrance, he will himself be caned (50 stripes). His ears will be pierced threaded with a cord tied behind him, and he will be sentenced to a full month's hard labor for the king.

Slave girls are not to be veiled either. Any man who sees a veiled slave girl is to apprehend her and bring her to the palace entrance. Her ears will be cut off, and the man who apprehended her may take her clothes (G. R. Driver and J. C. Miles "Assyrian Law Codes").

St. Paul, in the first of his "Epistles to the Corinthians" (chapter XI, verses 4 to 16), also insists on the need for the woman to have her head veiled when she prays or prophesies. And he adds : (for those who know what I mean) "Because of the angels."

Muslim psychosis on the power of seduction of women (awra) has its origin in chapter 24 verse 31 (3 times longer than the verse devoted to male vanity quickly finished in 5 lines) and has since given rise to a crazy generalization.

It must also be pointed out here that the problem of the veil (hijab) and the verses that we find on this subject come from the remarks, not of God, but of Umar, and concern at first only the wives of Muhammad. As Muhammad had several wives, Umar, who was the father of one of them, suggested to him that his wives should be veiled. Before that, Muhammad himself sat Aisha on his shoulders, with his beautiful long hair visible by everybody. Later, when the problem of Aisha's relationship with another man appeared (the affair of the necklace or al-ikf) the question of the veil was, of course, more seriously aroused.

The veil or hijab was first ordered in the case where one went to Muhammad (chapter 33 : 53 to 59): "O Prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them. That will be better, so that they may be recognized and not annoyed....And when you ask of them (the wives of the Prophet) anything, ask it of them from behind a curtain. That is purer for your hearts and for their hearts."

If we exclude older women, frankly ugly women, and those whose behavior is riddled with masochism (there are some!); few Muslim women are really attached to this type of clothing, which turns them into so many anonymous bags. They wear these degrading clothes only by obligation, and under the compulsion of "traditions" imposed by men. This is particularly true in countries that still keep a semblance of secularism (e.g., Turk, Tunisia, Algeria) and where the wearing of "Islamic" outfits is not made mandatory by law. The wearing of a veil or scarf being nothing more than a custom, in many Muslim countries, the woman does not mask her face. Some Muslim peoples have never seen fit to impose the wearing of any veil or clothing. Among the Tuareg, it is the man who wears the veil while the woman has never worn it.

Muslims who force their wives and daughters to wear the headscarf or veil do so much more to assert their authority (and unhealthy jealousy) than to respect any "divine law." There is nothing "revealed" in all this. Among Muslims, the wearing of a headscarf, a veil, or a chador is, in reality, a submission of the woman to the man, and even supposing that he exists, God has nothing to see in all this!

Scarf which is limited to the covering of the hair, fabric that leaves only the eyes as the only call for help, grating inflicted by the taliban, or complete covering of the face.

Officially a bulwark against male eyes, this veil silences half of the population.

Legal marriage, as it emerges from the Quran, is a subtle blend of legal rules and pre-Islamic customs. It is especially with cohabitation, a lawful means of having sex without committing the sin of "zina." In terms of marriage, Islam has never been an "egalitarian" religion.

In the chapter "impediments," the Quran is not very different from the other legislations of the time, but introduces, however, a notion peculiar to it. The one which forbids the marriage with the sister of a wife already married officially and still alive. But Islam allows a Muslim to marry a Jewish or Christian woman, while prohibiting, of course, the Muslim woman to do the same. The Jews used to adopt, and adopt still, the same discriminatory attitude. In addition, among Jews and Muslims, women do not participate in worship itself. She is only the spectator and the victim of it!

In Islamic law, marriage can take place if both spouses are pubescent. The Quran does not trouble itself with the notion of a "legal majority" which, in any case, did not exist in the seventh century! It also allows the practice of *jabr* or *jibar*, of forced marriage. That is to say, the right for a father to marry his minor daughter and even a child without her consent, and without even telling her about it. And in this case, even puberty is no longer a *sine qua non*. *Jabr* besides is not a specifically Islamic custom. It existed long before Islam and was widespread in most of the eastern Mediterranean.

The Jewish Talmud granted the same right to the father. Note also that the consent of the girl is required - in Islamic law - only if she is emancipated, already widowed or divorced. She may, however, refuse to be married to a madman, an epileptic or an ill-formed man. It is also to be remembered that the Quranic law decreed that deflowering was lawful from the age of nine. She relies, once more, on the example of Muhammad who, wishing to marry Aicha, declared her *nubile* at this age. Islamic marriage implies "constant cohabitation" and the maintenance of the household. It requires the man to feed his wives (they can eat whatever they are able to consume!) The Quran allows the husband to give the wife of whom he would have to complain a "good hiding through minor (sic) violence" but recommends him to abstain from bad treatment and serious abuses.

Muslim machismo is in no way limited to establishing a merely theoretical male-female superiority, but therefore also advocates domestic violence with the greatest clarity (4: 34): As for those from whom you fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them. Then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them. Lo! God is ever High, Exalted, Great " [we wonder again what God is coming to do in all this. "God," if he exists, cannot be at the origin of such precepts]. A fecund marriage is a religious obligation. The woman is the servant of man, but she must also give birth.

" Birth control is viewed with horror by the believing Muslim. The Muslim woman must be, first of all, a mother of Muslims.

It is precisely the large Muslim family that will, eventually, renew the strength of Muslim countries, while the decadent and sterile West will wither away, with its elderly population put away in rest homes, awaiting death. And the West will finally be defeated by Islam, because Islam symbolizes life and vitality, and it does this, of course, by the very immobility of its tradition!" (Annemarie Delcambre *Inside Islam* p. 90).

In Muslim society, celibacy is a kind of anomaly since man has the right to "own" four wives (with the exception, of course, of Muhammad, who arrogated to himself the right to have more) ; as well as an "unlimited" number of slave *de facto* wives (Muhammad had at least eleven of them). In this the Quran only confirmed the old tribal customs, those of peoples for whom the number of descendants was a source of prestige (except for Muhammad still , who had only one son and one daughter despite his fifteen wives and numerous *de facto* wives).

Following the example of the Prophet, the caliphs, sultans, and other Muslim "chiefs" therefore granted them many "religious" overrides in this field. Some of them locked up hundreds of women in "harems" (Arabic "*haram*": taboo, sacred things, or reserved things) guarded by castrated men (eunuchs). Among these women, it was not unusual to find non-Muslims captured during raids. The captives were saved only if they agreed to enter the winner's harem.

The "repudiation" - which is the subject of a certain number of verses of the Quran - is a method of the dissolution of marriage common to all peoples of Semitic origin, very different from divorce. Among the Israelites, Deuteronomy allows the husband to repudiate his wife without (long) formalities. This custom persisted for a very long time among the Jews, so much so that in Europe the Grand Sanhedrin – summoned in 1807 on the orders of Napoleon I - was ordered to put an end to this practice which allowed repeated marriages; but in many Muslim countries, man may still repudiate four women without having to justify himself. Among Sunni Muslims, the husband also has the right to reconsider his decision, which is handy!

Let us once again insist with journalists, intellectuals, and all the nice and smart people in our country, on the fact that a repudiation is not a divorce, and that there is a fundamental difference between the two. What the word repudiation implies is the dismissal of the wife by the only will of the husband, and it is a manifestation of his power. For the wife, on the other hand, it is equivalent to being thrown out on the street and to have no more legal protection even minimal.

The deep contempt for women that motivates Muslims has often manifested itself in the old Bedouin custom of the "temporary" marriage. Called mut'ah or sigheh in Iran, it could not last more than an hour and allowed, once, the satisfaction of the sexual needs of men who were away from their wife (s): caravan drivers, merchants, pilgrims. It was, in fact, a form of disguised prostitution. Today, and even though this form of (very) temporary relationship is no longer justified, mut'ah or sigheh allows sex outside marriage. Here again, we are faced with a flagrant case of hypocrisy. Relations with prostitutes are therefore tolerated by the most puritanical Islamic regimes if the "tricks" do not last more than one hour. Hence a resurgence of prostitution in Muslim countries where social misery continues to grow from year to year. Imitating the grandfather of their "prophet," Muslims arrogate to themselves "dispensations" by playing on words and referring to the habits and customs that are more than fifteen centuries old. Those who frequent prostitutes hide behind this so-called Quranic authorization that would be the right interpretation of the verse 24 of chapter 4. Since fucking "sessions" rarely last more than an hour, they are "in order with God." What next !

As Muslims can rule over the women or girls of their families, they are, of course, inclined to exploit women who do not benefit from the guardianship of a man AND EVEN WORSE.

It is to the Quran that some Muslims who commit crimes that would make Jack the Ripper jealous, refer! The Iranian justice ended up in sentencing to death (and executing) a certain Saeed Hanaei; a thirty-nine-year-old construction worker (during his October 2001 trial) who murdered sixteen prostitutes in the city of Mashhad in northern Iran.

The "serial killer" was unmasked when one of his victims managed to escape then to take refuge in a police station. His method was simple: he pretended to be a customer, lured his victim to a corner, quiet, "consumed her" and then strangled her with his Islamic veil! Saeed Hanaei will explain that he did so because a man approached his wife as she was passing through a bad neighborhood. He had taken her for a prostitute. Hanaei would have felt defiled then invested with a divine mission: to chase "impure" women from the holy city of Mashhad!

We are here before a classic case of mental alienation rooted in religious mysticism. Others have done the same in Catholic or Puritan countries, or in Jewish communities. It should be noted that some Iranian clerics demanded clemency for him because, according to them, he had never "shed innocent blood."

But the prostitutes who were massacred by Hanaei had not really chosen this job (the oldest in the world). One of them was only ten years old when she was then forced to marry (still the annoying precedent of Aisha !) Repudiated when she was twenty years old, by her husband, she was then forced to raise her five children alone. Prostitution - a taboo subject in the land of the ayatollahs - had been the only option for this woman who had been "legally repudiated" with her children. And it is this kind of courageous mother that Iranian clerics dare to call "impure woman"? The bastard in this case, it was the "pious Muslim" her husband yes! Hanaei enjoyed many marks of sympathy during his arrest and his family, very proud, still venerates his memory as that of a "holy man"!

The Iranian Inquisition does not consider as a true devotee the Muslim who sits too quickly in the hot spot that a woman has just left. Some doctors of the law even claim that fornication can be done through the eye or the ear. What the Devil !

But, oddly enough, in the West, the vast majority of nice and smart people or vice versa since it is the same thing (and by that we mean all those who, in one way or another, vicars, rabbis, priests, lawyers, journalists, politicians, leaders, intellectuals, writers, doctors, anti-racist filmmakers, anti-communists, in short, all who know); at the same time and with one voice, hit the poor (uh, the rich by definition since themselves are altruistic and therefore poor, and we all selfish and therefore rich) ignorant that we are with their decision: "yes to Quran and mosques, more there will be more men will be free and happy! "

Can we try to remind of all those nice and smart people, who are tirelessly explaining to us on television or elsewhere, to us who are stupid and wicked, or at least who do not know that, who, etc. that the best and wisest design of secularism is still that which puts all religions on an equal footing, by radically excluding them from political power; and that we cannot admit exceptions which would favor any religion in relation to others. Religion it is at home and in places of worship intended for that, and not in the public space! 2) There is no need to contravene this principle, or the other rules which condition the good functioning of modern societies; even by anti-racism, even by positive discrimination (as if there could be besides exclusively positive and not automatically resulting in

negative, discrimination)! For the record: Twentieth-century apartheid in South Africa was only a positive discrimination in favor of a visible minority (the whites).

1) Who said that the sacrifices of human victims offered to the gods had nothing to do with any religion?

2) On a personal level we are even against the transmission to children of their parents' ideas about religion. Let them choose to believe, or not believe, when they have reached adulthood. At home one must talk to children about religion only in a neutral and objective way.

CIRCUMCISION, EXCISION , AND OTHER MUTILATION.

The fitrah 1) is five things, including circumcision. Abu Hurayrah said: I heard the Prophet (peace and blessings of God be upon him) say: "The fitrah 1) is five things – or five things are part of the fitrah – circumcision, shaving the pubes, trimming the mustache, cutting the nails and plucking the armpit hairs." (Bukhari 5891; Muslim 527).

If it is not mentioned specifically or if the pronouns do not point to a certain gender, a hadith is valid for both sexes. Hence, the above-mentioned hadith is applicable for both men and women.

Narrated Umm Atiyyah al-Ansariyyah: A woman used to perform circumcision in Medina. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said to her: Do not cut severely as that is better for a woman and more desirable for a husband (Sunan Abu Dawud 41:5251).

But severe or not severe, female circumcision is a mutilation of the woman. And let's not talk about infibulation, and deflowering with a dagger!

Should the Americans in Boston return to the sword carrying in the street as in the eighteenth century, the Chinese women to the foot binding, the German women to the chastity belt? ? ? No ! So for pity's sake (God's sake of course) let we forbid finally really the excision admitted by Muhammad who contented himself (if we can say) to recommend moderation in the matter ("does not cut severely ").

In Mali, as in other African countries, imams agree to perpetuate shameful practices, true mutilation against the most basic rights of the human person. 80% of Malian women aged between fifteen and forty-nine are still circumcised despite the laws adopted by the government. It is the Malian League of Imams and Scholars for Islamic Solidarity (sic) which is the most directly opposed to the law prohibiting excision although, according to its spokesperson, the excision is " optional in the Muslim religion ." In other words, it is a custom, covered by Islam, that applies "according to whether you like the look of the customer" without any real need. Another crime against humanity among many others under the pretext of religion.

A God [like that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] who requires his believers to mutilate themselves to mark them, by their sex, as cattle are branded, is a God of dubious morality. One can understand that male or female circumcision, like any other medical intervention, can be justified in specific cases, and on individual medical indications. But mutilating children, boys or girls, pretending to do them good, is fanaticism. And in this area, there is no reason able to justify the distinction between female circumcision and male circumcision. Dr. Zwang goes even further. He says, "We can never stop female circumcision as long as we continue to practice male circumcision. How do you convince someone not to excise his daughter if at the same time you allow him to circumcise his son? "

Religion has been an instrument to justify male and female circumcision. It would be necessary to unmask its irrational character, and to denounce the harmful role of certain anti-racist religious circles which defend it, or which refuse to fight it.

Personal opinion of Peter DeLaCrau. We do not quite agree with Gerard Zwang. Circumcision is very different from excision and it is necessary to be a very pious Muslim to dare to put both on the same level, to dare equate the removal of the clitoris to the removal of the foreskin. You have said taqiyya as when a divorce is renamed a repudiation?

The Quran is therefore not only an instrument of oppression against non-Muslims, but also, paradoxically, an infernal machine raging against its own followers.

Husbands in the lands of Islam have the right to give their wives a good hiding, to take their children away, they can repudiate them in a few minutes, and even without their knowledge, by disinheriting them completely for the benefit of a younger one.

In addition to this right of good hiding, confinement, and repudiation, or custody of children, reserved for the husband; there is also a legal inferiority of the woman in matters of testimony and inheritance, with even outright disinheritance in the case of a non-Muslim wife.

It is regarding women that Islam reveals its anachronism and its most unequal aspects. The Quran reduces women to the rank of spectator and servant of man. She can be exchanged ("exchanging a wife for another" is the expression used in verse 20 of chapter 4 of the Quran) or rejected (repudiated) as for any standard consumer product; she is dependent on the husband as well as the cattle. The master can dispose of her as he sees fit and use force against him. To speak of misogyny here is too weak to express the contempt and subjection of women. Adultery seems to be a feminine exclusivity.

The Muslim world has remained faithful to these prehistoric precepts. By giving the Quran an immutable character, Muslims perpetuate habits and customs which are no longer in force in other communities for centuries. In this, they are joined by "ultra-Orthodox" Jews (Haredim), the same ones

who form the hard core of the Israeli right. The fascistic methods of this extremist, warlike and racist right wing are well known. Methods which are very similar to those of the most radical Islamist factions. They are these religious fascists who have claimed (and got!) Kosher buses (with separate compartments for men and women).

Islam carries a fundamentally unequal idea of the sexes. In many Muslim communities, men have arrogated the power of life and death to women and girls (honor killings). Adult men (or pre-adults) "reign supreme" and impose their wishes on women, girls, and children. Islam does not give freedom to women; the Quranic laws leave her no possibility of emancipation in society.

Some Muslim thinkers, apparently more revolutionary or more reformist, admit that women have the right to work. But by looking more closely at this, what we see is that the jobs they are thinking of are, for example, teachers (for girls) doctors and nurses (for women), etc. According to these learned thinkers, the woman can exercise all trades, except:

- 1 Those who are incompatible with her belief, such as cleaning sewers, fishing in lakes and rivers (??)
- 2 Those who are incompatible with his feminine nature: controller, police officer, dancer (sic)?
- 3 Those she is bodily unable to perform, such as factory work.
- 4 Those who require the use of a horse or bicycle.
- 5 And, of course, those who require the use of reason: she cannot be magistrate or imam. Other thinkers ban the jobs of actress, stewardess or saleswoman.

The arguments that are most frequently used to justify these prohibitions are....

1 Her feminine nature: she is made to stay at home, meet the sexual needs of her husband, and take care of children.

2 Her limited mental faculties.

3 Her psychological weaknesses due to menstruation, pregnancy, and childbirth.

And if women have a certain role in many Islamic societies - where religion is the most formidable barrier to the liberation of the mind, correctness of discernment, and freedom of expression - it's despite Islam they got it. In most countries dominated by the Quranic law, men can, with almost complete impunity, kill their daughters or sisters who do not submit to the injunctions of the Quran; and especially those who go out with men, non-Muslims, or without being married to them (honor killing). Let's acknowledge, however, that there are a few jobs that are hardly made for women: pit workers, marine commandos with a knife between one's teeth! By cons why not a woman admiral?

And now a little coolness to relax and change our minds, after all these injustices of the Quran about half of mankind (the other half, of the sky said Mao Zedong). What the famous Casanova wrote about women in an infinitely more elegant style than that of the Quran, a formal elegance that only reflects the grace of his ideas about them.

Conversation of Giacomo Casanova (translated from Italian).

"Love is patient; it is full of goodness; it forgives everything; it hopes everything. Love never perishes.

For the tongues will be silent, the prophecies will be fulfilled, and the knowledge will disappear.

Remain faith, hope and love. And the greatest of the three is Love. Every man is an infinite tenderness, even if he himself does not know, who loves to cry for not having seen the sun in order to know that he still has tears. Yet, man exercises oppression over woman. A real tyranny that she accepts only because she is better, more reasonable, more generous than him.

Qualities that should have earned her supremacy, but have, on the contrary, enslaved and thrown her at his mercy. For man is a hundred times more unreasonable, crueler, and more inclined to oppress others. But the one who never speaks ill of women does not really love them. To love them, to understand them, it is necessary to have suffered through their fault. Then, and only then, he will be able to find happiness on the lips of the beloved ."

Editor's note. Casanova perhaps exaggerates a bit.

It is true that women are undoubtedly the most beautiful and elegant creatures in this world, and that most humbly sacrifice themselves daily for their husbands and children; (There are exceptions, for example in this country a father has only one right: the right to pay, to continue to repay - only - the bills of the house from which he was expelled by the courts, the letter box of his wife's lover, or to help finance the local church, even if he is not one of his flocks;) but it is still among men that you find the truest love passions, because the man is naturally inclined to excess, apparently. See the beautiful

Portuguese legend of the dead queen: Ines de Castro (1325-1355). And Orpheus was perhaps fundamentally right that makes Love the first of the forces in the cosmos.

1) The normal state of human being according to Islam. It was necessary to dare saying it, pious Muslims did! We are away from the recht aicnnid of our Fenian friends.

SUMMARY.

Is converting to Islam a proof of intelligence?

What is having education or a minimum of general knowledge?

What is the minimum of intelligence?

What is being frank ???

What is having courage?

What is lying or misleading, voluntarily?

What is a smoke screen for soldiers?

What is being a male (or female) intellectual finally?

The status of women is one of the greatest scandals caused by the Quran. The hierarchy between women and men must obey the very widespread macho rule (2: 228): "Men are a degree above women."

Quran 4: 34. "Men are in charge of women, because God has made the one of them to excel the other, and because they spend of their property (for the support of women). So good women are the obedient, guarding in secret that which God has guarded." Or still, about the servitude to which woman is assigned, the ideal woman is closer to the submissive slave than to a person who is free of deciding her life (7: 189): "He it is Who did create you from a single soul, and therefrom did make his mate that he might take rest in her. And when he covered her she bore a light burden, and she passed (unnoticed) with it."

The woman is a possession of the male of which he can dispose of as he sees fit; as regards the wife (2: 223: "Your women are a tilth for you (to cultivate) so go to your tilth as you will, and send (good deeds) before you for your souls"); and daughters (2: 221): "Give not your daughters in marriage to idolaters till they believe." And as any consumer good is thrown when it no longer liked by the user, the wife can be repudiated with the greatest ease; the procedure is specified in chapters NR 2 (verses 229 to 231) and NR 65 (verses 1 to 4). The scorn in which women are held breaks out in the equivalence "1 man = 2 women" when witnesses are needed to settle a dispute (2 : 282): "And call two witnesses from among your men, two witnesses. And if two men do not be at hand, then a man and two women, of such as you approve as witnesses, so that if one errs (through forgetfulness) the other will remember"; This same unequal treatment also prevails in inheritance (4 : 11): "God charges you concerning (the provision for) your children: to the male the equivalent of the portion of two females, and if there be women more than two, then theirs is two thirds of the inheritance, and if there be one (only) then the half ." See also chapter 4 verse 176. Polygamy is officially accepted (4 : 3): "marry of the women, who seem good to you, two or three or four" and Muhammad sets an example. See also chapter 33 verses 28 and 50. "O Prophet! Lo! We have made lawful unto you your wives unto whom you hast paid their dowries, and those whom your right hand possesses of those whom God has given you as spoils of war, and the daughters of thine uncle on the father's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the father's side, and the daughters of thine uncle on the mother's side and the daughters of thine aunts on the mother's side who emigrated with you, and a believing woman if she gives herself unto the Prophet."

Muslim machismo is by no means confined to establishing male / female superiority, but also provides for violent reprimand and expresses it with the greatest clarity (4 : 34): "As for those from whom you fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them!" The Quran shows here its true face of retrograde and aggressive religion, which survives only by the terror it inspires to the ones and by the attribution of a factitious superiority to others. Similarly in verse 15: "As for those of your women who are guilty of lewdness (adultery), call to witness four of you against them. And if they testify (to the truth of the allegation) then confine them to the houses until death takes them or (until) God appoint for them a way." Death for adulterous women, the only remedy for this Islam which, on the other hand, does not envisage the case of the adulterous man. Another example of spousal infidelity incriminating the wives in chapter 66 verse 10, still with death as an issue. To call for the death of the other is not the mark of a particularly elaborate reflection.

In Saudi Arabia, in the northern city of al-Shamli, a widow of Syrian nationality, Khamisa Sawadi; was sentenced on 3 March 2009 to 40 lashes and four months terms, followed by a final expulsion from the country. Her crime: receiving at home on 21 April 2008 two young men who did not belong to her direct family, in contravention of the laws in force.

The two young Fahd al-Anzi and Hadiyan Bin Zein were arrested as they were leaving the house by religious police officers, the mutawa'een recognizable by their bushy beards and calf-length dresses. They, too, were sentenced to prison and whipping.

The two "culprits" explained that they were doing the shopping for the old lady. One of them, Fahd, is also the nephew of Khamisa's late husband. But sharia (Islamic law) is sharia, said a lawyer interviewed by the press, Mr. Ibrahim Zamazami. Of course, a seventy-five-year-old woman "is not generally considered attractive," admits the lawyer, " but age is not a sufficient reason for an acquittal." On the other hand, the charges could be dropped in appeal if Khamisa had been well the nurse of Fahd, as he asserted, which would have made him the equivalent of the son of the old lady.

QURAN AND SLAVERY.

According to the Quran, God created the universe and put every being in its place. Mankind and the jinn were created only to worship God. So God is the master of man, while man is the slave of God (the root *ibad*, men, is the same as the one used to form the word slave). The sin by definition of the human creature is to want to be the equal of its Creator.

But the hierarchy of beings does not stop there. Almighty God wanted to establish an inequality among men and wanting to introduce a perfect equality between them is therefore an act that contradicts his will.

Quran chapter 16, verse 71. "God has favored some of you above others in provision. Now those who are more favored will by no means hand over their provision to those (slaves) whom their right hands possess, so that they may be equal with them in respect thereof. Is it then the grace of God that they deny ? "

Quran chapter 24, verse 31. "And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and be modest, and to display of their adornment only that which is apparent, and to draw their khimar over their bosoms, and not to reveal their adornment save to their own husbands or fathers or husbands' fathers, or their sons or their husbands' sons, or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons, or their women, or their slaves, or male attendants who lack vigor."

How not to see in these male attendants who lack vigor some eunuchs, that is to say, castrated slaves (from whom the testicles were removed) become unable of sexual "needs"? Not only does the Quran not condemn castration, but this passage seems to tolerate it and to recognize it as practice.

Quran chapter 30, verse 28. " He coins for you a similitude of yourselves. Have you, from among those whom your right hands possess, partners in the wealth We have bestowed upon you, equal with you in respect thereof, so that you fear them as you fear each other?

A little accounting, according to the right to the inheritance, the testimony and the sexual right, can give us a rough idea of the social hierarchy according to the Quran and if we therefore reconstruct the hierarchical order of the creation according to the verses mentioned, we end up with a pyramid of unequal statuses that looks like the following ...
God.

The free man / the jinn.

The free woman

The slave, man or woman.

The Arabic vocabulary is particularly rich in designating these different categories of unfree: *abd*, *abid*, *riqq*, *raqiq*, *jariya*, *jawari* (reserved for female slaves), *ghulam* (reserved for young male slaves), *raqba* (Quranic word which means "nape" or "head"), *zanj* or *aswad* (black, meaning "slave"), *mamluk* ("possessed"), *khaddam* (domestic servant), etc. The most generic expression that designates them all has its source in the imaged language of the Quran: *ma malakat aymanukum* ("what your right has possessed").

The table below shows us therefore that the one who collects the most privileges is consequently the free man, who can at the same time become master, claim to a complete part of inheritance, the valid testimony and the sexual rights both on his wives and captives. On the other hand, the one who collects the disadvantages is, of course, the slave, deprived at first of freedom, then of testimony, and of the other rights enjoyed by his owner, but still able to claim (apparently) to half of the inheritance (clause that is to be put in perspective since he is himself the property of someone else).

Differences between men and women

In terms of inheritance: as a rule the man one part, the woman half a part (chapter 4 verse 176).

As regards testimony: the woman's testimony is worth half that of a man (except in specifically female cases). Chapter 2 verse 282. Involve two witnesses; in the absence of two men, one man and two women, so that if one of them goes astray, the other may remind her.

In the matrimonial field: the man has the right to have four wives, the woman is entitled to only one spouse.

Sexual rights over slaves: man has the right to use all his slaves ... The woman has the right to use no one of her male slaves.

The woman seems therefore to be between the two: the recurring value in her is $\frac{1}{2}$, while that which is recurring in the slave is 0, while the master keeps for himself the whole. Moreover, the slave (especially woman) is as a matter of fact married, she does not marry: the poor believer, who cannot pay a dowry to be wed with a free Muslim woman, is thus allowed to be wed with a captive or slave (chapter 17 verse 25).

God is the master of the free man, who is himself master of the slave. Also, by virtue of this inequality rigorously instituted, the slave is not concerned by the inheritance and his testimony is worthless. Only

the free man is entitled to these privileges, which are granted to him by the Lord as so many gratuities. At no time in the text does the Quran condemn or abolish slavery.

According to these passages of the Quran, one of the ways to deny (juhud) the Master of the Universe is therefore to ignore this inequality. The Merciful has not granted to the slave and the free man the same gifts, and this is a social order wanted by Him.

Quran, chapter 2, verse 178. "O you who believe! Retaliation is prescribed for you in the matter of the murdered; the freeman for the freeman, and the slave for the slave, and the female for the female."

In case of murder, the value of the life of human beings is not the same thing according to the Quran. The retaliation - the punishment is the same as the offense – that it prescribes, wants nobody compensates the life of a free man by that of a slave or that of a woman because these lives are not equal. On the contrary, believers are invited to measure the life of a free man only with that of a free man, that of a slave with that of another slave, that of a woman with that of a woman. The statuses are well differentiated.

The evolution of Arab and Islamic societies has shown that these passages of the Quran have been widely used to found a horrible Eastern slave trade and Christian slave trade but also a permanent import of women from all over the world to supply the harems and the desires of the Muslim states. A crime against humanity that lasted three times longer than that which was legitimized in the West by a papal bull in 1452, for the benefit of the Portuguese, but also affecting twice more individuals (17 million?) The Quran thus gives a divine support to the inequality since it legislates on what must be the relations between master and slave.

Jurists have therefore provided a legal framework for the slave trade in order to regulate and legitimize it. If there is no code specific to slavery, the writings of different theologians often have sections and subsections that deal with it. Thus, imam al-Shafi follows closely in this case the al Mudawwana by Imam Sahnun in his regulation of the purchase and sale of slaves. But the dissemination of these writings in more general tracts makes invisible the legal arsenal dedicated to human trafficking. From this point of view, it lacks a handbook that can bring all parties together in a single volume.

The status of the slave is ambiguous, because he is sometimes treated as an adami, a human being (goodness, kindness towards him are appropriate), sometimes as merchandise subject to the laws of the trade.

It is forbidden in principle to reduce a Muslim to slavery. The only case where a Muslim can be a slave is when he is born of parents who are themselves slaves. However, a slave who becomes a Muslim does not automatically free himself for all that. Another originality of this jurisprudence is that a slave can buy his own freedom himself, provided he has the means and subject to the agreement of his master: it is said then mukatab. On the other hand, he is mudabbar if his master specifies that at his death, the slave can recover freedom. A third status based on the Quran concerns women. A woman called Um walad (mother of a male child) is ipso facto freed at the death of her master. His descendants keep a wali (a link of clientship) that binds them to his former masters.

The fiqh (Muslim exegesis and jurisprudence) has promoted rigorous rules as for slave status. For example, the penalties that apply to the slave are half reduced (which may seem like an advantage if it does not consecrate the inequality). In the field of dress, women slaves are not entitled to appear in the modest dress reserved for Muslim women and are, as a result of this discrimination, exempt from the "veil" (or from that which takes its place). Prestigious writers have written tracts or texts that teach how to buy slaves at the market without being fooled. The great Ibn Khaldun at the beginning of the Muqaddima (Introduction) gave some succinct advice in this direction. Ibn Butlan (died in 1063) wrote a Risala fi shira al-raqiq wa taqlib al-abid ("Letter on the purchase of slaves") showing what criteria must be adopted to avoid the traps of the market and make "good deals" in terms of buying slaves while ... the text stops here because the next page is missing ...

The human beings placed under the tutelage of a master are always humiliated, deprived of freedom even sometimes treated with an extreme violence, as in the case of the castration (little survive there) or the sexual possession by the owner (rapes, and abuses of all kinds). The desert crossings (for Africans) were sometimes real genocides. But it is true that no society seems to have had the monopoly of slavery (or clemency), African societies themselves practiced domestic slavery, and the Romans had enslaved many blond-haired and blue-eyed tall warriors, Celtic or Germanic like Cimbri and Teutones.

Conclusion.

The recommendations that the Quran addresses to slave owners, in the sense of their human and indulgent treatment, are undeniable. This approach reminds of that of Paul of Tarsus concerning the relations between slaves and masters in his epistle to the Ephesians (chapter 6, verses 5 to

9): Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear] And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them [...].

The exhortation of believers to free their slaves to the extent of presenting this action as an expiation of the master's sins is probably a bold innovation in relation to the codes governing slavery in pre-Islamic Arabia.

Nevertheless, a "mamluk or possessed" of this time is deprived of freedom. A strictly inferior status is reserved to him, which deprives him of the elementary rights granted to a normal Muslim. Measures to distinguish him from a simple Muslim are enacted by jurists on the basis of the quoted verses. The Quran gives bluntly to the master sexual rights over his female slave.

RACISM, PROSLAVERY , AND COUNTER-RACISM IN LANDS OF ISLAM.

Let us point out before everything as we have just seen that the Bible, and especially the four Gospels, don't condemn slavery in any way.

The Old Testament only requires the freeing of the Jewish slave after seven years (unless he is willing to continue in this way) and remains silent on the case of non-Israelite slaves.

There is no passage in the New Testament of the kind: "He who has slaves and does not free them immediately will go to hell; or will not ascend to heaven, or will not be able to follow me, or will be excommunicated ... "Even worse, St. Paul seems to accept its principle, since he in no way he has about it remarks of this kind, but only recommends well treating slaves, treating them as brothers, etc. Well, it's the same with Islam and African slaves.

While it is true that the Quran did not abolish slavery, it insisted nevertheless at length o that they are treated humanely and kindly. The ihsan (ideal) towards the slave is the same, the text tells us, that which is recommended towards parents, neighbors and orphans. The text of the sura of women is explicit.

Chapter 4, verse 36. "And serve God. Ascribe nothing as partner unto Him. (Show) kindness unto parents, and unto near kindred, and orphans, and the needy, and unto the neighbor who is of kin (unto you) and the neighbor who is not of kin, and the fellow traveler and the wayfarer and (the slaves) whom your right hands possess. Lo! God loves not such as are proud and boastful."

Similarly, the powers of the master are not unlimited. For example, he has no right to compel his slave to prostitution. But by insisting on this indulgent treatment, the text also implicitly recognizes the legitimacy of slavery, or the very particular form of slavery practiced in its time.

However, a major recommendation, that distinguishes the Quran in this field, is that the master is encouraged (but not obliged) to free his slave if he asks him.

Quran chapter 24, verse 33. "And let those who cannot find a match keep chaste till God give them independence by his grace. And such of your slaves as seek a writing (of emancipation), write it for them if you are aware of anything of good in them, and bestow upon them of the wealth of God which He has bestowed upon you. Force not your slave girls to whoredom that you may seek enjoyment of the life of the world, if they would preserve their chastity.

Thus, the liberation of the slave remains at the only discretion of his owner. It is up to the latter to judge whether his servant has the qualities (or goodness) necessary for his release. No liberty, therefore, if the master does not agree, and no law obliges him to do so. On the contrary, there is one that allows him to keep his slave in slavery. That said, the exhortation to emancipation is relayed by powerful means and some hadiths present it as an action capable of compensating for the greatest sins of the believer. The Quran even pushes the owner to spend his own property for the benefit of slaves by releasing them. Strange attitude which keeps the slave in an inferior status, which reproves equality, but which at the same time pushes for his emancipation and his human treatment, without ever decreeing its abolition.

Only Muslim slaves of both sexes are allowed to legally marry a free man. Non-Muslim slaves, of course, are not allowed to marry a Muslim. However, the master of a slave has the right to take her sexually in order to enjoy from, without being forced to anything, not even to take her as a wife.

Quran chapter 70 verses 29-31. "And those who preserve their chastity save with their wives and those whom their right hands possess, for thus they are not blameworthy; but whosoever seeks more than that, those are they who are transgressors."

The principles of this inequality of human beings are therefore supported by a distribution of privileges granted to the ones with the exception of others. Of course, a slave has no right on the body of (her) master, that goes without saying. But especially the wife of the master, unlike her husband who is allowed to sexually enjoy those he likes among slaves and captives, has no right to sexually enjoy a slave or a captive. This favor is that of the believing man, to whom presumably belongs the wife, and the female slave, and the male slave.

As you never can have a discussion on slavery in Islam without being objected the case of Bilal al-Habachi, an Ethiopian Christian slave first owned by Abu Bakr and freed by him, who then chooses to serve the Prophet; let's finish with him.

Muhammad therefore took Bilal on his service, and on arriving in Medina he decided to make him the first muezzin of Islam. A gesture, of course, of a great symbolic significance. But as we will see, as important as it is, this act is not the abolition of slavery. The black slave Bilal was not emancipated by the Prophet in Medina, but by his companion Abu Bakr in Mecca. Muhammad only promoted him to a distinguished social role, because of his Muslim status. His promotion therefore recognizes his faith, not his quality of a human being of whom one of the inalienable rights is freedom.

To return to slavery in the land of Islam itself, let us note that this incredible black slave trade began a long time before that which was undertaken by the Westerners, who apparently learned much from it (in the seventh century with regard to the Zanj, i.e., seven hundred years before) and it ended a long time after (1980 for Mauritania). And yet the progress of ideas in the nineteenth century was necessary so that Europeans gradually come to put an end to these ancestral practices. Not without clashes besides.

The Zandj, as well as many other black slaves from the East African coast (where they were captured, bought, or got from the submissive states, as tribute); were imported in large number into the heart of the Muslim empire from an indeterminate date. Their living conditions must have been extremely harsh, since in three centuries they revolted three times.

A first uprising occurred in 689-690, under the government of Khalid ibn Abdallah, successor of Musaab ibn al-Zubayr. It was apparently of minor importance, it was apparently small bands engaging in looting, which were dispersed without great difficulty by the government army.

The prisoners were beheaded and their corpses hanged on the gallows.

The second insurrection took place five years later, in 694. It seems to have been more important, and especially better prepared. The Zanj this time had a leader, a certain Rabah (or Riyah?) nicknamed "Shir Zanj" ("Zanj's Lion"), and the authorities were forced to go twice to crush them. The character of this revolt appears to have been complex, but the information we have about it is rather poor. The information we have on this movement does not allow us to detect its true character; some think that it did not break out spontaneously, and that the Zanj had been worked on by some propaganda.

But it is, of course, especially the third Zanj revolt which is the best known, for this new slave revolt shook very strongly and for fifteen years (between 869 and 883) Lower Iraq and Khuzistan; causing countless material damage and dozens (some sources speak of hundreds) of thousands of dead. It was the work of a formidable and apparently unscrupulous character, Ali ibn Muhammad, nicknamed "Sahib al-Zanj" ("the Zanj master"). "Typical Revolutionary," of obscure descent, but having been able to approach the "highest levels" of his time; a talented poet, educated, versed in the black arts, having followed various doctrines and attempted several uprisings (notably in Bahrain and Basra), he succeeded in fomenting the greatest slave insurrection in the history of the Muslim world.

Four reasons explain the success of his action and the longevity of this revolt.

a) The extreme misery of these "herds" of slaves. The rebels, according to Tabari [his volume 36 is our main source of information] were employed as diggers, responsible for farming Lower Mesopotamia, to remove the silt, to pile it into mounds, so as to make cultivable the nitrite lands of the Shatt El -Arab; grouped by work sites of 500 to 5,000 workers, penned there, without home or hope, with, for all food, a few handfuls of flour, semolina and dates.

b) The theater : conducive to guerrilla warfare.

c) The precarious situation of the power in Baghdad (the country at that time was shaken by anarchy in its central part, and by serious problems in the remote provinces).

d) The personal qualities (organizational, warlike and political) of Ali ibn Muhammad.

There are two periods in this insurrection.

- The first (869 - 879) is the period of expansion and success for the insurgents, the central power not being able, for internal and external reasons, to fight them effectively.

The rebels organize themselves, get weapons, and fortify themselves in camps set up in inaccessible places, from where they launch raids. After a great number of ambushes and battles which turn to their advantage (because the freed slaves constantly increase the "army" of the insurgents); they temporarily take over the main cities of lower Iraq and Khuzistan (Abadan, Basra, Wasit, Jubba, Ahvaz, etc.).

The Abbasid troops reoccupy without difficulty those cities that the Zanj have taken, looted and then left. But they are unable to suppress the revolt, or inflict a decisive defeat on an enemy present everywhere and nowhere. As the power of Baghdad had other more pressing problems to resolve, the Zanj issue was overshadowed. Meanwhile, the "Master of the Zanj," firmly established in the region of the canals where his "capital" is located, mints his own money, organizes his "State"; and attempts, more or less successfully, to be linked up with other contemporary movements (such as those of the Shia Qarmatians¹), and the Saffarids of Ya'qub ibn al-Layth).

- The second period (879 - 883) is only a slow death throes before the final crushing. At that time, the Zanj became the main concern of the Caliph in Baghdad, who acted methodically, cleaning everything in his way, leaving the Zanj to lock themselves in the canals area; where they suffered an intense siege, led by "the regent of the Caliphate," al-Muwaffak, and his son, Abu I-Abbas (the future caliph, al-Mutadid). Lastly, Ali ibn Muhammad was killed, his closest companions and officers taken prisoner,

then transferred to Baghdad, where they will be beheaded two years later; but some members of his family will survive him for some time.

We could conclude by saying that the Zanj revolt was a political (power struggle) and social revolt (improvement of the living conditions of a particular class of the population), but several points of importance concerning this extraordinary event would be worthy of long developments. The personality of the leader of the revolt, his so-called genealogies, his creed and his "ideology," the political and social organization of the new "State," his relations with the different classes of the population and with other contemporary movements.

It is necessary, however, to insist on one essential fact: if this very particular movement holds a place absolutely apart, among the very numerous insurrections that took place in the history of the Muslim Middle Ages; it is because he put an end to the only attempt in the Muslim world to change family slavery into colonial slavery.

1) These revolutionaries founded a kind of communist republic in the eastern region of Arabia (Bahrain) in 926 and went as far as to take Mecca and steal the black stone from the Kaaba in 930.

APPENDIX 1.

REFLECTION ABOUT THE SUMERIAN PAGAN MYTH OF EVE AND ADAM.

We will never emphasize enough the danger that could be and still can be, for some weak minds, even if sometimes they are also brilliant, the Sumerian myth of Adam and Eve, made with a little earth and a little god's blood, in order to serve the great (gods) and work for them.

Contrary to what the pseudo-democrats or republicans, seem to believe, the alliance of monolatry (henotheism) and its revelation does not amount to polytheism without revelation. In the ancient world, people knew how to publicly celebrate the gods. They were everywhere, with a touching naivety. Taranis thundered. Bregesos (Bres) made the wheat grow. The cold north wind was Circius. There were nymphs in springs and rivers. A whole host of gods and semi-gods like Cuchulainn (Hesus on the Continent). All of this, for we uns Moderns, looks a little like an unbridled fantasy or poetic delirium, but the shamanistic high-knowers undeniably had the sense of the sacredness. Their polytheism did not involve dogma. So there was no holy war. Men did not ask for an act of faith, but only for respecting the rituals. Similarly, before the invasions by Islam and the ensuing disappearance of the entire kshatriyas caste, India lived millennia in peace with thousands of different religions.

In the defense of religion, we can still admit that there are less dogmatic religions, religions based on a theology of humility. But it is not these religions that are problematic today. The idea of God is not neutral. It has become a problem because religion is a problem, and we cannot get rid of it by an indifference atheism. It would be to be in denial. At the very least, a theology of humility would recommend to the believer to have the courage to admit that some of our old beliefs about God and Life are no longer valid. Infallibility has caused enough bloodshed. We must accept that we do not know everything, that there were mistakes or a basic ignorance about God. Given the question of the nature of God, it is even essential that the believer can admit that there are aspects of God and Life that escape us.

The first mistake is to constantly use God as an argument justifying anything and everything; what invariably leads to the expression of an image which is only the reflection of our desires, and which leads straightly in these conditions, to the development of a moral God. But does the moral god have a real relationship with God, in the meaning we have just seen? Can man, starting from a moral design of God, have a correct understanding of what the mystery of the unfolding of his Manifestation leads to? Can man, starting from a moral god, discover the true meaning of the sacredness? The presence at the heart of the subjectivity of the swaying of the Absolute Life? Can man, ballasted with a moralizing representation of God, even approach the cosmic God?

Atheism was not wrong on this question, and it is the moral god who has always been the target of his criticism.

We have given God so much of human characteristics that we have justified by him all our expectations, our desires, our hopes, and our demands. By dint of simplistic religious knick-knack, affected emotional fervor, bargaining by way of prayer, bigoted hypocrisy, we ended up killing the moral god we invented for our own convenience. It is religion that has made God a mortal, by ascribing him all the characteristics of man, to finally put him on a throne, and make him a God the Father. A neurotic substitute for our child expectations, Freud will say.

God, in his essence, encompasses eternity. In the heart of the Being, existences appear in time, keep on, and disappear. To ascribe to God a temporal existence, similar to human existence, is to consider him as a thing thrown into Becoming. The very fact of considering this super-thing is a person who stands above the clouds to judge some mortals, to support the power of some and the misfortune of others is to continue to develop the same mistake.

It seems that Man was made in the image of God, but what we see first is that the God of religions is most often made in the image of man. The confusion of our time about the idea of God is such that most true thinkers of our time are reluctant to use the word. The word God is a term whose emotional charge is powerful. It concentrates the rivalries and divisions of religions that claim an exclusive revelation of him. It is the flag that is brandished in all wars to justify atrocities. He is the supreme symbol of the authority. On the one hand, it is used to prohibit any reflection in advance. On the other hand, we have attributed to God in religion so many malicious and revengeful intentions, that good sense itself wants us to turn away from such a confused idea.

In our postmodern world, where indifference to religion is a state of affairs, it remains the cultural myths attached to it continue to fuel beliefs. Man therefore cannot escape the questioning of the idea of God. The question of God concerns even the unbeliever who turns away from religion, because the world as such remains governed by principles drawn from religion. Against all odds, we must

return to the idea of God, to examine it more closely, to see what religion has done with it also and to wonder if a good part of the problems we encounter today are not intrinsically linked to this representation of God that we make ourselves; representation that continues to rule underground our current beliefs.

What polytheism teaches is a representation of the powers of Nature, which holds simultaneously that there is also an underlying Absolute, a unity under diversity. It is the delegated cosmic powers that are called gods. The representation of God in the form of a Creator, found in the Semitic religions, is very different. It cannot be supported by metaphysics of Nature. Shankara in India, and Aristotle in Greece, severely criticize the concept of creation ex nihilo, which is precisely central in the religions of the book. The concept of Creator necessarily supposes, in order to be defended, in this case, a Revelation, a book, to represent God in a personal form, Revelation being the "word of God" addressed to men. But there is not one, but several revelations. There is the Bible, the Gospels, the Quran, the Book of Hermes 1) the twelve books of the Fenians, the Book of Mormons, and others.

To what the believer will answer: There is only one true religion! And it is precisely on this position that are structured the mass religions of our time. Not all, of course, but the most important as for the number.

The idea of God that we meet in religion is inseparable from the name that revealed religion gives him. Elohim, Yahweh, Lord Jesus, Jehovah, God, God, etc. This idea, furthermore, is only the development of an interpretation of Revelation. To be precise in these conditions, it would be necessary to say "what the Muslim means by God, it is," "what the Jew means by Yahweh, it is," in short, according to such or such interpretation.

The believer admits that only one religion is good, starting from the interpretation that is his, of what he believes to be God. The others in a pinch may have good intentions, but they are not acceptable; and the faithful must take care not to be seduced by "false beliefs," which are not the "Law of God," some "true belief."

Revealed theology interprets the mystery of the nature of God starting from the aforementioned revelation. We say well interprets, because the sacred texts cannot be read literally. Reading at face value reveals too many improbabilities, incomprehensible propositions, even shocking in the context of our current way of life. The religious texts were addressed to peoples of a given era, they were written in a specific historical background, in the language that men of old could understand. To maintain the idea that there is in spite of everything an absolute and not relative value in them, it is necessary to give an interpretation which puts them in the current context. In principle, religion presupposes that we cannot listen directly to the "word of God," but only follow the interpretation of his more or less faithful mediators.

Fundamentalism is a doctrine that advocates a rigorous return to the letter of the sacred texts. The fundamentalist believes that in order to progress in the solution of the moral problems challenging Mankind, we must return to the original words of the sacred text. The interpretation then joins what could be called literalism: it would be necessary to read and apply literally the sacred text.

But the problem is precisely, as the Irish high druid John Toland could have said, that there is always a conflict of interpretations. Therefore, it is necessary to decide what interpretation is authoritative. The authoritative interpretation will be therefore that of the representatives of God, the theologians, and priests. It is unanimously admitted that they at least know about what they are talking. For others, as there is no way to know, they must take their word for it (John Toland quoth). Lastly, so that the circle is well completed, and the interpretation locked, infallibility is granted to the sacred texts and supreme authority to those who are in a leading position within the religious organization. Those who are the "spiritual advisers." It is even possible to go further: in Catholic theology, the Pope, when he speaks ex cathedra, "from the top of his pulpit," is said to be unable to be mistaken when he deals with questions of morality and faith. This is called papal infallibility. Similarly, in Islam, the isma of the prophet is a supreme authority, for all that pertains to moral and temporal questions. The doctrine of infallibility or isma means: "I'm always right !!!". It leads directly to the blame of one who has a different point of view, and flatters the hubris of one who is invested with a position of power. It is, we cannot do more exactly, the opposite of humility. It bases disagreement and conflict in advance, since it does not admit, in principle, the possibility of a different point of view. In the field of the question of the nature of God, it divides therefore all dialogue by, being right / being wrong. This unambiguously demonstrates the naivety of interfaith dialogue attempts, and the internal contradiction of the efforts of all ecumenism.

The consequence is that our idea of God is necessarily an old belief, or an old idea, which kept on. There are millennia that God no longer speaks to men. Revelation is always situated in the past. In the primitive relation of Man to a higher power, the emotion of the sacredness was in the form of a fear. God was to be met in a sacred terror. This form remains largely unchanged. Instead of there is a

whole host of gods to be appeased, there is only one God to calm down. But it is not easier to appease this wrath of God. It can be found everywhere. Every disaster that appears on the planet can be interpreted as a punishment sent by God. Theologians have done it before with the Lisbon earthquake; as they did again with the Jewish genocide decided at Wannsee in 1942, by the socialists of the national party of German workers (5.5 million innocent victims) or with AIDS. Let man live in the fear of God! Let him humble himself before the Almighty. To receive his protection, let him bend to his Will! The voice that makes the clouds roar, that makes the oceans become rough, blood and grasshoppers rain, is implacable, terrible and imperative. Religion has always taught that God needs something, and that the man to whom God speaks has a duty to answer him; for in that is his covenant with God, his allegiance, his obedience, and his piety. Otherwise his curse will fall on the sinner. To be satisfied, God wants certain things to happen, and his will to be done. But how to guess his will? It is unfathomable. And then, if God is the Almighty, how is it possible that his will is not made? If God is really God? It would come to believe in the absurdity that God has needs. God has no need, he is the very Plenitude, in his infinite overflowing, how could he have needs, he who is all things? And how then to admit the equally absurd idea that God might not get what he needs? If nothing is opposed to him? It means nothing. According to the words themselves of religion, he is almighty. How could God have separated us from him because we would not have given him what he needed? There is nothing that can be outside of him, and separate from him. It means nothing either. How could he have requirements that humans should meet? It would be like pretending that Plenitude is not full, or that God is not God. One again, that means nothing. How to think, finally, in these conditions, that, discontented, God could come to desire to destroy the Man if the latter does not answer in fact to its requirements? Having no lack, he cannot have requirement. That means nothing either. These are just mistakes about God, and nothing more.

But as these errors have indeed been propagated, as they are still largely kept, it follows that they still weigh on this world. They are even at the root of the religious clashes taking place on Earth. What is no longer speculation. Ideas lead the world, but it is not necessary they are true ideas. It must be understood that beforehand our intolerant behavior, there are necessarily beliefs that ground them. Beforehand beliefs, there are religious ideologies 2). Religious intolerance refers to the representation that man has of God. Suppose you want to persuade someone to kill such or such person. He will not do without reason. For that, you have to instill in him the belief that he has to do it. As a last resort, the supreme argument is that he must execute the will of God! And it is a very special god that justifies murder, massacre or genocide.

If God is Almighty, how is it possible that his will is not done? If God is really God? The question being insolvable, then it is to be supposed that the Will of God can be thwarted. We have to assume this strange idea that God may not get what he needs. As Man, lost in the midst of a difficult Nature, can get not what he needs, it has been supposed that God could be in the same situation. But how, then, can the creatures of God thwart the will of the Creator? It is necessary to assume in advance that they are separated from him. If creatures are separated from the Creator, and that God, however, leaves them free will, then it is possible for them to do what God does not want them to do.

The biblical myth of Adam and Eve is a remarkable illustration of this point. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve enjoyed Eternal Life and fellowship with God. But God had put a condition on it that had to be respected. Do not touch the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil. Eve tasted the fruit and disobeyed. It was not entirely her fault, she was tempted by the snake. The serpent is the representation of the Devil, a fallen angel who would have dared to want being as great as the Creator, what God will never be able to tolerate. The divine punishment must inevitably come, thus consecrating the radical separation between man and God. Should ensue the condemnation to this torrent of miseries that is human existence. The punishment was expressed by a promised to death finiteness. Henceforth, the fault was marked as an indelible stain on the soul, even before birth. Some theologies have been very categorical on this point. This stain on the soul, no action can erase it, even with sincere repentance. The grace of God alone can, but lookout, it can only be got if the man comes to him in the right way. God is very stubborn, he does not take into consideration only goodness or generosity, yet we must come to him by the right path, by professing the good religion. Then and only then the Righteous will have the right to sit to the right hand of the Almighty. (And still, it's not even won, because some theologies go so far as to claim that God has chosen in advance his elected! The Jewish people or only 144000 persons).

The Will of God is not a joking matter, it is agreed that God has needs so important that he requires that human beings, from their separate position, respond to them. The consequence, of course, since it is God who wanted it so, is that it is necessary in the same way that men judge each other, in the

light of the requirement initially set by God. We may duplicate the Judgment ad infinitum. It will always be necessary to see in the others especially the imperfection. All that is bad: bad tendencies, bad sexuality, bad political party, bad nationality, bad religion, etc. Men can do what they want they will never live up to God's demands. Finally, last straw of misfortune, religion teaches that God will destroy man if he does not meet his requirements. The prodigious spectacle of the six days' Creation is finished; now the universe is no more than running its course, and this course of events is uncertain; because the Creation threatens at any moment to fall back into the Nothingness from which it came out (and in which it might have been better to stay?!). The man must tremble, it will be enough of a fit of anger of God so that everything disappears. The end of time is, for some believers, imminent. Signs of God's annoyance can be found everywhere. But death will not be a relief for anyone, because even if this bitter existence is only a passage, in the hereafter, there will be still the (first?) Judgment that awaits us. The soul will be evaluated then she will receive the reward of her acts. Rivers of pus and thorns of zaqqum tree, the torments of Gehenna in burning or icy hell, wait for eternity for those who have been iniquity makers. The rancor of God is terrible, and he will pursue everywhere those who have dared not to believe in him. Life is like a school where you can receive a prize at the end. But only the righteous will be entitled to the reward of Heaven.

All this is only fear speech, and this moralizing speech has nothing to do with the purpose of any true religion.

1) The Books of Hermes were the books (a whole library) with which the Sabians of Harran in Turkey claimed to be in line.

2) Set of ideas about God which are handed down from generation to generation.

APPENDIX 2.

THE LOT OF THE FAITHFUL OF OTHER RELIGIONS IN THE HEREAFTER.

For Islam, " No baby is born, but born on fitrah (that is to say Muslim), then his parents make him Jewish, Christian or a Zoroastrian " (Narrated by Abu Huraira r.a.).

We are here polar opposite the Recht Aicnid of the Irish Fenians. Islam is the natural identity of Man. Conversion to Islam is therefore considered natural, whereas any desertion of Islam is, on the other hand, considered as a perversion, a betrayal in relation to the primary nature of man, the Fitrah.

Whoever comes out of Islam is a denatured, a pervert, because it is inconceivable to give up the best of religions which has ever existed.

What, then, does Islam specify with regard to the hereafter, for those who have stuck to a path (Shar ') previous to the path revealed more recently by Muhammad?

In other words, what would happen if the Quranic message did not reach humans who would therefore have remained to a religion based on a message previous (to that of Islam?)

Editor's note: oddly enough, we find the same problem in the new catechism (1992) of the Catholic Church. "Outside the Church there is no salvation!" This affirmation is not aimed at those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church:

Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will, as they know it through the dictates of their conscience - those too MAY ACHIEVE ETERNAL SALVATION."

AS REGARDS ISLAM HERE IS THE RESPONSE.

Since the more recent message [the Quran] was also addressed to him, this man will also be held responsible in the hereafter for his position in relation to it.

He can stick to the oldest message by arguing that, anyway, he too has been revealed by God. The Quran refers to these men as "kufr" (Quran 4 : 150-151), which shows well that it considers them also as men having no longer the belief agreed by God. Especially since the Quran also claims that the announcement of the coming of the last messenger was already in the true unaltered Bible Scriptures (Quran 7:157). And that allusions to the qualities of his companions are also included in it (Quran 48:29). The fact that they would turn to pray towards the Kaaba in Mecca was already known by "men" (Quran 2:150), that is to say, here those who were versed in the knowledge of the scriptures; and allusions to the Quran already existed in the Holy Scriptures of the Ancients (Quran 26 : 196).

Editor's note. The Quran actually states that the coming of Muhammad, as a prophet for all Mankind, is announced in the Torah and in the Injil (the Gospel) as Hamed.

Chapter 61 verse 6: And when Jesus son of Mary said: O Children of Israel! Lo! I am the messenger of God unto you, confirming that which was (revealed) before me in the Torah, and bringing good tidings of a messenger who comes after me, whose name is "Hamed."

And in support of this chapter of the Quran, Muslims put forward two biblical texts.

The first of the two is a passage from Deuteronomy that speaks of true prophets and false prophets. Here it is. Deuteronomy 18: 15 to 22.

"The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the Lord our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die."

The Lord said to me: "What they say is good. 18 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. 19 I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. 20 But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death."

You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the Lord?" If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously, so do not be alarmed."

This prophecy is repeated in the Acts of the Apostles 3, 22 and 7, 37.

What is interesting in this testimony is his warning against false prophets.

The second text is a passage from the Gospel by John announcing the coming of the Paraclete.

Here it is. Gospel according to John, 16 : 7 to 15. " But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Paraclete (advocate) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going

to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

Editorial note. It's up to everyone to think what they want about such a prophecy, which is as vague as an astrologer's prediction for the coming year. The difficulty lies in the interpretation of the Greek word *parakletos*. End of the editorial note.

What will happen now, in the hereafter, of the man to whom has come a former message from God, but not the most recent? Two possible cases.

First case. This former message has been preserved in all its authenticity, as to its foundations, that is to say, as regards the beliefs. This man will be responsible before God only in relation to his adherence to the former message and his fidelity (at the level of concrete acts) to the teachings of this former message. In the other life, such a man, of course, will be not be responsible for his non-adherence to the more recent message from God, since it did not reach him. It is well in this sense that God said to Muhammad what follows: "This Quran has been inspired in me, that I may warn therewith you and whomsoever it may reach" (6: 19). The man to whom the Quran has not arrived cannot, of course, be held responsible for the fact that he did not believe in it.

Second case.

Notable changes have occurred in this former message. What will happen then, in the afterlife, in this case, of the man who, on Earth, has had erroneous beliefs, has followed new erroneous practices and / or has committed prohibited acts ; since this is what the altered form of the former message that has come down to him has taught him? And that he was not aware of the message that came later to restore it in its entirety.

Two things must be distinguished: the character of the erroneous belief and action, in themselves; and the punishment provided for them in the hereafter.

The erroneous beliefs as well as the deviant acts of this man are clearly in themselves some "bid'a mudhallila" 1), or "kabira" 2) or even "kufr" 3) (if his beliefs are too far from what is right).); and this, even if this man had no knowledge of the revelations that came after, to restore the authentic message from God. However, beyond the character of these beliefs and acts in themselves, what will happen to the level of the punishment of this man in the hereafter?

Ibn Taymiyya's opinion is that, although his beliefs and / or actions were kufr or bid'a mudhallila, this man will not be punished accordingly by God in the hereafter; if he had the sincere intention of following the message that had reached him, and that he did not fail to seek the truth.

The more recent message, which had the role of restoring what is right, having not reached him, the act in itself is therefore well some kufr; but the punishment foreseen for this crime in the hereafter will not be inflicted upon him, since this man had not been warned of his error; and that the Quran (6:19) expressly states, ".... that I may warn therewith you and whomsoever it may reach" (Al-jawab as-sahih 1, 271).

Another passage of the Holy Quran is besides more explicit on this subject: chapter 5 verse 19. "O People of the Scripture! Now has Our messenger come unto you to make things plain unto you after an interval (of cessation) of the messengers, lest you should say: There did not come unto us a messenger of cheer nor any warner."

This verse therefore implies by contrast that he who has remained faithful to the altered form of a previous message, because he had not been aware of the more recent message, came to restore the genuine message; will not be punished accordingly in the afterlife. He will have the opportunity to defend himself by saying: I did not know, no messenger had come to tell us, etc.

Having not had access to what was from God to show him, in the previous message with which he sincerely agreed up to now, what was right and what had been altered; his evil deeds will not be reproached to him, he will not go to hell.

Ibn Taymiyya makes things depend on the good will of the subject. The simple fact that he was led by the will to seek the truth or to follow what the messenger (whom he had had the teaching) had really said; is enough for him to escape the retribution of his evil deeds in the hereafter, even if the alteration of the early message is clear, and the fact of associating other divine persons with God the Father just as evident.

Shah Waliullah, on the other hand, makes the case dependent on the very nature of the evil deed in question, and on the alteration. If the alteration of the genuine message formerly sent to men by God is obvious, then it is absolutely impossible that this person, despite his so-called good will, did not realize that the message had been falsified.

This opinion of Shah Waliullah, relating to the woman or the man to whom a former message arrived, in a deviant form, and who did not have the more recent message; is very close to the Hanafi opinion concerning the man to whom no message at all has arrived. Some scholars of the Hanafi school believe that this man will have all the same to give explanation to God for his belief in his existence and oneness; as well as with regard to his acts which will be not conform with universal morality: prohibition of theft, murder, etc.

With regard to the divine oneness, the opinion of Shah Waliullah [Hujjat God al-Baligha, 1, 353; see also 1, 339]

nevertheless distinguishes two cases.

- If the paganism or polytheism of this religion was not obvious ("shirk khafi") and resulted from a hidden alteration ("tahrif mudhmar") of the message (case of Christians for example), then the man will not be punished by God, inasmuch as it is not obvious to everyone to understand that such designs are erroneous.

- If the paganism or polytheism of this religion was clear ("shirk jar") and that man has nevertheless followed what was an obvious alteration ("tahrif sarih").

of the original message; then he will be punished by God in the hereafter.

1) Minor error not calling into question the content of the belief.

2) Serious mistake or sin.

3) Mortal sin because fundamentally contrary to the Faith in what it has most important.

APPENDIX 3.

THE PAGAN ARAB WOMAN: QUEEN CHIEF WARRIOR PRIESTESS.

To assert that all over the world and at all times the status of women before Islam was the disaster claimed by some Muslims is nothing more than a racist lie. The reality is that the situation of women varied largely according to the tribe and place and that Muhammad made only standardize it by working out a rather pulled down average with it.

Some authors argue that women before Islam were freer. This would be shown by the first marriage of Muhammad that of his parents, but also other elements such as the fact that there were goddesses playing an important role in the Meccan pantheon before Islam 1) and elsewhere inscriptions showing a certain religious independence of women. Priestesses are evidenced in certain cults with the same titles as men.

The Saudi historian Hatoon al-Fassi relying on archeological materials from the ancient Nabatean kingdom, notes that women had an independent legal personality in it. She also suggests that they lost a lot of their rights with the arrival of Greek and Roman law, previous to the arrival of Islam, which kept many of their elements.

Pre-Islamic free love among the Bedouins (Ammianus Marcellinus, History XIV 4-6).

" They have mercenary wives, hired under a temporary contract. But in order that there may be some semblance of matrimony, the future wife, by way of dower, offers her husband a spear and a tent, with the right to leave him after a stipulated time, if she so elect and it is unbelievable with what ardor both sexes give themselves up to passion. Moreover, they wander so widely as long as they live, that a woman marries in one place, gives birth in another, and rears her children far away, without being allowed an opportunity for rest."

In pre-Islamic Arabia, the condition of women thus varied considerably according to the laws and cultural norms of the tribes in which they lived. In the prosperous southern region of the Arabian Peninsula, for example, the religious ideas of Christianity and Judaism prevailed among Sabaeans and Himyarites. This country had once had a well-known queen, the famous Queen of Sheba named Bilqis. In other places such as Mecca a set of customary rights prevail. This was also the case among the Bedouins (inhabitants of the desert), and this code varied from tribe to tribe. There is therefore no single definition of women's roles and rights before the advent of Islam.

As for the Arab woman, free and independent, we remind of the Arab queens, described in the Assyrian chronicles, the Queen of Sheba, the Queen Zenobia 2), the Queen Mavia, Mawia, Mawai, or Mawai, sometimes called Mania. She was a warrior queen who reigned over a confederation of semi-nomadic Arabs in southern Syria in the second half of the fourth century. Regarded as "the most powerful woman in the ancient Arab world after the end of Zenobia," if she was, of course, Arab, she was at first pagan. In 378, she led her troops in a rebellion against Roman rule, riding at the head of her army from Phoenicia to Palestine. She will succeed in defeating the armies of Rome through her tactical intelligence.

Sometimes they were just hot-blooded women. But we also find them in the fight, as referee in poetry competitions (Umm Jundah, wife of the famous Imru Al-Qays), as a fortune-teller, priestess, poetess (Tumadir al-Khansa, the most famous), prophetess, see Sajah 3) during the 632 ridda wars, or female politician managing the affairs of the city (Hubba bint Hulail and Atikah bint Murrah in Mecca).

Let us repeat it once again, the status of women has varied greatly according to region and time, and the various peoples, ethnic groups and tribes who have lived in Arabia. Before Islam, Arabs, for example, had many different types of marriages. Another reminiscence of the former matriarchy (without father or husband) is the temporary marriage (al mut'a). Of pre-Islamic origin, and still practiced among some Shia Muslims, it is an oral, private, temporary marriage, without a community of goods and with a symbolic dowry.

Three of these various types of marriage seem to be intermediaries between matriarchy without a father or husband, and the patriarchy that we know (the wife having only one husband): Nikah dhawaq, Nikah tarjih, Nikah hidn.

In some tribes, women were emancipated, even in comparison with current standards. In some cases, women have even held high positions of power and authority. Two queens also ruled at the time, Malika Asma and her daughter-in-law Malika Urwa (Daniel Shams).

Pakistani lawyer Sundas Hoorain describes a sexually liberated society in which men and women can have multiple partners or enter into a monogamous relationship at will. She concludes from it that the Muslim idea that monogamy is a post-Islamic invention is erroneous and partial, and that women had the right to enter into such a marriage before Islam. It also describes a society in which the filiation was matrilineal and where children were held by the mother and lived with the mother's tribe, while in

sharia, young children stay with their mother until they reach the age of puberty and then have to stay with their father. Sundas Hoorain also arouses the issue of the female mass infanticide and of the simultaneity of generalized polygamy. She wondered how it was possible for men to have many wives if so many girls were killed when they were children or at the infant stage. The Quran explains that the status of the pre-Islamic Arab woman was inferior, and says that pagan Arabs buried alive unwanted girls. While this practice may have been true among their Persian and Sumerian-Assyrian-Babylonian neighbors (????) the high social status of Muhammad's first wife seems to contradict this version. Indeed, Khadija was a wealthy independent merchant, leader of a large import-export company of caravans, where she employed many men, including Muhammad himself. The mother 4) of Caliph Muawiya I as well as Khunaas, Mus'ab Ibn Umair's mother, were wealthy merchants, free to hire men. Khadija was not an exception.

Muslim historians tell us the story of two extraordinary women, Umm Qirfa and her daughter Salma. Sources: Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Sa'd, Tabari.

In 628 Umm Qirfa (Fatima bint Rabia bin Bader Al Fazarri) was head of the Banu Fasarrah tribe at Wadi al Qurra. She was a very old lady, a symbol of pride, social status and respect. More than 50 swords received as gifts from tribal leaders were hanging in his house. She had 12 sons and a very beautiful daughter. Zayd, the adopted son of Muhammad, led a raid against the tribe. Under the command of Umm Qirfa, his men defeated the attackers. Many Muslims were killed, and Zayd himself wounded. Zayd swore to avenge. When he was re-established, Muhammad sent him to take revenge with more troops. The Sira of Ibn Ishaq specifies that Zayd killed Oum Qirfa "cruelly." (Zayd ordered Qays b al-Musahhar to kill Umm Qirfa and he killed her cruelly).

Tabari explains that he tied each of her legs with a rope and tied the ropes to two camels, and they split her in two.

Became a slave, his daughter Salma convinced Aisha to allow her to go to the rest of his people to convert them to Islam. But once liberated she visited the towns and villages and gathered a strong army. It represented such a threat for the Muslims that Abu Bakr sent his most ferocious commander, Khalid Ibn Walid, with a large army, to defeat her in the most cowardly and least chivalrous way.

1) In Arabic, the belly dancing is called Raqs al sharqi (literally: oriental dance) and in Turkish Oryantal dansi, which gave the term "oriental dance." It is recognized as one of the oldest dances in the world, especially in the countries of the Middle East (Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey, Greece, Syria, Iraq) and of the Maghreb. Belly dancing, often considered as a form of entertainment for men, would be in reality a form of ancient dance that reflects the body as a creation of nature and the temple of the soul. It was originally a dance performed by women in honor of the One who gives Life, the Great Mother. Hip movements were supposed to ensure the birth of future generations and were performed to prepare for childbirth. It develops particularly in Egypt in the tenth century with the arrival of a population from India. "In the time of the Pharaohs, the sacred priestesses made twirl their bodies and undulate their belly so that the goddess of love and fertility, come to take possession of them; then the deity they had become, offered herself to men."

2) Septimia Bathzabbai, better known in the Latinized form Zenobia, was the wife of Odaenathus, king of Nabatean origin, whom she succeeded on the throne of Tadmor (in the original Semitic language) after his assassination around 267.

3) Of the Christian tribe of Banu Tamim.

4) Hind bint Utbah.

APPENDIX 4.

ISLAM AND MEANING OF LIFE.

By Rashad Khalifa (1935-1990).

We are in this world because we committed a horrendous crime, and this life is our chance to redeem ourselves, denounce our crime, and rejoin God's kingdom.

It all began a few billion years ago when "a feud arose in the Heavenly Society" (chapter 38 verse 69). One of the high-ranking creatures, Satan, entertained supercilious thoughts that his God-given powers qualified him to be a god besides God. He thus challenged God's absolute authority. Not only was Satan's idea blasphemous, it was wrong - only God, and no one else, possesses the qualifications and ability to be a god. Consequent to Satan's blasphemy, a division occurred in the Heavenly Society, and all constituents of God's kingdom became classified into four categories:

1. Angels: Creatures who upheld God's absolute authority.
2. Animals: Creatures who rebelled but then accepted God's invitation to repent.
3. Jinns: Creatures who agreed with Satan; that he is capable of being a "god."
4. Humans: Creatures who did not make up their minds; they failed to make a firm stand with God's absolute authority.

The angels therefore expected God to banish the creatures who did not uphold his absolute authority (chapter 2 verse 30). But God is Most Merciful; He decided to give us a chance to denounce our mistake, and informed the angels that He knew what they did not know (chapter 2 verse 30). God knew that some creatures deserved a chance to be redeemed.

If you claim the ability to fly a plane, the best way to test your claim is to give you a plane and ask you to fly it. This is precisely what God decided to do in response to Satan's claim. God created seven vast universes, then informed the angels that He was appointing Satan as a god on the tiny mote called "Earth" (chapter 2 verse 30). The Quranic accounts related to appointing Satan as a temporary "god" (chapter 36 verse 60) confirm the previous scripture. God's plan called for creating death (chapter 67 verses 1-2), then bringing the humans and jinns into this world. Thus, they start over without any biases, and exercise full freedom to uphold God's absolute authority or Satan's polytheistic theory. To make this crucial decision, every human being receives a message from God advocating His absolute authority, as well as a message from Satan pushing his polytheistic principles.

To give us a head start, the Most Merciful gathered all the human beings before Him, prior to sending us to this world, and we bore witness that He alone is our Lord and Master (chapter 7 verse 72). Thus, upholding God's absolute authority is a natural instinct that is an integral part of every human being.

After putting the rebels to death, the souls of humans and jinns were placed in a special depository.

God then created the appropriate bodies to house the souls of jinns and humans during the test period.

The first jinn body was made from fire, and Satan was assigned to that body (chapter 15 verse 27).

The first human body was created from earthly material, clay (chapter 15 verse 26), and God assigned the first human soul to that body. The divine plan called for the angels to serve the humans on earth - guard them, drive the wind and rain for them, distribute provisions, etc. This fact is stated in the Quran allegorically: "Your Lord said to the angels, 'Fall prostrate before Adam.'" Satan, of course, refused to have anything to do with serving the human race (2: 34, 7:11, 17:61, 18:50, 20:116).

While Adam's body remained on earth, the real person, the soul, was admitted into Heaven in the outermost universe. God gave Adam certain commandments, represented by the forbidden tree, and

Satan was appointed as Adam's companion to deliver to Adam his satanic message. The rest is history.

Every time a human being is born, a human person is assigned to the new baby from the depository of souls. God assigns the souls in accordance with his knowledge (chapter 28 verse 68). Every soul deserves to be assigned to a certain body, and live under certain circumstances. God alone knows which souls are good and which souls are evil. Our children are assigned to our homes in accordance with God's plan.

An independent jinn soul is also assigned to the new human being to represent Satan's point of view. While the physical body of any jinn is reproduced from the parent jinns, the jinn soul is that of an independent individual. Jinns are descendants of Satan (chapter 7 verse 27, chapter 18 verse 50). The assigned jinn remains with the human being from birth to death, and serves as the main witness on the Day of Judgment (chapter 50 verse 23). A continuous debate takes place in our heads between the human soul and the jinn soul until both of them are convinced of one point of view.

Contrary to common belief, the "Original Sin" was not Adam's violation of God's law when he ate from the forbidden tree. The original sin was our failure to uphold God's absolute authority during the Great Feud. If the human person convinces his or her jinn companion to denounce that original sin, and uphold God's absolute authority, both creatures are redeemed to God's eternal kingdom on the Day of Judgment. But if the jinn companion convinces the human being to uphold Satan's idolatrous views, then both creatures are exiled forever from God's kingdom.

To promote his point of view, Satan and his representatives advocate the idolization of such powerless creatures as Muhammad, Jesus, Mary, and the saints. Since we are here due to our polytheistic tendencies, most of us are easy prey for Satan.

Satan's incompetence as a "god" has already been proven by the prevalence of chaos, disease, accidents, misery, and war throughout his dominion (chapter 36 verse 66). On the other hand, the human beings who denounce Satan, uphold God's absolute authority, and refrain from idolizing powerless and dead creatures like Jesus and Muhammad, are restored to God's protection - they enjoy a perfect life here in this world and forever.

Because our life in this world is a series of tests designed to expose our polytheistic ideas, idol worship is the only unforgivable offense (chapter 4 verse 48 and its duplicate verse 116). The world is divinely designed to manifest our decision to uphold either God's absolute authority, or Satan's idolatrous views (chapter 67verse 1-2). The day and the night change constantly to test our willingness to uphold God's laws by observing the Dawn Prayer and fasting during the hottest and longest days. Only those who are totally certain about God's absolute authority are redeemed (chapter 26 verse 89).
Rashad Khalifa.

APPENDIX 5.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH A JINN (GENIE) IN EGYPT BY HANK WESSELMAN.

This jinn was encountered in a shrine at the great mortuary temple of Medinat Habu near the Valley of the Kings. After my initial encounter in the temple on Dec. 7, 2009, I returned to the shrine through my shamanic journey on Dec. 8 where the jinn and I then had a most unusual conversation.

Let me say in advance that this dialogue did not occur in English nor in Arabic but rather in the non-verbal communication modality that I conceive of as 'think feeling.' My job, as always, is to translate and reconstruct the entirety of the contact after the fact from blocks of information that I can recall and transcribe into written notes.

As a prelude, allow me to offer that during the second encounter, the jinn manifested itself first as two disembodied eyeballs... and since this didn't deter me, it then carefully chose to reveal itself as a smoky humanoid form that flickered at the edges, shifting back and forth from one vague shape to another in pastel hues of orange, yellows and greens, with deeper core areas of more brilliant light as its mood shifted in response to our dialogue.

But if its etheric form was somewhat diffuse, its voice was quite distinct, allowing me to share what follows with confidence.

After identifying myself and what my intentions were for being there (in my journey), I revealed that I had been there the day before (and the jinn remembered this) that I had been in contact with Jinn before in Ethiopia in 1995 and 1996, and in Egypt in 2003.

I mention this because upon learning that I had had contact with the jinn before, the jinn became more respectful, even helpful.

Knowing that the jinn can be mischievous, I tricked it into telling me its name, and after that I was the one in control and the jinn could not lie to me. I say this for those of you among my readers who know the jinn and how tricky dealing with them can be

Initially the Jinn revealed that it had originally come from a place in the western desert (the name of this place meant nothing to me, nor could I later find it on a map) and that it had attached itself to an early traveler through that region who had eventually come to Egypt. When I asked, 'when?' the jinn didn't seem to understand the question.

When its human 'host' had died, the jinn had decided to remain near the River Nile and had taken up residence in different places, most recently in this shrine once the temple had been released from the grip of the desert sands that had covered most of it in the interim. When I asked how long it had been there, once again it didn't seem to understand the question.

(The Jinn's confusion about time is in alignment with my understanding that it is only when we are embodied in physical form that we are subject to and immersed within 'Time.' When we are in spirit between lives, we are then in the 'timeless.' And since Jinn are without physical form, they are in fact in the realm of timeless in which all time is 'now'.)

Has the conversation which follows been influenced by my own current interests and interpretations? Undoubtedly, as I am a scholar and I do a lot of reading, yet the interwoven information that follows is compelling, to say the least, even heretical at times. So here it is for your consideration, recorded shortly after it occurred...

THE CONVERSATION (taken from my written notes).....

HW: Is the Judeo-Christian-Islamic father god (Yahweh-Jehovah-God) the Originator?

J: No.

HW: Is it the creator?

J: No.

HW: Who or what is Yahweh-Jehovah-God?

J: He is the arch deceiver. You might call him the lord archon after the terminology of the Gnostikoi. (I thought about this for several moments, then...)

HW: Who and what is the lord archon?

J: He is the arch mind parasite who has been serving as humanity's adversary and who has been operating against humans from his beginnings.

(I digested this for more long moments. From my readings I would learn that this insight is in alignment with information recorded by the Gnostics in the Nag Hammadi Library found in the desert near Dendara in Egypt—scrolls that date from the 4th century.)

HW: You mean that he is not the creator as so many humans believe and claim?

J: Yes. The arch deceiver cannot create anything although he claims that he can. He is an archon. He can only mimic.

HW: Why is he so powerful and why have all three of the Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) revered him?

J: They were all of them deceived by the lord archon. He is the arch deceiver and he derives his power from those he has deceived—from those who believe that he is the creator... that he is the Originator. But he is not.

HW: So he is not the Originator?

J: That is correct. He is the lord archon.

HW: Are the archons—the deceivers—evil?

J: No.

HW: Do they operate in the negative polarity? (This took some explaining.)

J: Yes. They encourage humans to go wrong in their behavior.

HW: Why do they do this?

J: That is their nature. They are deceivers.

HW: And what then is the source of evil?

J: Humans. The archons influence humans to err in their behavior until they reach that point where they can no longer self-correct. At that point, humans create evil because that is their nature. They are creators and they have been influenced by the deceivers. They are still being influenced by the deceivers.

HW: So evil did not exist until humans created it?

J: That is correct.

HW: And is the Lord Archon evil?

J: No. He is the arch deceiver who has operated against humanity as the adversary since his beginning.

HW: Is this why so many religious wars have been fought in the name of religion? Is this why millions of women were killed by the Church in the Middle Ages during the Great Witch Hunts?

J: Yes. The Judeo-Christian-Islamic god is the lord archon. It was his influence that manifested itself in humans with twisted minds to manifest great acts of evil. He is still doing that.

HW: You mean that he still has the power to do that again?

J: The Lord archon has no power of his own. He is not a creator. He is an archon. Humans are creators and what they create is up to them. He influences them to go into what you call the negative polarity because that is his nature.

HW: So the choice is ultimately ours?

J: That is correct. Humans can create evil or they can create its opposite.

HW: Is that how we deal with the problem of evil?

J: I do not know. That is your responsibility as humans. In my opinion, humans created evil now they must un-create it.

HW: How do we do that?

J: By creating evil's opposite. And by changing your thoughts. The archons live in your thoughts. They are what you would call psychic vampires who feed on the energy of your thoughts and emotions. Yet humans will always have the power that comes with choice for humans are creators, but if humans allow the archons to influence them in your thinking, you humans will choose wrongly. The deceivers take delight in violence and warfare, greed and deception, competition and denial, corruption and mendacity. They encourage humans to take refuge in what you have called the negative polarity. I like this term.

HW: Did we create the gods?

J: That is correct.

HW: Who or what is the Originator?

J: No one knows. That is the Great Mystery.

HW: Where is the Originator?

J: Everywhere.

HW: So it is the creator?

J: No. The Originator emanates. It does not purposefully create. Humans do that.

HW: Can we interact with the Originator? Does it listen to our prayers?

J: No. It simply exists. It emanates for that is its nature.

HW: So the Originator is not a God?

J: No. It is the Originator.

(I asked a last few questions.)

HW: Is there a personal god who listens to our prayers, works in mysterious ways, and so forth and so on...?

J: Yes. That personal god is your own soul... the immortal part of your self who does not die. You humans have created it on your long journey across eternity. Unlike the archons, your individual soul aspect is a true spirit and always resides in the spirit world. It is part of the dreaming and as such, it dreams... always.

HW: And whose dream does it dream?

J: Its own.

HW: So when we pray to god almighty, we are actually praying to ourself?

J: That is correct. You are praying to your soul-self, your higher self, your god self. This is how the real gods come into being... You ensouled humans are all in the process of becoming god-selves. And when you dream, this experience is actually your higher-soul's dream.

HW: Do the Jinn have god-selves?

J: We are god-selves. We are spirits. And we have free will.

It was at this point that this extraordinary conversation came to a close.

I might add a reading reference for those who want more information about the true origins of Christianity, the Gnostics, and their perceptions of the archons, and especially the lord archon whose name 2000 years ago was Yaldebaoth.

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 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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2. Various preliminary general information about Celts.
3. History of the pact with gods volume 1.
4. Druidism Bible: history of the pact with gods volume 2.
5. History of the peace with gods volume 3.
6. History of the peace with gods volume 4.
7. History of the peace with gods volume 5.
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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.