

BINDING SERVICES
Tel +44 (0)29 2087 4949
Fax +44 (0)29 20371921
e-mail bindery@cardiff.ac.uk

Cardiff University

Three Apocalypses of the Early Muslim Period in the Context of Confrontations.

By Michel Sacramento

2005

UMI Number: U584015

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS
The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript
and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed,
a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI U584015
Published by ProQuest LLC 2013. Copyright in the Dissertation held by the Author.
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.
All rights reserved. This work is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Cardiff University

Three Apocalypses of the Early Muslim Period in the Context of Confrontations.

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the degree of Philosophy Doctorate in Theology.

By Michel Sacramento

2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

This thesis has taken too long to complete. It was in part independently of my will, but also for not having appreciated the amount of work it would require, this work has ballooned along the years.

I am grateful also for the unswerving support from my wife, Maguy Sacramento, especially during the years toward its completion, without whom this work would have never been achieved.

I am also grateful to my Research supervisor, Dr. Frank Trombley for his professional support and academic advises. His patience has probably helped achieve the goals that I set myself some years ago.

My thanks also go to my friend Pastor Sunny Okosun for his spiritual encouragement I have appreciated his unswerving friendship, and especially his logistical help with my frequent trips to the SOAS.

SUMMARY:

The present study has revolved around three apocalyptic texts believed to come from the context of 8th to 9th century more or less belligerent contexts. These are: The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel; the Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn; and the Fourteenth Vision of Daniel. It is a parallel study, which aims at probing the underlying influence of the iconographic evolution in the three monotheistic religions.

In all three apocalypses cited above, indications are that they did react to the erection of the Islamic Dome of the Rock that was completed at around AD 695. The Dome of the Rock was for the Muslims an exercise of iconographic display in favour of their universal religion, a monumental statement for the claim to the last revelation of God, henceforth that the religion of Islam held sway in the ranking of faithfulness to the primeval religion of Abraham. Accordingly, these three apocalypses expressed therein their contention of the hegemony of Islam, using various eschatological *topoi*, a number of circumstantial artifices, and a zest of imagination, to spearhead their peculiar ideology.

The iconography (visual, oral, literal) of the three communities undergoes some subtle but significant changes in the process. This can be seen in the way each text handles the image of the enemy, reshaping it where they saw fit, but also how each one's iconographic identity is reshaped from the eschatological perspective. The main actors of the apocalyptic scenarios may undergo a change of stature, or one's own orthodoxy is stated in parodying the others' cultic tradition, or still, draw an oblique portrait of the competition from within. As a result, the iconography of the opponent becomes a source of positive eschatological speculations, through the re-enactment of Biblical themes so as to exorcise the visual fact of the reality of the enemy. However, these features are inherent to the context of confrontational atmosphere, whenever the prospects of geo-political transformations permit.

The benefit of analysing these three apocalypses together side-by-side is that, in the context of protracted confrontations with Islam, it yields unexpected insights into the literary response, which those religious groups could afford to construct in the face of the hegemony of Islam. The praise of Jerusalem, the summons to strive for its recovery, and the theodicy of the interlude predicament their respective audiences were in, are all but alluded to in convoluted ways. To that aim, the apocalyptic genre allowed for the flexibility of circumstantial rhetoric while revisiting afresh the old traditional *topoi*.

Tables of Transliteration according to the Library of Congress System.

Arabic: Letters of the Alphabet.

Initial	Medial	Final	Alone	Romanisation
ا	ـا	ـا	ا	omit
بـ	ـبـ	ـب	ب	b
تـ	ـتـ	ـت	ت	t
ثـ	ـثـ	ـث	ث	th
جـ	ـجـ	ـج	ج	j
حـ	ـحـ	ـح	ح	ḥ
خـ	ـخـ	ـخ	خ	kh
د	ـد	ـد	د	d
ذ	ـذ	ـذ	ذ	dh
ر	ـر	ـر	ر	r
ز	ـز	ـز	ز	z
سـ	ـسـ	ـس	س	s
شـ	ـشـ	ـش	ش	sh
صـ	ـصـ	ـص	ص	ṣ
ضـ	ـضـ	ـض	ض	ḍ
طـ	ـطـ	ـط	ط	ṭ
ظـ	ـظـ	ـظ	ظ	ẓ
عـ	ـعـ	ـع	ع	ᶜ(ayn)
غـ	ـغـ	ـغ	غ	gh
فـ	ـفـ	ـف	ف	f
قـ	ـقـ	ـق	ق	q
كـ	ـكـ	ـك	ك	k
لـ	ـلـ	ـل	ل	l
مـ	ـمـ	ـم	م	m
نـ	ـنـ	ـن	ن	n
هـ	ـهـ	ـه or ـة	o or ة	h
و	ـو	ـو	و	w
يـ	ـيـ	ـي	ي	y

Vowels and Diphthongs

ـَ	a	ـَا	ā (see Rule 5)	ـِي	ī
ـُ	u	ـَى	á (see Rule 6(a))	ـَوْ	aw
ـِ	i	ـُو	ū	ـَيْ	ay

Tables of Transliteration according to the Library of Congress System.

Hebrew: Letters of the Alphabet.

Initial & Medial	Final	Romanisation
א		’ (alif)
בּ		b
ב		v
ג		g
ד		d
ה		h
ו		v
ז		z
ח		ḥ
ט		ṭ
י		y
כּ	ךּ	k
פּ	ך	kh
ל		l
מ	ם	m
נ	ן	n
ס		s
ע		‘ (ayn)
פּ	ף	p
פ	ף	f
צ	ץ	ts
ק		ḳ
ר		r
שׁ		sh
שׂ		ś
תּ		t
ת		t

Vowels

In Hebrew	*Romanization*	*In Yiddish*	*Romanization*
◌ַ	a		
◌ָ	a or o	א	a or o
◌ֶ	e		
◌ֵ	e	ו, או	u
◌ִ	i		
◌ֹ	o	וי, אוי	oy
◌ֻ	u		
◌ֶּ	e	י, אי	i
◌ַי	ai		
◌ֵי	e	ע	e
◌ִי	i		
◌ֹו	o	ייַ, אייַ	ay (if pronounced ai as in *aisle*, or)
◌ּו	u		
◌ְ	e or disregarded	יי, אייי	ey (if pronounced ei as in *weigh*)
◌ָה	a		
◌ֶה	e		
◌ָה	o		

Tables of Transliteration according to the Library of Congress System.

Greek: Letters of the Alphabet.

Upper case letters	Lower case letters (final)	Romanisation
Α	α	a
Β	β	b (v in modern greek)
Γ	γ	g
Δ	δ	d
Ε	ε	e
Ζ	ζ	z
Η	η	ē
Θ	θ	th
Ι	ι	i
Κ	κ	k
Λ	λ	l
Μ	μ	m
Μπ (initial only)	μπ (initial only)	b
Ν	ν	n
Ντ (initial only)	ντ (initial only)	d
Ξ	ξ	x
Ο	ο	o
Π	π	p
Ρ	ρ	r
῾Ρ	῾ρ	rh
Σ	σ (final ς)	s
Τ	τ	t
Υ	υ	y (u in diphthongs)
Φ	φ	ph
Χ	χ	ch
Ψ	ψ	ps
Ω	ω	ō

List of Abreviations.

AB:	Analecta Bollandiana.
BSAC:	Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte.
BSOAS:	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
CH:	Church History.
DOP:	The Dumbarton Oaks Papers.
EHR:	English Historical Review.
EI:	The Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd edition.
HJSS:	Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies.
HTR:	Harvard Theological Review.
HUCA:	The Hebrew Union College Annual.
IC:	Islamic Culture.
IOS:	Israel Oriental Studies.
JA:	Journal Asiatique.
JAJS:	Journal of the Association of Jewish Studies.
JC:	The Jerusalem Cathedra.
JE:	The Jewish Encyclopedia.
JESHO:	Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient.
JHS:	The Journal of Hellenic Studies.
JNES:	Journal for the Near Eastern Studies.
JQR:	Jewish Quarterly Review.
JRAS:	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.
JSAI:	Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam.
JSS:	Journal of Semitic Studies.
JTS:	Journal of Theological Studies.
MW:	The Muslim World.
P.G.:	Patrologia Graeca.
P.L.:	Patrologia Latina.
P.O.:	Patrologia Orientalis.
PO:	Paroles d'Orient.
RB:	Revue Biblique.
REJ:	Revue des Études Juives.
RHR:	Revue de l'Histoire des Religions.
ROC:	Revue de l'Orient Chrétien.
SI:	Studia Islamica.
SM:	Studia Monastica.
TDNT:	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.
TM:	Travaux et Mémoires.
VC:	Vigiliae Chistianae.
ZAVG:	Zeitschrift fur Assyriologie und Verwandte Gebieti.

living out the dominion of Islam, after the initial period of conquest; they are also concerned with the iconography of orthodoxy, which the three monotheistic religions had been disputing in the 8th and 9th centuries. What make them particularly interesting in this study is the fact that these apocalypses are representatives of the three main constituents of the People of the Book (*ahl al-Kitāb*), namely, the Jews (and Samaritans), the Melkites (Nestorians being significantly represented only in Iraq-Persia) in *al-Shām*, and the Monophysites. They constitute therefore a broad representation of the non-Muslim Monotheistic communities, as they come to articulate their respective understanding of world politics. Since Islam was the incumbent empire for the three apocalypses, the present writer has deemed it not indispensable to contrast these apocalypses to the Muslim apocalyptic, unless where the background setting makes it necessary. The reason for this is that Islam was already, as the Muslims saw it themselves, an expression of the fulfilment of the Last things. Islam being the last revelation, with its monumental achievements, expressive language of superiority, and eclectic cultural identity, had by then established its image as endowed with the status of the realised eschatology. It had appropriated for itself the iconography of the *muminūn*, but this de-appropriation was being challenged in many ways, not the least in apocalyptic rhetoric. In the course of this study, we will analyse the extent of the movement of appropriation and de-appropriation of each other's imageries and language, and evaluate the significance of their appearance in the opponent's text.

The *AZ* is a straight Jewish apocalypse in the tradition of Jewish sectarian literature, bent on accommodating new religious concepts over against the rabbinical teaching of the time. Despite remaining true to the kind of worldview that distinguishes a Jewish apocalyptic text from a non-Jewish one, this apocalypse is singularly in dialogue with the Christian and Muslim symbols of faith. The main theme of the apocalypse being the apocalyptic drama following the hegemony of the enemies of Israel, it nevertheless re-uses the traditional imagery of Christianity under Islam. Sometimes, these symbols come in mixed forms, or overlaid through multiple revisions. And so the process itself adds to the ciphering of the message. Although the description of eschatological war does point at Christianity, it is meant to depict both Christianity and Islam

Table of Contents: Page

Declaration III

Acknowledgements IV

Summary V

Table of Transliterations VI

List of Abbreviations IX

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Chapter 2: The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel 6

Conclusion 88

Chapter 3: The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn 93

Conclusion 175

Chapter 4: The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel 179

Conclusion 248

Chapter 5: Comparison and Contrast of the three Apocalypses. 252

Bibliography. 267

Appendix 1: The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel. I-VI

Appendix 2: The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn. I-XXI

Appendix 3: The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel. I-IX

Chapter 1: Introduction.

The three apocalyptic texts that the present writer has chosen for this study are the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel (*AZ*), the Fourteenth Vision of Daniel (*FVD*), and the Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn (*ASQ*). There is no Muslim apocalyptic text represented as such. There are several Muslim texts of apocalyptic significance. However, these are tiny portions in comparison to the above texts. The present writer does refer to them in the course of this study, where they are believed to contribute to, or enhance the discussion. Although the Islamic perspectives dominate the present discussion, it does not follow that the Muslim apocalyptic materials ought to be representatives of the Muslim ideology vis-à-vis the above texts. Rather, much non-apocalyptic Muslim materials do afford us more usefully with the literary groundwork from which the three apocalypses were composed.

Therefore, the reasons for this absence of a Muslim apocalyptic text are simply of practicality. The Muslim apocalyptic excerpts are disparate and do not address concurrent issues, whereas in the context of Islamic hegemony these three apocalypses do. The literary sources of Muslim deliberations on the issues of interest in the study of the three apocalypses are found mainly in the writings of Muslim apologists, who had little concerns over apocalypticism. The other obvious sources of information one can turn to are the Qu'rān and the ḥadith. Being, as they were, in the process of collection throughout the same period of composition of the three apocalypses, they are of much relevance for our discussion than it seems. And most importantly, as a monotheistic religion, Islam had assumed at its core ideology some overtones of being the "realised" eschatology. It established itself as the last revelation and considered its adherents as the heirs of the primeval religion of Abraham. Islam was poised to triumph over the entire (Christian) world, by divine commission. Therefore, the fact of Islam had to be displayed, and seen as superseding the two older monotheistic religions. Here is where iconography[1] as symbolic material representation of the later – with the delicate purpose of denegation on the Islamic claims – would have undergone some subtle evolution accordingly.

The common denominator for this selection is twofold: these three apocalypses represent the genre of literature that most forcefully set out to grappling with

[1] For a definition of what the present writer means by "iconography," see the first chapter below.

taking over the city and cult of the Temple of Jerusalem, and thus it ought to belong to the turn of the 8th century or thereabout.

The *FVD* is a Judeo-Christian apocalypse, which reflects more than any of the other apocalypses the circumstances of the Byzantine-Muslim wars of the mid-7th to 8th centuries, does in reality flesh out its eschatology in the background of the iconoclast controversy until before its final outcome (AD 843). But it seems possible that this apocalypse is aware of the emergence of a Muslim apocalypticism in Syria with regard to the resumption of the *jihād*. This feature designates an area at the Syro-Byzantine frontier, where war was a way of life, and the apocalyptic speculations an exacerbated exercise, possibly in dialogue with its Muslim counterpart. What is more, there are grounds to believe that the *FVD* might have undergone some Jewish or Judeo-Christian influence of sort, owing to both the Byzantine policies resulting in a constant shuffling of ethnic groups, and the apparent Muslim inability to get to grip with the persistence of local messianisms.

The *ASQ* is definitely a Coptic Monophysite apocalypse of the 9th century, with an emphasis upon the unification of the Romans with the kingdom of Kush. It purports to preserve the Coptic identity, which effective spirituality depends on observing the tradition of the orthodox fathers. Here, the authorship of the *ASQ* called on the celebration of traditions of the Coptic Church as the paradigm for resisting all heresy, the last included. The setting of the historical narrative is, however, that of the initial Muslim invasion of Egypt and eventual subjugation of the Coptic Church, weakened as it were by the Chalcedonian heresy, in itself a foreign language to the Coptic tenet. The *vaticina ex eventu* are supposed to have been communicated some time between the patriarchate of Cyrus the *Muqawqis* (AD 620-40s) and the time of death of Appa Samuel in AD 695, and yet the long narrative part of the apocalypse betrays posthumous fiscal events of the first half of the 8th century for instance. Nonetheless, the prediction is predictably protracted, like in the case of the Jewish school of prophets (e.g. Isaiah), owing to the very nature of the Coptic monastery of Qalamūn. The worldview of this apocalypse is somewhat drawn from the Nubian *exemplum*. Once again, the issue of doctrinal allegiance will be played out in Egypt, where the Coptic community of Qalamūn looked up to the Nubian Monophysite king for its vision of the future. There, too, the backdrop of the stalemate between the

Muslim Egypt and the kingdom of Nubia had fuelled speculations of a near future re-unification of Christendom.

The apocalyptic phenomenon of the period is unique in that from the perspective of the three regions of more or less open confrontations with the Arab Muslims, these texts do contain information of suppressed rebellion to the *status quo*. In Palestine, for instance, there occurred some latent insurrectional movements among the Jews, whose hopes of restoring the Jewish Temple were permanently dashed after AD 695. The short-lived period of relative autonomy accorded to them after the Persian sack of Jerusalem in AD 614 underscores the basis of the admonition in the *AZ*. At least two Jewish pseudo-messiahs laid claims on a prospective return of the Jewish Diasporas to Palestine in the 720s, severely quashed when they spilled out of control. These religious movements were entertained on home grounds under the watchful eyes of the Umayyads. The interesting characteristic of the Jewish movement of ʿIsā al-Īsfahāni, for instance, is that of syncretism, since he seems to have acknowledged the prophethood of both Jesus and Muḥammad.

Meanwhile on the Syria-Asia Minor frontier, several other sectarian communities were actively involved in parallel with the imperial effort to contain the Muslim determination to permanently conquer the land, the *Khazari* in Armenia, the *Athinganoi*, and other *Paulicians* were intent on furthering their own specific brand of prophetology and eschatology. These religious communities would lend their support to the successive Byzantine emperors according to the latter's views on the icons, for instance. However, the collusion of interests between ethnic and religious communities of so disparate ideologies seems rather a matter of expediency, insofar as the Muslim hegemony had to contend with all their specificities simultaneously. Here, the issue of the worship of icons was the main determining factor. It is not surprising therefore that it is in Asia Minor that the iconoclast emperors were the most popular. Yet, as the fortunes of a certain sects turned for the worst, there were still other sectarians to pledge their allegiance to the incumbent Byzantine leadership.

These points suggest the purpose of the study of the three apocalypses: to analyse whatever internal evidences from the apocalyptic texts that might shed new light on the motives behind their composition; to relate where possible the language and usage of terminology that may explain or elucidate the degree of

syncretism, if any, which the communities would have shared in common with their neighbours either friends or foes; and finally to draw some conclusion as to the theological circumstances that determined the apocalyptic movements, which leads to this particular genre of literature in the 8th to 9th centuries, the recognisable patterns of geo-political configurations that shape these apocalyptists' worldview.

There will be no definitive answers, nor any pretence to dogmatic conclusions. However, the exercise will be worth attempting on the basis of the present lack of scholarly opinion with regard to the apocalypticism as phenomenology in the period under study. The three texts under study are appended in the indexes. They are provisional translations of my own, from the original Hebrew, Greek and Arabic manuscripts. A painstaking exercise that is still on-going, but which proved absolutely necessary to undertake any serious analysis of this religious phenomenon. The present writer's aim would therefore stand in the era of comparative study, in Islam, Christianities, and Judaism, particularly in the area where the sectarian elements of these world religions encountered each other, when at the same time two to three empires were at a loggerhead.

A short Description of the Fourteenth Vision of Daniel (*FVD*):

The *FVD* is a 15th century Greek manuscript referenced MS B. 19, folios. 145 – 152, found in the School of Bibliotheca Marciana in Venice (Italy).[1] There are many other books of Daniel of Judaic, Christian and Muslim apocalyptic literature.[2] This recension of the *FVD* is a two parts text: a historical section (ch. 1-8) dealing with historical events narrated as *vaticinia ex eventu*; and the apocalyptic section (ch. 9-14) that elaborates on themes of the Last Days traditions, namely, the popular Antichrist legend, and the rebellion of the People of the North (i.e. *Gog* and *Magog*) whom Alexander the Great had shut up behind the Gates of the North, etc.[3] The two parts are, so to speak, separated abruptly by the negative account of the transition from the righteous to the worse of the Byzantine rulers. It is an apparent description of the Byzantines rulers of the second half of 8th century, among whom the iconoclast emperors such as Leo III, Constantine IV, Leo IV. There is also the mention of the iconophile Empress Irene (AD 797-802). The description of that ruler does betray the iconoclastic leaning of the authorship. However, the coronation of Charlemagne (AD 800) might have spelt out the resurgence of Rome – anticipating the imminent fall[4] of Constantinople – and ushering in the advent of the Antichrist subsequently and that of the Saviour-king of the Romans.

The Daniel Tradition:

The Daniel tradition represents the type of literature that is based upon the Biblical model of the elect in exile, which became the pattern of later assimilation and adaptation of that biblical model by distinctive religious groups

---

[1] K. Berger (ed. & tr.), *Die Griechische Daniel-Diegese. Eine Altkirchliche Apocalypse* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976), pp. 12-23.

[2] D. Cook, "An Early Muslim Daniel Apocalypse," in *Arabica* 49 (2002), pp. 55-96; G. Zervos, "The Apocalypse of Daniel," in J. Charlesworth (ed.), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 763-70; F. Macler, "Apocalypse arabe de Daniel," in *RHR* 49 (1904), pp. 265-305; S. Even-Shmuel, *Midrashei Geula* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, n.d.), pp. 200-52; J. Darmesteter (ed.), "L'Apocalypse persane de Daniel," in Mélanges Léon Renier: Bibliothèque de l'école des Hautes Études 73 (1887), pp. 405-20.

[3] Bousset has proposed an interesting hypothesis according to which there must have existed a Semitic Apocalypse of Daniel now not extent, which dealt specifically with the Antichrist closely resembling that of Hippolytus, see W. Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend: A Chapter in Christian and Jewish Folklore* (Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1999), pp. 68-72; cf. E.A.W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great Being the Syriac Version, Edited from Five Manuscripts, of the Pseudo-Callisthenes* (Amsterdam: APA-Philo Press, 176), pp. 163-200.

[4] Concerning the belief in the fall of Rome, see W. Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend*, pp. 123-32.

usually at odds with the prevailing or mainstream religion.[5] For instance, under the Diocletian persecution, the Coptic Church developed very early its peculiar speculative literature that became a source of rivalry between the Alexandrine *see* and Constantinople. Later on, the constant Byzantine persecution left such an impressive mark of apocalyptic commotion that prompted the composition of a Daniel apocryphon ever known to the Coptic church around the fifth century: it is called the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* which is a continuation of the thirteen divisions of the canonical Daniel in the *Codex Alexandrinus*.[6] By the time the Monothelete controversy reached its peak, the extent of the rift with Byzantium was such that the Egyptian church did not expect any help from anywhere, but to fight alone for its survival against the Arab invaders, under the leadership of Amr (AD 639-41).[7]

The Armenian Daniel apocryphon is no exception to this rule. The Armenian *Seventh Vision of Daniel* is a product of this suppressed Christian community, which had never rid itself from its suzerains' grip, just as its native literature had displayed all along a near total dependency upon its Greek cultural dominance. Thus, this version of the Daniel apocrypha, which itself follows an Armenian division in six visions of the biblical Daniel from the *Codex Alexandrinus* is filled with Hellenism. The first five visions are the same in both texts; but the sixth vision of the Armenian Daniel corresponds to the eleventh vision of the Greek version. The implication of this is shown in the title attributed to the Armenian apocrypha, which naturally occupies then the seventh rank. The Armenian Daniel was then to bear such contextual experience: it sprang from the Armenian mystical union between the material Church building with the spiritual nature of the Church.[8] Therefore, to depict the deadly perils faced by

---

[5] For a summary of the Danielic traditions in Christianity and Judaism, see JJ. Collins, *Daniel: A Commentary on the book of Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), pp. 53-60, 86-89.

[6] This Coptic apocalypse had reproduced the Septuagint similitude between the name of Daniel (*Belteshatsar* in Hebrew) and the Babylonian king (*Belshatsar* in Hebrew) into *Belthasar*. This indicates that the Coptic church did effectively generate its own apocryphal apocalypse of Daniel, though there appears to occur some influence from Persia in the eighth century, and notably from the then growing influence of the Pseudo-Methodius tradition upon later editions.

[7] Cf. R.H. Charles (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop pf Nikiu* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1916), pp. 183, 189 where the Egyptian Christians have opposed a fierce resistance to the inviders, and were even backed in their fight by the priests' preaching.

[8] See for instance the crowd of the people shouting: "We are ready to suffer persecution,...for our churches,...through which we were reborn; and we were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ with the hope of one faith. In the same manner we wish to redeem ourselves by torture and by shedding of blood. Since we recognize the Holy Gospel to be our Father and the Apostolic

the Armenian Church - both within and without Armenia is tantalizingly the same as to equate it with the Christian Rome [9] in her struggle over external enemies,[10] as well as internal threats to the integrity of the holy Church[11] - is as radically salutary as to seeing these events in the light of Armenian history. As R.W. Thomson points out, the Armenian literature as a whole - but this applies to the Armenian Daniel in particular - exhibits an unconscious adaptation, that is "*the use of literary topoi that were 'in the air'... without any deliberate attempt to deceive or mislead.*"[12] Thus the Daniel apocalypse we have at hand must share many *topoi* from the same Egyptian stratum with the apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn. As stated above, the Daniel tradition had earlier on strong ties with Egypt, and therefore would have some common features with the *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.*

Theological Significance of Daniel:

The book of Daniel is by far the most popular apocalyptic tradition, given its translation in so many languages, and multiple recensions. The *FVD* mimics relatively closely the Book of Daniel in language and its worldview. Like the authorship of the canonical Daniel, one could assume that the writer of the *FVD* was or felt about himself like an exile from the community of elect overrun by a mightier neighbouring force. Therefore, he set for himself the task of narrating the revelation accorded him. For a theological material to work with, there is only available the unfavourable description of one Byzantine ruler, and a glossy characterisation of two others to rely upon. But its iconoclastic stance is clear enough for a useful discussion of the part it had played in shaping the political aspect of the *FVD*, especially with regard to its take on the Byzantine-Arab wars, and the ever present Muslim threat hanging over Constantinople. As such, the *FVD* stands as a unique witness to the Byzantine apocalypticism supporting

---

Catholic Church our Mother, let no evil meddler come between us to separate us from Her." quotation from B.L. Zekiyan, "*E£iše* as Witness of the Ecclesiology of the Early Armenian Church," in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period.* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, 1982), pp. 187-97

[9] i.e. either Rome or Byzantium

[10] Visigoths, Germans, Ostrogoths, Slavs, Alans, Vandals, etc.

[11] heresies, palace revolutions, corruption, etc.

[12] R. W. Thomson, "The Formation of the Armenian Literary Tradition," in N.G. Garsoian, T.F. Mathews and R.W. Thomson (eds.), *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period.* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, 1982), pp. 135-50. (esp. p. 141).

the Byzantine iconoclasm, and therefore might contribute new insight into the controversy.

What makes the *FVD* definitely a Christian composition is the fact that the forces of evil are from the Semites (ch. 7 & 10), and that the "deception of the devil," orchestrated by the Antichrist (ch. 12), and which is to take place toward the Endtime (ch. 14) is none other than the issue of the imperial orthodoxy. In view of its expressed anticipation of the eschatological dominance of Rome, it is less likely that the predominance of Rome over against Constantinople, the *rapprochement* Charlemagne-Irene becomes a determining factor in the theology of the *FVD*.

Historical Background:

The author of the *FVD* states that the sons of Hagar will go forth, and move from Babylon into Asia Minor to wage war on Byzantium. This war might have had fresh ideological connotations, instead of the original ideals of the early Muslim conquests. We need to look at some other avenues in the Muslim ideology in the 8th century that could have impacted the warring trend in Asia Minor at the same period when the *FVD* was composed.

The Imamate of Jaᶜfar al-Sādiq[13] must have impressed, possibly, even caused some trepidation upon the authorship of the *FVD*, as the rise of this Muslim institution had reached not previously attained a prominence. Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq appears to be recorded as one of the three sons of Hagar.[14] The obvious question we need to answer about the evocation of this Imam is why him? It is to be noted here, that his namesake, the Imam and Caliph Jaᶜfar al-Mansūr (AD 754-75) was one of his invidious opponents on the grounds of the former's exceptional Imamate. But Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq had borne upon his person the essence of Shīʿa[15] Mahdism – concomitant with the Jewish and Christian messianism of the 2nd century AH – especially as this ideology set out to restore back the caliphate to the house of ᶜAlī, since all dissatisfaction at the time focussed toward renewed Muslim (both Shīʿa and non-Shīᶜa) messianic expectations.

[13] M.G.S. Hodgson, "Djaᶜfar al-Sādiq," in *E.I.*, vol. 2.

[14] Axiaphar may be consonantal to this name. However, other possibilities such as *'l-Asfar* could also correspond.

[15] R. Strothmann, "Shīʿa," in *E.I.* vol. 4.

Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq was born in AD 699/700, descendant of the Prophet and the great great grandson of Abū Bakr from his mother's side.[16] He died of poisoning in AD 765, probably at the instigation of the Caliph Jaᶜfar al-Mansūr. He was therefore, the first among the *Ahl al-Bayt*[17] to combine in his person this double descent.[18] Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq thus was believed to be the *Imam* of the House of the Prophet, his erudition unequalled, both as *the* holder of the Prophetic traditions, and the fact that he was believed to be endowed with the authority to interpret the Qur'an.[19] The title al-Mahdī[20] was first attributed to ᶜAlī's third son Muḥammad ibn al-Hanafīya.[21] Upon this Imam's death in AD 700/01, the concept of his Concealment (*ghayba*)[22] and awaited Return (*raj'a*), followed after an extravagant degree of reverence to the Imam/Mahdī, unprecedented in Islam. And which filled an eschatological function parallel to the Christian and Jewish Messiahs.[23] With the Imamate of Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq, an active propaganda (*daᶜwa*) in favour of the partisans of ᶜAlids (*Shīᶜat ᶜAlī*) was put into motion in the name of *jihād* against the tyranny (*ẓulm*) of the Umayyads aristocracy, although Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq appears not to have laid for himself any messianic claim.[24]

By now the Umayyads had helped federate against themselves all would-be-revolutionaries.[25] The early concept of al-Mahdī, the "one led by God to the truth,"[26] rested on three fundamental premises: first, al-Mahdī will appear during the period of anarchy (*fitan*, impiety, secularisation) preceding the End of the World; second, during the intervening age, al-Mahdī will restore the original piety, and there will be a period of plenty until his death; finally, during a period

---

[16] Shahrastānī, *Milal*, I, p. 166.
[17] Lit. "the people of the house" of the Prophet; the Prophet's kinsmen.
[18] S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), p. 259.
[19] Yaqᶜūbī, II, p. 381; Shahrastānī, *Milal*, I, p. 166; S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), p. 260.
[20] D.B. MacDonald, "Al-Mahdī," in *E.I.*, vol. 3.
[21] B. Lewis, *The Origins of Ismā'īlism: a Study of the Historical background of the Fatimid Caliphate* (New York, 1975), p. 25.
[22] D.B. MacDonald, "al-Gayba," in *E.I.*, vol. 2.
[23] See, however, Tabarī, III, pp. 31ff; Yaᶜqūbī, II, p. 350; Masᶜūdi, *Murūj*, III, pp. 256, where the ᶜAbbāsids claim that the caliphate would remain in their hands until it is handed over to Jesus, called ᶜIsā ibn Maryam.
[24] S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shīᶜa Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), pp. 267, 280-83.
[25] Ibn Qutayba, *ᶜUyūn al-Akhbār*, I, p. 204; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-[Buldān*, II, p. 352.
[26] Hence the coinage of titles such as the "party of al-Mahdī " (Shīᶜat al-Mahdī), the "party of Truth" (Shīᶜat al-Haqq), see Tabarī,` II, pp. 672-710, 691.

immediately preceding Judgement Day, certain ominous signs will follow the manifestation of the Deceiver (*ad-Dajjāl*), along with the mythological peoples of *Yajūj* and *Majūj*.[27] *Ad-Dajjāl* will lead people astray by performing miracles, and will kill both Elias and Enoch, but these two witnesses will resurrect immediately. Among *ad-Dajjāl*'s physical defects, it is that on his forehead are written the letters KFR, that is, *kāfir* "unbeliever."[28] At Resurrection Day *al-Masīḥ* (Jesus) will come in the form of/along with al-Mahdī, and one or the other will kill *ad-Dajjāl*.[29] The first remark that can be made here is that, even in Mahdīsm there was room for the accommodation of Jewish and Christian eschatological traditions.

The Imam Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq's apparent reluctance at first to assume the caliphate was born out of the idea that the Imamate and the caliphate could not be separated. His alternative principles of legitimacy could afford such separation by projecting the re-union of the two institutions in eschatological times. As Jafri puts it, this separation of the Muslim institutions is only acceptable:

> "until such time as God would make an Imam victorious. This Imam, who must be a descendant of the Prophet through 'Alī and Fātima, derives his exclusive authority, not by political claims but by *Nass*,[30] that is, explicit designation by the previous Imam, and he inherits the special knowledge of religion (*ᶜilm*)[31] coming down in the family from generation to generation."[32]

So, the Imamate of Ja'far as-Sādiq enjoyed the legitimacy by designation (*nass*) that was denied all other Imam. Not only did the Imam Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq possess the exclusive *ᶜilm*, but he was also the *Nass* Imam by legacy of the chosen family of the Prophet.[33] With this doctrine, the Imam Jaᶜfar as-Sādiq was placed above all temporal rulership, which would explain his attitude as noted above. It

---

[27] Qur. 21:96; 19:92ff; cf. "Gog and Magog" as in Ezekiel 38:2.

[28] J.-O. Blichfeldt, *Early Mahdism. Politics and Religion in the Formative Period of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), pp. 4-7.

[29] Here, the views are many, contradictory, and confusing. See al-Maqdisī, *Kitāb al-bad' wa't-tārīkh*, vol. 17, pp. 180-83; al-Baydāwī, *Anwār at-Tanzīl wa-asrār at-ta'wīl*, pp. 157ff. In Muslim b. al-Hajjādj, *al-Djāmi' as-sahīḥ*, vol. 5, the whole of chapter *al-fitan*.

[30] S. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shiᶜa Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), p. 290: says that the principle is that "the Imamate is a prerogative bestowed by God upon a chosen person,. From the family of the Prophet, who before his death and with the guidance of God, transfers the Imamate to another by an explicit designation (*Nass*)."

[31] Lit. *ᶜIlm*, an exclusive knowledge of religion passed on before death by the incumbent Imam.

[32] S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), pp. 281-82.

[33] M.G.S. Hodgson, "How did the Early Shī'a become Sectarian?" in *JAOS* 75 (1955), pp. 1-13, esp. pp. 10-11; S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shiᶜa Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), pp. 289-93.

was during the Imamate of Ja^{c}far as-Sādiq that was conceived the idea that the Imam was not the religious or secular ruler, but the spiritual one – which spiritual leadership the ^{c}Abbāsids also claimed over the whole Muslim community, and the main source of contention with the Imam – as the following tradition about the Imamate suggests:

> "God delegated to the Imams spiritual rulership over the whole world, which must always have such a leader and guide. Even if only two men were left upon the face of the earth, one of them would be an Imam, so much would his guidance be needed."[34]

Presumably, in order to avert the ineluctable clash with the ^{c}Abbāsids, the Imam Ja^{c}far as-Sādiq responded, the first, by elaborating[35] on the doctrine of "dissimulation" (*taqīya*). Accordingly, it became a duty of religion[36] to conceal the truth about a given Imam's divinely bestowed erudition with religious knowledge and spiritual leadership, until this is revealed at the appropriate time. The Prophet himself had been practicing *taqīya* when he was ordered to preach what was revealed to him.[37] So, one could plausibly identify the sequel of the resurgence of new conceptualisation in Mahdīsm, the doctrine of Occultation, the propaganda, etc. The relevance of these late developments may be seen in the naming of one of the sons of Hagar in the *FVD*. Axiaphar may be a Greek transliteration of the Imam *Ja^{c}far* as-Sādiq.

In the Hijāz, toward the end of 8th century a school of thought in Hims was busy collecting prophetic sayings to the effect that some jurists from Syria such as Nu^{c}aym b. Ḥammād brought over from Syria what seems a well drilled set of apocalyptic prophecies.[38] In the Nu^{c}aym's *Kitāb al-Fitan*, among the six events before the Hour predicted by the Prophet, there "*will be a truce between you and the Banu 'l-Asfar (namely the Byzantines). Then they will march against you and fight you. The Muslims will at that time be in a country called al-Ghūta in a*

---

[34] S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi^{c}a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), p. 294; A.A.A. Fyzee, *A Shī^{c}īte Creed* (Calcutta, 1942), p. 96, n. 6. See also Qur. 4:59.

[35] Jafri, *Origins*, pp. 298-300, asserts that Ja^{c}far as-Sādiq elaborated on his father's coinage of the term *taqīya*. According to him, indeed prior to al-Bāqir, there is not a single tradition on *taqīya*.

[36] Jafri, *Origins*, p. 299, quotes Ja'far as-Sādiq as saying: "Fear for your religion and protect it [*lit.* veil it] with the *taqīya*, for there is no faith (*Imām*) in whom there is no *taqīya*."

[37] See Qur. 5 67; cf. Qur. 16:106.

[38] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85.

town called Damascus."[39] Griffith has rightly pointed out that the 8th century Syria was one of the breeding grounds of apologetic apocalypticism:

> "The apocalyptic genre persisted in Syriac, and in later times was even combined with other types of apologetical/polemical writing... It had its roots in the patristic traditions of the exegesis of the biblical book of Daniel, such as had already been in vogue in the Syriac-speaking world since at least as early as the time of St. Ephraem."[40]

The *FVD* speaks of Axiaphar in chapter 2, the second of the three sons of Hagar as invading Asia Minor from the Armenian route, which would characterise Axiaphar as a name connected to the region where a stalemate or a truce has prevailed, or else when the region suffered setbacks from the Muslim raids. Given the un-natural character of this alliance, this Muslim apocalyptic prophecy seems to me to relate to the stalemate in the northern Syrian border where the earliest signs of the Muslims' lack of enthusiasm to maintain the *jihād* was expressed in apocalyptic terms, the word *Banū 'l-Aṣfar* = Axiaphar[41] may have assumed an apocalyptic connotation for those Arab Muslims who mix or collaborate with foreigners, that is, the local Christians, thus adulterating their own Scriptures.[42]

If this may be proven, then it could be inferred that the *FVD* was to Christians of Asia Minor the reflection of the late 8th century Muslim theological developments across the Syrian frontier about *jihād*. The most contested area of the Byzantine/Muslim frontier for two centuries from the conquest of Syria[43] was the valley-area (*al-ᶜamq*) of northern Syria.[44] The Isauria, Cilicea, and

---

[39] Quoted verbatim from W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Ḥims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85, esp. p. 146.

[40] S.H. Griffith. "Disputing with Islam in Syriac: The Case of the Monk of Bêt Ḥālê and a Muslim Emir." in *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 3 (2000).

[41] Here the expression *Banu 'l-Asfar* would be similar to the "People of the Book." The allusion might refer to the contention of the apocalyptic *jihādic* group with those who would consider the sufficient records of the earlier traditions of the Prophet, see for instance the angry reaction of Muᶜāwiya to a ḥadīth predicting a rival king from the Qahtānī, in W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85, esp. p. 150.

[42] This can be adduced from a prophecy attributed to Ka'b that on the contrary "the Mahdī will send his armies to fight the Rūm. He would retrieve the Ark of the Imanence (*tābūt al-sakīna*) containing the original Torah and Gospel from a cave in Antioch," see W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85, esp. p. 149.

[43] H. Arhweiler, "L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes (VIIe-IXe siècles)," in *Revue Historique* 227 (1962), pp. 1-32.

[44] J. Haldon & H. Kennedy, "The Arab-Byzantine Frontier in the Eight and Ninth Centuries," in *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloshki* Institut 19 (1980), pp. 79-116; W. Kaegi, "Observations on Warfare between Byzantium and Umayyad Syria," in M. A. Bakhit & R. Schick (eds.), *The History of Bilad al-Sham during the Umayyad Period, Fourth International Conference. 24-29 Octobre 1987: Amman, Proceedings of the Third Symposium* (Amman, 1989), pp. 49-70; W.

Germanicea having earlier been overrun during the first Arab conquests, had become the *thughūr* from where the annual Muslim *razzia* were being launched through the Taurus.[45] This frontier area was a breeding ground for sectarian groups, intent on capitalising upon the aspirations of the most affected populations.[46] These ethnic groups often lent their allegiance alternatively to the Byzantines or the Muslims according to their own agenda. The imperial policies (Justinian II, Nicephorus I) of colonisation,[47] that actually caused mass migrations, were dictated by security concerns, and so concentrated their efforts on the themes, the administration of great urban areas, and relied on the elite. However, Jews, Armenians, Syrians, Slavs, and Turks would migrate long distances from homeland and be constantly displaced thereabout from the Arab invasions onward, whose allegiance to Byzantium could never be ascertained.[48] Up to the Isaurian (Syrian) emperors, Byzantine policies toward the indigenous population had been essentially geared to defeating the Arab Muslims' ambitions to conquer Asia Minor. Iconoclasm, for once, had the merit of addressing the social needs of the pastoral populations – hence the Isaurians' edict of the *Ecloga* – whereby the most affected people by the Arab incursions were relieved of the heavy tax burden.[49] It is no wonder that the *FVD* should have the highest regard for the Iconoclast emperors. Neither should we be surprised that the Isaurians had enjoyed most the favours of the peasantry of Asia Minor.

Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85, esp. p. 158: Al-'Amq was a meadow surrounded by mountains. It seems to have been a district near *Dābiq* between Aleppo and Antioch; cf. D. Cook, "Muslim Apocalyptic and *Jihād*," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1995), pp. 66-104, esp. p. 85, n. 72. Cook conjectures that the apocalyptic battles in that region might have been identified with the A^{c}māq because of a possible influence "the valley of Armageddon" of Revelation 16: 16.

[45] I.e., C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6304 (AD 811), p. 680; AM6305 (AD 812), pp. 683, 685-86; cf. H. Arhweiler, "L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes (VIIe-IXe siècles)," in *Revue Historique* 227 (1962), pp. 1-32.

[46] P. Charanis, "Ethnic Changes in the Byzantine Empire in the Seventh Century," in *DOP* 13 (1959), pp. 23-44.

[47] A notable exception is the entry in Theophanes, where the unattended result of the population transfer was to spread another heresy, see C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6247 (AD 754/55), p. 593: "The emperor Constantine (V) transferred to Thrace the Syrians and Armenians whom he had brought from Theodosioupolis and Metilene and, through them, the heresy of the Paulicians spread about." But this is not a surprising assessment of the Isaurians from our iconodule historian; cf. AM 6259 (AD 766/67), p. 611.

[48] H. Arhweiler, "L'Asie Mineure ..", pp. 5-6, 15.

[49] See Constantine VI's tax remission in C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6287 (AD 794/95), p. 645, n. 3.

This region was also the site of one of the earliest Muslim historical apocalypses,[50] namely the *faḍā'il al-Shām* tradition,[51] a sort of apocalypticism found in the *Kitāb al-Fitan*,[52] and the *Kitāb al-zuhd wa-l-raqā'iq*,[53] which addressed of the Muslim *jihād* on the frontier of Syria during the first century AH.[54] It seems that *jihād* and the completion of it until Resurrection Day was part and parcel of Redemption, so that anything short of that was considered a distraction from the *Dajjāl*, that is, the false Messiah.[55] Nuᶜaym's *Kitāb al-Fitan* also suggests that there emerged a Muslim belief in the intercession of the latter days martyrs – i.e. those who partake in the apocalyptic wars (*malāhim*) until the appearance of the direct rule of God (*amr Allāh*)[56] – that was 10 times more efficacious than the deeds of the martyrs of the battle of Badr.[57] This was an apocalyptic ideology of wartime that makes plain that the atmosphere in northern Syria remained far from serene for the Muslims liking. The popular allegiance to the continuation of *jihād* for cause of Islam was no that consensual. The fact that Nuᶜaym b. Ḥammād should have a group (one third) of Muslims to be allied to Christians in order to fight an un-named common enemy at Kufa in Iraq, or somewhere in Persia, until the Christians' worship of the Cross betrays their polytheism, is evidence that the point at issue was about the complacent Muslims' attitude vis-à-vis their religious duty to the infidel Byzantines.[58]

From this perspective it would be judicious to assume that this *FVD* was an apocalypse remarkably at a contra distant opposition to the dwindling ideology of expanding the Muslim territory. It speaks of the Christians at the Syrian-Asia Minor frontier grappling with the state of constant warfare up to the early

---

[50] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85. Madelung traces the history of this movement from the area where the Muslims faced audacious harassments; cf., S. Bashear, "Early Muslim Apocalyptic Materials," in *JRAS* (1991), pp. 173-207, esp. pp. 191-98.

[51] E.g., the literature that praised the land of Syria-Palestine.

[52] S. Zakkār (ed.), Nuᶜaym b. Hammād, *Kitāb al-Fitan* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), p. 137. Nu ʿaym died in AH 228 (AD 843).

[53] H. al-Rahmān al-Aᶜzamī (ed.), ᶜAbdallāh b. al-Mubārak, *Kitāb al-zuhd wa-l-raqā'iq* (Beirut: Muḥammād ᶜAfīf al-Zuᶜbī, 1971), p. 516. al-Mubārak died in AH 181 (AD 796).

[54] P. Crone, "The First-Century Concept of *hijra*," in *Arabica* 41 (1994), pp. 352-87.

[55] D. Cook, "Muslim Apocalyptic and *Jihād*," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1995), pp. 66-104, esp. p. 71.

[56] M.J. Kister, "'A Booth like the Booth of Moses…' a Study of an Early *Hadīth*," in *BSOAS* 25 (1962), pp. 150-55, esp. p. 152; cf. W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85, esp. p. 155, where the climax of this apocalyptic battle would be that this Yemenite caliph will conquer Constantinople and Rome.

[57] Nuᶜaym, *Fitan*, pp. 259-60.

[58] Nuᶜaym, *Fitan*, pp. 260-61.

Abbasid caliphate. For example, the battle of Akroinos (AD 738/39)[59] marked a decisive Imperial victory over the Umayyad army in Asia Minor. During the long caliphate of al-Hishām (AD 724-743), the Muslim armies had suffered setbacks in Western Europe, Central Asia, as well as on the Byzantine frontier. This afforded the Christians at the Syrian frontier a new perception that the tide was about to turn. In AD 744/45 there was a new successful campaign led this time by Constantine V on the Upper Euphrates and Armenia.[60] There is here the perception that even the historians' accounts of the wars of the 8th century assumed greater spiritual overtones than before.

It should not come as a surprise then that the authorship of the *FVD* would depict the reigning emperor Leo III, and Constantine V after him in so favourable a light, regardless of their iconoclastic stance. Neither should the Regency of the future empress Irene be otherwise interpreted in the *FVD* than a disastrous period. One illustration of apocalypticism with regard to warfare on both sides of the frontier is the account of the summer "armed pilgrimage"[61] of AD 802/03 against Anatolia led by al-Qāsim, son of the Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd. God's hand was seen in both sides during that confrontation, although each side had seen the reverse action from the other (although here it was about the effect of siege-engines in two different instances: the Arab account of Arabs-Byzantines, where it is said that: "he set up siege-engines against it until God took it,"[62] and John of Thessalonike's account of the Avar-Slav siege, where these engines "were stopped by God alone"). Between these two contrasting periods of the Byzantine history, there are other key players who will feed the eschatological speculations in the second century AH, but none appear to suit better the ideology of the *FVD* than Leo III and Irene.

Leo III was a Syrian[63] born between AD 675 and 680 in Germanicia (Mar'ash), in northern Syria. He was probably acquainted with the Muslim people and the Arabic sources[64] long before he became emperor. His childhood home was

---

[59] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6231 (AD 738/39), p. 571.
[60] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6237 (AD 744/45), p. 584.
[61] Quoted from F.R. Trombley, "The Arabs in Anatolia and the Islamic Law of War...", esp. p. 149: on Hārūn al-Rashīd's cap it was written: "Raider and Pilgrim."
[62] E.W. Brooks, "Byzantines and Arabs in the time of the Early Abbasids," in *English Historical Review* 15 (1900), pp. 728-47, esp. p. 737
[63] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6209 (AD 716/17), p. 532, n.1
[64] A. Jeffery, "Ghevond's Text of the Correspondence between 'Umar II and Leo III," in *HTR* 37 (1944), pp. 269-332, esp. pp. 282, 285, 292-93, 309-11, etc.

Germanicia, that is the Arabic Mar'ash, in northern Syria, at the border of Asia Minor, occupied by the Muslims since AD 637 and which Caliph Muᶜāwiya (AD 661-680) transformed into a garrison. From the time of Yazīd (AD 744), it became the theatre of a permanent warfare until AD 694 when the garrison-city was destroyed to the extent that it had to be entirely rebuilt by al-ᶜAbbās, grandson of ᶜAbd al-Malik. Therefore, it could be said that Leo grew up in contact with Muslims more than Christians, and he probably spoke Arabic and Greek fluently.[65] More than acquainted to the Muslim culture, Leo III was well versed in the Muslim theological tenets, and he probably excelled in theological debate, since he had sparring opportunities with ᶜUmar, Pope Gregory II in Rome, and John of Damascus in turn.[66] However, his genuine interest in promoting the Christian faith is one of the outstanding features of this Byzantine ruler, and self-proclaimed priest.[67] If the so-called Leo III's correspondence with ᶜUmar II (d. AD 720) is genuine, it would attest of the beginning of literary disputation between Islam and Christianity in early 8th century, as well as afford us an outline of the salient points of contention of that disputation. In addition, the Ghevond text suggests also that there was already in circulation a Qur'ān acknowledged as the Muslim Scripture. The point of the matter is that Leo III's origins, personal knowledge of the Syrian frontier, and his outstanding military achievements against Islam, made him *the* messianic figure of the time, around whom the authorship of the *FVD* have plotted their eschatological scenario.

The garrison of Mar'ash was considered as *misr* or *ribāṭ*, two terms meaning: "fortified settlement." This unexpected Muslim setback caught the Umayyads struggling for the legitimacy of their caliphate. When in AD 746 Constantine IV destroyed Mar'ash, it was the Syrian Muslim jurists of that region, as quoted by 'Abd al-Razzāq, whose rulings would have reflected the Muslim anxiety to make progress on the Byzantine frontier in the first half of the second century AH. *Jihād* had become an element of formalised piety, that is to say, it was an attempt at "spiritualising the *jihād*," in order to re-invigorate the lost momentum at the hands of the Umayyads, as an instrument of the conquest on one hand. And also, on the other hand it was the need to account for the temporary halt in

[65] From de Goeje & de Jong (ed.), *Kitāb al-'Uyūn* (Fragmenta Historicorum Arabicorum), vol. 1, p. 25.
[66] A. Jeffery, "Ghevond's Text..," pp. 269-332, esp. p. 273.
[67] A. Jeffery, "Ghevond's Text..., pp. 269-332, esp. p. 272.

the conquest of foreign territories that that piety was shaped in the form of a deferred apocalyptic event.

Jihād was no longer essentially about conquest, but pious ideas about the importance of being frontier (*al-thughūr*) warrior in Syria, about the obligation of aggressive *jihād* to maintain the ground won started to surface.[68] These jurists denounced the state of vulnerability at the western frontiers. This was in part due to the Umayyads' troubled internal state of the Islamic Empire, so that the priority being elsewhere, the frontiers became neglected.[69] Among the best-known proponents of the new concept, one may cite al-Awzāᶜī and ᶜAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak,[70] but in the following generation of jurists, al-Shāfiᶜī (d. 820) was the most faithful to his two predecessors. Khadduri's assertion that al-Shāfiᶜī was one of the first to formally formulate the doctrinal idea that "the *jihād* had for its intent the waging of war on unbelievers for their disbelief," only re-enforces the idea that the earlier formulation of *jihād* was by al-Shāfiᶜī's time the new concepts were gaining wider acceptance. It appears that by the time of al-Shāfiᶜī the theory of the "abode of treaty relation" had been circulated.[71] It is now established that *jihād* in popular piety was about the legitimacy of the ruler – since *jihād* could only be declared on the authority of the deputy of God – which in view of the frequent military debacles must have reflected badly on the Caliph's divine appointment.[72] Fresh additions to the original notion of *jihād* were coined in Syria. F.M. Donner has dated the appearance of the terms "abode of Islam," and "abode of War" to the late 8th century AD.[73]

In sum, we can refer to the apocalyptic passage of the *Kitāb al-Fitan* of Nuᶜaym b. Ḥammād chronicling the Umayyads up to Marwan II (AD 744-50),[74] to suggest that the *FVD* may have been a response to the apocalyptic atmosphere

---

[68] ᶜAbd al-Razzāq, *Al-Musannaf* (Beirut, 1953), vol. 5, pp. 171-72.

[69] M. Khadduri, *The Islamic Law of Nations: Shaybani's Siyar* (Baltimore, 1966), p. 58.

[70] ᶜAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak, *Kitāb al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqā'iq* (Malegaon, 1966). This book elaborates on *Jihad* as an ascetic practice. He wrote also a book on *Kitāb al-Jihad*, now no longer extent, where he expressed his dismay at the state of neglect of the Syrian frontiers.

[71] H. Inalcīk, "Dar al-ᶜAhd," in *EI*, vol. 2, p. 116.

[72] F.M. Donner, "Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War," in J.M. Kelsey & J.T. Johnson (eds.), *Just War and Jihad* (New York, 1991), p. 41.

[73] F.M. Donner, "Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War," in J.M. Kelsey & J.T. Johnson (eds.), *Just War and Jihad* (New York, 1991), p. 50, n. 88; p. 67.

[74] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *JSS* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85. Although the collection of prophecies is undoubtedly Himyarite, from the early Abbasid period, they originated nonetheless from the Syrian Umayyad apocalyptic circles, see p. 144.

prevalent in the frontier region between Syrian and Asia Minor. There is notably an allusion to Yazīd II's iconoclasm in an early Islamic apocalyptic chronicle (~AD 780), where he is referred to – presumably with regard to Christianity and Christian iconography – as the "demolisher of building" (*hādin al-bunyān*) and "destroyer of images" (*mughayyir al-ṣuwar*). [75] But, the apocalyptic chronicle is rather obscure regarding the ᶜAbbāsid rulers,[76] but interestingly enough it predicts the Byzantine invasion that will reach the Aᶜmāq,[77] the appearance of a Yemeni redeemer[78] who will be aided by the Yemeni *mawālī*,[79] and the coming of an Andalus ruler.[80] However, it predicts that the *mawālī* will defect to the Rūm.[81] Madelung suggests that: "these *mawālī* were most likely native Syrians who had placed themselves under the protection of the Syrian Arab tribes."[82] In summarising, the present writer would be inclined to infer, tentatively, that the *Banu 'l-Asfar* (name given by Muslims to the Byzantines) may have become synonymous to a tag for "collaborators," or "traitors" on the part of the authorship of the *FVD* as well, and transliterated Axiaphar. In which case, as the present writer suspects, the other two names of the "sons of Hagar" were possibly symbolic names as well, namely Wali and Morphassar. These names were generic names of the key moments in the history of the wars in the frontier Syria/Asia Minor. The context of the FVD should be traced in that region during the protracted wars. Having laid the background of the Muslim apocalyptic *jihād*, we now turn to the scope of the *FVD*.

Statement of Purpose: The Scope of the *FVD*.

The *FVD* displays from the outset the scope of the apocalypse, namely, a narrative regarding "*the day of the Antichrist, how his advent will occur, and*

---

[75] M. Cook, "An Early Islamic Apocalyptic Chronicle," in *JNES* 52 (1993), pp. 25-29; cf. A.A. Vasiliev, "The Iconoclastic Edict of the Caliph Yazid II, A.D. 721," in *DOP* 9-10 (1956), pp. 23-47, n. 30.
[76] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies...," pp. 141-85.
[77] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies ...,", esp. p. 158.
[78] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies...," pp. 141-85, esp. p. 148: "The Mahdī will be only of Quraysh, and the caliphate is (vested) only in them. He will, however, have an origin and a lineage among the Yemenites," cf. in p. 150 where the future Yemenite Deliverer is described as "the one who would disperse the masses and unite the bands."
[79] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies ...," pp. 141-85, esp. pp. 152, 158, 161-62.
[80] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies ...," pp. 141-85, pp.
[81] Namely, those who have contracted a peace pact with them (*musālimatuhum*). Those were supposed to be the Bahrā', the Tanūkh, the Tayyi', the Kalb, and the Tazīd of Qudāᶜa.
[82] See W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies...," pp. 141-85, p. 164.

about the Endtime."[83] This apocalypse is thus not a prophecy about future events. Rather, one should speak of a treatise aimed at addressing the contemporary concerns of the religious community to which the authorship belonged. The language and content of the *FVD* being in every respect monolithically apocalyptic,[84] the question that comes to mind is whether this introduction reflects accurately the frame of mind and viewpoint of the community vis-à-vis the world politics of the time. How much historical information, if at all, should we expect of the text's idiosyncratic literary style? In any case, however, given that the author(s) of the *FVD* did suggest that the "*wars and rumours of wars*" that beset the era should be construed as the break out of wars such as the one divinely predicted, as the author(s) put it: "*according to the God-inspired voice which says: 'when you hear of wars... then...* "[85] This is an apocalyptic prophecy and the only one Jesus Christ ever uttered regarding the nations and kingdoms. Note that Jesus had then admonished his disciples not to panic in the face of such happenings, "*for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*"[86]

It is interesting to take notice of the listing of the major personages in the author's eschatological scheme where Persia is obliterated. In the stead, three Arab names representing the Sons of Hagar seem to hold sway: Walī, Axiaphar, and Morphossar.[87] The authorship does not appear to need any qualifying detail than the citing of the names, without further ado as to speak of a monolithic ethnic group, i.e., the Muslims. Rather, there seems to be a rationale for likening the "sons of Hagar" to some biblical scheme of sort. The first son of Hagar (in the order of citation!) is called Walī. C. Mango suggests here the Arab Muslim ruler Walīd I (AD 705-15.[88] Valen(tine) Arsacidus is another candidate to

---

[83] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. I.

[84] The Vision is quite distinctive in this respect compare to the two other apocalypses. Its literary style sticks closely and consistently to the laying down of the Chronology of the world from the time of wars (e.g., Persia and the Muslims against Byzantium) up to the days of the Antichrist.

[85] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. I; cf. Matth. 24: 4-31.

[86] Matt. 24: 6.

[87] Ch. 1:4; see K. Berger, *Daniel-Diegese*, pp. 47-49.

[88] See C. Mango & R. Scott, *The Chronicle*, A.M. 6234, p. 577, where Walīd is said to have ordered the martyr of the Metropolitan of Damascus, because of his public "anathema on Mouamed an d his fables and on everyone who believe in them!" denouncing Muhammād as "your false prophet and precursor of the antichrist," and his followers as "spiritually blind and deserving of eternal punishment." If C. Mango is right in conjecturing that Wali and Walīd are but the same person, then our apocalyptist might have been listing the most famous Caliphs who have gained some notoriety for persecuting the Christians.

Morphossar,[96] the third Son of Agar, and the most relevant adjective name by which to refer to the ᶜAbbāsid revolution in AD 750, without relating too specifically to a particular ruler. The third son may also have something to do with what must have been considered as the third stage in the history of the Hijra, after the Hijra of the Prophet, and the end of the Umayyad period. This provides us with a *terminus post quem* in AD 750. However, as G.T. Zervos suggests[97] the *FVD* encompasses events of up to the 9th century AD (e.g., the coronation of Charlemagne as the new Roman emperor in Rome concurrently to – but anticipated in people's mind as a replacement of – Empress Irene (AD. 797-802) in Constantine. Thus, all facts considered, the naming of the Sons of Agar in the introduction of the apocalypse sets the context from which the author(s) fleshed out the apocalyptic scenario. If Axiaphar and Morphassar relate to the messianic revolutionary figures, then, the first of the three sons of Agar should be as well.

In the *FVD*, however, the author(s) makes use of the latter statement of Jesus to advise otherwise that as a result of unprecedented happenings, the sons of Hagar will break loose from all restraint: "... *then the thorn-bush which holds back the sons of Hagar will dry out.*" The so-called "*thorn-bush*"[98] would no longer restrain the hegemonic aspirations of the Persians and the Arabs: "*and the nations of the Great Babylon and the Three Sons of Hagar will go forth.*"[99] It is obvious that the thorn-bush represented for the author, the might of the divine protector of the Byzantine Empire, which had safeguarded the Christendom from any serious challenge in the past. The fact that the thorn-bush would "*dry out,*" makes the significance of this entry even plainer, that is, in the long run that very power was bound to erode, so that the traditional Byzantine reliance on might alone would eventually seal its downfall. To this extent, one can perceive some geo-political erudition in the author(s)' analysis of the state of exhaustion

---

[96] It should be noted that Morphozzar reminds of the Persian re-naming of Daniel into Belteshazzar (Dan. 1:7). Out of the nine Daniel apocrypha, two relate the Islands of Crete and Rhodes to places of eschatological occurrences (cf. the Armenian and Greek Daniel apocalypse, ed. Macler). Otherwise, the Arabic word *mufassar* = "that is commented upon" = Qurʿān," from the root-verb *fasar* = to comment or interpret, which in the passive gives *mufassir* = commentator (or interpreter of dreams), is very much closer to its rendering in Greek *Morphassar*, to the extent that even the Greek accentuation match the Arabic one.

[97] G.T. Zervos, "Apocalypse of Daniel: A New Translation & Introduction," pp. 755-70.

[98] In Exo.3: 2-4, it is the "!Angel of the Lord," or Jehovah.

[99] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. I

correspond to the so-called Walī, the Byzantine army general who had stirred a revolt in Asia Minor against the empress Martina and Heraclonas in AD 641. He was of Armenian descent, and like the Arabs previously, he appeared at the head of the army before Chalcedon, which caused quite a stir in living memory. However, if one should seek to be true to the Arabic milieu, Walī might well simply refer to ᶜAlī the legitimate heir to the Prophet. But the name Walī is a literary device to conceal the identity of the personage alluded to, while conveying the meaning born by the word: Walī here stands in the Arabic sense for the "emir" or "one who has power."[89] This is a technical term for the chief[90] of a nucleus of fighting men or the leader of a retinue bound by a commonwealth covenant. Therefore the name Walī may be in fact a title in use before the title Caliph, which would fit even better the earlier period of the Islamic movement during which the nomadic Arab tribes paid their allegiance to the Prophet Muḥammād's leadership. A possible candidate for this name might be the Yemeni *mawālī* upon whom fresh apocalyptic speculations were attributed toward the 9th century.[91]

Lastly, Morphossar is the enigmatic third son, possibly referring to the biblical story of post-Noah humanity: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.[92] The etymology of the name Japheth that is "*he who spread far and wide*," may suggest that the authorship of this text was aware of the early Abbasids. Theophanes speaks of:

> "a people called the *Chorasanite Maurophoroi* (i.e., "black faced," or "wearers of black")[93] who rose up in the eastern part of Persia against Marouam (Marwān II, the last Umayyad Caliph, deposed in 750 AD)[94] and the entire clan that had ruled from the time of Mouamed."[95]

Nothing else as far as the present writer could see, has come the closer to

---

[89] In French: Valet. In Arabic, though, Walī literally means benefactor, companion or friend.
[90] E.g. a civil governor; in Arabic ᶜ*amīl* = a provincial governor.
[91] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies...," pp. 141-85, esp. pp. 152, 158, 161-62.
[92] Gen. 9:27 (NIV): "May God extend the territory of Japheth; may Japheth live in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his slave."
[93] In "The Chronicle of 754," it is said that ᶜAbd Allah sent after Marwān "a huge army of Persian soldiers, who still worshipped the sun and black demons." The reference was clearly to Zoroastrianism in the ranks of the ᶜAbbāsids' Muslim supporting soldiery. See K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), pp. 155-56.
[94] T. Orlandi identifies the beastly king (the 17th) whose numerical value 666 is written on the Muslim coins with the Caliph Marwan II, since the first Egyptian coins with Arabic inscriptions date from the period of the same Caliph.
[95] C. Mango & R. Scott, *The Chronicle*, 747/8 AD, p. 587.

Byzantium was under by the time of the Emperor Heraclius' definitive victory over Persia.

After listing the "main three" sons of Agar who will go forth,[100] the author(s) drastically shift attention to the generic name Ishmael, who is said, "*will come down to the region of the swift road. And he will fix his boundary at Chalcedon, opposite Byzantium.*"[101] The term "region of the swift road" was in all probability referring to Asia Minor because of its highly organised road network lay out.[102] In the circumstances of Muslim frequent inroads, particularly by sea, in the vicinities of the Aegean sea-coasts, the early Muslim raids (*ghazzia*) warfare caused in Asia Minor a sense of long-term danger in the face of the devastating inroads of the swift cavalry of marauding Arabs. The apocalyptic aspects of the Muslim invasions of Asia Minor were enough effective to leave the impression of a buffer zone between Islam and Christianity in the eschatological sense, or literally a *dār al-ḥarb* from the Judeo-Christian (Jewish) perspective. As the canonical Daniel was standing on the bank of the river Tigris,[103] when he saw the Messenger on the opposite side of the river, intent on delivering the revelation of things that were, and things that were to come, as a reward for Daniel's steadfastness, so also the authorship of this text does stand as a medium of revelatory insight into the outcome of the actual warfare.

The Eschatological Wars and the Title "Seven-Hilled" City:

Chapter 2 of the *FVD* seems to be replete with historical data: each of the three sons of Agar are said to come to occupy specific geographical zones formerly belonging to one or the other empire:

> "One of the three sons of Agar will come down to the southern city of Antioch, Anatolia of the Iberians, the regions of Thrakesion and Smyrna up to the Seven-hilled (city) and he

[100] Presumably, the sons of Agar will go forth from their region of confinement, i.e., Arabia, to spread outward toward the Christendom.

[101] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. I.

[102] McCormack, *The Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce AD 300-900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002). He suggests that the road network was greatly improved throughout the western Europe down to Asia Minor, starting before, but accelerating at the impulse of Charlemagne; cf. H. Ahrweiler, "L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes (VIIe-IXe siècles)," in *Revue Historique* 227 (1962), pp. 1-32, who assumes an even earlier period; E.W. Brooks, "The Arabs in Asia Minor (641-750), From Arabic Sources," in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 18 (1898), pp. 182-208.

[103] Cf. Dan. 10:2-5.

> will shed the Romans' blood."[104]

Although the author(s) does not give a detailed chronology of the Muslim inroads in Byzantine territories with respect to the three Hagarene names, it remains that there is a semblance of chronology, given the distribution of the activities of the three sons of Hagar. We are left with the textual order of the phases of conquests in the cited areas. From verse 1 to 4, there is an unmistakable reference to the Muslim annual razzias in Asia Minor. The *FVD* adds to this sorry picture the second front that the Muslims are said to have open:

> *"The second one will come to the district of Persia and the land of Galilee, to the edge of Armenia, and the city of Trebizond. 6 And he will come onto the part of the land of the Meropes. 7 And he will massacre (by) reducing to pieces (all) the male children from two up to three years old. 8 And he will deliver many to the sword."*[105]

Note that the *FVD* associates the second son of Agar to this second front. Just as Theophanes puts it, the Saracens were then in full control of "Abasgia, Lazica, and Iberia,"[106] the Arabs occupied Lykaonia in AD 712 and did "capture a great many families and cattles without number."[107] However, toward AD 762 the Turks (Khazars)[108] made incursions in Armenia "*killing many people and taking many captives.*"[109] This was an era of great many military campaigns from all directions that the apocalyptist is lapidary about the actual situation.

> "The third one will come down to the regions of the north and the city of Amasia and Synopolis, and Zalikos, and the regions of Chrisiapetra, and plunder them completely, even Bithynia, and Daphnousia, Chrisiapetra and Damoulia up to the Seven-hilled (city)."[110]

Under empress Irene, though, the Arabs grew stronger, devastating Cappadocia and Galatia,[111] Ancyra,[112] or Malagina.[113] In AD 781, the Arabs reached as far

---

[104] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. 1.
[105] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. 1.
[106] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6209 (AD 716/17), p. 542; cf. p. 545 the great winter offensive of Maslama through Thrace, threatening even the Imperial city.
[107] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6204 (AD 711/12), p. 532.
[108] The Khazars were a Turkish people residing between the Black and Caspian seas. In AD 707 already, the Roman emperor Justinian "was restored with the assistance of a powerful force of Khazars..." see "The Chronicle of 754" in K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), p. 129.
[109] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6254 (AD 762/63), p. 600.
[110] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. 1.
[111] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6290 (AD 797/98), p. 650.
[112] Tabarī, vol. 2, p. 221.
[113] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6291 (AD 798/99), p. 651.

as Chalcedon, forcing empress Irene to pay an annual tribute to the Arabs.[114] In AD 805 Harūn al-Rashīd invaded the Roman country with an army composed among others of Maurophoroi (300.000 in all).[115] The point at issue, however, is that the apocalyptist regards the reign of Irene as the climax of the slow deterioration of the Byzantine ability to defend the region of Asia Minor.

In chapter 3, Byzantium having lost the prestige of invincibility, the Ishmaelites cry out: "'*where is the God of the Romans? there is no-one helping them.*' For they have been truly conquered."[116] As a consequence, the Arabs are emboldened so as to plan even further:

> "'*Let us go and cross over to Byzantium.*' But being unable (to do so), they will take council again saying: *'Let us build up a bridge of boats and cross over Byzantium of the seven-hilled (city).*' And in that way the ungodly and all the hateful people will speak these (things). But, on hearing of the threats of the ungodly, the rulers of the Seven-hilled (city) and their nobles will not be alarmed, lest the Christians betray the seal of holy baptism, (and they) will take refuge in the islands of the sea. But there will be fear and tribulation and much necessity among the Romans. And men of the Seven-hilled (city) will suffer affliction by the sword."[117]

In contrast to St. John's time when Rome was recognised as the *seven-hilled* city,[118] the title had shifted to Constantinople the capital of the Christendom in the 4th century AD. From the mid 7th century onward, the status of Constantinople matched no longer the situation at Jerusalem on one hand. On the other hand, the Arabs could now reach by land as far as the seven-hilled city (*heptalophos*), which is Constantinople, across Chalcedon.[119] This is an essential point that the authorship of the *FVD* should at this point introduce the sacredness of Constantinople. In *The Vision of Daniel* (short version) the word is transliterated "*Aftalopon*," meaning Rome, also identified to "the Great Tyre," but Rome is also cited as opposed to *Aftalopon*.[120] The Victor with the Cross, who comes by God's command to settle in the *seven-hilled* city *par excellence*,

---

[114] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6274 (AD 781/82), pp. 628-29.
[115] C. Mango, *Chronigraphia*, AM 6298 (AD 805/06), pp. 661-62.
[116] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. I; cf. Martinez, *Pseudo-Methodius*, xiii, 6, 11, pp. 86-87.
[117] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, ch. 4, pp. I-II.
[118] Rev. 17: 5, 18.
[119] Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, p. 543: it is the qualifier for Rome since Virgil; but also of Constantinople.Cf. F. Macler, "Les apocalypses apocryphes de Daniel," in *RHR* 33 (1896), 287-319, esp. pp. 300, 310: "Malheur à, dans ce temps là, Babylon aux sept collines." In the Old Testament, Jerusalem is portrayed as the city built over two mountains.
[120] A. Sharf, "The Vision of Daniel," in *Byzantine Jewry: from Justinian to the Fourth Crusade* (London: Routlesge & Kegan, 1971), pp. 201-04, n. 18 & n. 19.

namely Constantinople, was the historic theme repeated over again in apocalyptic texts, although with the stress laid on the biblical *seven-hilled*, that is, Rome. More so, as the latter had laid claim over the Holy City at the turn of the 8th century, Jerusalem did become the *locus* of the eschatological battle. In the early 8th century midrashic narrative of the Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer, the author stated that: "*Jerusalem is situated on seven hills.*"[121] This seems to hold true for all three apocalypses under study here.[122] All these elements suggest that the "seven-hilled city" formula meant quasi universally the idealised Jerusalem. And it had become so in view of the Muslim control of the Holy Site, and the Muslim appropriation of the symbolism attached to the city.[123] The Muslim challenge over Constantinople in AD 717/18 was possibly motivated along the lines of the "sacralisation" of Jerusalem expressed in the erection of the Dome of the Rock in AD 691.[124] It may be that, the present writer submits, it was an extension of the appropriation of the *seven-hilled* city. In other words, whoever does not possesses the Holy Site does not deserve also the title for its capital.

In chapter 5 the saviour-emperor who would come to rescue the terrified Romans on the face of the Muslims, will bear a "*name beginning with the letter K of the alphabet.*"[125] The author adds a supplemental hint as though the identity of that saviour-emperor would become progressively evident upon a series of key events. Hence, the first hint is the manner of his advent: He "*will appear in the Seven-hilled city toward the Friday evening.*"[126] In that way, suggests the author, "*he will be ready against his enemies.*"[127] The pre-requisite for success in fighting the Muslims would be that the Byzantine Emperor ought to tackle first and foremost the symbolism of the Islamic supremacy.

---

[121] H.N. Bialik, Y.H. Ravnitzky (eds.) & W.G. Brande (tr.), *The Book of Legends: Sefer Ha-Aggadah. Legends from the Talmud and Midrash* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992), p. 371.
[122] In *The Apocalypse of Zerubabbel*, p. III, Jerusalem is the object of personal attention of Hephzi-Bah, because *Nof*, the king of Yemen had dared "shake his hand of Jerusalem."
[123] H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *Some Religious Aspects of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981), pp. 58-89; S.D. Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), pp. 135-48.
[124] E.W. Brooks, "The Campaign of 716-718, from Arabic Sources," in *JHS* 19 (1899), pp. 19-33; cf. M. Canard, "Les expeditions Arabes contre Constantinopole dans l'histoire et dans la légende," in *Journal Asiatique* 208 (1926), pp. 80-102.
[125] Cf. Sib. Or. 5:12,25.
[126] Why Friday evening, and not Friday *tout court*? On the seven-hilled city as Constantinople, see J.B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* (New York: Dover Publication, 1958, vol. 1, pp. 69-73;(Rev 17:9 (NIV): "This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits.."
[127] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. II.

In the circumstances, however, the letter K of the alphabet carries the idea of Constantine the Great. However, it points at Constantine V and/or Leo III without having to designate either. In simple words, the authorship of the apocalypse does intimate his fellow Christians to rid themselves of their actual inferiority complex vis-à-vis their Muslim neighbours. As for the significance of the "seven-hilled city" with regard to the deliverer's advent, the Davidic messianic tradition about the city of Jerusalem is evoked here. When viewed from the eschatological perspective, the author of the *FVD* might have had in mind the actual Muslim appropriation of the Holy Mount of Jerusalem.[128] This is made plain in the clause that affirms that otherwise the Christians would "*betray the seal of Holy Baptism*," which would invoke the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.[129]

Then the author proceeds to setting the agenda (ch. 5). After entering Jerusalem, the saviour-emperor "*will initiate, with the support of his two sons, a great war against Ishmael and the sons of Hagar.*"[130] What the expression "*Ishmael and the sons of Hagar*" meant with regard to what Caliphate specifically is not easy to decipher. It could be reminiscent of the 7th century layer of the apocalyptic materials upon which the authorship of the FVD has overlaid new ones in the 9th century. Heraclius and his two sons Heraclius Constantine and Heraclonas who were made co-emperors in AD 613 and AD 632 respectively, should they be meant here, fit the picture theoretically. However, there has been no such instance during which Heraclius with his two sons would have engaged the Muslims in the field. This contemporaneous connection between Alexander and Heraclius[131] is testimony to the Byzantines' anxiety to see to it that the Christian

---

[128] See discussion above. One may perceive here the on-going struggle for the ownership of the religious symbolism of Jerusalem. The author of the text might as well have wished to express his Affiliation to the Eastern Melkite Church, over against the Orthodox Roman Christendom, whose head at Constantinople would thus not qualify for the expected messiah-ship. The election of Saturday morning as the day of starting the great war, may well be indicative of the religious group the author belongs to.

[129] Acts 2: 1-14; cf. 1: 4-5, 8.

[130] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 5:10. The emperor Heraclius along his two sons Constantine III and Heraclonas (who were made co-emperors) spring straight to mind. Although they co-ruled briefly in AD 641 before being succeeded by Constans II, they played no known part in the fighting.

[131] Cf. G.J. Reinink, "Alexandre et le dernier empereur du monde: les développements du concept de la royauté chrétienne dans les sources syriaques du septième siècle," in L. Harf-Lancner, C. Kappler, and F. Suard (eds.), *Alexandre le Grand dans les literatures occidentals et Proche-Orientales, Actes du Colloque de Paris 27-29 novembre 1997* (Paris,: Université Paris X-Nanterre, 1999), pp. 149-55.

empire was still capable of keeping back all future invasions of the eschatological peoples, that is, the rebellious nations, and the Antichrist, beyond the Gate[132] that Alexander, the "*believing King... made against Gog and Magog,*"[133] before ushering in the advent of Christ. "*For the Lord had beckoned to him (King Alexander) to make a gate against Magog... He alone knew this mystery, which Jeremiah, in his prophecy, had prophesied concerning him.*"[134] To that extent, the prophecy attributed to Alexander the Great appears in an inscription upon the gate that he built in order to shut up the barbarian peoples.[135] In the 630s, people were still convinced, despite Heraclius' recent restoration of the Cross, and the people's fervent veneration of relics of saints, and because God: "*fait des miracles jusqu'en notre génération, la dernière.*"[136] But still the end was drawing near. Needless to say that the Persian episode was way in the background, a mere souvenir compared to the actual Muslim reality. This may be an instance of the superimposition of the latest "apocalyptic" events over the previous set of speculations.

The Alexander-Constantine-Heraclius Themes in Eschatology:

In Heraclius silver hexagram struck around AD 615, he is portrayed alongside his son Constantine, alone, and both as holding a cross and the *globus cruciger*, and on the obverse there is an inscription that reads: *Deus adiuta Romanis*, i.e., "God, help the Romans," which surrounds the Cross-on-Steps.[137] Therefore, the "support of his two sons" motif does not square with what the numismatic iconography purported to project. However, all three appeared on the gold *solidus* coins from AD 632. On the obverse, Heraclius is depicted upstanding

---

[132] E.A.W. Budge (ed. & tr.), *The History of Alexander, being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes* (Cambridge, 1889), p. 184: "King Alexander made haste and made the door against the north, and against the spoilers and the children of Magog. In the sixth month he finished the building of the whole door." Cf. p. 182.

[133] This is part of the title of a discourse of Mar Jacob, in E.A.W. Budge, *The History*, p. 163.

[134] E.A.W. Budge (ed. & tr.), *The History of Alexander*, p. 167.

[135] E.A.W. Budge (ed. & tr.), *The History of Alexander*, pp. 255-75, esp. pp. 268-71.

[136] B. Flusin, *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'Histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle* (Paris: Editions du Centre de la Recherche Scientifique, 1992), vol. 1, pp. 104-05, no. 23; cf. Flusin, *Anastase*, vol. 2, pp. 329-30.

[137] P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection II: Phocas to Theodosius II I(602-717)* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968), vol. 1, p. 270, no. 61.2. The *globus cruciger* symbolised the world dominion by the Christian emperor; the cross was the sign of Jesus' eternal lordship. The overall iconography symbolises the ultimate victory of the Romans as divinely ordained.

between his two sons, all three wearing crowns and chlamys, and holding the cross and the *globus cruciger* on their rights. On the obverse, there is the abbreviated inscription "VICTORIA AVGU E" surmounting the Cross-on-three-steps. These features are unique to the Heraclean dynasty (AD 610-717).

This motif re-appears during the period of the Isaurian emperors, where the theme of "*dynastic leadership*" in Byzantium sought to match the Muslims' notion of the Caliphate, "*deputy of Allah*"[138] The former occurrence may have served to symbolise the Trinity, but this would have been not the deliberate intended objective.[139] In any case, the author would be involved, to a large extent, into some imperial eschatology, where the author tries to address the issue of energy and operation in the contentious Monothelite doctrine. However, it could be that the then apocalyptic motif would have been picked up out of its former context, in order to serve another purpose altogether. One possible rationale for the use here of the "*help of the two sons*" motif may have been to account for the fluctuating fortunes of the Byzantine Empire. Since the date of composition of the *FVD* could be quite removed from the period of the Heraclean dynasty, the Isaurian period would fit better the ideology of the Vision of Daniel. Whatever the original intention of the author, the public perception of the political and theological events was certainly expressed in apocalyptic terms throughout the period of the Arab invasions.[140]

These facts seem to point at a literary construction of Heraclius as the New Alexander in the wake of his dealing with Persia.[141] When we come to the Byzantine numismatic evidence, the most striking feature of the iconoclast effect on the imperial affairs was the appearance of three major coinage innovations during the "Isaurian dynasty." First, Leo III (AD 717-41), the Arabic speaking emperor, introduced in AD 720 the junior emperor's portrait on the reverse of the *numismata* (gold) coins, while the senior emperor appeared on

---

[138] see discussion of the Muslim dynastic concept in the term *Ibn* "son of" bellow.

[139] See W. Brandes, "Heraclius Between Restoration and Reformation," in G.H. Reinink & B.H. Stolte (eds.), *The Reign of Heraclius (610-641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp. 17-40.

[140] W.E. Kaegi, "Variable Rates of Change in the Seventh Century," in F.M. Clover & R.S. Humphreys (eds.), *Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 191-208, esp. p. 194.

[141] G.J. Reinink, "Heraclius, The New Alexander. Apocalyptic Prophecies during the Reign of Heraclius," in G.J. Reinink & B.H. Stolte (eds.), *The Reign of Heraclius (610-41): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp. 81-94.

the obverse, replacing the Cross on Steps.[142] The symbol of imperial power seems to shift slowly from the *globus cruciger* toward the cross, probably an expedient iconographic alternative for the victory of Constantine I. This dynastic feature was transferred to the *miliaresion* coin. Second, it was the epigraphy of the *miliaresion* (silver) coins that followed the *examplar* of the Muslim *dirhem* in use since the 690s: on the obverse, a cross on steps was depicted with the victory inscription *Iesus Christus Nika* replacing the traditional *Victoria Augusti*, while on the reverse, there was only the inscription of both the senior and junior emperors' name with title of *basileus*. Constantine V (AD 741-75) introduced the third innovation in AD 751 by retaining the portrait of his deceased father on *nomismata*.

Thus, the depiction of three generations of emperors (Leo III, Constantine V, and Leo IV) meant to represent a stable dynasty,[143] very much in line with the role of *hereditary excellence* played in the Muslim formula "son of," (Ar. *ibn, bin*) with regard to the notion of guardianship of the tradition. This shows a growing self-consciousness on the part of the iconoclast emperors over their lineage, judging from the evocation thereby of the Cross and the image of imperial continuity. With the reign of Leo IV (AD 775-80), it was no longer three, but four generations represented in the *nomismata* coins from AD 776.[144] The coins minted between AD 780 and 790 do represent empress Eirene and Constantine VI on the obverse, and Constantine V, Leo III, and Leo IV, seated together. This is precisely the construction that the authorship of the *FVD* is making by contrasting the "righteous Emperors versus the Evil One.[145]

Conversely, the fact that the iconodule Eirene[146] should appear next to her son, suggests a mintage prior to the Second Council of Nicaea in AD 787, otherwise Eirene would not want to associate herself with the iconoclastic dynasty. Note that Pope Hadrian I (AD 772-95), to whom a copy of the Synod of 787 was

---

[142] P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore* Collection, III: *Leo III to Nicephorus III, 717-1081* (Washington, 1973), vol. 1, pp. 231-32.

[143] G. Dagron, *Emperor et Prètre: Étude sur le 'Césaropagisme' Byzantin* (Paris, 1996), pp. 51-2.

[144] P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore* Collection, III: *Leo III to Nicephorus III, 717-1081* (Washington, 1973), vol. 1, pp. 291-92.

[145] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, ch. 8, pp. III-IV.

[146] For a general overview of Irene's iconoclasm, see W. Treadgold, *The Byzantine Revival 780-842* (Standford: Standford University Press, 1988), pp. 36-38.

addressed, had also issued papal coins, and whose portrait appears in place of the Byzantine emperor.[147] This was borne out in the coins minted in Constantinople during her sole reign, in which *nomismata* she appears on both sides, severing at once all ties with the Isaurians. Conversely, it should be noted that only the names of Constantine and Leo alternate between the five Isaurian emperors – Leo VI (AD 780-97) included – as though the Isaurian dynasty wished to be seen as the only heirs to Constantine the Great, and be associated with the world dominion suggested in the name Leo (lion). It should be pointed out that the Byzantine imitation of the Muslim *numismatic* aniconism had hardly lasted more than a decade. The urge for displaying the hereditary status of the *basileus* on coins had eventually gained precedence over the religious overtone of the imperial portraiture.

However, coins were the single most widespread item. As such, the *nomismata* coins, in particular, took up the role of circulating in a nutshell the imperial message. Interestingly enough, Grierson has noted that the Cross-on-Steps feature was probably borrowed from seals,[148] which count among the private equipments. In addition to the latter feature, the portrait of the Byzantine ruler still appears in the Umayyad coins during the Caliphate of Uthman (AD 644-654), so long as the Muslims found their trade and industry dependent upon some parity with the Byzantine currency. The Muslim coins were not accepted in Syria because they did not bear the cross! So in order to have it accepted, it was not until AD 684 that Marwān I had adopted a modified representation of the cross, with the representation of the Arab Caliph. The purely Muslim coins are datable to AD 696 at the earliest.[149] The apocalypse of Pseudo-Athanasius (written c. AD 715) has the earliest notice about this Muslim coinage:

> "First, that nation will destroy the gold on which there is the image of the cross of the Lord our God, in order to make all the countries under its rule mint their own gold with the name of the beast written on it, the number of whose name is 666."[150]

---

[147] L. Bréhier & R. Aigrain, *Grégoire Le Grand: les états barbares et la conquête arabe (590-735)* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1938), pp. 416-19.
[148] P. Grierson, *Catalogue*, pp. 231-32; cf. the formula "Ibrāhīm has faith in Allāh" on Islamic seal and ring dated between the 7th and the 9th century, in M. Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palestinae* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), vol. 2, pp. 297-98, fig. 93 (1 &2).
[149] P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London: Methuen & Co, 1982), pp. 144-47, see Plate 34.
[150] Ps-Athanasius 9: 9, p. 283.

It is interesting to note that this apocalypse should make such an obvious and direct reference to the Muslim coinage in apocalyptic terms. The abbreviated inscriptions in numismatic propaganda was more effective than, say, the more elaborated doctrinal formulation of faith. Since Heraclius' victory over the Persians, the battle-cry "God help us"[151] had found its way in AD 615 into Heraclius silver hexagram in the form of *Deus adiuta Romanis*, i.e., "God, help the Romans."[152] The point of the matter is that traces of Christian iconography, here on coins, would interact in the *FVD* in fostering the ideology advocated therein. The Muslims are made to negate the Christendom as a direct assault on God: "*'where is the God of the Romans? there is no-one helping them' For they have been truly conquered.*"[153]

We are told then after that they - that is, the Christian Emperor and his two sons (heirs) – "*will fight (together) Ishmael and the sons of Hagar*," which suggests that the author was possibly trying a balancing exercise, either figuratively or literally. However, the notice might refer to an imagery of the idealised Heraclean dynasty,[154] as also this was made evident on the coins.[155] Heraclius' son and heir to the throne, Constans II (AD 642-68) had three sons. The victory of Constantine IV,[156] Heraclius great grandson, over the Arabs in AD 678 was a turning point, and this feat should not be underestimated, in the long-drawn struggle against the Muslim threat. Justinian II, the last of the Heraclean dynasty (AD 711) was the true heir of the Heraclean administration reform, and besides he successfully restored much of Asia Minor from marauding Arabs and kept in

---

[151] Lat. *Adiuta Deus*: a battle-cry prescribed by the emperor Maurice's *Strategicon*, see G.T. Dennis & E. Gamillscheg (eds & trs.), *Das Strategikon des Maurikias* (Vienna, 1981), pp. 442-43; cf. a tradition from the Syriac legend of Alexander the Great in E.A.W. Budge (ed. & tr.), *The History of Alexander, being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes* (Cambridge, 1889), pp. 255-75.

[152] P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection II: Phocas to Theodosius II I(602-717)* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968), vol. 1, p. 270, no. 61.2.

[153] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, ch. 3, p. I.

[154] Otherwise, we know that Heraclius (Charlemagne (AD 800) at least was so hailed by Alcuin) was held the "new Constantine" or the "new David" at some point , see P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London: Methuen & Co, 1982), pp. 84-92, for a useful summary of the Heraclean dynasty on coins. The apocalyptist would have capitalised on a matured representation, well established in the store of public imagination.

[155] Not surprisingly, did the Arabs' coinage replace in late 7th cent. AD (~ 696, see P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins*, p. 100) this very image with a more Muslim-friendly iconography (see discussion above).

[156] Note that the Emperor Constantine IV spent his time trying to emulate his namesake. In AD 680 he convoke the church synod in order to refute the Monothelite doctrine, and proceeded to expunge the church of the tenants of similar controversial doctrinal nuances.

check the Slavs and Bulgars. Both Constantine IV and Justinian II do seem to check out with our apocalyptist's scheme here. In terms of the chronological information this notice provides (late 7th –8th cent.), the emperor and his "two sons" in the text speak most probably of the idealised Heraclean dynasty.

Moreover, this Heraclean dynasty's allusion is further evoked in the fact that the Christendom would overcome Ishmael and the sons of Hagar on the grounds of its (doctrinal?) unity of the faith. As the author puts it so forcefully:

> "*And the leaders, and the nobles of the seven-hilled city will be united with him [the saviour-emperor]; Even the priests and bishops of the churches will bear weapons of war. And that emperor along with his two small boys will join in a mighty war against the nation of the sons of Hagar... And Ishmael will be defeated (and lament) with the sons of Hagar until the End.*"[157]

It is palpable that the vigorous attempt at uniting the church was the common denominator that distinguishes the three cited emperors from the other members of the Heraclean dynasty – although there are other features of their respective reign that qualify as well – would have marked the aforementioned dynasty with some degree of belief in their Messiah-ship. Besides, the apocalyptist insists heavily upon discriminating between the people he calls the "*nation of the sons of Hagar*," or the "*sons of Hagar*," and another ethnic group he names Ishmael. Presumably, for the apocalyptist both words meant the Arabs. Before the *hijra*, the Syrians called Arab Christians *Tayyayē*, so that when they had converted to Islam by the end of the 7th century the name became synonymous with Muslims. The Syriac term "sons of Hagar" (*bnei hagjar*) comes from the verbal root *ahdgar* or *ahgar* meaning "he has become Hagar," hence the expression *Mahdgar* and *Mahgar* from the participle. The Greek transcription *magarizein* or *magarites* have their origins from the Syriac and Arabic cognate *Mehagra* or *Muhadgir*.[158] They bear different names when referring to the Muslim Arabs or Christian Arabs. However, since both the "*nation of the sons of Hagar*" and Ishmael (as an ethnic entity) were defeated indiscriminately by the Romans, one should assume that the author perceived a devious collusion[159] between the two religious groups: the Arab Christians (e.g., the Himyarites, Ghassanids,

---

[157] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 5:11-17, p. II.
[158] Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, vol. 1, col. 971-72.
[159] See the discussion on the naming of the three sons of Hagar.

Lakhmids, Taghlibites,[160] Tanukhids,[161] and 'Aqoulaye[162]) became increasingly assimilated into their Arabic ethnicity (cf. so also are the views expressed in Sebeos and *Doctrina Jacobi*).[163] These Arab Christians were mainly Monophysites[164] whom Nau affirmed that they spoke: "*l'arabe et le syriaque, qui avaient aidé à traduire le Nouveau Testament en arabe et qui accompagnaient le patriarche Monophysite Jean devant l'émir des Sarrrasins en 644.*"[165] These Arab Christians shared with the Muslims the belief in One God, whom they called Allāh. Theophanes suggests to us that these Arab Christians had defected to the Muslims more by hatred of their fellow Greeks' mistreatment of them, and that "*the Arab (Christians) went over to their fellow-tribesmen, and it was they that led them to the rich country of Gaza, which is the*

[160] Special mention should be made of the Taghlibite tribe, which was probably the largest and most powerful of the Arab Christian tribes at the advent of Islam. They survives the initial Muslim invasion, since in the Caliph Walid I (AD 705-15) set out convert them by force, in vain apparently (see J.-B. Chabot (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)* (Paris, 1901), vol. 2, p. 481), until eventually they succumbed partly to the tax burden under 'Umar II (AD 717-20), and by AD 798 they all became Muslims (see J.B. Abbeloos & T.J. Lamy (eds.), *Chronique Ecclesiastique* (Paris, 1874), vol. 1 part 1, col. 338.

[161] The Tanukhids were Arab Christian tent dwellers in the vicinities of Aleppo, Eventually, they too succumbed to persecution and forced conversion, first under the Caliph al-Mahdī (), and finally in around AD 815 were forced to flee their open city, which had long attracted the pillaging appetites of the marauding Muslims (cf. J.-B. Chabot (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)* (Paris, 1905), vol. 3, p. 31).

[162] The 'Aqoulaye were Arab Christians of Baghdad and Kufa who were the easiest to apostatise, when unable to flee to Byzantium (see J.-B. Chabot (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)* (Paris, 1901), vol. 2, p. 445). Those who did apostatise proved themselves the worst of the enemies of the Christians in *dār al-Islām* (J.-B. Chabot (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)* (Paris, 1905), vol. 3, pp. 21-31).

[163] A possible source for dating the text, since the two words became interchangeable as the Arab Christendom was being absorbed into the ethnic group that distinguished itself as Islamic. See F. Nau, *Les Arabes Chrétiens de Mésopotamie et de Syrie du VIIe au VIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1933). Nau cites among other Arab Christians from Mesaopotamia 'des Aqoulaïé, des Tanoukaïé et des Tou'aïé," who later were to be persecuted by former Arab Christians, pp. 16, 101ff, 106-109; E.W. Brooks, "The Arabs in Asia Minor (641-750), from Arabic Sources," in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 18 (1898), pp. 182-208; cf. J.-M. Fiey, *Assyrie Chrétienne* (Beyrouth, 1965-68), vol. 3, pp. 203-30; C.E. Bosworth, *The History of al-Tabari V. The Sassanids, the Byzantines, the Lakhmids and Yemen* (Albany, 1999), pp. 74, 76-77.

[164] Ct. F. Nau, "Un Colloque du patriarche Jean avec l'émir des Agaréens...," pp. 225-79, esp. pp. 233-34, where Nau asserts that: "Ces trois derniers noms (les Tanoukaïés, les Tou'aïés et les 'Aqoulaïés) désignent les trois principales tribus arabes qui étaient Jacobites." On p. 237, Nau divides them between Jacobites and Nestorians.

[165] For the identification of these Arab tribes as Monophysites and the translation of the text, see F. Nau, "Un Colloque du patriarche Jean avec l'émir des Agaréens...," pp. 225-79, esp. pp 234-35, For the dating of the aforesaid meeting in AD 644, see H. Lammens, "A propos d'un Colloque entre le patriarche Jean 1er et ᶜAmr al-ᶜAst," in *Journal Asiatique* 13 (1919), pp. 97-110.

gateway to the desert in the direction of Mount Sinai."[166] In other words, the author seems to stigmatise the amalgam in a way that attributes the actual misfortunes of the *oūkomenē* to the historical partisanship that was prevalent at the advent of Islam. But his idealism for the unity of purpose of all parties (i.e., the coming together of the emperor, clergy, the believers who make the church) behind the lead of the Saviour-emperor, and for the purpose of re-taking the seven-hilled city, is made to project into his eschatological scheme the ideals of Constantinople and Jerusalem. What is made rather opaque here – the ostentatious Dome of the Rock standing at the Jerusalem mount – appears much clearer in the next chapter. The proposed course of action – uniting the forces of the Christendom – represents the most precarious part of the goal since it was the weakness of the *oūkomenē* in the first place.

Note here that, contrary to the other apocalypses there is no apparent theodicy in the *FVD*, no Christological assertion,[167] not over conditional merit of God's favour than the advent of a woman who "*will reign over the seven-hilled (city).*" Rather, as they brought about the age of iniquity, it is the sons of Hagar and Ishmael who are iniquitous: "... *because of their iniquity God allows [it] and He (i.e., Jesus) will stand self-restrained at Byzantium...*"[168] As a result of their iniquity that there is war and rumour of war against the Christians, so that the hardship will cause rulers of the Romans to blaspheme saying: "*woe, woe, neither in heaven do we have an emperor, nor on earth...*"[169] In other words, the Christians will be so hard pressed that they will believe that they no longer have a ruler.[170] But with (because of?) this word (lament?), says the apocalyptist, "*the Lord will pour out His mercy upon the Romans and He will (also) avenge them and He will repay justly His enemies...*"[171]

---

[166] C. Mango, *Chronographia* AM 6123 (AD 630/31), p. 466. Originally, says Theophanes, the Muslim emirs were intent on fighting "those members of the Arab nation who were Christians..." Clearly, Theophanes suggests the Arab ethnic bond was a major factor in the Arab Christian swift defection to the Muslim cause.

[167] Except the theodicy formula introduced in chapter 2 where the apocalyptist asserts that Ishmael "will fix his boundary at Chalcedon, opposite Byzantium."

[168] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. II.

[169] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. II.

[170] Cf. Matthew. 9:35; Mark 6:34).

[171] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* chapter 5:2.

Chapter 6 of the *FVD* opens with an account of the contemporary wars between the Muslims and Romans, which unmistakably refers to sea warfare and the failure of the Arabs to achieve their strategic goals:

> "*There will be* a *great bloodshed such as has not happen from the foundation of the world. For the blood will be mixed with the sea*[172] *up to twelve stades... And there will remain for that nation and Ishmael [nothing] except their three tents.*[173] *They will serve the donkey-drivers*[174] *of the seven-hilled* city[175] *for thirty years. And the nation*[176] *of the Romans*[177] *will look for the footprint of Ishmael but will not find any.*"[178]

The apocalyptist has in sight to wrap the account of the Romans' victory over the Muslims as "ultimately certain," in eschatological terms. This episode resembles the failed naval Arabs' siege of Constantinople in AD 717/18.[179] The triumph of the Christendom will take place as suddenly and unexpectedly as though in a visionary experience. Kaegi also has pointed out that the version of the *Greek Vision of Daniel* published by Berger, which was written just before the Arab siege of Constantinople in AD 717-18,[180] shows conclusively that the Byzantine population commonly regarded the political, military, and ecclesiastical events in apocalyptic terms.[181] This intriguing entry deserves our attention because it appears to lean on several biblical themes simultaneously. It

---

[172] This is a possible reference to the war at sea (AD 673-78 and AD 717-18), especially with regard to the turn of fortune in favour of the Byzantines in AD 718 when almost the entire Arabs' fleet was destroyed on the seashore of Constantinople, as Theophanes puts it "a God-sent storm fell upon them and scattered them through the intercession of the Mother of God..." (AM 6210 AD. 717/18, pp. 549-550).

[173] Lit. *σκηναι*. The term *σκηνιται* "tent dwellers" was a generic title for designating the nomad Arabs, a derogatory naming of Arab tribes (e.g., "barbarians" or "ignorants") that were characterised as such for their "unsophisticated lifestyle," as opposed to the urban life-style of the Byzantines.

[174] Note that Muḥammad may have traded in camels or related work, but this is pure conjecture. However, regarding the Arab's horsemanship see *Zosimus* 4:22; *Evagrius* 5:20.

[175] Some times the text refers to the "seven-hilled Babylon, the new Byzantium," see G. Zervos, vision 7th, p. 766.

[176] Gr. *ethnos*.

[177] N.b. The Byzantines thought of themselves as the successors of the Romans, and as such the authorship of the *FVD* obviously referred here to the restoration than the birthing of a new Christian empire.

[178] Cf. Zervos' translation (p. 765) is slightly different: "And there will be war and great bloodshed such as has not been since the foundation of the world. The blood will be mixed in the sea one and a half miles. And in the streets of the seven-hilled (city) horses will be submerged, drowning in the blood. And from that nation and from Ishmael there will remain only three tents of men."

[179] C. Mango, Chronographia, AM 6210 (AD 717/18), pp. 549/50.

[180] Following Winkelmann & Brandes, *Quelle*, pp. 317-18. They determine that the Vision of Daniel was composed shortly before the Arab siege of Constantinople of AD 717-718.

[181] W.E. Kaegi, "Variable Rates of Change in the Seventh Century," in F.M. Clover & R.S. Humphreys (eds.), *Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 191-208, esp. p. 194.

is worthwhile recalling here, for the sake of biblical reference, the story of the Transfiguration,[182] in which the three apostles Peter, John and James witness the visit that Moses and Elijah pay to Jesus, discussing concerning "*his decease*[183] which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." Then the visitors disappear just as miraculously, as the Apostle Peter's fearful offer to erect the three tents was left unanswered.[184] The Transfiguration conveys also the idea of the heavenly beings ready to partake in the eschatological wars for the sake of the orthodoxy. And the victory would only come at a price, even unto death.

The entry suggests that the Christians will eventually be rid of the Muslims, without even seeing their backs. Then after (or during) the thirty-year period of recovery the Roman race, says the apocalyptists, "*will look for the footprint of Ishmael but will not find any.*" The notion of race/nation seems quite essential in the Danielic eschatology. Apart from the Gog and Magog qualification of the barbarians, the new nation to which the author attributes any significant function in ushering in the new age was the race of Ishmael, which in apocalyptic traditions, was an eschatological novelty in its own right.

Since the promulgation of the so-called decree of 'Umar II,[185] it appears that an official code of conduct regulating the daily life relationship between Muslims and their subjects was being observed. At least, we can safely infer that the decree had set in motion an official standardisation of behaviour unprecedented throughout *dār al-Islām*. Most importantly, it aimed at enshrining the superiority of the Arab race as stated in the Qur'an down into the public domain.[186] One such ruling enforced the subordinate status of the non-Muslims vis-à-vis the Muslims so as to assign the responsibility of its observation on the side of the subjects (Christians should walk on the street side, giving way to the Muslim,

---

[182] Cf. Luke 9: 27-36; Matthew. 17:3-4; Mark 9:4-5. An excerpt of the Lukan version is noteworthy: "As he (Jesus) was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. *They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. Peter and his companions were very sleepy*, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him." (Luke 9:29-32 NIV). The emphasis is mine.

[183] Lit. "his departure," or "his exodus," (*ten exodon autou*).

[184] Matth. 17: 4 - 7.

[185] The authenticity of this decree is much disputed. What seems actually ʿUmar II's policy was attributed to ʿUmar I in almost all the Arabic historiography.

[186] Qur. 3: 109; cf. 3: 106.

handing over the tax in a submissive manner, etc). The Qur'ān does instruct with regard to the subjugation of the people of the Book to:

> "Fight those who do not believe in Allāh, nor in the Latter Day, nor do they prohibit what Allāh and His Apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth out of those who have been given the Book, until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection."[187]

Our apocalyptist seems to echo this degrading Christian experience at the hands of the Muslims, before moving onto God's actual providence for His people. The apocalyptist explains away the reason of this sudden turn of fortunes in terms of the prophetic word that:

> "will be fulfilled, which says: 'how one [person] alone shall drive off a thousand and two [persons] expel the myriads, unless God rejects them (i.e., Ishmael) and the Lord hands them over?'"[188]

There are similar sayings in the Qur'an, for instance:

> "O! Prophet urge the believers to war; if there are twenty patient ones of you they shall overcome a thousand of those who disbelieve, because they are a nation who does not understand."[189]

Clearly, our apocalyptist was not speaking in a vacuum, but was certainly confronting the reality of the living conditions at a time when those Qur'anic precepts and other Caliphal decrees were being enforced. Here the contention is that of the Abrahamic inheritance

Interestingly enough, our apocalyptist resorts to the Abrahamic prophecy, God's word of promise to drive away from his offspring the landowners,[190] in order to expound his prophetology. Divine deliverance comes as the fulfilment of prophecy. Should the events on the ground appear to contradict the Word of God – as was then the pressing case – then that situation would amount to rebellion against God's Word. The implication is that of the promise to Sarah (Isaac) versus Hagar's (Ishmael). Note that *Sarakenoi*[191] is a term that the author of this apocalypse has shunned deliberately, and yet it is the theme of Sarah disinheriting the son of Hagar (Abraham had to abide by Sarah's wish) that is

---

[187] Qur. 9: 29.

[188] Gr. *παραδωκεω* "betray," or "mislead." The use of this word invokes the idea that God have misled the Muslims on purpose, so that the source of heresy may be stamped out for good. See Deuteronomy 32:30.Psalm 21:8; 91:7.

[189] Qur. 8: 65.; cf. with regard to the episode of the battles of Uḥud and Badr in .Sūrah 3: 120-122; 124-126.

[190] Gen. 12:6-7; 13:14-17; 15:18-21; 27:4; 28:13, 15; Lev. 20:24;

[191] See literal significance in previous chapter. It is a word play between Sarah and Sarakenoi.

central to his eschatology.[192] This may be simply due to the historical context in which the term fell out of use in its original sense. However, given his preference for exclusively designating the Muslims "sons of Hagar," or "nation of Hagar," and Ishmael, as the enemies of the people of God – i.e., the Christians as inheritors of the promised land to Abraham – one can presume that the apocalyptist might have found the title *Sarakenoi* somewhat ineffective in conveying the characterisation of the Arab Muslim. As to underline this line of thought, the apocalyptist paraphrases the very biblical words God had uttered to Abraham regarding the extent of the land his offspring were to inherit. In a word, the sons of Hagar will indeed inherit, but the inheritance of Abraham does belong to the Son of Promise i.e., Isaac. Yet, the apocalyptist has transferred the inheritance theme upon the Roman emperor in such a way that the promise to inherit the land is replaced with the pledge of an everlasting and universal dominion of the church. God's promise to Abraham of an everlasting inheritance through Isaac has become synonymous to the universal dominion of Jesus Christ, and sceptre of the Roman emperor, the token of the church's invincibility:

> "And the sceptre[193] of that emperor will be long-lived...and his fame will spread from the rising sun as far as the west, and from south to the north. And he will erect his sword[194] to the east and cast his bow into the northern side and the Bear [constellation?]."[195]

A comparison between this passage with the passage in Genesis is in order here. Concerning the extent of the inheritance of Isaac, we read:

> "The LORD said...: "Lift up your eyes from where you are and look north and south, east and west. All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever... I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."[196]

And again with regard to the theme of dispossessing one's enemy, the boundaries are:

---

[192] Gen. 21: 10- 14.
[193] See Revelation 19: 15 "Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty."
[194] Sword and sceptre have become interchangeable words, a symbol of might and dominion.
[195] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III (5th Vision).
[196] See in the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* chapter 5:10-12; cf. Gen. 13:14-17 NIV.

> "I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies."[197]

And also with regard to the scepter of dominion:

> "The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."[198]

Then there are themes taken from other verses. Thus in Psalms 2:6-10:

> "'I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill. I will proclaim the decree of the LORD:' He said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery.' Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth."

Clearly, there are several biblical ideas concatenated together, and made to apply to the Christian emperor. Note that the apocalyptist does apply the Sonship in Psalms 2:7 to the Roman emperor, instead of Jesus-Christ as traditionally. As stated earlier in this discussion, the Roman emperor (Heraclius as the restorer of the Cross)' developed into the figure of the Saviour-king, a type of Messiah. Then after, it was only most likely that this effective eschatological figure, i.e., Heraclius/Alexander be retained in apocalyptic circles in its expectative role of defender/crusader of the believers.

In this chapter 6 of the *FVD*, certainly Heraclius is being considered the bearer of the divine sceptre. Such entries as: "*no-one will withstand his right hand, because that man has come from God. And he will bring about a great peace...And that sceptre will bring all wars on earth to an end,*"[199] in all likelihood, referred to the figure of Heraclius. Here the parallel with the Muslim concept of the title Caliph as *deputy of God* versus the concept of the *rightly guided one* is also palpable. The Heraclean dynasty likewise, which once more should be seen as the divinely ordained ruling lineage, is relative to the qualities of the individual rulers as opposed to the hereditary right:[200] the traits of such righteous leadership, albeit an idealised emperor, are manifest in the fact that the "*equipment of war will be turned into sickles, and shears and scythes.*" And

---

[197] Gen 22:17 NIV.
[198] Gen 49:10 NIV.
[199] In the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III (chapter 6:13, 19).
[200] Like the Davidic dynasty in the bible, Heraclius has become the symbol and representative of the founding patriarch of a lineage of rulers endowed with the messianic *charismata*. The transmission of that *charismata* does not obey to the natural lineage, but to its manifestation during an imperial reign rather than another.

there will be abundance of "*wheat, wine and oil,*" and the burgeoning of "*many sanctuaries throughout the inhabited world.*"[201] The Christendom will stand without challenge so that "*God will give him the good things, which since the foundation of the world until that time, He did not give,*" in His own accord rather than as a reward. These excerpts assert the view that such an "*emperor will glorify the God of Heaven*" because the favourable turn of fortunes falls during a period of righteous leadership.[202] In other words, there exists an element of "predestination" in the actions of a particular rulership compare to another, as though God does remain in full control, directing rather than reacting to the deeds of the Roman rulers. Thus the chapter ends in the customary manner of summarising the end of a Jewish king's reign as in the book of Kings: "*this one (i.e., Roman emperor) will be laid to rest in peace... after his kingship [has lasted] thirty-three years,*"[203] which suggests that there were kings who will not. That the veneration of Heraclius as a "messianic deliverer" of sort from his victorious campaign against Chosroes was entertained in Byzantium is certain, and even in Western Europe there evidence that this fact also holds true is the fact that it is alluded to in the Chronicle of 754 as follows:

> "Heraclius, trusting in the assistance of the Lord, fell on the enemy and killed him (Chosroes) with a single javelin. With the Persians erupting in flight, Heraclius pursued them with the sword as far as the city of Susa, which is their capital and the centre of their power. When Chosroes' kingdom was finally destroyed and had surrendered to imperial dominion, the people did honour, not to God, but to Heraclius, and he, accepting this with pride, returned to Constantinople (Roma)."[204]

However, the chronicler is quick to pin the cause of the Saracens' subsequent revolt in Arabia on the very fact that, *the people did honour, not to God, but to Heraclius, and he, accepting this with pride*. Heraclius, having suffered such a lapse of judgement at that crucial juncture could not expect his fortunes and that of the Christendom to last unpunished. Thus, God raised the Ishmaelites as a scourge for Heraclius who had encroached with the honour due to God. The

---

[201] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III.
[202] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* chapter 6:15-18, 20-21, 23-24.
[203] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III.
[204] See "The Chronicle of 754" in K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), pp. 112-13. Note that the name Rome is used here for Constantinople as the "New Rome," as built by Constantine I.

mid-8th century chronicler goes about it in somewhat in passing, avoiding to express a personal judgement of principle:

> "They say that afterward many things pertaining to this event began to come to Heraclius in his dreams as a warning that he would be ravaged mercilessly by rats from the desert. He was also forewarned by astrological readings of the course of the stars"[205]

The fact of the matter is that this convoluted entry set out the issue at stake, namely, the latent tension perceptible between the enhancement of the figure of the saviour emperor/king in the paradigm of David/Alexander/Constantine I/Heraclius and the cult of images that underscored the reliance of the people in God's deliverance, ultimately.

Iconoclasm: The Moral Issues.

During the first-half 7th century, the Cypriot priest Leontus of Neapolis (d. ~ AD 650) wrote several apologetic tracts. His *Apologie contre les Juifs*[206] demonstrates that the Christians' reverence of the Cross and veneration to relics, that is, the bones (τά όστα)[207] were of particular abhorrence to, and the main objects of the Jewish charge of idolatry:

> "S'il est impie d'honorer les ossements, comment se fait-il que l'on a rapporté d'Égypte en grande pompe les os de Jacob et de Joseph? Comment se fait-il qu'un mort a ressuscité au simple contact des os d'Élisée? Si dieu fait des miracles par l'intermédiaire d'ossements, il est evident qu'il le peut aussi avec des images, des pierres, et bien d'autres objects."[208]

With regard to the relics, Leontius' rebuff suggests that the Jewish blame referred to the defilement incurred in the contact established with the remains of the dead. More so with regard to the Cross, for which the Jewish accusation of xylolatry (ξυλόθέους),[209] prompted his most effective defence:

---

[205] See "The Chronicle of 754" in K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), p. 113; cf. D.J. Constantelos, "The Moslem Conquest of the Near East as Revealed in the Greek Sources of the Seventh and Eighth Centuries," in *Byzantion* 42 (1972), pp. 325-57.

[206] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104; see St. Leontius of Neapolis in Cyprus: *Contra Judæos et de imaginibus (Against the Jews, and On Images)*. PG 93:1597-1612.

[207] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104, esp. p. 69.

[208] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104, pp. 69-70, 77.

[209] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104, esp. p. 79; cf Mansi XIII, cols. 205, 356C, where the same accusation of

> "... les portraits, les images et les représentations des saints ne reçoivent pas la proskynèse comme si c'étaient des dieux. En effet, si j'adorais le bois de l'icone, je devrais nécessairement adorer tous les autres bois. Car si j'adorais le bois de l'image comme un dieu, je ne brûlerais pas l'image lorsque le portrait (χαρακτηρος) a été entièrement effacé. Et de même, tant que les deux branches de la croix restent associées, j'adore le symbole (τύπον) à cause du Christ qui y a été crucifié, mais lorsqu'elles se sont dissociées, je les jette et les brûle."[210]

Leontius was able to tie together Cross and relics with the material these cultic objects were made of, *e.g.* wood, stone (τα λίθινα ζωδα),[211] etc., asserting that whenever the material does no longer bear the symbol, or representation (τύπον) intended, the material becomes no more than that, a mere object. Thus, from the mid-7th century, there is little doubt that the charge of idolatry in *dār al-Islām* against Christians was the fact of the Jewish abhorrence of the dead body or any artefact connected to it.

Iconoclasm in the historical context was concerned with the eradication from the Church – both in the doctrinal and practical aspects – of what was considered the vestiges of pagan cultic practices. The veneration of the icons of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the saints was marred with misgivings since the early ecumenical Councils. In the 7th-9th century AD the hostility toward the practice of icon worshipping became known as Iconoclasm (smashing icons). John of Damascus emerged as the main proponent of the orthodoxy of venerating icons in the Eastern Church against the Muslims and Jewish charges of idolatry, whereas in the west the debate was more among Christians, swaying for or against according to the position of the successive emperors to the throne of Byzantium. The emperor being the guardian of orthodoxy so to speak, he would be portrayed, the traits of his policy and the morality of the society during his reign included, favourably or not according to the emperor's position on the matter. And our apocalypse makes no exception as we shall observe below.

Indeed, the next chapter (ch. 7) is wholly concerned with the instance of such a "wicked" rulership. The latter one is described as a "sceptre" of another genre, divisive and at loggerheads, which will "arise from the north, committing

---

xylolatry against the patriarch Germanus I, John of Damascus and Georges of Cyprus, recurs in the Council of Hiera in AD 754.

[210] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104, esp. pp. 67, 73.

[211] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104, esp. pp. 68, 75.

extreme unlawful cruelties against God and his saints.[212] *And he will commit many injustices and perform great transgressions.*"[213] In contrast to the previous righteous reign, all sorts of sinful behaviour will now be committed. People will indulge in sinfulness so that the "*abomination of desolation will be fulfilled.*" This is hardly the responsibility of the people than it is of the ruler or his "time" since the author affirms that this state of affairs is brought about "*at his (i.e., the sceptre) instigation people will be made to commit debauchery and perverting incest.*[214]" Whether this comes about as the consequence of the adoption of a given state policy, or else, a new church politics, can only be conjectured here.

The *Didache* may have been from its inception in the second century the source material for many an apocalyptic tradition, whereby sexual licence, infanticide, and syncretism with foreign religion, were characterised as deeds of eschatological significance. The definition of Judeo-Christian moral code as stated in *Didache* 1.2 is worth noting:

> "You shall not corrupt boys; you shall not be promiscuous – you shall not engage in sorcery; you shall not abort a child or commit infanticide."[215]

It brought together so disparate a series of themes of moral character under one single label, namely, how religious excellence can decay into corruption. The Councils of Ancyra (AD 314) and of Neo-Caesaria (AD 315) even established punishment for various types of sexual immorality. But since then until the medieval period, the church hierarchy was still fighting a loosing battle with sexual immorality. During the Council of AD 692, the bishops of the Roman Church depicted a situation of immoral and deprived piety not only among the people, but also the clergy.[216] In AD 742, concubinage was common practice among the clergy, and characterised in apocalyptic terms. Thus, Boniface, the apostle of Germany characterised the immoral behaviours of his peers, accusing

---

[212] This is reminiscent of the episode about Saul (later on the Apostle Paul) of Tarsus on the road to Damascus, who was held by the lightening voice from heaven as persecuting Jesus-Christ (Acts 9:4-5).

[213] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III (ch. 7: 2).

[214] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III (ch. 7: 3-4).

[215] In J.B. Lightfoot & J.R. Harmer (eds.), *The Apostolic Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994), pp. 229-35, esp. pp. 229-30.

[216] Hence, Christian sources often blame the early conversion to Islam in Syria, Egypt and Asia Minor, on ignorance, immorality, and corruption of the clergy, see T. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* (London, 1913), pp. 7, 166-87.

them of drunkenness, of concubinage, even of polygamy, in terms of betrayal and hostility to the universal status of Rome.[217]

An imperial policy of re-colonisation of Asia Minor by the contingents of the defeated Slavs and Bulgarians after AD 688-89 was implemented, and the latter were made to settle as *stratiotai* in the theme of Opsikion may be taken as the time when some odd sexual practices had been observed widely spread enough to be recorded by historians.[218] Licentiousness was not the preserve of the populace, far from it. This is an excerpt from the Quinisext getting to grips with sexual immorality among the clergy:

> "We decree that those (i.e., priests) who have become entangled in two marriages....," and "those who, after their ordination, have contracted one illegal marriage, that is, presbyters, deacons, and subdeacons... shall on no account be promoted to a higher rank."[219]

As a result of the widespread breakdown in moral standard, the apocalyptist warns sternly that: "*God will command the fire from heaven and it (i.e., the sceptre) will be shaken.*"[220] This statement is a probable concatenation of the fiery episode of Sodom,[221] with Jesus' vision of Satan falling like lightning from heaven.[222] Between chapters six and seven, the apocalyptist has aimed at defining the sovereignty of God that stands beyond the reach of human deeds. The author makes use of the conjunction of the heavenly bodies (constellation of the Bear; sceptre from the north; etc) in order to emphasise his particular brand of "astrological determinism."[223] However, as we have seen above, conjunction of stars and solar eclipses were the lot of apocalyptic *semeia* for the pending calamity. This pre-requisite ought to be reconsidered from the divine

---

[217] See the epistle to Pope Zacharias (AD 742) by Bonifacius: *Epistolae et Sermones*, 49 in Migne l.c., p. 745: "et inveniuntur quidem inter eos episcopi, qui, licet dicant se fornicarios vel adulteros non esse, sed sunt ebriosi, et injuriosi, vel venatores, et qui pugnant in exercitu armati, et effundunt propria manu sanguinem hominum, sive paganorum, sive christianorum." cf. M.Wilson Carpenter, "Representing Apocalypse: Sexual Politics and the Violence of Revelation," in R. Dellamora (ed.), *Post-modern Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsynania Press, 1995), pp. 107-35, esp. p. 115-19.

[218] See C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6204 (AD 711/12), p. 523: "They (i.e., the Bulgarians)...surprised many people who had gone across the water to celebrate opulent weddings and lavish luncheons with much silver plate and other equipment."

[219] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6177 (AD 684/85), p. 504; cf. F. Macler, "Apocalypses Apocryphes de Daniel," in *R.H.R.* 33 (1896), p. 305.

[220] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. III (ch. 7: 6).

[221] Genesis 19:24.

[222] Luke 10:18; cf. Rev. 9:1 "..., and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss."

[223] Reminiscent of the Magi in Matth. 2: 1-11.

perspective, which is to say that, a state of chaos is like inviting the wrath of God upon his creation.[224] In sum, so long as the fundamentals of Christianity are preserved, its dominion over the world would never be challenged. For our apocalyptist, immorality may have served as a substitute for iconophilia, or the consequent of it. It is interesting to note that the theme of the virgin girl who becomes pregnant through some sort of intercourse with the fish was the symbolism of idolatry producing the worse of fruit, namely the Antichrist, should be associated in this apocalypse to the Empress.

The 8th chapter is about an empress who succeeds the emperor whose imperial seat stands in the seven-hilled city (i.e., Constantinople).[225] Only Martina and Irene can qualify to fit the portrait. The emperor Leo IV (AD. 775-780) was the last iconoclast before the interim of Irene. The latter Roman ruler was notably a foreigner, of the southerner race of Giants: The combination of these two data points strongly to the empress Irene:

> "And after him a man will arise, foreign and of the race of the giants from the direction of the south. And he will reign in the seven-hilled (city). And after him a woman will reign over the seven-hilled (city), fool(ish) and foreigner and she will be seated in the direction of the South of the seven-hilled (city)."[226]

The episode of Irene's crowning left its imprint on the public imagination that our apocalyptist thought of it as a sign of what was to come. Irene had made here entrance northward to Constantinople "*from Athens. She came to the imperial city from Hiereia, as she proceeded to her betrothal to the emperor Leo IV.*"[227] Irene was a poor but beautiful Athenian orphan who married the short-lived emperor Leo IV. In AD 780, the emperor died living Constantine VI, a ten-year-old heir to the throne. Irene is known to have been regent for her son, and assumed the title of Co-emperor until she had him blinded and deposed in AD 797. From then she reigned as *Basileus* (AD. 797-803).[228] But so crucial was the reversal of her late husband's Iconoclasm that, at her initiative a Church Council was called in AD 786 (Constantinople) and in AD 787 (Nicaea), and

---

[224] For the author, God's judgement is an act of creation like in Genesis 1 & 2. Therefore, sin and chaos are interchangeable words for instantiating God's creative work.
[225] Both cities are eligible as already discussed above.
[226] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, pp. III-IV (ch. 8: 1-4).
[227] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6261 (AD 768/69), p. 613.
[228] I.e., "emperor," instead of *basilissa* = "empress," or *Augusta*, as she was entitled on her coins and seals.

had the veneration of icons reinstated forthwith on the basis of the Church Fathers' teachings. As a consequence, Constantine and Irene were acclaimed a "New Constantine" and "New Helena."[229] During Irene's reign, Byzantium was forced into a costly truce with the Arabs,[230] against which her strong push for the revival of monasticism and the veneration of icons did nothing to prevent. She may have had to mastermind the "discovery" of a coffin along the Long Walls of Thrace, on which coffin was engraved: "*Christ will be born of the Virgin Mary and I believe in Him. O sun, you will see me again in the reign of Constantine and Irene.*"[231] In stark contrast to Theophanes' assessment of the empress Irene,[232] our apocalyptist associates Irene's accession to the throne with the messianic Woes.[233] Thus, our author makes the accession of this Greek woman to the imperial throne of the Christendom, a diversion to say the least.[234] The author of the apocalypse seems to point at a power struggle for the pre-eminence of the Eastern Church over against the Western.[235] The empress Irene's choice of Nicaea for holding an ecumenical synod was not that fortuitous either, nor was her marked monasticism insignificant, with regard to her shifting the centre of attention toward the south-east, that is, toward Jerusalem.[236] Although, the offer of Charlemagne to marry her came in AD 801/02, it is probable that the intention was indeed "*to unify the eastern and the western parts.*"[237] This was a political statement of the harmonisation of state and church, but more so with regard to the restoration of the tradition of the Fathers.

---

[229] See P. Schaff & H. Wace (eds.), *The Seventh Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1955), p. 540.
[230] This is hinted at in chapter 9.
[231] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6273 (AD 780/81), p. 627; cf. C. Mango, "A Forged Inscription of the Year 781," in *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoloshkog Institute* 8 (1963), pp. 201-07.
[232] See C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6273 (AD 780/81), p. 626: "the most pious Irene together with her son Constantine were miraculously entrusted by God with the Empire..."
[233] At the immediate start of chapter 9.
[234] Palaces intrigues, royal marriages, etc have plagued the period of Irene: C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6293 (AD 800/01), p. 653; AM 6294 (AD 801/02), p. 654; J.B. Bury, *History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil I* (London, 1912), pp. 1-13.
[235] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6273 (AD 780/81), p. 627: "From that time on the pious began to speak freely. God's word spread about, and those who sought salvation were able to renounce the world without hindrance... the monasteries recovered..."
[236] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6273 (AD 780/81), AM 6280 (AD 787/88), pp. 636-37: "Tarasios, the most holy patriarch of Constantinople, went to Nicaea and there was held the Seventh holy and ecumenical Synod consisting of 350 bishops. And so the catholic Church regained her ancient adornment. The synod introduced no new doctrine, but maintained unshaken the doctrines of the holy and blessed fathers; it rejected the new heresy and anathematized the three false patriarchs..."
[237] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6294 (AD 801/02), p. 654.

After several years of dispute, eventually the Byzantine empress recognised the French king as co-emperor. Thus the *Imperium* in the West looked like the second "horn"[238] of the Beast of Revelation 13, following after Constantinople. In this connection, the historian W. Durant's statement deserves noting:

> "Out of this intimate co-operation of Church and state came one of the most brilliant ideas in the history of statesmanship: the transformation of Charlemagne's realm into a Holy Roman Empire that should have behind it all the prestige, sanctity, and stability of both Imperial and Papal Rome."[239]

In addition, the co-regency in AD 780 must be meant here, rather than Leo IV's reign followed by Irene's. In which case, the apocalyptist would be characterising the power struggle that ensued, and the blinding of Constantine, the heir designate, as a portent apocalyptic sign. In the *FVD*, the reign of Irene stands out as a reliable historical landmark. Since this notice suggests a possible *terminus post quem* for the composition of this recension of the *FVD*, a date at around the turn of the 9th century may be considered. It could be also inferred that the author betrays here most clearly his iconoclast leaning in this chapter. The legend has it that when Irene blinded her own son, there was a total eclipse of several days as a manifestation of the heavens' condemnation.[240] It is clear that the apocalyptist is also an adept of the idealised Heraclean dynasty, and unconditionally favourable to any Roman rulership bent on taking on the Muslim hegemony. That is all about what the name of the Empress Irene stood for, a reign blighted with setbacks on the Muslim front.

The 9th chapter alludes to the advent of king Charlemagne (AD 767-814). When Irene seized power at Constantinople in AD 797, people soon wondered if there was anymore a Byzantine Emperor. According to the graphic features of the coins minted during her reign, empress Irene is depicted both on obverse and reverse in full imperial dress including the *ioros*,[241] the crown of empresses,[242]

---

[238] "horn" and "sceptre" seem here wholly interchangeable terms.

[239] W. Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1950), vol. 4, p. 468.

[240] See C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6289 (AD 796/97), p. 647; cf. C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6279 (AD 786/87), p. 636.

[241] In the stead of the imperial chlamys.

[242] Above her head is the inscription: EIRINH BASILISSH, see P. Grierson, *Byzantine Coins* (London, 1982). Since she could not claim dynastic connection with the emperor she had deposed, Irene resorted to featuring only her own portrait. Despite the fact that the religious images were again permitted, no representation of Mary or the infant Jesus appears on the coins. It is very likely that her own posterity as a saint of the church was in her mind, which the apocalyptist seems to grapple with here.

which has a number of pyramidal spikes, and a large *prependulia*, holding the cross sceptre and the *globus cruciger* representing her universal authority. This haughty imperial pretence would be short-lived (barely 5 years in all),[243] as she would be deposed by Nicephorus I in AD 802/03, an episode that seems to have inspired the lament that follows:

> "Woe to you... because of your wealth and glory will be made to fall with your boasting as you say: 'I have clothed myself with gold, and jacinth, and pearl, and scarlet garment, and purple, and silver, and alloy. And it is not by my [own] hand! For in me kings will reign and powerful men will come in and go out, and great rulers will dwell within me.' Woe to you miserable Babylon, the mother of all cities! Because God will pour out his anger full of fire. And your high wall will be drowned. And nothing in you will remain [standing] except one pillar of the sceptre Byzantium of Constantine the Great." [244]

The empress Irene became a personification of the overconfident Constantinople over its protective walls, which like the imperial sway was to be taken away from the empress Irene, so also the city of Rome will have prominence over Constantinople This was aptly demonstrated by the zeal of the French king. While Irene was busy tearing down the imperial iconoclasm, Charlemagne (*Karoulos*) had been Christianising in great strides large areas of Europe. Between AD 772 and 804, king Charlemagne led personally no less than 18 military campaigns,[245] of which Theophanes simply describes as a "bitter vengeance on his enemies."[246] After that, forced baptism of Saxon pagans always followed. Charlemagne's policy of Christianisation of the Western Europe had earned him a reputation as the true Emperor of the Christendom, culminating in his crowning. Pope Leo III unexpectedly made haste to crown him Augustus and Emperor on Christmas day AD 800.[247] When he produced a crown and placed it on the king's head as the crowd shouted "*Hail to Charles the Augustus, crowned by God the great and piece-bringing Emperor of the Romans.*"[248] Naturally the persistent rumours of his coming accession to the Byzantine imperial throne was anticipated long before AD 800, and our

---

[243] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6294 (AD 801/02), p. 654; L. Bréhier, *Institutions de l'Empire Byzantin* (Paris, 1976), pp. 49-75.
[244] *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. IV (ch. 9: 1-5).
[245] Against the Saxons, Spanish, Slavs, and Avars.
[246] See C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6289 (AD 796/97), p. 649.
[247] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6293 (AD 800/01), p. 653.
[248] W. Durant, *The Story of Civilization* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1950), vol. 4, pp. 468-69.

apocalyptist was not slow to bet on Rome superseding Constantinople in the short term. The official communication of the rulings of the synod of AD 787 to Pope Hadrian I, not only ensured the stamp of the Papal authority, should be seen in the light of a growing "rapprochement" with the western Latin church. Therefore, these are indications that the need to unite the Christendom was starting to relegate the theological divide to the sideways at last.

The one remaining *"pillar of the sceptre of Byzantium of Constantine the Great"*[249] out of all the pillars of the Christendom[250] may actually refer to the only standing barrier to the Muslims conquest of Constantinople, that is, the Walls. But the See of Rome could be referred to, should the word pillar be accounted for as the sign that the Papacy at Rome had by then already assumed pre-eminence over Constantinople.[251] Thus, the author does not hesitate even to prophesy the imminent *"drowning of high walls"* of Constantinople, because the population may have lost all but her traditional confidence on its legendary protection. The fact that Charlemagne had managed to command such expectation on his leadership within barely a decade, alone shows that the focus of hope had turned resolutely toward Rome.

The actual thrust of the author's criticism was directed at the lack of direction of the Byzantine imperial leadership at Constantinople. For our authorship of the *FVD*, the fates of church and empire are joined through the person of the Emperor. We have seen how the apocalyptist looked up to the model set by king

---

[249] See Rev. 13. This may be an allusion to the famous Constantine's prophyry column erected between 328-330 AD (C. Mango, Theophanes *Chronographia,* AM 5821 (AD 328/29), p. 46, in the middle of the new Capitol's circular forum. The porphyry column was topped off with a bronze statue (John Malalas, *Chron. Pasch.* 1.528) from Phrygia, and which was deemed as a statue of Apollo reused by Constantine. The statue was "holding in its right hand a sceptre and its left a globe made of bronze...It was known by everyone as *Anelios* or *Anthelios.*" By the sixth century statues on pillars were deemed "pagan," by analogy with the Byzantine iconography convention that "pagan" statues stood on pillars. Moreover, its head was adorned with a seven-rayed crown. In the earthquake of AD 554 the spear fall and was replaced by a sceptre (C. Mango, Theophanes *chronographia*, AM 6047 (AD 554/55), p. 336 speaks of a cross instead; cf. J. Malalas, *Chron. Pasch.* 18.487). In Syria though, such a representation of imperial imagery would have seemed a normal accoutrement of a sun deity. Thus the only remaining "pillar of the sceptre of Constantine the Great" must have been the expression of the city's paganism, which then was the source of its fate. Cf. Rev 18:3, 11; especially verse 14, which in connection with the context of our apocalyp*se (only one pillar remaining*, which must speak of the ships' mat, recalls the weeping of all those "who earn their living from the sea." The economic activities, and particularly the sea traffic, which were affected by the Arabs' pirating should have been alluded to here.

[250] One may wonder if this word borne any relation with the Five Pillars of Islam.

[251] Cities were fighting for their ranking vis-à-vis the others, by constructing their special local history.

Charlemagne's christianising endeavour, which he did achieve so single-mindedly, without doctrinal pre-requisite, and successfully overriding the enemies of Christianity around. It is the contention of the present writer that the apocalyptist had wished to wave the spectre of Constantinople losing its status to Rome just as it did with Jerusalem at the hand of the Arab Muslims a century earlier. And if we take into consideration the fact that, roughly since the time of the completion of the Dome of the Rock, Constantinople was virtually isolated from the Eastern Church, Damascus as a major see does not qualify either as a seven-hilled city. In the eschatological scheme being drawn out here, the competing parties were Constantinople, won by the sceptre of Constantine the Great, Rome the biblical seven-hilled city, where by then the institution of Papacy was legitimised in the alleged legacy (heritage) of the Apostle Peter, and Jerusalem which the Jews lauded with being built on seven hills.[252] In order to further demonstrate the reality of this prospect, the apocalyptist does parody the Muslim conquest and appropriation of Jerusalem from the hands of the Christendom.

We may summarise the contrast as follows: on one hand the *FVD* speaks of an emperor whose name is the name of a beast (Leo III) whose reign would last long may in fact refer to Constantine V (34 years), because he was junior co-emperor with Leo III, then senior co-emperor with Leo IV. The following entry: "*This one will be laid to rest in peace, he himself along with his two small boys, after his kingship (has lasted) thirty-three years,*"[253] may be construed as an interpolation of the figure of Heraclius with his two co-emperors, translated to Leo III. In addition, the *FVD* states that:" *that emperor will glorify the God of heaven,*" which in the face of Constantine V's notorious persecution of the monks, suggests that our apocalyptist is in tune with the iconoclasm of this emperor.

By contrast, the empress Irene represents the opposite of good leadership of the Christendom. First as regent of Constantine VI, noted for his weakness coupled with a fierce wickedness, the *FVD* depicts him as a foreshadow of the evil to befall the Byzantine Empire, notably Irene's blinding of her own son, the AD

[252] In the *Pirke de Rabbi-Eliezer* 10, Jerusalem is referred to likewise, without even an explanation, see H.N. Bialik & Y.H. Ravnitzky (eds.), *The Book of Legends: Sefer ha-Aggada. Legends from the Talmud and Midrash* (New York: Schochen Books, 1992), p. 371.
[253] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, 6: 25, p. III.

784 Saracenes' extortion of tribute from Irene, and especially her iconophilia. In Chapter 7, the coupling mother and son must be a parody of this co-regency. Whereas, in chapter 8, Irene is unmistakably portrayed as: "*after him* (i.e. Constantine VI) *a woman will reign over the seven-hilled (city).*"

Chapters 10 and 11 consist of the apocalyptic narrative proper, fleshed out around the depiction of the antichrist and the underworld (*katachthonion*).[254] The antichrist, who is expected to come from the tribe of *Dan*,[255] had already stepped into Jerusalem.[256] The anti-Muslim feelings of the author that are expressed in this anti-Jewish interpolation should not distract us. Rather, should this view be retained, it is then necessary to ascertain as to why the author of this Danielic apocalypse should translate into anti-Jewish terms the perception of the Muslim hegemony in Judea. The equation of Jews and Muslims was customary on the grounds of heretic teaching. The antichrist is none but the Muslim hegemony presiding over the cult at the Dome of the Rock. This is borne out in the following statement: "*And every city and district will mourn upon you the mother of cities. For at that time the imperial sway will be taken from Byzantium and be given to Rome.*" [257] The statement also marks the transition from history to apocalyptic, with the intervening cryptographic symbolisation of the antichrist name.

The apocalyptic theme around the figure of *Dan* also runs through chapters 10 and 11. Thus the tribe of *Dan* and the coming of the Antichrist are somewhat related. The *sceptre* (from the tribe of Dan) *will arise from Judah, and he will reign in Jerusalem* is what can be regarded as a purely anti-Semite pun because the authorship of the *FVD* ascribes the advent of the Antichrist to the reign in Jerusalem of a Jew from the tribe of *Dan*. The fact of the matter is that Dan was the tribe in the north of Israel, near the Mount Hermon, a mount renowned for

---

[254] Lampe, *Patristic Greek*, p. 727: *katachthonion* = underworld, place under the earth, lower ground. N.b. Samuel the usurper was believed to be in the place of destiny of the wicked, see Origenes, *de engastrimytho* 3 (p. 285.12; M 12: 1066C)

[255] Heb. *Dan* = who judges, might simply be a word play. However, when used in conjunction with Gen. 49:16-17, it makes sense that the Jewish priesthood was the object of interest in this Christian jab (cf. Judges 18: 28-31). Note that the city of *Dan* in Arabic is Tell el-Kady nowadays.

[256] Cf. the *Latin Tiburtine Sibyl* with regard to the antichrist originating from the tribe of Dan, in E. Sackur, *Sibillinische Texte und Forschungen* pp. 185-86.

[257] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. IV (Ch. 9:8-9); cf. Matthew 21:43a "And the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit." I assume here that the term "fruit of the kingdom of God" does mean the kind of work king Charlemagne had been producing over two decades earlier, which the apocalyptist was looking up to.

its eschatological significance. The Jews expected the apparition of the Messiah to take at Mount Hermon. Jesus was transfigured there,[258] and from there also is Jesus expected to make His apparition (in Northern Galilee). However, this allusion to the eschatological beliefs relative to the region of the tribe of Dan was meant, possibly, to amalgamate the wrongs of both the Judaic and Muslim claims over Jerusalem. The author of the *FVD* goes on to describe the manner of the Antichrist's coming into being during that reign, namely, *from the under the subterranean places, the Hades.* And also the theme of the fish as it occurs in the *AZ* is striking by the connection that is made between the fish and the role of a virgin girl in the Antichrist's conception. Beside its obvious Christian symbolism, it may have referred to deadness or sickness of the fish (Ar. *Muridun* = sick). It is an incongruous theme that seems to land in the frontier between the historical and the apocalyptic in so far as the fact of the Muslim control of Jerusalem is concerned. However, given what the authorship of the *FVD* suggests in the following statement, one can infer that it may have been the spectre of Rome upstaging the supremacy of Constantinople, that was anticipated by the coronation of Charlemagne (AD 800), is what is all about here:

> "The imperial sway will be taken from you. Your traders will run away from you and vanish. And every city and district will mourn upon you the mother of cities. For at that time the imperial sway will be taken from Byzantium and be given to Rome."[259]
>
> "And a scepter will arise from Judea, whose name (is) *Dan*. And he will reign in Jerusalem. And those of the race of the Jews who had been scattered from Judea will be gathered together there from all city and region, and will come in Jerusalem toward their king, and they will afflict the race of the Christians in all the earth, and they will confine in a narrow space the Romans unto death."[260]
>
> "During the reign of *Dan* the antichrist will come forth from under the subterranean places of the Abyss below the Hades and the earth's depth."[261]

Yet, this does not explain the fact that this scenario should associate Charlemagne with the sceptre of *Dan*. Unless that the latter's early policy toward the Jews would have been construed as too dangerously pro-Jewish. His attitude toward the Jews was that of a clever politician, who realized the

---

[258] The event was recorded in Luke 9:28-36; Matthew 17:1-8; and Mark 9:2-8.
[259] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, 9: 6-9, p. IV.
[260] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, 10:1-7, p. IV.
[261] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, 11: 1, p. IV.

advantages to be derived by his kingdom from the business abilities of the Jews. So he gave them complete freedom with regard to their commercial transactions. Even some Jews seem to have occupied prominent places at his court. A Jew named Isaac was a member of an embassy sent by Charlemagne to Harūn al-Rāshid.[262] However, toward the end of Charlemagne's reign he seems to have wanted to alter this image through decreeing some capitularies against the Jews.[263] This fact may in fact reflect the apocalyptist views, which suggests also that Charlemagne's association with Irene in the couple of years before her death is key to the eschatological scenario of this recension of the *FVD*.[264] It should be pointed out that this entry, which casts in apocalyptic terms the relationship between Jews from the tribe of Dan, the Traders – supposed to be Jews – and the advent of the Antichrist is unprecedented as far as the present writer is aware of.

Since the conquest of Jerusalem was already an event more than a century old, the contemporary trend in the Jerusalem pilgrimage might be in focus here. Thus, when the author asserts that: "*those of the race of the Jews... will gather... and come to Jerusalem toward their king,*"[265] the so-called king of Jerusalem ought to be reckoned in the shape of the antichrist enthroned in the cultism of Jerusalem.[266] In this sense, during the reign of the antichrist the "*race of the Christians will be afflicted all over the earth, and they (i.e., the Muslims) will confine unto death the Romans in a narrow space.*"[267] It should be recalled that the Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem had not been seriously hampered by the Muslim conquest of Palestine in any systematic and long-term fashion.[268] This historic fact does not mean, though, that for the Christians the nature and significance of Jerusalem was no less undermined by the ostentatious spectacle of the Dome of the Rock, and so thereafter. This state of affairs constitutes the

---

[262] S.W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews. Volume IV: The Meeting of East and West* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), p. 45.

[263] See the capitulary edict for the Jews, by Charlemagne in AD 814, in J.P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologiae Cursus Completus*, (Paris, 1862), Vol. XCVII, pp. 369-370; cf. R.C. Cave & H.H. Coulson (eds.), *A Source Book for Medieval Economic History*, (New York: Biblo & Tannen, 1965), pp. 172-173.

[264] The MS M translated by Zervos does not involve the theme of the tribe of Dan.

[265] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, ch. 10:5.

[266] See above the discussion on the cult and pilgrimage at Jerusalem before and after the building of the Dome of the Rock.

[267] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. IV (ch. 10:6-7).

[268] For documentary evidences, see J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1977).

centrepiece of the apocalyptic scheme all the more. By all account, the Muslim restriction over the access to the Temple Mount was assumed. The ostentatious symbolism of Islam superseding Christianity and Judaism at the Temple Mount was, no doubt, a decisive factor in the author's elaboration over the theme of the seven-hilled city vis-à-vis the features of the Islamic cult. We shall come back to this point.

From the apocalyptist's viewpoint Jerusalem seems remote enough to allow his imagination the freedom of diving, for the first time in the text, into apocalyptic topics proper: How had the antichrist sneaked into Jerusalem? How does the antichrist conceal itself from the unsuspecting Christians? And lastly, how will the antichrist be defeated? A notable feature of the *FVD* is that the apocalyptic portion of the text is full of legendary circumstances, such as the Jews gathering in Jerusalem around their king, the imperial sway moving to Rome, etc. But, as the apocalyptic text stands, the *FVD* might have genuinely dreaded the prospect of the Jews regaining control of Jerusalem, through other means than the military (political, diplomacy, finance). Hence, the authorship of the *FVD* elaborates on the Antichrist's subterranean methods of achieving that result. This might have been a popular Anti-Semitic tradition widely circulated and that the authorship of the *FVD* has consigned here.

The 11th chapter is shrouded with riddles, obscure assertions, and a number of intractable historical materials. The vision opens up with the following statement: "*During the reign of Dan*[269] *the antichrist will come from under the subterranean places of the Abyss below the Hades and the earth's depth.*"[270] Christian apology had formed a tradition of depicting external threats to the empire as the wars between Jesus-Christ and the demons from the Abyss. There is somewhat an echo of this legendary story probably widely circulated that was in fact a Christian pun against the Muslim claim that Abraham had intercourse with Hagar on the stone of Kaʿba. John of Damascus however reproduces it in the course of his defence of the Christian practice of venerating the Cross, when Muslims express their adoration to the stone by kissing it:

---

[269] There is no definite significance to the title "*Dan.*" Here a play with the word or a short of words like Yugdhan or Hamadan is no unlikely, if the author wished to point at the specific Jewish sectarian movement of the same name.

[270] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. IV (ch. 11: 1); cf. Revelation 9:1-11, esp. Rev. 9:1 "... and I saw a star that had fallen from the sky to the earth. The star was given the key to the shaft of the Abyss."

> "Some of them (i.e., the Muslims) answer that [because] Abraham had intercourse with Hagar on it."[271] John goes on to question the Muslim practice relating to the legend: "Are you not ashamed to kiss it for the only reason that Abraham had intercourse with a woman...? This, then, which they call "stone" is the head of Aphrodite, whom they used to venerate [and] whom they called Haber, on which those who can understand it exactly can see, even until now, traces of an engraving."[272]

It is interesting to note that John of Damascus (d. AD. 759) asserted that: "*the Muslims accuse the Christians also of idolatry, because they venerate the cross; and the Christians return the accusation to the Muslims, because they venerate the Kaʿba.*"[273] The so-called "traces of engraving" (εγγλυφιδος αποκιασμα) probably refer to the Muslim traditions according to which the knees or footprints of Abraham could still be seen on the stone. Given that John of Damascus should collect within the same account on details of the "stone" which he characterises as the "*head of Aphrodite, whom they (i.e., the Arabs!) used to venerate*," he reports that they call it "Haber" (*Kaʿba*), it is tempting to see in the Greek word "englufidon" some etymological connection with the mysterious fish called "Muridon," or "Murgidon." Otherwise, the Muridon fish may have meant "ill" or "sick fish," of Arabic origin, speaks of Christianity (or its heretic, idolatrous affiliations) over against the messianic one. On one hand, there are also other cognates to this qualifying word: Mûrti(Sk.), a form, or a sign, or again a face, e.g., "Trimûrti", the "Three Faces" or Images. The use of this word may be a parody for the Trinity; Murttimat (*Sk.*) is something inherent or incarnate in something else and inseparable from it; like *wetness* in water, which is coexistent and coequal with it. Used of some attributes of Brahmâ and other gods.[274] On the other hand, Dag, Dagon (*Heb.*) means "Fish," and also "Messiah". Dagon was the Chaldean man-fish Oannes, a mysterious being who arose daily out of the depths of the sea to teach people every useful science. He was also called *Annedotus*.[275] In the context of the underworld scenario, we may have here a derogatory, though somewhat convoluted, insinuation to Christian

---

[271] P.G. vol. 94, col. 769B.
[272] P.G. vol. 94, col. 769B.
[273] See P.G. vols. 94, col. 768D - col. 769A: "Διαβάλλουσι δε ήμας ώς είδωλολάτρας προσκυνουντας...καί φαμεν πρός αύτούς· Πως σύν ύμεις λίθω προστρίβεσθε κατα την Χαβαθαν υμων, και φιλειτε τον λίθον άσπαζόμενοι."
[274] See H.P. Blavatsky, The Theosophical Glossary (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1930), p. 218.
[275] See H.P. Blavatsky, The Theosophical Glossary (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1930), p. 94.

eschatology. As far as John of Damascus' iconophile apologetic purpose goes, it makes sense that he should depict the *Kaʿba* ritual as vestiges of ancient Arab paganism. If this suggestion is correct, then, John of Damascus was contrasting the virtues of the Cross, against the devotion to a Stone that evokes the very iconolatry the Muslims levelled at the Christians' devotion to the icons.

One such legend emerged as early as the 9th century AD in Shī'a Mahdīsm about the origins of Muḥammād b. al-Ḥasan, the twelfth Imam after ʿAlī, who is said to have been born in AD 873, entered as a child in his native town of Hilla (near Baghdad) through a subterranean passage (called in Persian *sardāb*), and was seen no more. He was considered the "Master of the Subterranean Passage" (*ṣāḥib al-sardāb*).[276] But the source of this belief goes back to the aftermath of the death of the Muḥammād b. ʿAbdallāh (d. AD 762), the great-great-grandson of ʿAlī, the first Messianic pretender who rose up against the Caliph al-Manṣūr. It may be that this apocalyptic tradition had inspired our writer, like other Messianic pretenders of his time.

For instance, Serene,[277] a Syrian Jew appeared between AD 720 and 723 as Christ, the Son of God,[278] probably in response to ʿUmar II's harsh restrictions that were imposed on religious activities. The Jewish sectarian Abū ʿĪsā al-Isfahānī who proclaimed himself Messiah in AD 700, was killed in AD 748. As Kirkisānī (10th cent.) reports: "*among his (i.e., Abū ʿĪsā al-Isfahānī) adherents there were people who maintained that he had not been killed, but had merely entered a ridge in the mountains.*"[279] Therefore, one may infer from the ambient messianism outlined above, that our author ought to belong to the same socio-cultural milieu, probably spurned by some surges of Muslim harassment, which makes the exchange or borrowing of novel apocalyptic concepts conducive to syncretism.[280] For instance, the notion of "messianic occultation" was not so

---

[276] See J. Friedlaender, "Jewish-Arabic Studies," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 2 (1911-12), pp. 486-87, esp. pp. 495-96. There is also a legend around the murdered messianic claimant Abu Isa Isfahani who was believed to "have gone to the Banū Mūsa who are behind the sand (Arab. *wara' ar-raml'*) to preach to them the word of God," (see Friedlaender, *ibid*, 1, p. 256).

[277] Variably spelled *Sherini*, or *Sheria*, or *Seriou*; a possible connection *Shiroui*.

[278] Cf. a certain Severus, who was a Christian dwelling in the district of Marde, Syria, according to C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6213 (AD 720/21), p. 554; ct. J.B. Chabot, *Chronicon anonymum. 1234*, (Louvain, 1937), 240, pp. 18-25.

[279] Kirkisānī, p. 284; Quoted verbatim in Friedlaender, "Jewish-Arabic Studies," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 2 (1911-12), pp. 486-87, esp. p. 489.

[280] It suggests also that the composition of the Vision of Daniel took place within the period in question.

exclusive to the Shī'a Islam; the conceptualisation of the subterranean world that probably derived from the former, features also in the *FVD*.

There were several Messianic movements that erupted following the expectations of the coming fall of Constantinople at the hands of the Muslim navy. No doubt, these movements were sectarian, divisive among themselves, and without the backing of the rabbinical orthodox leadership. These seem to resemble the Jewish "fishermen" who went around preaching their good news of the impending deliverance of the Jews, especially as the latter's message stepped right in on Christian turf. But the implicit use of the Christian theme and expression does remain utilitarian,[281] intended more to convey the author's immediate proposal rather than an outright borrowing. Note that Jerusalem remains the focal point of the wider range of the apocalypticism during that period, whatever the religious, or ethnic allegiance (to cite but a few areas: Cordoba, Isfahan, Damascus, the Fayyum).

From the above discussion, we can see several elements coming together: the Ka^{c}ba ritual was the object of ridicule from the Christians, alleging the Aphrodite connection, in so far as Christians would have accused the Muslims of idolatry; in Mahdīsm also certain concepts assumed some connotation with the underworld with regard to the doctrine of Occultation, but only when the pun is directed at Muslims.[282]

Thus, since the emergence of the antichrist occurs during a time of Divine Judgement (i.e., during the reign of *Dan*), it is therefore important to surmise regarding the manner of its advent. The antichrist is turned into a small "*muridon*" or "*garidon*" fish, a kind of amphibian serpent-fish that grows into a monstrous creature of the deep sea. He "*will come in the form of a small garidon*

[281] The themes of the "fish," the "virgin girl," the treachery of "Judas," the selling of "the fish for thirty pieces of silver," or the advent of the "antichrist" could arguably be readily shared by Jews and Christians alike, as it was available from the common Torah prophetic tradition. Perhaps more so regarding the "fish" as it is referred to in Ecclesiastes 9:12 "Moreover, no man knows when his hour will come: As fish are caught in a cruel net, or birds are taken in a snare, so men are trapped by evil times that fall unexpectedly upon them." Otherwise, we may recall that a parable of Jesus equated a fish with a serpent (Matthew 7:10; Luke 11:11) might be played out here, which would confirm the Judeo-Christian origins of the Vision of Daniel.

[282] We have seen (discussion above) a positive usage of the Occultation in chapter 5:5-7 of *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, where the apocalypse affirms that the "the Lord will rouse up an emperor of the Romans, (whom people say was probably dead, and useful for nothing) whom people think he died many years ago. For (this reason) the Lord preserves (him) within the land of the people of Persia and the Syrian nations, whose name (begins with) the letter K of the alphabet."

fish... And he will grow big and will be caught by twelve fishermen."[283] It is hard not to relate the term "twelve fishermen" to the apostles of Jesus even though not all of them were, which probably refers here to the history of spreading the Gospel.[284] But in the larger context of the apocalypse, there is little doubt that the parody of the twelve apostles, with Judas included, is an allusion to the contemporary Jewish Messianism as follows:

> "And the fishermen will become enraged against each other. And one of them, whose name [is] Judah,[285] will boast around. And taking up a (the) fish as his inheritance, he will come in the district of Gouzeth [where] he will sell the fish for thirty pieces of silver."[286]

This place-name *Gouzeth* is possibly the Syrian village near Homs (*Emesa*) known as *Gousit*. But the word might come from the transliteration from Syriac of either the word *guizeth* (= waterless, barren) or gouzeltha (= fiery furnace) or even *gouzeha* (= rout, primitive form). This borrowing of Syriac words might also indicate the milieu or neighbourhood of the composition of this apocalypse. However, the name-place *Gouzeth* has been identified long ago with "the land of the Egyptians." According to Vasiliev,[287] there had been Judeo-Christian messianic hopes upon the Monophysite ruler of Ethiopia (based on Ps. 68:31, when at the time there were speculations about an eschatological marriage between the Byzantine ruler and an Ethiopia heiress). The location of this place in Ethiopia would make sense should the word *Gouzeth* be proven as a transliteration of *Chuzeth*, the daughter of the Ethiopian king.

However, there may be another explanation. A persistent theme emerged at the wake of Islam, according to which the Jewish communities of Palestine had indulged in "redeeming" the Christians from the hands of the Muslim rulers.[288]

---

[283] Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon,* p. 680: "Ixthus" fish, has a moral symbolism of those who commit sins, or of thoughts and passions, worldly, follower of Devil; Lampe, pp. 889-90 "murodos" means perfume, unguent, smelly. Therefore, the idea might be that of a "pungent fish" that had previously proved impossible to handle, but which over time would be contained.

[284] After all, the symbol of the "fish" is squarely the image of Christian proselytism.

[285] Lit. "Iouvda" = *Judas* in the sense of imposter. Let us recall that during the tremendous military campaigns Mu'awiyyah had carried out against Constantinople (AD 672-77), renewed Jewish messianic expectations were being stirred among the Palestinian Jewry, notably the movement led by Yughdan of Hamadan, also called Judah, the charismatic founder of the Jewish sect called the *Yudghaniyah* (see discussion above); cf. J. Mann, *Résumé* on the subject in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 47 (1927), p. 364..

[286] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. IV (ch. 11: 5-7).

[287] A. Vasiliev, *Logos tou Kyriou hemon Iesou Christou peri tes antilogias tou diabolou* (Moscow, 1893), p. 8.

[288] Reminiscent of Judas' betrayal of Jesus for "thirsty silver coins," see Matth. 26: 15.

of Islam.[297] With regard to the fish "ichthus" "muridon" or "murdon" that appears in the text, one may refer to a 8th century Christian inscription that speaks of Christ as "*the very great, the pure fish which the holy Virgin seized*"; another inscription says that we eat this fish with the bread and wine. This fish is at a fountain, which flows with the water of the spirit, and it is "*taken with the hook of divinity*" and it "*feeds the whole world with its own flesh.*"[298] Not much could be said at this archeological find, except that this appears a Christian adoption of the Jewish legends about the Leviathan, of which Gabriel would be given special power to catch in the great day. As Goodenough points out, "*the legend of the great fish whom the faithful will eat took on many forms, but is firmly attested in Jewish tradition.*" He cites Rabbi Ashi, who said apparently with reference to the final judgement that: "*If Leviathan by hook be hauled to land, what hope have fishes of a shallow strand.*"[299] Furthermore, given the possible rabbinical origins of those topics in this text, one may reconsider the tradition about the fate of the Leviathan/fish, which ends up sold on the marketplace. According to one such tradition, portions of the Leviathan (e.g., whale mear) are "*sold on the markets of Jerusalem... and sometimes an amulet would be made of its parts for the protection of the unworthy Israelites...*"[300] A novel interpretation of the Leviathan legend might have evolved during the Islamic era into mysticism. Portions of the so-called Leviathan/fish will be turned into protective amulets, the sorts of which we find in Christian relics carved from the wood of the True Cross.[301] In Islam too, such type of amulet in

[297] Note that most of the Jewish claimants to Messiahship (e.g., Abu Isa Isphahani, Serene, or Yugdhan), at least in the 8th century did not reject the prophethood of Muhammād; cf. C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6122 (AD 629/30), p. 464: "At the beginning of his (Muhammād) advent the misguided Jews thought he was the Messiah who is awaited by them..."; cf. M. Levy-Rubin (tr.), *The Continuato of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū l-Farh al-Sāmirī al-Danafī* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2002), pp. 46-51; see also Ibn Ishāq's *Sīra* in A. Guillaume, *The Life of* Muḥammad (London, 1955), pp. 239ff.

[298] E.R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), vol. 12, p. 99; cf. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, vol. 5, pp. 49-50.

[299] Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, p. 99.

[300] See *B.T. Baba Bathra* 75a.

[301] The entry in Sebeos, *Histoire d'Héraclius* speaks of a piece of the cross on the dead body of a soldier that was predicted to Yoseph in a dream he would find during a three-month battle in the Byzantine-Persian war. As it goes, this is what exactly happened (pp. 44-45): "Cet homme avait une bougette en cuir sous son épaule... Yoseph s'approcha, prit la bougette, vit qu'il y avait une boîte en argent et une croix à l'intérieur, dans laquell se trouvait un grand morceau de la croix de notre-Seigeur. Il s'en sign, et, après l'avoir pris, il rejoignit ses camarades." It seems that the cross that was found here, was part of an amulet or similar paraphernalia for protection.

One can suspect that the reason of the phenomenon laid in the victimisation and diabolisation of the Jews for their connivances with the new rulers of the site of Jerusalem. But, more specifically, this may refer to the killing of Christian captives[289] – especially during the period of the Arab invasion of Palestine – as several sources record that the Muslims regularly offered the Jews to redeem the Christian clergy and assets.[290]

Actually, the author of the *FVD* seems to allude to the trend of apocalyptic movements with socio-economic overtone,[291] which had altered the outcome of the messianic tradition since the advent of Muhammād. The "fish" that Judas catches and that he "*will sell for thirty pieces of silver*,"[292] might relate to the falsehood of the Prophet Muhammād for having betrayed the earlier Jewish expectations of redemption. In any case, for the Babylonian Judaism, to indulge in a physical contact with the *fish*, was as having a forbidden sexual intercourse with an Egyptian.[293] According to a Christian chronicler of the 10th century, Pseudo-Symeon Magister, the Jews were expecting the advent of the antichrist before the Messiah.[294] The latter was to be born of a nun.[295] Eventually the small fish would grow so gigantic – i.e., the Leviathan (e.g. Muhammād) – that its capture will require the collaborative work[296] of no less than twelve fishermen, i.e., the Twelve Tribes of Israel. There is hardly another perspective to the theme of the Leviathan other than the unnatural Jewish conviction about the Founder

---

[289] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6106 (AD 613/14), p. 431: "For the Jews bought the Christians, each man according to his means, and killed them."

[290] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6249 (AD 756/57), p. 595; L.B. Chabot, *Chronicon 1234*, 265, 24-30.

[291] The apocalypse of Qalamun would fit better this characteristic, since it depicts vividly the economic aspect of the Muslim despotism. S.H.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Librairie du Liban, 1979), pp. 1-26, where he sets the conceptual foundations of the movement, which he casts into the dual perspective of the religious and socio-politics.

[292] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. IV (ch. 11: 7).

[293] See Midrash Rabbas Gen. 97:3, where Joshua is believed to have qualified to lead the Israelites (compared to fishes) into the Promised Land because he "was the son of him whose name was as the name of a fish." Naturally, the commentary plays on Joshua's father's name Nun, which in Aramaic means fish.

[294] In *Sanhedrin* 11:98a it is reported that "R. Hanina said: 'the son of David will not come until a fish is sought for an invalid and cannot be procured, as it is written.' "Then will I make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil;" whilst it is written: "In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud fourth." See I. Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud* (London, 1935), vol. 2, p. 662.

[295] Cf. J. Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire 641-1204* (Athens, 1939), p. 73.

[296] Soon after, the apocalyptic text asserts that the fishermen will become enraged against each other, which underscores the necessity of the unity of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Despite this first success the Jewish people will disagree with each other to the point of travestying the character of the original movement.

The use of the biblical "*Virgin Girl of Israel*"[305] reminds of the naïve scheming of Israel that brought about her own demise in world politics. She has unwittingly given birth to the Antichrist, nurtured it, and made provisions for it to become a teacher to a self-indulgent audience – i.e., being immature by birth the Antichrist will thus preach a simplistic message[306] – so that the new religious system appears a genuine Jewish messianic movement until the time when it shows its true nature.

From here, the reminder of the Chapter 11 consists in unveiling the hideous nature of that antichrist. The full description of the antichrist's extraterrestrial pedigree needs not to detain us here,[307] except for mentioning in passing that the depiction ends with three abbreviations for the codename for the antichrist, given as: A.T.K. [308] An outline of this description in the *FVD* 11: 17-27 is as follows:

> "The height of his stature will be of 10 cubits (~5.3m), and the hair of his head will reach his feet. He will be covered with hair. The track of his feet will be three cubits. His eyes [will be] like [the] rising morning star. And the upper part of his teeth [will be made] of iron. The lower [part of his] jaw [will be] in diamond. His right arm [is made of] iron and his left [arm is made of] bronze. His left hand is three cubits wide, his right hand [is] four cubits wide. [He is] long-faced, [and] long-nosed. On his forehead are written three letters: A. T. K., that is to say 'antichrist.'"[309]

Compare with a similar Syriac depiction of the Antichrist:

> *"his head is huge, his hair red, his eyes blue and his neck strong. His sides are high, his chest broad, his arm long, and his fingers short. He has two horns next to his ears, and he has strong flesh in his ear as well as lean flesh. His figure is wrathful, stupendous, and furious, the figure of his stature is likewise stupendous."*[310]

The abbreviation A.T.K which the text asserts is the letters representing literally "the antichrist," that is presumably the Greek version. But, then the author adds

---

[305] See Isaiah 7:14 "the Virgin will be with a son..." cf. Isaiah 47:1 ""Go down, sit in the dust, Virgin Daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, Daughter of the Babylonians. No more will you be called tender or delicate..."; Jeremiah. 18:13 "... A most horrible thing has been done by Virgin Israel"; Lamentations of Jeremiah 2:13 "What can I say for you? With what can I compare you, O Daughter of Jerusalem? To what can I liken you, that I may comfort you, O Virgin Daughter of Zion? Your wound is as deep as the sea. Who can heal you?"

[306] Cf. Ascension of Isaiah 4.

[307] in K. von Tischendorff, *Apocalypses Apocryphae* (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1866), pp. 70-94.

[308] Gr. Alpha, Tau, Kappa.

[309] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, ch. 11: 17-27, pp. IV-V.

[310] M. Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* ((Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), pp. 91-92.

the form of miniatures became the source of an underground industry of art.[302] But an interesting notice asserts also that parts of the Leviathan will be spread "*on the walls of Jerusalem by the Holy One, that will cause the nations to be attracted to Jerusalem.*" The mysticism in question here revolved round the significance of Jerusalem. We have seen in the discussion about the importance of Jerusalem in the eschatology of the three monotheistic religions, that Jerusalem became the object of much deliberation and the iconic centre of the orthodox worship at the turn of the 8th century AD. Yet, we are no better informed here than that the (parts of the) Leviathan/fish would be sold on the market (of Jerusalem), safe for what it suggests, namely, the vulgarisation of the religion of Abraham. That its corollary: "*a Virgin Girl will buy (of) the fish, whose name[s] [are] Injustice...(and) Destruction,*" might then underscore the consequences of trading the inheritance of the Jewish faith with the "sons of Hagar," on the grounds of hastening the recovery of the Holy Land. The end result – the dominion of Islam and its Islamisation of Palestine – was enough evident to not even warrant the mention of Islam. Could it be that the Leviathan/fish tradition[303] assumed then the meaning of the "emergence of a new faith" or a kind of resurgence of religious heresy? By all accounts, the next entry would re-enforce this premise:

> "For having touched the head of the fish she (the Virgin Girl) will find herself pregnant. And the antichrist will be born from her. He will be born three months (later). And he will suckle during five months. And he (will) come to Jerusalem and become a teacher for children. And he will appear peaceful, unassuming and amiable, and prosecuting transgressions"[304]

---

[302] The Islamic representation of Burāq is attested from AH 714 (AD 1314), see T.W. Arnold, *Painting in Islam* (New York: Dover Publications, 1965), p. 119.

[303] See the Talmudic passage such as *B.T. Yoma* 75a, where the fish is associated with the symbolism of fertility; see *R. Bar-Kappara* which states that: "a maiden should be married on the fourth day of the week and that intercourse should take place on the fifth day, because on that day the blessing for fishes was pronounced." Cf. B.T. Kethuboth 5a and see Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols*, vol. 5, pp. 49-50.

[303] In *Sanhedrin* 11:98a it is reported that "R. Hanina said: 'the son of David will not come until a fish is sought for an invalid and cannot be procured, as it is written.' "Then will I make their waters deep, and cause their rivers to run like oil;" whilst it is written: "In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud fourth." See I. Epstein, *The Babylonian Talmud* (London, 1935), vol. 2, p. 662.

[304] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* ch. 11: 11-15.

a second set of letters: A.K.T., which letters the author says stand for "deny," "I utterly deny," and "the defiled dragon" respectively.[311]

The chapter 11 closes with a telling notice according to which there occurs a period of unusual abundance and "*all sorts of fruitfulness*" across the entire world "*when the sceptre of Dan*[312] *comes to an end.*"[313] The Greek word *karpodosiva* appears nowhere else before that usage in Germanus' writing at Constantinople in AD 730.[314] It is a concatenation of *karpos* (fruit) and *didwmi* (give), meaning fruit-bearing. Should the notice be connected with such a period in the 8th century, it would become a valuable working historical data, which might yield further information. We actually know that the 8th to 9th century were the years when crop production soared, after the disastrous loss of the agrarian supply from Egypt. Then new agricultural techniques were introduced, and even Charlemagne's regulation of the price of cereal in the early 9th century, by selling wheat from the imperial warehouses, shows a greater mastery of the administration of production and trade.[315] P. Toubert has recently demonstrated that the agrarian development in all countries of the Mediterranean basin – both the Greek speaking and the Latin – got under way as early as the eighth and ninth century. It was a gradual growth though, which accelerated in the 10th century.[316] The author speaks of such exceptional agricultural productivity that: "*for three years they will be harvesting the good things of the world,*" and that the planting "*will produce a hundredfold,*" and that even "*the seed of the olive*

---

[311] The Syriac for "a sign," "a character," or "a letter" is *āthlā* or *āthū*; On the other hand, *akhtha* is the Syriac word for "wrath," or "lasting anger," or even "a grudge." This word might be at the root of the personification of the antichrist in apocalyptic literature of antiquity. *Khath* is also the root for "reproof," and "censure," "What about Taw? If this reconstruction proves conclusive, we may have evidences that qualify this text as originating in Aramaic-speaking milieu.

[312] Dan was the fifth son of Jacob born to Baila, handmaid of Rachel. The Hebrew root verb *dyn* means "to rule" or "to judge." According to W. Bousset, tt seems that the Jews have developed a tradition about the antichrist long before Christianity, which finally diverged from the latter on points of details. However, given that the antichrist was believed to be of Jewish extraction (Gen. 49:17), together with the fact that Dan is omitted from the catalogue of the tribes of Israel, as found in the book of Revelation, the resulting inference has been that the antichrist come from the tribe of Dan. Whether or not the antichrist is a person or a belief system is still an open question. But as it stand in this text, it rather resembles a belief system.

[313] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. V (ch. 11: 28).

[314] See Lampe, *Patristic Dictionary of Greek* Germ. CP. Or I.M. 98. 229B, which might afford us a potential *terminus post quem* for the composition date of the text.

[315] C. Morrisson (ed.), *Hommes et Richesses dans l'Empire Byzantin* (Paris, 1992), vol. 2, pp. 360-62.

[316] For historical data, see P. Toubert, "La part du grand domaine dans le decollage économique de l'Occident (VIIIe-Xe siècles), in C. Higounet (ed.), *La Croissance agricole du haut Moyen Age* (Auch, 1990), pp. 53-86.

will spread (by its own means!) over an entire forest without any extraneous effort (lit. matter)."[317] And all that plentiful-ness will occur to such extent that "*has not happened since the foundation of the world until those days have come.*" In other words, the biblical Jubilee that lasts three years (incidentally!) will come to pass because of the divine covenant, in spite of (or despite) the Christendom's failure to abide by its side of the bargain.[318] The year of Jubilee consisted of breaking the yoke of slavery, while relying upon the divine provision in that year when the land laid waste. This is certainly an elaboration on the words the prophet Isaiah had uttered in favour of Hezekiah during the siege of Sennacherib king of Assyria against Jerusalem:

> "This will be the sign for you, O Hezekiah: 'This year you will eat what grows by itself, and the second year what springs from that. But in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit.'"[319]

Despite its lack of connection to the context of the Jubilee, the author wished to make unlawful the actual Muslim occupation of Christian lands in the way Sennacherib did of Israel long beforehand, so as to relate the exceptional season of abundant harvests with a manifestation of God's providence. Therefore, the circumstances of the Muslim dominion – a mere repetition of the Sennacherib[320] episode – that lead to vast land being left uncultivated, and which still yield substantive harvest, should be hailed as years of the Jubilee. Naturally, here the olive seed colonizing an entire forest by its own volition (a parody of course!), does conform to God's Law of Jubilee. As such, then, the theodicy of the *FVD* is threefold: first, God wills alone the year of Jubilee independently of the time of history; second, the year of Jubilee is divinely made known rather than humanly determined; third, the parties at play are passive instruments of God's planning. This theory might constitute the premises of the author's messianism: man cannot and should not interfere in matters divine, simply because the conceptualisation of the advent of the Messiah lies beyond human reach. Any pretense at bridging this divine prerogative is thus bound to fail. And this principle is strongly suggested in the next chapter.

---

[317] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. V (ch. 11: 34).
[318] See Leviticus 25:10-55;
[319] See 2 Kings 19:29.
[320] Cf. C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6305 (AD 812/13), p. 686, where Kroummos, the Bulgarian king is hailed "the new Sennacherib."

The 12th chapter (or vision) opens with the statement that "the nation of the Jews and the Jerusalemites" set themselves out to make plans saying:

> "And the nation of the Jews with the Jerusalemites will make plan saying: 'Let us make a king of this gracious and admirable man, (he) who has the three letters upon his forehead; for it is proper that become king.' And they crowned him in the third day; [For] he will reign three years. And during the third year of his kingship all fruit upon the face of the earth will be eradicated."[321]

The parallel with the story of Joseph is remarkable in many respects. It may be that the authorship wished to interpolate the story of Joseph who rose to the administration of the land of Egypt Once Joseph had interpreted the dreams of the cupbearer and chief baker of the Pharaoh, whose fates were decided in a three-day-term. In addition, Joseph was able to predict a seven-year period of plenty followed by a seven-year period of draught worldwide, and saw to it that food was stored consequently.[322] But the episode of Joseph was no apocalyptic narrative. Or else the authorship of the *FVD* have wanted to give a negative spin at the time, to the Jewish expectations of a messiah named *Nehemiah son of Hushiel, son of Ephraim, son of Joseph*, such as in the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.[323] Yet the apocalyptist chose to make use of the story – that is, the stratagem of the Jews have come up with in order to administer crop production – upon which the leadership of the antichrist is the antithesis of Joseph. In the *FVD*, there is a contrast to the three-year-period of transition between the closing period of the sovereignty of the sceptre of *Dan*, and the three-year-period process of take-over by the antichrist,[324] when the world will go from a time of amazing plethora to one of absolutely universal deprivation, epidemics, and hardship.[325] What is abundantly clear, though, is that the era of the antichrist

---

[321] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. V (ch. 12: 1-6).

[322] The young Joseph stirred murderous hatred from his brothers against himself because of the strange dreams he dreamt (Gen. 37:1ff). Actually, Joseph was spared his life when his brothers saw the opportunity to earn some money out of selling him to the Ishmaelite caravanserais, rather than having him killed (Gen. 37:25-28). Joseph proved himself skilled in interpreting dreams (Gen. 41:29-32) so as to manage to avert the disaster that was about to strike the land of Egypt during a seven-year period of draught. For seven years of exceptional abundance prior to the draught, Joseph had undertaken to store a substantial reserve of food that saw the people of the entire earth through (Gen. 42:57).

[323] See Appendix *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, pp. III, IV. Note that that messiah is said to be hidden at Tiberias.

[324] It is still quite unclear to me how this process takes shape.

[325] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 12: 7-11; cf. Rev. 6:8; 18:8-9.

will be demarcated from that of the sceptre of Dan, by the invasion[326] of spirits and demons into cities, especially the city of Jerusalem, with the purpose of trying their citizens:

> "And the unclean spirits and demons will come out. [Those] who are there in the Abyss, in the clefts, in the subterranean places, in the caves, in the lakes, in the springs, in the pools and in the air. They will come out [so numerous] like the sand of the seashore and they will be fastened to the antichrist. And they will be testing men and they will be destroying foetuses of women[327] and they will suck the milk of breast-feeding women."[328]

The theme of Revelation 20: 7-10 serves, it seems, to convey the idea that wars and rumours of wars are all the direct products of demons perverting the human social life.[329] Having been released in the open, the unclean spirits and demons seek to interact with (should I say: interfere in) human affairs.[330] The spirits will come out of a sort of "exile" so as to take possession of the antichrist, that is to say, empowering the belief system that is in place in order to accomplish Satan's rebellion against God.[331] Probably the episode of Satan entering Judas, in order that Jesus would be betrayed, was in sight here.[332] Then, in the middle of a fairly lengthy diatribe[333] regarding the subsequent Christian hardship and the dire state of the environment, the text contrasts all that to the state of mind of the Jews: "*Then each flesh of the Romans will lament, but the joy and exaltation of the Jews will be great.*"[334] This statement is the clearest Jewish ambivalent attitude

---

[326] This is a concept as old as the book of Revelation (Rev. 9: 14-15), where spirits and demons would eventually escape from their detention where they had been shut up (Rev. 20:7), area into area hitherto free of them (Rev.12: 9, 12, 13).
[327] Matthew 24:19; Mark 13:17; Luke 21:23; 1Thessalonians 5:3.
[328] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 12: 12-15.
[329] S. Mitchell, Anatolia. Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor. The Rise of the Church (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), vol. 2, p. 25: "He (Mēn, the god of Vindia) was thus worshipped in local *Hiera* throughout the region. His cult, like that of the Mother Goddess, extended beyond ethnic Phrygia... he was invoked as both god of heaven and god of the underworld to protect graves from disturbance." See also ch. 19: Central Anatolia at the End of Antiquity," for a whole range of demons beliefs, and the actions of the saint. For instance, as a means of exorcism, a procession consisted in (p. 149): "the planting of the cross above the old tombs from which the spirits had come." Cf. p. 144.
[330] See Genesis 3:1, an example of unnatural interaction between species.
[331] Rev 20:1-3 (NIV): "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time."
[332] See Luke 22:3-4.
[333] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 12: 16-25.
[334] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 12:21.

vis-à-vis the fortune of Byzantium yet, for it is made in a way that dispels all ambiguity as to the stand of the author of the apocalypse. According to the statement, the Jews were so pleased with the "*distress caused by the compulsion of the evil spirits and by the coming plague...*" so that the Christians suffered tribulations. There was little doubt in the Jewish minds however that the actual turn of events had emanated from the subterranean world. The author makes it plain that the Jewish approval of wrongdoers does amount to association of evil, and thus by implication to the charge of impersonation of the antichrist.

The next chapter is meant to bring home the premise that the Jewish visceral hostility toward Christ and Christianity had earned them the advent of the antichrist and the heresy of the sons of Ishmael, i.e., the (false) Prophet Muhammād instead of the Messiah. The opening statement of the thirteenth vision could not be more emphatic with regard to the antichrist's dealings with the Jews:

> "And then the antichrist will lift up a stone with his bare hands saying: 'believe [in] me and I will turn stones [into] bread.' And so the Jews will worship him saying: 'You are the Christ whom we have expected and because of Thee the race of the Christians have grieved us.' And the Jews will be in great joy, thus swaggering with the help of the antichrist. And then the antichrist will boast saying to the Jews: 'Do not grieve so much; just a [little] while and the race of the Christians will see who I am.'"[335]

Surprisingly, the *FVD* seems to avoid all usage of, or allusion to the term *Sarakenoi* with regard to the Arabs. But the pun associated with the term is not far off. Instead it is insinuated in the shape of the biblical imagery of the prohibited worship of "false" deities. The author is neither content with underlining the biblical pre-requisite that Ishmael was not to inherit with Isaac,[336] nor is he tempted with denigrating the sons of Ishmael altogether with regard to their Abrahamic inheritance.[337] The fact that the author makes the antichrist "boast saying to the Jews: "*Do not grieve so much; just a [little] while and the race of the Christians will see who I am,*"[338] presupposes that the Jewish aspirations to independence were bolstered, possibly an allusion to some activities of national liberation movements at its highest. In this alternative

---

[335] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 13:1-7.
[336] See Genesis 17:21; cf. Genesis 21:10-12.
[337] See Genesis 21:13.
[338] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. VI (ch. 13: 7).

though, one would think that the Antichrist, who stirs up any such liberation movement "*with his bare hands*," might suggest otherwise a "*spirit of rebe*llion" among the Jews. There is here in the text an ideology factor, of the type such as the Abū ʿĪsā al-Isfahānī, or that of Severus in Syria, both ill-fated movements having emerged in the first half of 8th century, and promptly and brutally suppressed. But these Jewish movements have subsequently re-invented themselves in the *Rafʿa* doctrine,[339] that is, of the doctrine of Docetism and its corollary, the Occultation ideology. The implications with regard to the adherents' practice of worship are beyond the scope of this study. However, it points to what the authorship of the *FVD* would have regarded as idolatrous worship, or iconodulism just as well. What might seem an exclusively Shi'a Mahdīsm would have find some ramifications in the ranks of Jewish sectarians. Thus, the author of the Vision would press forward with the ultimate charges of idolatry against the Jewish would-be-supporters of the religious movement of Muḥammād. Even though Jews would not even consider the worship of Moses or Christ for that matter,[340] the fact that the author should assert at all that: "*Jews will worship him*," is enough a pointer to the fact that issues in the Jewish iconodulism were at the end of the allegation. Moreover, by parodying the Jewish aversion for the Christian worship of Jesus-Christ the author suggests that the Jews came eventually to worship him as a result of the Christian persecution that led the former to identify Muḥammād – probably a pun for the legend of the Jews recognising the youth Muhammād as the Messiah-Prophet designate – wrongfully, as the Christ: "*You are the Christ whom we expected and because of Thee the race of the Christians have grieved us.*"[341] With regard to the prohibition of Jewish access to the Jerusalem Mount, and the forced baptism of Jews, the Christian dominion was certainly meant. The Jewish sectarians were equating the expected restoration of the Jewish cult with the

---

[339] See I. Friedlander, "Jewish-Arabic Studies," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 2 (1911), pp. 481-516, esp. pp.507ff.

[340] Although one cannot definitely dismiss the alternative hypothesis that of Jewish messianic claimants such as Yugdhani or Isfahani. Severus is said to have proclaimed himself as "Christ, the son of God," which may imply that the latter sought some sort of veneration. One ought to leave the issue open at this stage, although the apparition of these Jewish figures seems to predate the composition Fourteenth Vision of Daniel.

[341] *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. VI (ch. 13: 4); cf. C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6122 (AD 629/30), p. 464, speaks of the Jews' reacting to the religion of Muhammād as: "At the beginning of his advent the misguided Jews thought he was the Messiah who is awaited by them... while forsaking that of Moses...".

biblical exodus from Egypt. In fact it is a double parody that our apocalyptist exhibits in that Muhammād is made to be re-enacting the Mosaic ideology of the Jewish exodus to the land of Abraham.[342] In other words, the grief brought about by the Jewish failure to adhere to Jesus-Christ was compounded with their failure to discern the working of antichrist. As a demonstration of this antichrist's conspiracy against God's elect, the author states that: "*The Antichrist will boast saying to the Jews: 'do not grieve so much; for in a while the race of the Christians will see who [really] I am.*'" For the authorship of the *FVD*, the Jews are doubly misled by the Antichrist. On the one hand, they are mistaken with regard to the true nature of the "sons of Agar," given that as Jews, the *ahl al-kitāb*, they should know better, with regard to Ishmael, what the inheritance of Isaac is all about. On the other hand, the antichrist bidding the Jews to grieve no longer, though beguiling the prospect might appear, the nature of antichrist should be held as harmful to the Jews in due course as it appears to be meanwhile to the Christians.[343]

And the prize is clearly the city Jerusalem, though only implied in the title "the Jerusalemites." The appearance of the Messiah is always expected to take place in Jerusalem. The Jewish messiah is called Christ in the chapter 13 of the text, a significant departure from the sectarian Jewish messianism in antiquity. Despite the fact that this Jewish messiah is depicted as the anti-messiah, presumably in the Christian version of the antichrist, he retains the title of Christ in keeping with the Babylonian Talmud.[344] This picture of the antichrist's Christ appears to represent a messianic figure whose message aimed at replacing the present order, i.e., the Christian one with another that was Abrahamic. This is to say that it would be Ishmaelite nonetheless. One can discern here an allusion to the Muslim claim to restoring the primordial religion of Abraham.[345] But the

---

[342] When Moses became concerned that his fellow Jews would not recognise him as the deliverer sent by God, God instructed his to retort: "I am who I am." The Islamic pamphlet: "There\ is no God but Allah. And Muhammād is His Prophet." May be in mind here. See also Sebeos' *History*... concerning the earliest Jewish messianic significance of the movement of Muhammād as the exodus to the promise land; cf. the theory in *Hagarism*. This last point militates for the iconography of the Dome of the Rock as the symbol of the predominance of Islam vis-à-vis Christianity and Judaism, so that Mecca remained the starting place rather than the rival centre, second to Jerusalem.

[343] Indeed, Abū ʿĪsā al-Isfahānī's message spoke of the exodus to Israel.

[344] Belial in Sanhedrin 98a; Sifre Deut. 92; Beliar in Sibylline Oracles 2: 167 *et seq* and Sibylline Oracles 3: 46 *et seq*.

[345] See discussion above.

authorship of the *FVD* turns this Muslim claim into a move backward. Accordingly, the following statement might be positively identified as insinuating just that:

> "Then the antichrist will raise his voice toward the flinty rock saying: 'I have made the heaven and earth. I command you flinty rock, Become bread in front of the Jews!' And having disobeyed him the stone will turn into a dragon. And the dragon will utter a word (voice) toward the antichrist shouting: 'V!'[346] And [he] will declare to the antichrist: 'O you who accomplish all works of iniquity and all injustice, why do you pretend to do what you are not capable of.' And the dragon will put him (the antichrist) to shame in front of the Jews." [347]

The false messiah gave order to the stone to become bread, but the latter refused to obey, that is, to believe in his Messianic claim. It is interesting to note that Christians were inclined to put the blame squarely at the feet of the Jews on the grounds of an alleged spiritual inability for Jews to distinguish the antichrist from the Messiah. In Leontius' *Apology against the Jews*, he deals with the Jewish charge of idolatry levelled at the Christians. He returns the blame against the Jews by pointing out that:

> "... c'est comme toi jadis, Israel, tu leurs as fait la proskynèse en disant à l'arbre et au bois: 'c'est toi qui es mon dieu, et c'est toi qui m'a engender.' Encore une fois, nous ne parlons pas ainsi à la croix et aux portraits des saints..."[348]

So, the Jews are aggrieved only because of that innate proclivity to fail the test of Satan. The episode of Satan's temptation of Jesus at the start of His ministry is remarkably interwoven with the so-called angelic revelation – especially the angel Jibrīl – of the Qur'an. The dialogue between the antichrist and the dragon (or the *flinty rock*)[349] is contrasted with that of the Temptation, which test Jesus

---

[346] As of this writing, I am not able to make sense of this sign.

[347] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 13:8-14; Note that the test set by Satan was about the challenge to Jesus to prove his Sonship by performing the miracle of turning the stone into bread, a challenge that Jesus declined. Here though, the challenge is the opposite, namely, the antichrist's claim to sonship of God was unproven. For the term "flinty rock" (*akrotomon petran*) cf. Deut. 8:15: "He (God) brought you water out of hard rock."

[348] V. Déroche, "L'*Apologie contre les juifs* de Léontius de Néapolois," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), pp. 45-104, esp. pp. 70, 78.

[349] Gr. την άκρότομον πέτραν = "sharp rock" or "flinty stone." It is worth noting Job 28:9-12: "Man's hand assaults the flinty rock and lays bare the roots of the mountains. He tunnels through the rock; his eyes see all its treasures. He searches the sources of the rivers and brings hidden things to light. But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell?" See Lampe, *A Greek Patristic Lexicon* , p. 66; cf. Hyperechius (6th cent.), *adhortatio ad monachos* 74 (M. 79. 1480D), where in worshiping the heart of stone is changed into a heart of flesh. The allusion to the Rock of the Dome, or the Black Stone of Ka'ba, and/or the Zamzam well may be appropriate here, though not in all certainty. However, this may well constitute the charge

passed. It does not though originate from the Book of Revelation (cf. ch. 13). In *4Ezra* also, a stone raises its voice in an eschatological context.[350] Here it is possibly an iconoclastic parody of the lifeless stone that becomes responsive to the "pagan" worship. The qualifier "flinty" is likely to refer to the Arab sword. The former is meant to illustrate the sheer unorthodoxy that result from revelation that the Ishmaelites claim.[351] The apocalyptist is of the opinion that the miraculous operations that were (falsely) ascribed, in certain Hagarene/Ishmaelite traditions, to a particular supernatural being will cause all but embarrassment and confusion among those Jews who approved of the so-called new revelation. What is more, the apocalyptist clearly designates the Jews as the witnesses of the shaming of the antichrist, if they were not actually themselves the very objects of the shaming of the antichrist. The latter hypothesis would advocate an earlier dating of the text back in the period when the Muslim movement was still regarded as Jewish sectarian messianism,[352] or else, this is an indication that a true Jewish sectarian movement informed the apocalyptist with regard to actual apocalyptic aspiration among the Jews of Syria/Palestine. The hypothesis advocated by the authors of *Hagarism* might just fit the picture here, according to which there were brewing Jewish messianic speculations that inspired the Arabs' quest for a promised land of their own brand, i.e., the Samaritans, who themselves had good incentives to favour an alternative to the Jewish lineage's claim to the Holy Land.[353]

The Liturgical Eschatology:

It is conceivable that chapters 12-14 should be considered as containing traces of the liturgy of the sectarian community where the *FVD* was composed. Here a

---

against Muḥammād that he never performed any miracle, to which the Muslim retorted that the feat of receiving the revelation of the Qur'an, the divine writing, by an unlettered Prophet at all is *the* miracle par excellence.

[350] *4Ezra* 5: 5.

[351] Cf. *4Baruch* 9:30.

[352] See in particular, "The Samaritan Calques," in Crone & Cook, *Hagarism*.

[353] E.g., the Samaritan woman claim to the Mount Garizim in John 4:19; Evidences from papyri show that in the mid-5th cent. Samaritans (Dositheans) by religion resided in Egypt. The author of the letter swears by Mt. Gerizim: μα τον Αργαριζιν, which suggest the persistence of the Samaritans' claim, see D. Hagedorn, "Byzantinischer Brief aus samaritanischem Milieu" in B. Kramer & D. Hagedorn (eds.), *Griechische Texte der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung* (P.Heid. IV), (Heidelberg: Winter, 1986), p. 225; A treatise by Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria from AD 580 to 607, shows that there existed in his time a Dositheaη sect in the city. The treatise is preserved in the *Bibliotheca of Photius*, see S. Isser, *The Dositheans* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976), pp. 63-69.

cluster of statements of faith shows a system of belief at the crossroad between Christianity and Judaism. And there is a viable possibility that there was an on-going debate from within the community in issues that involved the orthodoxy of the teachings of a certain Samuel deemed "treacherous." Not much more could be said about this than to work out what the last chapter may yield in this respect. There is a marked shift of emphasis from the Muslims to the Jews, particularly notable in the apocalyptic portion of the text. This might also suggest that in the authorship perspective, the eschatological wars would be joined with the Jews instead of the Muslims, that is to say, a Judaising community against Jews.

The last chapter of the *FVD* is also a résumé of the theological tenet advocated by the community of the apocalyptist. First and foremost the Vision is a literary product of Syro-Palestine origins. The Semitism one can detect throughout the text (Hezekiah, Samuel, David, *Gouzeth*; flinty rock; the tribe of *Dan*; sceptre from Judea; Ishmael) suggests that the author may have been familiar with at least one Semitic language, and his/her religious group was probably at home inside or in the vicinity of the region called *al-Shām*. That the apocalyptist was from a Judeo-Christian stock is made plain with the exclusive use of Jewish names. The absence of any doctrinal formulation, either in Christology, nor of the Godhead, does suggests strongly that the Judeo-Christian community of composition should have been holding firmly on a messianic tradition anterior to the Church Fathers teachings, but posterior to the apostolic period. The Samaritans for instance fit well the belief system of the *FVD*. As we shall see below, the mystery "three men" who will confront the antichrist might constitute a peculiar monotheistic take in the Godhead operating among men. The main protagonists are Jews confronted with the Christian truths, which the antichrist would want withheld from the Jews:

> "Then three men will go forth to expose him (and will condemn him as [a] liar and deceiver); two [of them are] from the clouds of heaven and one [is] from the earth. And they will go ahead of the Antichrist himself abusing him shouting: 'Woe to you lawless, worker of injustice and inheritor of eternal darkness.' And they will proclaim all [over] the earth shouting and declaring to the afflicted Christians: 'Listen, You sons of men! Do

> not worship him! [For] he is not the Christ, nor the God-fearing man, but he is the antichrist!'"[354]

From the book of Revelation, we learn of the "two witnesses" who will go about the world prophesying. These are two men endowed with divine powers to chastise the earth for over three years until the Beast that will come up from the Abyss overcomes them.[355] In the *FVD*, the "three men" will perform fairly similar functions, on one hand of addressing specifically the antichrist and its deception, and on another hand of stimulating the Christians' stand against the Antichrist. The distinction between the two sets of "witnesses" lies over their individual perspectives. While the former will hold the inhabitants of the earth firmly responsible of their choice, the latter will consider them definitely the victims of the Antichrist's deception. The author wished to distance his theology of the Godhead from the realm of the Christian disputation. This attitude transpires from the way the doctrine of the Godhead is translated with apocalyptic overtones such as the image of the "two witnesses," because two of the men are "from the clouds of heaven" and the third man is from earth. Moreover, the monotheistic concerns of the *FVD* are quite apparent based on the practical implication of its embryo of doctrine of the Godhead, so to speak. Presumably, the earthly man represents Jesus-Christ, so that the "two men" from the clouds of heaven refers to the Father and Holy Spirit.

If so, this reformulation of the Christian Godhead, we have in lieu of the mysterious "two witnesses" of the book of Revelation – who do harbour divine powers and yet came to be overpowered by the Beast from the Abyss – the anthropomorphic characterisation of the Godhead in the "three men." This Judeo-Christian formulation of the Godhead – which incidentally recalls the three persons of God visiting Abraham, and who become two later on in the narrative[356] – removes at once the ambiguity of the monotheistic worship practice and its figural representation of the divinity. We know for instance that the Samaritan priests' vestments were devoid of all ornament, let alone the presence of the necessary decorations relative to the representation of the object of worship around the material setting of the cult.

---

[354] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 14:1-6.
[355] See Revelation 11: 3-12.
[356] See Genesis 18:2ff; cf. Genesis 19:1, 12.

The apocalyptist paints himself as cognisant of the dreadful consequences of the loosening of the Antichrist. He does also offer the alternative situation whereby God provides appropriate resources in order to counteract the effects of accidentally loosing the Antichrist. Having first shown the Godhead as "personally" (should I say "hypostatically") involved in denouncing the misdeeds of the antichrist, the apocalyptist goes on to characterise the decisive reaction created thereafter:

> "And many Christians will run at the feet of the saints saying: 'What shall we do, O Saints? Where we Christians shall hide ourselves?' And at their (i.e., the saints} word many Christians will hide themselves in the mountains, and caves, and holes of the earth, and will be saved, so that the treacherous Samuel may not capture them."[357]

The statement that "*many Christians will run ... at the saints*" is in itself an indication that the apocalyptist acknowledges that the history of the Christian religious iconography, their place in the cultic setting, and the belief system revolving around them at the time of the writing of the *FVD* did play a decisive role in shaping the co-religionists' worldview. Saints have finally assumed the guidance of the bewildered believers. They offer a learned advice that ascetic monasticism would be salvific, and the saints are heeded. Nothing is said though as to what saint(s) among the myriads of saints specifically was/were worth following, nor is any particular teaching recommended. However, this shift in the liturgy appears to lend weight to the urgency of the situation.

As for the "treacherous Samuel," it must be the antithesis of the biblical Samuel (lit. "God hears"), which might allude to Muḥammad's claim. In Hippolytus,[358] Christians have to seek their concealment in the mountains and cave following the tyranny orchestrated by the Antichrist. There is also trace of the lost version of a *Viddui Shmuel* (Confession of Samuel) recorded in the Talmud (*B.K.* 113b), which came to be known as the *Viddui Rab*. The entry of interest there reads as follows:

> "But thou, O our God, gracious and merciful, hast striven early and late to profit us, Thou didst desire to make us act wisely. On us Thou didst bestow the sweet savours of an altar in order to justify us, the service of sacrifices in order to pardon us, and the Sanctuary of holiness to make atonement on our behalf. But we closed the abode of Thy Temple, and tore Thine altars; we extinguished the lamps of holiness, and slew the prophets of

[357] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 14:7-9.
[358] Hippolytus, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 5, p. 217.

> faithfulness, and bent and bowed down to vanity, until Thine anger grew hot against us and Thou didst forsake Thine high Abode (the Temple) because of the evil of our doings. „[359]

Such a Judaic expression of contrition demonstrates easily that the Syrian Christians were keen on using the slightest indication of their opponents' misgivings to press forward their own case. Whether R. Samuel had been a *neutralist* figure of post-Bar-Kochba revolt would have been, then, a matter of apologetic deference toward the anti-messianic Jews of Mesopotamia. For his counterpart Rab well known in Palestinian tradition, was a 7th century prominent Messianist. This suggests therefore a close connection between Christian and Jewish sectarian milieu. Eppenstein suggests that Christian influence as indicated in the *Pesikta Rabbati* was most likely to make itself felt in a time and place in which relations between Jews and Christians were cordial and intimate.[360] What may be retained here is that the liturgical setting would have facilitated the cross-cultural rapprochement between sects. What is more, in the long run, those influences would have become matter-of-fact. But, here in the *FVD*, rather than the advocacy of what should be seen as orthopraxy, it suggests that the most pressing issue was that of surviving the Antichrist by escaping from its control, as the author affirms:

> "And when the antichrist finds these Three Men preaching in the midst of the Altar,[361] he will kill them by the sword. And [the word that was] spoken by the prophet David will be fulfilled: 'Then they will offer up calves on your Altar.'"[362]

On the one hand, by God's providence the faithful will be led to a fresh revelation of the ritual sacrifice of old. That the messianic community of the apocalyptist should endorse the ritual sacrifices for which the "prophet David" was the exemplar initiator is striking enough to require some observations: (a)

---

[359] Talmud *B.K.* 113b.

[360] See discussion and suggestions of S. Eppenstein, *Monatsschrift für Geschichte des Judenthums*, vol. 55 (1911), pp. 626-28; cf. B. J. Bamberger, "A Messianic Document of the Seventh Century," in *H.U.C.A.* 15 (1940), pp. 425-31. See also Israel Abrahams, "The Lost 'Confession' of Samuel," in *H.U.C.A.* 1 (1924), pp. 377-85.

[361] *Qusiasthrinou* is deliberately employed instead of the word *bwmon* for the pagan altar; Note the possible connection with the biblical story in 1 Kings 13:2, where a prophet went up to denounce the religious practice on the rival shrine that king Jeroboam initiated: "He (i.e., the prophet) cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD: 'O altar, altar! This is what the LORD says: A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who now make offerings here, and human bones will be burned on you.'"

[362] See the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* 14:10.

the practice of the ritual animal sacrifice would have become an issue should there occur a resurgence of messianic expectations, because of the many failed messianic advents: indeed, the last chapter speaks of the "treacherous Samuel," namely, he who profess to hear from God, or be heard by God, and purporting to resume the sacrificial cult; (b) conversely, should this be an allusion to a Judeo-Christian community then the authorship of the *FVD* had buttressed the idea of a precursor liturgical practice in the face of the unknown, it suggests that the cost of "getting it wrong" might have preyed on the community's mindset. On the other hand, our "three men" of the earlier paragraphs, who were synonymous to, and interchangeable with the Godhead, appear now to be no less than the saints in effect. The play here is parallel to the biblical ambiguity that remains between the person of YHWH, the Angel of the Lord, or the angel tout court. But the very fact of the reverence given to the saints – however mysterious they remain – should be mentioned at all does comfort the credence of the hypothesis that the Judeo-Christian community that produced the *FVD* might have been a sectarian messianic group such as derived from the Khazaris who have converted to Christianity, or have become acutely acquainted with Christianity. They were in the 8th to the first half of 9th centuries the main opponent empire, only second to the Islamic empire size wise. The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel, which has been recently translated and commented by M. Henze, seems to belong to the first half of the seventh century context.[363] As Henze points out, it borrows heavily from apocryphal Hebrew traditions. Even though the lack of any historical reference does not allow for a definite dating,[364] it is still a possible candidate for the late 7th to early 8th century based on its wide collection of themes reproduced in later apocalyptic compositions. What is certain though is the fact that this apocalyptic text should come down to us in its Greek version, instead of a manuscript in one of the Semitic languages There is no clear evidence of Semitism, except a few oddities. However, there was a period – brief enough to be significant in determining the date of composition of this Vision – when Greek was the most effective means of spreading these contemporary religious compositions. Timothy and John of Damascus' body of

[363] M. Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), p. 17.
[364] M. Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), pp. 11-22.

writings are witnesses of such literary activity, which suggests the first half of the 8th century AD in the area of *al-Shām*.

The Sacredness of the City: The *Hephtalophon*.

The locus of the whole *FVD* is definitely Jerusalem, although the apocalyptist might not be an inhabitant of the Holy City, it revolves around the idealised city entitled The *Hephtalophon*. But in lieu of the defined religious images we dispose of at least the imagery of the eschatological representations. For instance, the depiction of the harangue of the Antichrist to the flinty stone, beseeching it to "believe" so that the antichrist may "turn stones into bread." Therefore, stones are thus required to believe in the Antichrist, just as men are urged to believe (unlike Moses!) in Jesus or Muhammād in their respective capacity. The story of Jesus having turned down the satanic proposition should be discounted, since Satan did enjoin Jesus to "command" rather than urge the stones to obey Him.[365] This leaves us with the concept and significance of the "flinty stone"[366] to deal with: This is a recurrent apocalyptic theme, usually featuring supernatural capability. The fact that in the *FVD* the antichrist would at all attempt to command the flinty stone suggests that the theme here is itself an interpretation of the biblical episode in the book of Daniel. In the biblical story the stone cut by God's hand had smashed the pagan statue into pieces. Then after the stone became a huge mountain – presumably the mount of Jerusalem – it filled the whole earth. But in the *FVD* instead of operating the expected miraculous feats, the flinty stone becomes the instrument of divine judgement, which all things considered, brings the Jews to discern at last the true nature of the antichrist. The 4th century Samaritan *Memar Markah* (Teaching of Markah) or later portrays the Samaritans' houses as having a *mezuzah* above the entrance, in the form of the words of the Ten Commandments engraved on a stone.[367] Although this does not appear to have

[365] See Matth. 4:3.

[366] See Revelation 2:17, where a divine(ly given) names is written therein, which white stone has powers to overcome…; It is also a function of the Holy Spirit, one of sanctioning the work of men (Heb. 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart")

[367] M. Levy-Rubin (tr.), *The Continuato of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū l-Farh al-Sāmirī al-Danafī* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2002), p. 48: Note that it is a mole in the back of Muhammād that confirms his prophethood.

been used as talisman, there is nonetheless an esoteric approach to the mezuzah type stone used for the purpose of religious piety. In the book of Habakuk, the prophet taunts the worshipper to have the lifeless stone waken up so that it might give some guidance.[368] But the most interesting of the biblical references that can be related to this entry is in a vision reported to Daniel there:

> "a rock was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were broken to pieces at the same time and became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept them away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth."[369]

The Theme of Three Sons of Hagar.

During the battle, as the legend goes, the Muslims were simply out-numbered. The defeated Muslims had retreated into the Hijāz. But the three nominated leaders were all martyred, notably al-Jaᶜfar ibn Abī Ṭālib, the "winged martyr of Islam," and the elder brother of ᶜAlī, was also killed in the battle of Mūᶜtah in AD 629, and Khālid ibn Walīd (later nicknamed: "the sword of God") was chosen as the new leader. This was his first command but he realised the value of saving lives as opposed to seeing the whole Muslim army slaughtered, as they were out-numbered sixty-six to one. It is regarded as a victory in itself to have even returned home with the army alive and intact, which is what Khālid Ibn Walīd did. Mūᶜtah had been his first encounter with the Romans but it was not to be his last. It should be noted that Mūᶜtah had eventually become a site of Islamic pilgrimage since a shrine had been erected over al-Jaᶜfar's tomb.[370]

Ever since that debacle, Muḥammad was anxious to repair this damage to Islam. Indeed, Muḥammad had prophesied that the Muslims would conquer *al-Shām*.[371] Three years later (AD 632) despite his failing health and no impeding threat from the Syrian border, the Prophet urged ᶜUsāma, a youth of 21, the son of Zayd ibn Ḥaritha, the first of three martyred commanders of the Muslim army

---

[368] Hab. 2:12.
[369] Dan. 2:34-35.
[370] It is very much the equivalent of the Christian *Martyrion*. Here however, the shrine was thought of as a museum or a site for the remembrance of the first Muslim/Byzantine war rather than a Muslim devotional facility.
[371] See S.D. Goitein, *Stidies in Islamic History and Institutions*, (Leiden:E.J. Brill, 1968), pp. 140-48.

at Mūᶜtah, to lead the expedition in order to restore the reputation of Islam.[372] The whole story set the principle of the Muslim historiography in that the paradigm of the artistic expression of the Muslim history often overshadowed the real issues at the background of a given episode.[373] Here, it is well within the limits of possibility that the most urgent issue of the divine commission, however perplexing, was staged on top of the fundamental issue of legitimate succession in Islam.

Thus, the three martyrs of Islam, namely Zayd ibn Haritha, al-Jaᶜfar ibn Abī Ṭālib, and Abdallāh ibn Rawāḥah (and Khālid ibn Walīd, the fourth hero) were the personages alluded to in the Vision of Daniel. Although, Valens (Walīd), Axiaphar (al-Jaᶜfar), and Morphassar are rather cryptically representing the former group of Muslim martyrs, this construction leaves little doubt what the codification implied. First, these are the names of the earliest recorded leaders in the earliest Muslim invasions, out of which only these three names have formed the lore of Muslim legends about the early Muslim exploits of war against the Romans. One plausible reason for this might be the *gematria* technique consisting of ciphering the actual figure behind its numeral equivalent, out of which only the Prophet was to be attributed the number 666 of the eschatological Beast. But Rosenthal's study contributes also the present hypothesis in that the *khabar*, or *ayyām* techniques may be in use in this apocalypse. Given that the author of the work revisits a set of well-established events, which are then cast into his own contemporaneous situation, so that the *vaticina* may be rendered even more realistic, the technique does also press upon the cryptography of the message. In other words, he who knows the historical facts may uncover the mystery of the present time.

The *FVD* speaks of "*...the three sons of Agar will go forth,*" as a representation of the signs of the end of time. This description overshadows the main event,

---

[372] When some objections were raised such as the unfortunate timing, or the scorching heat, etc, Muhammād came to cursing those who disobeyed or reneged against the wisdom of his decision. This incident is recorded in Islam as the first ever cursing from the Prophet, which illustrates the precedence of legitimate succession over decision-making in Islam.

[373] On the *Khabar* technique, see F. Rosenthal, *History of the Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968), p. 66. It consists: "of a well-rounded description of a single event... it does not imply any fixed point in time, nor is it ever restricted to mean an organically connected series of events. Each *khabar* is complete in itself and tolerates no reference to any kind of supplementary material. In its formulation there is preference for the dramatic situation and colour as against sober fact. It is, then, primarily an artistic form of expression."

that is, the advent of Muhammād in the first place. Second, the *FVD* states that the "*thorn-bush which holds back the sons of Agar will dry out.*" As a result, the nation of Babylon (i.e., Persia at the time) and the sons of Agar will go forth unhindered. How exactly the so-called "mighty thorn-bush" (Gr. ἡ βάτος ἡ κρατουσα)[374] had prevented the invasions so far, seems to relate to a historical setting unmistakable enough to not warrant any further detail. However, the very usage of the term *βάτος* in this context would hardly go unnoticed had it not been for what *βάτος* stood to imply at the time, namely, the natural barrier against Islam that was the Mediterranean sea. The term *ἡ βάτος ἡ κρατουσα* is thus translated because the qualifying adjective *ἡ κρατουσα*[375] implies the expression of divine power. What might be suggested here is that, during the messianic times, when the enemy of God's people tramples on the Holy Land, God will provide an abundance of leadership and chiefs, who will oppose the invaders.[376] Such limitless is also the theme of Amos 1:3, in the reverse: it is about the limitless of Damascus' sins. The Hebrew expression "*seven... even eight...*" Here, the ancient expression of messianic times – that of abundance of wine and oil – is turned into something of the natural element (a liquid) in which God reveals himself from, as in the case of the burning-bush (a fire) of Moses. The threat of a successful Arab siege of Constantinople could be what context he had in mind, which if proven, suggests that the term "*mighty thorn-bush*" was the personification of the supernatural protector of Constantinople. So, what the author of the apocalypse set to do is that the messianic norms were evoked – the

---

[374] Ἡ Βάτος is the word in the vision that Moses had of God, see W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958). In the New Testament, it is the symbol of unfruitfulness (fr. Baton). But the word *Βάτος* (only in the masculine form) is attested in apocryphal writings in the sense of bath (Heb.: בַּת); cf. 2Ezra 7:22, where *Βάτος* is used as a measure for liquids, of the abundance (bath) of wine or oil, without limit. In 1Enoch 10:19, however, the abundance of wine has the meaning of the advent of the messianic age. In the Targum on Isaiah 5: 10 and the Targum on Ezekiel 45:11 (cf. its plural form בִּיתְאִין in Targ. 1Kings 7:26), it is the word בִּיתָא = bath that is used, in the sense of measure of abundance. See M. Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature* (New York: The Judaica Press, 1989), vol. 1, pp. 168, 200.

[375] Gr. κρατος = "Mighty," "Lord"; παντοκρατος = "Almighty."

[376] See Micah 5: 1-6 (NIV), esp. verses 4-6: "He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace. When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, *we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.* They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod with drawn sword. He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he invades our land and marches into our borders."

concatenation of the burning bush of Moses, with the advent of the messianic age – in order for the familiar repertoire to be "deformed" and "re-codified" into new norms. As a result, the whole exercise serves to bring about a transformed understanding of eschatology. The "mighty thorn-bush" is a literary device remarkably at the antipodes of the Constantinopolitan Mariology, may be standing in contra distance to the belief in the salvific powers of icons and relics. According to the theory of reading put forward by Iser:

> "literary communication differs from other forms of communication in that those elements of the sender's repertoire which are familiar to the reader, through their application in real life situations, lose their validity when transplanted into literary text. And it is precisely this loss of validity which leads to the communication of something new."[377]

This theory is aptly demonstrated in this apocalyptic text in that the ancient forms of communication assume new meaning, even against its original meaning. Former *topoi* of strictly Jewish stock are expropriated, then forcefully appropriated in a completely new sectarian Christian setting – e.g. Asia Minor and/or Armenia[378] – so as to accommodate the present time. The apocalyptic text precludes neither the institution of the church clergy,[379] nor a role to a female figure in its messianic scheme,[380] but that the Antichrist is born of her. The emperor along with his two sons does play the most prominent function of human agency. The last chapter of the apocalypse, which speaks of the treacherous Samuel whose intent on making many Christians captives, who resort to hiding "*themselves in the mountains, and caves, and holes of the earth.*" The statement suggests the situation in which empress Theodora in AD 844 – already Leo V fiercely persecuted the Paulicians in an attempt to refute the accusation of Paulicianism that he was charges of – had betrayed the long-term Byzantine harmony with the Paulicians. Bury had commented about this persecution as "*the greatest political disaster of the ninth century.*"[381] I suggest that the likely community in which the author of this *FVD* might have lived,

---

[377] W. Iser, *The Act of of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. 83.
[378] From the internal evidence, see in Vision of Daniel the whole of chapter 2: Armenia and Asia Minor are the battleground of the eschatological war with Islam..
[379] See Vision of Daniel Ch. 5:12.
[380] See Vision of Daniel ch. 11:8-14, about a virgin girl.
[381] I. Bekker (ed.), Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia* (Bonn, 1838), pp. 165-66; J.B. Bury, *The Late Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene* (London: Macmillan, 1889), vol. 2, see the whole of chapter 14.

such as disenfranchised religious milieu as the Paulicians or Athinganoi in Asia Minor, have shaped a peculiar theology at the crossroad between Byzantium and the Palestinian Judeo-Christianity.

Al-Shām had come to represent the area comprising Palestine, the Lebanon, and Syria. The word *al-Shām* means "the North" or "the Levant," with regard to the Hijāz.[382] The whole extent became the object of mystical beliefs regarding the *Holy Land*, because Abraham wandered in those regions in his quest for God; because the area covered the expected place of occurrence of the Last Judgement; Jews had customarily transported their dead into the area to inter them in the "sacred soil," because Resurrection will take place there, or in Jerusalem; the Christian ascetics, and Anchorites elected to roam *al-Shām* in the hope that their life of privation and austerity might avert punishment and bring about salvation.

Possible Origins and Date of Composition of the *FVD*.

After the preliminary listing of the possible context of the community that generated the theology peculiar to the *FVD*, it is now time to conjecture as to the likely origins and date of composition of that type of apocalyptic treatise.

Just as Enoch-Metatron is crowned in a king of God's double in *3 Enoch* 12, the legitimacy of the world ruler is asserted, i.e., the Christian Emperor is so "temporarily crowned" as suggested by his subsequent handing over of his crown to God. Here the imperial crown represents the divine "*wisdom heaped upon wisdom, understanding upon understanding...more than all the denizens of the heights.*"[383] This crown is also "*a crown bearing the letters of the divine Name,*"[384] such as the "lesser YHWH." But the royal crown is duly handed over to God at Judgment Day. In contrast to the Jewish eschatological scheme, the Christian apocalyptists have sought to circumvent the "divinity doubling" inconvenience associated with the Metatron title into a judicious instance of doctrinal amendment: Any claim to Messiahship other than that that asserts Jesus,' and any stand on orthodoxy outside the Scriptural one is dubbed

---

[382] H. Lammens & C.E. Bosworth, "al-Sha'm," in *EI*, vol. 9, pp. 261-73; M. Gil, *A History of Palestine 634-1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 2.

[383] *3 Enoch* 8:2; *Old Testament Pseudepigraphia*, vol. 1, p. 263.

[384] *3 Enoch* 11:12-13; *Old Testament Pseudepigraphia*, vol. 1, p. 265.

deceptive on the grounds that it causes the Jews to convert to Christianity without renouncing the old dispensation.

Note that, it was at around AD 654 that a certain Constantine, nicknamed Silvanius, founded the famous sect of the Paulicians in Armenia.[385] This heresy[386] was so referred to, and located particularly in Asia Minor, as the heresy of the Paulicians (*Paulikianoi*, formerly known as the Manichees),[387] Athinganoi[388] and the Samaritans,[389] heirs of the Montanistes and Novatians;[390] Meanwhile the theme of the crown bearing letters of the divine names is turned into the locus of unveiling secrets of the darkness, namely, the apocalypsis of their cryptic meaning.

The Iconoclast emperors protected the Paulicians. Conybeare goes as far as to regard the first Iconoclast emperors (Leo III and successors) as practically Paulicians. They became a persecuted community toward the end of the 8th century, and they took refuge in the Taurus mountains.[391] The Paulicians rejected the religious use of icons and relics (crosses, images of saints and the Virgin, the wearing of monastic habit, etc.), the baptism of infants. Most importantly, Paulicianism was an Armenian sect, which rejected the whole ecclesiastical system. It is also worth noting that from this eastern corner of the

---

[385] C. Conybeare, *The Key of Truth, a Manual of the Paulician Church in Armenia* (Oxford, 1898).

[386] See the early 7th century résumé of Timothy of Constantinople, *De receptione haereticorum*, in PG 86, col.25.

[387]

[388] Attested presence in Phrygia and Lycaonia, Asia Minor, in C. Mango, *Chronicle of Theophanes*, AM 6303, AD 810/11, p. 671. These sects practiced "*prophecies and rites... and their magic. For he (the priest of that sect) tied an ox... he had it slaughtered... and performed certain incantations... Those heretics were given leave during his (i.e., the emperor Nicephoros) reign to enjoy the rights of citizenship without fear so that many of the more frivolous kind became corrupted by their illicit doctrines.*" The Judeo-Christian character of this Phrygian sect is apparent from the fact that they were alternatively tolerated and persecuted by both iconoclast and iconophile emperors; see also AM 6304, AD 811/12, p. 678. On the Judaizing sect so called the Athinganoi, see J. Starr, "An Eastern Christian Sect: the Athinganoi," in *Harvard Theological Review* 29 (1936), pp. 93-106. The Athinganoi (Gr. "touch not") practiced all the Law of the Old Testament dispensation while observing baptism and adhering to the Messiah-ship of Jesus. They seriously threatened to bridge the Jewish and Christian divide, so that the patriarch Nicephorus wished to have them annihilated altogether.

[389] J. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 64-69; on their existence in the 7th century, see P. Crone & M. Cook, *Hagarism*, pp. 14, 165, n. 42.

[390] In the setting of Judeo-Christian circles during the early Muslim period, this would alienate both Judaisers and Christian-Jews alike, and constitute another heresy, see G. Dagron, "Juadaïser,". *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991), pp. 359-80; J. Gouillard, "L'héresie dans l'Empire byzantin des origins au XIIe siècle," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965), pp. 299-324, esp. pp. 310-12.

[391] A.H. Newman, *A Manual of Church History* (Philadelphia, American Baptist Publication Society, 1900-1903), vol. 2, p. 381.

Byzantine Empire, the iconoclast emperors, the so-called "Isaurians" have originated. They were favourable to the Paulicians in order to buttress their own anti-icon policy, but this attitude would have been no more than a political expediency. With regard to the connections between Paulicianism and Iconoclasm, Martin comments that it "*was never more than casual and accidental.*"[392] We are told that this sect spread to Asia Minor in AD 754/56 through the armies of Syrians and Armenians whom Constantine V (AD 740-775) had transferred to Thrace around Phillipolis, from Theodosioupolis and Melitene.[393] A great number of them had already settled in Constantinople. The Paulicians' resettlement in Anatolia served to protect the empire from the Bulgars and Avars, and their usefulness even with regard to the Arabs remained true until AD 844. When Empress Theodora had 100000 of them massacred, the rift caused the Paulicians to make common cause with the Muslims against the Byzantine iconophiles. Soon after, Joseph (d. 875) founded communities all over Asia Minor, which became an independent force to be reckoned with, when they mounted an expedition against Byzantium and reached up to Ephesus in AD 871. According to George the Monk, Paulicians were Monophysites, which amalgam with the Syrians on one hand, and the Manichaeans on the other hand, may have resulted in an Anatolian sect analogous to a Judeo-Christian iconoclastic community, and adept of apocalyptic prophecy. As to the apparent Monophysite stance of this sect, it must derive from the Syrian component of the settlers. Like the Adoptionists in Spain because of the Syrian contingent in the 8th century, the emphasis on the humanity of Jesus was such that there was no such thing as Incarnation, but Christ was an angel sent into the world by God, and his real mother was the heavenly Jerusalem. This may explain why there is hardly a doctrinal issue alluded to in the *FVD*, other than the Stone worshiping. Accordingly, Christ was considered to be in his humanity, not as the "natural," but as the "adoptive" Son of God. He was "only metaphorically" Son of God. They honoured not the Cross, but the Book of the "*Gospel and Apostles.*"[394] George also says of the Isaurian emperor Constantine V (Copronymus) that: "*He*

[392] E.J. Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (London: The MacMillan Co., 1978), p. 275-78.
[393] C. Mango, Theophanes, AM 6247 (AD 754/55), p. 593.
[394] See Bonwetsch, *Realencyclopadie für protestatische Theologie* vol. XV, p.p. 50-53.

was not a Christian (God forbid) but a Paulician, or to speak more fitly an idolater, a worshipper of devils," and further:

> "Those who uttered such blasphemies (e.g., calling on the remains of Constantine V, and claiming that he 'had arisen on his horse and was setting out to fight the Bulgarians- he who dwells in Hell in the company of demons') were Christians only in semblance, but in truth were Paulicians who, unable to make manifest their own loathsome doctrines, seduced the ignorant by this device, extolling the Jewish-minded Constantine as a prophet and a victor and embracing his impiety so as to subvert the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ."[395]

This last clause may echo the particular Christology of the sect, namely, that Jesus-Christ was Lord, but nonetheless he was a creature.[396] Eventually, sometime during Leo V's reign (AD 813-20), a military campaign in Anatolia seems to have scattered those close-knight communities of Paulicians, Athinganoi, or Montanists all over Asia Minor and beyond.[397]

The Messianic Rulership:

The story of the crown that the emperor would hand over to Christ came probably from the legend of the alleged incident that occurred when Jovian refused to be crowned with the Emperor Julian (the apostate)'s crown, by the hand of his soldiers, because the former had bowed down to idols; the emperor ordered instead that the crown should be hanged on the Cross, and prayed saying:

> "Puisque ta divinité m'a appelé à la couronne impériale, moi qui suis pécheur et coupable, accorde-moi, dans ta bonté, que je reçoive cette couronne de ta main bénie (et) pleine de grâce, afin que je sois glorifié par toi entre tous les royaumes de la terre."[398]

Having thus prayed, Jovian bowed the head before the Cross in reverence, upon which "*la couronne de l'empire descendit et fut placée sur sa tête sans que la*

---

[395] C. de Boor, *Georgii Monachi Chronicon* (Leipzig, 1904), vol. II, pp. 751-52; cf. C. Mango (ed.), *Chronicle of Theophanes*, AM 6305 AD 812/13, p. 685:

[396] For an overview of the Paulician doctrines, see the testimony of Armenian writer John of Oznun (~AD 730) in F.C. Conybeare (ed.), *Key of Truth* (Oxford, 1898), pp. 86, 115.

[397] See J.B. Bury, *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil I (A.D. 802-867)* (London: McMillan & Co., 1912), p. 277. On the Montanists being confused or equated to the Jews, see V.N. Beneshevitch, "On the History of the Jews in Byzantium from the 6th to the 10th Century (in Russian!), in *Yevreiskaya Misl'* 2 (1926), p. 318 (quoted from A Sharf, "The Jews, the Montanists, and the Emperor Leo III," in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 56 (1966), pp. 37-46).

[398] Quoted verbatim from F. Nau, "Methodius – Clement – Andronicus..." in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 451.

main d'aucun homme l'eût touchée."[399] The same imperial crown is to be handed over to Christ to mark the beginning of his world dominion. The whole saga is thus recycled in the context of the expected end of the Arab dominion. The Julian apostasy is played over so as contrast his (heretic) piety with the (orthodox) reverence to the Cross, which practice alone, had the power to restore the divine favour. The supernatural crowning of the Emperor of the Christendom bears the authority of divine acquiescence over the Christian worship of (or under) the Cross. Such themes as the imperial crown had become in apocalyptic compositions the favourite means of validating one doctrinal position rather than another. This Danielic theme is reproduced in the Syriac pseudo-Methodius' description of the Antichrist:

> "Sa tête (est) une flame de feu. Son œil droit contient du sang; son œil gauche est d'un bleu azure ayant deux pupilles; ses paupières sont blanches;[400] sa lèvre du bas est grande. Sa cuisse droite est grèle; ses pieds sont larges; le grand doigt de son pied est brisé."[401]

Another theme that is found in the *FVD* is the scheme of the duration of the four empires, the Syriac pseudo-Methodius specifies the year AD 694 as the end of the reign of the sons of Ishmael, sons of Hagar the Egyptian [slave] (*υιοι Ισμαηλ υιοι Αγαρ τησ αιγυπτιας*).[402] From the year of their entering Jerusalem (AD 637), their dominion will last seven weeks of years (i.e., 49 years = AD 686). According to the scheme, the empire of the Arabs will start to decline from the mid-683s. The Roman Empire will succeed the Arabs[403] and the Roman Empire will last 208 years (to ~ AD 909); then after will the Huns and the Antichrist come right before the millennium.[404]

---

[399] Quoted verbatim from F. Nau, "Methodius – Clement – Andronicus..." pp. 415-71, esp. 451; See discussion below on the crown.

[400] See discussion on *shi 'ur qoma*; Here, the Ethiopic recension (8th century) of the *Testament en Galilée* has: "... son œil gauche est mort, les deux pupilles de ses yeux sont blanches dans ses paupières..." (*Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 9, p. 183).

[401] F. Nau, "Methodius – Clement – Andronicus..." in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. 462.

[402] F. Nau, "Methodius – Clement – Andronicus..." in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71.

[403] The evidence that the end of the Arabs would have arrived will be provided by the following sign: an unbridled horse will bridle (*fegouda*) itself, by picking up the bridle made out the nails of the crucifixion of Jesus. In over words, this supernatural happening will signal the injunction to conquer or (should we say) to repossess, as the fulfilment of the word of the prophet, which said: "On that day, the horse bridle will be called 'Holiness to the Lord' (Zach. 14:20)."

[404] See 990s as the end year.

merciful, all compassionate;"[408] "toward the Friday evening;"[409] "from the rising sun (to) as far as the west;"[410] "it is not by my hand."[411]

Its use of Septuagint Greek as noted by Zervos[412] and the sparse application of Semitic proper names and expressions suggest that the authorship of the *FVD* was acquainted with a prophetic milieu harbouring some Semitic ideology (e.g. exodus from Egypt; promised land; Messiah-king; etc.) where Greek was still the predominant religious language.[413] A Judeo-Christian sect in the Fertile Crescent,[414] or in Asia Minor,[415] or even Egypt[416] would not be inconceivable possibilities. Zervos dates this apocalypse to the 9th century AD.[417] But his identification of the reign of Irene may be misleading. It would serve better the purpose of defining the boundary of iconoclasm as the definitive criteria for determining the community that composed the *FVD*. Bekker had suggested a date around AD 750,[418] as he considered the Abbasid Revolution as the key eschatological event. He is right in identifying the Caliph Marwān II as the last Muslim ruler, that is, *Lasmarini*, but fails to identify the first century ᶜAbbāsid governorship in Egypt as having been extended to the signs of Endtime. In this respect, the hypothesis of the existence of two layers (or more) of writing as advocated by Meinardus[419] is valuable in that he had attempted to dissect two stages of composition of the *FVD*: the first running up to the early ᶜAbbāsids, and the second phase that Meinardus identifies with the Fatimids period is somewhat arbitrary. This is what Meinardus says had made him change his mind:

---

[408] See *The Fourteenth Vision of* Daniel, ch. 5:1.
[409] See *The Fourteenth Vision of* Daniel, ch. 5:8.
[410] See *The Fourteenth Vision of* Daniel, ch. 6:1.
[411] See *The Fourteenth Vision of* Daniel, ch. 9:2.
[412] G.T. Zervos, "Apocalypse of Daniel: A New Translation & Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1983), vol. 1, pp. 755-70.
[413] E.g. the Montanists, Athinganoi, Karaites.
[414] The Christian Syriac recension might have informed the Greek one, the former being an early 7th century composition, see M. Henze, *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), pp. 11-22.
[415] K. Berger, *Griechische Daniel-Diegese*, p. 9.
[416] As a possibility suggested by G.T. Zervos, "Apocalypse of Daniel.." p. 757.
[417] G.T. Zervos, "Apocalypse of Daniel," p. 756, n. 8.
[418] C.H. Bekker, "Das Reich der Ishmaeliten im koptischen Danielbuch," in *Nachrichten der Königlischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaft zu Göttingen*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse 1 (1916), pp. 7-57.
[419] O. Meinardus, "A Commentary on the XIVth Vision of Daniel," in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 32 (1966), pp. 394-449; *idem*, "New Evidence on the XIVth Vision of Daniel from the History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church," in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968), pp. 281-309.

over the seven-hilled (city)." However, the description in chapter 7 attributing cruelties, injustices, and perversions to Constantine IV is in conflict with the MS B translation of Zervos, where in chapter 6 the same ruler from the north corresponds to Leo IV, who was known as the "Khazar", because he was the son of Constantine V and a prince of Khazaria, north of Byzantium.[421] This suggests that this recension MS M may be posterior to MS B, which is to suggest a date after AD 804.[422] After AD 820, those aforementioned religious communities in Asia Minor virtually ceased to exist as monolithic groups, despite a short recovery brought about by Joseph (e.g. AD 871).

As to the place of composition, the northern Asia Minor would be a strong candidate, owing to the extreme geo-political fluidity that was prevalent there, as the likely place of composition of the *FVD*. A monolithic ethnic group might have been at the crossroad between Byzantium, *al-Sham*, and Egypt in the east, while overlooking the events in the first half of 9th century southern Egypt on one hand, and the rise of the Frankish kingdom in western Europe on the other hand, the authorship of the *FVD* might have exploited such a vantage point to draw from so many early Judeo-Semitic traditions,[423] along with the 7th to 8th century apocalyptic material available,[424] translating them into the decisive events of the early 9th century.[425] The present writer would like to suggest that the *FVD* is a product of the sectarian milieu in Asia Minor.[426] Such community required remaining independent enough from the Byzantine tutelage and yet very much attuned to the Judeo-Christian eschatology (it relies heavily on the imagery of the book of Revelation).[427] In addition it was a religious community well versed in the tradition of collecting prophetic sayings for the interpretation of historical events (e.g. *gematria* on the number 666), with an undisguised purpose of defining the long-term relation to its neighbours.

---

[421] See G.T. Zervos, "Apocalypse of Daniel (Ninth Century A.D.). A New Translation and Interpretation," in *Pseudepigrapha*, p. 766, n. 6b.
[422] Zervos dates his MS to AD 802, pp. 756-57; so also K. Berger, pp. 36f.
[423] E.g. The Book of Revelation of John, *1Enoch*, *4Ezra* and *2(Syriac)Baruch*.
[424] E.g. *The Syriac Alexander Romance*, and the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius*.
[425] K. Berger suggests the Greek Island itself, *Griechische Daniel-Diegese*, p. 9; Zervos is definite about Constantinople as the place of composition of the *FVD*, "Apocalypse of Daniel," p. 757.
[426] So also, Berger.
[427] G.T. Zervos, "Apocalypse of Daniel." p. 759.

> "In volume XXXIII... I published 'A Commentary...' in which I advanced the theory that this document (i.e. the *FVD*), which reflects in apocalyptic terminology the end of the an Islamic dynasty, pertaining to the fall of the two dynasties, namely the Umayyads and the Fatimids. In fact, the problem of identification of the persons and events, which are described in the apocalypse, has led to several suggestions and alternatives.... We are now in the fortunate position, however, to have received final confirmation to the problem of the identity of the Islamic dynasty, which is referred to in our document. The 'fourth beast'... and the persons and events, which are described in the verses 23-77 are to be historically identified with the rise, the reign and the decline of the Fatimid Caliphate."[420]

The theological motive of the authorship of the *FVD* was that the worship of icons was idolatry, the likes of which that had brought about, in the first place, the eschatological wars of the last two centuries, or so. Simultaneously, the hypothesis of Meinardus suggests most convincingly that a *terminus post quem* in the death of Marwān II would be a useful starting point. The reason for this is in the fact that the *FVD* is clearly presenting the event as ushering in a period of hardship and calamity not previously witnessed. If so, the composition of the *FVD* could not be far too removed – namely, after iconoclasm had been defeated – from the neighbourhood of the Nubian kingdom at the height of its power. Otherwise the *FVD* would have surely expressed the advent of another messianic age reflecting the new geo-political configuration, which seems not the case here. However, the most likely community of origin of the *FVD* would have strong Judaic leaning, possibly from the pen of a Jew under the guise of an iconoclast Christian. Owing to the mention of the swaying of the imperial dominion to Rome, the rise at Jerusalem of the Antichrist who would reign in Jerusalem, this recension is evidently aware of the favourable treatment of the Jews in the kingdom of Charlemagne (d. AD. 814) and his successors, a feature that is not present in the MS B. The fact that Charlemagne died without fulfilling this expectation suggests that the year AD 814 should qualify as a possible *terminus ante quem* for the composition of the *FVD*. The present writer would consider for the composition of the *FVD* the date of AD 843 as a firm *terminus ante quem*, which marks the end of iconoclasm. In chapter 8, Irene is unmistakably portrayed as: "***after him*** (i.e. Constantine VI) ***a woman will reign***

[420] O. Meinardus, "New Evidence on the XIVth Vision of Daniel from the History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church," in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968), pp. 281-309.

In the *FVD* there is trace of the concept of concealment of the messianic king who is hidden, but supposedly dead, and who is set to wake up at the prompt of some eschatological mission:

> "And the Lord will rouse up an emperor of the Romans, (whom people say was probably dead, and useful for nothing) whom people think he died many years ago. For (this reason) the Lord preserves (him) within the land of the people of Persia and the Syrian nations, whose name (begins with) the letter K of the alphabet. This one will appear in the Seven-hilled (city) toward the Friday evening."[405]

It is fair to say that the so-called Emperor of the Romans that he is identified as "K" for Constantine the Great *redivivus*. But the narrative makes it plain that it is Constantine V who is meant. This seems to be a common thread in the apocalypticism of the period to have the namesake hero of the past history to be operating in the present day and age. Here, the figure of Constantine the Great is made to interfere in the realm of the living, as to revive the spirit of *grandeur* that had characterised his leadership. Specifically though, that Constantine is predicted to "appear in the Seven-hilled (city) toward the Friday evening," where the expression is construed as an anticipation of the re-conquest of Jerusalem in the near future. It is almost similar to the legendary Muslim account of Maslama entering Constantinople during the year AD 717-18.[406]

Conclusion:

The *FVD* appears to have undergone an overlaying of new apocalyptic themes on the layer of the Heraclean-Alexander apocalyptic tradition. The authorship of the *FVD* appears to have a strong Judean background owing to the Semitic elements therein; yet, this Greek text is at odds with the "tribe of Dan," as though in contra distinction to the other tribes of Israel. One could add the fact that the authorship of the *FVD* is iconoclast, does lend support for a Judeo-Christian milieu of composition. In *dār al-Islām*, given some oddities of Semitic origins such as: "who is by name Wali;"[407] the use of Quranic formula: "all

[405] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, 5: 5-8, p. II.
[406] M. Canard, "Les expeditions Arabes contre Constantinopole dans l'histoire et dans la légende," in *Journal Asiatique* 208 (1926), pp. 80-102, esp. pp. 99ff.
[407] See *The Fourteenth Vision of* Daniel, ch. 1:4.

We have seen that the context of the protracted confrontation between *dār al-Islām* and the Byzantium in Asia Minor had had a direct effect on the religious communities of that region. In the north, around Armenia, what could be termed as a Judaic Empire of sort, had managed to effectively put to the challenge the might of the Muslim dominion. Other religious communities – Phrygians, Athinganoi, Paulicians, etc – as well had contributed to the shaping of the Anti-Muslim ideology in Asia Minor. By contrast, it was on the opposite side of the divide that Islam was bequeathed with a new impetus, thanks to the Syrian jurists who redefined the early concept of *jihād*. As such the *FVD* was the answer to the new conceptualisation of the Islamic *jihād*.

Throughout the *FVD*, the figure of Heraclius pervades the eschatological scenario, even though he is never cited explicitly. It may be inferred that an earlier manuscript would have been updated with a set of new speculative materials. In the process, such materials would have been widely circulated, and would have crossed over from one sect to another.

A Short Description of the Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn (*ASQ*):

This *ASQ* is an Arabic manuscript found in the MS Paris n. 150, fol. 20-31, dating from AD 1606. It had been edited and translated in French by J. Zadieh in 1917.[1] There is under the same name a Coptic hagiography entitled *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun*[2] that has been edited and translated recently by Alcock.[3] There is also a Portuguese edition of the Ethiopic recension of *The Life of Samuel* by Pereira.[4] As Zadieh has pointed out the Arabic of the *ASQ* is not literal, but relates to some dialectal peculiarity, confined possibly to the monastic environment of Qalamūn itself, which however may or not in the present writer's opinion reflect the earliest characteristics of the arabisation of Egypt. Zadieh has inferred, from the diacritical features in particular of the text, that the apocalypse must have been written at the beginning of the 8th century, alleging that: "*Ce sermon est donc ancien, car le copte a été vite supplanté.*"[5] There is evidence, however, to suggest that the Copts held staunchly to their mother tongue at least as late as the 11th century AD, but this also is no proof that the Coptic resistance was uniform.[6]

F. Nau confidently believed that the *ASQ* "*est la traduction d'un document copte du VIIIe siècle dont on retrouvera peut-être quelques fragments au Faïoum.*"[7] The irony of the matter is that this apocalypse, which champions the preservation of the Coptic language and culture, should have survived only in Arabic. The Arabic of the *ASQ* is hard to follow, unconventionally repetitive, and un-necessarily long. The *ASQ* consists of two parts: the main part comes in the form of a summons to resist the acculturation of Egypt into the Arabic Islamic culture. It contains historical socio-religious data often corroborated by

---

[1] J. Zadieh, "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de deir-el-Qalamoun," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 374-404.

[2] Hereafter, the *LSK*.

[3] See Introduction in A. Alcock (ed. & tr.), *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983).

[4] M.F.M.E. Pereira, *Vida do Abba Samuel* (Lisbonne, 1894).

[5] J. Zadieh, "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de deir-el-Qalamoun," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 374-404; F. Nau, "Note sur l'Apocalypse de Samuel," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 405-07, esp. p. 405.

[6] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, p. 121: A Church "report was written down in Coptic and Arabic." See discussion below (papyri evidences of Copto-Arabic bilingualism; the Sudanese model, etc.).

[7] F. Nau, "Note sur l'Apocalypse de Samuel," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 405-07.

other historical sources. The last, but shorter portion is apocalyptic in the proper sense of the term. It yields far less useful information.

The Person and Spirituality of Samuel of Qalamūn:

Samuel of Qalamūn (c. AD. 597-695) lived most of his adult life during the early Islamic period.[8] We learn from the *LSK* that he has been made captive by the marauding Berbers (i.e., Libyan nomads), before being sold as slave at Siwa, and for three years he was coerced, unsuccessfully, into ungodly behaviour. As a result of his steadfastness he was endowed with miracle working powers, as a crowning of the divine calling made to him earlier during a visit that the Angel of God paid to him in a small church. In his prayer of acceptance Samuel professes his allegiance to the will of the Lord, saying: *"I enter into your dwelling place and I kneel down in the place in which Your Holy [divine] feet have stood."*[9] Asceticism was thus the way *par excellence*, which bestowed on Anbā[10] Samū'īl the right to "inherit land and seed" as it is attested in the words of the Angel as follows:

> "The Lord has made this land over to you and your heirs, for you have renounced marriage and children of the body. The Lord has given you instead spiritual children. The Lord has blessed you with faithful elders and orthodox bishops on this mountain."[11]

The so-called " spiritual inheritance" became altogether the foundation of this Coptic community's reverence for Samuel in that the blessing was eternally bestowed upon his followers. In the *LSK*, an entry asserts that after his mentor's death (i.e., Agathos), the spirit of the disciple (i.e., Samuel) was *"redoubled... like [in the instance of] Elijah and Elisha, and he (i.e., Samuel) inherited*

---

[8] Given that the composition of the Life of Samuel should fairly be placed prior to the Apocalypse of the same name, the dating suggested by F. Nau needs be pulled up toward the mid-8th century AD. Cf. F.J. Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic...*, p. 267.

[9] In A. Alcock, "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn," in *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), pp. 321-45, esp. p. 345, n. 93, A. Alcock reports that the Coptic version reads: "I shall go into Your House and worship Your Holy Temple." This is reminiscent of the *maqām Ibrāhīm*, whereby the steps of the patriarch had become objects of worship in their own rights. Moreover, such reverence to "holy places" is now justified on the grounds that God have manifested Himself, or His voice had been heard there. Should we retain the significance of the Coptic rendering, this suggests that the "worship of temples" was becoming an issue requiring specific authoritative warrant. Here, it is the appearance of an Angel sufficed.

[10] The present writer will be using the title Anbā instead of Apa or Abba as often quoted in the scholarly literature; likewise for Qalamūn and Kalamun. This is due to the Coptic origins of these words and the different systems of transliteration scholars have used in studying this subject. Where otherwise, it will be only for reasons of consistency with the quotation.

[11] A. Alcock, "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn," in *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), pp. 321-45, esp. p. 345.

eternity."[12] An Arabic Jacobite Synaxarion speaks of Samuel as follows:

> "And this father spoke many exhortations (*mawāᶜiẓ*) and treatises (*maqālāt*) and prophesied (*tanabba'a*) about the coming of this nation (*al-'umma*), which is the *muhājarin*."[13]

Thus, miracles, reverence, asceticism, and eternity were agglomerated around the exalted status of Samuel as the prophet-founder of a monastic community, may be of a new order.[14] And Anbā Samuel's prophesying focussed on the coming of the "*nation of the hijra*."

The Nation of the Hijra:

According to Crone and Cook's finding, many of the early Christian Chronicles refer to the followers of Muḥammad as "hagarenes," and the "tribe of Ishmael." It seems rather that the early Arab community, while it was developing its own religious identity, did not call itself "Muslim." On the other hand, Greek and Syriac documents refer to this community as *Magaritai,* and *Mahgre* (or *Mahgraye)* respectively. The *Mahgraye* are the descendants of Abraham by Hagar, hence the term "Hagarism." But there is another dimension to this term; for the corresponding Arabic term is ***muhājirūn***; the ***muhājirūn*** are those who take part in a ***hijra,*** an exodus. It refers also to those nomads who settle (*muhājirat al-ᶜarab*) in Medina, or emigrants.[15] "The 'Mahgraye' may thus be seen as Hagarene participants in a *hijra* to the Promised Land; in this pun lies the earliest identity of the faith which was in the fullness of time to become Islam." The *ASQ* seems to have preserved the etymology of the term. It is a point of interest for this study of the *ASQ* to consider if the *hijra* actually meant the point of departure for the followers of Anbā Samuel, as a monastic

---

[12] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun*, (Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd, 1983), p. 79. The concept of inheriting eternity seems to go beyond the allusion to the "double portion of the spirit" of 2Kings 2, 9ff. The person of Anbā Samuel, who is also said to have been to his followers as "a pillar of light in the entire mountain of Scetis (p. 79)," attracted to himself a following in the style of the disciples to Jesus. However, if the hypothesis that Anbā Samuel was worshipped may be far-fetched, nevertheless, the reverence manifested to his teachings and discourse is clearly stated.

[13] Quoted from Zaborowski, "Implicating Chalcedonians," p. 102, n. 9; R. Basset (ed.), "Le Synaxaire arabe Jacobite (Redaction Copte), II," in *PO* 3 (1909), pp. 245-545, esp. p. 408. The composition of Synaxary is dated to the early 9th century.

[14] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel*..., p. 74: "This is the life... of... Apa Samuel, the father of the holy Community of the Virgin of the mountain of Kalamun in the province of the Fayyum."

[15] F.M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), pp. 75-82.

PRIFYSGOL CAERDYDD

community. Therefore, it was perfectly legitimate and justified to pay due attention to the person of Samuel as well as the artefacts related to his person and life.

Abū Ṣalīḥ, the Armenian historian gives us a short notice about the monastery of Qalamūn. Notably, there was therein "*a spacious church named after the Lady, the Pure Virgin Mary...*"[16] and that "*Anbā Samuel, the superior and administrator of this monastery, was a learned man; and God revealed to him what would happen in the future, and spoke with him; and Samuel wrote down what God said to him, and his prophecies were verified in his own time.*"[17] The problem with this notice, however, is the fact that the description is that of a 4th century AD Anbā Samuel, the actual founder of the monastery that bears his namesake.[18] Of our 7th century Anbā Samuel, there is no apparent mention, except may be a hint in what Abū Ṣalīḥ adds:

> "*It is said that the father, Anbā Samuel, the celebrated administrator of this monastery, used to worship on the mountain, at a place called Rayān, opposite to the monastery. Up to the end of Amshīr, in the year 874 of the Righteous Martyrs (A.D. 1178), the number of monks in this monastery amounted to 130; and they were virtuous and devout.*"[19]

The Monastery of Qalamun in Early Islam:

Abū Ṣalīḥ's notice might be reflecting a tradition of the local monastery for handing down a linear history of the headship of Qalamūn, revolving around the founding figure, as though, the 7th century namesake was the 4th century Samuel who lived on, at least in the spirit. Since Anbā Samuel is seamlessly connected to "*the year 874 of the Righteous Martyrs*" without any transition, it would seem that the tradition of the namesake of Samuel runs through the time span of the historical entry. The purpose was probably to emphasise the fact that a devout martyrdom was still upheld, but the effect of this device is that it makes the narrative imply that the spirit of Anbā Samuel at Qalamūn lingered on. The point of the matter is that Abū Ṣalīḥ would have spelt out the spiritual principle prevalent at that Qalamūn monastery. Namely, there was a belief here of a chain of transmission of charismata that was carried through the namesake of Samuel.

---

[16] B.T.A. Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries. Attributed to Abū Ṣāliḥ the Armenian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 206.
[17] B.T.A. Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries*, pp. 206-07.
[18] B.T.A. Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries*, p. 206, see n. 4.
[19] B.T.A. Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries*, p. 208.

mountain of the same name. There, the monastic lifestyle was anchorite and coenobite. Under the care of Anbā Agathon Samuel had learned the angelic life. He fiercely opposed the decrees of Chalcedon, which put him under the hostile attention of Cyrus. In AD 842 a calligrapher called Zacharias of the monastery of Samuel of Qalamūn, who wrote certain Synaxary lections for the monastery of St. Michael in the desert, may have had some hands in the text that came down to us.[30]

The reverence of saints in the monastery of Qalamūn is quite a peculiar feature of dedication. At around AD 790, some Coptic monks entered the monastery of St. Antony in Wadi'n Natrun, disguised as Bedouins, in order to steal the body of St. John the Short (d. in 5th cent.).[31] The *Ethiopian Synaxarium* recounts how the body of St. John the Short was subsequently retrieved back to Scetis during the days of Anbā Yuannis (AD 777-99).[32] The monks of the monastery of St. Macarius went one day to mount Klyma (Suez) to retrieve the body, but "it was not possible for them to fulfil their mission for the moment, for the body of the saint was guarded by the Melkite Chalcedonians who dwelt in the sanctuary."[33]

During the patriarchate of Anbā Mikhā'īl (AD 744-768), there were tribes:

> "in mountains in the eastern part of Egypt, from *Bilbais* to *al-Qulzum* and the sea, consisting of Muslims who were called Arabs. And there were among them more than thirty thousand horsemen, and they had chiefs in command of them."[34]

Despite these hindrances, retrieving the relics remained the ultimate goal. Therefore, it should not come as a surprise to consider Anbā Samuel among those saints whose words and deeds were revered with the utmost gravity, as model of steadfastness in face of political constraints and religious rivalry.

Among the non-Chalcedonian Christians who reacted initially to Islam in an Abrahamic interpretation, that is, as a judgement from God for depriving Israel, son of Sarah, of his privilege over Ishmael, son of Hagar, there were the

---

[30] T.C. Peterson, "The Paragraph Mark in Coptic Illuminated Ornament," in D.E. Miner (ed.), *Studies in Art and Literature for Bella da Costa Greene* (Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1954), pp. 310-2.

[31] J. Leroy, *Moines et Monastères du Proche-Orient* (Paris, 1954), p. 48.

[32] E.A.W. Budge (tr.), *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church* (Cambridge, 1928), p. 418f (*Ethiopian Synaxarium* in *P.O.*, IX).

[33] E.A.W. Budge (tr.), *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church* (Cambridge, 1928), p. 418f (*Ethiopian Synaxarium* in *P.O.*, IX).

[34] Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffa' in B. Evetts (tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904), from *P.O.* V, p. 101.

way of life upon the world rather than attempt to win the argument. In short, Islam became the reference from which the theological debate stemmed. In a previous chapter, we have seen that the Muslims rediscovered the eschatological thoughts that underpinned the inception of Islam.[25] The *ASQ* is very much about the person of Anbā Samuel, unlike the *FVD*. Anbā Samuel is not a passive figure, only commissioned to delivering the prophetic message. He is a father of the community, and a patron-saint, a living icon. We will have, therefore, to deal with both the features of such an iconic figure and with the apocalypse as material.

During Cyrus' persecution of the Coptic Church between AD 631 to 641, Anbā Samuel's reputation in the Fayyum[26] spread quickly among the Jacobites, and he became the figure of the Anti-Chalcedonian resistance. In view of the hostility of the Jacobites vis-à-vis the Chalcedonians at the rise of Islam, it is wondrous to hear Anbā Samuel predict that the Muslims would eventually show themselves "an implacable nation." His personal attitude to the invading Muslims at the time will occupy us now. It is not a surprise that the authorship of the *ASQ* does charge the Chalcedonians for the Muslim overrun of Egypt. Shortly after the Muslims took control of the Fayyum, Bishop John of Nikiu tells us that: "*the people began to help the Muslims.*"[27] Actually, Anbā Samuel was not the father of the Fayyum monasteries, nor the founder of any particular institution, but he rebuilt an old settlement deserted during the Persian persecution of Cyrus.[28] The oasis of al-Fayyum had always been threatened by invaders from the north and south, which resulted in building fortified cities such as Qasr, Dakhla, Qalamūn and Budkhulu. Qalamun is situated southwest of the Fayyum oasis. Anbā Samuel of Qalamūn was also regarded as the patron saint of fecundity. His relics were allegedly discovered by anbā Isḥāq in the Church of anbā Misāīl, where they laid abandoned, but many miracles were associated with those relics.[29] The monastery of Qalamun is situated in the

---

[25] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* p. III.

[26] Fayyum = ancient Arsinoë. The monastery of Qalamūn was situated east of the Nile River, south of al-Fayyum.

[27] R.H. Charles (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1916), p. 181.

[28] A.J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt* (Oxford, 1902), pp. 168-93.

[29] O.F.A. Meinardus, *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1992), pp. 6-7.

This name Samuel might have been a title, a dignity conferred on the administrators of the monastery. With regard to our Anbā Samuel in the *ASQ*, such dignity was afforded him to the effect of causing his life to coincide with the genesis and rise of Islam, as though Anbā Samuel's prophetic insight had been already written down in his personal spiritual experience.

Certain traditions of the Coptic Fathers may feature in this apocalypse: the pattern for the prophetic calling of the seer; the subsequent cult of that seer; his legacy of the seer forms a new set of cultic apparatus and contributes to the iconography that represents the body of the traditions of the Fathers. Taken as a whole, these features happened to eliciting the apocalyptic nature of the sectarian religious community at the monastery of Qalamūn. For instance, these formula: the "books of the 40 saints (*al-Muqaddasāt*)[20] that are *for salvation*;"[21] "the great city, which is the *Fayyum... where are the revelations of the good Messiah* concealed (*nawāmīs*);"[22] "the *canons* of the Church and the *decrees of our Fathers*,"[23] were all part and parcel of the Coptic sacred iconography, which Anbā Samuel urged his followers to prize, almost above everything else. Those saints are of the ranks of the "exalted," or "hallowed" ones, who have earned that status for their deeds during their lifetime, just like Jesus had obeyed to His Father and is now at the right hand of God and intercedes for His followers.[24] Here is a peculiar rendering of the New Testament concept of the Son, who has earned a superior status for the price of His steadfastness on His trial. It could be said that the author's equation of the sufferings of Jesus with the actual experience of his fellow Copts might have been conceptualised as a result of the atypical Christian subjection to Islam.

On the other hand, the Muslim theological argumentation suggests that the rationale in the 7-8th century of the Islamic ideology was to impress the Muslim

---

[20] The word *al-Muqaddasāt* carries the sense of the "hallowed ones" or "consecrated ones." This adjective qualifies also the naming of Jerusalem (*baytu ᶜl-Muqaddasāt*) or for Palestine as the Purified land (*al-ᶜarḍu ᶜ l-Muqaddasāt*).

[21] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. VI.

[22] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, p. VI. Here also, the Muslim concept of concealment is borrowed. Zadieh has judged it sufficient to translate the word *nawāmīs* as simply Laws (from Gr. Nomos). However, the context requires that the idea of a specific place of concealment of the "revealed word" be considered. For this meaning of the word, see Lane's *Arabic Lexicon*, vol. 8, p. 2854.

[23] See *The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, pp. VII-VIII. Here, the meaning of "decrees" or "regulations" for *nawāmīs* has to prevail, as opposed to Law or Scriptures.

[24] See Rom. 8: 34; cf. Heb. 5: 7-10.

select but a few representative excerpts from the apocalypse in order to keep the analysis as succinct as possible without undermining the importance of the text. Some historical digression might be required at times. The *ASQ* opens with a peculiar declaration of faith worth discussing:

> "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, glory to the (only) One God.
>
> We are prompted by the Lord's grace, praise be to Him, to put in writing the discourse of our father, the holy Anbā *Samuel*, leader of the monastery of Qalamun. May his intercessory prayers (*ṣalātuhu*) remain with us, Amen!"[37]

As head and Anbā of the monastery of Qalamūn, Anbā Samuel's greeting formula appears to be embedded in the text as though it was under the divine compelling urge[38] – although *ʿawn* means "help" or "grace" – that the discourse of Anbā Samuel ought to be committed in writing. This formula assumes that a blessing is to be expected in the course of reading the words of the saint. This suggests that the *ASQ* was possibly supposed to be read in congregation, and a sort of response from the audience was expected in return of this short introduction. It is a combination of the article of faith with the discourse that blessing resides. In the formula: *"May his intercessory prayers remain with us, Amen!,"*[39] *ṣalātuhu* denotes the sense of prayers of "petition," or "supplication," or "blessings." It denotes also the "keeping," or "cleaving," to something or someone. Thus the word *ṣalātuhu* conveys idea of a complementation of the work in the spirit of the one who started it. On the one hand, the implication is that the chain of the divine blessings may not become transient, but would be transferred to the reading community. The Apostle Paul signed his epistles in an almost similar fashion,[40] with the notable difference that Paul entrusted his readers to the grace of the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, or the Lord. This is a fundamental distinction because it suggests that Anbā Samuel thought of himself as the founding father of the community. If so, the point drawn earlier suggests that there may have been a community at Qalamūn living parallel to the actual monastery of the same name.

---

[37] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. I. Prayers Ar. صلاتة Note that the word is of Qur'ānic origin.

[38] Matth. 4: 1(NIV): "Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil."

[39] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. I.

[40] 1Cor. 16: 23-24: "The grace of Jesus Christ be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen;" Gal. 6: 18: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen;" cf. Phil. 4: 23.

Monophysites and Nestorians who held the opposite views. This is illustrated by the Coptic Bishop Severus of al-Ashmunain (d. ~ AD 987)'s assessment:

> "The Lord abandoned the army of the Romans as a punishment for their corrupt faith, and because of the anathemas uttered against them by the ancient fathers, on account of the Council of Chalcedon."[35]

According to the testimonies of the Armenian bishop Sebeos (~ AD 661), and the Iraqi anonymous Nestorian monk (~ AD 670), the Arabs conquered foreign territories based essentially on the assumption that they inherit the promise Allāh had made to Abraham.[36] They were following in the footsteps of their ancestor Abraham by recovering those places of worship he built (e.g., Yathrib = Madina = Madinan; Jerusalem = al-Quds; Holy Land = al-Shā'm, etc).

In achieving those objectives – meaning fighting in the path of Allāh, offering the sacrifice of Ishmael, pilgrimage in the footsteps of Abraham, worshiping as their ancestor did, etc – the Arabs, sons of Abraham through Hagar, were all but performing the primordial monotheistic custom. It is of a notable importance that in Islam the sacrifice of Ishmael replaced the biblical tradition of the sacrifice of Isaac, precisely, on the point of the conceptualisation in Islam of the martyrdom during the conquest. This was so just as the way in which the Mosaic ideology of Exodus operated, that is, the duty of conquest of the Promised Land was mandatory, and the biblical "*land flowing with milk and honey*" became the reward of paradise that was the reserve of the Muslim martyr. Anbā Samuel, too, would have thought of his monastic life along those same lines, but quite in opposition to the moving in Egypt of the nation of the *hijra*. We have to take into account these elements – tradition of the fathers, martyrdom, monasticism, iconophilia, etc – of the Coptic faith as a whole in order to draw out as accurate a picture to help elucidate the message of the *ASQ*.

The Text of Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn:

This apocalypse is so wordy and repetitive at times that it requires a synthetic approach, lest one gets lost from the main thread. The present writer will have to

---

[35] Quoted from W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 353; see also in B. Evetts (tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*..

[36] The Abrahamism of Islam is most prominently advocated by P. Crone & M. Cook, *Hagarism*, pp. 3-15; ct. recent criticism of this position in N. Robinson, *Discovering the Qur'ān* (London: SCM, 1996), pp 47-59.

On the other hand, the use of the word *ʿamīl* in this context suggests that the text itself is to be considered a source of spiritual endowment in its own right. It could be inferred that the author of the apocalypse would want to suggest that the teaching of Samuel thus preserved, had the potential for endowing the reader with leadership skills. It is constituent of the body of the Coptic iconography. Should the above proviso be taken to mean that Anbā Samuel had actually pronounced a *vaticina* concerning the coming advent of the Muslim Arabs[41] – as the preceding claim that the discourse had taken place in the presence of (among other saints) *Gregorius*, the Bishop of Qays,[42] and *Apollos*, disciple of Anbā Samuel – it implies that the so-called *Tayyaye* must refer to an innocuous community established in Egypt prior to the *hijra*, about which Anbā Samuel had voiced some concerns. But this is just conjecture *hijra*.

When asked about the actual situation of Egypt, Anbā Samuel looks circumspect, but feels compelled to provide some guidance:

> "I do not want to talk on this account of the Arabs and their harsh dominion, nor of the end of time, according to what is written that it is not for you to know the time and the seasons unless the Father puts that under his own authority. However, I shall disclose a little while for your benefit to the profit of your soul. And I will declare what shall no doubt come to pass in the future times, when they will abandon the commitment to God's sheltering commandments. (But) for him whose heart remains vigilant will be preserved from imitating the actions of the *Hijra*, so that his soul will be saved."[43]

The expression: "for the benefit to the profit (*li-rūbāʿī*) of your soul," uses the word that means an utterance in poetic or in verse form, which is consistent with prose-like expression above. It is a technical term of uncertain origin, called "quatrain," i.e. "in fours," "in foursomes." In Arabic, the term *rūbāʿī* did not appear until the end of the 10th century AD, in Khurāsān and from the pen of a poet of Persia.[44] In the 10th century Sufi circles, the question arose as to whether it was legitimate during the spiritual observance to listen to *rūbāʿiyyāt* songs.

---

[41] The word *al-Tayy* (Arabic tribes) may be a telling borrowing from its Syriac significance, in which case the author may be seeking a play-of-word here. Though, I retain the meaning of "present" or "immediate." The Arabs on the other hand must be enough distinct from Egyptian root that the remark poses some questions. If the text would trace the history of the immigration of the *Tayy* way before the *hijra*, we may have an indication here of a recent past pacific co-existence with the latter in Egypt before the Muslim *Tayy*. In any case, the expression "Arabs," which would eventually be retained in the text bore a peculiar meaning, rather connected to the invading Muslims.

[42] Historical refs needed!

[43] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III.

[44] C.-H. de Fouchecour, "rūbāʿī," in *EI*, vol. 8, pp. 578-80.

From Manichaean fragments of pre-Islamic Arabic translation, it refers to songs intended for feasting and wine. Here, the reference would be to the "musicality" or the soothing ability of the discourse, or even an interpolation of the apocalyptic warning of Jesus: "*You will hear of wars and rumours of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come.*"[45]

The Christian introductory formula of greeting that usually asserted the confession of faith of the community was in the *ASQ* enhanced with the intercessory power ascribed to the local saint, namely Anbā Samuel. The "holy father" was thus put on the same footing of reverence normally due to the Godhead in the liturgical setting. That is to say, it was quite natural to invoke one's ancestor's holiness when approaching the deity to whom worship is given. But what makes such a reverent attitude seemingly acceptable is that it is directed toward the word rather than to the person who uttered it. As such, the community's aspiration to betterment is referent to the ancestral proviso:[46]

> "This discourse of the Saint Anbā *Samuel* pledges protection and strength[47] (to anyone) upon reading in, and observing it, and acting according to what is written in it."[48]

As we shall see later, given that the pledge for protection was conditional upon observing a strict prohibition on the use of Arabic, for instance, the author intended to create a collective memory of the portent of the Arab nation from past experience.

The *ASQ* borrowing from the biblical Revelation of John is most evident in the introductory formula. It shows Anbā Samuel expressing a sense of resolve at the question put to him when Samuel was asked: "if the period of their (i.e. the

---

[45] Matth. 24: 6 (NIV).

[46] In Islam, the highest virtue of the ancestral lineage determined the rank of the tribe in the hierarchy (see discussion above).

[47] Ar. *ʿamāl* (pl. *ʿummāl*): normally conveys the sense of work, action, effective operation. See A.A. Dury, " ʿamīl," in *EI*, vol. 1, pp. 435-36. *ʿAmīl* in Islam denotes the Muslim who performs the works demanded by his faith, e.g., a Muslim scholar. The Prophet is supposed to have appointed representatives (*ʿummāl*) among their tribes. Under the Caliphs, *ʿamāl* meant a provincial governor or administrator. Tax collection was carried out usually by non-Muslims *ummāl*, generally Christians known as *ʿamīl kharādj*, in the first century of the Hijra (A. Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri*, vol. 3, pp. 12f, 121ff, 137). We hear of ʿUmar II complain about their unfairness in Kufa (al-Ṭabarī, *History*, vol. 2, 1366). In Egypt, under the ʿAbbāsids, the *ʿamīl kharāj* was usually appointed by the central government of Baghdad (al-Maqrīsī, *Khiṭaṭ*, vol. 1, p. 15).

[48] See *Samuel of Qalamun*, p. 1

Arabs) rule over the land of Egypt would last long or not?" Samuel sighed and said:

> "Blessed be God, He who fixes the times and alerts the mind of his humble people and exalts his people, He who overthrows kings and raises other kings who believe in His beloved Son, by whom this people honours God. He supports them for this peace of the land of Egypt, in spite that God's wisdom is beyond human investigation."[49]

This is a paraphrase of John's certitude about the things that are bound to happen[50] in the land of Egypt; It is also a concatenation with Daniel,[51] whereby the scheme of succession of the nations is intended. The *ASQ* would want to present Samuel as a Daniel in exile, may be as an interpolation of his monastic lifestyle. Nonetheless, Anbā Samuel affirms God's control in the actual situation of Egypt in foreign hands, by evoking the theodicy therein. Like Daniel who mastered the interpretation of dreams, and was given to make value judgment even on kings, Anbā Samuel stands on such higher spiritual plan as though his very life-long hardship had been prophetic in its own right, and apotropaic *per se*.

The *ASQ's* Ideological objectives.

From the outset, the author states clearly his/her goal: to commit to writing Samuel's discourse concerning "*the presence of Arabs, who prevail in the land of Egypt, and with respect to the era of Hijra.*" But the author does assert that: "*we are prompted by the Lord's grace,*"[52] as to emphasize the legitimacy of the writing. The use of the "we" is either to state the collegiality of the work, or that the account had been duly corroborated by those who were present, i.e., the eyewitnesses of the entire discourse. The former hypothesis would place the composition of the text during the lifetime of Anbā Samuel, but the latter seems

---

[49] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. I.

[50] Rev. 1: 1-3 (NIV): "The revelation... which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place...the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near."

[51] Dan 2:20-22 (NIV): "Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposes them. He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning. He reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what lies in darkness, and light dwells with him."

[52] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. I; The word *ʿawn* usually meaning "help" or "assistance," here fits better the idea of divine inspiration or even of providential dispensation.

more likely, as it points to a posthumous[53] undertaking, and yet within the lifetime of the eyewitnesses so as to ascertain the trustworthiness[54] of the account. It is difficult though to ascertain the historicity of the two witnesses, i.e., Gregorius and Apollos.[55] The significant witnesses, though, seem to be those contemporaneous figures[56] that could be readily appended to the recent persecution of the Coptic faith, leading up to the era of the *Hijra*. This clause was likely meant to suggest that the writing of the present apocalypse was divinely ordained to commit into writing the apocalypse.

From such a vantage point as his, Anbā Samuel immediately points the finger of blame at the heresy prevalent in the Coptic Church:

> "When adverse times worsen, and stir the entire world, O! Children of mine, think at once of the great evils of the heretics in the Orthodox Church during the time of the father *Dioscorus* until now. Remind yourselves also about the great evils to our fathers along with *Dioscorus*, (what) happened to them (when) he was expelled to a remote Island. *Ieroutarius* sat on his seat, and this *Ieroutarius* caused great evils to the Christian faith. Several were driven away without shelter, the orthodox ones were killed, and the buildings were destroyed. As to *Oukialinos* the owner of the false cap, however, let me remain silent concerning him."[57]

The text of the *ASQ* provides us some valuable hints with regard to the settings of the discourse. The text is unusually candid for an apocalypse; it is definitely not a ***vaticina ex eventu***, but affirms that the discourse did take place under the Muslim rulership. The author(s) made no effort to cast the discourse at the time of any of the many patriarchs of the Coptic Church's history. At best, some loose references to the Monophysite tenets of the Coptic Church are noticeable, even though the Monothelete doctrine does constitute the background to the plight of the Coptic Church. Rather, we are drawn toward a monastic environment, just as the title of the apocalypse claims. The word "*dayr*" (pl.

---

[53] The formula: "May his intercessory prayers (*ṣalātuhu*) remain with us," hints clearly at the Coptic traditional faith in the efficacy of the prayers of the deceased Saints.

[54] Gregorius, the Bishop of Kays, and Apollos, who is no more than the disciple of Anbā Samuel are the most important names mentioned as witnesses. However, Sergius, Dioscorus and Benjamin are the main heroes of the Coptic Church that the author(s) considered worthy of mention.

[55] May be this strange feature is derived from the "Two Witnesses" of the Book of Revelation 11: 1-14.

[56] Ieroutarius, Oukialinos, Kubiros the Mukakos.

[57] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. I-II.

diyār)[58] used here to denote the context of a monastery refers to a centre of Christian religious and intellectual life under early Islam. Liturgical rules and literary works, and other civil regulations were usually formulated there.[59] It seems therefore that the monastery of Qalamūn is portrayed symbolically here as a site of authority, (one of) the last standing Orthodox Sees that had enjoyed some degree of freedom from heresy.[60] In addition, it appears that the naming of the Arabs[61] in the text is relevant to our discussion, given that the Coptic Church was well acquainted with the Christian Arab neighbours,[62] e.g., the Ghassānids (Monophysites)[63] from the Transjordania, the Lakhmides (Nestorians) in East Syria,[64] or the Taglibites and the Banū-Bakr from Persia. All these communities

---

[58] D. Sourdel, "Dayr," in *EI* , vol. 2, pp. 194-95: "a word of Syriac origin denoting the Christian monasteries which continued to function after the Arab conquest of the Middle East... often named after a patron saint... or a founder."

[59] D. Sourdel, "Dayr," in *EI*, vol. 2, pp. 194-95.

[60] See J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamun," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-115; cf. Jan Helderman, "Die Sprache der Ruhe: Blike in die Geschichte des Christlich-koptischen Agypten: Johannes von Schmun, Samuel von Qalamun und das Triadon," in *BSAC* 36 (1997), pp. 105-19. Look also for J.J.G. Jansen's lectures on the Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamun.

[61] Al-Tayy (i.e., the Arab tribes) is a word without derogatory significance. A word of Syriac origins (*Tāyyāyē*), in Latin "*Taveni*", speaks of the Arab nomads of the Syrian desert. It may be that the text makes a difference between the Arabs tribes before their conglomerate under Islam. It is in stark contrast to the word Αραβος (tent dweller) = Arabs, which appear to refer specifically to the invading Muslim Arabs.

[62] The Syrian desert was not merely a geographical extension of Arabia, but essentially the demographic expansion of the land of Arabia in that the nomadic Arabs were Christian migrants, it seems, ruled by one king at Hīra, e.g., Nuᶜmān, the Nestorian convert of AD 593 who ruled over both the Arabs of Persia and those of the Greeks (see *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 13, p. 469), and thus alternating allegiance at will. In all probability, those Arabs became acquainted with either empire's warfare techniques. In addition, they were certainly very well knowledgeable with regard to the logistic infrastructure of both empires, which proved invaluable to the Muslim campaigns after the Hijra. In addition, the Arab Christians were probably the most valuable assets for the Muslims early military campaigns. They were used to address their prayers to *Allāh*, the Arabic name of *the* God; They preached *Allāh*; They practiced several daily prayers, fasting, alms-giving; They made their living from providing their services to the merchants (guidance, escort) and states (routes knowledge, militia patrols in exchange of an annual tribute). In the absence of these sources of income, the Arabs of the arid desert resorted instinctively to pillaging and the seasonal *ghazwa* in the cultivated neighbourhood. In such an environment, the advent of Muḥammad should have appeared as messianic (the "Ishmaelite brotherhood" definitely played in), if not at least an act of God's vengeance, and his ideology was more than ideally suited to some quarters of the Arab Christians (cf. F. Nau, *Les Arabes Chrétiens...*, pp. 101-03).

[63] The Ghassānids may be considered Monophysites because of their allegiance to Byzantium, whereas the Lakhmides affiliated to the Persians were by and large Nestorians.

[64] Right up to the end of the 7th century AD, doctrinal disputations broke out from time to time in Mesopotamia: Monophysiticism, Dyophysiticism, Nestorianism, and Chalcedonianism. (see *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. 7, pp. 155-71; vol. 13, pp. 546-50, 560-79). For instance, the *Trisagion*, which was essentially represented by the famous addition: "who was crucified for us," was widely accepted by the Syrian Chalcedonians but rejected among the Cyprus Chalcedonians. Even in AD 727, Michael the Syrian tells us that the "addition" was still a cause

next to which the Coptic Church had a long standing doctrinal affinities, the author of the *ASQ* seems to draw a line of demarcation around the *Hijra* – historically, spiritually, and ethnically speaking – as though the community of Qalamūm sought to distance itself from its former affiliation, or possibly the community's isolation was the factor.

The Socio-Ethnic Rationale:

The present writer contends that the *ASQ* is geared toward fighting the nation of the *Hijra*, in so far as the immigration of foreign populations, of various ethnicities, threatened to swamp the Coptic substratum of the Egyptian society. The expression "*nation of the Hijra*" itself lends some weight to the point, since such naming of the Arabs and Muslims does hardly occur elsewhere. It is therefore, the flow of migration in Egypt from without, rather than the religious ideology, that the authorship of the *ASQ* is concerned with. The means of achieving this objective may be religious though, yet the scope of definition of what is or is not Coptic is hardly anything else than the language, whereas the apparent prime target would have seemed obviously the Chalcedon doctrinal tenet.

The *ASQ* asserts the value of holding on the tradition of the fathers, the Coptic language of the fathers, through which the Holy Spirit spoke, the naming of the children by names of the Saint fathers in order to keep alive their memory and spiritual presence in the life of the community. There is no doubt that the *ASQ* had been fighting the relentless incursion of the Arabic and Arab culture in the Coptic way of life. The point at issue, however, was that the *ASQ* would have sought to relate the advent of the ***hijra*** with the heresy of Chalcedon, the true causality of the punishment that the Coptic community was suffering from. The theodicy of the *ASQ* is therefore twofold: first, to make sure that the heresy is recognised, and dealt with. Second, hold on to the redemptive process (hardship, steadfastness) whereby the ***hijra*** would eventually become ineffective.

The *ASQ* Treatment of the Chalcedonians:

---

of open schism among the Syrian Chalcedonian (see J.B. Chabot (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien* (Brussels, 1963), vol. 2, pp. 492-93).

As for Cyrus the *Muqawqis*, he provided single-handedly the necessary ammunitions to the author of the *ASQ*, and Heraclius' Monotheletism along with. So the "*filthy man*"[65] as the *ASQ* nicknamed Cyrus the Muqawqis was accused of having "*restricted so much the Orthodox,... and... banished them from place to place.*[66] Anbā Samuel goes on to catalogue his misdeeds against the Coptic Church and its patriarchate:

> "In his oppressive strife,[67] he will pursue father *Benyamin*..... But He (God) sent against them this nation that only seeks gold, not godliness according to their vow in prayer."[68]

Literally: "he will strive (*huwa bī-'l-jahdi*) greatly." It is interesting to note that the author uses such a strong term, on purpose, to characterise the Muslim-like oppressive attacks on the Orthodox Church, and its leadership, at the hand of Cyrus. This meant probably that the emperor's attempt to impose by force Monotheletism on Egypt was *a type* of the advent of the Antichrist, if not *the* pre-requisite for the Muslim hegemony. As a token of the aforesaid heresy that befell the land of Egypt, the Coptic Church was weakened on one hand. On the other hand, Islam was to bear out the next stage of the signs of Endtime in showing their rapacious nature.

Heraclius' attempt to impose by force the Monothelete doctrine was not only disastrous for the Coptic Church, but the endeavour was unique to Egypt. Anbā Samuel could relate the oppression inflicted upon the Orthodox Church[69] as being remitted to the whole Church at the hands of the Muslims.[70] Indeed there was an Orthodox Coptic patriarch of Alexandria (AD. 626-665) under the name of Benjamin I,[71] together with his brother Mennas,[72] who would become the object of the Chalcedonian persecution. That is to say that an attempt was made

---

[65] The term used here needs some interpretation (probably in the way the O.T. depicts sometimes the abhorrence of filthiness): *al-ṭamthu* literally means menstrual discharge, which in religious belief amounts to the reward of sinfulness.

[66] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 2, p. 490: He departed to Upper Egypt; and he remained hidden there" for 10 years.

[67] From the root j-h-d where *jihād* is derived.

[68] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. II.

[69] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 2, pp. 490ff relates indeed to Cyrus' persecution of the Orthodox.

[70] Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 2, pp. 492-93: "And the Lord abandoned the army of the Romans before him, as a punishment for their corrupt faith, and because of the anathemas uttered against them, on account of the council of Chalcedon, by the ancient fathers."

[71] See R.H. Charles (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu* (London Williams & Norgate, 1916), pp. 200-02; B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 2, p. 487: he was the 38th Patriarch.

[72] Sometimes, Menos, or Mennos.

at a forceful reunification of the church[73] by Heraclius and Cyrus the Cholchian (Caucasian or Muqawqis).[74] In other words, the two brothers were the figureheads of the Jacobite Coptic resistance to Heraclius. In the apocalypse of Qalamūn, *Benjamin* (and supposedly his brother) are made into the first interlocutors of ᶜAmr the Arab chief of the invaders,[75] rather than the image of the restorer of the Coptic faith after Heraclius' success in making many Copts turn Monophysites. There is a definite ambiguity in the cultural identity of the Egyptian church. It revolves around the roles the author makes of these protagonists of the Coptic Church play for one given expectation and the actual outcome of an episode in the history of that church. But the real shift of perception in identity is defined by the shift of allegiance, depending on the scheme of the apocalyptist. Here, the *ASQ* expresses the negative views of Heraclius, under the gaze of the Arab rulers while at the same time promoting the Coptic nationalism over against the Byzantine Chalcedonians.

That the author of the *ASQ* was reprimanding the Chalcedonians for the initial failure of the Copts to withstand the Muslim invasion of the land of Egypt is quite obvious. Frend demonstrates abundantly the extent of rivalry between the Monophysite and Chalcedonian missionaries in Egypt, played out since the 5th century right up to the 9th century, and as far south as the Nubian kingdoms.[76] According to Zaborowski's recent article on the apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamun, the authorship of the apocalypse seems to point at the divisiveness of the Chalcedonian tradition leading to the demise of the Christendom, and that the so-called rise of Coptic nationalism against the oppressive tutelage of Byzantium was in fact hardly a consensual one. He rightly asserts that the apocalypse "*still espouses the ideal of Roman suzerainty in its eschatology.*"[77]

The point of the matter is that at the time of the Muslim invasion of Egypt the Coptic Church was as fragmented as it could possibly be. But the north-eastern

---

[73] That is, an attempt at reconciling the Chalcedonian and Monophysite Christologies under the Monothelete doctrine.

[74] Cyrus was appointed to the See of Alexandria in AD 631, cf. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 349-51. On the word Muqawqas, see the commentary of Friedlaender's article "Jewish-Arabic Studies."

[75] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 2, pp. 496-99.

[76] For an overview of monophysite/Chalcedonian rivalry in Egypt, see W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

[77] J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūm," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-15, p. 101.

Egypt held the Muslims out over a decade, before buckling under their geographic isolation. For a while:

> "the church of Alexandria remained widowed, without a patriarch. Therefore the orthodox Theodosians (i.e. the Copts) assembled together. And a number of the heretical Chalcedonians met together; and they formed a council at Miṣr... But God, who knows all, had reserved this degree for him who was worthy of it"[78]

This state of affairs might be what is alluded to when the *ASQ* speaks of those who are not qualified for the priesthood. While there was much infighting among the Muslims, a Chalcedonian deacon named Theophylact (also called Cosmas I) lobbied for his own promotion, and soon the Caliph Marwān II appointed:

> "him patriarch over his fellow-countrymen, the Greeks; for they had no patriarch at that time. So this was done for him speedily; and they appointed him patriarch over the Chalcedonians."[79]

This happened during the patriarchate of the orthodox (Copt) Michael I (AD 744-68). One should wonder if this is not the episode afforded the authorship of *ASQ* to pin back the blame of the conquest of Egypt by the Arab Muslims[80] firmly on the Chalcedonians.[81] As for the Caliph Marwān II (d. AD 750), after a long consultation he presided between the Jacobites and the Chalcedonians, had the Chalcedonians take possession of the Theodosians (Copts) churches, some 75 years after they were confiscated. But Sawīrus al-Muqaffaᶜ is anxious to mention that during the deliberations before the amīr ᶜAbd al-Malik ibn Mūsā b. Nāṣīr that: "*for the orthodox with their arguments from the Holy Scriptures prevailed over the Chalcedonians.*"[82]

---

[78] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, p. 103.
[79] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, p. 118.
[80] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, p. 123: ""But as for the Chalcedonians, they wrote and said: 'In the beginning the power was in our hands, and the churches with all their property were ours. But the Muslims, after their conquest of Egypt, handed them over to the Copts.'"
[81] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, pp. 118-19.
[82] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, pp. 118-19.

Life under Muslim Dominion: The Arabic soldiery in contact with the Copts.

Immorality receives the lengthiest treatment in the *ASQ*. It is often depicted as a result of the combined effect of Muslims' exactions and the loss of confidence of the Coptic society with respect to the Muslim hegemony. But that immorality had it roots in the cultural relationship with the immigrants who happen to be Arabic-speaking. We need therefore to examine the trend of immigration with respect to its effect on the autochthones.

During the first three centuries of the Muslim conquests the sphere of geo-political influence of Egypt[83] and North-western Syria[84] were felt far beyond their respective borders. The best evidence of the Egyptian situation might be seen in the high turn over in the Egyptian emirate, the relative autonomy that these emirs arrogated themselves at times, and the variable extent of territorial control (Tunisia, Libya, Ethiopia, and Sudan) beyond the Egyptian borders that these emirs had assumed variably depending on the Caliphs' authority. During the Caliphate of Muᶜāwiya, the Arabs built from experienced Egyptian Copts the backbone of their naval forces. The Copts manned the naval expeditions of the Muslims against Byzantium, mainly as experts in sailing and navigation.[85] The Muslim immigrants in al-Fustat,[86] the majority of whom were from Yemen, preferred to settle in away from the garrison town (*al-thughūr*), in greener areas[87] where they could supplement their income with the product of their pastoral work.[88] This close contact of the Arabic-speaking immigrants with the local population was compounded by the peculiarities of the capitulation treaty

---

[83] K. ᶜAthamina, "Some Administrative, Military and Socio-Political Aspects of Early Muslim Egypt," in Y. Lev (ed.), *War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean 7th – 15th Centuries* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1997), pp. 101-13.

[84] W.E. Kaegi, "Observations on Warfare between Byzantium and Umayyad Syria," in M. A. Bakhit & R. Schick (eds.), *The History of Bilad al-Sham during the Umayyad Period, Fourth International Conference. 24-29 Octobre 1987: Amman, Proceedings of the Third Symposium* (Amman, 1989), pp. 49-70.

[85] M.A. Shaban, *Islamic History. A New Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 157-8.

[86] Bāblūn al-Fusṭāṭ was the name given by the Muslim conquered by storm the fortress of Fusṭāṭ, so that it became *fay* and *ghānima*; see B. Evetts, *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 2, p. 494.

[87] Plots of lands called *khitat*. With regard to the Caliphs policy of settling Muslim troops in garrisons towns, see ᶜAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, p. 91; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, p. 249; cf. W. Kubiak, *Al-Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Cairo: American University Press, 1987), pp. 58-81.

[88] ᶜAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, pp. 139-41.

with the Copts of Egypt, which stipulated among other obligations that for each year: "*they were required to entertain one or more Muslims for three days.*"[89]

It should be recalled to mind that the conquered territories were traditionally organised by administrative region (*al-jund*), with a military system called *dīwān al-jund*.[90] Since the Caliphate of ᶜUthmān, al-Fustat became the seat of government of the *jund* of Egypt.[91] The Copts were enlisted in the *dīwān* rolls along with the Arabs, but the Copts:

> "appeared under the names of the Arab tribes who bestowed their patronage (*walā'*) on them. The converts to Islam among the Copts (i.e. the *mawali*, or clients) used to be identified with the Arab patron clan instead of their original Coptic identity."[92]

In AD 744, the governor of Egypt Ḥafṣ b. al-Walīd recruited no less than 30.000 Copts in the *dīwān*.[93] These Copts came to be known as *al-ḥafṣiyya*.[94] After the second civil war (AD 680-92) that brought the Marwānids to power, the *dīwān al jund* of Egypt was regularly reinforced, with fresh recruits from Palestine and Syria, and this went on from the Caliphate of ᶜUthmān (AD 644-656)[95] until the Caliphate of Yazīd III (AD 744),[96] in order presumably to secure the loyalty of the Arab clans of Egypt garrisoned along the coastal lines. The Marwānids also broke away with the early tolerance policy toward the Copts. They imposed heavy tax upon the monks, made the cadastre of the entire land, and exacted all sorts of mistreatment on the Copts, except for a rare reprieve period under Hishām (AD 723).

Marwān II revoked his rival's policy of reinforcement (*madādiyyun*) of the *dīwān* of Egypt because he sought to control the whole province. But he had actually only managed to face an outbreak of rebellion that eventually cost him his life at the hands of the ᶜAbbāsids. Soon after, these ᶜAbbāsids supporters were granted lands (*iqṭāᶜs*).[97] With the arrival of the ᶜAbbāsids, the *dīwān al-*

---

[89] D.R. Hill, *The Termination of Hostilities in the Early Arab Conuests A.D. 634 – 656* (London: Luzac & Company, 1971), p. 38.
[90] The first *diwān al-miṣr* was built by ᶜAbd Allāh al-Sa'd, in AD 646; cf. B. Evetts, *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 2, p. 501.
[91] de Goeje (ed.), al-Ṭabarī, *Tarikh*, I, 2589.
[92] K. ᶜAthamina, "Some Administrative, Military and Socio-Political...", p. 106.
[93] R. Guest (ed.), al-Kindī, *Al-Wulāt wa-Kitāb al-Qudat* (Cairo, n.d.), p. 84
[94] R. Guest (ed.), al-Kindī, *Al-Wulāt wa-Kitāb al-Qudat* (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 51, 84.
[95] C.C. Torrey (ed.), Ibn ᶜAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-Akhbārihā* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1920). pp. 118-9, 128.
[96] R. Guest (ed.), al-Kindī, *Al-Wulāt wa-Kitāb al-Qudāt* (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 65-68, 70-71, 84.
[97] al-Kindī, *Al-Wulāt...*, pp. 101-03.

jund of Egypt became increasingly made of Turks. Egypt became the land of the occupiers as well as a country of multiple ethnic groups. They were otherwise Muslim fighters, whose only communication language would have been none other than Arabic. These settlers, once more, came in direct contact with the Copts, owing to the capitulation pact (Ar. *baqt*) imposed on them, according to which the Copts were obligated to attend to the needs of the Muslim soldiers, on top of the usual foodstuff and clothing, in return for the Arabs' protection. Although it is difficult to fully evaluate the extent of immigration in Egypt since its conquest in AD 641, it seems clear that the rate of immigrants *per* autochthonous Copts was considerable enough to alarm the authorship of the *ASQ*.

It is clear from these historical encounters with the many ethnically diverse immigrants, the Copts were being immersed, it seems, in the Arabic culture and language like never before. By the fact that the Copts became involved in the Muslim soldiery, they became *de facto* compromised with the enemy of the Coptic Church. According to the *ASQ*, it was the adoption of Arabic names, habits, and way of life, rather than immorality, that was at the root of the decline of the Coptic faith. The picture drawn above suggests that the *ASQ* and al-Kindi, were referring to the same contextual period, that is, from shortly before the ᶜAbbāsid revolution up to the early 9th century when the ᶜAbbāsid immigration policy reached its peak in Egypt, when the garrisons held no longer back the immigrant soldiers, who took to the rural areas of Egypt. The ᶜAbbāsid Caliph al-Muᶜtaṣim b. Hārūn (AD 794-842) had decided to abolish the *dīwān* system,[98] by preference for the *ghilmān* system. This was a system of recruiting among the captives, of children slave-soldiers[99] who will eventually form a contingent to the service of and only answerable to the Caliph personally. Not only did the *ghilmān* system alienate the traditional base of ᶜAbbāsids' supporters (Turks and Armenians), this caused a general break down of the central administration of Baghdad. Sawīrus tells us that a general insurrectional situation spread all over Egypt, and that it:

---

[98] ᶜAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, p. 162; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, p. 257; A. ᶜAbdin (ed.), Maqrizi, *Al-Bayan wa-'l-I'arab* (Alexandria, 1989), vol. 1, p. 82.

[99] Qur'ān – *al-Insān* 76: 19-20: "And round about them will (serve) boys of everlasting youth (*ghilmān*). If you see them, you would think them scattered pearls. And when you look there (in Paradise), you will see a delight (that cannot be imagined), and a great dominion"

> "lasted long on account of the disturbed state of the government of Baghdad. And the insurgents rose against the government in Egypt, and gathered the taxes for themselves... two men took possession of the revenues...Lakhm and Judhām, the two tribes, seized the western part of Egypt and the district of Alexandria and Maryūt, and ruled over the whole of Al-Buhairah. So when they reduced the city of Alexandria to extremities, the inhabitants prayed, and implored the Lord's help, and begged him to deliver them from this tyrannical people."[100]

In such a situation of lawlessness - note that Alexandria was at the time a *ribāṭ*, that is, a garrison town serving as a border fortress,[101] which says a lot about its lack of support for the ᶜAbbāsids - it is not surprising that monks and other hermits would distil words of encouragement such as this old hermit called John of the monastery of Az-Zajāj, of whom the historian Sawīrus al- Muqaffaᶜ should say was "*endowed with grace to see through the Holy Ghost signs and visions.*" He is reported to have prophesied to the Alexandrians as follows:

> "I see that you are distressed by this people. In the same way, believe me, a nation will come from the West, and will destroy without mercy this people and this city, and plunder all that it contains."[102]

That a certain rebel was able to "*assemble an innumerable army, and kept the road between Egypt and the East*" is remarkable enough to suppose that the authorship of the *ASQ* would have been prompted to anticipate the emergence in the near future of an independent Egyptian territory altogether.[103] Al-Muᶜtasim's change of policy finally caused the great revolt of AD 838 within Baghdad, the ᶜAbbāsid capital, forcing the Caliph to move the capital of the empire to Samarra that same year. This was the time when the fragmentation of the ᶜAbbāsid Empire became all the more apparent to everyone. Most importantly, it can be inferred that in Egypt the same period saw the greatest trend in the merging of the Coptic and Arab cultures, hitherto kept apart more or less.

The Caliphs had always required that the garrison-town be kept segregated from the local population. They regarded as a distraction from military consignment any involvement of the Muslim soldiers in non-military affairs. Therefore, the breakdown of such a social barrier may have contributed to a natural *arabisation*

---

[100] B. Evetts, *The History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 5, pp. 427-28.
[101] During the Caliphate of Muᶜāwiya, some 27.000 soldiers were permanently stationed in Alexandria, see Maqrizi, *Al-Bayan*, vol. 1, p. 168.
[102] B. Evetts, *The History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 5, pp. 428-29.
[103] B. Evetts, *The History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 5, p. 428.

of Egypt, further than all that the Caliphs and their emirs had attempted to achieve to that effect.[104] Although, one should bear in mind that the first time a Caliph allowed the Arab settlers in Egypt to become agriculturalists, and traders, happened under Hishām b. ᶜAbd al-Malik (AD 724-43) in a small scale.[105] But this allowance set a precedent as a result, and a spontaneous Arab immigration occurred, especially among the Qays tribesmen who prospered in Egypt during the first half of the 9th century AD.[106] The unattended consequences of the Coptic Church situation, when taken wholly as a breakdown of the Muslim institutions in Egypt, are multiple: a sustained and extensive period of anarchy had presided over the administration of Egypt. One may be disposed to identifying, as the present writer does, the period AD 749 to AD 842 with the situational background, which the *ASQ* may be referring to with regard to the fast dwindling Coptic component in the Egyptian society.

Lastly, it may be not incidental that the renewed Byzantine offensives in Egypt were the result of the awareness in Byzantium of the breakdown of the Egyptian institutions, not as one has suggested, the breakdown of the Copts' moral. Several Coptic insurrections had been meted with the most brutal responses, especially from the ᶜAbbāsids. One the other hand, the Byzantine naval incursions in the ports of Alexandria, Tinnis and Damietta in late 8th and first half of the 9th centuries[107] do suggest that the whole purpose for the expeditions was to capitalise on the endemic disloyalty in those *ribāṭ* vis-à-vis the central government. It should be born in mind that these three ports opposite the eastern Byzantium, essentially, had come to represent in the *faḍā'il* literature[108] the backbone of the Muslim propaganda (*daᶜwa*) concerning the eschatological virtues of *jihād*. It was an extension of the way the Muslim propaganda worked in the Northwestern Syrian border. Most importantly, it should be agreed that particular configuration of the Egyptian geo-political context caused the Arabic language to finally get a foothold the Egyptian society outside the confines of the Muslim administration. One should presume that it was not as considerable a

---

[104] ᶜAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, pp. 141-43.
[105] al-Kindī, *Al-Wulāt*, pp. 73-76.
[106] al-Kindī, *Al-Wulāt*, pp. 76-77.
[107] A.M. ᶜAbbadi, *Moslem Sea Power in Egypt and Syria* (Beirut, 1981), pp. 46-8.
[108] On Egypt, see I. ᶜAdawi & A. Umar (eds.), al-Kindī, *Faḍā'il Miṣr* (Cairo, 1971), p. 49; On Syria and Palestine, see G. Le Strange, *Al-Muqaddasi: Description of Syria, including Palestine* (New York: AMS Press, 1971).

swing at the expense of the Coptic language, but it was the vehicle of foreign cultural inroad in the Egyptian social fabric.[109]

The Historiography of the *ASQ*:

The construction of the Dome of the Rock in AD 695 attests of the Umayyad pretensions to the succession of the Davidic/Solomonic dynasty.[110] But with the third civil war ending in the ᶜAbbāsid revolution of AD 750, the virtual abrupt halt in the conquests, all that unity of the Islamic empire was about to fall apart. In AD 756, the last surviving member of the Umayyad dynasty fled to Spain, establishing himself as Cabd al-Rahman I of Spain, which becomes a separate Umayyad emirate. In AD 800, the Shīʾīte Aghlabids in Tunisia become virtually independent from the ᶜAbbāsid Caliphate. The conquest of Sicily Island, undertaken by the Aġhlabids of Tunis, took place in ᶜAbbāsid time from AD 827 to AD 902.[111] This state of affairs may have prompted the author of *ASQ* to speculate upon the disintegration of the Muslim empire altogether.

The author of the *ASQ* does alternate between the apocalyptic and historical reality as though the exercise was about interpolating apocalyptic material regarding, say, the time of Cyrus' governorship of Egypt, with the actual experience of Muslim governorship. One could perceive the rationale behind such literary device: to weave around a set of well-established historical facts a contemporary interpretation of those events in apocalyptic terms. Conversely, we have here the older apocalyptic dealing essentially with the Cyrus episode (AD 631-41), which are recast in the 8th and/or 9th century context under the same typology. For instance, the actual Muslim mistreatments of the Copts would be made to match the experience of Cyrus' persecutions.

Other historical materials such as Sawīrus' *The History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church* amply corroborate the facts reported in the historical part of the *ASQ*. However, the content of the apocalyptic part (roughly from page 16

---

[109] See E. Sivan, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (Yale: Yale University Press 1990), and more recently, E. Sivan, "The holy war tradition in Islam," *ORBIS* 42 (1998), pp. 171-194.

[110] M.J. Kister, "You shall Only set out for Three Mosques," in *Le Muséon* 82 (1969), pp. 173-96.

[111] That is, a protracted conflict of 75 years. The attempts of AD 652 and 667 already from the Muslims – those formers Christians – of Tunisian stock (*Ifrīqiyā*) having ended in failure. For an overview of the history of that episode, see M. Talbi, *L'émirat Aghlabide 184-296/800-909: histoire politique* (Paris: Librairie d'Amériques et d'Orient, Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1966).

onward) is rather entangled with less useful assertions. The most significant historical data, which the authorship of the *ASQ* had chosen to exploit, are disparate. But the episode of Cyrus sets to motion the whole apocalyptic scenario. Nonetheless, there are other significant events, such as the Muslim persecution, the ᶜAbbāsid revolution, and the rise to prominence of the Nubians that appear to feature in the *ASQ*. This suggests also that the episode of Cyrus' attempt to impose by force the Monothelete doctrine was fresh enough in the collective memory of the Coptic community. As such, we could infer that the Cyrus persecution of the Copts had been codified somehow, in a form of apocalyptic sayings befitting the new masters.

That it would serve as presage for the next, fully-fledged manifestation of the antichrist, although the term is never explicitly utilised,[112] it is through the gematria[113] that the number 666[114] will reveal the Antichrist, that is, the enigmatic *Lasmarini*. According to the Arabic MS 4785 (fol. 75-97) and MS 6147 (fol. 20-38), there is a notice about the last king of the Hijra. Unfortunately Zadieh's notice does not give much more than:

> "le dernier roi de l'hégire portera le nom de leur prophète et le chiffre de son nom est 666. Son nom arabe est Mohammed."[115]

What it does provide us with is the evidence from the letter of Pisentius (mid-7th century) that Christians had already coined several Muslim leaders' names as the name of the Antichrist, starting with the Prophet, but also variants of the same type such as *Mametios,*[116] *Mamentios* or *Mamadanos*.[117] The gematria number 666 for other Muslim leaders such as Marwān II would follow suit. At any rate, the context of the Muslim exactions in Egypt bespeaks the readiness of the Arab emirs to confront any Coptic rebellion, probably because Coptic nationalism was a reality to the Muslim emirs, since the Muslim exactions

---

[112] Often the author uses the formula: "the nation of the Arab hijra."

[113] Gematria originates from the Greek word *geometria*, meaning both "earth-measurement" and "geometry." See discussion in Chapter 4: the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*.

[114] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIX. See discussion below.

[115] J. Zadieh, "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de deir-el-Qalamoun. Texte arabe édité et traduit en français," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 374-404, esp. p. 404, n.1.Zadieh refers to the text of Pisentius quoting from the article of R. Griveau, "Notes sur la lettre de Pisuntios," in *ROC* 19 (1914), pp. 441-443, esp. p. 442; cf. F. Nau, "Note sur l'Apocalypse de Samuel," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 405-07, esp. p. 405.

[116] Martinez, *Eastern Apocalyptic*, pp. 263-64.

[117] R. Griveau, "Notes sur la lettre de Pisuntios," in *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 19 (1914), pp. 441-443, esp. p. 442.

surely did not operate in a vacuum. And if the Caliph Marwān II had become the object of the gematria shortly after the ᶜAbbāsid revolution, it can only mean that the Coptic apocalyptists would have counted this Caliph among the worst of their experience of the Muslim dominion. The *ASQ* suggests that the reality is that the actual ***ideology of the hijra*** is to be understood as the precursor of the Endtime:

> "Because they are an implacable nation whose strength went unnoticed among the communities of the saints. O! What is the meaning of this Hijra and their domination contrary to our Laws? "[118]

At this juncture, we are cast into the era of Muslim dominion, beyond the first wave of the Muslim conquests. The "implacable nation" which the author speaks about would be translated literally: "***whose strength is not found to their notice among the communities of the saints.***" The author sets out to explain the phenomena of this Christian apathy in the Arabs unprecedented records in history. There is perhaps an intention to cast the actual reality into apocalyptic overtones where the authorship is more comfortable, the apocalyptic world-view of the book of Revelation for instance. The term ***hijra***[119] used uniquely in the *ASQ*, should be a general reference to the beginning of the era of Arab's dominion, a dating formula and in extension the Muslim era. Here though, there is no doubt that the temporal reference had been left aside, possibly from current usage in the Coptic Church rather than an allusion to the historical event itself. Another possibility is that the early Islamic ideology was revived, so as to have come to the notice of our apocalyptist. The fact that the Muslims were expected to "***rule Jerusalem (Ierushalim) many times***"[120] would suggest that the geo-political situation of Egypt would have been still fluid, in the image of the war situation in Asia Minor[121] in the 8th to 9th centuries, although clearly this passage may be a sequel of the 7th century apocalyptic excerpt.[122] Another possible

---

[118] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. II.
[119] Meaning "migration," "flight," "exodus."
[120] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III. Or "they will rule Jerusalem several times." Note that the Hebrew name is used instead of al-Qūds.
[121] C.E. Bosworth, "The Byzantine defence system in Asia Minor and the first Arab incursions," in M.A. Bakhit (ed.), *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Bilād al-Shām During the Early Islamic Period up to 40 A.H./A.D. 640. The Fourth International Conference on the History of Bilād al-Shām* (Amman, 1987), vol. 1, pp. 116-124; M. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton, 1981), pp. 91-155.
[122] Apart from some minor Byzantine successes in defending Asia Minor, thanks to the so-called Asia Minor *themata* (the *Anatolikon*) defensive system adopted in the region (C. Mango

explanation may be that the use of Jerusalem here is an interpolation of the word *heptalophon* – i.e. the seven-hilled city – which would suggest a reference to the repeated Muslim sieges against Constantinople, or the protracted warring in western Asia Minor opposite Constantinople.

> "They (i.e., the Copts) will become negligent with respect to the Godhead,[123] and complacent in their intention.... It will not be a serious matter in their heart that, the chapters of the Lectionary[124] would be read and be missed by them, to such an extent that they will listen to it no more[125]..."[126]
>
> "They will eat and drink with them, and become frivolous like them, vain, fornicators like them, they will subject for themselves concubines like them, and they will defile their bodies in relationship with the women of the Hijra, (who are) unnatural and unclean. Men will have intercourse with men like them. They will practice extortion, and swear like them. They will oppress and hate one another, and they will hand over some of them to the nations without act of mercy. It will come from their mouths all sorts of futile chatters unworthy to say. They will set up out of the human shape an image of God in many ways. Some of them will invoke boars, dogs, and donkeys."[127]
>
> "And even the priests will fall into degeneration and dissolution, incapable to obey the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. And if any one of the priests (was) to utter a word of instruction such a person, he will say it by irritation without a burning desire over the people. And this will anger God against them, because they have departed from the canons of the Church and the teachings of our spiritual fathers. Therefore, He will impose on them the Hijra of the Arabs and their hatred for them. And so, they will incur destruction on them (with) many losses. And the land tax will be so much heavy (that) they will not be able to overcome it. And they will become poor, and the Hijra[128] will

---

& R. Scott, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6111, pp. 435-36; A.M. 6161, pp. 491-92). The *theme* system, which is ascribed to the Heraclean dynasty, became a system of administrative division of the land whereby military and civilian powers were at the hands of a governor, the *Strategus*. The theme system borne also a potential for military insubordination to the imperial authority. See C.E. Bosworth, "The Byzantine defence system in Asia Minor and the first Arab incursions," in M.A. Bakhit (ed.), *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Bilād al-Shām During the Early Islamic Period up to 40 A.H./A.D. 640. The Fourth International Conference on the History of Bilād al-Shām* (Amman, 1987), vol. 1, pp. 116-124, esp. pp. 120-21.

[123] See M. Canard, "*Da'wa*," in *EI*, vol. 2, pp. 168-70.

[124] *Fusul* has the meaning of "judgement" or "chapter." It implies that the rendering the judgements of the Lectionary were of great importance, besides the reading of the Gospel. Such important pronouncements were related to the creeds of the Church as opposed to the preaching of the Gospel. Thus, it was crucial that believers should attend the service in order to acquire valuable elements of defence of the Christian faith.

[125] I.e. The Gospel would no longer be relevant to them.

[126] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. IV.

[127] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III.

[128] This is a classical picture of the Muslim raids. The lands usually prosperous became gradually sterile as a result of continual campaigns of military expeditions, especially before the reaping of the crops.

> corrupt the entire work that is on the field. "Therefore, He (God) will impose on them the Hijra of the Arabs and their hatred for them (i.e. Christians)."[129]
>
> "And if anyone of them is overwhelmed by the zeal of God so as to utter the word of instruction from the canon, because of their submission they will be assailed, and like the lions they will open the mouth against him."[130]

But the reference to the Muslim dominion in India (from AD 712-14)[131] that postdates the Dome of the Rock by almost two decades requires a date of composition posterior to the conquest of Sindh. What is more, the notice that "*for a while, they (i.e., the Muslims) will live in peace with the Christians,*" may speak of the apparently "peaceful" continuation of the Christian pilgrimage at Jerusalem, but in fact it must have more to do with the fluctuation of the successive governors' policies in Egypt. This was meant to censure the assumption that the Christians may have seen become complacent and even resigned themselves to the reality that Islam was to become rooted in Egypt. And that "*the Christians will lust after them with regard to their achievements*"[132] might specifically allude to the impressiveness of the Muslim program of monumental building of the Caliph ᶜAbd al-Malik, for example, the Rock of the Dome at Jerusalem. The circumstances referred to here point definitely to the first half of the 8th up to the 9th century:

> "They (the Muslim Arabs) will rule over a huge territory, from the East to the West. They will possess Jerusalem for a long time,[133] and a multitude of peoples will associate[134] with them: Georgians,[135] Hebrews, Greeks, Edessenes,[136] those from Amida[137] and those from abroad, Chaldeans,[138] Persians, the Berbers, the Sindi,[139] and Hindi. They will indulge in their conquest to (the point of) exalt(ing) themselves. For a little while, they will live in

---

[129] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VIII; Zadieh, p. 397.
[130] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. VII-VIII; Zadieh, "L'Apocalypse de Samuel...", p. 396.
[131] See below.
[132] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III.
[133] Clearly, the possibility that the Muslim rulers will undertake the building of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem is not even a remote conjecture.
[134] Is this an indication of a broad support the Arab conquests generated as far as the Indian world, or those Sindi and Hindi were in fact Yemenites, who are often confused to the Hindi? In any case, the point was certainly made that a conglomerate of variegated religious nationalities welcome the rise of Islam, or at least, had some personal interests in this event.
[135] Iberia.
[136] Lit. "citizens of Urfa,or Urhai."
[137] Or "abroad," is a place unknown to me. If the word is to mean "extremity," then the sentence would refer to the Edessenes from abroad and the autochthonous (motherland).
[138] The Sassanide Mesopotamia, where a large community of Nestorian Christians prospered.
[139] In the region bordering West Pakistan and Afghanistan.

> peace with the Christians. But after that, the Christians will lust after them with regard to their achievement.[140]

Given that Egypt would singularly become a multi-ethnic, multicultural district of the *dār al-Islām*, it is no wonder that the author of the *ASQ* should define that situation as a breeding ground for syncretism, hence the author's warning against the false impression of peaceful co-habitation.

The Muslim Exactions:

According to the Chronicle of Zuqnīn written *ca.* 775, ᶜAbd al-Malik made a census (Ar. *ta'dīl*) from which the Muslims instituted (~AD. 691) for the first time the tax *per capita* (Ar. *jizya*) or poll-tax, in contrast to the former tax (Ar. *kharāj*; Syr. *maddātō*) on land. "*From this all (sorts of) evils began to well up against the Christian nation... From this point onwards the Sons of Hagar began to subject the Sons of Aram to Egyptian slavery.*"[141] Walīd ibn al-Malik would call for another census based on the previous, "*but it added much to the evil.*"[142] There is little wonder that Walid ibn ᶜAbd al-Malik should figure among the most evil Muslim rulers of the apocalypse since the latter Caliph's reign is described as a period of anarchy: "*He was a crafty man, who multiplied exactions and oppression more than all his predecessors. He completely wiped out all deserters and bandits.*"[143] Among his other exactions Walīd seized the most holy cathedral of Damascus, according to Theophanes, it was *out of envy of the Christians, because this church was surpassingly beautiful*![144] In AD 708 the Caliph Walid enlarged the mosque of Damascus by annexing the splendid church of St. John the Baptist, along with its finest decorations. As to underline the work undertaken by his father at Jerusalem,[145] this Caliph wanted to underscore the fact of the Muslim superiority displayed across the *dār al-Islām*.[146] Therefore, our apocalyptist is at pain urging his fellow Copts not to slacken in the face of the Muslim successes. It is the unsuspecting Christians –

---

[140] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III. The Copts' admiration for the Muslims' exploits is obvious here. Jerusalem in particular, which the ASQ says they will possess for a long time, is of interest.
[141] A. Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, p. 60.
[142] A. Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, p. 61.
[143] A. Palmer, *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, p.79.
[144] C. Mango & R. Scott, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6199, p. 524.
[145] C. Mango & R. Scott, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6199, p. 524.
[146] On Walīd imposing only Arabic in administrative registers, see C. Mango & R. Scott, *Chronographia*, A.M. 6199, p. 524.

for having so long left their neighbouring Arabs' peril to grow "unnoticed," says the author, "unchecked" should we say – who are to be blamed for the actual subjugation of the Copts. What is more, the apocalyptist seems to be aware of the Muslim tradition according to which Hagar, the maidservant of Sarah, who bore Ishmael to Abraham, was of Egyptian origin, and for reason of kinship the Prophet expressly enjoined his followers to treat the Egyptians well.[147] Even so, the Christians' attitude that led to the present situation is not amended.

> "They will abuse the elders and they will confine the virgins and restrain them in their houses against their will.[148] They will nod at the Christian faith, and they will become hostile to the priests, and the humble monks... "[149]
>
> And they will remove their timbers, and their bricks, and their precious stones, from which they will build for themselves lofty and splendid houses. And they will take away the Crosses from over the Churches, and they will convert many Churches, and turn them for their libraries,[150] out of their great arrogance and disdain for the Christians. .."[151]
>
> And they (the Arabs) will survey the land in records,[152] and they will subject it to tax, and there will be a great thirst upon the land, and many people will die of starvation... And people will wake up from their night sleep to find at each one's door that three indecent officers will request each a different tax decree.[153] As a result, it will destroy great cities,

---

[147] Al-Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. 4, ed. L. Krehl & Th.W. Juynboll, (Leiden, 1862-1908), p. 1970.

[148] J. Ziadeh translates this passage very differently from me: "they will assail them in their houses because of the taxes." However, there is no reason why this should be so, as the intention is to portray the plight of every Christian individual in a way that corresponds to their status. So the Christian virgins were to be subjected to the obvious treatment that occurs in war times, especially when the Muslim policy of the time aimed at spreading the Arab blood, by all means. Christian virgins and other young women were enslaved and used as concubines against their will. For instance, in M.M. Khan (tr.), Sahih al-Bukharī *The Book of Al-Maghâzi* (Riyadh, 1994), p. 773, an entry reads as follows: "we went out with Allāh's messenger for the battle (*ghazwa*) of Banū Al-Mustaliq and we received captives... and we desired women and celibacy became hard on us and we loved to do coitus interruptus. So when we intended to do coitus interruptus, we said, 'How can we do coitus interruptus without asking Allāh's Messenger while he is present among us?' We asked (him) about it and he said, 'It is better for you not to do so, there is no person that is destined to exist, but will come to existence till the Day of Resurrection.'" Here, the Prophet prohibits "coitus interruptus" on the grounds that it is the prerogative of God to decide the birth of a person, therefore things should go their course, given that God granted them (women) captives, the latter were to be taken advantage of "without second thoughts!"

[149] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VIII.

[150] This word *Jawāmi*^{c} should be translated as meaning "libraries." Though the term is usually used for mosques, here it conveys another usage for the Muslims altogether, as an expression of contempt and pride over Christian institutions.

[151] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. VIII-IX

[152] Evetts, *History of the Patriachs*, vol. 3, pp. 74-76. Indeed Ubaid Allāh ordered a census and the cadastre of all properties under the patriarchate of Alexander II.

[153] The Shī'ī Imām Ja'far al-Sādik is reported to have declared that a dhimmī should be forced to pay as much as they could be forced to in order cause them depression and lowliness (*sagār*), which is meant to make them prefer to become Muslims (see Muḥammad Ibn Mas^{c}ūd al-^{c}Ayyāshī, *Tafsīr*, (ed.) Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Mahallātī, (Beirut, 1991), vol. 2, p. 91, n. 41; ^{c}Alī Ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *al-Tafsīr*, (Beirut, 1991), vol. 1, pp. 287-88).

> and towns, and villages, and ports. And this land of Egypt, which abounds in trees, and beautiful garden places, and forests, and pomposity, because of such many taxes imposed upon the land, because of the arrogant people of little mercy."[154]
>
> "Therefore, He will impose on them the Hijra of the Arabs and their hatred for them. And so, they will incur destruction on them (with) many losses. And the land tax will be so much heavy (that) they will not be able to overcome it. And they will become poor, and the Hijra[155] will corrupt the entire work that is on the field..."[156]
>
> "And they will extort from them the tax upon their soul, so that they will sell their clothing and belonging, to clear their taxes. And they will acquire every thing belonging to the people for motives they will estimate for themselves. And they will harass them over it, and the people will be moved from city to city, from country to country, seeking air without finding it."[157]

If any, as Jones had already hinted at, the Copts seem to have maintained a tenacious solidarity with the orthodox Coptic patriarchs and doctrines.[158] Therefore, since the apocalypse of Samuel reinforces this premise, a number of questions require answers: was the apocalypse authorship directing that very Coptic nationalism, under the disguise of the Copts' historical resistance to Chalcedon, against the well-entrenched institutions of the Arab Muslim hegemony instead? If so, what period in the late first to the second century AH suggests itself the best from internal evidence? Given that the rejection of Chalcedon – it was by now a more-than-three-century old controversy – was the revolving point of the ideology advocated by the authorship, what type of congruent elements of the 5th century then lent themselves so readily to the contemporary situation of the Coptic Church? And in what way anti-Chalcedonianism conveyed the Coptic nationalism over against the rule of Islam? What is the significance – its relationship to, or bearing on the Byzantine iconoclasm (especially the interval of Irene) – of the strong Mariology in the apocalypse, given the congruent incidence of the Holy Man's features on the Coptic orthodoxy?

---

[154] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. IX-X.
[155] This is a classical picture of the Muslim raids. The lands usually prosperous became gradually sterile as a result of continual campaigns of military expeditions, especially before the reaping of the crops.
[156] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VIII.
[157] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. X.
[158] A.H.M. Jones, "Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?" in *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1959), pp. 280-98, n. 1.

Geopolitic Considerations in this *ASQ*:

We are told that ᶜAbd al-Malik's construction of the Dome of the Rock (*Qubbat al-Ṣakhra*) cost seven years of tax revenue from his richest province, Egypt.[159] The *ASQ* seems to refer to the period reprieve during ᶜUmar II's reign, who was Caliph for only three years (717-720). Naturally, the Egyptians who had so long carried the burden of the Caliphs ambitious monumental programs were possibly the most relieved from the tax reforms. ᶜUmar II was notably the only Umayyad caliph singled out by ᶜAbbāsid historians for his Islamic virtue. He deposed Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab and appointed various people, both Yamanīs and Qaysīs, to govern the eastern provinces. He attempted to reduce taxes and resolve the complaints of the *mawālī* converts, who were taxed as if they were not Muslims. Only unbelievers were required the pay the *jizya* (poll tax). The *mawālī* land was not sold to Muslims but was turned over to local villages, which paid the *kharāj* (land tax).

ᶜUmar II tried to improve religious tolerance by restoring churches to Christians, synagogues to Jews, and the oasis of Fardak to the followers of ᶜAlī, and he abolished the despicable practice that Muᶜāwiya had started of cursing ᶜAlī after the Jumᶜa (community) prayers. Yet ᶜUmar II may also have discriminated against Christians and Jews by enacting laws such as the one prohibiting them from riding a horse. (There is confusion as to whether these were instituted by ᶜUmar I or ᶜUmar II.) The ascetic ᶜUmar stopped the foreign wars and conquests. To his son, who asked for stern measures to root out evil, he replied, "That means the sword, and there are no good reforms that can be accomplished by the sword."[160] Unfortunately most of ᶜUmar's reforms seem to have been reversed by his successor Yazīd II (r. 720-724), who indulged himself while his Qaysi advisors governed. Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab escaped from prison and raised a rebellion against Syrian rule. His *jihād* (holy war) was organized at Basra; they took the garrison town of Wasit and marched on Kufa.

The Basra judge al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. AD 728) spoke against violent revolution even against rulers he disapproved of, disagreeing with many Qadaris, whose doctrine of human free will he shared. Al-Hasan noted the verse in the *Qur'ān* stating that God only sends astray evildoers. Troops led by the skilled general

---

[159] *Mujīr al-Dīn*, vol. 1, p. 241, line 11.

[160] See R. Payne, *The History of Islam* (New York: Barns & Noble Books, 1992), p. 140.

Maslama ibn ᶜAbd al-Malik defeated the rebels and killed Yazīd in August 720. Maslama later was removed from his governorship for not sending surplus revenues to Damascus. His replacement ᶜUmar ibn Hubayra was a Qaysī and pursued the Muhallabīs and Yāmānī leaders. Consequently, Yazīd II increased taxes and tried to reform the administration of Egypt. Concerning the multiplication of taxes in Egypt at the expense of the Christians, Sawīrus Ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ mentions those measures, and the first of which as means of financing the Muslim fleet construction:

> "In those days Alexandria was governed by a man whose name was Theodore [the Chalcedonian. He] went to Damascus to the leader of the Muslims whose name was Yazīd son of Muᶜāwiya, and received from him a diploma giving him authority over the people of Alexandria and Maryūt and the entire neighbouring district, and declaring that the governor of Egypt had no jurisdiction over him. [Theodore demanded of Agathon] the money which he was bound to pay, taking from him thirty-six *solidi* every year [as jizya for his clergy], but he also exacted from him that which he spent upon the sailors in the fleet (*ᶜalā' l-nawātiyya fi' l-ustūl*)."[161]

Thus, it is likely that this period of tyrannical Emirate of Egypt run from AD 705 to 742 during which Christians, and particularly the monks and clergy, paid a heavy toll in martyrdom, indiscriminate capitation and other unreasonable taxes, would be the background of apocalyptic speculation in the monastic circles in Egypt. The population suffered the wrath of the Emirs from their massive emigration in order to escape their hardship.[162]

When in AD 750 ᶜAbd al-ᶜAbbās, later on nicknamed "the Blood Shedder," succeeded in rebelling against his master the Caliph Marwān II, creating a general state of insurrection, the Nubian king Mercurius, nickname "the Second Constantine,"[163] seized the opportunity to assert his independence. It is noteworthy quoting what Sawīrus al-Muqaffaᶜ says of this Mercurius, when he alleged that he:

> "Was entitled Great King, upon whom the crown descended from Heaven; and he governed as far as the southern extremities of the earth, for he is the Greek king, fourth of

---

[161] Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ, *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria III: Agathon to Michael (788)*, ed. and transl. B. Evetts, Patrologia Orientalis V, (Paris, 1910), pp. 1-215 [257-471], esp. p. 259.

[162] E.L. Butler, "The Tyranny of Twelve Emirs," in *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 395-404.

[163] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, p. 140.

> the kings of the earth; and none of the other kingdoms stands up against him, but their kings attend him when he passes through their territory. And he is under the jurisdiction of Mark the Evangelist, for the patriarch of the Jacobites in Egypt exercises authority over him, and over all the kings of the Abyssinians and the Nubians"[164]

Thus, the Nubian king Mercurius (AD 744-68) raised the expectations of salvation among Egyptian Copts. Little wonders then that the *ASQ* raises the prospect of the unification of the Ethiopian king with the Roman, especially when the ᶜAbbāsid revolution was played out in Egypt.[165] Likewise, his successor the Nubian king Kiriakous invaded Egypt at the head of a 100,000 strong army of horsemen and another 100,000 camels.[166] At last the two Patriarchs of Egypt, Michael the Copt and Cosmas the Melkite managed to make common cause in order to lead an effective army against the Emir ᶜAbd al-Malik.[167] In effect, Egypt enjoyed some regional autonomy of sort in the absence of a central Muslim leadership. Both Muslim leaders drew for the battle at Abusir Kuridis, in the province of Banū-Souef of Egypt, across the Nile River, in which Marwān was killed. The death of Marwān in AD 750/51 and the overthrow of the Umayyads by the ᶜAbbāsids brought about a four years respite for the Christians of Egypt. Cosmas is known to have participated in the iconoclast controversy then raging in Byzantium and Syria. In Egypt, the worship of images was never at fault, since those churches of Egypt contained so many statues and images. Now both branches of the church agreed upon the prohibited use of statues for worship, though both allowed pictures.

Eventually, the ᶜAbbāsid revolution brought about a doubling of taxes and harsher conditions of living for the non-Muslims across the empire, but particularly in Palestine.[168] Even the Caliph

> "*ᶜAbd Allāh [i.e., al-Ma'mūn]* (AD 813-833) ordered that anyone who paid the *kharāj* would receive a certificate (ⲗⲉⲍ) so that no one could take anything further from him, as has been done previously. Because of that affliction many people were ruined; each [governor] who came was such an oppressor that many people were ruined and

[164] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs,* vol. 3, pp 145-46.
[165] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 3, pp. 170ff
[166] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, vol. 3, p. 144.
[167] From ᶜAbu Saliḥ's account; see E.L. Butler, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 405-19.
[168] M. Levy-Rubin, *The Continuatio of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū l-Fath al-Sāmirī al-Danafī* (Princeton, 2002), pp. 57-65

innumerable families perished, and towns and villages were vacated and fell into ruin."[169]

This last clause seems to contradict the premise that at last a Caliph had bothered to curb the routine exactions against the *dhimmī*. It should mean simply that the general condition of the non-Muslim subjects was then much more severe since the overthrow of the Umayyads. The Caliph al-Ma'mūn is also credited for founding in Baghdad in AD 832 the institution known as the House of Wisdom (*bayt al-ḥikma*), which purpose was to disseminate in the Muslim world the Hellenic classical heritage in Arabic.[170] In addition, he was personally interested – although the Caliphs al-Manṣūr (AD 754-775), al-Mahdī (AD 775-785), and Hārūn al-Rashīd (AD 786-809) had shown similar intellectual dispositions – in theological discussions, the most notable instance being his debate with Abū Qurrāh in AD 829.[171] In other words, the time was ripe for intellectual exploration among the elite of the ruling Muslims. Despite the sporadic unrest in Egypt, the turn of the 9th century marks the dawn of factual interactions across the religious divide. It was the time when the apologists began to master the doctrinal tenets of their opposites. The literature that emerged was one of imaginary dialogues between religions and each one sought to outclass the argument of the other. The *ASQ* should be seen as a literary product of that period.

The Context of the Composition of the *ASQ*:

It has been difficult for the scholarship to date the apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamun, precisely because the history of Egypt is replete with foreign rulers, especially in the Muslim era.[172] But, once the period of "the tyranny of the

---

[169] M. Levy-Rubin, *The Continuatio of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū l-Fath al-Sāmirī al-Danafī* (Princeton, 2002), p. 76.

[170] See D. Gutas, *Greek Though, Arabic Culture* (London: Routledge, 1998), esp. pp. 131-45.

[171] For Abū Qurrāh's debate with the Caliph al-Ma'mun, al-Kindī's debate at al-Ma'mūn's court in AD 820, see N.A. Newman (ed.), *The Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue: a Collection of Documents from the First Three Islamic Centuries* (Hatfield: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1993), pp. 355-545.

[172] L. MacCoull, "Three Cultures under Arab Rule: The Fate of Coptic," in *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 27 (1985), pp. 61-70, esp. p. 66; J. Iskander, "Islamization in Medieval Egypt: The Copto-Arabic 'Apocalypse of Samuel' as a Source fro the Social and Religious History of Medieval Copts," in *Medieval Encounters* 4 (1998), pp. 219-27, who dates the apocalypse at around the reign of the Fatimid ruler of Egypt al-Ḥakim bi-amr (AD 996-1021); cf. J. van Lent, "The Nineteen Muslim Kings in Coptic Apocalypses," in *Parole de l'Orient* 25 (2000), pp. 643-93, esp. pp. 664-65.

twelve emirs," as Butcher qualified the years AD 705-742 of the Coptic Church,[173] is recognised from the apocalyptic text, then we have a clear *terminus post quem*, for the composition of the apocalypse. Then after, we may consider the period of the revolt of the Copts running from roughly AD 725, up to the ᶜAbbāsid Revolution (AD 750), which incidentally the apocalyptist seems to discourage, unless within the framework of the unity of the faith, we may hold the firmest *Sitz im Leben* of the speculative period of this apocalyptic tradition. But the year AD 725 cannot be discarded as the starting point of the apocalyptic speculations either. MacCoull views the apocalypse as a source for the history of the decline of the Coptic language, where in fact, in the context of the Coptic revolt, it should be related to the re-affirmation of the Coptic language instead. She has shown that most Egyptians clung more tenaciously to their Coptic language than, say, the Palestinians had held onto their Aramaic.[174] At this point, it is fair to adduce that the *ASQ* praised the Coptic language in eschatological terms in a way that might reflect the Muslim praises (*faḍā'il*) of the virtues of the country or town, possibly simultaneously, but one can suspect that the latter had probably influenced the former. The implication of this is the fact that the *ASQ* may not be, after all, a pointer to the actual decline of the Coptic language, but a genuine Coptic propaganda reclaiming the virtues of an ancestral language that happen to be also the ecclesiastic tongue. With respect to religious iconography, there is here an instance of novel aesthetic representation of the *communicatio dei*.[175] This is important to be distinguished from the *lingua sacra*, which is the language of the dominant culture, whereas for the *ASQ* the language of *communication dei* is purported as the language in which the basic formulations of the faith were received. In any case, this would have come posterior to the addition of the octagon to the Dome of the Rock.

The present writer proposes the view that three periods, at least, could be discerned in the apocalyptic text: the original period that witnessed the creation of the legend surrounding the *LSK*; the speculative phase during which Samuel is made to have uttered prophetic sayings, like Mary the Theotokos, about the

[173] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 395-404.

[174] L.S.B. MacCoull, "The Strange Death of Coptic Culture," in *Coptic Church Review* 10 (1989), pp. 35-45.

[175] St. Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225-74) spoke of the Communication with God (*communicatio dei*) in the sense of a participation involving oneself opening up to God.

threats to the orthodoxy, the iconoclastic movement, especially the iconoclastic Council of AD 754 etc.; lastly, the writing of the apocalypse proper, possibly in anticipation of, or following the ᶜAbbāsid revolution. On reflecting, backward, the apocalypse is strangely positive with regard to the veneration of the Theotokos. As it is also Zaborowski's point of view, the apocalypse of Samuel should be ascribed to the anti-Chalcedonian monastic tradition that produced the *LSK* earlier,

> "whereas the later *ASQ* is a trajectory backward explaining the conquest *ex eventu*, concerned with preserving an established tradition against apathy under an oppressive government."[176]

However, despite this backward outlook, the *ASQ* betrays the contemporaneous debate, that of the Byzantine iconoclasm. The Tome ripped apart by Samuel may be a hint at the Council of AD 787, which constituted the most radical volte-face of the ecclesial position of Byzantium since the Monothelite controversy of the early 7th century. It was this "anti-Chalcedonian" move, I suppose, that the *ASQ* liken to the future advent of the Roman ideal. It is no wonder that the intervening iconophile period of the empress Irene (AD 780-803), along with the coronation of Charlemagne (AD 800) was perceived as a prelude to the unification the faith.

The so-called decree of ᶜUmar II (AD 717-20), despite how worthless historically it might be, mentions that this Caliph had at some point granted exemption of the *jizya* tax to those who converted to Islam. It was issued at the hills of a period of severe hardship in Egypt at least. It seems that the new Caliph sought to stop the tax haemorrhage of the past decade. But this was a respite compared to what was to follow, until the Caliphate of Hishām (AD 724-43). In view of what ps-Athanasius records about the census and the tax burden – see Sawīrus ibn al- Muqaffaᶜ on the census in Egypt under ᶜUbaid Allāh[177] –

---

[176] *ASQ* = Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn. See J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūm," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-15, esp. p. 108.

[177] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, pp. 74-5: He commanded that the people and the cattle should be numbered, and the lands and vineyards measured with measuring lines... that a leaden badge should be placed on the neck of every man... and he had them numbered, and wrote down the names of all of them... and he doubled the taxes." See also the exactions of Ubaid Allāh , B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs*, pp. 86-7, where Hishām had him removed as emir of Egypt, banished him to the Berbers. The latter eventually rebelled against the tyrant, and massacred his children (~AD 743).

> "whenever the harvest of the field is ripe, blood will appear from the soil. On that day, the wise men will flee to the mountains. For after that, the people who were restrained in predicament of the land of the Arabs will come out, which are the troops of the Gog and Magog."[184]

This Coptic rebellion caused the Caliph Hishām to pay closer and personal attention to the affairs of Egypt at last, and the Coptic Church at large.[185] Hence the Caliphate of Hishām (AD 724-43) is described by Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffa[c] as fair to everyone, and as a blessing and a relief for the Coptic Church.[186]

The Call to Avert the Usage of Arabic.

When the apocalypse of Samuel prohibits the usage of Arabic, it does so by asserting that the usage of the Arabic tongue would de-nature the ethos of Christianity, because that language would muddle up (*yaqtaliṭu bihim*) all other languages together, or in other words, would become extinct. Thus, the actual Christian (*naṣārā*) world at large would be reduced to a mere "nation" (*al-[c]umma*), the apocalyptist's favourite title for naming the Muslims. That the ongoing arabisation of the *dār al-Islām* is decried is not surprising, since it became Muslim state policy from late 7th to early 8th century. But when the apocalyptist alludes to the "*Christian brothers of southern Egypt who still know the Coptic language and speak it,*"[187] there remains no doubt that the southern Egypt where Coptic, and Greek, were the languages still upheld as the ecclesiastical, and liturgical languages suggests another regime than the Islamic one. But southern Egypt was about the Coptic Nubia, and the apocalyptist was probably pointing toward what the kingdom of Nubia represented then, an enclave of unfettered Christianity, and moreover a kingdom of Monophysite confession.

---

analysis of K.B. Wolf, "Muḥammad as Antichrist in Ninth-Century Córdoba," in M.D. Meyerson & E.D. English (eds.), *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), pp. 3-19.

[183] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 400-01.

[184] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIX.

[185] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 400-04.

[186] Quoted in Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic*, p. 267.

[187] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn* pp. 22, l. 17- f; 23, l. 1; cf. J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūm," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-15, esp. p. 113.

on the Copts that followed, one may be inclined to sit these entries after the general census of AD 730. The hardship in Egypt was further exacerbated by the Umayyad Caliphs' uneasiness with the governorship in Egypt. It explains why the Caliphs resorted to a rapid changeover of emirs in order to forestall the governors' personal ambitions. No other subjected territory had suffered from the consequences of both the sharp decrease of the state income from the Egyptian tax collection, but also because the Coptic resilience, which had always persisted ever since the subjection of Egypt, now threatened the *status quo*. The emirate of ᶜAbdallāh ibn ᶜAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān (AD 705-709) reached unprecedented proportions of oppression. He appears to have enjoyed inflicting hardship on his Christian subjects.[178] Qurra ibn Sharīk al-Absī (AD 709-714) who succeeded him was even worse, especially when thousands of Copts sought to emigrate.[179] As for the emir Usāma ibn Yazīd (AD 715-717), not only he enforced the yearly payment tax on monks by wearing a wrist ring engraved in Arabic with the year of the *hijra* and the name of their home convent. The renewed hardship only increased the flow of emigration to the extent that he decreed that no Egyptian should travel without a passport, for which each person should pay a fee.[180] The *ASQ* seems to allude to these capricious administrative policies, of the public despair, and of the general disruption that ensued.

Moreover, the vivid description of tax[181] burden that Sawīrus ibn al- Muqaffaᶜ gives of the same period in apocalyptic terms, does agree with the *ASQ*, as well as the pseudo-Athanasius. The apocalyptist is too well aware of the futility of a disjointed rebellion.[182] The Coptic revolt of AD 725, in the eastern half of the Delta,[183] seems to correspond to what the *ASQ* suggests when it says:

---

[178] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 395-96. This governor trebled the tribute to be paid by the clergy, even a special fee was required on Christians to bury their dead.

[179] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 397-98.

[180] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 398-99.

[181] Already mentioned during the reign of Heraclius, in B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol.2, p. 493: "they used to call the tax the *bakt*, that is to say that it was a sum levied at so much a head. And this went on Heraclius had paid to the Muslims the greater part of his money; and many people died through the troubles which they had endured."

[182] The apologist Alvarus of the Muslim ruled Spain had hinted to that attitude despite his passionate defence of the contemporaneous martyrdom for the sake of Christianity. See the

It is not here the time and place to weight the evolution of the usage of each of the two languages in Egypt, but from the above discussion, one could infer that, since Caliph ᶜAbd al-Malik ordered that the Muslim administration Arabic be substituted for the Greek in AD 702[188] the Coptic language for ecclesiastical usage would have suffered no injury. Throughout the Muslim Empire, Arabic only managed to dominate Greek from the 9th century onward. In Spain, there are evidences that the usage of Arabic in the Spanish society would have threatened to supplant Latin only in mid-9th century, if we can trust, for instance, the complaint of Alvarus on the subject.[189] In general, the practice of bilingualism in the field of trade, is borne out by the numismatic evidences of the early Muslim mintage, e.g., Arabic-Greek or Arabic-Latin coins.[190] For instance, the excavations at Nessana in the Negev desert have revealed interesting inscriptions and papyri of the Umayyad period (~ AD 670-80).[191] They suggest that the settling there of communities of skilled workers of Egyptian origin.[192] Nessana lies along the caravan route between Jerusalem and Mount Sinai. The local Coptic guides to the Holy Sites worked in a cosmopolite environment in the pilgrimage industry.[193] The picture provided from the artefacts, inscriptions and papyri is that several thriving multilingual small communities, involved themselves in industries and craftsmen associated to the Holy Land. These religious communities had therefore preserved their ethnic, denominational and linguistic identities. And the *ASQ* does suggest an alarming decline in the predominance of the Coptic language. This was probably due to the steady influx of foreign nationals in Egypt. But, as MacCoull's analysis of papyri evidences also suggests, up to AD 1050, the Egyptians spoke Coptic

[188] P. Hitti, *The Origins of the Islamic State* (New York, 1916), p. 301.
[189] J. Gil (ed.), *Corpus scriptorum mozarabicorum* (Madrid: CSIC, 1973), 2 vols, in vol. 1: pp. 299, 314-15. There are other evidences to support the relevance of this trend in Egypt. See discussion below.
[190] B. Bagatti, *I Monumenti di Emmaus el-Qubeibeh e dei Dintorni* (Jerusalem, 1947), pp. 173-77, esp. p. 174; there are also ceramic artefact bearing Arabic-Greek inscriptions dating to AD 743 and later, see for instance p. 141.
[191] C.J. Kraemer, *Excavations at Nessana 3: Non-Literary Papyri* (Princeton, 1958), n. 56.
[192] The Coptic alphabet and script derive from the Greek.
[193] C. Kraemer, *Excavations at Nessana 3: Non-Literary Papyri* (Princeton, 1958), n. 72, 73.

fluently and the liturgical language was essentially Coptic, and they used Arabic only reluctantly. But all that changed significantly by AD 1200.[194]

Samuel as the Epitome of the Presence of God in the Holy Man:

In Egypt, the holy man of Egypt was portrayed as the presence (*praesentia*) synonymous to "the power" by which monastic life regulates itself.[195] It is the Holy Man's being that renders God visible because he is the "nave," that is, the central point, the locus of holiness in the community, both during his lifetime and posthumously.[196] Therefore the life of the Holy Man, the *anthrōpos theou*, becomes a revelatory medium, through which heavens irrupt down vertically into the monastic community, a life that mediates his community's access to God.[197] Elsewhere, upon performing a miraculous healing on a woman, the on-lookers declared: "*He is a man of heaven who has come down to earth.*"[198] Indeed, on another occasion the same woman called upon Anbā Samuel again. She urged her pagan husband as follows:

> "Will you not send for Samuel, the man of heaven, to come and heal me from my sickness?"[199] Other healings occurred when the sick were "laid in the place where he passed by, and the moment they saw him, their health was restored to them."[200]

The figure of Apa, "the father,"[201] is self-regulatory, in the sense that the new society of the *oikoumenē* thus founded derives its *raison d'être* from the "commanding presence"[202] of the founding Apa Pachomius was believed to

---

[194] L.S.B. MacCoull, "Three Cultures under Arab Rule: The Fate of Coptic," in *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie* 27 (1985), pp. 61-70; and her "The Strange Death of Coptic Culture," in *Coptic Church Review* 10 (1989), pp. 35-45.

[195] M.S. Burrows, "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33.

[196] M. Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1959), pp. 20-23.

[197] Pachomius' commission was "to minister to the human race and to unite all to God." Quoted verbatim from M.S. Burrows, "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33, esp. p. 15.

[198] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel of Kalamūn*, p. 97.

[199] *Idem*, A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel.*

[200] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel...*, p. 99.

[201] Anbā, originally was synonymous to elder in earlier monasticism. Then, possibly through the NT dictum "Abba, Father"(see Mk. 14: 36, when Jesus is petitioning to God; cf. Rom. 8: 15; Gal. 4: 6, where the Apostle Paul speaks of the Sonship of the believers) that the ideas of Abba and Father were conflated into the fatherhood of Anbā Pachomius. But this is only conjectural.

[202] P. Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 51.

Chalcedonian community of Scetis,[210] and whose champion of the anti-Chalcedonian orthodoxy was none other than Anbā Samuel.[211] He allegedly

> "left the mountain of Scetis and came to the province of the Fayyum... by divine providence, and came and settled in the mountain of Kalamun."[212]

Mary's dwelling place is thus also the resting place of Samuel. As the title Anbā "father" becomes the extension of the Heavenly Father,[213] so also the dwelling place of Samuel had become an extension of the cult of Mary. In the *LSK*, appeared in a vision to Anbā Samuel holding a "golden reed," with which She goes to take the measurements of the Church. She declares solemnly: "*This is my dwelling-place where I shall live forever... from this time forward I shall establish for myself a dwelling-place in this mountain and I shall dwell in it with Samuel, the servant of my Son.*"[214] Mary states to Samuel also that she "will intervene for him with God (*tushaffaᶜ fīhi ᶜinda Allāh*) to accept his sacrifice in the Jerusalem of heaven,"[215] as though the promised intercessory work of Samuel will have the backing of Mary, if not altogether the start of a new messianic era:

> "And the merciful God will make us worthy to obtain mercy and he will forgive our sins through the prayers of our holy Father Anbā Samuel, and the intercessions of the Mother of God the all time Virgin."[216]
>
> "My Son will protect Samuel and his children because of the sufferings he has undergone."[217]

The author of the *ASQ* intent was therefore to elicit the veneration of Mary and Anbā Samuel as being an integral part of the worship of Jesus. The theme of Mary petitioning her son on behalf of the Bridegroom having run out of wine is evoked here.[218] The abundance of wine being is itself a symbol of messianic times, since Jesus revealed his glory for the first time, and the bible adds that Jesus' "*disciples put their faith in him.*" It may be the theme of the visibility of

---

[210] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel...*, pp. 79-80. After much suffering, Anbā Samuel encouraged the others, before saying (p. 99): "I shall go back to my monastery, the place which the Lord has ordained me to live in."
[211] R. Basset, "Le synaxaire arabe jacobite (Rédaction copte)," in *P.O.* 3 (1909), pp. 245-545, esp. pp. 405-08.
[212] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel...*, p. 79.
[213] J.-F. Guilmont, "Paternité et mediation du fondateur d'Ordre," in *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* 40 (1964), pp. 393-426, esp. pp. 395-96.
[214] Alcock, *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun*, p. 100.
[215] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XVI.
[216] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XXII.
[217] See Alcock, *The Life of Samuel*, p. 100.
[218] John 2: 1-11.

have so interiorised the Scriptures that "the Scriptures were alive in him."[203] Veilleux has pointed out that in Pachomius community, the Scripture was to become the rule par excellence. The horizontal coenobitism was regulated with direct reference to Scripture.[204] Thus, the Scriptures, in Pachomius' spirituality, delineate the contours of continuity of the Christian tradition, and it was precisely through that principle of Pachomius' interiorisation of the Scripture that Pachomius has become the embodiment of the true tradition, which also makes him the spiritual father.[205] Owing to Pachomius' perfect unity with God, the Holy Man deserves the title of Anbā "the father" precisely because he had become the dwelling place of the heavenly Father.[206]

It is fair to deduce from the above that the narratives of the Life of the Holy Man were mainly concerned with recording the genesis of the new humanity around the founding figure Anbā Pachomius. This seems to be a pattern in Late Antiquity world that around the figure of a human being, heaven and earth came to be joined.[207] In the *ASQ*, Mary the Theotokos declares to Anbā Samuel that She had chosen the monastery of Samuel and would remain in it as Her dwelling place:

> "This is my own dwelling, I abide in it because I have loved it with my servant Samuel, and with all his loyal children who follow his communion."[208]

Anbā Samuel urges his followers to strive to capture the essence of the martyrdom of the Coptic fathers and uphold their way of life as a token of orthodoxy. Here is where the monastery of Qalamūn becomes a cultic shrine by virtue of the spiritual presence of Mary. The ploy was probably an elaborate ideology of a breakaway monastic group that parted away from presumably[209] a

---

[203] A.N. Anastassakis (tr.), *Vita Prima* Graeca (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975), pp. 15, 23.
[204] A. Veilleux, "Holy Scripture in the Pachomian Koinonia," in *Monastic Studies* 10 (1974), pp. 143-53.
[205] A. Veilleux (tr.), *The Life of Saint Pachomius and his Disciples* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1980), vol. 1, p. 33.
[206] In the Sahidic version, Pachomius acquired the title "the father," which the text explains away by adding: "he deserves to be called father because our Father who is in heaven dwells in him." Quoted verbatim from M.S. Burrows, "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33, esp. p. 15; cf. Ephesians 3: 17; Colossians 1: 20.
[207] P.R.L. Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), pp. 87-92; see also P. R.L. Brown, *The Cult of the Saint: Its Rise and Function in Late Christianity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981), pp. 5-6, 86-87.
[208] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. XVI.
[209] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel*..., pp. 80-81, speaks of the "polluted Tome of Chalcedon."

God in the Anbā Samuel the otherwise invisible God that was intended in the *ASQ*, and which John of Damascus conceived of.[219] But what is a precedent though, is the fact that the iconophilia of the *ASQ* should stand strictly within the contours of messianic expectations.[220] In the sense that Samuel assumes the embodiment of Christ in his advent, he took up his cross,[221] and in his becoming the axis of access to the heavenly Father. In particular, that it is associated with its notion of adherence to the traditions of the Coptic fathers. Indeed, this may be illustrated in what follows. Upon appearing to Samuel, a relative of Samuel set out to build a church there to be consecrated in the name of Anbā Samuel. Not surprisingly, the holy man declined the proposition. Then, Joseph the Bishop of the Fayyum came down to consecrate it "*in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and of the Holy God-Bearer, the Holy Mary.*"[222] So, Mary was added to the Trinity. And given Mary's earlier pledge to Samuel, it is no wonder that God would be worshipped alongside Mary and Samuel and a host of the Coptic saints.

The present writer suggests that iconophilia was not about the defence of material images as such, despite the fact that the image of Mary stands on the wall of the monastery, and deserves the high deference of the monks. It was about preserving the continuity of the lineage of the fathers of the messianic age, starting with Mary at the Wedding of Cana, through Jesus, the Apostles, the Coptic fathers, among whom was Samuel standing as the *last father*[223] at the advent of Islam. As such, one could argue that the *ASQ* set out to re-appropriate

---

[219] See for instance the chapter 9 "Vision of the Invisible: The Iconoclast Crisis," in J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1969), pp. 132-48.

[220] Contrary to the Iconophiles, whose views suggest merely the cult of saints as didactic in purpose.

[221] It is worth noting that in Pachomius' spirituality the imitation of Christ goes actually as far as to adopt the cruciform shape (arms outstretched as a magnified form of *askēsis*) during prayer. See M.S. Burrow, "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33, esp. p. 19.

[222] See Alcock, *The Life of Samuel*, p. 105.

[223] M.S. Burrow, "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33, esp. p. 19, where he comments about the fatherhood of Pachomius: "He is... 'the Apa's Apa!' As such, it comes as no surprise that the narratives fashion him into an *imago Christi* in several striking ways... Thus Pachomius interprets the 'form' of the Christian life in terms of the 'carrying of the cross' of Christ." It is worth noting that the imitation of Christ goes as far as to adopt the cruciform shape (arms outstretched as a magnified form of *askēsis*) during prayer.

the Muslim claim according to which Muḥammad and his scripture were last the line of transmission of the Revelation of God.

In the same token, Mary promises to Samuel that he will beget "*spiritual children.*"[224] In the Greek version of Vitae Pachomium, it is said regarding discipleship that: "*A man who begets another (i.e. another monk) in the work of God,*" the narrator affirms that such a man "*is his father after God, in his age and in the age to come.*"[225] The dogma in the *ASQ* is no less than the commitment to the "commandments" (*waṣīyah*, Pl. *waṣāyā*), or "spiritual instructions" of the "spiritual fathers" (*'abā'ūna l-rūḥānīyyīn*), the so-called instructions, or teachings (*taʿlīm*), and to the "canons" (*qāwānīn*; sing. *qānūn*). What was really meant in the *ASQ* by scripture, commandments, or canons, and "our fathers" will remain open to discussion. But the precedence that coenobitism had hitherto set might be indicative, that a new Christian humanity was envisioned there too. Anbā Samuel is portrayed as an *exemplum* to imitate in order to partake of the salvation that was to follow. It is to be noted that Anbā Samuel is particularly anxious to be counted as follower of the Coptic fathers in the chain of succession, namely, Gregory, Severus,[226] Antony, Macarius, and Shenute (*Shelūdhah*).[227] The last father, Abbott Shenute attended what was believed then to be the last Ecumenical Council, which is the Third Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (AD 431). As such, Anbā Samuel stakes his lineage to the orthodox teaching of the Church through these Coptic heroes, over against those Egyptians[228] who surrendered to Chalcedon.[229] Moreover, in the *LSK*, Anbā

---

[224] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. XVI. The present writer suggests that the word *al-Mutamaskin* be translated the "spiritual ones" instead of the "faithful ones", or "loyal ones." This would be in keeping with the general notion of "spiritual fathers," "spiritual counsel," "my beloved children," "children of the kingdom of heaven," by which the author wished to convey the idea of spiritual children that Anbā Samuel is promised to earn because of his deeds. Indeed, in the *LSK*, Anbā Samuel is promised "children of heaven" p. 76; or "spiritual children" p. 82. He is granted the "consolation of children after the flesh" p. 87, n. 96. The word "disciples" is from the Coptic word "Mémathtes" (Gr. *Mathētes*), pp. 81; cf. A. Alcock, "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn," in *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), pp. 321-45, esp. p. 345, n. 93,

[225] Quoted verbatim from M.S. Burrows, "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian Vitae," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33, esp. p. 16.

[226] Ar. Sawīrus.

[227] See the *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XV; cf. A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel...*, pp. 114-15.

[228] Incidentally, the title "Copt" derives from the word "Egypt."

[229] See A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel...*, p. 81, n. 58: "As to what happened then in Scetis, we shall be silent, and we shall turn to the holy champion Apa Samuel..." The Coptic Church was

Samuel is said to be "*the father of the holy community of the Virgin of the mountain of Kalamun in the province of the Fayyum.*"[230]

Iconophilia in the *ASQ*.

If there is any hint in the text that the *ASQ* had any misgiving about the worship of icons, it would be found most clearly in a single statement in the middle of a long sermon addressing Christians essentially. But this is no iconoclasm. It was the unique opening, it seems, to castigate those who submit to Islam as an idolatrous generation:

> "Men will have intercourse with men like them. They will practice extortion, and swear like them. They will oppress and hate one another, and they will hand over some of them to the nations without act of mercy. It will come from their mouths all sorts of futile chatters unworthy to say. They will set up out of the human shape an image of God in many ways. Some of them will invoke boars, (others) dogs, and donkeys."[231]

The idea that those who bow down to the supremacy of Islam, are bound to become like those who profess Islam is emphasised. The *ASQ* presents this religious evolution in the process of Christian moral decay that would follow after the advent of the nation of ***hijra***. Basically, the mingling with Islam is to blame for this turn for worse. Worst still, women will become so dissolute that they will go as far as to declare: "*I will act upon God who created me.*"[232] It is difficult not to ascribe this last statement to mere apocalyptic asperities. Otherwise, the issue of intermarriage could well have raised serious concerns in some quarters. It is therefore possible that the context, in which the moral consequences among Christian women were alluded to, suggests that the authorship of *ASQ* wished to single out the influence of Islam upon their prospective Christian wives.

---

mistaken for being Monophysite. They believed in the two natures, however indivisible. But the rift was a political one, intended to isolate and suppress the Alexandrian See. From the Council of Chalcedon (AD451) until the irruption of Islam in Egypt, the Coptic Church lived in virtual exclusion. But there remained internal divisions at the time the Muslim invaded, and beyond.

[230] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel...*, p. 74.

[231] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III, Folio 21, Zadieh, p. 393: "ils représenterons l'image de Dieu, c'est à dire l'homme, de plusieurs façons." Another translation would give: "*I will make myself like God who created me.*" All in all, it boils down to the idea of moral decay that ends up in idolatry.

[232] *Idem*, folio 21, Zadieh, p. 393, *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III.

Some of these Christians, the *ASQ* says, will invoke[233] various sorts of animals as though there was any such paganism in Islam, or that the Muslims could have tolerated this type of religious behaviours. Zadieh interprets this passage as if these women were naming, or even calling (on) those gods by the name of different animal species.[234] This pun, however, would make perfect sense in the context of the Garden of Eden, where all sorts of animals, among which the Serpent, could potentially have diverged Eve from the monotheistic worship. The seduction of the Serpent is therefore what the *ASQ* perceived as the inspiration of the cult of icons. The fact that the text condemns that God should be represented with anthropomorphic features suggests that the authorship of *ASQ* distinguished between the icon of saints and the pictorial representation of God, or the Godhead. The Muslim charge against the artistic representation of living beings could not be alluded to here, given that the Muslim prohibition included all living creatures, let alone the Godhead. However, what the authorship of the *ASQ* might have meant by women bragging that "*I myself will act upon God who created me*,"[235] as an open criticism of the Christian representations of Jesus, and the icon of the Mother of God carrying the Infant Jesus, along with. By contrast, the Mariology of the *ASQ* is as conspicuous as is its anti-Chalcedon stance. Mary the *Theotokos* is given a prominent space in the *ASQ*, as an eschatological figure rather than a figure of the temporal defender. Her intercession would occur only at the behest of Anbā Samuel should his followers satisfy to the obligation of preserving the Coptic traditions and Scriptures called "canons," which were bestowed onto them from the Egyptian Fathers.

The Iconography of the *ASQ*:

The iconography of the *ASQ* is construed as a referential feature out of which all the Copts should be sufficiently equipped with the means to discerning the present time of error and hoe to deal likewise with the other heresies such as those that assailled their predecessors. Not only will this degradation in the

[233] Cf. the translation of Zadieh, "Apocalypse de Samuel..," p. 391.
[234] Zadieh, p. 391: "Ils représenteront l'image de Dieu, c'est-à-dire l'homme de plusieurs façons. Ils appelleront les uns porcs, [les autres] chiens, [d'autre] des ânes."
[235] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. IV; Zadieh, p. 391: "Elles iront jusqu'à dire sans crainte: 'J'agirai contre Dieu qui m'a créé..."

Copts appreciation of the Christian assets come to catch up with them unawares, but the Copts' behaviour with regard to those elements of the Christian iconography would contribute a great deal to this iconography disappearing. Anbā Samuel outlines the salient points:

"They will abandon the commitment to God's sheltering commandments. (But) for him whose heart remains vigilant, (he) will be preserved from imitating the actions of the Hijra, so that his soul will be saved."[236]

"Many books from the Church will become meaningless, because none of them will be preoccupied with the books, for their heart will tend toward foreign books. They will forget many of the martyrs in that time, for their history will no longer exist, and will not be found anymore. The ones found besides the biographies of the life (of the saints), when read will be found by many of the people not understandable, as there is no acquaintance of their language. Many churches will be(come) ruins in that time, deserted on the night of the Feast, and also on the Sunday night."[237]

"They will not find one who will read among them writings on noblemen, even any of the 40 saints for our salvation."[238]

"Furthermore, they will not be shaken (for) the great city, which is the place of shade with all its borders, where the good Messiah is kept secret in their books. (They were) mighty in the knowledge of God, whose Coptic language (was so) lovely in their mouth like sweet honey, exhaling among them like a spirit of delight, because of their elegantly elaborate speech in Coptic."[239]

"And this will anger God against them, because they have departed from the canons of the Church and the teachings of our spiritual fathers. Therefore, He will impose on them the Hijra of the Arabs and their hatred for them."[240]

"And they will take away the Crosses from over the Churches, and they will convert many Churches, and turn them for their libraries, out of their great arrogance and disdain for the Christians. But the holy martyrs will pay attention to the actions being committed in the places of their martyrdom, and they will raise their complaint to God"[241]

"do keep up with all that I say to you today, and all the monastic constitution which our spiritual Fathers laid down for you, and urge the future generations until the century of centuries..."[242]

"I say to you that the Mother of God will intervene for him to God to accept his sacrifice in the Jerusalem of heaven. And he who will dedicate a vow for this holy Church"[243]

---

[236] [236] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. III, Folio 21r; Zadieh, p. 393: he translates *Ikabra kem bi yasīr* as "je vous dis quelques details."
[237] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. V-VI.
[238] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VI.
[239] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VI.
[240] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VIII.
[241] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. VIII-IX.
[242] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIV.

This cluster of prophetic utterances and summons bespeaks the twofold character of Anbā Samuel. On one hand, he comes close to characterise himself as transcending the earthly world up to the denizen of the spiritual world. And one the other hand, he is a living person who has already gained the heavenly citizenship on the grounds of vicarious his sacrifices. Such a dedication to the preservation of the Coptic heritage might well become scarce, groans Anbā Samuel, given the trend of disloyalty to the Coptic "spiritual Fathers" that he observes – notwithstanding that he remains confined within the monastery – all around him. The offence caused is made known by the very martyrs who are said to "*pay attention to the actions being committed in the places of their martyrdom, and they will raise their complaint to God.*" It is not just the enemies who become the object of their paying attention to the events, but those descendants of the martyrs who do not heed their prescriptions, but committing some derelict actions despite them being conscious of "*the places of their martyrdom.*"

Since the time of deprivation will certainly occur, during the Islamic era, the following moments (the capture of Jerusalem for a long time;[244] the Muslim expansion from East to the West; the assimilation of foreign nations under Islam; etc) will cause the Christians to "*lust after them (i.e. the Arabs) with regard to their achievement.*" Then after, the *ASQ* goes on to depict the religious corruption of the Christian institutions in direct contrast to the prosperity enjoyed by Islam. It is quite interesting that the authorship of the *ASQ* should reserve such a disproportionate portion of the apocalypse to a sermon – 8 out of 11 folios – on elaborating upon the contrast that will materialise, without citing any of the monumental achievements of the Arab Islamic Empire. What is more, the *ASQ* speaks of the Copts who will assimilate so thoroughly the Arabic culture that they will be confused with the Berbers:

> "They will speak in the Arabic language, and boast about it so that they will indeed not be known as Christians. Rather, one will presume concerning them that they are Berbers."[245]

---

[243] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XV.

[244] Zadieh makes the Arabs' capture of Jerusalem a recurring event, un-necessarily in my opinion.

[245] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VI.

In other words, the author of the *ASQ* would want us believe that the Copts might have diluted so extensively the cultural heritage of their Fathers that there would be nothing Coptic left for them to cling on, but only to correlate with the dominant ideology of the *hijra*. Here, the temptation to convert to Islam might be alluded to, and yet the authorship does not supply us with a tangible incentive for the Egyptians to do so, let alone, the psychological impression of the Islamic superiority.

It is rather likely that the authorship of the *ASQ* would rather elaborate on the imaginary collapse of the Coptic identity. The *hijra* was to the Arabs what Coptic should have been to the Egyptians. Taken in this way the Coptic language would have carried the spirit of Christ that had animated the fathers of the Egyptian Church, that spiritual force that once had spread far and wide. As such, the Coptic language is the main and foremost iconographic item representing the Egyptian Church. Thus, to the authorship of the *ASQ*, the usage of the Arabic language in ecclesiastic affairs, and within the Church is as abhorrent as a declaration of faith in Islam, and therefore, says anbā Samuel: "*do not let a Christian speak in Arabic in these sites, because that would amount to the most terrible religious confession.*"

The Coptic books, which the *ASQ* refers to, are probably the Lives of the Coptic saints, the records of their martyrdom, or the "*40 saints for our salvation*" are for the author of the *ASQ* as much of an asset that would be missed in so far as the spiritual insights would be "*kept secret in their books*," for instance.

The same holds true concerning the Coptic language. It could be inferred that the author points at it as the most important asset of them all. As such the community from which the *ASQ* might have worked out – possibly in response to the Muslim calligraphy[246] – the iconic means of preserving the Coptic culture, while pre-empting the possibility of the Muslim prohibition of the usage of Coptic. A contemporary witness of such state of affaires, which is the commentary of Alvarus of Spain, is of great significance. An entry in particular is of interest.

Like the author of *ASQ*, Alvarus reprimands his fellow Christians for their zeal in assimilating the Arab-Islamic culture while the Christian Latin literature is

[246] See discussion in the Conclusion Chapter bellow.

deserted. Similarly, Alvarus points at both the books and the language as sacred religious assets. His despair at the end of his *Indiculus luminosus* is worth reproducing in full:

> "What educated person, I ask, can be found today among the laity of our faith who, attentive to the holy Scripture, explores the Latin volumes of any of the doctors [of the church]? Who is there who burns with evangelical, prophetic, or apostolic love? Do not all the Christian youth, handsome of face, fluent of tongue, conspicuous in their dress and gestures, outstanding in their knowledge of gentile erudition, and *sublime in their ability to speak Arabic*, most avidly pull down the volumes of the Chaldeans, read them most intently, discuss them ardently, and, collecting them with great zeal, make them known far and wide with the praises of their tongues, while at the same time remaining ignorant of ecclesiastical beauty and disdainful of the rivers flowing from the paradise of the church as if they were something vile."[247]

Alvarus' commentary is also a testimony of rapid acculturation occurring among the Spanish Christians by his time (AD 850s), which runs parallel to the distress of the author of the *ASQ*. We may assume, in Alvarus time, that the Christians of Muslim Spain had all connections with Byzantium abruptly severed from AD 711. Some contacts - at least a few traffic of information or some exchanges of novel religious ideas - with the Egyptian Copts via Morocco could well have taken place. Alvarus elaborates a scheme according to which the Muslim dominion of Spain will end by AD 870.[248]

The affected pessimism about the survival of the Coptic language would reflect the first half of the 8th century context, but the *ASQ* is anachronistic already with regard to the period of the great Muslim achievements during the decades around the turn of the 8th century. At the height of the Muslim dominion, when the Arab Muslims will boast saying: "*there will be ever no other nation that will conquer us*,"[249] the *ASQ* would be expressing exactly the actual sense of hopelessness among Copts that the tide would ever turn in their favour. Furthermore, the period would correspond to the times of harsh taxations in Egypt, and the mistreatment of the monks (fl. 23v- 24v), and the rapid turn over of emirs would have added to the burden. This is hardly a prophecy on the hardship to come when it would suffice a sermon on the un-necessary fatalism

[247] Quoted verbatim from K.B. Wolf, "Muḥammad as Antichrist...", p. 16. The emphases are mine.
[248] K.B. Wolf, "Muḥammad as Antichrist...", p. 8.
[249] Fl. 24v; *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. IX; Zadieh, p. 397

on the part of the Copts. Only far and few in between that a positive word of assessment is given of the steadfast ones. Thus, the *ASQ* affirms that only a few "*remnant who shall keep up the standard, shall know the Coptic language, and they shall speak in it.*"[250]

The authorship of the *ASQ* wished to lay stress on the zeal, or the "striving" to achieve a goal, for instance, in the usage of the word "intention," lest "Satan will mislead the heart, and he will throw in it his ideas and intentions."[251] This comes in contra distance to the *hijra*, at least in the sense the author of the *ASQ* understood and intended it. When speaking of Cyrus the *Muqawqas*, the *ASQ* affirms this point:

> "In his oppressive strife[252] he will pursue father *Benyamin*,..[253] But He (God) sent against them this nation (i.e., Islam) that only seeks gold, not godliness according to their vow in prayer."[254]

One can only wonder if the author makes a deliberate use of the term *jihād* because there is no alternative word to convey better the idea of "evil zeal" directed at God's elect. The contrast this word creates with godliness is startling: father *Benyamin*,[255] whose devotion and divine privilege the Muslim governor strived for, is what attitude – in remaining true to the name he bore – kept him going.[256] The latter strives for gold, not godliness. The fact of the matter is that the poll-tax levied against the non-Muslims speak for itself.[257] What is a fact though, can be inferred from the role that the author makes the figure of *Benyamin* to play in the apocalypse. The despondency of the Copts is expressed in stark contrast to the divinely intended effect of the bearer.

The expression "people of intention" (*ahl al-niyyah*), as al-Ṭabarī records it with regard to the Copts' initial "belligerent" reaction to the Muslim hegemony, was

---

[250] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VI; Zadieh, p. 395.
[251] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XII.
[252] Lit. *jihād*. It is theologically significant that the word *Jihad* should serve to illustrate the endeavour of this enemy of the orthodox Christians in Egypt.
[253] Lit. "son of my right hand" or "my beloved."
[254] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. II.
[255] Lit. "son of my right *or* power."
[256] A.J. Butler, *The Arab conquest of Egypt and the last years of the Roman dominion*, (Oxford, 1978), p. 561f, thinks that the name Abū Maryam, the Metropolitan of Miṣr, is a distortion of the name Benjamin. In al-Ṭabarī, *History*, vol. 13, pp. 166-67, he was in the company of "some people of purpose" (Ar. *ahl al-niyyah* = "people of intention"), whom the *Muqawqis* urged to fight off the Muslim invaders. The Copts were animated with a primitive eschatological "intentions" to put up a visceral resistance against the Muslims; cf. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. 8, p. 3040.
[257] Ar. *jizya*.

presumably the Coptic equivalent for ***muhājirūn*** when it came to upholding the orthodox faith. In the *ASQ* the word *ᶜaghrāḍun* conveys the same idea: purpose, aim, intention. It is used eight times in the *ASQ* either in relation to people's inner attitude to the Church life, or with regard to some external forces that affect one's behaviour. In addition, when the word is used in conjunction with *ḍāwatu* means "nature," or "essence" of the intended action. Hence, one can understand the sentence as referring to the things of God. But, here it is the correct Christology, which is seen as warrant for God's blessing, rather than a mere interest in God. Neglecting the defence of the Christology would ultimately cause their own downfall, as this weakness will undermine their faith in Christ. But according to its Muslim meaning, it is related to the propaganda movement appealing to Muslims to give their allegiance to an Imam. The root word ḍāᶜ*wa* denotes the means of founding a new empire. For instance the ᶜAbbāsid ḍāᶜ*wa* which was, strictly speaking, propaganda for a member of the Prophet's family (*Shī'at al-Muḥammad*). Given that the author of the apocalypse is definitely playing on the term Hagarenes[258] – a term being related to the Muslim "fighter in the path of Allāh" (Ar. *mujāhidūna*)[259] – in its eschatological sense,[260] the very use of Arabic in contrast, becomes synonymous with apostasy. Thus, the casual intention even for ascertaining of one's doctrinal orthodoxy incapacitates the God-given Christian mind. Whatever the rationale for the story, there might remain some truth in al-Ṭabarī's rendering of the confrontation, the clearer indication yet that a parochial anti-Arab feeling[261] greeted the Muslim Arabs.[262] Therefore, the author of the *ASQ* appears to assert that the Coptic fathers had duly anticipated the actual course of action, so that their advice therein would seem a matter-of-fact:

---

[258] Syr. *mĕhaggĕrōyē*.
[259] S. Griffith, "Free Will in Christian Kalām: Mōshē bar Kēphā against the teachings of the Muslims," in *Le Muséon* 100 (1987), pp. 151-4.
[260] Genesis 16:12, cf. 17:20-21.
[261] See C.E. Bosworth, *The Arabs, Byzantium and Iran: Studies in Early Islamic History and Culture* (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1996). Bosworth's analysis of the anti-Arab political activism in Persia does not suggest that such sentiments were motivated or fuelled by any nationalism and ideology. Rather, it was politically parochial and nativistic.
[262] See R.H. Charles (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu* (London Williams & Norgate, 1916), pp. 178-81.

> "...and they will imitate the Hijra in their actions.[263] They will even call their children by their names, and will renounce the names of angels, and prophets, and messengers,[264] and martyrs. And they will commit actions worse than I could report to you, so that your heart will hurt so much. It is that they will give up the lovely language of the Coptic, from which the Holy Spirit very often spoke to our spiritual fathers. But, their children will learn it from their youth because they will speak in Arabic language and boast of it, so that the priests and monks will dare them in turn, for they will speak in the Arabic language and boast of it and so within the Temple. Woe, then, O! My beloved children, what can I say? In that period there will be readers[265] in the Temple who will not understand what they will recite, nor what they speak (about). Because they have forgotten their language, how terribly tearful it will be for the Christian world,[266] because they have forgotten their tongue, and have spoken horribly in the tongue of the Hijra.... The Temple will become so ordinary to them that not even anything from the doors of the Temple will remain.[267] It will be so neglected that not even half a service[268] would be completed, because they will neglect the seven rituals of the Church, which they will not complete.... They will forget many of the martyrs in that time, for their history will no longer exist, and will not be found anymore. The ones found besides the biographies of the life (of the saints), when read will be found by many of the people not to be understandable, as there is no acquaintance with their language. (p. 6)" [269]

The status of Muslim superiority was re-inforced by the *mawālī* status, itself being considered superior to the *dhimmī* status during the Umayyad period (AD 661-750). Over time, the Islamic institutions became increasingly so effective a means of conversion that the apocalyptist betrays his dismay that the Coptic heritage should fade away so effortlessly. The status of the ᶜAbbāsid *dāᶜwa*,[270] in the ranks of which many *mawālī* had contributed to the revolution, and which is distinct from the Umayyad *mawlā* seemed superior to the latter, since it gave

---

[263] This must refer to the Muslims' religious and traditional behaviour, which wase notoriously taken over or imitated across the Christendom that came under the Islamic dominion.
[264] Or, "Apostles, prophets." So also was entitled Muḥammad (participle of the verb *Hamdoun* = praise!).
[265] Lit: "*al-qurrā'* = vocaliser of the sacred text," i.e. the *Qur'ān*.
[266] Lit: "the inhabitant of the Christian faith." We have here the contrast that the author had tried to draw between the two religions. The confrontation has turned into Muslims' favour because the Christians have lost the mystic of their Coptic language, which was endowed with supernatural powers.
[267] Is this vandalism?
[268] Lit: "a deacon." I believe that the service of the Church is the target of the author's protest. There seems to me that the inexperience and youthfulness of the ecclesiastics were probably an issue at the time.
[269] The liturgy of the Egyptian Church was probably consisted of the reading of the lives of the saints, besides and possible in priority the service was made of this.
[270] Lit. a missionary movement, "summons," from the root word *daᶜi* = to propagandise in the cause of the Imamate.

incentive of social betterment. It attracted millenarians and esoteric movements in those ethnic groups (Shī'ī, Khārijī, Hāshimiyya, etc.) for which the hopes for instant salvation in this world appealed strongly. It should not come as a surprise that the peak of conversions to Islam occurred around the ᶜAbbāsid revolution.[271] It may be conjectured that the Copts did not remain insensitive to the *mawālī* aspiration, of whom the author of the apocalypse of Samuel castigates as deserters, those who: "*will forget many of the martyrs in that time.*" The author is probably aware of the ᶜAbbāsid *ḍaᶜwa* revolutionary movement, and is stigmatising its effect upon the Coptic population. Thus, the Coptic martyrology, asceticism, and church history are plentifully reflected in this apocalypse. For the writer, the spirit of Coptic history and tradition was on the verge of being entirely submerged by the Muslim Arabs, unless the fathers' spirit is revived and duly revered. As if the writer wished to underline the spiritual benefits embodied in the Coptic stock, the writer of the apocalypse has it that the Muslim Arabs were after the obliteration of their heritage, having perceived the power of steadfastness therein.

Here is where the cult of the saints, and martyrs, and the relics are deemed adequate, not just in view of the circumstances of the Muslims' dominion, which "is contrary to the Coptic laws," but as utterly appropriate in reaction to that very situation. The saints' watching over what is going on in "the places of their martyrdom" is not passive. They affect actively by their holy presence the turns of events. Since the martyr-saints are witnesses of their descendents' deeds,[272] they become *de facto* aware of the misdeeds of their children's opponents. And the saints are made to intercede, too, as a result of their partaking in the martyrdom. Otherwise, the hosts of saints may be inclined to withhold their intercession:

> "But the holy martyrs will pay attention to the actions being committed in the places of their martyrdom, and they will raise their complaint to God. And they will say their petition to God: 'You who judge impartially, Judge between us and this nation which keeps committing such actions in Churches. Certainly, God of righteousness, pronounce a judgement against them, and pay them back according to their deeds.' On that day,

[271] R.W. Bulliet, "Conversion to Islam and the Emergence of a Muslim Society," in N. Levtzion (ed.), *Conversion to Islam* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), pp. 30-51, esp. pp. 33-35.

[272] Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."

> Jesus the Messiah, Word of the Father, and being the Son will gratify their heart, and He will encourage them saying: *'O! My dear Lords, Be patient until their time is accomplished. Indeed, the source of their deeds that you observe is from the sins, which my people have committed, while they were rejecting my decrees and commandments. And they are imitating this nation. Because of that, they (i.e., the Muslim Arabs) will lord it over them until the completion of their time.*'"[273]

There is a clear call to emulate the achievement of the martyrs. However, the cult of the saints is presented as neither incompatible with the Lordship of Jesus-Christ, since their intercession in the direction of Jesus is enthused by the very messianic nature of the person of Anbā Samuel, nor is the Copts' reverence for their saints any different from the Byzantine reverence for the emperor, since Jesus himself calls those saints "my dear Lords."

> "Therefore, as for me, O! My beloved children, I (Samuel) beseech you, I request humbly to commit those who come after you at the end of time to hold in check their soul to the end. And do not let a Christian speak in Arabic in these sites, because that would be the most terrible religious confession.[274] For many will dare to speak within the sanctuary[275] in the language of the Hijra in that time... And he (an old devotee) spoke to me when I inquired about the future of the rulers of the Hijra, saying to me: "*O! My son Samuel, perceive and understand what I declare to you. At that time when the Christians will endeavour to speak within the sanctuary in the tongue of the Hijra, in which they will blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Trinity, distress after distress will increase a sevenfold for the Christians at that time.*" (p. 10)"
>
> "Therefore, O! My beloved children, strive[276] in every endeavour to keep away from the suggestions of Satan, and do not follow the tendencies of our heart and flesh, for Satan will mislead the heart, and he will throw in it his ideas and intentions... O! My beloved children from believing in the Sabeans[277] and to live at the expense of others, and do enter the place where is a woman, because indeed the stone causes with the firestone to project fire and will burn many motes (p. 11)"

In a word, the Coptic perspective on the cult of the saints makes it a non-issue altogether. The author of the apocalypse shows no concern with the Trinitarian and Christological implications of the icon worship, more than it is with regard

---

[273] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. IX.

[274] The author reckons the importance of the language for a religious penetration. This he highlights especially within the compounds of Christian religious services. The word may derive also from the Greek "*logizomai* = to reckon, or enter into account"; cf. Rom. 4:3.

[275] Gr. *bema*.

[276] *Jihād* is the in the context a call to religious duty as well as an active resistance to the Muslim conqueror.

[277] The Sabeans were a Judeo-Christian movement, of a Gnostic which developed in Egypt. I believe that Zadieh is mistaken here to translate this passage as referring to children. The Sabeans as a concurrent religious group must be considered instead.

to the cultic language. Neither is the exasperating dominion of the Muslims a matter of traditional theodicy. Rather, Jesus himself, according to the apocalyptist, states that this present era of the *hijra* will last the time allotted them, never any longer than that! Conversely though, this apocalypse does not hold the Jews responsible for the Muslim heresy, as is the case traditionally. Instead, the Sabeans[278] are deemed a greater danger for the Coptic faith, the source of satanic adulteration of the Coptic faith. Who were these Sabeans to warrant the *ASQ* most important warning is not clear, and one can only speculate. There were at least two sets of Sabeans: the Sabians and the Sabeans. In North-west Syria the Sabians were monotheists, had prophets and scriptures (comprised of five books), and are believed to practice ritual immersions, hence the root name that gave their name: they call themselves *Mandai Yahiai* meaning "followers of St. John the Baptist." Their slogan "there is no god but God"[279] may have endeared the Sabians to the Prophet. In Aramaic the Baptists are *Sabi-yun*. These Sabians are possibly those who are referred to in the Qur'ān. They had a basic conception of the Trinity; practiced the sign of the cross (often use the cross as relic); the use of running water plays a major role in marriage, prayer, and purification rituals. They lived an ascetic life and refrained from certain meat. But most importantly, it seems, the Sabeans had misgivings regarding the reverence to the icons. By all means, the notice of the Sabeans in the *ASQ* might be alluding to the charge of syncretism this sect was dubbed with. Yet, even this attitude does not explain the hostility of the author of the *ASQ*. It is also said of Abū ʿĪsā Isfahānī that he believed in both Jesus and Muḥammad.[280] In Abū Qurrāh's "Rationalist Apologetics,"[281] where he set out to sample the fundamentals of Christianity, there is a useful brief of the tenets of

---

[278] But the root Arabic word *saba'a* means to turn, convert (see discussion in previous chapter). Thus, the Prophet himself was called sābī. According the some early Muslim writers (ʿAbd ʿAllāh Ibn ʿAbbās (d. ~ 650): "The religion of the Sabians is a sect of Christianity"). Some others suggest that the Sabeans were a Monotheistic religious community between Christianity, Judaism, and the Mandeans. They practiced baptism, believed in prophets, and some suggest they had no scripture of their own. See the study on the subject of the Sabeans of S. Gunduz, *The Knowledge of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 23-25.

[279] The Sabeans are considered descendents of the Queen of Sheba. Sometimes they were regarded as Mandeans, or "people pf the Book" (Qur'an 2:26; 5:69; 22:17); see S. Gunduz, *The Knowledge of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 18.

[280] Harkavi (ed.), Kirkisānī, *Kitāb al-anwār wa'l marakib* , p. 284.

[281] See recently the text translation and commentary of J. P. Monferrer Sala, "Apologética racionalista" de Aba Qurrah en el *Maymar fi wuPūd al-Haliq wa-l-din al-qawm* II/*2,12-14*," in *Anales del Seminario de Historia de la Filosofia* 22 (2005), pp. 41-56.

the religious denominations of his time regarding the Godhead. He exposes, as he puts, the deficiencies of the other religions, of which presumably, the Sabeans figure among what his categorised as "the Syriac communities of heretics," the Muslims being in his scheme the "new pagans" so to speak.[282] Abū Jūsuf Ja^{c}qūb al-Kirkisānī in his work on the Jewish sects (AD 937) characterised the Sabeans as related, if not affiliated to the Christians. Having attributed the Christian doctrine to Paul (פולץ) who is said to have denied the necessity for carrying out the commands and other ordinances. He goes on to ascribe to later Christian philosophers (פלאספה אלנצארי) the assertion according to which "*religious ordinances were given to the Israelites in Divine wrath. The Israelites chose these ordinances for themselves because they resembled those of the Sabians; while those of the Egyptians, to which those of the Sabians were related, were known to them through their stay in Egypt.*"[283] Kirkisānī attests of their existence in his days, since at least the Council of Nicaea (AD 325).

For there is, it seems, another set of Sabeans of Greek descent, whom the Muslims encountered by AD. 639 at Ḥarrān (in actual Turkey),[284] who are described as practising a Nabatean paganism: they worshipped Sin, Mars, and *Shamal* the lord of the spirits, and performed human sacrifices. The Sabeans were therefore a*strolaters*, also called *magi*, those who worshipped one God, but approached Him indirectly through some created representative symbols, such as the sun, moon, stars other celestial bodies (e.g. the Black Stone, which is a meteorite). Their belief system also consisted, it seems, in multiple baptisms. Hence, the term Sabians may derive from the Aramean word *sabi^{c}a*, or "the religion of many baptisms," founded by Boudasp or Bodhisattva, a Chaldean Wise Man.[285] Some Sabaites of Yemenite descent were known in remote areas

---

[282] See esp. pp. 44-45, 49 in J. P. Monferrer Sala, "Apologética racionalista...", Monferrer Sala comments that: "Los receptores del discurso de Abü Qurrah no son otros que los seguidores de las principales religiones *(adyan)* de sus coetáneos, que supuestamente han sido reveladas por Dios y que él presenta sucesivamente de acuerdo con la aparición histórica de cada una de ellas. La estructuración que de todas ellas ofrece Abü Qurrah se atiene al esquema siguiente en el que los elementos inicial y el final están deliberdamente relacionados: 1. antiguos paganos; 2. religiones reveladas; 3. comunidades siriacas heréticas; y 4. nuevos paganos (= musulmanes)." p. 45. This suggests that in Abū Qurrāh's scheme, the Sabians were but one of those heritical sects prior to the rise of Islam.

[283] W. Bacher, "Qirqisani, the Karaite, and his Work on Jewish Sects," in *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 7 (1895), pp. 687-710, esp. p. 704.

[284] See al-Ṭabarī, *History*

[285] M. Tardieu, *Sâbiens coraniques et sâbiens de Harrân*, Journal Asiatique 274 (1986), pp. 1-44 ; T.M. Green, *The City of Moon God : Religious traditions of Harran* (Leiden :E. J. Brill,

of the Sanai for their literary traditions that came out of Mar Sabas' monastery. They adopted Hermetic traditions and developed this Egyptian lore into astrology. More importantly though, the Caliph Marwān II (AD. 744-750) made Ḥarrān his home and moved the Umayyad capital to Ḥarrān. Marwān's power was founded upon the political and military abilities of the Sabeans of Ḥarrān.[286] The city of Ḥarrān happens to have sheltered the Christian scholar, Abū Qurrāh,[287] in an age that witnessed the beginning of Christian *Kalām*.[288] In AD. 830 the Caliph al-Ma'mun demanded of them to choose between conversion and death. They chose instead to be identified to the Sabeans of the Qur'an, claiming the rights of the *kitābīs*, and have so famously tricked their way out of their predicament. However, one can only guess at the Caliph's opportunism for sensing the benefits he might draw from this minority community. In any case, one could perceive that the city of Ḥarrān would have assumed a scholarly, political, and cultural prominence beyond the confines of Islam by the time of the writing of this apocalypse. How this evolution had played out with regard to the emergence of literary works such as this apocalypse can only be tentative at best. But it is tempting to suggest that the milieu would have been conducive for apocalyptic speculations, in a place so close to the actual centre of power in world politics.

> "And he (i.e., the believer) will attach it to the anchorage of redemption, and he will be full from the heavenly blessings of Jerusalem. I therefore urge you for all restraint and countenance, to hold fast and to use with all attachment what I entrust on you, and the canons we have delivered to you. And your children should urge those who will come after them at the last time to be watchful and to observe the monastic practices so that they may be entitled to the inheritances of the kingdom of heaven. For there will be times when many monks will revel, and ridicule the monasteries because of their insults. And they will throw away from them the canons and religious duties... (which is) the upholding of the true light of discernment of the land of the great Egypt. In truth, the great *Antonios* who is endowed with the Holy Spirit, and Father *Makarius*, Anbā *Pachomius*, and Father *Shelūdha (Shenute)*, these people whose petitions would make the land of Egypt prosper. They are those who laid down for us the canons and imposed it upon the monks, and until our (their?) death we have completed their good work, and

---

1992); See H.P. Blavatsky, *The Theosophical Glossary* (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1930), p. 282.

[286] See al-Ṭabarī, *History*

[287] On his contribution to the iconoclast discussion.

[288] See S.H. Griffiths, "Christian Kalam...,"

> paid attention to their holy instructions and practised it. So you, O my beloved children! Do keep up with all that I say to you today, and all the monastic constitution which our spiritual Fathers laid down for you, and urge the future generations until the century of centuries to keep up with the word I said to you today according to the word of the Apostle Paul: "*Imitate me as I myself have imitated the Messiah.*"[289] As for yourselves, O my beloved children! Imitate me and follow my tradition as I followed my holy fathers' traditions. Whoever holds fast in what I lay down to you, then the Mother of God will implore her beloved Son for you, because you are living in her land, as I have seen it often times, and I saw it with my own eyes in this church. And I heard her with my ears saying that: "*This is my own dwelling, I abide in it because I have loved it with my servant Samuel, and with all his spiritual children who follow his communion.*"[290]

The believer is urged to abide by the teaching of Antonios, Macarius, Pachomius, and a certain *Chaloudah (Shenute)*, who are considered the Coptic saints "*whose petitions would make this land of Egypt prosper.*"[291] The teachings referred to are basically monastic life, upholding the "canons" and their "holy instructions." But what is striking is the fact that these figures are spoken of in the present tense. Antonios is said, for instance, to be: "endowed with the Holy Spirit." And as previously noted, these saints would yet make a difference as though the author was alluding to the endowment of the Spirit, which the icons of saints were filled with.[292] For his part, Samuel who laid stress beforehand on his own dutiful observance of his forefathers' tradition, comes to address his followers in the biblical sense as the Apostle Paul did: "*Imitate me as I (i.e., the Apostle Paul) myself have imitated the Messiah.*"[293] This he did, however, with the important exception that the saints are now associated with the person of Jesus, who is described in Hebrews 13:8 as: "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.*" But in an earlier instance of 'anbā Samuel's sermon, he relayed the words he himself had heard from an old man:

> "As I had myself heard from an old devotee of God, endowed with the Spirit, full of holiness. And he spoke to me when I inquired about the future of the rulers of the Hijra, saying to me: '*O! My son Samuel, perceive and understand what I declare to you. At that time when the Christians will endeavour to speak within the Altar in the tongue of the*

---

[289] An allusion to 1 Corinthians 4:16; Hebrews 6:12; 13:7-8.
[290] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XVI.
[291] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XV.
[292] Supposedly, the author is inspired here by the biblical suggestion of Jesus that the heroes of faith of the past "are" alive in Luke 20:38: "He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive.
[293] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XV.

Hijra, in which they will blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Trinity, distress after distress will increase a sevenfold for the Christians at that time.'"[294]

It is not quite clear if the authorship of *ASQ* intended this as an illustration of the actual chain of transmission of the revelation from the Coptic fathers. The text does not say implicitly whether the old man had himself received his revelation about the advent of the ***hijra*** from another saint, but this might well be implied. The old man remains an anonymous figure anyway. By all accounts, it is certain that that mysterious figure had disclosed to Samuel far more than what – judging by his own admission – anbā Samuel was prepared to reveal, on the grounds that the "*secret from this word*"[295] might be misconstrued. Then, what the authorship of *ASQ* would have in mind concerning the tradition of the fathers could be a whole range of material heritage, the likes of "secret words," "prophecy," as well as relics of saints, liturgical books, and other materials. All of which artifacts would have been regarded locally as canonic. The illustration of the latter point would be given by the very fact of the committing into writing of the *ASQ* itself. Therefore, one could adduce from the above that the iconography of Qalamūn tradition might encompass the idea of a school that holds onto its own homemade legend of a sacred church history. It is about the iconic value of the apocalyptic text, the fact that it is the literary reminder of what had taken place in the monastery of Qalamūn, this literary icon may be transported, exported around.[296]

When the *ASQ* makes statements on ecclesiastical matters, it appeals to the acknowledged set of iconographical references to the effect that they are supposed to represent, that is the heavenly counterpart. This belief goes as far as the 4th century, whereby, it was believed that during those church services, saints, martyrs, and angels were in heavenly celebration simultaneously.[297] Therefore, the Coptic Church ought but to call upon their fathers for the

---

[294] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XII.
[295] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XII.
[296] The *ASQ* speaks of the "commandments of our saint fathers," of the "decreed and acknowledged fasting," of the "40 saints for our salvation ," of the "night of the Feast, and also on the Sunday night," etc. For an illustration of the effect of tradition on the cult of sites and the liturgy, see J. Wilkinson, "Picturing Jerusalem," in A. Eastmond & L. James (eds.), *Icons and Word. The Power of Images in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp. 105-18.
[297] E. Schwartz & T. Mommsen (eds.), Eusebios, *Historia Ecclesiatica* (Leipzig, 1909), 10.4.69-70; J. Wilkinson, *From Synagogue to Church: The Traditional Design, Its Beginning, Its Definition, Its End* (London: Routeledge, 2002), p. 110.

heavenly retributions to befall its enemies. Otherwise, failing to do so does amount to a dereliction of religious duty. This may be why: "*Many churches will disintegrate in that time, deserted on the Night of the Feast, and also on the Sunday Night.*"[298] And also that because of the steadfast commitment, not only Jesus Himself will give encouragement, but most importantly, the Coptic martyrs would become particularly involved in the earthly affairs as they witness the wrongs being committed in the very sites of their martyrdom:

> "But the holy martyrs will pay attention to the actions being committed in the places of their martyrdom, and they will raise their complaint to God. And they will say their petition to God: "You who judge impartially, Judge between us and this nation which keeps committing such actions in Churches."[299]

The point at issue here is that the Copts ought to attend those Night Services probably because of the faith in their Coptic liturgy's direct connection with the heavenly worship. Moreover, its iconographic representations were realised in the acts of worship itself, rather than the object of worship. Thus, observing the commandments of the Coptic fathers was an assumption of the God-given liturgy. In other words, the authorship of the *ASQ* would have advocated an iconophilia of the realized eschatology.

There is little doubt that the issue of the equation of image and the actual person to whom worship is due, and the apotropaic attributes of the icons are alluded to, almost in passing. This hypothesis is further demonstrated in the immediately following clause, that is, the assertions that the "*Mother of God would implore her beloved Son for you, because you are living in her land,*"[300] should the worshippers do uphold the tradition. Moreover, the claim according to which Mary the Mother of God would have formally declared as her "dwelling place" the monastery, or relic adorning it, might well agree with the iconophiles' worship tradition. This is to claim that worship practiced here did not only benefit the monastery, but spreads the blessing all over the land of Egypt:

> "This is imposed upon you, O! my beloved children to fulfil perfectly all the commandments and its monastic constitution. For if you observe it you will deserve to see the Mother of God, the Holy Virgin Mary our Lady as I saw her myself. And she will

[298] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. VI.
[299] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. IX; cf. Rev. 4:8. It should be noted that such belief was probably borrowed from Jewish circles, see the Babylonian Talmud, *Hullin* 91b.
[300] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XV.

> pledge with honours (privilege) many of those who will inhabit this desert, and those who will visit it will be blessed by it, and they will pull out of it the pardon of their sins.[301]

A note of caution is in order here. The monastic life-style might not necessary mean literally a reference to the desert. Nor is the monasticism of the apocalyptist an incitation to leave the urban Christian life. Rather, the "desert" here might well be an allusion to the on-going iconoclast controversy. This is to say that the author may be suggesting that the practice of reverence for saints that is nowadays out of favour. Against this, the author of the *ASQ* claims that without true monasticism iconoclasm is turned into an issue that is one of no substance. As a result of the forces of heresy (i.e., iconoclasm), actually the spiritual force of the icons of Mary had come out of the actual image toward the type of congregation where she would be freely worshipped.[302] The following excerpt may illustrate the point:

> Blessing on to you O My beloved children! For you have deserved to dwell in the monastery of the Virgin, our pure Lady Mary, singing and praising God in this Temple which the Mother of God has dug out[303] for her a dwelling. (It is) a blessing for he who will proceed resolutely to this Temple in good faith. I say to you O! My beloved children, that the Mother of God, our Lady Mary will implore her beloved Son, he will consent to discard and forgive entirely his sins. Blessedness is to those who will come to offer a sacrifice[304] in this holy house. I say to you that the Mother of God will intervene for him to God to accept his sacrifice in the Jerusalem of heaven. And he who will dedicate a vow for this holy Temple, and fervent to make amends in it, I say to you that the Virgin our Lady Mary will receive his vow and fulfil his (prayer) request promptly. Whosoever will write down this holy declaration, and put it in the House to be read for the benefit of all souls who listen and keep it up and act according to what is recorded inside and keep away from their twisted ways, then his soul would be purified. I say to you that the Virgin our Lady Mary will implore her beloved Son about it to tear the bondage of his sins and he will write his name in the book of life. Therefore, O My beloved children! If then you keep up into what I urge you, then the Virgin our Lady Mary will intercede for

---

[301] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XV. The desert lifestyle would become thus a way of penitence and gain of God's favour.

[302] See Ezekiel 10:17-18: "When the cherubim stood still, they also stood still; and when the cherubim rose, they rose with them, because the spirit of the living creatures was in them. Then the glory of the LORD departed from over the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim.

[303] اختارتها لها lit. "She has dug for Herself." See also the cognates referring to the skill, or ability to guide someone through the desert. See E.W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (Beirut: Librarie du Liban, 1968), book 1, part 2, p. 717.

[304] Lit. "qurbān" in the sense of offering, oblation, or sacrifice. See Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. 7, p. 2507; cf. in Mark 7: 11, where "corban" means a sacrificial offering, a consecrated present for the Altar.

> you unto her beloved Son. And he will subdue your enemies under your feet, and you will tread under (your) feet the head of the sea monster, and you will break all powers of the archenemy. So if you keep up into what I have entrusted you, then dominions and powers will grant you presents, and the rulers will confer to you the honour, and the Berbers will submit to you.[305] Therefore, do strive with all your strength O My beloved children! Do carry out with zeal you prayers at the required time of the day, and convene to the night prayers. Keep from changing the constitution that I have laid down for you, otherwise you will be under a terrible judgement. Keep up with all reservation O My beloved children! In the words I laid down so that you will become sons of the kingdom of heaven. "[306]

This is in a nutshell the creed that Anbā Samuel set up, or rather, would have us believe was in force in the monastery of Qalamūn. The principle would be that the Virgin having to offer her support to her people, has revealed a specific ancient place of worship, which she had to dig out for herself. She did so, presumably, because that particular place of worship, from the early Coptic Fathers, had been abandoned. Then after, it sunk underground. Moreover, She has personally decided to dwell in that Temple. Incidentally, the author of *ASQ* uses interchangeably the word for "monastery" with the expressions "holy temple," "holy house," or simply "temple," or "dwelling." Elsewhere the "monastery of Qalamūn" is replaced by the "monastery of the Virgin," or even the "Jerusalem of heaven". This implies that the author of the *ASQ* views the monastery of Qalamūn and its regulations and practices as precinct to heaven, and with regard to Jerusalem it probably conveys the Islamic notion of the Navel of the earth.[307] However, here it is the monastery of Qalamūn, which presently prefigures the eschatological Jerusalem.[308]

In the desert, there is thus a place (***maqām***) where the singing and praises to God become heard by the divine presence. The point of the matter is that Anbā Samuel claims no less than that the relics of Mary were rested in that place, by Her personal volition. The proof of the fact is that the relics (of Mary) have

---

[305] See Luke 10: 17 "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!;" Phil. 3: 21; Heb. 2: 8; 1Pet. 3: 22; cf. Luke 17: 20.

[306] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XVI-XVII.

[307] In Ezek. 38: 12 (LXX),it is translated "τὸν ὀμφαλὸν τῆς γῆς." (Heb. "עלי־טבור הארץ" In Arabic it is the expression "فِي أَعَالِي الأَرْض"; cf. Judg. 9: 37. For a recent study of the subject of the navel of the earth (Heb. *Ṭabbūr*), see C. Stuhlmueller, *The Collegeville Pastoral Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1996), esp. p. 234.

[308] See occurrences of the heavenly Jerusalem Gal. 4: 25-26; Heb. 12: 22; cf. for the Jerusalem coming from heaven, see Rev. 3:12; 21: 2, 10.

chosen to make that uncovering known to the followers of Anbā Samuel, by performing some apparitions at the place where Her body would have been buried. This is *the* shrine that the Virgin Mary had elicited as a unique place of worship agreeable to God. This may echo the Islamic claim to the restoration of the Abrahamic religion, but action of the Virgin Mary suggests otherwise, namely, that it points at the orthodoxy of the tradition of the Coptic Father. Moreover, the act of unearthing a disused, long forgotten holy place such as that of the relics of Mary has undoubtedly some resonance with the ability to guide, direct the worshipper into the true orthodox religion. The author of the *ASQ* is brave enough to even suggest that those Egyptians, who are actually in need of repentance, are those who are abandoning their Coptic traditions. Conversely, he who holds to the tradition, She (Mary) would implore Her Son to tear down his/her very bondage of sin, so as to earn his/her name be written in the book of life.

From the topic of icons, then, the author shifts his attention into more apocalyptic pre-occupations:

> "But if they do not repent, then it will persist upon the land until the consummation of the dominion of the Hijra, and the last kings of the Hijra. And the name of the last king who will stand from the (period of the) Hijra is *Lasmarini*.[309] And the number of his name will make 666."[310]

The caliph Marwān II (AD. 744-750) seems to the present writer the enigmatic *Lasmarini*, who is the last of the Umayyad dynasty. The ᶜAbbāsid revolution had possibly given rise to apocalyptic speculations in Egypt. His death on Egyptian land would even add to the fervour. As such, the *ASQ* suggests that a trend of speculation regarding the likelihood of a Muslim civil war, which was considered a turning point in the fortunes of Egypt. It should be noted though, that Marwān II may have been considered the last of king who will stand from the period of the *hijra*, in the sense of the Arabs Umayyads over against the ᶜAbbāsids of Persia. The significance of the ᶜAbbāsid revolution in the composition of the *ASQ* will occupy us now.

---

[309] This name seems to me a corruption of al-Marwān II because of the *gematria* on his name, which indeed amounts to 666.

[310] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIX.

The Politico-Apocalyptic Drama:

In Spain, the turn of the first century of the *hijra* was anticipated in apocalyptic terms as attested in the Chronicle of 754:

> "In the beginning of the era 758 (AD 720), in the one hundredth year of the Arabs, an eclipse of the sun, lasting from the seventh to the ninth hour of the day, was observed in Spain, a number of the witnesses seeing stars appear. Many counted that the eclipse appeared at the time of al-Hurr's successor, as-Samh."[311]

The ᶜAbbāsid revolution that occurred a couple of decades later than this apocalyptic account suggests that the socio-political situation in *dār al Islām* was propitious for a cataclysmic turn of events.

The long secretive Shīʿa propaganda came into the open during that last Umayyad caliphate. As for the Shīʿas' propaganda, its adepts had recourse to the concept of *taqiyya*, or "valid dissimulation of one's belief," in order to prevent discord and obviate personal persecution, in constant readiness for the appearance of the *Mahdī*. Its role was crucial in plotting and covering up the Shīʿa revolution, through the lead of the true *imām*.[312] The very concept of concealment of the *imām* added to the underground and fragmentary nature of the Shīʿa movement. The real support (at first from the Kufan Arabs) of the Shīʿa movement came from the *mawālī*, that is, in the course of time the non-Arab clients such as the *Yamaniyya* or the Iranians. The latter were to hand over the Caliphate to the ᶜAbbāsids and signal the end of an era of Arab-dominated Muslim leadership. The implications of the change are beyond the scope of this study. It is useful to note that with the end of the Muslim expansion policy, the ᶜAbbāsid had resorted to a Sāsānian-like cultural cross fertilisation, namely, a policy of long term socio-economic development, rather than to rely upon the tradition source of state income that the booty of conquest used to bring. A wind of freedom may have been blowing among the Christians who could even take comfort in the new stances of the ᶜAbbāsid ideology. When the new caliph ᶜAbd

---

[311] See "The Chronicle of 754" in K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), p. 136. Al-Hur ibn Abd ar-Rahman al-Thaqafi (AD 716-18) and As-Samh ibn Malik al-Khaulani (AD 718-21) were both governors of Al-Andalus roughly at the end of the first century of the Hijra.

[312] See ᶜAbd al-Husain Zarrinkūn, "The Arab Conquest of Iran and its Aftermath," in R.N. Frye (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), vol. 4, pp. 1-56, esp. pp. 48ff. Note that the Black standard was the sign of the good tiding of the Mahdi's appearance (pp. 51, 53-54).

al-ᶜAbbās in the mosque of Kūfa pronounced his discourse of investment into the caliphate, he declares the contrast to the Umayyads:

> "The ᶜAbbāsids would rule according to the Qur'ān and the example of Muḥammad .... God has caused a caliph to appear amongst you from the descendents of Hāshim...and transferred the government to you... Know that this authority is ours and will not leave us until we hand it over to Jesus son of Mary."[313]

In such unprecedented "ecumenical" circumstances, no wonder that the authorship of the *ASQ* should anticipate so eagerly that the caliph Marwān II would become the last of the Hijra, whom he is quick to equate with the biblical number 666. As K.B. Wolf has shown,[314] the likening of the Prophet Muḥammad with the Antichrist developed in Spain in mid-ninth century. According to Wolf, the Spanish apologist Alvarus depicted the Prophet Muḥammad as "a *type* of Antichrist rather than as *the* Antichrist himself." Alvarus' commentary of the Apocalypse "was less to make Muḥammad the Antichrist than to make the Islamic society within which he lived seem 'Antichristian.'"[315] The revelation that the Prophet Muḥammad claimed to have received from the angel Gabriel is disparagingly dismissed. Alvarus charges the Prophet Muḥammad with the cardinal sin of having:

> "spoken words against the heavenly God: balancing things lofty and weaving them together with things murky, things that truly are *antecedents of Antichrist and adverse* to our humble religion."[316]

The author of the *ASQ*'s postulate: "And the name of the last king who will stand from the (period of the) *hijra* is *Lasmarini*. And the number of his name will make 666. He who has a heart to understand, let him (understand),"[317] seems to point at the ᶜAbbāsid Revolution as the event preceding the advent of the Last Days. In which case, the caliph Marwān II is considered *a type* of the Antichrist era. It seems to the present writer that this instance in the *ASQ* was the first where a Caliph would be attributed the number 666 of the Antichrist, apart from the Spanish Alvarus would to the Prophet.[318] The Point of the matter

---

[313] See al-Ṭabarī, *History*, vol. 3, pp. 29-33.
[314] K.B. Wolf, "Muḥammad as Antichrist in Ninth-Century Córdoba," in M.D. Meyerson & E.D. English (eds.), *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), pp. 3-19.
[315] K.B. Wolf, "Muḥammad as Antichrist...", p. 16. The emphases are mine.
[316] K.B. Wolf, "Muḥammad as Antichrist...", p. 8. The emphasis is mine.
[317] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIX.
[318] See discussion above.

is that the Spanish martyr movement displays a number of features one may perceive in the *ASQ*. However, we cannot definitely determine if there were established at some point a relationship between the two communities across the Mediterranean Sea. In any case, the author turns his attention South toward the Abyssinian kingdom:

> "Then, he will send upon them a king of the Romans in anger against them, from the East. For the Archangel Michael will appear to him in a dream and say to him: "Get up and take back captives, for God had made you ruler over all his land." Thus, he will reign over all his land. But the king of Abyssinia will commit wickedness against you in the land of their fathers from the East. And the Hijra will flee into the deserts, which belong to her. First, they will flee from the king of Abyssinia of the East and the king of the Romans will descend upon the sons of Ishmael, and will surround them in the valley of ambush,[319] the dwelling of their fathers. And he will destroy them from the East and will terrify them with great fear."[320]

Then, the author of the *ASQ* interpolates themes of the Alexander legend with the advent of the new era. This can be gauged from the Abyssinian connection with the mixed race origins of the Byzantine ruler. The author's speculation leads him to describe how the *Alexandros neos* would conquer the sons of Ishmael when he drives them out of *Babylun* from the northeast Egypt.[321] However, his caution is masked with a telling warning: if the Christians fail to act appropriately, that is, "*Woe, for those who will appeal to the hijra in those days*,"[322] the biblical woes will be served on them, and the Arab troops would overrun them like Gog and Magog:

> "And the king will arrive to the land of Egypt and will set on fire the city of Egypt called *Papolonia*[323] because of the sons of Ishmael, because of the impurities they had committed. And he will demolish the land of the North[324] and will afflict the sons of Ishmael into servitude."[325]

---

[319] Lit. "the valley of Al-Hefar." This might refer to Africa, i.e., Sudan, since the author mentions next Abyssinia.
[320] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XX.
[321] The fortress of Babylon in present day Cairo. See also below Papalonia.
[322] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIX; Zadieh, p. 403: "Malheur à ceux qui, en ce temps-là, porteront le nom de l'hégire."
[323] Ar. "Bāb al-Yūn," or "Bābilyūn" was a fortress on the bank of the Nile river, opposite a city called Misr. Eventually it became the name of the whole settlement on Nile that comprised al-Fusṭāṭ, also called Fusṭāṭ Miṣr. See A.J. Butler, *The Arab conquest of Egypt and the last years of the Roman dominion*, (Oxford, 1978) p. 221. It is believed that the Muslim armies first set up camp here, before proceeding up to Alexandria (see al-Ṭabarī, *History*, vol. 13, p. 163).
[324] Zadieh, "Al-Djonf."
[325] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XX.

> "But the king of *Abyssinia* will marry the daughter of the king of the Romans, and there will peace for a time of reconciliation. And there will be a revival in the confines of the earth for 40 years, such as there has never been on earth. And there will be a time of happiness for the Christians. And they will shamelessly open the doors of their churches, and rebuild houses, and plant vineyards, rebuild palaces over their delight in the Lord their God. Woe, for those who will appeal to the Hijra in those days! After 40 years, such will be the manifestations of the untamed wild king: the sources of waters and rivers will turn into blood for one hour, and their blood will embitter the waters. Second sign: babies will start speaking at less than 3 months old. Third sign: whenever the harvest of the field is ripe, blood will appear from the soil. On that day, the wise men will flee to the mountains. For after that, the people who were restrained in confinement of the land of the Arabs will come out, which are the troops of the Gog and Magog."[326]

A last note on the closing statements of the *ASQ* is in order here: the author seems to have taken issue at the "Arabs" quite distinctively from the "Muslims" at large. While the *hijra* may refer to the religious ideology, it seems that the use of the terms "Arabs" or the "sons of Hagar" do relate to the "spirit of error."

> "And the monster will appear, that is the false Messiah, and he will perform many signs and wonders of heroism to the point of deluding the elect, according to the scriptures. And he will manage to draw 10 of the rulers[327] of the Romans' king with his government, and they will hand over to him alone the kingship. Blessed is he who will fight and conquer him, for he will reign eternally with the Messiah. "[328]

There occurred in Egypt as well as in Spain some quasi parallel pre-occupations with the expectation of the collapse of the Islamic empire in the second-half of the 9th century. The *Prophetic Chronicle*, a Latin manuscript dating from AD 883, combines some Spaniard royal annals with apocalyptic exegesis, predicting the end of the dominion of the Ishmaelites in less than two years. The apocalyptic portion of interest is worth quoting in full:

> "The word of the Lord was made known to Ezekiel, saying: 'Son of man, set your face against Ishmael and speak to them saying: 'I gave you power over other peoples, I multiplied you, I strengthened you, and put in your right hand a sword and in your left hand arrows, so that you would destroy peoples and they would be levelled before your face like straw in the face of fire, and so that you would enter the land of Gog on foot and kill Gog with your sword and put your foot on his neck and make them slaves and tributaries to you. But because you forsook your Lord God I will turn you about, I will forsake you, and I will surrender you into the hand of Gog and in the territory of Libya

[326] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XXI.
[327] This *Malouka* does not make sense unless emended into rulers of colonies.
[328] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. 21.

> you and all of your multitude will perish by his sword. Just as you did to Gog, so he will do to you. After you have held them in servitude for 170 years, Gog will in turn do to you what you did to him.'" "... All of the [reign of the] Arabs of Spain [add up to] 168 years, 5 months. They will remain until St. Martin's Day, the 3rd of the Ides of November; in 7 months they will have completed 169 years, and the 170th year will have begun, the year when the Saracens will have completed [their allotted time], according to the above noted prediction of the prophet Ezekiel."[329]

This prophetic chronicle is significant in the fact that it exemplifies the actual mood of the Christian communities living under the Muslim rulership from the first century of the *hijra* onward. These communities may have had in common their ethnical, political, and ecclesiastical isolation from the reach of the imperial assistance for a long period of time, so that they endeavoured to make up for the lack of solidarity in the Christendom. However, the Christian apocalyptists delved into the Muslims' internal affairs for their inspiration. They sought to make the most of the slightest signs of the regional governors' insubordination, or inclination to parting away from the central authority of the Caliphs. Therefore, their visions of the world politics revolved in fact around the regional realities rather than from a global viewpoint. This observation does hold true for the three apocalypses under study.

The "Samuel of Qalamūn" Tradition:

We have mentioned at the beginning the fact that both sets of texts – the *ASQ* and the *LSK* – show a literary and ideological continuity between them, which raises the question of the process and time of translation of which text into what language. A priori, the translation from Coptic into Arabic is likely. For example, the epithet given Cyrus in Coptic was the "Colchian," which name went into Arabic as "*Muqawqis.*"[330] But the irony is that it is the latter version, the Arabic *ASQ*, which has survived. However, given that no Arabic *LSK* is extent, one may wonder if the fact does not tell another story. The *ASQ* – which looked at the moments of the Egyptian resistance to the Coptic acculturation – and the context of the *LSK* – which harked back into the early Coptic Church,

---

[329] J.G. Fernández, J.L. Moralejo & J.R. de la Peña (eds.), *Crónicas Asturianas* (Oviedo: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Oviedo, 1985), p. 188.

[330] The word seems to be attested the earliest in Muslim historiography in the work of Ibn Ishāq (d. 768), see A. Guillaume (tr.), *The Life of Muḥammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 653; A. Alcock (ed. & tr.), *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983), p. 121, n. 40.

prior to the rise of Islam – have undergone a very different process of composition, whereby the former in particular has undergone the slow but steady process of the arabisation of Egypt in the first three century AH. It may be that both texts relied upon the same monastic tradition in order to draw their respective interpretation of history. Zaborowski suggests another hypothesis:

> "The two are complementary texts springing from the same monastic tradition. In terms of their orientation to the conquest, the earlier *Life* can be seen as a trajectory forward in time, concerned with establishing their orthodoxy against the Chalcedonians, whereas the later *ASQ* is a trajectory backward. Explaining the conquest *ex eventu*, concerned with preserving an established tradition against apathy under an oppressive government."[331]

But while the *ASQ* had been recasting the most recent past in a framework of historical events that had hitherto achieved a widespread acceptance in Egypt, in the meantime the *LSK* had elected to obliterate the fact the advent of Islam, despite the incongruity of the account of the persecution by Cyrus the *Muqawqis*. A telling illustration of this fact may be seen in the episode of castigation of the Tome of Leo: in *ASQ*, it is the backdrop of the Monothelite controversy that is recycled, and there is not reference to Consubstantiation. Instead the *ASQ* asserts that God: "*will forgive our sins through the prayers of our holy father Anbā Samuel, and the intercessions of the Mother of God...*;" in the *LSK*, it is the 5th century anti-Chalcedonian context that was evoked, and the emphatic formula of the Nicean orthodoxy that the Godhead is Consubstantial is recalled in the closing statement: "*May... we obtain mercy in his presence (i.e., Samuel), we Christian children...through Christ... whom there is all glory fitting to Him and His Good Father and the Holy Spirit, which is Creator and Consubstantial...*"

There in the later phase (8th-9th century) of the Coptic tradition, it seems, it was for the evocation of the namesake of the Coptic Fathers, relocated at the monastery of Qalamūn, which became the common denominator, not just the 7th century figure of the Coptic resistance. The *ASQ's* complaint about the abandonment of the names of the Coptic saints in order to give the Egyptian children foreign Arabic names is the issue at point here, since the shift reflected

---

[331] J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūm," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-15, esp. p. 108. Zaborowski should be given the credit for perceiving the importance of studying the *ASQ* side-by-side with the *LSK*.

whereto actually the Egyptians looked up to for their inspiration. In any case, it is worth noting in the *LSK*, a prophetic saying the saint uttered, upon hearing that the monks were about to consecrate a new church to his name, Samuel electing instead to have it dedicated to Mary. The latter would have declared: "*Believe me, my children, that after four generations God will raise up a leader in this monastery: it is he who will build a church in my name.*"[332] Clearly, we see that in the *LSK* that there was a concept for a "paraclete" of sort to come. And yet, the concept is crucially absent from the *ASQ*, given its sectarian stance. By the early Islamic period, the Greek term *metanoīa* had come to mean more than just repentance. It meant also the action of repenting, that is, of prostrating oneself before saints, angelic beings, or the icon of the Coptic fathers.[333] In the *ASQ*, the depiction of Samuel comes short of a "Life-Giver."[334] The paraclete ideology in the *LSK* would only be remotely reminiscent of the Imamate/Mahdism, had it not been for the context in which the figure to come was introduced, that is, the cult of the "living"[335] Anbā Samuel as a life-giving exercise in its own right. Since the dedication of the newly built church was the evocative opportunity of re-asserting the virtues of the Coptic fathers, Anbā Samuel did not negate the orthodoxy of the cult after death when he refrained his followers. But since Samuel had already the crown of martyrdom in fighting for the faith of the fathers,[336] and the fact that he is said to have earned "*great influence before God, that he should forgive our sins,*"[337] there is little doubt the *LSK* displays the type of iconophilia obliterated in the *ASQ*. So also, Ibn Ishāq's biography of the Prophet does remind us that the idea is not far fetched: "the

[332] A. Alcock, *Life*, p. 105, n. 189.
[333] A. Alcock (ed. & tr.), *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983), p. 77, n. 21.
[334] In the introduction of Samuel's sermon, the text states that: "This discourse of saint Abba Samuel pledges protection and strength to anyone upon reading it...," and also as previously, the prayer that: "May his intercessory prayer remain with us."
[335] In the sense that the defunct saint was believed to be alive, that is. In *LSK* anyway, this holds true because the text connects the fact with the apparition and declaration of Mary the Theotokos. In contrast though, the *ASQ* does mention the declaration of Mary, but stops short of bridging the gap. The purpose of this being that the ASQ wished to do away with the iconoclastic concerns that it would incur.
[336] A. Alcock, *Life*, p. 82.
[337] A. Alcock, *Life*, pp. 117-18. Elsewhere, the influence (Gr. *parrēsia*) litteraly means "freedom of speech" before God, see E.A.W. Budge, *Coptic Martyrdoms* (London, 1914), p. 285.

Munahhemana[338] in Syriac means the life-giver and especially the one who raises from the dead,"[339] and that the Muslims had connected it both with the advent of Muḥammad, but also with the angel Gabriel in his role as messenger.[340] In the *ASQ* Anbā Samuel carries the two attributes: on one hand, the ability of foretelling the events during the era of ***hijra***. On the other hand, he was gifted, alive, with powers of thaumaturgy so as to cause his burial place a source of apotropaic effects.[341]

The present writer's view is therefore that the *ASQ* would have parted trajectories with the *LSK*'s sometime prior to the ᶜAbbāsid revolution, precisely over the issue of the role posthumous of Anbā Samuel. In the *ASQ*, to pay tribute to the Coptic fathers had become synonymous with "re-connecting oneself to the life-giver," whereas in the *LSK*, venerating the fathers still carries the late Antiquity sense of ***metánoia***, that is, not only that of repentance, but also of the action of "prostrating oneself before," equivalent to the Muslim notion of *aslama*, the "submitting of oneself to Allāh"[342]

There is a range of grievances that the *ASQ* raises in the first part of the text that deserves now our attention. All but a few complaints address the attitude of the Copts vis-à-vis "this nation of the *Hijra*." The very expression "this nation of the *Hijra*" is noticeably too regularly repeated as though it was intent on underlining the messianic character of the Islamic ideology, at least in its inception. The word ***hijra*** is handled in a way that is reminiscent of the biblical exodus, in the sense of migrating from a land to the land so-called granted by

---

[338] The concept of *menahhemana* is ubiquitous in the apocalypticism of the period under consideration in that it is implied in the apocalypse of Zerubbabel as one (*Menahem*) of the messianic figures. In Daniel, the same concept is re-appraised in the guise of Metatron. See discussion.

[339] A. Guillaume (tr.), *The Life of Muḥammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 104, n. 1; The "life-giving" power is implied as Samuel had cured Gregorius, the bishop of Quays, among other miraculous deeds. Note that the Imāmism did conceive of similar virtues (thaumaturgy, interpretation of scripture, etc).

[340] *Idem*, A. Guillaume, *The Life..*, p. 104, n.1.

[341] This is reminiscent of the remains of the prophet Elisha that caused the resurrection of a dead soldier, upon touching Elisha's bones, see 2 Kings 13: 21.

[342] See Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, "*metánoia*," pp. 855-58: In Egypt in particular, this notion of penitence was apparently widespread to the extent that a Day of Penitence (*hē emēra metanoīa*) was observed (*P Oxy.* 1357). The word was also used as a name of a monastery at Alexandria (*P Flor.* 298.54); cf. As prostration, or to make an inclination, John Moschus (d. AD 619), *Patrum Spirituale* 11 (M. 87. 2861), John Climacus (d. AD 649), *Scala Paradisi* 5 (M. 88. 764B,C); as act of penitence of the Perfect, see John Climacus, *Scala Paradisi* 5 (M. 88. 780B); as a sign of worship, see John Moschus, *Patrum Spirituale* 39 (M. 87. 2892C); 100 (M.87. 2960A .

God. To which Muslim mind-set the authorship of the *ASQ* is anxious to point out that this was "contrary to the Christian Law." The vested ideology of the *ASQ* was thus to face up to Islam with the contra-distant frame of mind. Furthermore, the authorship of the *ASQ* asserts that the attitude of the Copts would determine the outcome of the actual conflict.

The Apocalyptic portion of the ASQ:

In the *ASQ*, the Caliphate of Marwān II is marked out as the coming of the age of the antichrist. The number 666 is specifically attributed to him. It is also the beginning of the apocalyptic portion of the whole *ASQ*. After Marwān, we are led to believe that a particularly wicked king of the Arabs will reign and inflict much suffering on the orthodox:

> "But after this, the Lord will remember his people whom he has greatly humiliated. Then, he will send upon them a king of the Romans from the sea in anger against them. For the Archangel Michael will appear to him in a dream and say to him: "Get up and take back the captive, for God had made you ruler over all his land." Thus, he will reign over all his land... But the king of *Abyssinia* will commit great wickedness in the land of their fathers from the East. And the hijra will flee into the deserts, which belong to her."[343]

This regime is allegedly a direct result of the dawn of the antichrist age. At long last, a Roman king will be made to arise, who will defeat the sons of Ishmael. The unidentified king whom the Archangel Michael intimates the onset in a dream: "*Get up and take back the captive*" (*ʿanheḍa wa-radda al-sabī*), is thus a Christian ruler who will act with the right frame of mind, i.e., in anger, against the sons of Ishmael. He is supposedly animated with the spirit of Constantine I. Concurrently, from the east an Abyssinian king will hound obstinately the sons of Ishmael, to the effect that they will have no other option than to flee in the desert of Arabia where they belong. The author of the *ASQ* imagined the viability of a concerted military campaign on Egyptian soil. The Abyssinians and the Byzantine armies would carry out in a pinch movement an offensive that would prove impossible for the Arabs to withstand. However, there is too little data to work with in order to fit in the likely protagonists the author was referring to. The author wanders freely in apocalyptic tirades, although an entry

[343] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. XIX-XX.

here may be worth mentioning. He states that an alliance by marriage between the two kingdoms would take place, followed by a period of great peace on the entire world.[344]

But the paragraph that follows in the narrative may be of some greater historical value. In addition, the *ASQ*'s most salient feature that distinguishes it from the *FVD* for instance, and indeed, from most of the Christian apocalypses composed in the same period, is the fact that it makes no use of the theme of the Jews. It does lie no blame whatsoever upon the Israelites. On the contrary, where the narrative makes an allusion to an apocalyptic event from the Old Testament, it does so in relation to the exodus of the Jews under the leadership of Moses. The theme of the appearance of blood in the land of Egypt is re-used here to narrate the apocalyptic signs marking the coming of the age of the antichrist:

> "After 40 years, such will be the manifestations of the untamed wild king: [First sign:] the sources of waters and rivers will turn into blood for one hour, and their blood will embitter the waters. Second sign: babies will start speaking at less than 3 months old. Third sign: whenever the harvest of the field is ripe, blood will appear from the soil."[345]

This theme of the exodus of the Jews intends to describe instead the "*woe(s), for those who will appeal to the Hijra in those days!*"[346] Presumably, such is the terror that will befall those Copts who convert to Islam, or else those Christians who are comfortable with the dominion of Islam. The latter are those who get on with their normal life unconcerned, rather than heeding the warning signs of the coming of the antichrist. By so returning the ancient theme of the chastisement of the Pharaoh against the defecting Copts,[347] the author sought probably to lay stress upon the alternative option given to them, that is, the monastic life, or the life in the mountains:

> "On that day, the wise men will flee to the mountains. For after that, the people who were restrained in the predicament of the land of the Arabs will come out, which are the troops of the Gog and Magog."[348]

The eschatological battles against the archenemies of the Christians were about to take place. The troops of Gog and Magog were certainly all those people living in Egypt who would not let go the people of God, i.e., the elect of the

[344] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, pp. XX-XXI.
[345] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XXI.
[346] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XXI.
[347] Or indeed the Chalcedonians, the enemies of the orthodox.
[348] See *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XXI.

monastery of Qalamūn. The point of the matter is that the author of the *ASQ* would have had those Christians that he dubbed heretics, or enemies of the community of Qalamūn, as his main targets. Therefore, the theme of the Jewish enemies could not possibly be congruent with the likes of the Chalcedonians, and also the defectors to Islam. As a result, it could be inferred the *ASQ* was addressing the Christian community of Scetis as a paradigm of betrayal – that Anbā Samuel would have considered as the adherents of Chalcedon – which Anbā Samuel had parted with to found the monastery of Qalamūn in the first place.

Date of Composition and Provenance of the *ASQ*.

Egypt had endured a long period of despotic rulership, due in part to the briefness of the governorship and the heavy burden of taxation on the Copts. It was in Egypt that the *Mamluke* first formed the backbone of the ᶜAbbāsids' power, attracting against them a bitter resentment of their former Arab Muslims allies. There also did the ancient slavish servant of the ᶜAbbāsids show some early pretension to seizing power. The most significant period of the Muslim rule in Egypt that would be particularly relevant to the *ASQ* by far might be that of the Tulunids. The Tulunid dynasty in Egypt lasted from AD 868 to 905. It would eventually restore some semblance of stability in this province. Ahmed ibn Tulun (d. AD 883) the founder, was a dashing and athletic 33-year-old son of a Turkish Mongol, slave to al-Ma'mun (possibly what the *ASQ* referred to with regard to a mixed race ruler in Egypt), a *Mamluk* therefore, arrived in al-Fusṭaṭ in AD 868 at the head of an intimidating troop of 100,000 soldiers. The Caliph al-Mu'tazz's appointment of a Turkish was a notable novelty from the traditional Arabic and Persian ethnicity of the governors of Egypt, apart from Abū Saliḥ who became the first Turkish-born governor in AD 779, yet was classified as Arabic. However, the administration in Egypt began to disintegrate, with taxes becoming intolerable and inflation on the rise virtually since the ᶜAbbāsid revolution. Ahmad ibn Tulun was to take charge of the situation once for all. He soon consolidated the government, steadied the economy and restored order. But seeing healthier usage for Egypt's treasury locally, he sent less and less of the tax revenues to Baghdad. He founded a new capital city called al-Qata'i', north of Fusṭaṭ in AD 870 and built a mosque from which minaret his

name was proclaimed on Fridays, a clear prerogative of the Caliph. By AD 872, he became personally rich and powerful enough to declare himself independent from the Caliph and established a dynasty that ruled Egypt and extended its dominion to Palestine and Syria for 37 years, until Baghdad invaded successfully in AD 905, and the general Muḥammad ibn Suleyman al-Katīb re-established ᶜAbbāsid control. Ahmed ibn Tulun had had an army of some 30,000 strong stationed in Cairo.[349] His famous mosque that was built between AD 876 and 879, is the second oldest in Cairo (ᶜAmr ibn al-ᶜAs built the first one in AD 641). By AD 880, Ahmed ibn Tulun was striking *dinar* coins in his own name, which was one of the preserves of the Caliph. All of these points tally fittingly with the atmosphere from which the author of the *ASQ* speculated, especially with the breaking away from the ᶜAbbāsid authority over the Islamic empire, and the governor's encroachment with the leadership of Syria and Palestine. In the meantime, the comparatively impervious Monophysite Sudanese kingdom from the southern boarders was consistently threatening the hard-won autonomy of ibn Tulun. The present writer surmises that here is probably the historical context of the penning of the *ASQ*.

In the *LSK* it is said that the oral account of the life of Samuel was committed into writing as late as in the fourth generation of Samuel's followers. The *ASQ*, which is a later, complementary work,[350] compared to the *LSK*, has been shown to come from the same monastic *époque*, thus suggesting a *terminus post quem* from the early 9th century.[351] The writing of the *ASQ* would be rightly ascribed to a kind of literary phenomenon in the 9th century AD for canonising the Coptic orthodoxy. It was at first a defensive necessity given that the advent of Islam had defied the *status quo*, but as the Muslim failure to subdue even very small kingdoms such as Nubia, and other mountainous enclaves[352] had exposed the

---

[349] D. Stewart, *Great Cairo: Mother of the World* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1981), p. 57.

[350] Note, for instance, the similar anachronistic reference to the Tome of Leo (AD 451) in both the ASQ and the Life of Samuel of Qalamun, in lieu of the Monothelite doctrine introduced by Heraclius. For a summary of this doctrine, see discussion in Frend, *The Rise*, pp. 346-49; also notable is identical reference to Benjamin as the "great beared (man);" Mary's declaration "this is my dwelling-place, where I shall live forever..." (p. 100)

[351] J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūm," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-15, esp. pp. 108-09.

[352] Charles Martel did stop the Muslim advance in the mountainous ranges of central France (C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6216 [AD 723/24], pp. 556-57); The Druzes, a tribe of Maronite

limits of the Islamic might, the assertiveness of Coptic culture in the *ASQ* fuelled no doubt the anti-Islamic nationalism. The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamun must have been written the earliest at the end of 7th century, given that its main hero, Anbā Samuel, whose sayings the authorship purported to record, is attested to have died at around 695 AD. Nau had dated the apocalypse to the early 8th century.[353] But more recently, Martinez has suggested the apocalypse "*must have been written much later, for it deals with problems which only developed later on, and it betrays most clearly the influence, not only of PA [ps.-Athanasius], but also of PM [ps.-Methodius].*"[354] As for the Coptic *LSK*, which "may have been written as late as the early ninth century,"[355] might not be necessarily the source of the Arabic recension. Its authorship does claim the *LSK* to have originated from collecting "*the oral tradition of four generations of Samuel's followers.*"[356] An attempt at dating the colophon of Pierpont Morgan Manuscript 578 ff. 1-68, suggests a period around AD 892-93,[357] which lateness (two centuries after Samuel's death), in the context of the actual Arab dominion, betrays an anachronistic attempt at reasserting the sacredness of the Coptic language for ecclesiastical usage, in agreement to Samuel's teaching. The lament in Anbā Samuel about the decline in the use and knowledge of Coptic in Egypt is echoed in Spain with regard to Latin MS.[358] We have seen that the steady influx of immigrants in Egypt from the late 8th to the first half of 9th century, culminating under the reign of al-Muᶜtasim b. Hārūn (AD 794-842) may have been the single most important contribution to the first noticeable surge in the rate of Arabic component of the Egyptian society.

---

descent that never quite converted to Islam, did escape the tutelage of the Umayyads and the ᶜAbbāsids in the remote regions of the Lebanon.

[353] F. Nau, "Note sur l'Apocalypse de Samuel," in *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 20 (1915-1917), pp. 405-07.

[354] F.J. Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius* (PhD dissertation: The Catholic University of America, 1985), p. 267.

[355] J.R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūm," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-15, p. 103; cf. A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983), p. ix, Alcock suggests tentatively that: "the first recension (of the Coptic *Life*) may be dated to the first half of the 9th century." See also A. Alcock, "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn I," in *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), pp. 321-45 & "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn II," in *Le Muséon* 111 (1998), pp. 377-404.

[356] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun*, pp.ix & 74.

[357] A. Alcock, *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun*, p. vii; n. 3.

[358] In Albar, *Indiculus Liminosus*, PL. CXXI, cols. 555-56; E.P. Colbert (tr.), *The Martyrs of Córdoba (850-859): A Study of the Sources* (Washington, 1962), p. 301.

Conversely, as Blake has pointed out, the native Aramaic-speaking Christians of Palestine became the first in *dār al-Islām* from the ᶜAbbāsid period to adopt Arabic as their ecclesiastical language. And these were the first to form in the monastery of Mar Sabas a literary circle that spread wide following the disasters that befell the monastic communities of Syria-Palestine in early 9th century. Adopting Arabic seems not to have raised any significant objection among the Aramaic-speaking Christians. Abū Qurrāh is a representative of the Palestinian Christian apologists who argued their case in Arabic. Many monk refugees found respite in Constantinople, while others settled in the Sinai desert carrying along a Syriac literary corpus, which subsequently developed independently in Arabic. Blake wrote: "*La Palestine est devenue arabe plus vite et aussi plus profondément qu'aucune des autres provinces du Caliphat.*"[359] Whether or not this state of affaires came to affect the local Coptic communities is not ascertainable. However, their isolation – the linguistic barrier might have been a contributing factor – from the patriarchate of Constantinople was probably complete until AD 937 as Eutychius of Alexandria (AD 877-940) complained about: "*The names of the patriarchs of Constantinople have not reached me since Theodore (i.e. AD 679) at the time of writing this book. Likewise, in regard to the patriarchs of Rome, the names of the patriarchs of Rome and reports of them have not reached me.*"[360] It is therefore safe to situate the possible *ante quem* date of the composition of the *ASQ* prior to the re-established of any sort of contact with the Patriarchates of Constantinople and Rome, given that the *ASQ* does deal with the isolating factor of the Arabic language.

The present writer's presumption is that the Coptic monks who had preserved a command of the Coptic language recorded the original "oral traditions" in translation from vernacular Arabic. Therefore, it is likely that the Arabic recensions of the *LSK* and the *ASQ*, or portions of these would have been extent at the time of the redaction of the Coptic recensions. Martinez' assertion of the influence of the Syriac ps-Methodius on the *ASQ* may be justified, at least on the

[359] R.P. Blake, "La Littérature grecque en Palestine au viiie siècle," in *Le Muséon* 78 (1965), pp. 367-80, esp. pp. 376-78. This remark is pertinent with regard to the *ante quem* dating of the composition of the *ASQ*; cf. S.H. Griffith, "Stephen of Ramlah and the Christian Kerygma in Arabic in Ninth-Century Palestine," in *JEH* 36 (1985), pp. 23-45.

[360] Quoted verbatim in S.H. Griffith, "Stephen of Ramlah and the Christian Kerygma in Arabic in Ninth-Century Palestine," in *JEH* 36 (1985), pp. 23-45, esp. p. 26.

grounds that the fact is evidence of the Syriac apocalyptic ideas permeating the Coptic Church. But the influence, he perceives, of the Arabic recension of ps-Athanasius (a manuscript he codes: PA ar. II), which is an 11-12th century manuscript cannot be justified, because the idea of the final union of the kingdoms of Rūm and Ethiopia, in one faith, that of the Orthodox Church was no new concept before the turn of 8th century.[361] Moreover, the kingdom of Kush and the Byzantine kingdoms were perfectly interchangeable expressions.[362] What might have been new, however, was the fact that in the union of Rome with Ethiopia, those Ethiopians in question were Abyssinians and "Nobades,"[363] i.e., Nubia, the kingdom converted two centuries or so earlier by the Jacobites.[364]

The allusion to the Nubians in ps-Methodius as well as in the *ASQ* might become helpful in dating the latter apocalypse, and this suggests two observations: (a) that the Nubian kingdom had become to the Arabs, at some point, an entity to be reckoned with; (b) that the Jacobite doctrinal position was possibly considered as a potential federating compromise between the Orthodox and the Melkite (Chalcedonian) church. In the former case, the Nubian situation might indicate that the authorship looked up to the last Christian kingdom capable to stand up to the Muslims hegemony. In the latter case, however, this might simply afford us with the historical context of the Nubians audacious attempt at challenging the Arab domination of Egypt. The successful defence of Dongala, the Capital of Nubia in AD 652, thanks to the skills and reputation of the Nubian archers, had convinced the Arabs to agree a "pact" (Ar. *bakt*; Gr. *pakton*) of non-aggression with the small Christian kingdom, in exchange of a slave tribute and trade relation.[365] The two small kingdoms of Nobadia and

---

[361] F. Nau,"Révélations et Légendes. Méthodius. – Clément. – Andronicus," in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 452. Nau states concerning the likely date of translation of Methodius into Greek that: "Cet écrit syriaque, soit qu'il ait débuté par un remaniement de la *Caverne des trésors*, soit qu'on l'ait ensuite fait précéder de ce remaniement, a été mis en grec de 676 à 678 (ed. Estrin)." Note that another translation back into Syriac has very possibly produced the recension that Martinez is dealing with.

[362] F. Nau,"Révélations et Légendes. Méthodius. – Clément. – Andronicus," in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 443.

[363] May be the namesake of Nobadia Longinus, the first Monophysite bishop, who had converted Nubia in AD 580.

[364] F. Nau,"Révélations et Légendes. Méthodius. – Clément. – Andronicus," in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 449.

[365] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 377-82.

Merkuria came under the rulership of the Monophysite king Merkourios (AD 697-707), probably in order to form a common block against the Muslims.
The local church language remained Greek as opposed to the Coptic, although only progressively that the Nubian Church managed to introduce a vernacular borrowed from the combination of the Greek and Coptic script. In AD 702 the Abyssinians raided Arab shipping in the Red Sea, even sacking Jidda, the port of Mecca. Throughout the 8th up to the early 9th century, several skirmishes would occur along the frontier with Muslim Egypt. In short, from the period of early conquests, the kingdom of Nubia was strong enough to halt the southward the expansion of Islam. As to boldness, in comparison to the might of the Muslim empire the tiny kingdom had no lack of it. Thus, when Copts were being persecuted in about AD 745, the Nubian king Kiriakous (Cyriacus) invaded the southern Egypt.[366] And in AD 836, the Nubians stopped sending slaves to the Arabs, revoking the treaty of 652 altogether.[367]
From all of this history of the Nubian show of bravado, a picture emerges that the state of a lasting independence for the Christian Nubian kingdom did appeal to the Copts, and the community of the followers of Samuel in particular, who looked up to the Nubian king as a potential deliverer figure. The present writer would suggest that the authorship of the *ASQ* did envision the alliance of the two Christian rulers with the divine mission of defeating Islam, as a precursor to the Endtime scenario. It does not necessarily follow that the authorship of the apocalypse of Qalamun had been aware of the latter development, but the prospect of a hypothetical concerted offensive Nubia and Byzantium, against the sons of Hagar, was certainly fuelled by the Nubian standoff with the Muslim governor of Egypt. Iskander on the other hand has proposed the 11th century as the date of composition of the *ASQ*. Iskander uses mainly the apocalyptic part of the *ASQ* for asserting his views, namely, the description of the "last king of the Hagarenes," as the most compelling evidence that the *ASQ* referred to the

[366] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 411-12. The Nubian embassy to the Caliph had helped diffuse the tension, and the Muslim obliged to relent on the monthly slave tribute.
[367] E.L. Butcher, *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith & Elder, 1897), vol. 1, pp. 440ff; See also J.H. Taylor, *Egypt and Nubia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 64; W.Y. Adams, *Nubia: Corridor to Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 539-44; W.L. Hansberry, *Pillars in Ethiopian History* (Washigton: Howard University Press, 1981), pp. 131-32.

Fāṭimid Caliph al-Hākim bi-Amr Allāh (AD 996-1021).[368] However, the reputation of "blood shedder" and "destroyer of the crosses" was already attributed to ᶜAbd al-ᶜAbbās who rebelled against his master the Caliph Marwān II.[369] Moreover, the theme of drunkenness is one of the most used classical *topoi* in apocalyptic texts, where it characterises the abundance of blood letting. The argument that the last king of the Hagarenes will have a Christian (French) mother would have related to the First Crusade when this title "The French" was applied to the crusaders. Although the title is implied, the fact that Antichrist is depicted in the characteristically apocalyptic mixture of races (or natures), does suggest itself. In both the *FVD* (fish and the virgin girl) and the *ASQ* the Antichrist will be born of a mixture of two natures, a configuration that is a commonplace apocalyptic theme.

A *terminus post quem* for the date of composition of the *ASQ* during the Caliphate of Marwān II (AD 740-50) is in order.[370] If the name of the beast could be related, with less violence, to the first minting of the Muslim coins (ᶜAbd al-Malik, in AD 691-92), which would correspond to the admixture of Christian iconography and Muslim epigraphy. If this is taken in conjunction with the completion of the Dome of the Rock (AD 692),[371] then it was the Prophet Muḥammad who, probably, was meant by the number of the beast, that is 666. There are several Coptic traditions which identify the beast of Revelation

---

[368] *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, p. XIX; J. Iskander, "Islamization in Medieval Egypt: the Copto-Arabic 'Apocalypse of Samuel' as a Source for the Social and Religious History of Medieval Copts," in *Medieval Encounters* 4 (1998), pp.219-27, esp. p. 221-23; cf. J. van Lent, "The Nineteen Muslim Kings in Coptic Apocalypses," in *Parole de l'Orient* 25 (2000), pp. 643-93, who disagrees with Iskander.

[369] B. Evetts (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), vol. 3, p. 140; Al-Mansur (AD 754-75), the ᶜAbbāsid Caliph also was nicknamed as-Saffah "Blood-shedder" by al-Ma'sudi in *The Book of Meadows*.

[370] This is also the date I arrive at for the Vision of Daniel, from the indication of the number 666 of the beast, which must refer to the Muslim coins bearing the stamp of the aforementioned Caliph; see also T. Orlandi's dating of ps-Athanasius, in *Vita dei Monaci Phif e Longino (Milan: Cisalpino-Golliardica, 1975)*; see Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic*, p. 262.

[371] Owing to the completion of the Dome of the Rock, a fitting *topos* became the object of intense eschatological speculation, namely, the biblical theme of "the abomination that causes desolation." So Daniel 9:27 (NIV): "He will confirm a covenant with many for one 'seven.' In the middle of the 'seven' he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on a wing *of the temple* he will set up an abomination that causes desolation, until the end that is decreed is poured out on him." Dan. 11:31 (NIV): "His armed forces will rise up to desecrate the temple fortress and will abolish the daily sacrifice. Then they will set up the abomination that causes desolation." Dan. 12:11 (NIV): "From the time that the daily sacrifice is abolished and the abomination that causes desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days." Cf. Mat. 24:15 (NIV): "So when you see standing in the holy place 'the abomination that causes desolation,' spoken of through the prophet Daniel - let the reader understand - ..." See also Mk. 13:14.

13:18 with the Prophet Muḥammad (Copt. *mametios*).[372] John of Nikiu explained the Arab conquest of Egypt as God's retribution of the Chalcedonians.[373] But should we adopt, with more violence, the other alternative concerning the second mintage of a purely Muslim epigraphical coin in AD 697, so that the phasing out of the main symbol of Christian iconography – that is, the cross on coins – from the world of Islam was the point at stake. This would sit well the authorship's aim at decrying the Christian acculturation (Copts' usage of Arabic, adoption of Arabic names, etc.). I disagree with Martinez who seems to suggest that: "*it would have taken some time before the coins were circulating and widely known in Egypt*,"[374] as though that would have lessened the psychological impact of the introduction of the new Muslim coins upon the population. The present writer suggests that the turn of the 9th to the mid-9th century when the Nubian kingdom was at its highest ability of stand against the ᶜAbbāsids that the *ASQ* may have been composed.

Conclusion on the *ASQ*:

This apocalypse elevates the monastic saint, Anbā Samuel, to the stature of "*healer of the faith*," and the one whose saintliness and ascetic lifestyle work exorcism over the nation (i.e., the Copts). The introductory formula "*May his intercessory prayers be with us*" is amply evidence to the point. Anbā Samuel pledges also blessing to whomsoever follows his instructions. Mary, the Theotokos also backs him up. These features distinguish the *ASQ* from the two other apocalypses, namely the *FVD* and the *AZ*.

Anbā Samuel, for once, is not an anonymous personage, or a legendary figure in the tradition of the apocalypticism. He is probably a saint whose namesake causes him to partake in the chain of charisma of prophecy and saintliness. The corollary of this peculiar feature is that it spiritualises the inherent iconophilia in the *ASQ*. Not surprisingly, then, that the Holy Man, like the *imām* takes centre stage in replacement of the icons and relics, in the capacity of consultative institution. In the apocalypses they play the key role, whereas the various main protagonists serve the agenda of the saint. Anbā Samuel's propaganda suggests

[372] I.e., Būlus al-Būšī, *Commentary on Revelation* (quoted from Martinez, pp. 263-64);
[373] R.H. Charles (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiou* (Oxford: Text and Translation Society, 1916), p. 186.
[374] Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic*, p. 265.

that the all-pervasive Heraclean legend needed to be demoted, and the cult of the saints (i.e., the Coptic saints, past and present) promoted in its stead, should one aspire to the divine restoration of the rule of (Christian) law and order. In this respect, one may view the new role the *ASQ* assigns to the Holy Man as upstaging that of the Christian emperor. His/her asceticism and acquired wisdom designates the saint, if not renders his/her high-ranking status unassailable, and unavoidable too, by virtue of the latter's connection with the realm of the sacred that earns him/her the ability to heal, and prophesy. But here, this ability is not so much referring to the Godhead itself. Instead, it has everything to do with the recapturing of the "posthumous sayings" of the patriarchs. In other words, the saints filled the role of the Muslim Caliphs, as "rightly guided ones" in the sense of their lineage to the Prophet. Here, the Muslim charge that the Christians "did not have a saviour" as it appears also in the Samuel apocalypse, suggests that the author of the apocalypse might be contending with the issue of the legitimacy of the Byzantine emperors as leaders of the Christendom. More than just the issue of imperial legitimacy, it was the very image of the emperor that was being contrasted to that of the saints, that is, the icons and relics.

It is worth noting that, in the authorship of the *ASQ*'s mind, the threat that the sons of Hagar posed upon the Coptic Church did not concern the conversion to Islam, but the ineluctable amalgamation of the Coptic culture with the immigrant ones. Immigration was the main issue that is detectable in the *ASQ*, and which should determine the period the authorship of this apocalypse would have been referring to. Egypt was virtually constantly inundated with foreign ethnics and cultures, which situation would have *de facto* made Arabic into the *lingua franca*. There is the point at which the issue of preserving the Coptic language became an urgent one. At times, the land of Egypt would have been criss-crossed by so many different ethnic groups (Arabs, Berbers, Turks, Persians, Greeks, Syrians, Armenians, Sudanese, Jews). The ᶜAbbāsids, following after the Umayyads' policies in Egypt, had maintained battalions that could be likened to the French *légion étrangère*, in so far as these two dynasties relied upon different contingents, at different times, and to varying degrees of confidence. As we have seen above, al-Muᶜtasin's disbanding of the *dīwān* system was the last barrier that was lifted between the Coptic urban populations and the immigrants, who immediately occupied the countryside.

a total lack of empathy to human suffering. This point shows that the apocalyptists could articulate, albeit in apocalyptic terms, a feature present in the eruptive powers of all universalist religions, or related movements.

When the *ASQ* asserts that the Copts were being confused to Berbers, or earlier saying that the Hagarenes will mix with many nations (Sinds, Greeks, Hinds, etc.), one wonders if the rationale of this apocalypse get the sense that the issue should be sought in the flooding of Egyptian identity, rather than the threat of dominion from a general apostasy, namely the mass conversion to Islam. This explains also the usage of the term ***hijra*** as a title for the Muslim immigrants, but as a generic term for the tide of immigration *tout court*. It has been a point of interest for this study of the *ASQ* to consider if the *hijra* actually meant the point of departure for the followers of Anbā Samuel, as a monastic community of a new kind. Given the nature of Anbā Samuel's spirituality, and the factor of the Coptic language, do militate for it.

The emigration from Mecca to Medina marks the date of origin of the Islamic calendar, known as the ***hijra***. The doctrine of *Hijra* as being of Muḥammad's migration is, however, not reflected in the *ASQ* as such, despite its having been originally written in Arabic in Egypt. Rather, the apocalypse written in the middle of the 9th century as a Christian prophecy does use the term *hijra* for what it meant then in the 9th century, that is, an ideological departure from the Arabic culture. So when the *ASQ* refers to the *hijra*, it may well mean the eschatological ideology. What was at stack then could be that the Muslim *hijra* had weakened the Coptic resolve that was manifest during the Chalcedonian persecution. It was during the ᶜAbbāsid revolution that the Apocalyptic parted from the hagiographic side of the tradition of Samuel of Qalamūn. But the motive for its being penned down has to be sought in the rapprochement that the authorship had anticipated between Nubia with Rome.

There is a set of common saying running through the *ASQ* and the *FVD* worth mentioning. This should not come as a surprise since the Danielic tradition has found its roots in Egypt back during the Roman period. The first interesting parallel may be found in the description of the Antichrist, although the title is implied, the fact that he is depicted characteristically in the apocalyptic mixture of races (or natures), does suggest itself. These two apocalypses speak also of the Antichrist who will "*forget the fear of God*," so that this would cause people to renounce religion. But what is peculiar about this defiant mindset of the Antichrist toward God is the expression on his face that qualifies it: either a motionless visage or a lifeless posture. Either way, the clause denotes obviously

A Short Description of the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel (*AZ*):

This apocalypse originally known as *Sefer Zerubbabel* (Book of Zerubbabel) is based on the Oxford Ms. 2797, the *Sefer ha-Zikronot* also called the *Chronicles of Yerahmeel*. There is available a number of translations of this text.[1] Other manuscript versions of this work are worth noting: the Oxford Ms. Opp. 236a (Bod. Or. 160) fols. 13a-15b; the Oxford Ms. Opp. 603 fols. 32b-34; and the Oxford Ms. Heb. f27 (2642) fols. 42-43.[2]

The *AZ* is a two-part text: a historical part that records events of the 7th century (2/3 of the whole text), and the other which is apocalyptic (last 1/3). Its literary structure evokes the biblical Zerubbabel, whose name celebrates his birth in exile.[3] It speaks of the epic return of the elect to homeland. Zerubbabel had presided over the very first of those many disappointing returns to the Holy Land, having himself been hailed as God's anointed or Messiah before dropping rather abruptly out of favour. Other Messianic figures like Ezra, Zachariah, and Nehemiah who had grown up in exile cross past the narratives of the *AZ*, but it is Metatron around whom the future destiny of Israel is fleshed out. This *AZ* is typically a medieval Jewish apocalypse, which has had considerable influence on the later Jewish tradition such as Zionism, propounding the requisite return of the exiles to the Holy Land in order to achieve an ideal state of perfect unity between God and the elect. But *Rabbinic* Judaism is even more obviously a religion of exiles; that is to say, it develops its peculiar eschatology in the context of the long-standing contact with foreign ideas.

This apocalyptic text is devoid of all marking, pagination, or reference! It is therefore not easy to reference my quotations from the text. Therefore, I shall proceed with a referential system of my own. In terms of its position vis-à-vis

---

[1]The text had been published by I. Lévi, "L'apocalypse de Zorobabel et le roi de Perse Siroès," in *REJ* 68 (1914), pp. 131-44, 69 (1919), pp. 108-121, 71 (1924), pp. 57-65; in Spanish by A. A. Cecilia, "El Libro de Zorobabel," in *Sefarad* 61 (2001), pp. 243-58.

[2] It is reproduced in Hebrew under its title *Sefer Zerubbabel* in A. Jellinek (ed.), *Bet ha-Midrasch* (Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrmann, 1938), vol. 2, pp. 54-57. Since Jellinek's edition, there appeared the publications of Y. Even-Shmuel, *Midreshey Ge'ullah* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1954), pp. 71-88, M. Himmelfarb, "*Sefer Zerubbabel*" in D. Stern & M.J. Mirsky (eds.), *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 67-90, and S.A. Wertheimer, *Batey Midrashot* (Jerusalem: Ktav wa-Sefer, 1980), vol. 2, pp. 495-505. There is now available a much more recent transcription edited and published in E. Yassif, *Sefer ha-Zikronot hu' Divrey ha-Yamim le-Yerahme'el* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2001), pp. 427-35.

[3] Zerubbabel = Lit.: born in Babylon, i.e. in exile.

Judaism and Christianity, the *AZ* stands between the Fourteenth Vision of Daniel (more in the Jewish tradition) and the Apocalypse of Samuel (definitely Christian). This text bears the signature of a Palestinian Judean sect acquainted with Christian themes, whereas the Vision of Daniel was composed from the perspective of religious community at contra distance with several religions simultaneously (e.g. Judaism, Christian iconodules, Islam). This is why the *FVD* could be mistaken for a Judeo-Christian work, or even a Jewish work. Yet, there remains no doubt that it is a Christian work penned possibly from within the matrix of the Jewish messianic circles. This is the type of apocalypticism that was influenced by popular Jewish eschatology, which revolves around the biblical scheme Edom/Jacob, that is, the historical struggle between the "nations" and Israel. Within such apocalyptic agenda, the successive dominant empires confront Israel in turn. The *AZ* in this respect is noticeably removed from the initial reaction to the Muslim dominion. It does not consider the advent of the Ishmaelites as a divine punishment for the Christians. Owing to the fact that the Jews were reputed to have predicted the advent of Muḥammad, welcomed the Muslims as liberators, and encouraged their Muslim Semitic "cousins" to rid the *dār al-Islām* of the vestiges of Christianity, it beggars the question whether the *AZ* is at all, as it claims, an account of the early 7th century events.

The literary structure of the *AZ*:

The narrative alternates constantly between using the first person (e.g.: "I was..."; "I went..."; "... spoke to me..." and the use of the third person or the name of Zerubbabel (e.g.: "He asked..."; Zerubbabel replied..."). This may be due to the fact that the writer wished to make regular use of Biblical interpolations. The style of Daniel or Ezekiel mattered according to the object of the narration: when Zerubbabel is given a round of revelation, possibly for the matters regarding the near future, Ezekiel is his paradigm; whereas in relating future events and the fortunes of Israel, Daniel is the choice. Having said that, it is still very difficult, at times frustrating to make sense of the historic setting of the *AZ*. The text is a record made by Zechariah son of Anan and Elijah while in exile, supposedly in Nineveh:

"Metatron said these words to *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel*, governor of Judea, in exile

during the time of the Persian Empire. They were recorded unaltered by *Zechariah*[4] son of *Anan*[5] and *Elijah*[6] while in exile."[7]

The *AZ* presents also a singular incongruity with respect to the place of occurrence of the visions. The author does not hesitate to merge the Ezekiel theme of the "visions of Kebar"[8] with their time of occurrence one day after the Sukkot festival, which the former restorers of the Temple of Jerusalem had celebrated until the 23rd of the 7th month i.e., Ethanim[9] (or *Tishri*). Each critical eschatological event that is revealed to Zerubbabel is punctuated by the months of the Jewish calendar, which is a feature characteristic of the Biblical Ezekiel. This may hint to a tradition in practice within the actual community of Zerubbabel, where national historical events were celebrated, just like in some sectarian messianic groups.[10]

However, the literary construction here can make sense somewhat where Zerubbabel is made to "*draw closer*" to his heavenly interlocutor and is entrusted with soliciting some forbidding answers to his subconscious questions. In this text, Zerubbabel is depicted both as a friend of God, and as one who "sees" rather than "hears" merely the word from heaven, as though to convey the idea of the "word of God that came to pass": "*It (the voice) spoke to me as one speaks to his friend... I heard the voice, but I could not distinguish its appearance.*"[11] The latter clause seems as important a statement of authenticity as it is of orthodoxy: the author(s)' intention is obviously to claim parity of the vocal (oral) revelation with the canonical one. One wonders if this occurred as indicative of the asceticism, or the monastic context in which the apocalypse was composed. This determination will probably remain inconclusive.

But the affected perplexity in the clause is immediately abridged, when we take into account the historical background, and the contemporary issues such as the iconography and related doctrinal controversies. Here for instance, the dominion

---

[4] Cf. Neh. 8:3-4; Name of several Amoraim.
[5] Cf. 1Esd. 5: 30; otherwise *Anan* (cloud); an *Amora* (expounder of the teacher's opinion).
[6] It is probably meant as a personage different from the *Elijah* the prophet.
[7] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. IX.
[8] Cf. Ezek. 1:1,3; 3:15-23. The river Kebar is situated in the Euphrates valley in Iraq, where the visions of Ezekiel occurred.
[9] Cf. Hab. 2:1-2.
[10] See N. Wieder, *The Judean Scrolls and Karaism*, pp. 163-97. Wieder enumerates a number of festivals with their singular practices, especially with regard to the Karaites.
[11] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.

stamped it with an intrinsic universalism.

The Ideology of the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel:

The apocalypse of Zerubbabel is testimony to the lively apocalyptic imagination in Rabbinic and Medieval Judaism. It is a Pseudepigraphical work originating probably in early 7th century Byzantium, but a 8th century composition may not be entirely excluded, especially with regard to its iconodulia, namely its interest in the female messianic figure of Hephzi-Bah. The latter feature would push forward this work as contemporaneous of the late iconodule period, that is, prior or shortly after the advent of Leo III. But the setting of the *AZ* is definitely the early 7th century – during which the Jews regained some control of the administration of Jerusalem and even resumed the sacrificial cult at the Temple Mount for a short while – where Persia, then Byzantium, then after the "Sons of Hagar" disputed between them the Land of Israel. It is therefore no wonder that the *AZ* gives so little attention to the future of Jewish Diaspora *outside* Israel. The *AZ* is a work that embodied the features of the Jewish Messianic tradition that developed in the late 7th to the first half of 8th century, in which elements of the old Jewish tradition with others more contemporaneous ideas were mixed so that they confer to this work a great originality. This work has achieved a wide diffusion and a tremendous influence in Jewish mystical circles. The angelic medium of revelation is the only means of communication between God and the elect. Zerubbabel lays no claims to prophethood, neither does he profess to hold an esoteric message since there is none of the divine command to seal or cipher the message. He repeatedly requests to be granted the disclosure of the secrets of future events.

From the outset the *AZ* states on the Danielic model the purpose of the divine communication, namely, what concerns Zerubbabel the most:

"[This is] The word that came to *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel* the Governor[14] of Judah on

[14]The expression פחת יהודה (*pechah yehudah*), which translates into "satrap of Judah" means simply "governor of a region." The root denotes the sense of "deliverer" or "redeemer." But the title "satrap" comes from the word אחשדרפן (*achashdarpan*), which is a borrowing from a Persian word usually translated *Satrap* meaning *Governor* or *district administrator*. This word is also found in Ezra canonical. However, in IV Ezra 5.16, the word Heb. פלטיאל = Gk Φαλτιηλ = Lat. *Phalthiel* is translated *Phaltiel* meaning "the head of the people." But it should be rendered: "The Lord is my deliverer"; cf. *Pilthai* (in Neh. 12:17 which name may have been misread for *Pihtha*, or possibly a play of word), one of the representatives of the priestly house in the time of *Zerubbabel*.

of Islam is unmistakable given that in apocalyptic terms the month of *Tishri* was traditionally associated with the Creation out of the prevailing chaos (Heb. *tohu bohu*).[12] The implication is then that Zerubbabel was being granted a revelation of the divine redemptive scheme from the actual chaos. Even better now, Zerubbabel becomes a potential messianic figure *per se*, mediating the redemption of the nation of Israel. He is the one who is quickened in the stead of the people of Israel, with the double purpose of fathering the "New Israel" into a new dispensation, as well as the eschatological leader heading the "exodus" of the nascent nation from Nineveh[13] into the "New Jerusalem."

The authorship of *AZ* does not relent from "naturalising" foreign *topoi*. The stone statue may be a mere disparaging popular tale about the Muslims' worship. But when he comes to the issue of messianic failures, the Shī'a Islamic notion of concealment fits perfectly his theology. Neither does he hesitate to put in his record distorted accounts of the Jewish history, as though the writer is acquainted with oral tales in circulation among the Jewish sectarians of his time. Thus, the rod of Hephzi-Bah by which she withstands the assault on Jerusalem where everybody else failed, is come down from an unorthodox chain of transmission.

All these features make the *AZ* stand out as a Jewish sectarian apocalypse that fits no other Jewish literary tradition. This apocalypse breaks so many grounds that it is almost impossible to trace the new materials from the old traditions layer. This fact suggests also that the *AZ* may be a syncretic product of a milieu and historical circumstances extremely creative, enough removed from the actual political events, yet much closer to the opponents' school of thought that

---

[12] For the expression *tohu bohu* (Syr. "*Touh and Bouh*"), see Gen. 1:2; Cf. its use in the context of the destruction of the Land of Judea at the hand of the enemy, which is brought about by the Israelites' own doing, Jer. 4: 23 (Heb.): ראיתי את־הארץ והנה־תהו ובהו ואל־השמים ואין אורם: (Lat.): "ecce vacua erat et nihili." In the Syriac Pseudo-Methodius, following a description of Cosmological events of End time prior to the advent of Christ, it reads: "...and the earth will turn back to its original *Touh and Bouh*," see F. Nau, "Révélations et Légendes. Méthodius. – Clément. – Andronicus," in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 444. God is literally communicating to Zerubbabel his plan of re-creation (redemption) out of the present *Tohu Bohu* (Gen. 1:2). Hence, the quest for "the plan of the Eternal Temple" goes beyond the Jerusalem Temple (also considered the centre of the earth). The Pseudo-Methodius apocalypse evidences that this recurring theme of "re-creation" was quite pervasive in the apocalyptic speculations during the Islamic era already by the mid-7th century AD; concerning the *Tishri* month, see Hag. 2:1-2. This word might be likened to the Arabic *milal* or the Aramaic *malahim*.

[13] Nineveh, formerly the ancient capital of Assyria, was actually the place near which the Persians suffered their first and crushing defeat at the hands of the Byzantines in AD 627. Note that the Hebrew text uses the root word נוב = to flourish, perpetuate or to fall away.

> the 24th of the seventh month.[15] This is the vision that the Lord showed me. I was petitioning before the Lord, my God by the river *Kebar*[16] when I saw the vision. As I was saying: 'Blessed art Thou O God, who quickens the dead,' my heart wailed within me[17] to say: '(What) will be the plan of the eternal Temple?'"[18]

The whole passage is a conflation of Ezekiel 1: 1-3 and several passages of the chapters 40, 41, 41 of Ezekiel, with Daniel 9.[19] This was to recall Ezekiel's vision where A Man with a measuring reed gives him a tour of measurement of diverse buildings at the Temple Mount. And in the fashion of the Biblical Daniel in deportation who resorts to prayer, Zerubbabel had some supernatural experiences during his intercessory prayer. The narrative seems to suggest that Zerubbabel was standing by the river *Kebar*, it is equally possible that this was actually a visionary translation toward the river *Kebar*, from an unknown place of prayer. The intent of the writer is to present Zerubbabel as a Jewish spiritual leader in exile, a Governor of Judah. Zerubbabel is chiefly concerned with the Temple regarding its plan, shape, or the like. As a matter-of-fact, the plan of the eternal Temple is an established Biblical one. A Temple of which plans were made by king David and executed by Solomon, as the Bible says: "*the Temple was finished in all its details according to its specifications.*"[20] So Zerubbabel's enquiry about the "eternal Temple" here would be irrelevant, had it not been for a compromising project of rebuilding the Temple in any other specification at best. It should be borne in mind that it was the same Zerubbabel who rebuilt the Second Temple.[21] The last point that needs to be mentioned is the attribute that Zerubbabel applies to God concerning himself, reasserting that: '*Blessed art Thou O God, who quickens the dead.*' At this juncture, this could well mean that Zerubbabel suggests that he was claiming for himself the status of the prophet of old, *redivivus*. In which case, when interpreted along with the summons to "*speak ... as one speak to a friend,*" and "*Draw near me. Ask (of me) and I will*

---

[15] Cf. Hag. 2:1-2.
[16] Cf. Ezek. 1: 1.
[17] Dan. 7: 15; cf. IV Ezra 3:1-3: "...as I lay upon my bed I was disquieted...and my mind was preoccupied...and in my agitation I began to address the Most High."
[18] See *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.
[19] Cf. A. Sharf, "The Vision of Daniel," in *Byzantine Jewry from Justinian to the Fourth Crusade* (London: Routledge of Kegan Paul, 1971), pp. 201-04, n. 5.
[20] 1Kings 6: 2-38.
[21] Ezra 3: 8; 5: 2; Haggai 1: 14.

tell you,"[22] a possible interpolation of Jesus' Transfiguration would not be a far-fetched inference.

The summary description of Zerubbabel makes him appear older than the youthful Biblical Daniel, but fitting with the status and maturity of the Biblical Zerubbabel. There is another possible interpolation of the biblical story of the witch to whom king Saul requested to have the prophet Samuel brought back from the dead, and who disappointed the expectations of the king.[23] Either by the effect of his asceticism, or because of his status of deportee – e.g. a *dhimmī* in *dār al-Islam* – the mystic Zerubbabel experiences some visionary perceptions of the "voice... from the doors of heaven." The "voice" has a form "shape," or an "appearance." It is noteworthy to observe that the heavenly interlocutor seems unsure, puzzled and somewhat reluctant to divulge anything until the identity of the heavenly visitor is ascertained:

> "Then a voice[24] answered me[25] from the doors of heavens and said to me: "Are you *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel* Governor of Judah?" And I replied: "I am your servant." And it answered me, speaking to me as one speaks to his friend.[26] I heard a voice, but I did not distinguish his appearance."[27]

In any case, he sizes the opportunity to ascertain his condition from his visionary interlocutor, the "voice," that is. In *The Babylonian Talmud*, in Hagigah, a similar expression occurs where "a *bath Kol* went forth and said: *Return, ye backsliding children* – except Aher." The term *bath Kol* means literally "daughter of a voice," namely "an echo," or "sound," or even "resonance." Here it has the sense of "heavenly voice," or "divine voice."[28] This is an allusion to the close relationship of Moses with God, and somewhat recalls to mind God's friendship with Abraham the Hebrew patriarch. However, 1Kings 3: 5 (NIV) reads as follows: "*At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, 'Ask for whatever you want me to give you.*'" This is what was asked of Solomon when he was building the first Temple of Jerusalem. In the context here, the summons may be related to the

---

[22] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.
[23] Cf. 1 Samuel 28.
[24] Lit. "clouds."
[25] mymsh Tvtldm ynniyv denotes some sort of revelation reminiscent of Exodus 33:11.
[26] 1Kings 3: 5.
[27] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. IV.
[28] I. Epstein (tr.), *The Babylonian Talmud* (London: The Soncino Press, 1938), vol. 4, Hagigah 15a, p. 93

plan of the Temple. The messianic claim of Zerubbabel is made plain, at least with regard to the Temple. The *AZ* may have conceptualised of the idea of multiple messiahs who each would be endowed with a specialised attribute, and to be allocated a specific role in the eschatological scenario.

Rome, Constantinople, or Jerusalem?

Then, with no transition whatsoever, the visionary Zerubbabel is made to meet the Messiah in the city of Rome:

> "As he (to Zerubbabel) said: "be alive!" then the Spirit carried me, lifting me between heaven and earth, and subdued me in *Nineveh*[29] the Great, the city of slaughter.[30] And I said: "Woe to me, for I am cast away."[31]

Here the mystical experience is identical in many respects to that of Ezekiel. According to Ezekiel, the place of idolatry and harlotry is none but the "north gate entrance" of the Temple of Jerusalem "where the idol that provokes to jealousy stood." This was the idol that caused the *Shekina* to leave the Temple of Jerusalem in the time leading up to the first deportation.[32] A Rabbinic tradition has it that the *Shekina* hovered over the Mount of Olives for 3 and a half years, waiting for Israel to repent, before leaving this world.[33] According to a Talmudic tradition, the *Shekina* left this world from the spot on the Mount of Olives called *the footstool of God.* From that very spot will the redemption of the Dead begin.[34] Soon after the Arab conquest of Jerusalem, the Jewish communities were granted permission to build a house of prayer at the Mount of Olives. The legend relative to the earliest Muslim iconoclasm is found in Theophanes' account may yield some precious help here. According to it, following the unsuccessful attempt by ʿUmar I to build the Aqsā mosque at the

---

[29] *Nineveh,* the ancient capital of Assyria. The word is from the root נין (= to flourish, perpetuate, or to fall away); Gr. Ninus.

[30] Cf. Ezekiel 8: 3-5 (NIV): "...Jerusalem, ... where the idol that provokes to jealousy stood... So I looked, and... I saw this idol of jealousy." However, one cannot exclude the possibility that *Nineveh* might have been for the author the place of the eschatological battle that decided the outcome of the conflict between Persia and Byzantium in AD 627.

[31] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel,* p. I.

[32] Ezek. 8:6-9: 2: here Ezekiel is give the revelation of the idolatry being practised by the Jewish priesthood in the Temple precinct in secrecy. Immediately after, Ezekiel will witness the departure of the glory of God (*Shekina*) from the Temple (Ezek. 9: 3 – 11: 23).

[33] *Eicha Raba Petichta* 23.

[34] *Bereishit Rabah* 33:11.

Jerusalem mount, as the building would repeatedly collapse, the Caliph was advised by the Jews that:

> "'If you do not remove the cross that is above the church on the Mount of Olives, the structure will not stand.' On this account the cross was removed from there, and thus their building was compacted. For that reason Christ's enemies took down many crosses."[35]

What is interesting about this account, can be gauged from what had happened on the Mount of Olives since then. Bonfires were lit from the Mount of Olives to mark the beginning of the month in the Jewish calendar,[36] that is, the beginning of the national repentance in anticipation of the restoration of the Temple. By all accounts, the derogatory qualifiers in the *AZ* may not necessarily refer to the Christian Church primarily. After the Muslim conquest and since the erection of the Dome of the Rock, the dashed Jewish hope for an imminent restoration of the Temple cult gave the Mount of Olives a rise to prominence in the Jewish piety that has not wavered ever since. A plot of land on the Mount of Olives was acquired overlooking Jerusalem, on which a synagogue was erected – called Beth Orioth: the House of the Mount – where special intercessory prayers were recited as follows:

> "We have no comfort but to go about the gates... praying for mercy and forgiveness... for the return of the *Shekina*, the coming of the Messiah, the ingathering of the exiles... from the holy sanctuary on the Mount of Olives."[37]

Likewise, a Jewish hymnist of the early 7th century echoes the trepidation that overwhelmed the Jewish sentiment:

> "Until when shall we sit outside the land, and will the ruler of the empire of Edom be extolled unto heaven? Humiliate him and pull down into the depth of the earth, and let the heavens be glad, and the earth rejoice."[38]

At best, the *AZ* would refer to the Muslim cult, which unlike the Christian Church is otherwise associated with the cult of the Stone (*Ka'ba*). Therefore, for Zerubbabel, to be "*cast away... in Rome*" would epitomise the exclusion from the Jewish cult at the Jerusalem Temple, at the hands of the Muslims. So Zerubbabel asks:

---

[35] Theophanes, *Chronographia*, AM 6135 [AD 642/3], p. 476.
[36] *Mishna Rosh Hashana* 2:4.
[37] A. Ya'ari, *Igrot Eretz Yisrael* (Jerusalem: Masada, 1971), p. 47.
[38] W. J. van Bekkum, *Hebrew Poetry from Late Antiquity: Liturgical Poems of Yehudah. Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), pp. xv-xvi, 104.

> "My Lord, what is the name of this place?' Then he said to me: 'This is Rome, the Great in which I am detained.'"[39]

But then after, Zerubbabel is taken back to Nineveh the "Great city," the "bloody City," where the narrative re-integrates the Biblical framework. However, this revelatory mechanism may have its origin from the Muslim tradition about Muḥammad's Night Journey and Ascension to Heaven. By all means, Nineveh is probably Rome, and it seems that Rome is perfectly interchangeable with Jerusalem. Zerubbabel's fervent penitence is vicarious in the sense of the Biblical Daniel's 21-day-fasting. This, he does for the sake of the people of Israel. One may be tempted to think of Zerubbabel as a Saint in the Christian sense, that is, the posthumous role of the saint whose privileged access to God gives him right of say.[40] He plays the role that Jesus had credited to Himself for the Church, namely, as the medium between man and God.[41] This is a veiled messianic claim:

> "For my soul within me was so extremely distressed that I pressed forward to intercede and invoke the Lord's name, God of Israel, I myself confessing my own shortcomings and sins. I said: 'O Lord, I am ruined, I have committed sins, transgressions and iniquities.[42] Thou art the Lord, God who created the whole universe by the word of your mouth, and by the word of your lips the dead will live.' Then he said to me: "Go to the *winter- house*, to the place of harlotry."[43] And I went as he commanded me. And he said to me: "Turn further." and as I turned I saw a despicable man, bruised and in pain."[44]

Likewise, Zerubbabel's Messiah is called *Menahem* (heb. "Consoler" = Paraclete),[45] though he is also found "despicable," "disfigured," and "despised"[46] in the middle of an idolatrous Byzantine setting (the house of corruption = the "harlot" of the Book of Revelation).[47] Muḥammad is referred to in Islamic tradition as the Paraclete from the Syriac rendering of the

---

[39] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.
[40] This is foreign to Judaism. In the OT it bears a negative sense of necromancy (e.g. 1 Sam 28). Whereas in the *ASQ*, it has a positive function: the Virgin Mary appears where She is buried in order to elicit the worship carried out on that shrine at Qalamūn.
[41] John 14: 2, 16.
[42] Cf. Dan. 9.
[43] However, this sentence could be translated as follows: "Go to the *white house* (i.e.: the Christian church), the place of scorn."
[44] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.
[45] Sanh. 98b; cf. A. Guillaume, *Life of Muḥammad*, p. 104.
[46] Isaiah 53: 3.
[47] Rev 17:9 (NIV): "This calls for a mind with wisdom. The seven heads are seven hills on which the woman sits." (i.e. Rome)

Menahemanna. One can adduce from this that the name *Menahem* had assumed a peculiarly messianic overtone, which the authorship of the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel could not afford to circumvent.

An entry in *Sanhedrin* 98a reads: "*The Messiah was born when the Temple was destroyed*" and it follows that: "*Elijah said to R. Joshua the son of Levi: The Messiah sits at the Gates of Rome, among the sick.*"[48] That the impression that Zerubbabel is enacting the fate of the exiled Israel[49] is further re-enforced by the statement that follows his repentance. Having been translated by the spirit to Jerusalem, Zerubbabel is first bewildered at the sight of "*a despicable man, bruised, and in pain*"[50] whom he encounters at the "the place of scorn," called the "winter-house," e.g. the church possibly. The sight of the wretched man might be a representation or personification of Israel, if not the state of Zerubbabel himself. Another possible translation reads the "place of harlotry" or the "white house" in which the "dishonoured, despicable man" is held prisoner.[51] In Zerubbabel, the "city of blood" is possibly a word play with the Edomim; the name Edomites was traditionally the Jewish name for the Romans. This idea is carried over onto the other expressions such as "the house of shame" or "the place of frivolity."[52] The exiled Patron-Saint is usually portrayed as determined to remain among his protégés, and would oblige should the circumstances allow him to join the latter.[53] The explanation that the latter provides later on suggests strongly that it is a Christian-like Messiah who is being detained at Rome, whether Jesus or some creature of the like is yet unclear. However, this account echoes also the Danielic one, where "a man" appeared with a divine message to Daniel after being held back 21 days by a "Prince of the Persians."[54] The Archangel Gabriel, thanks to Daniel's incessant intercession and the help of the archangel Michael, delivers eventually the messenger. Given that this account was most probably inspired from the Book

---

[48] M.L. Robinson, *The History of the Talmud* (New York, 1903), p. 69.
[49] Cf. Ezek. 12: 11.
[50] The Messiah is so unrecognisable because he is constrained by God to endure his people's hardship, hence his captivity in Rome. See discussion below.
[51] Daniel 12: 9.
[52] I. Lévi, , *Le ravissement du Messie*, p. 189, n. 11.
[53] See for instance Mary in the *ASQ*.
[54] Dan. 10:13 (NIV): "But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia."

of Daniel, our "despicable man" is likely an interpolation of the angelic being detained by the "prince of the Persians."[55] Given the Islamic claim that *Jibrīl* was *the* mediator of the Prophet's message, this would be an interpolation of that Islamic tenet. Hence, the detained messenger in our apocalypse, who is also a messiah, since the man replies to Zerubbabel's question that makes it plain that Zerubbabel's role is that of another messiah who affords the former with a helping hand in order to bring about the new messianic age. In which case, the "detained messiah" is the image of the true religion being kept hostage at the hands of the Prophet of Islam. This is far cry from anything messianic that has been conceptualised in Judaism:

> "I myself am the Messiah of God, son of Hezekiah. I am kept into captivity until the time of End,"[56]

So the mysterious man seems to fit the role of a messenger imprisoned in Rome, i.e., by the Byzantine church and at the same time he is a claimant messiah. Here the messiah is portrayed as messenger rather than deliverer in so far as the doctrinal perspective of the apocalypse of Zerubbabel parallels that of the Gospels, namely, the message has precedence over deliverance, e.g., the ideology over the revolutionary. The latter then enquires to the former:

> "Zerubbabel! What are you doing here, and who has brought you here?"[57]

This is consistent with some apocalyptic narratives of the time, whereby in the course of a supernatural visitation of the heavenly realm the visionary or mystic is required to explain how has he/she has managed to enter a particularly high sphere in the quest of divine encounter. Note for instance the case of Muḥammad in his Night Journey when he is asked by heavenly beings, with a marked astonishment, how he made it up there.[58] To the similar question Zerubbabel replies that:

> "the Spirit of God has carried me away and expelled me here in this place."[59]

---

[55] Dan. 10: 12-14 (NIV): "Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding...your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days.'... I was detained there with the king of Persia. 'Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

[56] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.

[57] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.

[58] A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muḥammad.* pp. 181-84.

[59] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.

Here, it may well be that the old biblical theme of "resting the land"[60] was being revisited, as a justifying rationale for the present predicament of Israel, in a manner somewhat disingenuous.

Some Notable Oddities in the *AZ*:

As for the peculiarities of the *AZ*, if any, three features stand out as seemingly non-Jewish *topoi*: Hephzi-Bah as protector of Jerusalem along with her messianic son, the Messiah son of Joseph whom the Antichrist kills, and the Antichrist. On their own separate usage, they would have been an un-eventful occurrence. It is the combination of the three *topoi* in the eschatological frame of Jewish messianic that really calls for an answer as to how the Christian flavour in this apocalypse has found its way in an otherwise Jewish apocalypse. For instance, the Messiah's mother, that is, Hephzi-bah, who fights several foreign kings in battle for the sake of her progeny, it is a strange rendering of the Christian belief in the apotropaic powers of Mary the Theotokos. She is portrayed as holding back the rebellious people, Gog and Magog, at the eastern gate of Jerusalem while everyone else is fleeing away. The allusion to a "Messiah's mother" in the *AZ* does bear witness to the influence of the Christian faith in the defensive role of Mary, notably with regard to Constantinople.[61] But there is also the theme of the Antichrist-like king, who is son of Satan. As for the Antichrist in the *AZ*, he is the epitome of apostasy. F. Nau has made the same point in his study of three apocalyptic texts:

> "L'apostasie, c'est l'Antéchrist. C'est comme un transfuge qui s'empare du royaume. Lorsque le roi descendra du couchant avec le people armé, l'Antéchrist viendra de l'Orient. Leur faux prophète trompera à l'aide de ses prodiges."[62]

Antichrist, that is, the infamous Armilius (usually associated to Heraclius), does have a mother. She happens to be an especially beautiful statue (possibly the True Cross) and whom he requires the deluded population to worship. The

---

[60] 2Chron. 36: 20-21; Lev. 25: 4-5; 26: 27-43.

[61] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6209 (AD 716/17), p. 546: "... God and the all-holy Virgin, the Mother of God, protect this city and the Christian Empire;" N. H. Baynes, "The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople," in *Analecta Bollandiana* 67 (1949), pp. 165-77, esp. p. 171: "But these relics were only a supplement; for the protection of Constantinople... the unfailing guarantee, was the succour and mediation of the Blessed Virgin: God has given her to be the acropolis, the fortress, the walls of defence for the capital..."

[62] F. Nau, "Révélations et Légendes: Méthodius-Clément-Andronicus. Texts édités, traduits et annotés." In *Journal Asiatque* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 462.

Byzantine policies (i.e. Nebuchadnezzar), since Heraclius, of forced baptism against the Jews and Samaritans had left its imprint in the Jews' self-consciousness of exiles as was the case of Daniel and his companions, who had been thrown into the blazing furnace.[63] It was here, at the juncture of the Heraclean upsurge in Mariolatry, that the Christian tradition through the Jerusalem pilgrimage[64] for instance, might have crossed over onto the Jewish community that produced the *AZ*. According to the legend, the Blessed Virgin had a propensity to "feel herself to be exiled if she is not amongst her own people"[65] in the Holy City. In the *AZ*, the angel Metatron/Michael explains to the biblical Zerubbabel that following the destruction of the Second Temple (AD 70):

> "the Holy Nation will be scattered.... Many of them will fall because they observe the Torah, so they will abandon the Lord's Torah and worship idols."[66]

A Messiah son of Joseph[67] named Nehemiah[68] "*will gather all Israel as one*" after 990 years in exile. After 40 years of peace,[69] a period of politico-military upheavals will plague the Holy Land. Many foreign kings including the son of Satan will rule again the land of Israel. Then a second Messiah will appear (resurrect?), alongside the returning Elijah the Prophet, and the Jews will return to Jerusalem for the last time and definitely resume the Judaic worship at the Third Temple. This much anticipated Third Temple was to become the site in which the true worship of God will take place descends from heaven. That is to

---

[63] Dan. 3: 1-17, for Daniel and his companions' steadfastness; cf. Dan. 3: 24-25, where a man like "a son of the gods" had joined them.

[64] Arculf on the dripping oil from an icon of Mary that proves the honour of the Theotokos, see J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, pp. 115, Ch. 5: 1-9.

[65] At the wake of Leo III's iconoclastic policy, when the Patriarch took the sacred image of the Virgin down to the sea in order to save it from destruction. The icon went on its own in exile to Rome. This is so rendered in the narratives of the "Roman Virgin." The Akathistos Hymn, a 6th century hymn honouring Mary, became associated with the Hodegetria, in either the 7th or 8th century with the new Virgin's role as defender of Constantinople. R. Cormack, *Painting the Soul, Icons, Death Masks and Shrouds* (London, 1997), pp. 24, has shown that the icons depicts the feast of Orthodoxy celebrated in AD 843 to mark the end of Iconoclasm (p. 26).

[66] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.

[67] An ambiguous expression, relating either to Jesus, or a parody of a false Jewish messianic claimant.

[68] There is indeed a certain Jewish leader who had assumed the name of Nehemiah, and set out to re-organise the sacrificial cult at Jerusalem, in imitation of the Biblical Zerubbabel in Ezra 3: 1-2; cf. *Midrash Guelah* 78.

[69] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.

assert that the Third Temple will become the Navel of the earth, whereby God takes up His residence anew,[70] on the Mount of Olives.[71]

Saadia (d. AD 942) is the first Jewish authority who spoke about Armilius, and who mentions a Jewish tradition of 8th century that could be resumed as follows: If the Jews do not prove themselves worthy of Messianic salvation, God will force them to repentance by terrible persecutions. In consequence of these persecutions, a scion of the tribe of Joseph will arise and wrest Jerusalem from the hands of the Edomites, that is, from the Christians. Thereupon the king, Armilius, will conquer and sack the Holy City, kill the inhabitants together with "the man [Messiah] of the tribe of Joseph," and then begin a general campaign against the Jews, forcing them to flee in the desert, where they will suffer untold misery. When they have been purified by sorrow and pain, the Messiah will appear, wrest Jerusalem from Armilius, slay him, and thereby bring the true salvation. This excerpt of the Jewish notion of Armilius suggests that it emerged under Muslim rule, possibly at the wake of the erection of the Dome of the Rock, and so, the "wresting of Jerusalem from the hands of Armilius" should be an interpolation of the actual Muslim Caliphate. In addition, this Armilius, who is the product of the intercourse of Satan with a splendid marble statue of a beautiful girl standing in Rome, would start an apocalyptic war against the Jews upon their denying the former due reverence as Messiah is hardly anything but Muḥammad the Arab Messiah and the cult of the Kaʿba.[72]

The Figure of Metatron-Michael.

So far, we have Zerubbabel granted the revelation to the people of Israel. His messianic function is to inquire of God. Among the multitude of Messiahs, *Metatron* is probably the closest to the Christian conception of the Son of God. In Sanhedrin 38 b, God is said to have the same name as Metatron, "*as it is written: My name is in Him.*" :

---

[70] In Ezek. 43: 4-7, the Glory (*Shekina*), or "presence of God" returns to the Temple; cf. Ezek. 11: 23, where it left the city altogether, and stopped above the mountain east of it.

[71] Heb.: *Har ha-Zaytim*; Ar.: *Jabal at-Tur*. See Zachariah 14:4 (NIV): "On that day His (the Lord's) feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south."

[72] *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, pp. 118-20.

> "He (God?) has breathed his name in my heart[73] (*Metatron* for the Gentiles[74] is *Shaddai*). 'So you *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel* whose name is *Yeconiah*,[75] ask of me and I will disclose to your people what will happen at the End of days.' And he said to me: 'The *Messiah* of God will stay hidden in this place until the Endtime. But this *Messiah* (is) son of *David*[76] and whose name is *Menahem*[77] son of *Ammiel*.[78] And this one was born in the days of David the king of Israel. He was saved by the Spirit and was hidden in this place until the advent of the Endtime.'"[79]

I. Levi translates the word גוים "goyïm" = "nations," into *Gematria*, which is rendered: "*Car Métatron, en guematria, égale Schadaï.*" However, I suppose that *Guematria* (גימטריה) is another way of speaking of the pagan nations' languages, perhaps a Persian naming of that language. Gematria originates from the Greek word *geometria*, meaning both "earth-measurement" and "geometry." Hence, we may speak of a "sacred geometry" for which the request of Zerubbabel for a new revelation of the "plans of the Temple" makes sense and would refer to. Yet Metatron does not bear any measuring rod at all. Nonetheless, the mysterious man who did measure the dimensions of the sacred city to Ezekiel asserted that "*And the name of the city from that day shall be JEHOVAH IS THERE.*"[80] In this biblical account, it is a supernatural city that would never be taken by the enemies of Israel from their hands because God dwells in it, not that Metatron is Shaddai. Therefore, it is not sensible to equate Metatron with El-Shaddai, quite the contrary is what the author of the *AZ* sought to convey, namely, that the so-called equation was a disputed view.

---

[73] In other words Michael (or Metatron) bears divine attributes by the fact that his words carry the divine authority of the revealed Word of God Himself, not that he is God, or son of God but God's plenary representative.

[74] Gr. *Guematria* = "earth-measurement," "geometry."

[75] *Yeconiah* means *the Lord establishes.*

[76] As it will appear later, this statement is ambiguous, for it claims no less than the Jesus genealogy: son of David and son of Joseph have too peculiar a Christian stance. For this not to be deemed a conspicuous Jewish borrowing, it would require to be regarded as a thrust for an apocalyptic Hebrew movement on the verge of adopting Christian traditions which had preserved a deep-rooted Jewish feature.

[77] *Menahem* is the name of the Messiah to come according to *Sanhedrin* 98b; see also Y. Ber. III, 5a top; Lam. R. to I, 16; Pirqke d'R. El. XIX.

[78] (Heb. *Ammiel* = of God's family) Cf. Numb. 13:12 *Ammiel* (from the tribe of *Dan* = judging in favour!) was one of the Twelve spy sent by Moses in Canaan to explore the country. It is conspicuous that this popular tradition of the Messiah from the tribe of Dan should occur in such a fashion in this Hebrew apocalypse, especially as it appears in Anti-Jewish Christian writings around the sixth century onward.

[79] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III. This is an allusion to the first son of Bath-Sheba, who died because of God's rebuke at David's adultery.

[80] Ezek. 48: 35b (MKJV).

> "The Messiah of God is Nehemiah son of Hoshiel.[86] He will come five years after Hephzi-Bah, and he will gather all Israel like one man. Together they will stand 40 years at Jerusalem and the sons of Israel will draw near and offer sacrifices pleasing to the Lord. Every Israelite will be recorded according to his genealogy."[87]

Zerubbabel is told that Nehemiah son of Hoshiel will rule over Jerusalem along with Hephzi-Bah until the fifth year, when the Persian king will fight the Messiah of God, that is, Menahem son of Hoshiel.

> "He cleaved to me and brought me over the house of corruption, of weariness.[88] He showed me there one stone that was in the shape of a *virgin woman*, and her appearance and form became extremely beautiful to contemplate. He said to me: 'This stone is the wife of *Belial* (Satan). This one will have intercourse with her and a son whose name is Armelius will come out from her, and he will destroy the people, in Hebrew (tongue) he is the *ruler of the universe*. His dominion will spread from one end of the earth to the other. He will bear ten signs and worship idols of foreign gods, and to offer praise he will say: 'Nothing will stand before me!' In addition, all those who will not be faithful to him, he will destroy by the sword. And many will die in this way."[89]

The *AZ* is by far the most vehement toward the Christian and Muslim iconography. The Virgin (i.e. Mary) woman, which is a stone (i.e. Kaʿba) is beautiful to the eye (i.e. the Temptation in the garden of Eden), and she becomes even more beautiful the longer one gazes at her. She is assigned the duty of having intercourse with Belial (i.e., Satan, the Tempter). Here both Christianity and Islam are amalgamated regarding the most important aspect of each one's worship and the object of veneration. No less than the original sin is thereby ascribed to the cult of Christianity and Islam, given that the cult is satanically inspired: Belial who is Satan (שמן) will sleep the Stone changed into a beautiful Virgin Woman, out of which intercourse will Armilius (ארמילוס) be born. Armilius in Hebrew, adds the author of the *AZ*, is "the ruler of the universe." In the context of Armilius' origins, the expression "he will rule" (ימלוך) here seems to be convoluted so as to relate more to a deity (Moloch) rather than to a kingship from human agency.[90] The point of the matter is that the title Armilius would fit any leader of either Christianity or Islam, but in particular with regard

---

[86] He is also the Messiah son of Joseph (an irony about Christ?).
[87] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. IV. This may be an allusion to Neh. 7:6; cf. Ezra. 2: 62.
[88] See Ezek 40: 4b (MKJV): "For you are brought he so that I might show them (i.e., the visions) to you. Declare all that you see to the house of Israel."
[89] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. IV.
[90] Amos 5:26 (Darby): "Yea, ye have borne the tabernacle of your king (Moloch) and the shrine of your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves."

Chapter 4: The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

The biblical Zerubbabel (i.e., "born in Babylon"), here as the mediator of the apocalypse is said to be the son of Shealtiel (i.e., "he who inquires of God").[81] The name of Metatron-Shaddai was breathed on the archangel Michael so that he had become part of the demiurge, and that whatever Zerubbabel might have to ask/pray for Metatron-Shaddai may grant the former. On his own accord, however, the archangel Michael reveals that Messiah son of David alias Menahem son of Ammiel will remain hidden until the Endtime, as though to imply that this is so under the prerogative of Metatron-Shaddai. This is here an instance of the influence of Shī'a Mahdism in which the spiritual power is transferred from one to the next through a rod, which otherwise "God gave to *Adam*, to *Moses*, to *Aaron*, to *Joshua*, to king *David*."[82] Zerubbabel is thus the privileged biblical High Priest who alone may be viewed as the equivalent to the Muslim "rightly guided one," by birth, to have access to the knowledge of the divine mystery. The legend of the chain of transmission of the miracle-working rod is further enhanced by the Hebrew lineage. By extension the Muslim Mahdīsm may also be accounted as conceptual source for this Jewish notion. However, Zerubbabel receives the revelation of two more messianic figures that were in a state of concealment in Tiberias: "*Elijah* son of *Eleazar*[83] is hidden in *Rakkah*, the city of *Nephtali*, which is Tiberias."[84] Then Michael speaks of another personage in concealment "whose name is *Nehemiah*, son of *Hoshiel*, son of *Ephraim*, son of *Joseph*, is also hidden there."[85] Whatever the significance attached to the concealment of those messiahs might have been, it seems that Rome and Tiberias, as sites of imprisonment of these Jewish messiahs may have something to do with historic sites of Jewish messianic rebellion, and that those figures in concealment might well represent those Jewish leaders who have met a violence death in their messianic uprising. This is evidenced in the following statement of Michael to Zerubbabel's enquiry:

---

[81] See Ezra 3: & Neh. 12:1. In IV Ezra 5:16 Shealtiel is translated into Salathiel (i.e.,
[82] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.
[83] Hb. rzila = *Eleazar* = God has helped. This seems to suggest quite a different personage than the prophet of that name. The biblical prophet is only known as the *Tishbite*. In fact, it is more likely to signify that our *Elijah* son of *Eleazar* is a later hero of some episode of the struggle for survival in the history of Israel. Indeed, as pointed out by I. Levi, there existed a Jewish leader called *Elijah*, son of *Eleazar*, who had lived in Tiberias during the Persian rule of Palestine.
[84] It is a town on the littoral of Galilee. This city was a refuge for a large community of Jews and the site of a rabbinical scholarship.
[85] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.

to the alleged prohibition of the Jewish cult at the Temple Mount, namely, by Heraclius and Muḥammad (the Caliphs) successively.[91] That Heraclius and Muḥammad would have conspired (i.e., Satan's intercourse with the stone-woman) is very much a possibility, and the interpretation may not be so far fetched.

There is no clearer evidence than this entry concerning the identity of Armilius, who is born of a stone and Satan, that suggests beyond reasonable doubt that the Muslim religion was meant here. After having described the Persian king Shiroui's exaction of revenge against the Jewish rule of Jerusalem, the *AZ* depicts the appearance of Armilius (Muḥammad), worshiper of a stone, who will conquer and rule the universe, saying *'nothing will stand before me!'* and destroying by the sword whosoever does not believe in him (i.e. his prophethood). The next entries may be of historic significance, especially with regard to the persecution that will cause the scattering of the Israelites in three different bands:

> "And he will kill the Messiah son of Joseph, who is the son of Nehemiah, son of Hoshiel along with 16 righteous men.[92] He will slay their community and the Israelites will go into exile in the desert in three scattered bands."[93]
>
> "As I *Zerubbabel* requested of *Metatron* chief of the army of God, he said to me: 'God will give the scepter of salvation to *Hephzi-Bah*,[94] mother of *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*, And a great star will shine before her and all the stars will deviate from their orbits, and *Hephzi-Bah*, mother of *Menahem*, son of *Ammiel* will go out and kill the two pervert-hearted kings. One of the two kings is *Nof*, king of Yemen[95] who will shake his hand

---

[91] It should be recalled that the author of the AZ was concerned with the failed Jewish attempt at restoring the Jewish sacrificial rites at Jerusalem. However, having recovered the True Cross (AD 618) and restored the ban on the Jewish cult at the Temple Mount, Heraclius is said to have ordered in addition a forced baptism of Jews in revenge for their abuses on Christians during the short occupation of Palestine by Persia (see accounts by Theophanes, *Chronographia*; Sebeos, *History*; Sergius, *Sack of Jerusalem*). Shortly after, the Muslim Arabs (AD 634) took control of Palestine raising in vain another hope of the restoration of the Jewish cult at the Temple Mount.

[92] This information may be useless and of the domain of apocalyptic fantasy.

[93] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, pp. IV-V.

[94] The name *Hephzi-Bah* occurs once in the Old Testament (2Kings 21:1: the wife of *Hezekiah*, mother of *Manasseh* the worst Judean king ever) with the meaning of *In whom I am pleased* (Es. 42:1-3 cf. Septuagint Es. 42:4; Mat. 12:18; 18:5:5; Are *Bath-Sheba* or *Bath-Shua* names related to *Hephzi-Bah*?). Cf. Arab. *Hafaza* (= helper: see 1Chr. 3:5: *Bath-Shua*, daughter of *Ammiel*).

[95] There were no king of this name in Yemen. Yet, this is an interesting word-play, because it depicts in Hebrew terms נוף = to shake or to strike) the apocalyptic significance of such an enemy to Israel. Otherwise, Nof was the ancient name for Memphis, north of Egypt.

over Jerusalem. The second one is *Esyrnan*[96] king of Antioch. That battle and its signs will be confirmed (covenanted) during the seventh feast,[97] on the third month."[98]

The episode of the Sassanians' takeover of Palestine (AD 614) may have been the main thread over which new speculations over recent political events were superimposed as future historical events. Between AD 618 and 619, the Jewish prince was killed, dashing the hopes of the restoration of the Jewish priesthood on the Temple Mount. In Ad 634, the Muslims armies invade Palestine, barely a decade after Heraclius had restored at Jerusalem the Christian control. Here, the quick succession of claimants to the control of Temple Mount is played out in eschatological terms.

Having accomplished the 990 years, God will perform the resurrection from the dead, so that the tribes of Israel will come out of their resting place. The so-called resurrection from the dead could well be a way of saying that the Jewish community would expand unexpectedly following a massive merging with some "lost tribes." The Khazars are an example of such phenomenon. The title Khazars included among other ethnics the Turks (like the Arabs, descended from Esau, also called Edom). The Edomites were fellow-Semites as their forefather, Esau, was a son of Isaac. It follows that the Arab Muslims would have genuinely raised anew the hopes for the independence of the Jewish state when their cousins conquered Palestine. For God had solemnly commanded the Israelites saying: "*Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother ...the children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in their third generation.*"[99]

"In the 2nd year of his reign, on the month of *Iyar*[100] the family of *Korah*[101] will go up

---

[96] Just as the preceding name, this Hebrew word seems to derive from אסיר = prisoner, captive, exile. The F recension, however, has *Asyrnu* = we are prisoners. In which case, there is little historical information in this statement, except for its meaning: the spreading of (spiritual) captivity, as if the long period of Arab rule over the Yemenite Jews and the Antiochean Jews was regarded as a supernatural bondage, prior to the rise of Islam.

[97] If not mistaken (I. Levy speaks of Pentecost!), the feast the author is talking about corresponds to the Jewish feast of the Tabernacle, the last of the Hebrew festivals. This one is a typology of the Millennium feast when Israel and the Nations will at last stay in peace (Zech. 14: 16-19). It makes sense in the face of rebellious attitudes of these "nations" involved in anti-Jewish persecution, that in the author's eyes, is bound to bring about the predicted wrath of God against the nations (i.e. Egypt) that do not come to Jerusalem and revere Yahweh, the Lord of Hosts.

[98] That is *Sivan*. See *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.

[99] Deut. 23:7 (KJV).

[100] This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar, of twenty-nine days, varying between the tenth of April and the eighth of June.

[101] Meaning *cooling, satisfaction, comfort.*

into the plain of Jericho near the *torrent of Shittim*.[102] And they will draw near to *Moses* and he will join the banner of the *Korahites*.[103]

The *Korahites* were disparate elements of the Jewish communities known as the Khazars, which are alluded to here. Notably, the Karaites were also said to constitute the lost tribes of Israel, of which some had converted to Judaism in the course of history.[104] A brief history is in order here. The Jews – also known as Palestinians, Parthians, Scythians, Iberians, Sacae, Goths, etc. – had considered the Caucasus Mountains as a hospitable refuge for centuries going back from the destruction of the Second Temple in AD 70 onward. And they went there in large numbers, and through several waves of immigration, to escape from the severe persecutions which they had been suffering, and notably, at the hand of Emperor Justinian in the 6th century AD. Other groups of Jewish immigrants followed, especially in the 8th century. When the Arabs conquered part of Daghestan, they found a large Jewish population there."[105] For many centuries before the Khazar rulers adopted Judaism, there had been numerous migrations of Jews into the region later called to be called Khazaria. Khazaria is a land that extends from the North of the Black Sea to the Transcaucasus. There, some remnants of the ten tribes of Israel would have settled in that region as well. Indeed, Jewish sources claim that there were identifiable remnants from the tribes of Issachar, Manasseh, and Simeon living in Khazar regions, and that their archaic Hebrew names and the lack of any Levites among them supported the conclusion that they were not practising Jews, but Israelites from the ten tribes of Israel.[106] However, these regions had many non-Israelites as well. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that: "*...the Khazars had reappeared in Armenia, though it was not till 625 that they appear as Khazars in the Byzantine annals...described as 'Turks from the East.*'"[107] But the Khazars did not adopt Judaism unilaterally. The 'dynasty' of the ruling class adopted Judaism, but not

---

[102] The torrent of Shittim שיטים (scourge, punishment) נחל (wady, river-bed); cf. Midr. Till. to Ps. I. Ber. 16.a. (ref. to Num. XXIV, 6).
[103] These are Levites descendants of the *Kehathites* (1Chron. 1: 35; 6: 22; 9: 19).
[104] Still an authoritative survey by A. Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe. The Khazar Empire and Its Heritage*, (New York: Random House, 1966).
[105] I. Landman & S. Cohen, *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia. The seven-branched light*, (New York. Universal Jewish encyclopedia. 1944), vol. 8, see entry "Mountain Jews," p. 26.
[106] *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 8, pp. 26-27.
[107] *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, (Encyclopædia Britannica. Inc. 1943), vol. 13, see "Khazars," pp. 362-63.

until between AD 786 and 809, while remaining tolerant to the commoners who retained their own faiths of Judaism, Christianity or Islam. The Khazars converted because: "...it was chiefly due to the cultural superiority of the Daghestan Jews that the 'Kahan' (king) of the mighty state of the Khazars was converted to Judaism together with his court and part of the Khazar population between the 8th and the 9th centuries."[108] Khazaria's Jews eventually became known as "Ashkenazi" Jews.[109] It is probably what the author of the AZ is referring to when he says: "they will draw near to *Moses* and he will join the banner of the *Korahites*," namely, the Jewish and the other not so Jewish tribes (e.g., the Edomites)[110] will join together to form the Khazar kingdom, along with or under the impulse of the Karaites movement – i.e., "followers of Scriptures." The author of the AZ saw the occurrence of this phenomenon as a sign of the Messianic age at hand:

> On the 4th month, which is *Tammuz*,[111] the Lord, God of Israel will appear (in his glory) on the Mount of Olives.[112]
>
> And this will take place during the third war. There will be three wars on the land of Israel: One which *Hephzi-Bah* will wage against *Shiroui* the king of Persia; One which the Lord God of Israel will wage with *Menahem* son of *Ammiel* against *Armilius* and the 10 kings who are associated with *Gog* and *Magog*;[113] The third one which will take place at *Tsela-Haelef*, will be carried out on the month *Ab* by *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel* and *Zerubbabel*.
>
> "These are their names associated with their cities and domains: the first king will be *Seleucus*[114] of the land called Sepharad,[115] capital (מדינתו) of which is *Aspamia*[116] on the sea-district."[117]

The last entry of historical value would be that alluding to the first of the ten eschatological kings, that is, a king in the land of Sepharad, namely, in Spain. This is also the point at which the *AZ* shifts from the historical to the apocalyptic

---

[108] *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 8, pp. 27, 376.
[109] *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (1943), Vol. 17, pp. 576-577.
[110] Deut. 23:7 (KJV): "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; for he is thy brother ...the children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in their third generation."
[111] *Tammuz* is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar, of twenty-nine days, varying between the ninth of June and 6 August.
[112] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. VI; cf. Zech. 14:4.
[113] Traditionally, it is the land of Ethiopia.
[114] *Seleucus* (king of Persia) may be used here for its meaning as a word rooted in וילוך which conveys the sense of *being removed from* or the *departure from the presence of God.*
[115] Of a country near the Black-Sea (wrongly Spain: I. Levi), or Sepphoris.
[116] *Aspamia* is the name of several country towns, especially one each in Bithynia, Mesopotamia and Syria. There is an apparent confusion with a city of Spain.
[117] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. VIII.

part. Unfortunately the name of this king is hardly meaningful. Should this refer to the Umayyad kingdom of Spain

From the possible influence of Christianity, one may refer to Leo III's claim to the rulership as well as to priesthood may be inferred. Zerubbabel does combine the title of "governor of Judah," as well as that of a messiah."[118]

Some Important Moments in the *AZ*:

The concatenation of the Ezekiel[119] and the Nineveh theme helps here to determine with some certainty the intended effect: Nineveh in AD 627 for the author(s) is the defining eschatological war of nations, which ought to be considered the historical point of departure from the Jewish exile into the promise land. Hence, the statement: "... *then the spirit carried me [off], lifting me between heaven and earth, and landed me in Nineveh the Great, the city of Slaughter*"[120] does make a perfect link between Zerubbabel's quickening by the spirit and his grievous intercession.[121] Zerubbabel rises up onto his destiny as Restorer of the Jewish faith. Note that the Samaritans,[122] who incidentally believed that at the End of Time the dead will be resurrected by the work of a "Restorer" (*taheb*) or "Saviour" (possibly a prophet such as Zerubbabel, some say Moses), believed in the apocalyptic revolution of world history.[123] But there is no evidence, as far as I can see, to suggest that the Samaritans had mounted any messianic insurrection after AD 634, which may disqualify this group from the authorship of the *AZ*.

---

[118] Haggai 2: 20-23 (NIV): "The word of the LORD came to Haggai...: 'Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I will shake the heavens and the earth. I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother. On that day... 'I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' ..., 'and I will make you like *my signet ring*, for I have chosen you,' declares the LORD Almighty." The signet ring is considered as a mark of the messianic dignity.

[119] Ezek. 8: 3 reads as follows: "And He putteth forth a form of a hand, and taketh me by a lock of my head, and lift me up doth a spirit between the earth and the heavens, and *it bringeth me in to Jerusalem in visions of God*, unto the opening of the inner gate that is facing the north, where [is] the seat of the figure of jealousy that is making jealous." This account justifies the assumption that the visions of Zerubbabel here concerned Jerusalem even though the visionary is actually on the banks of the river Kebar.

[120] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.

[121] cf. Ezek. 4:1-14.

[122] On Samaritans existence until the 6th century, see J. Taylor, *Christians and the Holy Places* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 64-69; on their existence in the 7th century, see P. Crone & M. Cook, *Hagarism*, pp. 14, 165, n. 42.

[123] See *Memar Markah* 4:12.

Only this time, Zerubbabel is compelled to foresee the fate of the Jews at the hands of the Ishmaelites rather than the Romans (e.g., Nineveh, the Great, the city of the slaughter). What is interesting, however, is that Zerubbabel is made to taste for himself what it would feel like for his compatriots to be so barred from accessing the Temple precincts: "*Woe to me, for I am cast away. For my soul within me was so extremely distressed... I myself confessing my own shortcomings and sins.*"[124] Then after He "who quickens the dead" does restore[125] Zerubbabel to his former stature saying: "Be alive!" thus echoing the quickening by the Spirit of the "dried bones" of Ezekiel 37. The experience is Zerubbabel's eye opener. Zerubbabel is moved from the scripturally fixed Biblical figure, to the eschatological player. What Ezekiel passively witnessed and that which Zerubbabel contributed to in the Second Temple restoration, now are brought together in the person of Zerubbabel. This adoption of the literary style of Ezekiel does suggest the rational behind making apocalyptic the biblical figure of Zerubbabel, one among many zealots who took part in rebuilding the Temple of Jerusalem. By the concatenation of the visions of Ezekiel and the Ezra account of the first return of the Jewish exiles from Babylon led by Zerubbabel[126] and the completion of rebuilding the Temple, the author is setting the foundation of his apocalyptic text. The visions in this apocalypse intend to convey the views that the actual visions are more than prophetic revelations, that transcend space and time in such a way that since present reality and future events are traversed instantaneously, the entire history of the elect of God is thoroughly revealed in contemporary time. In short, the author firmly places the present circumstances right in the middle of the historical revelatory scheme.

This eschatological perspective suggests also that the milieu of the apocalypse of Zerubbabel entertained messianic speculations of a nature that did not require the author to be concerned with enunciating the popular belief in a post-biblical Zerubbabel,[127] albeit attained through the recycling in the 7th-9th century of Jewish and Christian symbolisms. Whereas the biblical Zerubbabel was content with the restoration of the Temple infrastructure, the apocalyptic Zerubbabel

[124] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.
[125] Restoration here has the sense of the remission of sins. Cf. Ezek. 37:3-5.
[126] The biblical Zerubbabel, who is of Davidic descent, assumed in the meantime in Jewish traditions the stature of a messianic figure expected to return at an eschatological time to restore the fortunes of the Jewish nation.
[127] I.e., over against the biblical one.

concerned himself with instituting there and then the new contours of the eschatological Temple. Zerubbabel goes on parodying the founder of Christianity, and possibly of Islam.[128] Later on, Zerubbabel is literally numbed when the appearance states his servanthood to God, and discloses his identity: "*I am the light of Israel, and his Messiah.*"[129] Immediately after this statement, Zerubbabel adds that: "*he slipped away in the likeness of a young male in white garment, strong and handsome.*"[130] This is quite unmistakably a reference to the image of Jesus and even Jesus' own words quoted from the Gospel of John. It must be noted however, that Zerubbabel does construe the meaning of "light" as the "advent of God's deliverance." For instance, when Zerubbabel asks the appearance: "*when will the light of Israel be?*"[131] A two-winged creature, the Archangel Michael in effect, retorts to Zerubbabel: "*how dare you ask a question to the Messiah of God?*"[132] Zerubbabel replies as follows: "*I was [only] asking 'when will the deliverance of Israel come?* " In other words, as far as the Messiah chooses to reveal himself, it was conceptually in agreement with the Karaite tenet concerning the "progressive discovery of hidden thing,"[133] but it did not follow that the recipient was entitled to enquire any further than necessary, or haste the revelation, let alone to enquire directly to God. This is also consistent with the established wisdom of the time on the subject. The Archangel Michael orders Zerubbabel to enquire of him whenever is required as a general rule:

> "I am Michael who brought good news to Sarah. I am the commander of the Lord's army, the God of Israel. I am he who fought against Sennacherib, he who prevailed against 180000 men. I am he who led Israel in the battle against the kings of Canaan. Moreover, I will wage the divine war with this Messiah of God..."[134]

Note here that the word שרת (lit. "priestly ministry") is used synonymously to the preaching of the Gospel, an obvious borrowing from Christianity. But the

---

[128] There are evidences of such rhetoric concerning Muḥammad during his *Miʿrāj / Isrā'*. Although this kind of rhetoric is usually ascribed to later sayings (ḥadīth), it shows the concomitant influence of the theme in apocalyptic circles (sectarians) in the three religions. With regard to Jesus as Son of God, there is for instance an interpolation on the issue of Metatron/Michael, as equal to God, or superior to someone else (Muḥammad leading the prayer before Abraham, Moses and Jesus; Ishmael being blessed rather than Isaac.

[129] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. II.

[130] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. II.

[131] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. II.

[132] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. II.

[133] N. Wieder, *The Judean Scrolls and Karaism*, pp. 62-70.

[134] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. II.

word serves a word play with Sarah (princess) or the free-person, in contrast to Hagar (woman of servitude).[135] The anti-Arab sentiment is rather clear; the allusion to *Sarakeinos* may be in the back of the authors' mind here. On the other hand, the pro-Jewish position of the apocalypse is evidently at the expense of the Christian Gospel, especially the story of the angelic annunciation to Mary is replaced by an alleged annunciation to Sarah. In addition, when we take into account the latter portion of Michael's declaration, there remains no more doubt that the message stands against Christianity and Islam: "*I will wage the divine war..., against the fiery-faced*[136] *king, and against Armilius son of Satan,*[137] *he who is born of the Idol of Stone (i.e., Muḥammad).*"[138] In such conceptual context as this, the apocalyptic Zerubbabel can be regarded as a Jewish-Christian messianic myth that grew specifically out of the experience of the rule of Islam.

What is probably the centrepiece of the apocalypse of Zerubbabel is displayed outright in the first paragraph where Zerubbabel agonised before his God saying: "*What will the plan of the Eternal Temple be?*"[139] But another recension that can be rendered as: "Where is the Eternal Rock?"[140], does appear much more reliable and of some significance to the present writer,[141] which points more clearly to the Temple Mount. Thus, Zerubbabel considers this sacred place – where the angel establish communication between earth and heaven, his *omphalos*, or "centre of the word" – as being coveted by the three monotheistic

---

[135] cf. the Pauline Midrash in Gal. 4: 24-26.

[136] This עזמבירא king needs yet be identified: it is either Heraclius, Justinian II, or Leontius (Λεόντιος), or even more likely Leo III (Λέων), all of whom are known to have carried one form of anti-Jewish persecution or another. On the other hand, there are Coptic traditions identifying the beast of Rev. 13:18 specifically with Muḥammad (see Būlus al-Būsī, *Commentary on Revelation* (ref. in F.J. Martinez, Eastern Christian Apocalyptic, p. 264).

[137] Or Harmalaos, Ermolaos, Armilios. For the Jewish author, Armilius was allegedly the product of the intercourse of Satan with Mary, resulting in the cult of, or reverence to the Virgin Mary. This should however be qualified given the heightened public piety toward the icons and the name of Mary in times of severe distress such as the inroads of the Muslim marauders.

[138] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. II.

[139] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I; The nature of Zerubbabel's question is reminiscent of Ezekiel's (cf. Ezek. 40ff), which would advocate for the dimensional rather than the geographical aspects of Zerubbabel's inquiry.

[140] i.e., "איה צור העולמים" in the edition of de E. Wertheimer, is a preferable translation compare to the text edited by I. Levi (an allegedly earlier recension) that is rendered as "What will the plan of the Eternal Temple be?"

[141] Cf. Jacob sleep on a stone in Haran, and the house of God (*beth-el*) and the gate of heaven, see Gen. 28: 11-13, 16-19. Concerning sacred stones, see M. Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religions* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1958), pp. 216-38, esp. p. 227: Their sacred character was due primarily to their heavenly origin. But they were at the same time images of the Great Mother, the earth goddess *par excellence*... But ... the Ka'aba was looked upon as the 'centre of the world.'.. it was not merely the central point of the earth; directly above it, in the centre of the heavens, was the 'gate of heaven'... Through it passed the *Axis Mundi*."

religions is here alluded to. Like in the Christian and Muslim traditions, there are all sorts of stories relative to the providential discovery (or recovery) of the "original rock" where the patriarchs had worshipped. The Jerusalem mount was the place of veneration *par excellence*. However the precedence of one recension to the other, a tentative dating may be deduced from the apparently baffling meaning of the expression, which some copyists would have manifestly tried to remedy, only after the original expression "where is the Eternal Rock" had lost its rationale, that is during or after the construction of the Dome of the Rock.[142] As a matter of fact, several mythical stories around the theme of the "primeval religion" had emerged claiming invariably the discovery and inheritance of a sacred rock at the Temple mount as the Eternal or Original Rock upon which Abraham worshipped.[143] As a matter-of-fact, Makām Ibrāhīm (Qur. 2: 125), denotes a place of prayer, a summons to the pilgrimage to Mecca, to the Black Stone, especially that it bears the footprints of Abraham, which appeared when Abraham built the sanctuary of Mecca, and also because the footprint of the Prophet had exactly the same dimensions.[144]

There is one intriguing feature of the visions of Zerubbabel worth mentioning. Zerubbabel asserts that after the vision "*I remained in prayer... When I finished my prayer I entered my house,*"[145] which looks odd given that no mention is made of Zerubbabel going off from Jerusalem to the river Kebar[146] in Babylon and back. As I. Levi points out, the introduction of "... *I entered my house*" would not be justified, had the purpose been other than to underline the spatial

---

[142] The hypothesis suggests also that the construction of the Dome of the Rock (AD. 695) might have served, among others, the purpose of appropriating the Rock for Islam, and putting definitively at rest the issue of the precedence of Islam over Christianity and Judaism.

[143] Melito's reference to a stone carried from Jerusalem to Melitus; *Vita S. Pauli Iunioris* in Monte Latro *Analecta Bollandiana* 11 (1892), pp. 53-54, speaks of: "One of the Twelve Stones taken from the river Jordan;" or "An extremely large stone lies on the mountain peak. This stone was called Sacred from Old." On the Abrahamic sanctuary tradition, see P. Crone & M. Cook, *Hagarism*, pp. 21-26; on the stone in a mountain, see Wnesinck, *The Ideas of the Western Semites concerning the Navel of the Earth* (Amsterdam, 1916), pp. 14f. Speak of the Maqam Abraham; the footprint of Jesus.

[144] M.J. Kister, "Makām Ibrāhīm," in *EI*, vol. 6, pp. 104-06.

[145] See *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I; I. Levi, "L'Apocalypse de Zorobabel," in *Revue des Etudes Juives* pp. 144-60, esp. pp. 144-45; cf. Dan. 10: 4-5.

[146] The Kedarites (or Kebarites) or people of the river Kedar were considered Ishmaelites, just like also were the Assyrians (Ashur in Hosea 8:9), divinely appointed to carry out on behalf of Israel God's judgement of, and deliverance from the Edomites (Christians), see W. J. van Bekkum, "Jewish Messianic Expectations in the Age of Heraclius," in G. J. Reinink & B.H. Stole (eds), *The Reign of Heraclius (610-641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), p.110.

dimension of the vision. But unlike him, the present writer suggests that if we consult the model of Ezekiel upon which this first paragraph of the apocalypse is based, the prophet Ezekiel there was prophesying some time during the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity, despite the account of his vision' settings as shuffling between the river Kedar and the Temple of Jerusalem. The Zerubbabel of the apocalypse, however, not only steps in the shoes of Ezekiel, but also performs during a similar time of subjection to a foreign power, namely the Muslims. What is more, the interpolation of the Ezekiel model becomes complete as a result of the introduction of the last statement in the first paragraph. Given that Zerubbabel of the apocalypse is a visionary *à priori* here rather than a restorer of the Temple, one can perceive that he probably does not operate in Jerusalem, or on the bank of the river Kebar. It seems that the spiritual experiences in this apocalypse are depicted in the style of mystical journeys of the visionary between the earthly reality and its idealised counterpart[147] where visual revelations and aural communications are granted the prophet. Elsewhere, Zerubbabel is said to having been dealt with very kindly by the archangel Metatron, and that: "***beside revealing to him the time at which the Messiah would appear, he brought about an interview between the Messiah and Zerubbabel.***"[148] In the *Legends of the Jews*, to the question put to Zerubbabel: what is the mightiest thing in the world? Zerubbabel wrote: "***Women are the mightiest in the world, but truth prevails over all else.***" Later on Zerubbabel goes on as far depicting: "***in glowing words the power of woman, who rules even over kings.***" The story goes on to the point where it says about Zerubbabel that:

> "As unto his predecessor Daniel, so unto Zerubbabel, God vouchsafed a knowledge of the secrets of the future. Especially the archangel Metatron dealt kindly with him. Besides revealing to him the time at which the Messiah would appear, he brought about an interview between the Messiah and Zerubbabel. In reality, Zerubbabel was none other than Nehemiah, who was given this second name because he was born in Babylon. Richly endowed as Zerubbabel-Nehemiah was with admirable qualities..."[149]

---

[147] See further down the text: "... Then the Spirit (a wind) carried me off, lifting me between heaven and earth, and subdued me in Nineveh..." Cf. I. Levi, "L'Apocalypse de Zorobabel," in *Revue des Etudes Juives* p. 145.

[148] L. Ginsberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), vol. 4, p. 351.

[149] L. Ginsberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), vol. 4, pp. 351-52.

This is a contemporary late 7th century tradition about Zerubbabel. Yet, only some vestiges of the mystical journey narrations are detectable as though a deliberate effort was undertaken to phase out that literary genre from the text. In short, the editor of the apocalypse was working at a time when the mystical journey[150] was no longer a distinctive character of the community that produced its earlier versions. But as noted above, given that the quest for the "*plan for the Temple*" thrust aside the quest for the Eternal Rock, the latter would have made less sense by the time of the construction of the Dome of the Rock or just thereafter. The present writer suggests that the Zerubbabel tradition may have been exacerbated by the specific event of the erection of the Dome of the Rock. In sum, AD 695 should establish the turning point around which the composition of the apocalypse is the most likely to have occurred.[151] Further data below may help consolidate this hypothesis. In IV Ezra, the heroine of the apocalypse is portrayed as a mere intercessor on behalf of his people as follows:

> "... as I laid upon my bed I was disquieted... and my mind was preoccupied... and in my agitation I began to address the Most High... and I poured out in cry and I said: 'Have pity on me, O Lord, and be merciful towards your creatures, for the serpent of the desert (i.e., Islam) is consuming them.'"[152]

Obviously, here the serpent of the desert parodies the Temptation in the Garden of Eden, even though it is rather the so-called "consuming temptation" than the existing chaos that was alluded to in Ezra. Yet, the intercessory prayer of Ezra had become the device that stands between the apocalyptic revelation and the eschatological annihilation. Furthermore, the author(s) of Zerubbabel seem to address the problem of scriptural integrity of the apocryphal writings. This was also the main thrust of the Muslim refutation that has exerted the most effective

---

[150] Note that the Qur'ānic account of the Night Journey of the Prophet had epitomised the process of divine revelation (like Moses' Torah) in Islam, which no doubt became an Islamic feature in its own right, so that the Christians grew reluctant to make use of.

[151] The literal association of the female messianic figure such as Hephzi-Bah with the surge of Mariology during the reign of Heraclius may be too straightforward. It would become advisable to seek further down any "antichristian" connotation that might have occurred after the Muslim conquest, which shortly after might have exposed the Jewish mistaken hopes placed upon the Arab Muslims. For me the Dome of the Rock must have been such a decisive moment of the Jewsh disillusionment. See W.J. Bukkum's tentative suggestion of the 8th century as possible period for the composition of the Zerubbabel tractate in "Jewish Messianic Expectations...", pp. 111-12.

[152] See Dan. 7:5; cf. IV Ezra 3:1-3.

pressure upon the Christian worship traditions.[153] Although this Jewish apocalypse appears devoid of doctrinal tenet, it does not necessarily follows that there was no controversial perspective to it. In fact, the theodicy of this apocalypse leaves no doubt as to what end the actual revelation is devised for: to envision the post-Christian and Muslim era. In order to do so, the authorship of the *AZ* proceeded with denying the Jewish opponents the exclusive usage of the prevalent iconography.

Naturally, Zerubbabel did retort, to the divine instruction to enquire for himself, with a predictable puzzlement: "***what should I ask [any further] since my end is near and my days are fulfilled?***"[154] The author(s) of the *AZ* meant to suggest that the ministry of Zerubbabel extended beyond his natural life, or at least, that his biblical revelation actually spanned beyond the biblical context into the latter circumstances, namely, the Islamic era. The symbolism is unmistakably borrowed from the prophetic visions granted Ezekiel for the times before, during and after the siege of Jerusalem and subsequent captivity of the kingdom of Judah in the Babylonian exile. Accordingly, the Spirit snatches Zerubbabel against his will,[155] as he experienced anxieties regarding a new Temple at Jerusalem, i.e., the Dome of the Rock. This reluctance is expressed by the sense of despair Zerubbabel feels on learning the situation of imprisonment of the Messiah. This should be an interpolation of the denial by the Muslims of the Mount of Jerusalem, since the Dome now stands in the stead. Although, the *AZ* never explicitly referred to the Dome, but it equally very plausible that the "plan of the eternal Temple" should point at the Dome of the Rock.

The OT Media of Revelation:

"A voice (i.e., "clouds")[156] from the doors of heavens" does communicate with Zerubbabel, and thus the author depicts him as the "anointed interpreter of God's Word," which further puts him on the same footings to Moses, Jesus and

---

[153] See I. Levi, "L'Apocalypse de Zorobabel," in *Revue des Etudes Juives*, p. 145, n. 2, who does not make sense of this statement, like several others.

[154] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I; cf. Dan. 12: 13 (MKJV): "But you og on to the end, for you shall rest and stand in your lot at the end of the days;" Ezek. 11: 13b (FDB): "Et je dis: Ah Seigneur! Veux-tu détruire entièrement le reste d'Israël?"

[155] Cf. Ezek. 3:12, 14.

[156] The idea is that from such manifestation of the clouds speaking from heavens proceeds the interpretation of the future (*augur*). Thus, the voice bestows on Zerubbabel the status of "divine legislator."

Muḥammad as a founder of religion. This stature is further underlined by the repeated use of the title "Governor of Judah."[157] This is also reminiscent of the attitude of the Biblical Patriarchs and Angels vis-à-vis Muḥammad as they repeatedly wondered how was it possible that he was granted the privilege of visiting the heavenly realms. For instance, the text states, as Zerubbabel was petitioning before the Lord by the river Kebar:

> "I saw a vision...[158] a voice answered me from the doors of heavens[159] and said to me: 'Are you Zerubbabel son of Shealthiel?'... 'Zerubbabel, what are you doing in here, and who brought you here?'"[160]

As for the founding of the community's iconography with respect to the image of the messiah, the author(s) of the apocalypse of Zerubbabel display a keen interest in the appropriation of the authoritative cultic setting that might befit the anticipated eschatological era.

Furthermore, the author of Zerubbabel draws from the biblical theme of the detention of God's messenger that is in Daniel,[161] to convey potentially another tenet of his faith. Having been withheld twenty-one days somewhere in Persia, the Messiah was eventually freed from his confinement to deliver to the visionary the revelation. Daniel remained steadfast in the spirit of prayer in the meantime. In Zerubbabel, concatenating Daniel and Ezekiel plays out the vicarious condition of the visionary. When a wind (voice) takes him up "between heaven and earth" and tosses him in Nineveh the Great,[162] the city of slaughter,[163] such a rough physical treatment (Ezekiel) of Zerubbabel has turned his spiritual labour (Danielic) into an enactment of the revelation of the Messiah: He (i.e., the Messiah) is held captive in the city that He is meant to

---

[157] The word פחה (*Pahtha*) is a borrowing from Persian usually translated *Satrap*, meaning *Governor* or *District Administrator* of the nation of Judah. From the introductory sentence the apocalyptist declares: "*This is the word which came to Zerubbabel son of Sheathiel the governor of Judah on the 24th of the seventh month.*"

[158] Dan. 10: 7; Ezek. 1: 28

[159] Ezek. 1: 3.

[160] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. I.

[161] Dan. 10:13 "But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for *I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*"

[162] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6118 (625/26), pp. 448-55. Nineveh is one of the battlegrounds of Heraclius which outcome was the defeat of Persia and the return of the True Cross; cf. Sebeos, *Histoire d'Héraclius*, p. 84, speaks of the decisive extermination of the Persian army in Nineveh in AD 628.

[163] Cf. Ezek. 8:3 "He stretched out the form of a hand... and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem..."

destroy at the End of Time. The idea of the two Messiahs, one of which would accomplish the role of the vicarious Messiah became widespread in Judaism at some stage between the 4th and 7th centuries and in the medieval period.[164] In Sanhedrin 98a & b, the Messiah stands enchained at the gates (outside) of Rome, amidst a multitude of a wounded folk. In Jellinek's *Bet Hamidrasch*, Elijah urges the Messiah (by the garden of Eden) to endure the hardship on account of the sins of Israel. The idea is that the Messiah himself is subjected to the torture and hardship that the people of God suffers during the interval at the hand of the impious kingdom.[165] In order to allay any unease, the author introduces the mediation of the a winged angel no less than the archangel Michael, "he who is like God/who is like God?" In its affirmative form, the name Michael asserts the divine nature of his ministry; in the question form, however, this name on its own does reverberate as the hottest issue of the day, namely, how any given revelation ought to be ascertained against the scriptures. And so as to stress upon this point, the archangel's credentials are listed in such a way that should allay any doubt as to the orthodoxy of the new revelation. Here, the assertion is worth quoting in full:

> "I am *Michael*[166] who gave news to Sarah;[167] I am the commander of the Lord's army, the God of Israel; I am he who fought against *Sennacherib*; he who prevailed against 180 000 men; I am he who led Israel in the battles against the kings of *Canaan*; And I will execute the divine war[168] with this *Messiah* of God who is seated before you, against the fiery-faced king,[169] and against *Armelius* son of Satan...[170] God has established Me over His people and upon His beloved as commander to fight against the princes[171] of the nations...[172] on account of *Metatron*.... "I am the angel who guided *Abraham* in all the land of *Canaan*, and I blessed him in God's name. I am He who rescued *Isaac* and lifted

---

[164] N. Wieder, "The Doctrine of the Two Messiahs among the Karaites," in *JJS* 6 (1953) 14–23.
[165] See A. Jellinek, *Bet Hamidrasch*, vol. 4, p. 35.
[166] *Michael* means *who is like God?*
[167] *Alternatively,* who brought good news to *Sarah!*; cf. the Pauline Midrash in Gal.4: 24-26), a contrast between *Sarah* = the free-woman and *Hagar* = the Arabian woman of servitude.
[168] Dan. 8: 23; cf. the Archangel *Michael* in Heraclius battles (E. Kurtz (ed.), *Michaelis Pselli Scripta Minora*). In the Koranic tradition as well *Jibril* (Gabriel) is the Archangel who fights the battles of the Muslims.
[169] This mynp,zi king needs yet to be identified; however, Heraclius or Justinian II or even Leontius (Leòntio), or more likely Leo III (Lšwn) all who are known to having carried out persecution against the Jews, qualify more or less for that picture.
[170] Is it Muḥammad or Heraclius? This needs to be decided on the following developments in the description of this enigmatic person.
[171] *Michael* as a chief or commander of God's army is also named *prince*. However, the princes of the nations are considered as demonic powers that fight against God and His angels.
[172] Check the word for "nation" if it has the sense for ethnicity.

> up a lament over him, and I am the One who wrestled with *Jacob* across the *Yabbok*. I am He who guided Israel in the desert for 40 years in God's name. I am He who appeared to *Joshua* at *Guilgal*.[173] I am He who poured out brimstone and fire over *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. He (God the Father?) has breathed his name in my heart:[174] (*Metatron* for the Gentiles[175] is *Shaddai*)."

The author does exploit the biblical ambiguity between what is meant by the "angel of the Lord" and the "Lord" in the story of the angelic visit to Abraham.[176] So too, the annunciation of to Sarah was meant to assert the primeval role of this messenger in the creation of Israel's lineage. As a result, the archangel Michael preserves this prerogative. Better still, the archangel Michael seizes the opportunity of his theodicy exposé to bring in the emblematic figure of *Hephzi-Bah*:[177]

> "So as for you *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel*, whose name is *Yeconiah*,[178] ask of me and I will disclose to your people what will happen at the End of Days... The *Messiah* of God will stay hidden in this place until the End. But this *Messiah* (is) son of *David*,[179] and his name is *Menahem*[180] son of *Ammiel*.[181] And this one was born in the days of David the king of Israel. He was saved by the Spirit and was hidden in this place until the advent of the End.[182] As I *Zerubbabel* requested of *Metatron*[183] chief of the army of God, he

---

[173] *Guilgal* is the Hebrew term for "circle, wheel". This introduces perhaps the author's view of the history of the nations.

[174] In other words Michael (or Metatron) bears divine attributes by the fact that his words carry the divine authority of the revealed Word of God Himself, not that he is God, or son of God but God's plenary representative.

[175] I. Levi translates the word myvg into *Guematria*. I suppose that *Guematria* is another way of speaking of the pagan nations' languages, perhaps a Persian naming of that language.

[176] See Gen. 17- 19.

[177] As a messianic figure, this female person, whether historical or legendary, is unique in the Jewish male dominated tradition.

[178] *Yeconiah* means *the Lord establishes.*

[179] As it will appear later, this statement is ambiguous, for it claims no less than the Jesus genealogy: son of David and son of Joseph have too peculiar a Christian stance. For this not to be deemed a conspicuous Jewish borrowing, it would require to be regarded as a thrust for an apocalyptic Hebrew movement on the verge of adopting Christian traditions which had preserved a deep-rooted Jewish feature.

[180] *Menahem* is the name of the Messiah to come according to *Sanhedrin* 98b; see also Y. Ber. III, 5a top; Lam. R. to I, 16; Pirqke d'R. El. XIX: pcvy nb laymi mhnm.

[181] (Heb. *Ammiel* = of God's family) Cf. Nb. 13:12 *Ammiel* (from the tribe of *Dan* = judging in favour!) was one of the Twelve spy sent by Moses in Canaan to explore the country. It is conspicuous that this popular tradition of the Messiah from the tribe of Dan should occur in such a fashion in this Hebrew apocalypse, especially as it appears in Anti-Jewish Christian writings around the sixth century onward.

[182] This is an allusion to the first son of Bath-Sheba, who died because of God's rebuke at David's adultery.

[183] Tosaf. Yeb. 16.b.

orthodox theology, nor the theology of any other Jewish sect of the period.[188] One can just presume that the concept of *Hephzi-Bah* as mother of *Menahem* (comforter) was simply an appropriate restatement of God's uninterrupted care for his people of Israel. Inasmuch as the term amounted to convey the idea of *Zion* being the city of the people of Israel, the repelling of foreign claims over Jerusalem must have been one of the most important features of this apocalypse. Once more, this aspect moves the setting of the apocalypse back exclusively to the period when Byzantine Christians and Arab Muslims' claims were most forcibly being laid over Jerusalem. It would be appropriate to adduce from this that *Hephzi-Bah* was a seventh-century Jewish concept in some sense. It was also an appropriation by the sectarian community of Zerubbabel of the values of female divine attributes.

Lastly, it is worth noting the way the belief in the Goddess, in our case, *Hephzi-Bah* the mother of the *Messiah* evolved into a protection figure, almost identical with the Virgin Mary's attributes.[189] The *Zerubbabel* version though falls short from her being revered as the mother of God! What's more, she detains the wonder-working *rod* that would eventually overcome the powers of the enemies of Israel.

The Suffering Messiah and the Elect:

As far as normative Judaism was concerned, the idea of a Messiah being put to death was foreign to Jewish Messianic expectations. So Mowinckel asserts that: "*In the time of Jesus, at all events, the thought of a suffering and dying Messiah was quite alien to the normal Jewish view. For many it was not merely incomprehensive, but offensive.*"[190] In the Qumran literature, there seem to exist two Messianic figures, on as the "son of Aaron," and the other as "son of David."[191] Thus, there occur several instances of a Second Messiah in post-

---

[188] Speak of the Jewish sect that involved the interdiction of eating meat and drinking wine, which was attested in the seventh century Palestine.

[189] See M. Whitby, *Chronicon Paschal*, where Mary ransomed the people of Constantinople.

[190] S. Mowinckel, *He That Cometh: The Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954), p. 329; cf. M. Miarcovich (ed.), *Hippolytus Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), p. 377.

[191] See for instance 1QS 9:11; 4QT 9-13, 14-20; 4QFl. 1:11; 1QSb 5:20-29. See also A.S. van der Woude, "χριω κτλ. VI. Rabbinic Writings," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 9 (1974), pp. 517-20; cf. M. Black, "The Qumran Messiah and Related Beliefs," in *The Scrolls and Christian Origins: Studies in the Jewish Background of the New Testament* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), pp. 145-63; R.A. Rosenberg, "The Slain Messiah in the Old Testament," in *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 99 (1987), pp. 259-61. Rosenberg has

rival cult around the sanctuary of Shiloh, out of which the Samaritans have originated.[195]

This option points toward the sectarian groups dissatisfied with the Judaic orthodoxy, of which many harboured messianic expectations, of the militant type. In addition, the fact that the apocalypse of Zerubbabel speaks of the killing of that Messiah, does help narrow the range of Jewish messianic movements that would have experienced the violent loss of its messianic leader.[196] Should the authorship have alluded, however, to a group of Judeo-Christian sectarians or even a Judaising Christian sect, then the biblical reference ought to suggest another option, that which would refer to Joseph the father of the Messiah as Jesus-Christ. The first option is definitely at point.

A Tentative Suggestion of the Historical Background of the *AZ*:

Historically speaking, the Jewish communities have been scattered throughout the *dār al-Islām*. The authorship of the *AZ* suggests, however, that his community, possibly a sectarian one, had undergone some exodus of sort. At the Syro-Byzantine frontier, a constant flux of migrants both ways had gone on for over two centuries after the Muslim conquest of Syria. The Palestinian Jewry, in particular, but also those on the frontier were at the mercy of the turn of events in the area.[197]

In Iraq the Jews were an organised fairly monolithic religious group under the leadership of the *gaon* (exilarch), a sizable community, second only to the Nestorians. The main settlement lived at Nineveh in the district of al-Madā'in where the rabbinical schools have produced the Talmud. Small Jewish settlements were scattered throughout Iraq, but many more were by the waters of Babylon at the juncture of the Euphrates with the Tigris.[198] They spoke Aramaic like the Christians did. This area needs not detain us, only to mention the fact that two of the figures of the Jewish messianism have emerged from here. In AD 720 Serene (Serenus)[199] or Shirin or Sirin: A Syrian Jew promised

---

[195] Lit. Heb. Shiloh = "rest."
[196] I.e. the Yughdani, Isfahani, etc.
[197] H. Ahrweiler, "L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes," in *Revue Historique* 227 (1962), pp. 1-32.
[198] F. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 169.
[199] Probably a popular ironic naming of a "false Messiah" as suggested in the Chronicle.

(*Michael* = *Metatron*) said to me: "God will give the scepter of salvation to *Hephzi-Bah*,[184] mother of *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*."

It could be said that this reflected a theological influence from, or over the christological controversies of the early seventh century.[185] *Hephzi-Bah* (the daughter of the Helper, or woman-helper), reflects the parallel Christian use of the *Paraclete* = helper, that is the Holy Spirit (a *female* attribute of God). In the Talmud and Targum *Menahem* means "comforter" or "consoler," the one who consoles people for the loss of a dear one.[186] We have also to bear in mind Jesus' statement: "I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."[187]

In other circumstances like the early conquests of Arab Muslims, this new reliance on *Hephzi-Bah* would be undoubtedly a major setback in this Jewish theology, when one considers the paucity of matriarchal leadership in Hebrew culture. However, this aspect is even more interesting for our understanding of the text. It corroborates the above conjecture that the community in which the apocalypse was conceived could have completed its absorption of some Christian eschatological concepts, while reworking their original Jewish stances. Yet, as the name *Hephzi-Bah* stands, the heroine does fit neither Jewish

---

[184] The name *Hephzi-Bah* occurs once in the Old Testament (2Kings 21:1: the wife of *Hezekiah*, mother of *Manasseh* the worst Judean king ever) with the meaning of *In whom I am pleased* (Es. 42:1-3 cf. Septuagint Es. 42:4; Mat. 12:18; 18:5:5; Are *Bath-Sheba* or *Bath-Shua* names related to *Hephzi-Bah*?). Cf. Arab. *Hafaza* (= helper: see 1Chr. 3:5: *Bath-Shua,* daughter of *Ammiel*). Perhaps, we have here a clue as to one of the constituents of Late Jewish (Rabbinical, Gaonic) messianism. In angelic traditions in Palestine many names emerged such as *Uriel*, *Raphael*, etc. which shows that the author is prepared to give his Messiah an angelic progenitor or nature. Is this an allusion to the controversy around the Christian doctrine of the nature of Christ of the sixth and early seventh centuries? So the daughter of the helper or woman-helper reflects the parallel Christian use of the Paraclete = helper that is the Holy Spirit (a *female* attribute of God). The entire concept of this apocalypse may be founded upon this strange provider of the Israelites redemption. The Holy Spirit having been appropriated by Christians needed be distinguished, if not simply re-adopted as the only possible source of relief for the Jews. If correct, it throws some light on Jewish spirituality (or concept of the Holy Spirit) even up to the seventh century AD. On the other hand, one cannot dismiss an allusion to Ḥaphza, the Christian wife of the Prophet Muḥammad (see discussion below).

[185] Indeed, Heraclius' victory led to him initiating theological and ideological changes designed to unite the Christians of the Byzantine provinces (Theophanes, *Chronographia*, 330 (AM 6121)). This instance deeply affected the fabric of Church history and shook the Jewish and eastern communities to the core of their religious perception of western Christianity (see John Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: the Church, 450-680 AD* (Creswood: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1989), pp. 333-73). For general introduction see J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought*; P. Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity*, esp. ch. 4; and A. Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire*.

[186] It was the name of the *Messiah* to come according to *Sanhedrin* 98b; see also Y. Ber. III, 5a top; Lam. R. to I, 16; Pirqke d'R. El. XIX: pcvy nb laymi mhnm.

[187] Matth. 16: 18. (NIV).

Talmudic Judaism (end-5th century onward), where he is named "son of Joseph" as opposed to the Messiah, "son of David." The former would be slain in the conflict with the forces of the ungodly. But after the death of the son of Joseph, the Messiah son of David will triumph over his enemies and will reign in glory.[192] Therefore, the concept of two Messianic figures is not as foreign to Judaism as one might think. A feature peculiar to the *AZ* is its plethora of Messiahs. Apparently, they are assigned each one of them with specific functions. Yet, these roles seem to overlap, adding to the complexity of the apocalypse.

Concerning the depiction of the Antichrist (or the false Messiah) coming from the tribe of Dan,[193] we may have here evidence to ascertain whether the authorship is Jewish or Christian because of the text's description of this personage. In the Gospels, Joseph father of Jesus, is included as Zerubbabel's descendant,[194] which could account in the apocalypse of Zerubbabel for the formula of "Messiah, son of Shealtiel," "Messiah, son of Joseph," and "Messiah son of Jeconia." For if the authorship wished to imply that the expected Messiah was in the genealogy of David, distinctively from the one that produced Jesus, then it would suggest Joseph son of Jacob, not the Joseph father of Jesus. In order to do so, the Messiah from the tribe of Dan, referring to Samson "the deliverer of Israel," who was one of the Judges having ruled in the post-exilic Israel, would have achieved the purpose. In effect, the authorship is making some allusion to Samson who was of the tribe of Dan, a descendant of the "sons of Joseph." The so-called "sons of Joseph" had been dissatisfied with the Twelve Tribes, and so the Two Tribes parted away to form the kingdom of Judah, in opposition to the remaining Ten. In protest, they famously formed the

---

demonstrated that Christian exegeses of messianic passages such as Zechariah 3:8, Jeremiah 23:5, Isaiah 53:11, and Daniel 9:26 had its origins already in the exegesis of Jewish sectarian milieu. For a contrary opinion, see L.D. Hurst, *The Epitle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 48.

[192] A. Edershein, *The History of the Jewish Nation after the Destruction of Jerusalem under Titus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979), p. 441; R. Patai, *The Messiah Texts* (New York: Avon, 1979), pp. 165-70.

[193] Lit. Dan = "judgement," cf. Gen 49: 17-18 (NIV): "Dan will be a serpent by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse's heels so that its rider tumbles backward. 'I look for your deliverance, O LORD.'"

[194] Matth. 1:12 (NIV): "After the exile to Babylon: Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel." In the Gospel of Matthew, it is interesting to note that Joseph son of Jacob is not included. Whereas we have in Luke 3: 27-30 (NIV): "... the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,... the son of Levi, ... the son of Judah, the son of Joseph ..."

to recapture the Holy Land.[200] He also urged that the Talmud be abolished. An entry worth noting (AD 721) in the *Chronicle of 754* gives us some details about this character:

> "The Jews were tempted – as they had been under Theodosius the Younger[201] – and led astray by a certain Jew, who, having ironically assumed the name of Serenus, assailed them (i.e. the Jews) with a murky error. Preaching that he was the Messiah, he told them that they were to hasten to the promised land and ordered them to get rid of everything that they possessed. Once they had done this, they remained empty-handed and penniless. When news of this came to Anbasah, he incorporated into the fisc everything that they had disposed of and called Serenus to him, to ask whether, if he indeed was the Messiah, he thought that he was doing the work of God."[202]

One should assume that this "false Messiah," if indeed he is the same character who operated in Babylon, had managed to move out of Spain to pursue his messianic campaign. Otherwise, the name Serenus would have become a by-word for all the Jewish messianic claimants of the time. In the early 7th century, such a messiah was referred to as *the devil in the guise of Moses*,[203] suggesting that a Jewish messianic claimant was tantamount to the Antichrist in disguise. In any case, Caliph Yazīd II, ʿUmar's successor, arrested that "Messiah" and handed him over to the Jews in Pumpedita for punishment. Natronai ben Nehemia (Gaon) urged the Jewish community to readmit their brethren into the fold. They eventually did so, though they were initially reluctant.

In AD 748 Abu ʿĪsā al-Isfahanī (of Persia) was convinced that he was the herald (*dai*) of the imminent coming of the Messiah.[204] He formed an army with the

---

[200] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6213 (AD 721/22), p. 554: "a certain Syrian, who was a false messiah and deceived the Jews by calling himself Christ, the son of God." This revolutionary called Severus, was it seems a Jew of Judeo-Christian dwelling in the district of Marde. On Severus, see H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*: von den ältesten Zeiten bis aus die Gegenwar (Leipzig: Oskar Leiner, 1909), vol. 5, pp. 457-60; J. Starr, "Le movement messianique au debut du VIII siècle," in *REJ* 102 (1937), pp. 81-92.

[201] (AD 408-39).

[202] See "The Chronicle of 754" in K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), pp. 139-40. Anbasah ibn Salim al-Kalbi (AD 721-25) was then governor of Al-Andalus.

[203] See Isidore (AD 560-636), *Chronicle: MGH AA* 11:391-497, 109: "Theodosius the younger, son of Arcadius, ruled for twenty-seven years. The Vandals crossed over from Spain into Africa. There they subverted the Catholic faith with Arian impiety. At the same time Nestor, bishop of Constantinople, stirred up the error of his perfidy. The synod of Ephesus, convoked against him, condemned his impious dogma. In this same time, *the devil in the guise of Moses appeared to the Jews in Crete and promised to lead them to the promised land over the sea without even getting their feet wet* (emphasis is mine). After many had been killed, those remaining, who survived, were converted immediately to the grace of Christ."

[204] I.e. missionaries who engage in *dawah*, that is , preaching Islam.

intention of conquering the Holy Land. During the general upheaval against Marwān II by the ᶜAbbāsids under Abū l-ᶜAbbās, he attacked Marwān II, the last Umayyad caliph. He advocated abolishing divorce and added four extra daily prayer periods. Although he fell in battle (AD 749), his adherents organized their own sect (Isarites) and lived according to his doctrine - the first new Jewish sect since the fall of Israel to fully part away. They existed as a separate sect until the 10th century when all mention of them ceased.

In Palestine, however, the situation was rather more ambiguous. In AD 631, the *baṭrīq* Sergius could muster an army of 5000 strong, made of 300 Romans and the rest being Samaritans, in order to oppose the Arab Muslims invasion. The latter group defected eventually.[205] During the Muslim offensive of AD 637 on Syria, the Samaritans turned guides and spies in the services of the Islamic invaders.[206] ᶜUmar I agreed to a treaty with the people of Jerusalem, probably at the insistence of the Syrian Jews, which paved the way for the tradition of the Muslim pact (*baqt*). We are told that, subsequently, the emir of Syrian Mu'āwiya settled among Jews in Tripoli.[207] However, although the conquest of northeastern Palestine was completed then, Caesarea held on until AD 640, when a Jew showed the Muslims the way into the city;[208] and Tiberias was conquered only in a second phase, in the course of which the whole region of Gaza was subjected to a long and costly Muslim siege, especially the coastal Lebanon strip and the mountainous northern Syria.[209] The AD 677-78 rebellious activities of the Mardaites (Ar. *Jarājima*)[210] decades after the Muslim conquest attest of the fact that the Muslims never quite managed to fully control the character disparate of the population of that region.[211] In fact, Asia Minor was persistently raided by the Arabs and twice, in the 680s and again in AD 716/17. Such a region became intractable "natural" frontiers in their own right from which, like Gaza with the possibility of Byzantine help by sea, religious seditions irrupted relatively too loosely for the Muslim comfort. In addition, this

---

[205] J.B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, vol. 2, p. 413; *Patrologia Latina* 83: 1017-1058.
[206] F. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 151; Bāladhurī, *Fūtuh al-buldān*, p. 158.
[207] F. Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), p. 247.
[208] Bāladhurī, *Fūtuh al-buldān*, pp. 140-41.
[209] Bāladhurī, *Fūtuh al-buldān*, pp. 115-16.
[210] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6169.
[211] Bāladhurī, *Fūtuh al-buldān*, pp. 159ff.

was eventually captured near Marde (eastern Syria), and handed over to Belisarius the *magister militum per orientem*. One can assume that the fugitive Israelite militants had formed a community of settlers in the district of the same name. At around the same period, Justinian ordered the destruction of all Samaritan synagogues and a prohibition on building new ones. After this revolt and prompted by St. Sabas, who came to Constantinople complaining of the outrages committed by the Samaritans, Justinian I strengthened the legislation.[215] In AD 556, once more, "Jews and Samaritans staged a revolt at Caesarea in Palestine."[216] The context in which this revolt occurred, and the behaviour of the Jews and Samaritans suggest a simmering militant messianism along the line from Marda to Palestine I. The event of the short-lived Israelite administration of Jerusalem (AD 613-17), not of the Palestine territory notably, was presumably the climax of these messianic expectations. But the Jewish cause was never as coherent and coordinated as one would expect.

The advent of Islam may have proved far from quelling the Israelites' aspirations. One wonders, therefore, if the episode of Heraclius should at all mark out the historicising exercise in Apocalypse of Zerubbabel. It may be that the Jewish involvement in Muslim affairs, especially in dealing with Christians, should be ascribed to an militant prophetism.[217] Daniel al-Qūmisī wrote in his commentary on Daniel 11: 32 in the 9th century that before the advent of Islam, Jews could "*come to Jerusalem; and they would come from the four corners of the earth to Tiberias and Gaza to see the Temple; but now... Israel come from the four corners of the earth to Jerusalem to pray...*"[218] Tiberias was the seat of the Sanhedrin, and the centre of the Jews of Palestine. It is from there that all Jewish violence against Christians sprung.[219] A mighty earthquake struck Tiberias, which claimed some 100000 lives.[220]

---

[215] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6021 (AD 528/29), p. 273, n. 13.
[216] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6048 (AD 5558/56), p. 337.
[217] A Jew suggested to 'Umar (AD 642) that crosses should be removed in order for his Temple building to stand, see C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6134 (AD 642/43), p. 476; another Jew prophesied to Yazid I that he would enjoy a 40 years caliphate if he rid all the churches under his dominion of all images, see C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6215 (AD 722/23), p. 555.
[218] Daniel al-Qūmisī, The Commentary on the Book of Daniel 11, *The Taylor Schechter Collection* (Cambridge: University Library, !!!), 10 C2, quoted verbatim from M. Gil, *History of Palestine*, p. 69.
[219] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6120 (AD 627/28), pp. 458-50.
[220] J.B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, vol. 2, pp. 509-10; J.B. Chabot, *Chronicon pseudo-dionysianum*. 42-3, AG 1059.

situation was a lasting affront to the Islam *jihādic* ideals; here is also where the Muslim jurists would conceive of the Islamic apocalyptic riposte. An interesting connection could be made of the Jewish communities that spread throughout Armenia, and out of which some traditions of Jewish eschatological migration had emerged. In Rabbinical literature (Targum), the identification of *Harmonah* (Amos 4: 3) with Armenia was probably based upon the false etymology of הרמונה, as if the word were composed of הר (*har*) (mountain) and מונאה (*monah*) to give Armenia. The Haggada bases the statement that upon their journey from Palestine to the places where they were deported, the Ten Tribes of Israel passed through Armenia. These were the contingents of Jews, which would eventually form the Khazari kingdom.[212] This midrash (Lam. R. to I, 14) adds that:

> "this was probably ordained by God in order that the Israelites might pass through cultivated regions where they could easily procure food and drink, and not through the desert where they would suffer from hunger and thirst."

In addition, an entry (Yeb. 45a) refers to captive Jews as having been transported from Armon (Armenia?) to Tiberias.[213] There is, however, a more straightforward eschatological explanation here. The expectation of the appearance of the Messiah at mount Hermon had long been established. The tribe of Dan was located in the north of Israel, near the Mount Hermon, renowned for its eschatological significance. Jesus was transfigured there.

I suggest that this was the likely context in which the authorship of the *AZ* had fleshed out its peculiar eschatological drama. In order to discuss the *AZ*, we need to hark back a century prior to the *hijrā*. An incident of particular interest for our inquiry occurred during the reign Justinian I (AD 527-64). Theophanes tells us of a Jewish and Samaritan revolt in Palestine against the Byzantines:

> "In June (AD 528/29) the Samaritans and Jews in Palestine crowned a certain Julian as emperor and took up arms against the Christians, against whom they committed robbery, murder, and arson. God delivered them into the hands of Justinian. He destroyed them all and beheaded the usurper Julian."[214]

In the same vain, Theophanes reports of the seditious Jewish and Samaritan dealing with the Persians, to whose king the fugitives "promised to hand over their country to him, that is all of Palestine." The leadership of those fugitives

---

[212] See discussion below.
[213] I. Singer (ed.), *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, pp. 117-18.
[214] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6021 (AD 528/29), p. 271.

Mu'awiyya was confronted with the incursions of the Mardaites as far as the Holy City.[221] This event led to a peace treaty with Byzantium at the urgent request of Mu^{c}awiya.[222] The messianic claimant of AD 720 was from the district of Marda. ^{c}Abd al-Malīk was confronted to the Byzantine raids of Justinian II Caesarea and Ascalon (AD 686), and had to pay the latter an annual tribute,[223] on the condition that the Mardaites from Lebanon be prevented to make incursions. The Byzantine armies destroyed the two ports and exiled its inhabitants.[224] Cassel, the 19th century orientalist had made a valuable suggestion that there was a Messiah expected in the Jewish sectarian milieu, in particular in the period around the foundation of the Khazar kingdom (AD 600-1025). The following quotation of their Messianic claim demonstrates his assumption: "*I have waited for Thy salvation, Jehovah, through Samson the Danite, to the Messiah.*"[225] In the 7th century, the Arab-Khazar wars were fought around Armenia. In AD 685 the Khazaris took Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan from the grip of the Arabs.[226] The Khazaris were in effect the only serious threat to the Arabs in the 720s.[227] They succumbed eventually to the Arabs in AD 737.

However, here it is not that straightforward to think of Zerubbabel as *the* messianic figure on his own, since a number of additional names (Metatron, Messiah ben Hezekiah, Ammiel ben Joseph, Joshua, Michael, etc) fit the function in the Zerubbabel apocalypse. As we shall see later on, contrary to the two other apocalypses there is an array of Messiahs who contribute individually

---

[221] C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6169 (AD 677/78), p. 496, n. 1. The Mardaites were an Irano-Armenian tribe according to H.M. Bartikian in *Byzanyium: Tribute to A.N. Stratos* (Athens, 1986), vol. 1, pp, 17-39. They are called a "brazen wall," with regard to their defensive usefulness for the Byzantine Syrian north-eastern frontier.

[222] So did 'Abd al-Malik in his first year remind the Byzantines of the Thirty Years peace treaty agreement, see C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6176 (AD 683/84), p. 503.

[223] Note that from AD 678, to the Byzantine emperor Constantine IV on the account of the civil war raging against his rival Abd Allah ibn al-Zubayr so that he might receive military aid or at least not be attacked, Marwan "paid the emperor one thousand *solidi* of pure gold and of proven weight every day for nine years..." see "The Chronicle of 754" in K.B. Wolf (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990), p. 124.

[224] A. b. Yahyā Balādhurī, *Futūh al-buldān* (Leiden, 1866), p. 143; C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6177 (AD 685/86), pp. 506-07.

[225] See P. Cassel, *Der Chasarische Königsbrief aus dem. 10 Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1876), [or] *Magyarische Alterthümer* (Berlin, 1847), idem see his article in J.P. Lange (ed.), *Theologisch-Homiletisches Bibelwork: Des Alten Testamentes* (Berlin, 1887), vol. 5, p. 122.

[226] A. Koestler, *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and its Heritage* (New York: Random House, 1976), p. 27.

[227] M. Wittow, *The Making of Byzantium, 600-1025* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), p. 225.

origin, the messianic figure of the *AZ* provides us here with an issue of iconography. By Judeo-Christian sects,[234] it is meant those religious groups that share in common with the Qur'an the main trait of Christology that denies the divinity of Jesus, and which we consider as the actual sources of the Old Testament lores, especially those stories of Moses that uses terms (e.g., ***muminūn*** = Heb. ***minim***; ***āmana***; ***kafara***; ***mīthāq*** = Gr. ***diathēkē***) in connection with Jesus in the Qur'an.[235] The *Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati*, an early 7th century (AD 634) account of a dialogue between a Christian Jew and a Jew, probably written in Palestine, may record a well-established pattern of theological dispute among these parties.[236] With regard to the existence of Judeo-Christian sects in Jerusalem, i.e, the "believing Jews" (*Iudaei... credentes*;[237] *Iudaeis Christianis*; *credulous Iudaei*; *fideles*) there is an entry in Adomnan's account of their disputation with the "non-Christian Jews" (*cum infidelibus Iudaeis*; *incredulous Iudaeis Christanis*), which was arbitrated by the Umayyad Caliph Mu'awīya, probably between AD 679 and 680. This shows that there lived in Jerusalem, one or more Judeo-Christian sects involved in heated contention over the custody of the "Holy Cloth of the Lord." However legendary some clauses may be, Adomnan's account identifies a number of sects practicing the veneration of relics. Abū 'Īsā al-Isfahānī, was a leader of a Messianic Judeo-Christian sect, the *'Īsāwiyya*, which rebelled against 'Abd al-Malik, presumably, in early 8th century AD. He regarded Jesus as a prophet (*nabī*) of the children of Israel, and saw himself as the messenger (*rasūl*) of the Messiah (*al-Masīḥ*) to come, in order to deliver those children of Israel from the

---

[234] Eg., see the Ebionites on the prophethood and supernatural birth of Jesus in N. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 36; Pseudo-Clementine, *Homilies* 7, ch. 8: "And this is the service He has appointed: to worship him alone (*to monon auton sebein*) and to believe only the Prophet of Truth (*aletheias monoi pisteuein prophetei*), and to be baptised for the remission of sins..." The Nestorians insisted upon the benefits of distinguishing between Christ's "two natures," because His earthly nature, humanity, deeds, made Jesus the "perfect man," or "model" of human virtue. See Pseudo-Clementine (4th cent.), *Homelies* 16 ch. 15-16 on the Unity of God; 17: ch. 11: 1-12 & ch.16, on the "ungenerated" Father and the "generated" Son. Cf. Qur. 6: 101-02; 27: 8. An instance of Judeo-Christian denial of the crucifixion of Jesus, that is prior to the Qur'anic account can be found in 'Abd al-Jabbar, *Tathbīt Dalā'il al-Nubuwwa*, 'Abd al-Karīm 'Uthmān (Beirut, 1966), p. 143.

[235] S. Pines, "Notes on Islam and on Arabic Christianity and Judaeo-Christianity," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 4 (1984), pp. 135-52, esp. pp. 138-39; idem, *The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source* (Jerusalem, 1966).

[236] N. Bonwetzsch (ed.), *Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati* (Berlin, 1910), p. 86.

[237] Cf. with the term "believing Children of Israel" in Qur. 61: 14.

and moon – was believed to constitute the two signs of Allāh. This Ḥafsa's legend had reached beyond the confines of Coptic Christianity so as the name served to depict a female heroin, which epitomises the apocalypse of Zerubbabel's iconoclasm.[247]

Old Tradition and Innovative Contemporary Traditions:

The iconography of the *AZ* is the real novelty aspect. The patron saint, commander in chief of the army and protector of Israel is the archangel of old: Michael-Metatron, who appears along with the Messiah in order to wage the apocalyptic war against Armilius.[248] Metatron plays the role of Revealer to Zerubbabel, and Inspirer of the messianic actions to the Messiah son of David. Metatron has the numerical value equivalent to that of el-Shaddai.[249] He claims to have dispensed the revelation of God's plans to Abraham, Moses, Joshua, etc. So now also, he reveals all: the plans of the Temple, who Armilius really is (the Antichrist),[250] his origins (born of the statue) and nature (out of the intercourse of the woman with Satan). The authorship of *AZ* made Metatron create in details the figure of Armilius, as the epitome of evil.[251]

In this messianic scenario two entirely new eschatological figures are introduced, along with the enigmatic stone: the mother of God endowed with magical attributes[252] and the Messiah son of David (alias, Messiah son of

---

[247] The legend is recorded by the Muslim historian al-Tabarī. On Mary given to the Prophet by Cyrus the Mukawkas, see al-Tabarī, *History*, vol. 9, p. 117; cf. Sahīh al-Bukhari 3: 755. According to Qur'an 4:34, Ḥafsa was only a maidservant when the Prophet tricked his way into having sexual intercourse with her. She is reputed to have memorise the entire Qur'an by heart, which was eventually recorded by Zayd ibn Thabit.

[248] Lit. "destructeur du people." I. Lévi, *Le ravissement du Messie à sa naissance et autres essais.*Textes choisis et présentés par Evelyne. Patlagean (Paris, 1994), p. 196, n. 6. See the article "Armilius" in *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, pp. 118-20

[249] I. Levi, *Le ravissement du Messie*, p. 191, n. 8.

[250] Sanhedrin 98a teaches that the Messiah will not appear until the whole world is either entirely righteous or entirely wicked. This is a standpoint that explains why the expression "he who restrains," which the Rabbis speak of as the various things that impede the redemption. The Jewish notion of the Antichrist is Belial, the "lawless one," as in Sifre Deut. 92. Belial is a lieutenant of Satan, if not Satan himself according to Sibylline Oracles 2: 167 *et seq* and Sibylline Oracles 3: 46 *et seq*. See for a brief review *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 1, pp. 625-27.

[251] I. Lévi, *Le ravissement du Messie*, p. 222.

[252] See 2Kings 21:1: Hephzi-Bah is the mother of Manasseh, and wife of Hezekiah; cf. *Sanhedrin*. 94a: "The Holy One, blessed be He, wished to appoint Hezekiah as Messiah, and Sennacherib as Gog and Magog..." To which divine intent this objection is voiced: "If Thou didn't make David the Messiah... wilt Thou appoint Hezekiah as such...?"; I. Lévi, *Le ravissement du Messie à sa naissance et autres essays.*Textes choisis et présentés par Evelyne. Patlagean (Paris, 1994), p. 192 : "C'est la première fois qu'une mère du messie est appelée á

Joseph).[253] But it hardly was a Jewish concept that any female figure should participate so actively in the eschatological wars, especially with regard to the guardianship of Jerusalem, had it not been an interpolation of the role of Mary for Constantinople. Himmelfarb wrote that: "nowhere else in Jewish messianic speculation is the mother of the messiah an important participant in the eschatological drama."[254] It is worth noting that Mary is also believed to protect the monastery of Qalamun as She made explicitly the promise to Apa Samuel. In addition she helps the Messiah son of Joseph fight off the king of Persia.

There are at least three different messiahs or titles of the Messiah: The first Messiah waits inside his Roman prison in chains for his hour. His name is Menahem son of Ammiel. This is the point at which the old man is changed into a radiant young man. After this, there is the statement to the Zerubbabel that it the Messiah son of David. Metatron reveals to Zerubbabel that in the Endtime, a "staff" will be given to Hephzi-Bah, the mother of the Messiah son of David. With it, she would kill two kings; one from Yemen (Nof)[255] and the other one from Antioch (Esrogan). Conversely, Nof (Nāth, Noth)[256] was a prophetic character in Muslim eschatological tradition, of the prophets of ancient Israel, who is supposed to have lived before Christ. He allegedly prophesied the future course of events, among which, the birth of Christ, the advent of Muḥammad, and his successors, i.e., the ᶜAbbāsids up to the Caliph al-Mansūr (AD 775).[257]

---

jouer un role dans le drame messianique. Rien dans la Bible, ni dans le Talmud, ni dans les Midrashim n'a fait prévoir une telle imagination."

[253] D. Berger, "Three Typological Themes in Early Jewish Messianism: Messiah Son of Joseph, Rabbinic Calculations, and the Figure of Armilius," in *Journal of the Association of Jewish Studies* 10 (1985), pp. 141-64.

[254] M. Himmelfarb, "Sefer Zerubbabel," in D. Stern & M.J. Mirsky (eds.), *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Literature from Classical Hebrew Literature* (Philadelphia, 1990), pp. 69-90, esp. p. 69.

[255] In the Revelations of Methodius, the name Noub (Nobades) is attributed to the Kushites, from which tribe the Greek emperor will come, see F. Nau, "Révélations et Légendes. Méthodius. – Clément. – Andronicus." In *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71, esp. p. 443.

[256] See also Naioth - dwellings, the name given to the prophetical college established by Samuel near Ramah. It consisted of a cluster of separate dwellings, and hence its name. David took refuge here when he fled from Saul (1 Sam. 19:18, 19, 22, 23), and here he passed a few weeks in peace (comp. Ps. 11). It was probably the common residence of the "sons of the prophets;" The biblical Noph, however speaks of the Hebrew name of an Egyptian city (Isa. 19:13; Jer.2:16; 44:1; 46:14, 19; Ezek. 30:13, 16). In Hos. 9:6 the Hebrew name is Moph, and is translated "Memphis," which is its Greek and Latin form. It was one of the most ancient and important cities of Egypt, and stood a little to the south of the modern Cairo, on the western bank of the Nile. It was the capital of Lower Egypt. Among the ruins found at this place is a colossal statue of Rameses the Great.

[257] See Nuʿaym ibn Hammād (d. AD 849), *Kitāb al-Fitan*, MS British Library, Or. 9449, fols 198b:9 – 200b:4, esp. fols. 198b:10 – 199a:21; see M. Cook, "An Early Islamic Apocalyptic

Note that in certain Islamic quarters, the coming of the wicked rule was envisaged in apocalyptic terms, that is, by preceding the coming of the "righteous" rulership. This apocalyptic prophecy spoke of the turn of the 9th century AD, which the author viewed as ushering in the imminent appearance of the *Mahdī*, expected to restore justice and truth from the rule of the *Shī'īte* caliphate (barely half a century after the fall of the Umayyads). This doctrine – although predominantly serving the *Shī'īte* cause – became tricky because it belied the very Islamic ideological assumption according to which Allāh would have made obsolete Christianity and Judaism in favour of Islam because of the latter's falsification of the Scriptures, hence the rule of wickedness.

In *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity*, there are two valuable plates that represent the Jewish artistic depiction of Biblical themes, contemporaneous of time of writing of the *AZ*. Both plates may reflect the iconography of the main scriptural contentions between Muslim and Jews: Plate 63, which is dated to the late 7th century AD, depicts a scene of the Torah being given to Moses at Sinai.[242] We know that the Muslims accused the Jews of falsifying the scriptures, especially with regard to its reference to the advent of Muḥammad. The corollary of this was that Abraham would have given Ishmael to sacrifice instead of Isaac as is accounted in the Torah, and that Abraham would perform his pilgrim to Mecca in visiting his elder son Ishmael. As for the second image, Plate 66, it is also dated the late 7th century AD. It portrays the strife/play between Isaac and Ishmael, although one cannot tell if it carries the model of Jewish or Christian interpretation of the Biblical story.[243]

Possible External Source of Eschatological Themes:

We know also that Muḥammad had married Ḥafsa (Ḥafsa or Hefzi-bah?), daughter of ʿUmar. She was the fourth wife of Muḥammad by whom he had strengthen the ties with one of his closest companions, the forth "rightly-guided one" (Caliphs) after his death. Muḥammad is said to have once repudiated Ḥafsa, but the angel

---

father to son. This prediction, however, falls within the Caliphate of Hārūn al-Rashīd (AD 786-809).

[242] H. Schreckenberg & K. Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 246-47.

[243] H. Schreckenberg & K. Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), pp. 254-55.

to the eschatological scheme. In this apocalypse, Zerubbabel does accommodate the input of many fellow messiahs, in accordance with the biblical episode of the return from Persian exile.[228] We shall come back to this later.

The Theodicy of *AZ*:

Yet, the theodicy of the *AZ* overlooks the sin of Israel, indeed it stresses on the redemptive faculty of the eschatological restorer in that redemption is reliant upon his pre-emptive (or anticipatory) activities. The dismay expressed in the chapter 10 of the Apocalypse of Pseudo-Athanasius[229] may shed some light to the theodicy purported by the *AZ*. Indeed, the author of Pseudo-Athanasius would qualify his optimism by conceding that despite the predicament,[230] which the men of his time were in, "men will not convert, but will add sin to sins," which lead to believe that a contemporary analysis was widely shared according to which the conceptualisation of the theodicy with the traditional triangular relationship divinity-mankind-messiah where the sin of mankind is left out, in favour of the dialogue divinity-messiah. One interesting entry in the Syriac apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius, which illustrates the evolution of the apocalyptic thinking, is worth noting. But for the time being, the ambiguity in the *AZ* requires our attention here, for the reason that the messianic figure of Jesus, the founder of the Christian church was the target of this anti-Christian invective,[231] while simultaneously the apocalypse commandeered for itself the very figural representation of the opposite religion.[232] This unimpeded replication of the Christian messianic iconography seems however to indicate at best a Judeo-Christian ideological milieu of composition,[233] but it is possible that a Jewish sectarian group would want to squeeze a Jewish ideology into the available slot in the spectrum of messianic speculation. Whatever the milieu of

---

[228] see the books of Nehemiah, Ezra, and Zechariah.

[229] F.J. Martinez, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius* PhD Thesis (Catholic University Press, 1985).

[230] The dominion of Islam was ideological caused (ch. 9:1) although the blame falls also on the poverty of morality and a general decadence of the Coptic Church (ch. 8:15).

[231] The adjective "son of Hezekiah" may be intended to distinguish this Jewish messiah from the Christian one, there is no mistaken identity as for the role this messiah was thought to fill in the circumstances, namely, to usher in another messianic age.

[232] C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972), pp. 34-36.

[233] To witness a suffering Messiah as Zerubbabel himself is expelled from Nineveh (cf. John of Patmos) is so closely paralleled by the apocalypse of John, that one wanders if the apocalypse of Zerubbabel did not stem from the apocalypse of John.

rebellious nations.[238]

Iconography and Apocalyptic:

The imagery and language used in the *AZ* also reflect the contending iconographies of the three monotheistic religions. The *AZ* has been involved, as one should perceive by now, in the contention over the final, orthodox revelation of the scriptures, the ownership of the religious site of Jerusalem, the notion of progressive revelation of the Scriptures, and the artefact of the supremacy of Judaism over against its opposite faiths. Starting with and stemming from the appropriateness of the image of the Messiah, the author of the *AZ* strives quite successfully in satirising the Messiah of both opponents. The *modus operandi* was another instance of symbolic appropriation of the opponent's material, as distinct from effectively re-assuming ownership. It is definitely an unlike approach in that the contention is dual – i.e., against Christianity and Islam – on one hand. The latter had more to loose in theological controversies from which derives the corresponding iconography, than the Jewish counterpart on the other hand. An obvious example of that is the issue of God's restoration of His rule on earth. In Islam, the term *ᶜamān* was conceived of as "God's seal (*tabaᶜ*, or *khātham*) on the believers," because it prevents evil from affecting the latter, the so-called *dhimmī*. As a result, *ᶜamān* was supposed to permanently affect the rule of life of the recipient.[239] According to the anti-*Shī'a* traditionist Nuāym Ibn Ḥammād,[240] who claimed to transmit from the final authority of ᶜAlī, it was assumed that:

> "the realm of the people of Muḥammad, upon whom be blessing, after his death will last one hundred and sixty-seven years and thirty-one days; after that God will cause weakness to rule over them."[241]

---

[238] S. Pines, *al-'Īsāwiyya* in *EI*. Vol. 4, p. 96; A. Fahmī Muḥammad (ed.), Al-Shahrastānī *Kitāb al-Milal wa 'l-Nihal* (Cairo, 1941), vol. 2, pp. 23-25. He may have conceived of himself as "identical to the Messiah, a conception reminiscent of the doctrines of certain extremist Shī'ī sects.... As proof of his prophethood, it was said that, despite being illiterate like Muḥammad, he produced books and scriptural scrolls."

[239] For the concept and history of *ᶜamān*, see J. Pedersen, "Amīn," in *EI* (2nd ed.), vol. 1, p. 436.

[240] A jurist, otherwise known as the transmitter or even the author of these new conceptualisations.

[241] F. Krenkow, "The Book of Strife," in *Islamic Culture* 3 (1929), pp. 561-68, esp. p. 563 (*Kitāb al-Fitan*, MS. fol. 192). This suggests that the date envisaged was AD 632 + 167 = AD 799. After the four first (righteous) Caliphs, from when Muawiyya assumed the leadership of the Islamic state, thereafter was instated a hereditary system whereby the Caliphate passed from

The interesting point about this personage is in the fact that it antedates the one that the author of the *AZ* alludes to. This suggests also that the author of the *AZ* well was acquainted with the Muslim eschatological speculations from the Yemen. How much of the author's inspiration has derived from it would be a conjecture. Yet, one cannot help but wonder if a Muslim source material would have had some bearing upon the following entry:

> "And the word is true that 420 years after the rebuilding of the city and the sanctuary it will be destroyed a second time. And 20 years after the building of the city of Rome,[258] 70 kings will reign in it, according to the number of the 70 nations. At the end of the 10 kings will come a tenth king who will destroy the Temple and will cause the perpetual (sacrifice) to cease."[259]

There is in the second part of *AZ*, the traditional apocalyptic *topoi* listing the months of each major eschatological event. 420 years after the city had been, the Messiah son of Joseph will come to resume to sacrificial cult (daily sacrifice). But after only 20 years, Jerusalem will be destroyed again. God will allow Armilius to kill the Messiah son of David, whose body will lay unburied at the gates of Jerusalem But Shiroui the Persian king will invade and the Jews will be scattered into the wilderness. A period of 7 years of anarchy will follow during which 10 kings will rule the world, while Jerusalem lies in ruins. Meanwhile, Hephzi-Bah stands up at the gate of Jerusalem. With the staff of Moses (or Aaron) in hand, she will raise Nehemiah son of Schealthiel back to life. 990 years will pass before some assistance from God, because he will stand on the mount of oil (opposite the Temple Mount), thus marking the return of the *Shekina* from where it departed as Ezekiel saw it. Israel will be given to recognize the Messiah who will appear in the Valley of Arbel, when he enters Jerusalem with Elijah. That Messiah is Nehemiah son of Schealthiel (i.e. Messiah son of Joseph) resurrected. The Messiah would eventually kill Armilius with the breath of his mouth.

Chronicle," in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 52 (1993), pp. 25-29. Cook dates the composition of this apocalyptic portion of the book to approximately the 780s.

[258] Is it Constantinople?

[259] AD 70 is the date for the historical end of the perpetual sacrifice ever. Nothing precise could be said as to the 420 years following the rebuilding of the city (Nehemiah) and the sanctuary (Ezra). The two events are quite separate in time, and scholars have not reach a consensus concerning these dates. However, going from AD 70 a deduction will give us 350 BC as the date of the dedication of the new Temple. In any case, just as "the 70 Romans kings" is meaningless, so there is little historical information to glean from this whole paragraph. Unless this portion, at least, may have originated from external sources such as the Muslim apocalyptic historiography.

Jibril having descended from heaven, said to him: "*Take Hafsa back, She fasts and prays and she will be your wife in the Garden.*" However, what distinguished her from the other wives (except Aʿisha) was that she could memorise reliably the entire Qur'an by heart. The written copy of the Qur'an which was recorded by Zayd ibn Thābit on Abū Bakr's instructions, and which was then given to ʿUmar for safekeeping, was then given by ʿUmar to Ḥafsa his daughter to look after.[244]

When Uthman eventually became the Caliph, he instructed several written copies of the Qur'ān to be made so that they could be sent to the main centres of the now rapidly expanding Muslim empire, and it was the copy in Ḥafsa's keeping that was used, after it had been meticulously checked for its accuracy by referring to all the other written records of the Qur'ān and to all the Muslims who knew the Qur'an by heart. According to the legend – the Prophet Muḥammad would have already died by then – Mary al-Qibṭiyya was born in Upper Egypt, of a Coptic father and a Greek mother. She had moved in her youth to the court of the *Muqawqis*, and was given to Muḥammad in a pledge of allegiance by the infamous Cyrus of Egypt.[245] She undoubtedly enjoyed the same treatment of respect due to all the Prophet's wives, but especially with respect to Mary as "*Umm al-Muminin*," i.e., *the* "Mother of the Believers." Muḥammad is said to have even repudiated for a whole month all of his wives in favour of Mary al-Qibṭiyya,[246] now the Coptic wife of noble descent. The analogy with the Christian Mary was a matter of course, owing to the fact that her only son who was given the name Ibrāhīm, after the ancestor of both the Jews and Christians, when he was being buried, so the legend goes, "the sun was eclipsed and it grew dark and gloomy," which phenomenon – the conjunction of the sun

[244] One may wonder if this story had not been created in order to ascribe, legitimate the authority of the Qur'an on the basis of Ḥafsa's Christianity (recall the plot devised by Cyrus the Muqauqas for generating a Christian descendence for Muḥammad so that the heresy of Islam might eventually die out). In any case, the Christian matrix of the early Islam is apparently reflected here. Whether this was the intended goal remains disputable. But once complete, the Qur'ān was handed over to Abū Bakr, and on his death passed to ʿUmar, and upon his death passed to ʿUmar's daughter, Hafsa. This suggests that the authenticity of most, if not all, of the Qur'anic text rested on the shoulder of Ḥafsa.

[245] The scheme was that through the fruit of this relation, Christianity would emerge on top of Islam and this son Ibrāhīm would eventually reclaim the conquered territories from the hold of Islam.

[246] Or *Mary* literally means "maidservant of God." Eventually, Muḥammad granted her the status of "freed women" and so earned the most prominent position in the Prophet's esteem. She is said to have never turned Muslim, but died in ascetic reclusion.

The Messiah is both a suffering and glorious one, son of Joseph and ancestor of David at the same time, or concurrently. These features were, no doubt, taken from the Talmudic literature. However, traces of the iconoclastic circumstances are here unmistakable. Throughout the eschatological framework, salvation is wrought at the advent of the Messiah, which occurs after the destruction of the Second Temple. The Messiah son of Joseph is the same as Nehemiah son of Hushiel[260] who leads the Jews like one man to Jerusalem, but he is killed in battle with the Persian king. Safrai refers to a Jewish leader known otherwise only by his messianic name as ***Nehemia ben Huschiel ben Efraim ben Joseph***, who led for some three years the Jewish rule in Jerusalem autonomy granted by the Persians until AD 617 when Shiroes' policy reversal.[261]

The Enemies of Israel in the *AZ*:

This historic figure might hold the key to understanding the complex combination of messianic titles in the *AZ*. However, the events of AD 617 in themselves, may be only the genesis of the AZ, not the *terminus post quem*. The Kalir book – which Lévi shows to have similar sets of expressions for the Christian Church – does not account however for the prominent place accorded Hefzi-Bah in a Jewish apocalypse.[262] Lévi dismisses – too lightly in my views – the Mariology phenomenon that seems to have irrupted in some Jewish sectarian milieus, by simply suggesting that:

> "Ici le folk-lore juif s'est simplement laissé pénétrer par le folk-lore Chrétien. En effet, au dire des chronographes byzantins, Héraclius exposait dans la basilique l'image de Marie... Le jour de la deliverance de Constantinople, une fête religieuse rappelait aux Byzantins la gratitude qu'ils devaient à la Toute Sainte."[263]

One cause for this unjustified presumption may be that the phenomenon is made to have emerged under the reign of Heraclius, namely, the protection of the city

---

[260] F. Macler, *Histoire d'Heraclius par l'éveque Sébeos*, p. 68.

[261] S. Safrai, "Das Zeitalter der Mischna und Talmuds (70-640)," in H. Hillel-Ben-Sasson (ed.), *Geschichte des Jüdische Volkes. Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (München, 1994), pp. 404-20; M. Avi-Yonah, *Gazetteer of Roman Palestine* (Jerusalem, 1976), p. 256..

[262] I. Lévi, *Le ravissement du Messie à sa naissance et autres essais.* Textes choisis et présentés par Evelyne Patlagean (Paris, 1994). Levi has compared and contrasted the Sefer Zerubbabel with the poetry (piyyut) of *Kalir*, of which he concludes that (p. 217): "Il n'est donc pas douteux que le Livre de Zorobabel est antérieur au Kalir, c'est à dire au VIIIe siècle."

[263] I. Lévi, *Le ravissement du Messie à sa naissance et autres essais.* Textes choisis et présentés par Evelyne Patlagean (Paris, 1994), p. 222.

of Constantinople.[264] As far back as the 5th century, the icon of Mary the Theotokos was ceremonially transferred from Jerusalem to Constantinople. In AD 625 the *Akathist* Hymn was composed, when the Patriarch Sergius paraded the icon of Mary along the walls of the city, to celebrate the miraculous deliverance of Constantinople under the Avars' siege. Mary as the protector of Constantinople and the Christendom is a phenomenon that developed up to the 8th century, precisely ending with the accession of Leo III, in AD 717. It was not until the 9th century that the tradition will resume. However, what can be associated with Heraclius should be the True Cross. But neither the figure of the Theotokos, nor the supernatural powers of the Cross on their own – which were two main constituents of the Christian iconography – would have inspired the authorship of *AZ*. The *asheroth* (idols, wood, tree) in the *AZ* is very likely the characterization of the Christian cross.[265] The expression "... they will abandon the Torah, and will worship idols (ashroth) speaks of the wood of the Cross. In the Jewish rejection of Christianity and Islam, their respective religious universalism, and the supernatural potency allegedly pregnant in their cultic iconography (e.g., the Ka'ba, the Cross), the authorship of the *AZ* has in effect re-combined the universalism and supernaturalism into a new messianism.[266] The latter Jewish messianism is re-enforced the further one abhorred the symbolism of the religious object being rejected. Hence, there appears a sense of parodying, mimicking even, the major claims of the opposite. The fallible human agency needs to be removed from the messianic drama, so that the historical messianic claimants such *Nehemia ben Huschiel ben Efraim ben Joseph* need not partake in the eschatological war that is beyond reach. Moreover, this messianic figure of the early 7th century Jewish experimentation may actually stand for the 8th century messianic claimants. This is why the Messiah son of Joseph succumbs after 7 years battle against Gog and Magog.

Fortunately for the people of Israel, Hefzi-Bah,[267] the mother of the Messiah thanks to her a twig of almond tree – rather than the dead wood of the Cross –

---

[264] See C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 6209 (AD 716/17), p. 546.

[265] I. Levi, "Apocalypse de Zorobabel," in *REJ* 70 (1920), pp. 57-65, esp. p. 59.

[266] The Babylonian Talmud suggests that new ideas of the Messiah son of Joseph have made their way in at around the 8th to 9th centuries, See Sukkah 52; Menahem ('Conforter') in Sanhedrin 98b.

[267] Heb. "My favorite," or "My delight is in her." Isaiah 62: 4 (NIV): "No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah, and your land

endowed with supernatural powers, intervenes before Jerusalem would have been destroyed. The king of Rome wages war against Nehemiah son of Hushiel in turn, and the latter is killed. Then the Messiah son of David (the second Messiah?), also called Menahem son Ammiel, with the help of the prophet Elijah, does manage to defeat the king of Rome and resurrects Nehemiah son Hushiel. This non-Judaic tradition is Hefzi-Bah, the mother of the Messiah, who like Mary the Theotokos in Christianity, plays a pivotal role in the course of the events of the Last Days.

In addition to the feminine figure of Hefzi-Bah, a marble statue of great beauty has become the centre of a pagan worship. This marble status could well have referred to the Virgin Mary, since she is seated in "the House of Ridicule," that is, the Hebrew name for the Christian Church. The status is also the wife of the very Devil with that has conceived Armilius,[268] the Antichrist and king of Rome. This Armilius combines both the temporal and spiritual functions, which Leo III seems to be the first to have claimed formally. The latter emperor had also distinguished himself for carrying out a massive program of Jewish and Samaritan forced baptism. For the authorship of the apocalypse of Zerubbabel it is clear that such situation constitutes the image of the most hateful imperial Rome. In this apocalypse of Zerubbabel the revelation of the apocalyptic battle that would precede Judgment Day is given by the "the prince of the divine army," called the archangel Michael, also known as Metatron, the "angel of the face" or the "angel of the Presence." Metatron is thus identical to El-Shaddai.

After the conquest of the largest part of Byzantium by the Persians in early 7th century there was a revived hope for coming the Messiah again, and the Jews fought on the side of the Persians. It is at this time when *Sefer Eliyahu* (hebr. Apocalypse of Elijah), was written, which describes how the Byzantine army was defeated in the country Israel. So, the Jews hoped for the imminent return to their country; in the *Sefer Zerubbabel* is apparently set to arrange for the

---

Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married." It is ironic that the title here was applied to Jerusalem, from the mother of Manasseh, one of the most reviled king of Israel. In the Septuagint the name is translated into Οψειβά, *Hopseibá*, Αψειβά, *Hapseibá*, Οφσιβά, *Hophsibá*, the mother of Manasseh (2Kings 21:1). It is also the new name of Zion (Isa. 62:4); Septuagint translates Θέλημα έμόν, *Thélēma emón*, "my delight." According to the *Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries*, n. 2657, it is a fanciful name for Palestine.

[268] Armelios is the transliteration for Romulos, the alleged founder of Rome, see C. Mango, *Chronographia*, AM 5965 (AD 472/73), p. 185.

Gil also believes that the architectural structure of the Dome of the Rock, its octagonal form, was reflective of the Muslim concept of Paradise: "*It is a description of Paradise, which the Muslim tradition claims (in the name of the Prophet) has eight openings. Indeed, the tradition attributed to the Prophet declares that the rock (on the Temple Mount) belongs to Paradise.*"[273] The octagonal form makes of the Dome of the Rock the navel of the earth,[274] and so Islam the gate to heaven. As to the marks of Jesus left in the Palace of Pilate called Gabbatha, an Armenian guide-book of the 11th century speaks of "the stone... on which the Saviour stood before Pilate, and upon which his footprints are to be seen to this day." [275]

Scytopolis (modern Bet She'an), capital of Palestine II was a cosmopolite city, a mixture of Jews, Samaritans and Christians. Procopius attests of a sizable Samaritan community that lived there with a certain Arsenius, who persecuted the Christians in the period before AD 530.[276] A camp of the Samaritans is mentioned in *The Piacenza Pilgrim* (AD 570).[277]

The *continuatio* of the Samaritan Chronicle is a source of some of the Muslim claims:[278] Muḥammad is recognised as a prophet by three astrologers (a Jew, a Christian, and a Samaritan).[279] And Kaʿb al-Aḥbār, the Jewish astrologer would prophesy saying: "I have found in my Torah that [one] of the descendents of Ismāʿīl will arise, who will rule and conquer the world, and no one will stand in his way." Then 'Abd Allāh, the Christian astrologer will say likewise: "I found

---

[273] M. Gil, *A History of Palestine 634-1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 95, n. 20; Quoting Al-Mubārak b. Muḥammad ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-hadīth wa'l-athar*, (Cairo, 1311)vol. 2, p. 254: "At the End of the Days, the Paradise will move to Jerusalem." See also 'Abdallah al-Hamawī b. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, (Leipzig, 1866), vol. 4, p. 592.

[274] Ar. *Naaf-e zamīn*; cf. Jerome usage of the term "navel of the earth" concerning Jerusalem, in F. Glorie (ed.), Jerome, *Commentary on Ezekiel* 5.5/6-56; Sophronius of Jerusalem speaks of it as follows: "And prostrate I will venerate the Navel-point of the earth, that divine Rock in which was fixed the wood which undid the curse of the tree. How great thy glory, noble Rock, in which was fixed the Cross, the Redemption of mankind!... And from that famous valley I will mount those steps, and venerate the Mount of Olives from which he ascended into heaven." in J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1977), pp. 91-92.

[275] J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1977), p. 201.

[276] G. Dindorf (ed.), Procopius of Caesarea, *The Secret History* (Bonn, 1838), 27:5.

[277] J. Wilkinson, *Jerusalem Pilgrims*, p. 79.

[278] M. Levy-Rubin (transl.), *The Continuatio of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū l-Fath al-Sāmirī al-Danafī* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2002). This is an invaluable source history for the living under Islam from the perspective of the local non-Muslims. The author gives a broadly positive report of the Umayyad rulers vis-à-vis the Palestinian populations in general.

[279] See *Continuatio*..., pp. 46-50.

resumption of sacrificial system under the direction of someone named *Nechima ben Chusiel ben Efraim ben Josef.* But the Persian Jewish-friendly policy changed suddenly: Jerusalem should become Christian. *Sefer Zerubbabel* may be describing this: "Schiroi, son of the Persian king, pulled Schiroi against Nechima and against Israel... and Nechima stepped down, and he banished Israel into the desert." (5.72).

The cryptic letters designating emperors and other mythic personages in apocalyptic texts were by no means exclusive practice, to judge by similar occurrences in the Byzantine coins of late 8th century AD. In a coin struck in about AD 790, Constantine VI and his mother the regent empress Eirene, are represented with the legend: "Constantine and Eirene his mother." But Constantine VI is given the titles: "C," "b," and "Δ," which probably correspond to *Caesar*, *basileus*, and *Despotes* respectively.[269] The abbreviation might only be due to the lack of room, but this feature associated with Constantine VI's fate – he was deposed and blinded by his iconodule mother, the empress Eirene (AD 797-802) – was swiftly seized upon in apocalyptic circles in order to convey the sense of what can be expected to befall the iconoclast ruler.

The author of the *Mysteries of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai'* wrote: "*The second king who will rise from Ishmael [that is to say, ʿUmar ibn al-Khattāb] will be a lover of Israel and will repair their cracks and the cracks of the temple.*"[270] According to the Karaites commentaries, Edom represents the Christian kingdom.[271] Gil comments about the status of Jerusalem: "*The new status of Jerusalem and the renewed recognition of its sanctity were not the result of scholarly discussions or new theological interpretation. They were born with the Dome of the Rock, an idea conceived by the ruler, Caliph ʿAbd al-Malīk, and translated by the best architects and builders of the time into a language of pillars and arches bearing all the splendour that the imagination could possibly envision.*"[272]

---

[269] P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore* Collection, III: *Leo III to Nicephorus III, 717-1081* (Washington, 1973), vol. 1, pp. 337-38.

[270] Quoted verbatim from M. Gil, *A History of Palestine 634-1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 70; cf. A. Jellinek, *Bēt ha-midrāsh* (Leipzig, 1854), vol. 3, p. 79.

[271] A. Jellinek, *Bēt ha-midrāsh* (Leipzig, 1854), vol. 3, p. 79; vol. 4, p. 120.

[272] M. Gil, *A History of Palestine 634-1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 91.

the same [revelation] in the Gospel." Then Sarmasa, the Samaritan astrologer says: "You will be the one to profess [the Muslim] faith and law; with it you will subdue the necks of the infidels and you will rule the world through it."[280]

According to this source, the conquest of Palestine with (incidentally) Muḥammad as leader of the Arabs was peaceful - except Caesarae that offered stiff resistance to the Muslim invaders, and thus was subjected to a day long massacre, after which *"every place else stood in awe of them [i.e., the Muslims]"*[281] - since Muḥammad did offer normally in return of surrender, a guaranty of security and religious freedom (*ᶜamān*) as an option to the outright acceptance of the summons to Islam" (*daᶜwa*).[282] The Umayyad successors of Muḥammad, says the author of *Continuatio*, *"ruled according to what he [i.e., the Prophet] had enjoined upon them; they did no more or less, and did not harm anyone."*[283] This evaluation of the Umayyads is contrasted to the rule of the ᶜAbbāsids whom the author asserts *"was a strong and mighty kingdom. They doubled the tax upon the land (kharāj) and raised the poll tax (jāliya) and made its burden heavier; they levied wasriya from all the provinces and afflicted the people with it."*[284] In Palestine, the governor ᶜAbd al-Wahhāb ibn Ibrāhīm stood out as particularly wicked in taking ruinous financial advantages from creating a rift between Christians and Samaritans in Palestine.[285]

A Palestinian origin for the *AZ* is in order, given that Samaritans and Jews have contributed some deal to messianic speculations before and after the advent of Muḥammad. The false messiahs who have raised the expectations of the coming of a Semitic messiah have done so out of hardship and desperation. A combination of social and religious factors suffice to keep alive speculations in a given circumstance that would be carried over in another, quite unlike situation.

---

[280] See *Continuatio*..., pp. 47-48.
[281] See *Continuatio*..., p. 53.
[282] See D.R. Hill, *The Termination of Hostility in the Early Arab Conquests* (London, 1971), esp. pp. 59-84; A. Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: a Source-Critical Study* (Princeton, 1994), pp. 146-67.
[283] See *Continuatio*..., p. 53.
[284] See *Continuatio*..., pp. 57-58. The author suggests emphatically that this drastic regime change had affected more than just Palestine, but "all provinces and afflicted the peoples..." This information might be in keeping with the testimony of the apocalyptic texts.
[285] See *Continuatio*..., pp. 58-60.

> animals, nor birds, nor wild beasts will touch him.[290] Then, the sons of Israel will call out to God, because of the multitude of oppression. From their great distress, God will answer them."

The descriptions of Muḥammad were seldom drawn in other than apocalyptic terms: a *praecursor antichrist*;[291] a "*pseudophepheta*" who prophesied that after his death he would rise after three days, but when the time came, he instead lay rotting until his stench attracted a pack of dogs;[292] a "heresiarch;"[293] an "antichrist."[294] This was so because Muḥammad was seen as the chief trickster against the Jewish hopes, especially with regard to the dashed anticipation for the restoration of the Jewish the cult at the Temple Mount. Having made abundantly clear on that site that Islam had superseded Christianity and Judaism the author of the AZ recommends a radical cultic alternative away from the Jewish sacrificial system, namely, the adoption of a sedentary religious way of life. "*The sons of Israel will call out to God*" may have just that in perspective, that is, a hermit-like attitude of repentance instead of the by-now unrealistic prospect of the restoration of the Jewish cult.

Monastic Source for the *AZ*:

J. Raasch in her study of early Eastern Christian monasticism has the first drawn the attention on a number of parallels between the oldest Christian apocalypses and monasticism, especially with regard to the apocalypses that featured a heavenly journey.[295] According to her, the link between the two traditions – Christian monasticism and apocalyptic literature – goes as back as the fourth

---

Dajjal in the eschatological struggle between him and the true Messiah near the gate of *Lydda*, see Ibn Majah, *Sunan*, II, 1361 (*Kitab al-fitan, bab* 36).

[290] Refer to the claims that a one of the gates of Jerusalem became the Christian place for dumping rubbish.

[291] A. Cutler, "The Ninth-century Spanish Martyrs' Movement and the Origins of Western Christian Missions to the Muslims," in *Muslim* World 55 (1965), pp. 321-39, esp. pp. 329-30. Cutler advocates the view that the 9th century martyrs' movement aimed at fostering a great rebellion against the Muslim hegemony in order to precipitate the Messianic era.

[292] See Gregory, in O.J. Zimmerman (transl.) Gregory, *Dialogues* (Washington: Fathers of the Church, 1959), p. 5; see Eulogius in *Memoriale Sanctorum* 1.7 (PL 115:745; cf. *Memoriale Sanctorum* 2:1.1 (PL 115:766-67).

[293] See John of Damascus in D.J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam: The "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"* (Leeiden: EJ. Brill, 1972).

[294] See Eulogious in *Liber apologeticus martyrum* 9, 10 (PL 115:857)

[295] For instance, there is *1Enoch* or *The Book of the Watchers* also known as the *Ethiopic Enoch*, chapters 1-36. See J. Raasch, "The Monastic Concept of Purity of Heart and Its Sources," in *Studia Monastica* 11 (1969) pp. 269-314, esp. pp. 280-81. For *1 Enoch* (esp. ch. 14 ff.), see the translation by E. Isaac, in J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, (New York, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 20-21 and ff.

Failed Jewish Expectations:

As the visionary came to terms with his initial dismay, Zerubbabel witnesses a remarkable transformation in the appearance of the Messiah: from the bruised, shabby looking Messiah, emerges "*a man in the likeness of a young male in while, strong, and handsome.*"[286] There seems to be no other referent story of the sort in other apocalypses. However, this Messiah appears quite literally to emulate Jesus Christ, in such a way that in the place of Jesus' dying on the cross and resurrection the third day, the Messiah of this apocalypse is shown as a being suffering the fortunes of his people, and then after He is revealed as Messiah, to whom Zerubbabel eagerly enquires about His advent. Thus, this Messiah is revealed, and therefore is expected to disclose in his stride the divine scheme of the Endtime.

It is quite noteworthy that the apocalypse of Zerubbabel should redraft some episodes of the patriarchs of the Torah, as though it was essential to reclaim the "Jewish" heritage of that national history, or rather to perform a *Midrash* on those biblical entries borne out of the proposed apocalyptic scheme.

Since Muḥammad could figure indifferently as the *Ante-Messiah* or *false Messiah*[287] preceding the *Messiah* of God, the Jewish lament over *Menahem* and *Nehemiah* could be qualified by the author as "vain," and this must have reflected specifically the wandering of Jewish opinion about Muḥammad.

> "So, all Israel will mourn *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel* for 41 days in bewilderment,[288] and his dead body will be cast down before the gates of Jerusalem.[289] Neither sacrificial

---

[286] Cf. Mark 16:5; John 20:11-16.

[287] Arab. *Al Dajjal* = false *Messiah*.

[288] In the M. Jastrow's *Dictionary of the Targum*.. vol. 1, pp. 1648-9, 1651 ותהי = "astonishment," "desolation," or "confounded" is a word of the same root as the biblical *tohu-bohu* before the Creation: this is a statement of destiny for the people of Israel not to look at the present chaos, epitomised by the murder of the *Messiah*, Menahem son of Hoshiel, as a sign of the End. Rather, by mourning him 41 days, some Israelites betray the emptiness of their purpose, or their desolate attitude regarding the responsibility of the murder. Thus, the emphasis is on Israel's desolatedness towards this dashed messianic hope, but rejects definitely both his Messianity and murder. This lends some light on the purpose of the Apocalypse of *Zerubbabel*: there is a strong commitment in lifting out Israel's sense guiltiness towards the murder of the *Messiah*. Certainly, the correlation of Nehemiah son of Hoshiel to the *Messiah son of Joseph* is intentional. The period of time (41 days) as well as the light-hearted allusion to Jewish suffering point to the description of Jewish sufferings that in fact reflected the ambience of congregational commotion, where millenarian utterances were taking place (calling upon God, followed by God's answer).

[289]During the campaign of Jerusalem, Umar who was greeted by a Jewish delegation from Jerusalem was asked about the false *Messiah*, to which the Jew replied: "What are you asking about him, O Commander of the Faithful? You Arabs, will kill him ten odd cubits in front of the gate of *Lydda* (see Y. Friedmann, *The History of al-Tabari* XII, p.189)." For the killing of *Al-*

century AD. As evidenced by Aphrahat's *Demonstrationes*, this was achieved through the long period of contact in Persia with the Jewish Merkabah (chariot) mysticism.[296] In *The Book of the Watchers*,[297] Enoch "*travels to the ends of the earth as well as through the heavens*," where "*he is shown the throne of God, 'the Great Glory.*"[298] He undergoes an "initiation" into the secrets of creation, and thus earns the right to see the "*court of heaven, angels and the thrones of the Judge and of the just.*"[299]

R. Murray further elaborates on Raasch's findings, by underlining the influence of *Sefer Hekhalot*, or the *Hebrew Enoch*,[300] especially its apocalyptic and mystical tradition in *Demonstration* XIV.35, as well as on Aphrahar's *Hekhalot Hymns*.[301] In the latter, Metatron the "Angel of the Presence" guides and instructs the "wise man" R. Ishmael in his heavenly ascent, notably on the heavenly "Holy Ones," whose counsel God does nothing in the world without.[302] But in this revelatory process of the heavenly secrets, it is Aphrahat who is the centre of attention, given that for the latter the visionary of the apocalyptic revelation assumes the status of "Watcher."[303] Although Aphrahat does exclusively advocate the superiority of Jesus vis-à-vis the array of Watchers and Holy Ones of the *Hebrew Enoch*, he nevertheless depends heavily upon the Jewish mystical tradition. Murray goes as far as to suggest that the actual mystical experience is that of being "rapt to the *hekhal*," namely, a typically lightning flight of the angels.[304] I suppose that the Jewish term *hekhal*

---

[296] Aphrahat (+344 AD)

[297] That is *3 Enoch*.

[298] See J. Raasch, "The Monastic Concept of Purity of Heart and Its Sources," in *Studia Monastica* 11 (1969), p. 281.

[299] According to J. Raasch (p. 281), this experience in Aphrahat's rendering of the tradition was a mental or spiritual exercise, a kind of meditation rather than a revelatory and/or mystical experience. However, the apocalyptic literature that derived from this kind of exercise cannot be restricted to mere meditation, but really a revelatory experience, as the text evidences elsewhere.

[300] *Hekhalot* means literally "heavenly palaces." P. Alexander dates the composition of *3 Enoch* in its present form to the 5th century AD. (*OTP*, vol. 1, pp. 225-9), though acknowledging earlier dating for parts of it, including the heavenly ascent narrative (ch. 3-15), which may be contemporary to Aphrahat of Persia.

[301] For the text of *3 Enoch* or the *Hebrew Enoch*, see P. Alexander's translation in H. Charlesworth (ed.), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, pp. 223-315, ct. C. R. A. Morray-Jones, "Hekhalot Literature and Talmudic Tradition: Alexander's Three Test Cases", *JSJ* 22.1 (1991) 1-39; See R. Murray, "Some Themes and Problems of Early Syriac Angelology," in R. Lavenant (ed.), *V Symposium Syriacum*, (Rome, 1990), pp. 143-53, esp. pp. 150-3.

[302] R. Murray, *Ibid.*, p. 150, (See *3 Enoch* 28).

[303] R. Murray, *Ibid.*, p. 150-1.

[304] R. Murray points out that the cognates for the word *hekhal*, verb or adjective are used in the text to describe the mystical experience of angelic-like flight by the wise man, *Ibid.*, p. 151.

("palace" pl. *Hekhalot*) might have assumed progressively the meaning of Temple, Shrine or Monastery within the circles of Jewish mysticism in Late Antiquity. From its original sense of "place of the presence of God," the word has come to symbolise in Christianity a repository of the *shekina*. Soon the body, relic or icon of a saint, which was also considered as imbued with the *shekina*, gave rise to a cultism often associated with monasticism. Hence the heavenly *hekhal* became fused with earthly *hekhal* under the influence of the legend formed around the defunct saint. What is relevant for our inquiry here is not so much the Jewish parallel to Muḥammad's Isrā/Mīraj experience,[305] but the presence of a Christian *hekhal*, which lay beneath, or at least in the background of the apocalyptic literature under study. Even though the actual *hekhal* concept may not be referred to as such, it nevertheless is assumed. One evidence of the presence of the *hekhal* concept is the instance of this mystical occurrence in our apocalypses is the multiple, intricate transformations of the central characters of the apocalypses, who happen to become recipients and mediators of the revelation. Moreover, given that the authors of these apocalypses do take for granted the authority of their new revelation on the same footing to the Scriptures re-enforces the assumption that this mystical tradition of sectarian Jewish origin was quite familiar to most ascetic Christian audience, and the corollary of this tradition being that the apocalyptic literature had its roots firmly in the precincts of ascetic monasticism.[306] For such Jewish mystical tradition is conspicuously absent from the Hekhalot literature – probably in opposition to the Christian notion of Jesus – but it eventually emerged in the Middle Ages in the Kabbalistic literature.[307]

---

[305] Al-Isrā' is the term designating the Night Journey of Muḥammad from Mecca to Jerusalem, precisely at the "Farthest Mosque" (*al-Masjid al-Aqsa*); The al-Mīrāj, on the other hand., is about the Ascension from *al-Masjid al-Aqsa* to heaven.

[306] Although the Palestine monasticism of the end-6th – early-7th century is portrayed as lustful, highly depraved, immorality and perverted piety among monks and Rabbis, life around monasteries as full of prostitution, and even Christians, Jews and Samaritans ganged up together in criminal activities, see John Moschus, *Pratum Spirituale*, 165.

[307] J. Fossum, "Jewish-Christian Christology and Mysticism," in *Vigiliae Christianae* 37 (1983), pp. 260-87; G.A.G. Stroumsa, "Form(s) of God: Some Notes on Metatron and Christ," in *Harvard Theological Review* 76 (1983), pp. 269-88.

Heb. *maqom*;[313] Ar. *maqām*) of the "presence of God."[314] We could guess, without need of absolute certainty, that as the Metatron tradition crossed the precincts of Jewish lore between the 5th and the 6th century AD, he assumed the function of someone "causing others to access the heavens," by virtue of his namesake in Greek, *meta-tron*.[315]

The *AZ* is replete with interpolations of Christian iconography (666; Hefzi-Bah; Rome; Armilius; Messiah son of Joseph; Resurrection; etc) and the Islamic (Night-Journey; Kaʿba; Gabriel/Michael; Caliphate; etc); the mixture of which renders the study of the text painstaking. However, this underlines the need for an approach from the perspective of iconography, rather than solely on the grounds of the hypothesis of an apocalyptic climate. For instance, despite the fact that Zerubbabel comes back to life to tell the tales of his visions in Rome, and affirms that "*Nehemiah, son of Hoshiel, son of Ephraim, son of Joseph, is also hidden there*,"[316] this apocalypse purports to prophesy events in distant times as the time when the Second Temple will be destroyed again: "*And the word is true that 420 years after the rebuilding of the city and the sanctuary it will be destroyed a second time*."[317] Zerubbabel is portrayed as a real temporal human being acting like an angelic being. This seems a clear indication that the Christian idea of the afterlife activities of the Saint is what mattered most to the authorship of the *AZ*. After two destructions, it seems that there is a dead end regarding the measurements of the original plans of the Temple, as to suggest that the Jewish community was at that stage unable to articulate its faith without parodying on their neighbours tenets.

---

[313] Synonymous to the place of the manifestation of the "presence of God" like at Bethel in Genesis 28:11 & 16-19, or at the burning bush of Exodus 3:5, or in Deuteronomy 12:5, 11.

[314] By the 5th century AD, the authenticity of a visionary experience was still debated, presumably, because of its close relation to ascetic monasticism. See A. Golitzin, "'The Demons Suggest an Illusion of God's Glory in a Form:' Controversy over the Divine Body and Vision of Glory in Some Late Fourth-, Early Fifth-Century Monastic Literature," in *Studia Monastica* 44 (2002) pp. 13-43. Note that the word *maqom* usually rendered by "stage" referred to the pilgrimage that the Patriarchs, notably Abraham, had performed in their quest for God has pervaded the three monotheistic religions.

[315] Metatron means literally: "(one who sits) besides the throne." The legend describes Metatron as being under the throne, or besides, opposite (hence "Prince of the Face"), above the throne of Glory, and teaches Torah to embryos (or babies and infants). This originates from a concept according to which the divine presence of a god rests under his throne. See S. Lieberman, "Metatron, the Meaning of his Name and his Functions," in I. Gruenwald (ed.), *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden-Koeln: E.J. Brill, 1980), pp. 235-41

[316] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.

[317] *The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. III.

What Messiah for the Jews?

The key figure of the new trend of apocalyptic literature is Metatron, the epitome of the transfigured Enoch of *Sefer Hekhalot* (esp. 3 Enoch 28). As M. Idel has pointed out, Enoch was seen as the archetype of the mystical visionary for the subsequent adepts of apocalyptic speculation. Through his ascent to heaven, he is transformed into Metatron, the "Prince of the Presence" (lit., "of the Face," = Heb. *Sar haPanim*).[308] According to Raasch's analysis, which focussed mainly on Aphrahat, I surmise that the apocalyptist sought to "interiorise," that is, to reframe the Jewish figure of Metatron into Christology and the Christian practice of worship. The personage of Metatron happens to span the history of humanity in God's plan, so that He is the Adam of the Creation, goes on to represent Moses bearing the *Shekina* of God at Mount Sinai, his vision of the Theophany (*kabod YHWH*), and embodies finally the meaning of Jesus Christ, that is the abode (*haikle* = "temple") of the Father's glory (*iqara*).

It is the Lord Jesus who is the Wisdom and Glory of God, the Eucharistic Presence, and therefore the True Tabernacle of worship.[309] For Aphrahat, the Wise Man, that is, the ascetic and/or the "consecrated celibate" discovers his life and eternal vocation (Gr. *theosis* = "deification") in and through the Lord Jesus – or in Aphrahat's own word: "*He will make us [ascetics] share in His nature*" – so that the Wise Man or the "Sage" experiences the eschatological recovery of Paradise.[310] In other words, what really Salvation means is achieving one's own deification through the practice of a kind of asceticism that allows the divinity of the Lord Jesus within the saint (*hakkima*) to be seen – i.e., unveiled (*apokalypse*).[311] Hence, it was Metatron in the stead of Jesus Christ, who became the archetype of the "deification course of action" the saint undergoes through the ecstatic visionary experience. He was the "seer" *par excellence*, the beholder of the true *Imago Dei*, even as the *locus* (Aram. *atra*; Gr. *topos*;[312]

---

[308] See *3Enoch* 1: 4; 3: 1 (*Old Testament Pseudepigraphia*, vol. 1, pp. 256-7); M. Idel, "Enoch is Metatron," in *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990), pp. 220-40, esp. pp. 233-5.

[309] See Aphrahat's rendering of the Eucharistic presence of Jesus in the Christian body in *Demonstration* III.2, 101:18-25.

[310] See *Demonstrations* II.20, 92:21-93:1; VI.10, 277:21-23; cf. XXIII.49, 96:18-19; and 51, 100:4-9.

[311] See S. Brock, *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World of St. Ephrem the Syrian* (Kalamazoo, 1992), pp. 148-54.

[312] See the article of H. Köster, "*topos*," in *TDNT*, vol. 8, pp. 187-208, esp. 195 ff.

It remains to determine what was meant then by hiding or resting-place. According to R. Yose's (mid-10th cent.) reading of Zecharia 9:1 "*In the land of Hadrakh and in Damascus shall be his resting-place*," the word *his resting-place* (מנרחתו) is a designation of Jerusalem,[318] and so, the interpretation of the verse should be that in the messianic era Jerusalem will extend as far as Damascus – the site of Elijah's return[319] – where the exiles will assemble. From the Qallir's religious poetry, the expectations of some messianic occurrences in Lebanon, or on the Mount Hermon were written in poetic terms.[320] It was, incidentally, the site of the Transfiguration of Jesus,[321] as well as the neighbourhood of the place where a "great light from the sky" and a sound of the voice of the Messiah led to the radical conversion of Paul, on the way to Damascus.[322]

The same area seems to have assumed – and entertained it long after – eschatological significance, resting on the belief that the *parousia* will occur there or around Damascus.[323] It could nonetheless be inferred that this so-called resting-place was synonymous to the "hiding place" of the *AZ*. But it is the ultimate conflict of Israel with Rome that was associated the most with the Mount Hermon.[324] In the book *Rule of the Community* at Qumran, instructions were given for a final battle against Belial and the *Kittim*, or Westerners (usually in reference to the Romans). A messianic verse that recall Mark 1:3, says: "*Clear ye in the wilderness the way of the Lord, level in the desert a highway for our God.*"[325] One passage in the *pesher* fragments 2-6, column 2, line 18 reads "when they return from the wilderness of the p[eopl]es."[326]

In *The Prayer of Rabbi Simeon b. Yohai*, there is, in reference to Zecharia 9:1 a

---

[318] Cf. Psalms 132: 14 (ASV): "This is my resting-place (זאת־מנרחתי) for ever: Here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

[319] M. Friedmann (ed.), *Sifrē to Deuteronomy* (Vienna, 1880), p. 79.

[320] I. Davidson, *Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1924), pp. 251, 278.

[321] Mark 8: 29 (HNV); "You are the Messiah." Matthew. 16: 16 add "..., the Son of the living God"; for a study on the missianic significance of Mount Hermon, see V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan & co., 1952), esp. p. 14.

[322] Acts 9: 3-7; 22: 6. Acts 22: 11 (HNV) speak of "the glory of that light."

[323] Luke 24: 51; Acts 1: 9-11.

[324] J. J. Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Ancient Literature* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), p. 57.

[325] *Rule of the Community* 8: 14; see 1QM, 4QM.

[326] Cf. 1QM 1:3. For an overview, see M.C. Murphy, Wealth in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Qumran Community (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2002).

description of the atrocities committed by "the king of fierce countenance,"[327] who "*will go on massacring until he reaches Damascus, but soon as he reaches Damascus divine rescue and salvation will be granted to Israel.*"[328] So Damascus was established in Medieval Jewish apocalyptic traditions as the place of the messianic drama. By then, the scenario of the coming of two messianic figures, namely Elijah and the Messiah was well known.[329]

Clearly, this Jewish community clung to its Hebraic heritage and religious cultus. There is no firm Christian leaning throughout the text despite the appearances. Hephzi-Bah might have supplied to the Jewish communities an equivalent of the Christian female deliverer,[330] although this suggestion of M. Himmelfarb is not that convincing, according to which the female figure made its entry in Jewish folklore due to the pervasive sculptural representation and widespread belief in the miraculous powers ascribed to Mary the *theotokos*. Rather, the Jewish community sought to redefine itself by ways of comparative religious analysis. Thus, the scheme seems to have needed more than before to borrow its materials from the popular tradition of Judeo-Christian disputation. Hephzi-Bah is portrayed in *Sefer Zerubbabel* as the representative of the antichrist who precedes the advent of the messiah from Judah. The likely intention of the authorship of the *AZ* was that the whole messianic drama involved the very redemption of Israel from the idolatry, the like of which was displayed in the iconography of Christianity and Islam.[331]

The recent archaeological finds in Palestine have revealed a high degree of Jewish share in the Byzantine culture during the two last centuries before the rise of Islam.[332] In the synagogue there are found beside the Mosaic richly depicting biblical stories, the signs of the zodiac, or representations of the god Helios.[333] In this respect, the *Sefer Zerubbabel* was probably iconoclast. And in

---

[327] See Dan. 8:23.
[328] A. Jellinek, *Beth Ha-Midrash*, p. 122.
[329] See its Arabic original in N. Wieder, "The Doctrine of the Two Messiahs among the Karaites," in *JJS* 6 (1953) 14–23., esp. pp. 16, 18.
[330] A. Cameron, "Images of Authority," pp. 29-35; M. Himmelfarb (transl.) "Sefer Zerubbabel," in Stern and Mirsky (eds), *Rabbinic Fantasies*, pp. pp. 67-90, esp. p. 69, and notes pp. 81-90.
[331] Deut. 12: 1-3; cf. Micah 5: 13-14.
[332] C. Mango, *Byzantium*, pp. 13-30; Haldon, *Byzantium*; A. Cameron, *Continuity and Change*
[333] E.g. the synagogogue zodiac at Hammath-Tiberias (5th cent.), see M. Dayan, *Hammath-Tiberias: Early Synagogues and the Hellenistic and Roman Rwmains, Final Excavation Report* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983), vol. 1, p. 5, fig. 1; The synagogue of Naaran with its Helios mosaic (6th cent.), see L.-H. Vincent, "Un sanctuaire dans la region de Jericho, la

Hephzi-Bah's connection with Armilius (~ gr. ***eremolaos*** = "destroyer of people"),[334] she was loathed as *the* source of all paganism, parodied as the "mother of all heresy."

These disputations revolved often round the Jewish perception of biblical prophecy, which was far more historically interpreted than Christian eschatological exegesis. Therefore, when new circumstances affected the *status quo* another impetus was provided for maintaining adequate distinction from Christianity, yet preserving and advocating an inflexible Mosaic aspect of its messianic faith. It was often the Jewish initiative and opportunity for rediscovering new elements of dispute. This was a firm exercise of self-identity that was undeniably Aramaic by definition, yet detached from Judaism, which the author's community wished no longer to be reckoned by:

> "R. Yishma'el said: Metatron said to me: 'Come and I shall show you the Curtain of the Place which is spread out before the Holy One, blessed be He, on which are engraved all the generations of the world and their deeds, whether they did them or will do them until the end of all generations.' And I went and he showed me with the fingers of his hand like a father who teaches his son the letters of the Tora... And I saw *Messiah ben Joseph* and his generation, and all the deeds which the nations of the world will do there. And I saw *Messiah ben David* and his generation, and all the battles and wars of their deeds, and their acts which they will perform with Israel, whether for good or for bad. And I saw all the battles and wars which Gog and Magog will do in the days of the Messiah, and all that the Holy One, blessed be He, will do with them in the Future to Come. And there were the chiefs of the generation, whether among Israel or among the nations of the world, whether they did or will do in the Future to Come, until all generations, all was

---

synagogue de Na'aran," in *Revue Biblique* 65 (1961), pp. 163-77, esp. pp. 164-65; also interesting is the synagogue of Beth Alpha (6th – 7th cent.), see E.L. Sukenik *The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1932), p. 38; the synagogue of Susiya (attested in use from 5th to 9th cent), see S. Gutman, E. Netzer & Z. Yeivin, "Susiya, Khirbet," in M. Avi-Yonah & E. Stern (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Archeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Englewood-Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975), vol. 4, pp. 1126-28.

[334] In the hymn attributed to Eleazar Qilir (Cyril), it is a certain *Harmalyos* (probably the same figure of the *Sefer Zerubbabel*) who kills the messiah of God, see Yahalom, "The Temple," pp. 278-80; "On the Validity...," p. 130; another hymn from the same author states that "the holy people will be destroyed..., persecution is decreed upon them. That is Armalyos, that is his name. [God] will cause him to crush and to tear down, He will appoint him to destroy and to annihilate...," in Fleischer, "Solving the Qiliri riddle," pp. 414-15. The name Armilius and its cognates was certainly so familiar in Jewish popular imaginary representation of the historical enemy of the Jews, probably Heraclius, that it has found its way into the apocalyptic literature there after. But the archenemy of the Jews was ubiquitous. It appears therefore that this legendary figure appears in the Jewish apocalyptic only from the 7th century onward.

engraved there on the Curtain of the Place. And I saw them all with my own eyes, and at the end when I had seen I opened my mouth and spoke in praise of the Place...."[335]

In 715 the Umayyads built a new mosque on the Temple Mount, which they named the "Farthest Mosque" *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*. A.L. Tibawi has considered that this action: "***gave reality to the figurative name used in the Koran.***"[336] The *AZ* advocated the advent of a Messiah devoid of the human agency. The recent erection of the Dome of the Rock, and possibly the extension of AD 715, may have contributed to making it clearer to the messianic Jews that the restoration that Zerubbabel would undertake in the Endtime will involve a Temple where no-one would possibly be denied access. In opposition to this, the author of the *AZ* is resolute in putting an unbridgeable distance from this fundamental element of the monotheistic iconography. He set his eschatological vision on the perfection, the intangibility of the mystical liturgy, and the perfection of the Jewish Messiah such as Metatron, and this was possibly under the Muslim influence.[337] The present writer would like to suggest that the iconography of the author of the *AZ* could be characterised as "absolutely incommensurable." In the same token, the author of the AZ was probably unsympathetic to the Jewish Messianic movements that erupted in Palestine during the first mid-8th century. According to our apocalyptist, every Jewish Messianic claimant was to be meted with a violent end, and would cause to the Jews only hardship yet again.[338]

Date of the composition of the apocalypse.

H. Graetz has maintained that this apocalypse had been composed in Italy in the middle of the 11th century,[339] but Lévi has shown more plausibly that the author of *Book of Zerubbabel* was a Jew of Palestine, where the book was probably composed.[340] The date he suggests is the first half of the 7th century may be

---

[335] *Sefer Hekhalot*, 5:187-88.

[336] A.L. Tibawi, *Jerusalem: Its Place in Islam and Arab History* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969), p. 9; There is, however, no evidence for an early identification of Quran 17:1 with that mosque, see A. Guillaume, "Where was Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa?" in *Al-Andalus* 18 (1953), pp. 323-36.

[337] L. Matignon, "L'Homme parfait en Islam et son originalité eschatologique," in *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 15 (1947), pp. 287-314; cf. H. Corbin, *The Man of Light in Iranian Sufism* (New York: Shambhala, 1978).

[338] See the *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*, p. V.

[339] H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden* (Leipzig 1860-1878), vol. I, pp. 65-67; so also M. Steinschneider., "Apocalypsen mit to polemischer Tendenz," in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenliindischen Gessellschaft* 28 (1874), pp. 352-367, esp. p. 360.

[340] I. Lévi, "L' Apocalypse de Zorobabel," 69 (1919), pp. 108-128, esp. p. 112.

challenged, although the historical context described by the author corresponds to the period of rapid changes of fortunes for the Jewish people, which represents the transition from Persian, then Byzantine, then after Muslim rules. These internal historical data might have only served a further purpose, that of encrypting the events of the 8th century, which the authorship of the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel was possibly aware of.

> "At the end of 990 years, when the power of the people of the saints will be worn out,[341] the help of God will be (manifest), to deliver them, and the hand of the *Messiah* of God will be over them to gather them... 420 years after the rebuilding of the city and the sanctuary, it will be destroyed a second time... At the end of the 10 kings[342] will come a tenth king (*Armilius*) who will destroy the Temple and will cause the perpetual (sacrifice) to cease.[343]"

The number "990 years" is symbolic rather than historical. It is apparently the Jewish millennia. It may at the best bear some millennial significance.[344] What is however more than symbolic, is the fact that the community had managed to work out a very sensible dating for its messianic scenario. To make sense, the symbolic number of "990 years" was to be related to approximate historical dates related to the three successive destruction and rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem as follows: The first rebuilding of the Temple destroyed in 586 BC was completed around 515 BC. Following its profanation in 167 BC by Antiochus IV Epiphanus, in 165 BC the Maccabeans rededicated *Zerubbabel's* Temple anew in a way that recalled Solomon's fastidious dedication. The "little help" that God would grant the worn out "people of the Saints" would rather

---

[341] Dan. 12: 7: And I hear the one clothed in linen, who [is] upon the waters of the flood, and he doth lift up his right hand and his left unto the heavens, and sweareth by Him who is living to the age, that, `After a time, times, and a half, and *at the completion of the scattering of the power of the holy people*, finished are all these.' (emphasis mine)

[342] The "10 kings" is a interpolation of the Daniel's "10 little horns," which represent the infighting of petty rulers during an interim of time, normally 70 years. This is probably a reference to the succession of Muslim rulers and their internal struggle for power, of which the apocalypse hints that "The 10 kings from the nations will be appointed, but they will not complete a year of ruling."

[343] AD 70 is the date for the historical end of the perpetual sacrifice ever. Nothing precise could be said as to the 420 years following the rebuilding of the city (Nehemiah) and the sanctuary (Ezra). The two events are quite separate in time, and scholars have not reach a consensus concerning these dates. However, going from AD 70 a deduction will give us 350 BC as the date of the dedication of the new Temple. In any case, just as "the 70 Romans kings" is meaningless, so there is little historical information to glean from this whole paragraph.

[344] The Syriac version of Pseudo-Methodius has a chronology of several millennia, interlaced between favourable and unfavourable periods for the Christendom. It may not be an isolated feature of Jewish millenarianism, but a commonplace characteristic in seventh century eastern regions.

have referred to that messianic revolution that Maccabee initiated and which ended with the Roman destruction of the Third Temple (the Temple of Herod) in AD 70. Thus, the statement that "420 years after the rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary,"[345] served to compute the date of the second destruction. We find that the "420 years" matches the lapse of time between the first destruction (585 BC) and the Maccabean revolt (165 BC). However, the important historical event of the destruction "again" of the Jerusalem and the Temple referred in the mind of the author's audience to the AD 70 Jewish defeat and exclusion from the city by the Romans. When the scenario is related to the 420 years,[346] the remaining time from the millenarian scheme of 990 years would be 570 years. This meant that the Temple's destruction of AD 68/70 was the last starting point of the "period of the nations (that is 990 years)" that was left, which if added to 570 years would result in a pre-supposed dating for the new millennium at around AD 638/640.

I conjecture that the text should have been written long after the time of Heraclius' death (AD 641). Heraclius is singularly irrelevant for the authorship of the *AZ*, and the title Armilius cannot be any longer associated with the emperor Heraclius. But a much later date might better fit the internal evidences from the text, than that of the building of the Dome of the Rock in AD 695. If the collapse of Persia in AD 652 was actually not yet a serious option for the community, it was not so as long as Byzantium and Persia were both still considered oppressive empires towards the Israelites, which now at last were crumbling fatally under the Muslim rise.

Further, the Armilius that was still alive, whom *Hephzi-Bah* was supposed to kill at Jerusalem would be 'Abd al-Malik, the builder of the Dome of the Rock, this is what is recorded in this document. By then, the fact that the plunderers are to be plundered in turn by the "horsemen of the desert" (i.e.: The Arab Muslim), shows that the author is recording with the highest trepidation the

[345] The Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed for the first time by the Babylonians when they captured Jerusalem in 586 BC (2kings 25:8-10), and was rebuilt at about 515 BC at the urging of the prophets *Haggai* and *Zechariah* (Ezra 6:13-15). It was known as *Zerubbabel's* Temple.

[346] This computation recalls to mind the "weeks of years" of Daniel on one hand, but also the 70 years of exile prophesied by the prophet Jeremiah. However, the tradition related to the speculations about the time of restoration uses 400 years approximately as the span of time God allowed the Israelites to spend in Egypt until the Exodus, so was it regarding the restoration of *Zerubbabel's* Temple.

successes of the Arab Muslims. However, a question has to be asked: if it is Heraclius (i.e.: Armilius) who was meant to be the tenth king before the coming of the *Messiah*, why did the author fail to report the series of Byzantine and Persian losses at the hands of the Muslim Arabs?[347] Moreover, since Armilius is meant to represent the archenemy of the Jews, so that Hephzi-Bah, the mother of Armilius, could no longer fit the role of a female deliverer of the Jews, as Mary was believed to be to the Christians. Similar references to the Christian motif of the Mother of God have been employed in previous apocalyptic prophecies in order to convince the intended audience that the actual outcome was divinely predestined.[348] Such an opportunistic usage of foreign apocalyptic motif does not make the beneficiary an adherent to the iconophiles, nor does it indicate the existence of any degree of syncretism. What seems the case here is that Armilius is the representation of any builder of the mosque that stand at the site of the Temple Mount. Whosoever undertakes any task to that effect will be confronted by Hephzi-Bah.

Should the historical context of the composition of the *Sefer Zerubbabel* be established as reflecting the era of Islamic hegemony rather than the Byzantine era, we may have then to consider the Ḥaphsa tradition instead – that is, the Muslim motif of transmission, or *Isnād* of the sayings of the Prophet – that came to sit on top of the Christian motif of the Mother of God. But the latter seems no to be in order here. In other words, the author of the *Sefer Zerubbabel* sought to recycle the theme of Gog and Magog (the third kingdom) – that is, the eschatological battle when kingdoms and nations come to destroy each other in order to usher in the era of the antichrist[349] – into hitherto the reign of the Fourth Kingdom, that is to say, the last kingdom before Judgement Day is already.[350] In

---

[347] Syria (Yarmuk in AD.636), and Palestine (AD.638), and Mesopotamia (AD 639), and Armenia (AD 640), and later of the collapse of Persia (AD. 652).

[348] For instance, the Persian king Koshrow is said to have prophesied to Probus the emperor Maurice's envoy that the Mother of God had appeared to him, predicting on Probus the victories of Alexander the Great (see M. & M. Whitby, *The History...*, p. 154, n. 81)..

[349] Cf. Dagron & Déroche, "Juifs et Chrétiens," pp. 194-95, 212-13; *Doctrina Jacobi Nuper Baptizati*, V, 6-7, 18.

[350] See Sebeos, *Histoire d'Héraclius*, p. 105: "Et la troisième bête... Il veut dire le royaume du Nord, Gog et Magog, et leur compagnons... Et la quatrième bête, terrible, étonnante... elle mangeait et broyait et foulait au pied le reste. Il dit: cette quatrième se levant pour sortir du côté du sud [est] le royaume d'Ismaël." According to Sebeos, God and Magog precede the advent of Islam. The apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius (AD 692) seems to justify the actual existence of the antichrist by the time when the Jerusalem Mount had assumed its eschatological significance

Basically, our apocalyptic text is an amplification and modernisation of the biblical text. The latter needs not to be necessarily apocalyptic at all, although the new exposé will invariably assume a future tense, a new naming scheme of extra biblical traditions. So too, the biblical figure finds his sphere of influence extended (Ezra as a scribe; Zerubabbel as a new Daniel; Daniel as mediator of a new dispensation) For instance here, Leviticus 26 plainly states the Law of reward and punishments depending on the attitude of the community of Israel as a whole, especially so with regard to the nation's capable standing before its neighbours. This Law makes it abundantly clear that the God of Israel would cause the land to be laid waste, should the Israelite community fail to observe the Commandments. In so doing, the land can rest in compensation for the number of years of abuses inflicted on it. In other words, the land does suffer foremost from the ritual sin of the inhabitants. On the long run, after a period of abuse the land is subjected to an indeterminate period of quarantine, before undergoing a proper rehabilitation. Thus, the duration, non-determined of such period of rest may be explained away. In respect to this cycle, the "*dishonoured man*" whom Zerubbabel encounters in his spiritual journey does enact that very process. Therefore also, Zerubbabel does track the path to redemption, so that his nationalistic repentance should have resulted from the disclosure of the apocalyptic scheme granted him.

Thus, one could rightly assert that the *AZ* is replete with Jewish mysticism. For instance, Metatron is a key messianic figure, alongside several others. He is the comeback Enoch to the effect that he is believed to have recovered the primordial status of Adam before his Fall in the garden of Eden. Therefore, Metatron holds the key to the restoration of the Israelites to their primordial status of the elect. He is also Michael, or Shaddai, with regard to his divine-like attributes, which mimic closely the Christian ideas of the messiah-ship of Jesus. Likewise, Metatron partakes in the redemption of Israel in two respects: he is *the* redemption of Israel much like Jesus who affirmed: "I am the Resurrection and the Life;"[353] He holds the power to amend the penchant of Israel to err.

In regard to the latter feature, Metatron proceeds to exposing the "heresy of the Christians about Jesus" that has grieved the Jews for so long, and the falsehood

[353] John 11: 25.

which case scenario, the factual representation in view must have been the symbolic significance of the Dome of the Rock at the turn of 8th century, rather than a reflection of the author's concerns with the speculative outcome of the wars on-going. It may be that, the author of Zerubbabel is at pains to demonstrate that the third monotheistic religion was the last, thus violating the traditional Four-Kingdom scheme. The audience of the author can hardly span beyond the disillusioned Jewish sectarian communities bewildered by the relative fluidity of the 8th century world politics. For such audience the author proposed the wait-and-see scenario based on the nations' present dispute over the control of the Jerusalem cultic. The couple of years following AD 715 would become an attractive proposition for the composition of the *AZ*.

Conclusion on the Apocalypse of Zerubbabel:

Clearly, at the time of the composition of the apocalypse, elements of the Jewish mystical Literature found their way in this apocalypse, although the old style of the Biblical visions, such as that contained in books of *Ezekiel* and *Daniel* is preserved. It has captured a moment in Israel's history when the messianic speculations about the impending restoration of the Holy Land were at their most realistic. The originality of the apocalypse of Zerubbabel resides in its combination of materials of the messianic concepts developed by the old rabbinical tradition, with other new ones, so far entirely novel in Judaism.[351] Given the subsequent success that this apocalypse has enjoyed since, one can wonder if the sublimation of the human agency in the *AZ* may have actually achieved its purpose, that of channeling the emotions of the Israelites into visionary fantasies, thus projecting into a remote future the violence of immediate aspirations.[352] The *AZ* is far more removed from the historical events it appears to describe than is hitherto appreciated in modern scholarship. It postdates the period of crystallisation of Muslim iconography, possibly the erection of the Dome of the Rock, the parody of which was directed against the Jews oldest enemy, Christianity.

---

in Islam, rather than his near future coming (Ch. 13:16-21); Pseudo-Ephrem's *Homily* (AD 680) may have had similar inclinations (see *Sermo* 5, pp. 169-362).

[351] J. DAN, *The Hebrew Story in the Middle Ages* (Jerusalem, 1974), pp. 35-46.

[352] G.D. Cohen, *Messianic Pstures of Ashkenazim and Sepharadim* (New Yoerk: Leo Baeck Institute, 1967), pp 12, 30-31.

of the antichrist (i.e., Christianity and Islam). He stands prisoner in Rome in order to carry out this vicarious function on behalf of the nation of Israel. Accordingly, he appears to Zerubbabel "shabby," "despicable," in "distress," and even "hideous" to contemplate. All those above traits of Metatron purpose to tally the Incarnation and Resurrection of Jesus, except His death on the Cross. The other difference is in his inauguration of a new heavenly liturgy devoid of all man-made religious iconography. The author's construction of this genre of eschatological mysticism allows for doing away with all religious paraphernalia. His scenario concurs with the biblical accounts, which display no such cultic devices, except for the sight of a sea of crystal, a rainbow around the throne, lightning, thunders, and worshipping voices...[354]

Another novelty about this apocalypse is that Zerubbabel is a messianic figure in his own right, who like Jesus, is portrayed as the leader of the Israelite church. Etymologically, Zerubbabel the governor (*phalthiel*) is a natural "head of the people" of Israel. As such he is the mediator of a new dispensation revolving around the revelation of the "*plan of the eternal Temple*," that is to say, he is a restorer *redivivus* of the primeval worship from the actual *tohu bohu*. Hephzi-Bah is almost a coincidental sequel of the new dispensation whereby some Biblical figures, not always the most pivotal ones, are resurrected in order to carry on their Biblical duty where they left off. Hephzi-Bah carries the status of protector of the city of Jerusalem, in which capacity also, she is supposed to fight off those who have so far kept hold of the site of the Temple. The rediscovery of the rod (ha-maṭṭah) of Hephzi-Bah is the missing link in the chain of transmission of divine power. Like Jesus, Zerubbabel is still alive, and had always been since he is granted access where the messiahs of old are restricted from, whereas Zerubbabel wanders around free. The rod is just as a revelatory medium as is its bearer, namely, Hephzi-Bah as a defender of Jerusalem. This rod is self-authenticating – a direct reference to the rod (maṭṭah) of Aaron[355] – as well as a sign of the prophetic revelation of things to come – as it is in the case of Jeremiah's vision – by image God proclaims: "I will hasten my Word to

[354] See Psalms 97: 7; Isa. 2: 8; Jer. 25: 6; Ezek. 46: 2; Mich. 5: 13-15, cf. Ezek. 28: 13-19; Rev. 4: 1-6.

[355] Here מטה is used following the account of Num. 17: 8.

perform it."[356] Therefore, the *AZ* is also about the revelation of Zerubbabel as a messianic figure, which thus far Zerubbabel was not yet aware of. Not only all these concepts were new, but also and mostly, they come at the hills of the theological developments around the community of Zerubbabel at about the time of the building of the Dome of the Rock. This king of conceptualisation of the activities of Zerubbabel *redivivus* implies that it had its roots in Christianity – i.e. the role of Jesus at the right hand of God, pleading on behalf of the church; the Saints; or Mary – and in the earliest forms of Mahdīsm, although there is no clear-cut evidence. After all, Jesus had hitherto revealed to John, posthumously, issues of concerns about the Seven Churches in Asia Minor, and other issues of the Endtime. The author of the *AZ* had certainly sought to make sense, in eschatological terms, of the fact of Islam to his fellow Jews, by re-processing the iconography of the opponents. His visionary scenario is one of the saving deeds of "perfect men," of the likes of Enoch, who alone should be expected to atone for the sin of Israel and bring about a Messianic age.[357]

[356] Jer. 1: 11-12. Note that the Hebrew word for rod is מקל

[357] L. Ginsberg, *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1947), vol. 5, pp. 156-57, 163-64.

Chapter 5: Comparison and Contrast between the three Apocalypses.

From the above discussion, it could be inferred that the Muslim theologians and apologists did genuinely not grasp the meaning of the Cross for Christians under their dominion.[1] Yet, the symbolism of the Cross, in particular, under the circumstances of subjection to the Islamic way of life, had assumed unprecedented relevance in view of the enduring dominion of the Islamic *Hijra*. The Muslim theologians had very early noted and often scorned the incongruity of the crucifixion as a historical falsification at best. However, given that some Christians apologists such as John of Damascus, Abū Qurrah, or Timothy I, started to emphasise the parallels one ought to draw from his/her present affliction with the suffering of Jesus Christ, the Cross came then to symbolise at once the hope that Christianity would ultimately overcome the enemies of the elect.

For instance, at the turn of the 9th century the Nestorian Patriarch Timothy I (AD 727-823) was keen to explain to his interlocutor, the caliph al-Mahdī, regarding the death of Jesus on the Cross that: "*death was the cause of resurrection and resurrection is the cause of life.*"[2] This had a bearing in particular with regard to the many subtle changes taking place in the Christian iconography, owing to the reality of the dominion of Islam – claiming the status of the "last revelation" – which incurred a remarkable adjustment of status on the Eastern Christendom. That is to say that a number of different Christian confessions that found themselves beyond the reach of the Byzantine patronage required to reconfigure durably their confession of faith from the point of view of Endtime events.

The present writer is inclined to suggest that the author of the *ASQ* displays a theology on the worship of icons that antedates the one of Abū Qurrāh, Bishop of Ḥarrān.[3] John of Damascus (d. AD 749) was mainly concerned with addressing the Christians who found themselves increasingly on the defensive

---

[1] H. Lazarus-Yafeh, "Some Neglected Aspects of Medieval Muslim Polemics against Christianity," in *Harvard Theological Review* 89 (1996), pp. 61-84. Lazarus-Yafeh suggests as a conclusion of his article on the Medieval polemics that: "In addition to the traditional model..., we should also view Judaism and Islam as the two halakhic, rationalistic, religions, less inclined to symbolism – in contrast to Christianity."

[2] S.H. Griffith, "Disputes with Muslims in Syriac Christian Texts," in B. Lewis & F. Niewöhner (eds.), *Religionsgespräche im Mittelalter* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992), p. 263.

[3] See S.H. Griffith, "Theodore Abū Qurrah's Arabic tract on the Christian practice of venerating images," in *Journal of the African and Oriental Studies* 105 (1985), esp. pp. 54-55.

vis-à-vis their misgivings concerning the veneration of icons.[4] But unlike Abū Qurrāh who confronted, from the Melkite perspective, the charges of idolatry coming from Muslims and Jews, our apocalyptist can hardly be regarded as so forthcoming. Although the tenets of Abū Qurrāh's argumentation[5] may have been too Chalcedonian to endorse for a Copt, the authorship of the *ASQ* might have bridged the gap on the veneration of icons because of the monastic and patriarchal traditions that were autochthonic to Egypt. The least that one can say is that the issue of iconophilia was never a valid one within the monastery of Qalamūn.

With the *AZ*, we step into a substantial radicalisation of the aniconic religious culture, whereby the fact of Islam is transcended, as its advent is made to provide the Jewish people the opportunity of amending that pervasive idolatry. In that respect, the eschatology of the *AZ* is distinctly mystical, encompassing the pool of the present contentious religious practices in all the three monotheistic faiths into a sort of apocalyptic scenario in which some mystical personages of choice would play out the corresponding parodies. Thus, the iconography of the rival religion would be swallowed up. Here, the similarities with the significance of Jesus in Christianity are the most salient. Jesus' message and deeds to his fellow Israelites were recorded so as to expose the innate sinfulness of man; by condemning his message and messiah-ship, all the humanity's evil was poured upon his person; consequently, God reveals the primordial cult of His choice, which has no equivalence in man's made artefacts for the cult of God, because of his divine attributes. Therefore, neither the cult of the Temple Mount, nor the cult of saints, of the Virgin Mary, and of the Cross, nor even the Muslim hold on the Temple Mount, or the veneration of the Black Stone at Kaʿba, would fulfil God's requirements. For the author of the *AZ*, only the agency of heavenly beings, who have been proved in biblical history, is qualified to accomplish what human beings are inherently incapable of, precisely because of its acquaintance with the original religion. In addition, the *AZ* is probably of a sectarian Jewish origin, in conflict with the mainstream

[4] St John of Damascus, *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies Against those who Attack the Divine Images*, D. Anderson (tr.), (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminar Press, 1980); cf. D.J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam. The Heresy of the Ishmaelites* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972).
[5] S.H. Griffith (tr.), *A Treatise on the Veneration of the Holy Icons* (Louvain, 1997), esp. pp. 55-56.

Judaism, or the Jewish Messianic movements that flared up from time to time in the aftermath of the advent of Islam.

Conversely, the author of the *FVD* offers little novelty in comparison to the two other apocalypses. By way of its advocated iconography, the *FVD* lacks the imaginative creativity of the *AZ*, and a body of native Christian tradition of the kind that is exploited in the *ASQ*. The prime reason for this lies probably in the fact that the *FVD* is a Judeo-Christian composition, and as such, it does oscillate between the two religious traditions. It set out to address the issues of indeterminate geo-politics affecting a religious community caught between the two warring world empires. The protracted confrontation was regarded here more acutely than anywhere else as the battle of the Endtime, the advent of the antichrist prior to the coming of the Messiah.

Endtime Theology and Iconography:

The question to answer is how these three apocalypses compare regarding the Endtime, and consequently what is the place and role allotted to Islam in those distinct eschatological schemes. Long before the Islamic era, Emmerson suggests:

> "Christian thinkers had developed two distinct traditions regarding the historical role of Antichrist. On the one hand, there was *the* Antichrist, the powerful figure who would play a dramatic role in the final act of Christian history. On the other hand, there were *the Antichrists*, or more technically, *the types of the Antichrist*, who would emerge from time to time throughout history as persecutors of the 'chosen people,' prefiguring the decisive persecution that would be implemented by the ultimate Antichrist."[6]

From the outset, one should be attentive to Islam's ignorance of visual symbols, in contraposition to the calligraphic art.[7] With Judaism, Islam shares a rationalistic view of the cult, where the visual symbolism of the doctrines is a foreign concept, when not pagan altogether. John of Damascus (Yahnah ibn Manṣūr ibn Sargun, d. AD 749) and Theodore of Studios (d. AD 826) were proponents of the orthodoxy of the veneration of icons. The primary aspect of authentic iconography centred around one new thing: expressing calligraphically the spiritual, whereby creation (*e.g.*, man) is no longer modelled in the image of

---

[6] See R.K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1981), pp. 21-33. The emphases are mine.

[7] O. Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art* (), p. 138.

reality, but the fundamental shift is that iconography serves the art of the sacred, that is, the art of the Dogma rather than a mere Christian art. P. Lemerle has commented upon such a shift in Byzantine art as follows:

> "C'est que l'icone finit par ne plus *représenter* un personage sacré, *elle est ce personage*... Bien plus, il est arrivé qu'on donnât comme parrains à des enfants des icons, et il se trouva des gens d'Église pour approuver cet usage."[8]

In the popular practice of the faith, when the fact of Islam compelled the weary people to resort to a worship of the icons more pressingly than necessary, all the iconographical panoply of one's religion contributes to stifle the anxiety with regard to the uncertainty of the outcome. The author of the *ASQ* extols the naming newborn with the names of the Coptic saints, commends the usage of the Coptic language for spiritual blessings, etc. The *FVD* makes use of a number of Semitic names, and somehow performs a "de-arabisation" of the Muslim personages who are made to play some significant eschatological role in the apocalyptic scenario. The iconoclastic stance of a given Byzantine ruler determines his/her eschatological role, while the veneration of the Virgin Mary as the defender of Constantinople – which has assumed the title of *Hephtalophon* meaning the "seven-hilled city," since the loss of Jerusalem – is hardly proscribed. The present writer suggests that this might have occurred for two reasons: first, the persistence of the veneration of the Virgin Mary was necessary in view of the repeated failure of the Muslims to take Constantinople, hence, the reputed supernatural protection of the city had to fall back upon a tradition well entrenched in the popular belief. Second, the loss of Jerusalem a the hands of the Muslims became as a result a lesser issue, while Constantinople gained a higher eschatological significance, so that the title *Hephtalophon* fitted the requirement for superseding Jerusalem. Therefore, despite the author's iconoclastic stance, he could still accommodate the veneration of the Virgin Mary.

In the *AZ*, to cite but one example, the "Judaising" Virgin Mary, Hephzi-Bah, is a female personage in charged with recapturing Jerusalem from the Muslims. With the rod of Aaron given her, she will come to the rescue of the male

[8] P. Lemerle, *Essais sur le monde byzantin* (London: Varorium Reprints, 1980), pp. 49-58. The *ASQ* in particular epitomises this evolution in Christian iconography, as we shall see in the corresponding chapter.

fighters, Messiahs of all ranks, who will wage the eschatological battle against Armilius, the antichrist. We may perceive in this instance, the extent of the theological construction that was required to arrive at such an appropriation of a Christian mystical theme. The eschatological battle was indeed a theological battle of attrition on the iconographical front.

John of Damascus recaptured the essence of the incarnation (the divinity and humanity in Christ), which the early Christians had wrestled with so hard to formulate, because it was then again at stake under the regime of Muslim aniconism: "*In former times, God, without body or form*," contended John of Damascus, "*could in no way be represented. But today, since God has appeared in the flesh and lived among men, I can represent what is visible in God.*"[9] Later on, Theodore of Studios could elaborate further in his footstep: "*Man has no characteristic more fundamental than this, that he can be represented in an image; that which cannot be represented in this way is not a human being.*"[10] Thus, in the icons the temporal is giving way to the eternal. By the turn of the 8th century, one cleric complained that Christians have become so uneasy with the veneration of images to the extent that, instead they began to embrace Islam even without being pressed to do so.[11] Against the objections on the practice of venerating images coming from Jews and Christians, Theodore Abū Qurrah the bishop of Harrān (AD 795-812) was at the crossroad of the polemical debate. His Arabic apologetic tract affords us with "*a new view of the well known Islamic campaign for public display of the symbols of Islam in the conquered territories, beginning already in the reign of the caliph ᶜAbd al-Malik (685-705).*"[12]

In all three apocalypses we have seen the impact of the construction of the Dome of the Rock, its psychological effect, and the apocalyptic reaction it had incurred on the non-Muslim citizens. It may be said that ᶜAbd al-Malik had

---

[9] John of Damascus, *First Oration on Images*, in *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 94, col. 1236 (Paris: Garnier Fratres, 1864); quoted in J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974), p. 45.

[10] Theodore of Studios, *Refutation of the Impious Poems of the Iconoclasts*, in *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. 99, cols. 444-445 (Paris: Garnier Fratres, 1903); cited in J. Pelikan, *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 128.

[11] S.H. Griffith, "Theodore Abū Qurrah's Arabic tract on the Christian practice of venerating images," in *JAOS* 105 (1985), pp. 53-73.

[12] S.H. Griffith, "Theodore Abū Qurrah's Arabic tract on the Christian practice of venerating images," in *JAOS* 105 (1985), pp. 53-73.

achieved far exceedingly what the Muslims have looked for asserting the superiority of Islam. It was an exercise of iconographic display of the universal religion, the last revelation of God, and more importantly that of their appropriation of the "Navel of the earth," or the *axis mondi*. The Dome of the Rock is as well the clearest *terminus post quem* for all three. The next iconographic display, only second to the Dome in terms of eschatological significance was the minting of the Muslim aniconic currency. That currency was meant to display the symbol of the Islamic era. More than just that, the minting of the Muslim currency was an assertion that the Arabic language was to become the *lingua franca* for trade and communication. Indeed soon after, the Caliphate adopted throughout the empire a new system of road signalisation.

The development of the apology of John of Damascus coincides with the rise of the figure of the holy man in *dār al-Islām*, be it a mystical figure (real or imagined such as Zerubbabel), a Messianic claimant (several Jews), the monk (e.g. Anbā Samuel), or simply the hermit. Both as a vicarious figure and a mystic whose sole purpose was to uphold the orthodoxy over against the irruption of heresy at the End times, these personages carried with them the power to breed new apocalyptic insights into the actual religio-political state of affaires.

This type of apocalypses is a literary genre that could be termed historico-apocalyptic in that it uses discrete events not necessarily related to the period of the writing. But it is made of modular items that represent better the meaning being conveyed. The present writer suggests that these apocalypses are nonetheless helpful in defining more accurately the apocalyptic material that was produced in the 8th – 9th centuries of our era. Not that all three display such features, but it is of interest to draw some point of similarity, if any, with the specificities of these apocalypses. At any rate, the apocalypse of Samuel may be probed to that effect, since the introductory account does reflect remarkably the *examplum* of the vicariate of the Saint. The apocalypse states that the aim of this writing is "*to benefit those who are suffering hardship*" and also "*to comfort... those who read it with faith.*" In this respect the *ASQ* stands on the grounds of the iconodulism that was prevalent in Egypt, especially with regard to the Coptic fathers. For the *ASQ*, the actual dominion of the Hijra – note the sense of era –

has been brought about as a result of the heresy of Chalcedon, that is, the Melkite Church.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, we have seen the *FVD* advocating a more aggressive stance against the sons of Agar. The "three sons of Agar" was a figurative representation, as it were, of the fiercest moments in the struggle with Islam. Iconodulism in that respect is rather the manifestation of a weakening of the faith. This apocalypse may be the product of iconoclasm, especially for its stand for Leo III and Constantine V, and over against the empress Irene. Nonetheless, its stance is at contra distance with what may have been going on the other side of the divide, that is, the rise of *jihādic* rhetoric in Syria, owing to the stalemate that the Umayyads – and Abbasids after them – wish to break in the Syrian border with Byzantium. Many a religious community, or an ethnic group, would have experienced such an apocalyptic atmosphere, where war had become a way of life, a constant exercise of accounting for the actual and near future geo-political map of the immediate neighbourhood. What might have resulted here was that each party became interested as a-matter-of-fact to any available means of gazetting the political situation in Asia Minor. The most vivid and valuable material to that extent would be the apocalyptic speculation. In the context of Asia Minor, in particular, the fever of apocalypticism may have crossed over boundaries that usually would resist to such foreign influence.

When we turn to the *AZ*, however, the picture that emerges from the text is that of a community at loss with what to make of the Muslim hold on Jerusalem. In AD 715 the Umayyads built a new mosque on the site of the Temple Mount, which they named the "Farthest Mosque" *al-Masjid al-Aqsa*, certainly with the purpose of giving reality to the figurative names used in the Quran. The present writer surmises further that the actual exercise had caused the author of the *AZ* to have Zerubbabel assume iconographic significances of its own. Zerubbabel would assume a messianic role unprecedented in Jewish iconography. Likewise Muḥammad in his Night Journey experience, Zerubbabel is given to travel in time to the site of the now Muslim Dome of the Rock and witness the sorry state of the Messiah imprisoned there. The Biblical Zerubbabel who resisted the contribution of the local *goim* (heaven) during the rebuilding of the Temple had become an angelic agent whose person the dispensation of the revelation of the "plan of the eternal Temple," is laid upon. Hephzi-Bah would succeed in

protecting Jerusalem where others have failed. These themes suggest in themselves that the apocalyptist was in search of definitive answers to the continuous question of the Jewish own control of its destiny.

When we speak about the change in iconography, the *ASQ* stands out sharply for its interiorisation of the concept of the community of the elect. The monastery of Qalamūn, the Coptic corpus of Scriptures dubbed the "canons," and the unbroken lineage of the Fathers, held together as a whole, became the metaphoric recourse in times of Islamic hegemony. These icons of the Coptic Church were the sanctuary, the safe haven in which the Scriptures – may be the Gospel as distinct from the canons – would be fulfilled.[13]

The Influence of Islam in shaping of the Iconography of the Apocalypses:

The present study has consisted in comparing and contrasting at time, so that what was in the common thread could be highlighted. This comes about as follows: The common thread is first and foremost the program to de-appropriation of the Temple Mount. In Islam, Jerusalem had become the Navel of the earth with regard to the revelation of religion. We may recall that in Islamic traditions, which relate to the return of Jesus as *Mahdī*, the *locus* of this eschatological event would be Damascus, precisely at the eastern minaret (*Bāb Jīrūn*) of the Great Mosque of Damascus.[14] Other traditions have it that Jesus would enter Damascus through the eastern gate in order to fulfil the eschatological killing of the *dajjāl*:

> "This is the tower upon which Jesus son of Maria will alight, for Muḥammad is reported to have said, 'I saw Jesus the son of Maria come forth from near the white minaret, east of the Mosque... Jesus shall come forth from the white Tower by the eastern gate, and shall enter the mosque. Then shall the word come forth for Jesus to fight with the Antichrist at the corner of the city.'"[15]

The actors of the re-conquest of the lost ground could be either an idealised Messiah, or a Saint whose claim to the lineage of the fathers. In the latter case, the messiah-like saint has angelic or special connections with the divine, that the saintly words and canon of behaviour guaranty the wellbeing of his followers.

---

[13] N. Wieder, "'Sanctuary' as a Metaphor for Scripture," in *JJS* 8 (1957), pp. 165-75.

[14] A.J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muḥammadan Tradition* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1925), p. 113; for a more recent survey, see T. Khalidi (tr. & ed.), *The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and Stories in Islamic Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

[15] T.P. Hugues, *A Dictionary of Islam* (London, 1897), p. 67.

Conversely, the messianic figures in the *FVD* are historical emperors endowed with historical names such as Constantine and Leo. They are praised accordingly, and in the manner of the Old Testament narratives on the reigns of the successive Israelite kings (David, Salomon, Ezechias, etc). The latter feature fits the type of religious community of Judeo-Christian leanings, in matters regarding the "celebration" or "reminiscence" of the righteous king whose spirit sustains alternately the favour of God.

There are many interpolations between the three apocalypses. *Metatron* is the unique messianic figure that is not biblical. Among the multitude of Messiahs in the *AZ*, the figure of *Metatron* is probably the closest to the Christian conception of the Son of God. The name was particularly used among the Jewish sects, which delved into speculations on the mystical name of God. In that sense, the role of *Metatron* is not new, as was the figure of Hephzi-Bah. The appearance or resurrection of the dead who disclose some revelation is foreign to Judaism, and so, this move represents a momentous departure from a religious practice prohibited by Moses. In the OT it bears a negative sense of necromancy (e.g. 1 Sam 28). Whereas in the *ASQ*, it has a positive function: the Virgin Mary appears where She is buried in order to elicit the worship carried out on that shrine at Qalamūn. Conversely, the captivity of the Messiah detained in Rome may be an interpolation of the story of the young Daniel. The *AZ* is clearly a strong critic of the worship of the (Black) Stone, yet a proponent of the role of Hephzi-Bah, or against the worship of the Cross, while claiming his strictness with regard to the Torah.

With regard to the praise of Jerusalem and *al-Shām*, the three apocalypses do construct very different scenarios. For the *ASQ*, Jerusalem is the celestial one, to which one ought to strive in the preservation of the Coptic Fathers' traditions. As for the *FVD*, Jerusalem is overshadowed by the more pressing concerns for Constantinople, the *Hephtalophon*. This circumvents the ambivalent feelings concerning the status of Jerusalem. Having no other messianic expectation than the wishful hope in the reigning cycle of the emperor-saviour owing to his presupposed endowment with the spirit of Constantine I, or the likes of Alexander the Great. This is where the *FVD* intimates the clearest departure from the scenario of the *AZ* for instance, which is for obvious reasons the most forceful proponent of the restoration of the cult at the Temple Mount.

For the *ASQ*, Jerusalem is the ideal city, which sacredness no longer resides in its being the site of the Jewish cult. Rather, Jerusalem is in heaven, meaning, it is the spiritual one where the hosts of its saintly inhabitants are those Coptic fathers and native martyr-saints who populate the corpus of the sacred Coptic records. In other words, the heavenly records that will be open at Resurrection, i.e., the "Book of Life"[16] gives way to earthly records of the Coptic fathers.

The theme most conspicuously borrowed from Shī'a Islam in the *AZ*, deals with the hidden Messiah, concealed or restrained in Rome. It is taken up in the *FVD* regarding Jesus (ch. 2), so as to explain away the failure of the Byzantines to withstand the Ishmaelite invasion. Whereas in the *ASQ*, it is the Virgin Mary who was absent from the practice of the piety of the Copts, up to the time of Anbā Samuel. Instead, in the dire circumstances of the Coptic Church, She eventually reveals Herself to Anbā Samuel. She urges Samuel's followers to offer Her their due worship, should a need arises for Her to intercede on their behalf to Her Son Jesus. Her "restraint," so to speak, is in relation to the historical fact that Her burial place at Qalamūn was thus far unknown, and the benefits of venerating Her relics (or shrine) sorely missed as a consequence.

The *AZ* is implacable against the iconographies of both Christianity and Islam: The *AZ* is parodying the most prominent object of the cult both in Christianity and Islam. The Virgin (i.e. Mary) woman, which is in fact a stone (i.e. Kaʿba) is extremely beautiful to the eye (i.e. the Temptation in the garden of Eden), and she becomes even more beautiful the longer one (Eve) gazes at her. Satan assigns her the commission of having intercourse with Belial (i.e., Satan himself, the Tempter). Both Christianity and Islam are amalgamated regarding the most important aspect of each one's worship and icon.

The rod of Hephzi-Bah in the *AZ* is the equivalent of the notion of "chain of transmission" of divine commission, as it is represented in the *ASQ*. Certainly too, the *FVD* conveys such notion with regard to the protective works of Mary for the city of Constantinople. The difference with the former lies in the fact that the rod is just as a revelatory medium as is its bearer, namely, Hephzi-Bah

[16] Rev. 3: 5 (MKJV) " The one who overcomes, this one will be clothed in white clothing. And I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels." Rev. 22: 19 (MKJV) "And if anyone takes away from the Words of the Book of this prophecy, God will take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy city, and [illegible] the things which have been written in this Book."

The enemy is portrayed as the Antichrist either explicitly of through the number 666 of the Book of Revelation.

The iconography of the three religions had become theme of positive eschatological speculation. The manner in which these iconographical themes would find their way in another faith is through the re-enactment of Biblical *topoi* so as to exorcise the visual fact of the reality of the enemy.

These features are inherent to the context of confrontational atmosphere. The context in which the three apocalypses are written is more or less tense, if not belligerent altogether. But the striking incentive is the presence of a potential imperial power with the means and will to challenge the *status quo*.

The *FVD* is by far the clearest iconophile of the three apocalypses. And it had to, given the tradition it derives from. Here, there is no female saviour. Rather, in the face of the threat posed by Islam, the orthodoxy of the emperor is of the essence. By contrast, the Mariology of the *ASQ* is as conspicuous as is its anti-Chalcedon stance. Mary the *Theotokos* is given a prominent space in the *ASQ*. Predictably, in the *AZ* the status and apotropaic role of Mary is the object of an ambivalent appropriation under the cover of Hephzi-bah.

Zerubbabel is the messianic figure *redivivus*, who resurrects solely in order to receive the revelation for Israel of the things to come. However, he is assigned an extra function of the messianic age in the deliverance of the nation of Israel. His repentance and intercession on behalf of Israel had presumably earned him this honour. To an extent, this mimics the role of the Paraclete (*Menahem*, *Metatron*), whereby Jesus extends His support to the disciple even after His translation into heaven. Hephzi-Bah plays the role of Mary with regard to Jerusalem, and joins a host – it is difficult to number them exactly and figure out their structural hierarchy – of other messianic figures. It is possible that the author of the *AZ* wished to discourage the prevalent Messianic individualism, by preference for a more concerted futuristic endeavour. Mary the Virgin plays that role in the *ASQ* in the fact that She ought to be revered in order to carry Her complaint to Jesus. The cult given to Mary is a token of the orthodoxy of venerating the Coptic saints, their relics, and those "extra canons" that supplement the canon of the Scriptures. But the *FVD* falls short of crossing the divide. Instead here, Mary is the supernatural defender of Constantinople. Therefore, She ought to be treasured like an angelic being, rather than revered.

defending Jerusalem. This rod is self-authenticating as well as a sign of the prophetic revelation of things to come.

The pun over the Cross is another one. The dead wood of the Cross is opposed to the sprouting rod handed to Hephzi-Bah. Throughout this study, we have seen that the iconography of the opponents is the object of each of the three apocalypses' apologetic composition. Numerous themes of biblical settings that were typical of the Jewish lore were borrowed from one to the other religions. Muḥammad emulates a number of the miraculous deeds of Moses b. 'Imrān. Like Moses, the Prophet would not enter the inherited land (*dār al-Islām*).[17] Since Islam claimed to be the last revelation, and therefore were its adherents the faithful community, Hunayn Ibn Ishāq suggested that unlike the Israelites who plunged into idolatry during the 40 days absence of Moses, God would find a faithful community of Muslims.[18] In the Qur'ān, the Jewish ruler Solomon (Suleiman) becomes the Muslim paradigm of the ideal Muslim ruler (*rāṣidūn*) combining kingship and prophethood, and therefore he was legitimately the one who waged wars against the polytheists or offered to non-Muslim kingdoms (*'ahl al-kitāb*) the status of protected (*dhimmī*).[19] Likewise, Jewish lore introduced some Christian themes such as the famous Hephzi-Bah character reminiscent of the prominent role the Virgin Mary had played in the Orthodox circles.

Conclusion:

These books of the "canon," as the author of the *ASQ* puts it, have assumed a canonical status almost on a par with the canonical books of the Bible. It is as though, because they are the repositories of the Coptic fathers' teachings regarding the orthodox way of life, this notion looks like a peculiar rendering of Rev. 3: 5; 22: 19. As a result, the images and relics of saints became redundant, and of little enlightenment in comparison. For instance, the icon of Mary is discarded altogether, in favour of the visionary experience of Anbā Samuel, which is fittingly put in record. The assets of the community are therefore Her revelation, and elected dwelling. Moreover, She figures alongside the three

[17] See in the Qur'ān, Sūra 7:128, 137; 44:25-28.
[18] A. Guillaume, *The Life of Muhammad* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 682.
[19] See in the Qur'ān, Sūra 27:17-44.

persons of the Trinity, and so is naturally to be worshipped as partaker of the divinity, according to this apocalyptic record. Therefore, for the author of the *ASQ*, the true icons are no longer images of saints and relics, but the corpus of the teachings of the Coptic fathers. The Coptic language is an icon in its own right, without which the revelation of all the teachings of the canons would not be mediated. The Coptic language is thus the vehicle, the spirit, of communion with the fathers *par excellence*.

Finally, for the author of the *ASQ*, who urges his followers to strive to capture the essence of the martyrdom of the fathers, the Cross of Jesus is of no use if their upholding the way of life of the Coptic fathers does not become the yardstick by which orthodoxy is appraised. Here is where the monastery of Qalamūn becomes a cultic shrine by virtue of the spiritual presence of Mary. The supernatural translation of Her relics at the site of the future tomb of Anbā Samuel elicits at once the veneration of the Coptic fathers therein, Anbā Samuel himself included.

Therefore, we can infer from the above that the iconography of the *ASQ* had undergone a refining process at the mystical level. The iconography of the *ASQ* had been spiritualised. It requires no apologetic discourse as to its stance on the veneration of icons. The *ASQ* is devoid of almost all the paraphernalia that caused controversy, as a result of the theodicy that the author advocated. It should be noted that in the *ASQ* the theme of the Jews – as conspirators, accusers, or heretics – is conspicuously absent. However, the theme of the plagues that befell the land of Egypt at the instigation of Moses because of the Pharaoh would not let go of the people of Israel, is re-enacted in the *ASQ* with Anbā Samuel and his followers in the role of Moses and the Israelites. This last feature contrasts sharply with the typical Christian apocalypses. A plausible reason for that might come from the targeted audience of the *ASQ*: it could be said that the *ASQ* was addressing specifically the Christian community of Scetis, which Anbā Samuel had parted with and went on to establish the monastery of Qalamūn.

Compared to the *LSQ*, the *ASQ* is much less a cult of personality. Indeed, there are less miracles that Anbā Samuel performs in the latter. As suggested earlier,

the trajectory backward toward the early founders[20] allowed for the attention to be focused solely upon the spiritual fathers of the Coptic Church. This required of the *ASQ* to solicit in its theology the support of no other icons but the community's spiritual assets. It goes without saying that, in his quality of founder of the community of Qalamūn, Anbā Samuel came short of claiming to have created a new *genre humain*. And that vindication constitutes an iconic asset: the community of Qalamūn itself.

Conversely, the *AZ* could be considered an exercise in "all-encompassing spiritualisation," a bit like in the manners of the visions of Ezekiel. Therefore, its iconography also agrees with the Jewish aniconic religion. The termination of the sacrificial tradition at Jerusalem served fittingly the purpose of the author of the *AZ*. It is obvious that the author wished to do away with the Jewish tradition altogether. The author of the *AZ* pushed the caricature of the Christian and Islamic devotions to the confines of a travesty. Since also we consider the context of the ill-fated warring of his fellow Jews as the working background for composition of the apocalypse, we ought to infer that the author of the *AZ* drew his aniconism from his pragmatic viewpoint, leaving little room to the cultic paraphernalia.

The author of the *AZ* is an adept of some sectarian Jewish mystical traditions, which are conspicuously absent from the Hekhalot literature – probably in opposition to Christian mysticism – but that did emerge in the Middle Ages in the Kabbalistic literature. This may account for the ease with which some themes of non-Jewish origin have pervaded the eschatological scheme of the *AZ*. It is a cross-cultural position that has afforded our author both the awareness of the incongruity in Judaism and the leverage necessary for a series of imaginative parodies of the most salient doctrinal tenets of the opposite faiths. Our author has skilfully re-used the appropriated materials in order to flesh out the apology in his scheme of the apocalyptic scenario. The transfiguration of Jesus is played out in the sequence where the "despicable man" is changed before Zerubbabel's eyes into a "dazzling young man." Like Muḥammed, the heavenly hosts are perplexed by Zerubbabel's stepping in the celestial degrees of revelation.

[20] See discussion in chapter 2: The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.

Bibligraphy.

Alfeyev, H. *The Spiritual World of Isaac the Syrian* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2000).

Al-Munajjid, S. (ed.), Ahmad b. Yahya al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan* (Cairo, 1956).

Al-Qazwīnī Ibn Mājah, Muhammad b. Yazīd, *Kitāb al-Sunan* (*Kitāb al-fitan, bāb* 36), (Cairo: Dar al-Majah, 1998), 4 vols.

Al-Rahmān al-Aᶜzamī, H. (ed.), ᶜAbdallāh b. al-Mubārak, *Kitāb al-zuhd wa-l-raqā'iq* (Beirut: Muhammad 'Afīf al-Zu'bī, 1971).

Al-Rahmān al-A'zamī, H. (ed.), ᶜAbd al-Razzāq b. Humām al-Sann'ānī, *Al-Musannaf* (Johannesburg: Majlis Ilmi, 1970-1972), 10 vols.

Al-Tanahi, M.M. Al-Mubārak b. Muhammad ibn al-Athīr, *al-Nihāya fī gharīb al-hadīth wa'l-athar*, (Cairo: Dar 'Ihya' al-kutub al-araboyyah, 1311), 5 vols.

Al-Tayyib al-Mūsawī al-Gazā'irī (ed.), ᶜAlī b. Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *Tafsīr al-Qummī* (Najaf, 1386-7 H), 2 vols.

Anastassakis, A.N. (tr.), *Vita Prima* Graeca (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975).

Anastos, M.V. "The Argument for Iconoclasm as Presented by the Iconoclastic Council of 754," in *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honour of A.M. Friend Jr.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 177-88.

Anastos, M.V. "The Ethical Theory of Images formulated by the Iconoclasts in 754 and 815," in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 8 (1954), pp. 153-60.

Anderson, D. (tr.), St John of Damascus, *On the Divine Images: Three Apologies Against those who Attack the Divine Images* (New York: St. Vladimir's Seminar Press, 1980).

Arberry, J. (tr.), *The Qoran Interpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).

Arjomand, S.A. "Islamic Apocalypticism in the Classical Period," in B. McGinn (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism: Apocalypticism in Western History and Culture* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 3 vols.

Arnold, T.W. *Painting in Islam* (New York: Dover Publications, 1965).

Arnold, T.W. *The Preaching of Islam* (London: AMS Press, 1974).

Avi-Yonah, M. *Gazetteer of Roman Palestine* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1976).

Bacher, W. "Qirqisani, the Karaite, and his Work on Jewish Sects," in *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 7 (1895), pp. 687-710.

Bagatti, B. *I Monumenti di Emmaus el-Qubeibeh e dei Dintorni* (Jerusalem, 1947).

Bamberger, B. J. "A Messianic Document of the Seventh Century," in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 15 (1940), pp. 425-31.

Banning. H. *Muhammad ibn al-Hanafīya,* (Erlangen:E.Th. Jacob, 1909).

Bartikian, H.M. *Byzantium: Tribute to A.N. Stratos* (Athens: N.A. Stratou, 1986), 2 vols.

Bashear, S. "Early Muslim Apocalyptic Materials on Early Muslim-Byzantine Wars: A Review of Arabic Sources," in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* N.S. 2 (1991), pp. 173-207.

Bashear, S. "Muslim Apocalypses and the Hour: a Case-Study in Traditional Reinterpretation," in *Israel Oriental Studies* 13 (1993), pp. 75-99.

Bashear, S. "The Title 'Fārūq' and its Association with ᶜUmar I," in *Studia Islamica* 72 (1990), pp. 47-78.

The actual Muslim grip on the Temple Mount at Jerusalem is a point at issue. Both Christianity and Islam had claimed in turn to constitute the community of the elect. Both religions have prohibited the Jewish practice of the cult on the sacred site. Therefore, the amalgam of the two usurpers becomes a matter of fact. The titles used here such as the "house of idolatry," the "house of harlotry," "Rome" could fit either religion indiscriminately. And accordingly the author of the *AZ* draws attention upon its obvious corollary, the antichrist, which in the circumstances would perfectly befit either Heraclius or Muḥammad, but probably both. To that end, the author of the *AZ* distances the Jews from this fundamental element of the monotheistic iconography. He set his eschatological vision on the perfection, the intangibility of the mystical liturgy, and the perfection of the Biblical figures such as Michael, Metatron, Shaddai, or Enoch. The iconography of the author of the *AZ* may be characterised as entirely mystical.

Bibligraphy.

The *Apocalypse of Zerubbabel*: this is my provisional translation of the Hebrew text from the edition of I. Levi, "L'Apocalypse de Zorobabel et le Roi de Perse Siroès," in *Revue des Études Juives* 68 (1919), pp. 129-60, and that of the Hebrew text of the "Sefer Zerubbabel" in *Midreshei Geulah* (Tel Aviv: Massada for Bialik Institute, 1943), pp. 71-88, edited by Y. Even-Shmuel.

The *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*: this is my provisional translation of the Arabic text from the edition of J. Zadieh, "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, Supérieur de Deir-el-Qalamoun. Texte Arabe édité et Traduit en français," in *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 20 (1915-17), pp. 374-404.

The *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*: this is my provisional translation of the Greek text from the edition of K. Berger, *Die Griechische Daniel-Diegese. Eine Altkirchliche Apocalypse. Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, SPB 27 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976).

ᶜAbbadi, A.M. *Moslem Sea Power in Egypt and Syria* (Beirut, 1981).

ᶜAbd al-Karim 'Uthman, 'Abd al-Jabbar b. Ahmad al-Hamadhani, al-Qadi, *Tathbīt Dalā'il al-Nubuwwa*, (Beirut, 1966).

ᶜAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak, *Kitāb al-Zuhd wa-l-Raqā'iq* (Malegaon, 1966).

ᶜAbdin, A. (ed.), Maqrizi, *Al-Bayan wa-ᶜl-Iᶜrab* (Alexandria, 1989), 2 vols.

ᶜAdawi, I. & Umar, A. (eds.), Kindi, *Fada'il Misr* (Cairo, 1971).

ᶜAthamina, K. "Some Administrative, Military and Socio-Political Aspects of Early Muslim Egypt," in Y. Lev (ed.), *War and Society in the Eastern Mediterranean 7th – 15th Centuries* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1997), pp. 101-13.

Aaron, D. H. "Shedding Light on God's Body in Rabbinic Midrashim: Reflections on the Theory of a Luminous Adam," in *Harvard Theological Review* 90 (1997), pp. 299-314.

Abbeloos, J.B. & Lamy, T.J. (eds.), *Chronique Ecclesiastique de Barhebræus* (Paris, 1874-77), 3 vols.

Abel, A. "Changements politiques et littérature eschatologique dans Ie monde musulman," in *Studia Islamica*, 2 (1954), pp. 23-43.

Abrahams, I. "The Lost 'Confession' of Samuel," in the *Hebrew Union College Annual* 1 (1924), pp. 377-85.

Adams, W.Y. *Nubia: Corridor to Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

Ahrweiler, H. "L'Asie Mineure et les invasions arabes (VIIe-IXe siècles)," in *Revue Historique* 227 (1962), pp. 1-32.

Alcock, A. (ed. & tr.), *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983).

Alcock, A., "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn," in *Le Muséon* 109 (1996), pp. 321-45.

Al-Dhahabi, M.H. (ed.), ᶜAlī Ibn Ibrāhīm al-Qummī, *al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufassirun* (Cairo: Maktabah Wahbah, 1405), 2 vols.

Alexander, P.J. "The Iconoclastic Council of St. Sophia (815) and its definition," in the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 7 (1953), pp. 37-66.

Bibligraphy.

Conference on the History of Bilād al-Shām (Amman, 1987), vol. 1, pp. 116-124.

Bosworth, C.E. *The Arabs, Byzantium and Iran: Studies in Early Islamic History and Culture* (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1996).

Boulos-Sony, B.M. "La méthode exégetique de Jacques de Saroug," in *Paroles d'Orient* 9 (1979/80), pp. 67-103.

Bousset, W. *The Antichrist Legend: A Chapter in Christian and Jewish Folklore* (Atlanta: Scholar Press, 1999).

Bréhier, L. *Institutions de l'Empire Byzantin* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1976).

Brock, S. *The Luminous Eye: The Spiritual World of St. Ephrem the Syrian* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Studies, 1992).

Brooks, E.W. "Byzantine and Arabs in the Time of Early Abbasids," in *English Historical Review* 15 (1900), pp. 728-47.

Brooks, E.W. "The Arabs in Asia Minor (641-750), From Arabic Sources," in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 18 (1898), pp. 182-208.

Brooks, E.W. "The Campaign of 716-718, from Arabic Sources," in *Journal of the Hellenic Studies* 19 (1899), pp. 19-33.

Brown, P.R.L. *The Cult of the Saint: Its Riseand Function in Late Christianity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1981).

Brown, P.R.L. *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

Budge, E.A.W. (tr.), *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church* (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1928), 4 vols.

Budge, E.A.W. *Coptic Martyrdoms in the Language of Upper Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1914).

Budge, E.A.W. *The History of Alexander the Great Being the Syriac Version, Edited from Five Manuscripts, of the Pseudo-Callisthenes* (Amsterdam: APA-Philo Press, 1976).

Bulliet, R.W. "Conversion to Islam and the Emergence of a Muslim Society," in N. Levtzion (ed.), *Conversion to Islam* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), pp. 30-51, esp. pp. 33-35.

Bulliet, R.W. *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period: An Essay in Quantitative History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

Burrows, M. S. "On the Visibility of God in the Holy Man: A Reconsideration of the Role of the Apa in the Pachomian *Vitae*," in *Vigiliae Chistianae* 41 (1987), pp. 11-33.

Bury, J.B. *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire from the Fall of Irene to the Accession of Basil I (A.D. 802-867)* (London: McMillan & Co., 1912).

Bury, J.B. *History of the Later Roman Empire* (New York: Dover Publication, 1958), vol. 1.

Bury, J.B. *The Late Roman Empire from Arcadius to Irene* (London: Macmillan, 1889), vol. 2.

Busse, H. "The Arab Conquest in Revelation and Politics," in *Israel Oriental Studies* 10 (1983), pp. 14-20.

Butcher, E.L. *The Story of the Church of Egypt* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1897), 2 vols.

Butler, A.J. *The Arab conquest of Egypt and the last years of the Roman dominion*, (Oxford:Clarendon Press, 1978).

Bibligraphy.

Basset, R., (ed.), "Le Synaxaire arabe Jacobite (Redaction Copte), II," in *Patrologia Orientalis* 3 (1909), pp. 245-545.

Bauer, W. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (London: The University of Chicago Press, 1958).

Baynes, N. H. "The Supernatural Defenders of Constantinople," in *Analecta Bollandiana* 67 (1949), pp. 165-77.

Bearman, P., Bianquis, Th., Bosworth, C.E., Donzel E. van, & Heinrichs, W.P. *The Encyclopeadia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978), 11 Vols.

Bekkum W. J. van. *Hebrew Poetry from Late Antiquity: Liturgical Poems of Yehudah. Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998).

Bekkum, W. J. van. "Jewish Messianic Expectations in the Age of Heraclius," in Reinink, G. J. & Stole, B.H. (eds), *The Reign of Heraclius (610-641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp. 95-112.

Berger, D. "Three Typological Themes in Early Jewish Messianism: Messiah Son of Joseph, Rabbinic Calculations, and the Figure of Armilius," in *Journal of the Association of Jewish Studies* 10 (1985), pp. 141-64.

Berger, K. (ed. & tr.), *Die Griechische Daniel-Diegese. Eine Altkirchliche Apocalypse* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1976).

Bialik, H.N. & Ravnitzky, Y.H. (eds.) & W.G. Brandes (tr.), *The Book of Legends: Sefer Ha-Aggadah. Legends from the Talmud and Midrash* (New York: Schocken Books, 1992).

Blachère, R. "Regards sur l'acculturation des Arabo-Musulmans jusque vers 40/661," in *Publications de l'Institut Français d'Études Arabes de Damas* (1975), pp. 1-20.

Black, M. "The Qumran Messiah and Related Beliefs," in *The Scrolls and Christian Origins: Studies in the Jewish Background of the New Testament* (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983), pp. 145-63

Blake, R.P. "La Littérature grecque en Palestine au viiie siècle," in *Le Muséon* 78 (1965), pp. 367-80.

Blankinship, K.Y. *The End of the Jihād State: The Reign of Hishām Ibn ᶜAbd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994).

Blavatsky, H.P. *The Theosophical Glossary* (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1930).

Blichfeldt, J.-O. *Early Mahdism. Politics and Religion in the Formative Period of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985).

Bondi, R.C. *Three Monophysite Christologies: Severus of Antioch, Philoxenus of Mabbug and Jacob of Sarug* (London: Oxford University Press, 1976).

Bonwetzsch, N. (ed.), *Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati* (Berlin: Philologisch-historische Klass, 1910).

Bosworth, C.E. "A Note on *taᶜarrub* in Early Islam," in *Journal of Semitic Studies* 34 (1989), pp. 355-62.

Bosworth, C.E. "The Byzantine defence system in Asia Minor and the first Arab incursions," in Bakhit, M.A. (ed.), *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on the History of Bilād al-Shām During the Early Islamic Period up to 40 A.H./A.D. 640. The Fourth International*

Bibliography.

Canard, M. "Les expeditions Arabes contre Constantinopole dans l'histoire et dans la légende," in *Journal Asiatique* 208 (1926), pp. 80-102.

Canart, P. "Nouveaux récits du moine Anastase," in *Actes du XIIe congrès international d'études Byzantines II*, (Belgrade: Beograd, 1964), pp. 263-71.

Canart, P. "Une nouvelle anthologie monastique: le *Vaticanus graecus* 2592," in *Le Muséon* 75 (1962), pp. 109-29.

Carpenter, M.W. "Representing Apocalypse: Sexual Politics and the Violence of Revelation," in Dellamora, R. (ed.), *Post-modern Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsynania Press, 1995), pp. 107-35.

Casanova, P. *Mohammed et la fin du monde: Etudes critique sur l'Islam primitif* (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1911).

Cassel, P.S. *Magyarische Alterthümer* (Berlin: Veit, 1848).

Cecilia, A. A. "El Libro de Zorobabel," in *Sefarad* 61 (2001), pp. 243-58.

Chabot, J.-B. (ed.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien, Patriarche Jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)* (Paris, 1901), vol. 2 & 3.

Chabot, J.B. *Chronicon anonymum ad A.C.. 1234*, (Louvain:, 1937).

Charanis, P. "Ethnic Changes in the Byzantine Empire in the Seventh Century," in *DOP* 13 (1959), pp. 23-44.

Charles, R.H. (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiou* (Oxford: Text and Translation Society, 1916).

Charlesworth, J. H. (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 2 vols.

Cohen, G.D. *Messianic Postures of Ashkenazim and Sepharadim* (New York: Leo Baeck Institute, 1967).

Colbert E.P. (tr.), *The Martyrs of Córdoba (850-859): A Study of the Sources* (Washington: Catholic University of America, 1962).

Collins, JJ. *Daniel: A Commentary on the book of Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

Collins, JJ. *Daniel: A Commentary on the book of Daniel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

Constantelos, D.J. "The Moslem Conquest of the Near East as Revealed in the Greek Sources of the Seventh and Eighth Centuries," in *Byzantion* 42 (1972), pp. 325-57.

Conybeare, F.C. *The Key of Truth, a Manual of the Paulician Church in Armenia* (Oxford, 1898).

Cook, D. "Muslim Apocalyptic and *Jihād*," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1995), pp. 66-104.

Cook, D. "Muslim Apocalyptic and Jihād," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1996), pp. 66-104.

Cook, D. *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002).

Cook, D.B. "An Early Muslim Daniel Apocalypse," in *Arabica* 159 (2002), pp. 55-96.

Cook, M. "An Early Islamic Apocalyptic Chronicle," in *JNES* 52 (1993), pp. 25-29

Coope, J.A. *The Martyrs of Córdoba. Community and Family Conflict in an Age of Mass Conversion* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995).

Corbin, H. & tr. by Manheim, R. & Morris, J.W. *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis* (London, 1983).

Bibligraphy.

Frye, R.N. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), vol. 4.

Fyzee, A.A.A. *A Shī'īte Creed* (Calcutta, 1942).

Dagron, G. *Emperor et Prètre: Étude sur le 'Césaropagisme' Byzantin* (Paris, 1996).

Gil, J. (ed.), *Corpus scriptorum mozarabicorum* (Madrid: CSIC, 1973), 2 vols.

Gil, M. *A History of Palestine 634-1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

Ginsberg, L. *The Legends of the Jews* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), 8 vols.

Goeje, M.J. de (ed.), Al-Balādhurī: *Futūh al-Buldān* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1866), pp.137-38.

Goitein, S.D. "The Sanctity of Jerusalem and Palestine in Early Islam," in *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968).

Goitein, S.D. *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, (Leiden:E.J. Brill, 1968).

Goldziher, I. *Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981).

Golitzin, A. "'The Demons Suggest an Illusion of God's Glory in a Form:' Controversy over the Divine Body and Vision of Glory in Some Late Fourth-, Early Fifth-Century Monastic Literature," in *Studia Monastica* 44 (2002) pp. 13-43.

Goodenough, E.R. *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1965), vol. 5 & 12.

Gotthiel, R. "A Christian Bahira Legend," in *Zeitschrift fur Assyriologie und Verwandte Gebieti* 13 (1898), pp. 189-242.

Gouillard, J. "L'héresie dans l'Empire byzantin des origins au XIIe siècle," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965), pp. 299-324.

Graetz, H. *Volkstümliche Geschichte der Juden* (Leipzig: B. Harz, 1860-1878), 3 vols.

Graetz, H. *Geschichte der Juden*: von den ältesten Zeiten bis aus die Gegenwar (Leipzig: Oskar Leiner, 1909), vol. 5

Green, T.M. *The City of Moon God : Religious traditions of Harran* (Leiden :E. J. Brill, 1992).

Grierson, P. *Byzantine Coins* (London: Methuen & Co, 1982).

Grierson, P. *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coin in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore Collection II: Phocas to Theodosius II I(602-717)* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1968), vol. 1

Grierson, P. *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection and in the Whittemore* Collection, III: *Leo III to Nicephorus III, 717-1081* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1973).

Griffith, S.H. (tr.), *A Treatise on the Veneration of the Holy Icons* (Louvain: Peeters, 1997).

Griffith, S.H. "Disputing with Islam in Syriac: The Case of the Monk of Bêt Ḥālê and a Muslim Emir," in *Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies* 3 (2000).

Griffith, S.H. "Disputes with Muslims in Syriac Christian Texts," in B. Lewis & F. Niewöhner (eds.), *Religionsgespräche im Mittelalter* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1992)

Bibligraphy.

Cormack, R. "The Arts during the Period of Iconoclasm," in A. Bryer & J. Herrin (eds.), *Iconoclasm* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 1977), pp. 35-44

Cormack, R. *Painting the Soul, Icons, Death Masks and Shrouds* (London: Reacktion Books, 1997).

Crone, P. & Cook, M. *Hagarism. The Making of the Islamic World* (Camvridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

Crone, P. "The First-Century Concept of *hijra*," in *Arabica* 41 (1994), pp. 352-87.

Cutler, A. "The Ninth-century Spanish Martyrs' Movement and the Origins of Western Christian Missions to the Muslims," in the *Muslim World* 55 (1965), pp. 321-39.

Dagron, G. "Juadaïser," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991), pp. 359-80.

Dan, J. *The Hebrew Story in the Middle Ages* (Jerusalem: Book Gallery, 1974).

Darmsteter, J. *Le Mahdi depuis l'origine de l'Islam jusqu'a nos jours* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1885).

Davidson, I. *Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1924).

Dawes, E. & Baynes, N.H. *Three Byzantine Saints. Comtemporary Biographies from the Greek* (New York: St Vladimir's Semiray Press, 1996)

Dayan, M. *Hammath-Tiberias: Early Synagogues and the Hellenistic and Roman Remains, Final Excavation Report* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1983), vol. 1.

de Boor, C. *Georgii Monachi Chronicon* (Leipzig: Lipsiae, 1904), vol. 2.

de Goeje, M.J. Al-Tabarī, *Tarikh al-rasul wa'l-mulūk*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1879-1901).

de Lange, N. *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

Denis, A.-M. *Introduction aux Pseudépigraphes Grecs d'Ancient Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970), pp. 309-14.

Dennis, G.T. & Gamillscheg, E. (eds & trs.), *Das Strategikon des Maurikias* (Vienna: Verlag der Osterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981).

Dindorf, G. (ed.), Procopius of Caesarea, *The Secret History* (Bonn: Copus Scriptores Historiae Byzantinae, 1838).

Dodd, E.C. "The Image of the Word," in *Berytus* 18 (1969), pp. 35-79.

Dodd, E. C. & Khairallah, S. (2 vols.) *The Image of the Word: A Study of Qur'anic Verses in Islamic Architecture* (Beirut: American University of Beirut, 1981).

Donner, F.M. "Sources of Islamic Conceptions of War," in J.M. Kelsey & J.T. Johnson (eds.), *Just War and Jihad* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

Donner, F.M. *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981).

Draguet, R. (ed.), *Les formes syriaques de la matière de l'Histoire Lausiaque* CSCO 398 (Louvain: CSCO, 1978), vol. 2.

Durant, W. *The Story of Civilization* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1950), vol. 4, p. 468.

Dussaud, *Histoire et religion des Noseiris* (Paris: Bouillon, 1900).

Bibligraphy.

Griffith, S.H. "Free Will in Christian Kalām: Mōshē bar Kēphā against the teachings of the Muslims," in *Le Muséon* 100 (1987), pp. 151-4.

Griffith, S.H. "Images, Images and Christian Icons: A Moment in the Christian/Muslim Encounter in the early Islamic Times," in P. Canivet & I.-P. Rey-Coquais (eds.), *La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam. Actes du colloque international* (Damascus: IFEAD, 1992), pp. 121-38.

Griffith, S.H. "Stephen of Ramlah and the Christian Kerygma in Arabic in Ninth-Century Palestine," in *JEH* 36 (1985), pp. 23-45..

Griffith, S.H. "Theodore Abū Qurrah's Arabic tract on the Christian practice of venerating images," in *JAOS* 105 (1985), pp. 53-73.

Griveau, R. "Notes sur la lettre de Pisuntios," in *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 19 (1914), pp. 441-443.

Guillaume, A. "Where was Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa?" in *Al-Andalus* 18 (1953), pp. 323-36.

Guillaume, A. *The Life of Muhammad* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955).

Guilmont, J.-F. "Paternité et mediation du fondateur d'Ordre," in *Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique* 40 (1964), pp. 393-426.

Gunduz, S. *The Knowledge of Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Gutas, D. *Greek Though, Arabic Culture* (London: Routledge, 1998).

Gutman, S., Netzer, E., & Yeivin, Z. "Susiya, Khirbet," in M. Avi-Yonah & E. Stern (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Archeological Excavations in the Holy Land* (Englewood-Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1975), vol. 4, pp. 1126-28.

Haldon, J. & Kennedy, H. "The Arab-Byzantine Frontier in the Eight and Ninth Centuries," in *Zbornik Radova Vizantoloshki Institut* 19 (1980), pp. 79-116.

Hansberry, W.L. *Pillars in Ethiopian History* (Washigton: Howard University Press, 1981).

Hansbury, M. (tr.), *Jacob of Serug on the Mother of God* (Crestville: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998).

Hanson, P.D. *The Down of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

Harris, J.R. (ed.), *The Gospel of the Twelve Apostles together with the Apocalypses of each one of them* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900).

Helderman, J. "Die Sprache der Ruhe: Blike in die Geschichte des Christlich-koptischen Agypten: Johannes von Schmun, Samuel von Qalamun und das Triadon," in *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 36 (1997), pp. 105-19.

Henze, M. *The Syriac Apocalypse of Daniel. Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001).

Hill, D.R. *The Termination of Hostility in the Early Arab Conquests A.D. 634 - 656* (London: Luzac & Company, 1971).

Himmelfarb, M. "*Sefer Zerubbabel*" in Stern, D., & Mirsky, M.J., (eds.), *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 67-90.

Hinds, M. "Kufan Political Alignments and their Background in the Mid-Seventh Century AD.," in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 2 (1971), pp. 346-67.

Hitti, P. *The Origins of the Islamic State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1916).

Bibligraphy.

Eastmond, A. & James, L. (eds.), *Icons and Word. The Power of Images in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003).

Edershein, A. *The History of the Jewish Nation after the Destruction of Jerusalem under Titus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979).

Eliade, M. *Patterns in Comparative Religions* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1958).

Eliade, M. *The Sacred and the Profane. The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1959), pp. 20-23.

Eliyahu, A. "Muslim and Christian Literature in Praise of Jerusalem," in *The Jerusalem Cathedra* 1 (1981), pp. 187-189.

Eliyahu, A, "An Arabic Book on the 'Merits of Jerusalem'," in *Tarbiz* 30 (1960), pp. 209-214.

Emmerson R.K., *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Washington: University of Washington Press, 1981), pp. 21-33.

Epstein, I. *The Babylonian Talmud* (London: The Soncino Press, 1935), vol. 2.

Even-Shmuel, Y., *Midreshey Ge'ullah* (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1954).

Evetts, B. (ed. & tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris, 1904), 4 vols., from *Patrologia Orientalis* vol. 1, 5 & 10.

Evetts, B.T.A. *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries. Attributed to Abū Sālih the Armenian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

Faris, N. A. (tr.), Hishām Ibn al-Kalbi, *Kitāb al-Asnām* (The Book of Idols) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952).

Fiey, J.-M. *Assyrie Chrétienne* (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1965-68), 3 vols.

Flusin, B. "Démons et sarrasins. L'auteur et le propos des Diègèmata stèriktika d'Anastase le Sinaïte," in *Travaux et Mémoires* 11 (1991), pp. 381-409.

Flusin, B. *Saint Anastase le Perse et l'Histoire de la Palestine au début du VIIe siècle* (Paris: Editions du Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, 1992), 2 vols.

Fossum, J. "The Adorable Adam of the Mystics and the Rebuttals of the Rabbis," in P. Schäfer (ed.), *Geschichte - Tradition - Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel, Band I: Judentum*, (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1996), pp. 529-39.

Franceschini, A. & Weber, R. (eds.), *Itinerarium Egeriae* (Turnhout: Corpus Christianorum, 1958).

Frend, W.H.C. *The Rise of the Monophysites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

Friedlaender, I. "Jewish-Arabic Studies," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 2 (1911-12), pp. 486-87.

Friedlander, I. "Jewish-Arabic Studies," in *Jewish Quarterly Review* 2 (1911), pp. 481-516.

Friedmann M. (ed.), *Sifrē to Deuteronomy* (Vienna, 1880)

Friedmann, Y. "Finality of Prophethood in Sunni Islam," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam,* Vol. 7 (1986) pp. 177-215.

Friedmann, Y. *Prophecy Continuous : Aspects of Ahmadi religious thought and its medieval background* (Berkeley: University of California, 1989).

Bibligraphy.

Hodgson, M.G.S. "How did the Early Shī'a become Sectarian?" in *JAOS* 75 (1955), pp. 1-13.

Hurst, L.D. *The Epitle to the Hebrews: Its Background of Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

Idel, M. "Enoch is Metatron," in *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990), pp. 220-40.

Iser, W. *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978).

Iskander, J. "Islamization in Medieval Egypt: The Copto-Arabic 'Apocalypse of Samuel' as a Source for the Social and Religious History of Medieval Copts," in *Medieval Encounters* 4 (1998), pp. 219-27.

Jafri, S.H.M. *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979).

Jastrow, M. *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Babli, Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature* (New York: The Judaica Press, 1989), 2 vols.

Jeffery, A. "Ghevond's Text of the Correspondence between 'Umar II and Leo III," in *Harvard Theological Review* 37 (1944), pp. 269-332.

Jellinek, A. (ed.), *Bet ha-Midrasch* (Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrmann, 1938), 4 vols.

Jones, A.H.M. "Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?" in *JTS* 10 (1959), pp. 280-98.

Juhnboll, G.H.A. "The *qurrā'* in Early Islamic History," in *JESHO* 16 (1973), pp. 113-29.

Kaegi, W.E. "Initial Byzantine Reactions to the Arab Conquest," in *Church History* 38 (1969), pp. 139-49.

Kaegi, W.E. "Observations on Warfare between Byzantium and Umayyad Syria," in M. A. Bakhit & R. Schick (eds.), *The History of Bilad al-Sham during the Umayyad Period, Fourth International Conference. 24-29 Octobre 1987: Amman, Proceedings of the Third Symposium* (Amman: University of Jordan and Yarmuk University, 1989), vol. 2, pp. 49-70.

Kaegi, W.E. "Variable Rates of Change in the Seventh Century," in F.M. Clover & R.S. Humphreys (eds.), *Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), pp. 191-208.

Kessler, C. "'Abd al-Malik's Inscription in the Dome of the Rock: a Reconsideration," in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1970), pp. 2-14.

Khadduri, M. *The Islamic Law of Nations: Shaybani's Siyar* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1966).

Khalidi T. (tr. & ed.), *The Muslim Jesus: Sayings and Stories in Islamic Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Khan, M.M. (tr.), Sahih al-Bukharī *The Book of Al-Maghâzi* (Riyadh: Al-Saadawi Publications, 1996).

Khoury, R.G. *Chretomathie de Papyrologie Arabe. Documents relatifs à la vie privée, sociale et administrative dans les premiers siècles islamiques* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993).

King, G.R.D. "Islam, Iconoclasm, and the Declaration of Doctrine," in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 48 (1985), pp. 267-77.

Kister, M. "Land property and jihād," in *JESHO* 34 (1991), pp. 270-311.

Bibligraphy.

Kister, M.J. "'A Booth like the Booth of Moses...' a Study of an Early *Hadīth*," in *BSOAS* 25 (1962), pp. 150-55

Kister, M.J. "You shall Only set out for Three Mosques," in *Le Muséon* 82 (1969), pp. 173-96.

Koestler, A. *The Thirteenth Tribe: The Khazar Empire and its Heritage* (New York: Random House, 1976).

Kotter, B. (ed.), *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1973).

Kraemer, C.J. *Excavations at Nessana 3: Non-Literary Papyri* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958).

Kravari, V., Lefort, J. & Morrisson, C. (eds.), *Hommes et Richesses dans l'Empire Byzantin. VIIIe-XVe siècle* (Paris: Réalités Byzantines, 1992).

Krehl. L. & Juynboll, Th.W. (eds.), Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Bukhārī, *al-Jami' al-Sahīh*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1862-1908), 4 vol.

Krenkow, F. "The Book of Strife," in *Islamic Culture* 3 (1929), pp. 561-68.

Krüger, P. "Le caractère monophysite de la troisième lettre de Jacques de Saroug," in *l'Orient Syrien* 6 (1961), pp. 301-8.

Kubiak, W. *Al-Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Cairo: American University Press, 1987).

Kurtz, E. & Drexl, F. (eds.), *Michaelis Pselli Scripta Minora* (Milan: Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuoro, 1936), vol. 1.

Ladner, G.B. "Origins and Significance of the Byzantine Iconoclastic Controversy," in *Medieval Studies* 2 (1940), pp. 127-49.

Lammens, H. "A propos d'un Colloque entre le patriarche Jean 1er et 'Amr al-'Ast," in *Journal Asiatique* 13 (1919), pp. 97-110.

Lammens, H. *Mélanges de la faculté orientale de Beyrouth* (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1913), 4 vols.

Lampe, G.W.H. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (New York: Clarendon, 1961).

Lane, E.W., *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (Beirut: Librarie du Liban, 1968). 8 vols.

Landman, I. & Cohen, S. (eds.), *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia. The seven-branched light*, (New York, Universal Jewish encyclopedia, 1944). 10 vols.

Lapidus, I.M. "The Conversion of Egypt to Islam," in *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972), pp. 248-62.

Lazarus-Yafeh H., "Some Neglected Aspects of Medieval Muslim Polemics against Christianity," in *Harvard Theological Review* 89 (1996), pp. 61-84.

Le Strange, G. *Al-Muqaddasi: Description of Syria, including Palestine* (New York: AMS Press, 1971).

Leroy, J. *Moines et Monastères du Proche-Orient* (Paris: Horizons de France, 1957).

Levi, I. "Apocalypse de Zorobabel et le roi de Perse Siroès," in *REJ* 68 (1914), pp. 131-44; 69 (1919), pp. 108-128; 70 (1920), pp. 57-65.

Lévi, I. *Le ravissement du Messie à sa naissance et autres essais.* Textes choisis et présentés par Evelyne. Patlagean (Paris: Peeters Publishers, 1994).

Levy-Rubin, M. (tr.), *The Continuato of the Samaritan Chronicle of Abū l-Farh al-Sāmirī al-Danafī* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 2002).

Bibliography.

Lewis, B. "An Apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History," in *BSOAS* 13 (1950), pp. 308-38.

Lewis, B. *The Origins of Ismā'īlism: a Study of the Historical background of the Fatimid Caliphate* (New York: AMS Press, 1975).

Lieberman, S. "Metatron, the Meaning of his Name and his Functions," in I. Gruenwald (ed.), *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden-Koeln: E.J. Brill, 1980), pp. 235-41.

Lightfoot J.B. & Harmer, J.R. (eds.), *The Apostolic Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994).

Linder, A. *The Jews in Roman Imperial Legislation* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987).

MacCoull, L.S.B. "The Strange Death of Coptic Culture," in *Coptic Church Review* 10 (1989), pp. 35-45.

MacCoull, L.S.B. "Three Cultures under Arab Rule: The Fate of Coptic," in *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 27 (1985), pp. 61-70.

Macler, F. "Apocalypses Apocryphes de Daniel, publiée, traduite et annotée" in *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 33 (1896), pp. 37-55; 163-76; 288-319.

Macler, F. "Les apocalypses apocryphes de Daniel, IV" in *RHR* 49 (1904), pp. 265-305.

Macler, F. *Histoire d'Heraclius par l'éveque Sébeos. Traduite de l'Arménien et Annotée* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1904).

Madelung, W. "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Hims in the Umayyad Age," in *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31 (1986), pp. 141-85.

Madelung, W. " Political Horoscopes relating to Late 9th Century 'Alids'," in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 36, 1977, pp. 247-275.

Madelung, W. "The Sufyānī between Tradition and History," in *Studia Islamica* 63 (1986), pp. 5-48.

Mango, C. & Scott, R. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

Mango, C. "A Forged Inscription of the Year 781," in *Zbornik Radova Vizantinoloshkog Institute* 8 (1963), pp. 201-07.

Mango, C. *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

Martin, E.J. *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy* (London: The MacMillan Co., 1978).

Martinez, F.J. *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius* PhD Thesis (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1985), 2 vols.

Mas'ūd al-'Ayyāshī, M. b., *Tafsīr*, (ed.) Hāshim al-Rasūlī al-Mahallātī (Beirut, 1991), vol. 2.

McCormack, M. *The Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce AD 300-900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

McGinn, B. *Antichrist: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (San Franscisco: Harper San Franscisco, 1994).

Meinardus, O.F.A. *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1992).

Meyendorff, J. *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1969).

Bibligraphy.

Meyendorff, J. *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions: the Church, 450-680 AD* (Creswood: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1989).

Meyer, R.T. (tr.), Palladius, *The Lausiac History* (New York: Newman Press, 1964).

Miarcovich, M. (ed.), *Hippolytus Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986).

Migne, J.-P. *Patrologia Graeca* (Paris: Garnier, 1857-1866).

Mitchell, S. *Anatolia. Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor. The Rise of the Church* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), vol. 2.

Monferrer Sala, J. P. "Apologética racionalista" de Aba Qurrah en el *Maymar fi wu Püd al-Haliq wa-l-dín al-qawm* II/2,12-14," in *Anales del Seminario de Historia de la Filosofía* 22 (2005), pp. 41-56.

Morray-Jones, C. R. A. "Hekhalot Literature and Talmudic Tradition: Alexander's Three Test Cases," in *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 22 (1991), pp. 1-39.

Mowinckel, S. *He That Cometh: The Messiah Concept in the Old Testament and Later Judaism* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1954).

Muhammad, A. Fahmī (ed.), Al-Shahrastānī *Kitāb al-Milal wa 'l-Nihal* (Cairo: Maktabah Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi , 1941), 2 vols.

Murray, R. "Some Themes and Problems of Early Syriac Angelology," in Lavenant, R. (ed.), *V Symposium Syriacum 1988*, (Rome: Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1990), pp. 143-53.

Murray, R. *Symbols of Church and Kingdom: A Study in Early Syriac Christianity* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

Nau, F. "Le texte grec des récits sur les Pères du Sinaï," in *Oriens Christianus* 2 (1902), pp. 58-87.

Nau, F. "Methodius – Clement – Andronicus..." in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-71.

Nau, F. "Note sur l'Apocalypse de Samuel," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 405-07.

Nau, F. "Un Colloque du Patriarche Jean avec l'Emir des Agaréens et Faits Divers des Années 712 à 716," in *Journal Asiatique* 11(1915), pp. 225-79.

Nau, F. "Révélations et Légendes. Méthodius. – Clément. – Andronicus," in *Journal Asiatique* 9 (1917), pp. 415-7.

Nau, F. *Les Arabes Chrétiens de Mésopotamie et de Syrie du VIIe au VIIIe siècle* (Paris: Cahiers de la société asiatique, 1933).

Newman, A.H. *A Manual of Church History* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1900-1903), vol. 2.

Newman, N.A. (ed.), *The Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue: a Collection of Documents from the First Three Islamic Centuries* (Hatfield: Interdisciplinary Biblical Research Institute, 1993).

Noth, A. *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition* (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1994).

Noth, A. *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: a Source-Critical Study* (Princeton, 1994).

Orlandi T. *Vita dei Monaci Phif e Longino* (Milan: Cisalpino-Golliardica, 1975).

Palmer, A. *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993), pp. 222-42.

Patai, R. *The Messiah Texts* (New York: Avon, 1979).

Payne, R. *The History of Islam* (New York: Barns & Noble Books, 1992).

Bibligraphy.

Pelikan, J. *The Spirit of Eastern Christendom (600-1700)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

Pereira, M.F.M.E. *Vida do Abba Samuel* (Lisbonne, 1894).

Peterson, T.C. "The Paragraph Mark in Coptic Illuminated Ornament," in D.E. Miner (ed.), *Studies in Art and Literature for Bella da Costa Greene* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 310-2.

Pines, S. "Notes on Islam and on Arabic Christianity and Judaeo-Christianity," in *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 4 (1984), pp. 135-52

Pines, S. *The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source* (Jerusalem: The Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1966).

Raasch, J. "The Monastic Concept of Purity of Heart and Its Sources," in *Studia Monastica* 11 (1969) pp. 269-314.

Rabinovitz, Z.M. (ed.), *The Liturgical Poems of Rabbi Yannai according to the Triennial Cycle of the Pentateuch and the Holidays* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1985-7), 2 vols.

Reinink, G.J. "Alexandre et le dernier empereur du monde: les développements du concept de la royauté chrétienne dans les sources syriaques du septième siècle," in Harf-Lancner, L., Kappler, C. & Suard, F. (eds.), *Alexandre le Grand dans les literatures occidentals et Proche-Orientales, Actes du Colloque de Paris 27-29 novembre 1997* (Paris: Université Paris X-Nanterre, 1999), pp. 149-55.

Reinink, G.J. "Heraclius the New Alexander: Apocalyptic Prophecies During the Reign of Heraclius," in G.J. Reinink & B.H. Stole (eds.), *The Reign of Heraclius (610-641): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp. 81-94.

Robinson, N. *Discovering the Qur'ān* (London: SCM Press, 1996).

Rodkinson, M.L. *The History of the Talmud: from the time of its formation, about 200 BC., up to the present time* (Boston: The Talmud Society, 1918).

Rosenberg, R.A. "The Slain Messiah in the Old Testament," in *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 99 (1987), pp. 259-61.

Rosenthal, F. *History of the Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968)

Rousseau, P. *Ascetics, Authority, and the Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

Safrai, S. "Das Zeitalter der Mischna und Talmuds (70-640)," in H.H. Ben-Sasson, (ed.), *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes: Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (München: Beck, 1994), pp. 404-20.

Sahas, D.J. *John of Damascus on Islam: the Heresy of the Ishmaelites* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972), pp. 68-74.

Sandler, E. *The Icon, Image of the Invisible* (San Francisco: Oakwood Publications, 1993).

Schaff P. & Wace, H. (eds.), *The Seventh Ecumenical Councils of the Undivided Church* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1955), p. 540.

Schreckenberg, H. & Schubert, K. *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).

Severus ibn al-Muqaffa in B. Evetts (tr.), *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1904).

Bibligraphy.

Shaban, M.A. "Conversion to Early Islam," in N. Levtzion (ed.), *Conversion to Islam* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1979), pp. 24-29.

Shaban, M.A. *Islamic History. New Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971).

Sharf, A. *Byzantine Jewry: from Justinian to the Fourth Crusade* (London: Routlesge & Kegan, 1971).

Sharon, M. *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palestinae* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1998), vol. 2.

Singer, I. (ed.), *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1901-06), 12 vols.

Sivan, E. *Radical Islam: Medieval Theology and Modern Politics* (Yale: Yale University Press 1990).

Sivan, E. "The holy war tradition in Islam," *ORBIS* 42 (1998), pp. 171-194.

Smith, R.P. *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxford: Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1879-1901), 2 vols.

Starr, J. "An Eastern Christian Sect: the Athinganoi," in *Harvard Theological Review* 29 (1936), pp. 93-106.

Starr, J. "Le movement messianique au debut du VIII siècle," in *REJ* 102 (1937), pp. 81-92.

Starr, J. *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire 641-1204* (Athens: Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jarbucher, 1939).

Stenschneider, M. "Apocalypsen mit to polemischer Tendenz," in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenliindischen Gessellschaft* 28 (1874), pp. 352-367.

Stuhlmueller, C. *The Collegeville Pastoral Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1996).

Sukenik, E.L. *The Ancient Synagogue of Beth Alpha* (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1932).

Schwartz E. & Mommsen T. (eds.), Eusebios, *Historia Ecclesiatica* (Leipzig, 1909).

Talbi, M. *L'émirat Aghlabide 184-296/800-909: histoire politique* (Paris: Librairie d'Amériques et d'Orient, Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1966).

Tardieu, M. "Sâbiens coraniques et sâbiens de Harrân," in *Journal Asiatique* 274 (1986), pp. 1-44.

Taylor, J. *Christians and the Holy Places* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Taylor, J.H. *Egypt and Nubia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

Taylor, V. *The Gospel According to St. Mark* (London: Macmillan & co., 1952).

The Holy Bible, New International Version (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984).

Thomson, R. W. "The Formation of the Armenian Literary Tradition," in N.G. Garsoian, T.F. Mathews and R.W. Thomson (eds.), *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period.* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, 1982), pp. 135-50.

Tibawi, A.L. *Jerusalem: Its Place in Islam and Arab History* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1969).

Tischendorff, K. von. *Apocalypses Apocryphae* (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1866).

Torrey, C.C. (ed.), Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh Misr wa-Akhbariha* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1920).

Bibligraphy.

Wolf K.B. (tr.), *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain* (Liverpool:Liverpool University Press, 1990).

Wolf K.B., "Muḥammad as Antichrist in Ninth-Century Córdoba," in M.D. Meyerson & E.D. English (eds.), *Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Medieval and Early Modern Spain* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000).

Woodward, G.R. & Mattingly, H. (eds. & tr.), *Barlaam and Ioasaph* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914).

Woude, A.S. van der. "χριω κτλ. VI. Rabbinic Writings," in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* 9 (1974), pp. 517-20

Wright, W. *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: The British Museum, 1870-72), 3 vols.

Wustenfeld, F. (ed.), Y. Yāqūt b. 'Abdallah al-Hamawī, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, (Leipzig, 1866-70), 6 vols.

Ya'ari, A. *Igrot Eretz Yisrael* (Jerusalem: Masada, 1971).

Yahalom, J. & Sokoloff, M. *Jewish Palestinian Aramaic Poetry from Late Antiquity*, (Jerusalem: Book Gallery, 1999).

Yassif, E. *Sefer ha-Zikronot hu' Divrey ha-Yamim le-Yerahme'el* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2001).

Zaborowski, J.R. "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamun," in *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), pp. 100-115

Zadieh, J. "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de deir-el-Qalamoun," in *ROC* 20 (1915-17), pp. 374-404.

Zakkār, S. (ed.), Nu 'aym b. Hammād, *Kitāb al-Fitan* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993).

Zakkar, S. (ed.), Nu'aym ibn Hammad al-Marwazi, *Kitāb al-Fitan* (Mecca: al-Maktaba al-Tijariya, 1991).

Zekiyan, B.L. "*Eliše* as Witness of the Ecclesiology of the Early Armenian Church," in *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period.* (Washington: Dombarton Oaks Symposium, 1982).

Zervos, G.T. "Apocalypse of Daniel: A New Translation & Introduction," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1983), vol. 1, pp. 755-70.

Zimmerman, O.J. (transl.), Gregory, *Dialogues* (Washington: Fathers of the Church, 1959).

Bibligraphy.

Toubert, P. "La part du grand domaine dans le decollage économique de l'Occident (VIIIe-Xe siècles), in Higounet, C. (ed.), *La Croissance agricole du haut Moyen Age* (Auch: Flaran X, 1990), pp. 53-86.

Treadgold, W. *The Byzantine Revival 780-842* (Standford: Standford University Press, 1988).

Trimingham, J.S. *Christian among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times* (London: Longman Group Limited, 1979)

Trombley, F.R. "The Arabs in Anatolia and the Islamic Law of War (*fiqh al-jihād*) Seventh-Tenth Centuries," in *Al-Masāq* 16 (2004), pp. 147-61.

van Bekkum, W.J. "Jewish Messianic Expectations in the Age of Heraclius," in G.J. Reinink & B.H. Stole (eds.), *The Reign of Heraclius (610-41): Crisis and Confrontation* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), pp. 95-112;

van Lent, J. "The Nineteen Muslim Kings in Coptic Apocalypses," in *Parole de l'Orient* 25 (2000), pp. 643-93.

Vasiliev, A.A. "The Iconoclastic Edict of the Caliph Yazid II, A.D. 721," in *DOP* 9-10 (1956), pp. 23-47.

Vasiliev, A.A. *Logos tou Kyriou hemon Iesou Christou peri tes antilogias tou diabolou* (Moscow, 1893).

Veilleux, A. (tr.), *The Life of Saint Pachomius and his Disciples* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1980), vol. 1

Veilleux, A. "Holy Scripture in the Pachomian Koinonia," in *Monastic Studies* 10 (1974), pp. 143-53.

Vincent, L.-H. "Un sanctuaire dans la region de Jericho, la synagogue de Na'aran," in *Revue Biblique* 65 (1961), pp. 163-77.

Watt, M.W. "The Conception of *īmān* in Islamic theology," in *Der Islam* 43 (1967), pp. 1-10.

Weinberger, L.J. *Jewish Hymnography. A Literary History* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1998).

Welch, A. "Epigraphs as Icons: The Role of the Written Word in Islamic Art," in J. Gutmann (ed.), *The Image and the Word* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977), pp. 63-74.

Wensinck, M.C.A.J. *The Muslim Creed: Its Genesis and Historical Development* (London: Frank Cass, 1932).

Wertheimer, S.A. *Batey Midrashot* (Jerusalem: Ktav wa-Sefer, 1980), 2 vols.

Whitby, M. & Whitby, M. (tr.), *Chronicon Paschale, 284-628, AD* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989).

Wieder, N. "'Sanctuary' as a Metaphor for Scripture," in *JJS* 8 (1957), pp. 165-75.

Wieder, N. "The Doctrine of the Two Messiahs among the Karaites," in *JJS* 6 (1953) 14–23.

Wilkinson J. *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1977).

Wilkinson, J. *From Synagogue to Church: The Traditional Design, Its Beginning, Its Definition, Its End* (London: Routeledge, 2002).

Winkelmann, F. & Brandes, W. (eds.), *Quellen zur Geschichte des Frühen Byzanz (4.-9. Jahrhundert): Bestand und Probleme* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1990).

Wittow, M. *The Making of Byzantium, 600-1025* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

Appendix 1: Translation of The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel.

Narration concerning the days of the Antichrist, how he will come to be, and concerning the Endtime.

1- 1 According to the God-inspired voice which says: "Whenever you hear of wars and rumours of wars, nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, (there will be) earthquakes, plagues, and deviation of stars," 2 then the thorn-bush which holds back the sons of Agar will dry out. 3 And the nations of the great Babylon and the three sons of Agar will go forth. 4 The first of them (is) by name Wali, the second Axiaphar, and the third Morphassar.

2- 1 And Ishmael will come down to the region of the swift road. 2 And he will fix his boundary at Chalcedon, opposite Byzantium . 3 One of the three sons of Agar will come down to the southern city *Antioch, Anatolia of the Iberians*, the regions of *Thrakesion* and *Smyrna* up to the Seven-hilled (city). 4 And he will shed the Romans' blood. 5 The second one will come to the *district of Persia* and the land of *Galilee*, to the edge of *Armenia*, and the city of *Trebizond*. 6 And he will come onto the part of the *land of the Meropes*. 7 And he will massacre (by) reducing to pieces (all) the male children from two up to three years old. 8 And he will deliver many to the sword. 9 The third one will come down to the regions of the north and the city of *Amasia* and *Synopolis*, and *Zalikos*, and the regions *of Chrisiapetra*, and plunder them completely, even *Bithynia*, and *Daphnousia*, *Chrisiapetra* and *Damoulia* up to the Seven-hilled (city).

3- 1 And all these will slaughter a multitude of the Romans. 2 and they will be expelled to the sea. 3 and the number of that nation amounts to myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, and (there will be) other unusual multitudes and limitlessness. 4 and Ishmael will cry out loudly and say: 5 "where is the God of the Romans? there is no-one helping them." For they have been truly conquered.

4-1 For indeed the three sons of Agar will gnash their teeth even against the Romans. 2 And they will plot and say to themselves: 3 "Let us go and cross over to Byzantium." 4 But being unable (to do so), they will take council again saying: 5 Let us build up a bridge of boats and cross over to Byzantium of the seven-hilled (city). 6 And in that way the ungodly and all the hateful people will speak these (things). 7 But, on hearing of the threats of the ungodly, the rulers of

the Seven-hilled (city) and their nobles will not be alarmed, lest the Christians betray the seal of holy baptism, (and they) will take refuge in the islands of the sea. 8 But there will be fear and tribulation and much necessity among the Romans. 9 And men of the Seven-hilled (city) will suffer the affliction by the sword.

5- 1 Therefore beloved ones, listen to the much compassionate and loving kindness of God: 2 for as the son of Agar gnashed his teeth, and the ungodly Ishmael, so also do wild lions (gnash their teeth) against the Romans. 1 But listen, brothers, because of their iniquity God allows (it) and He will stand self-restrained at Byzantium, and He will strike and they will be struck. 2 And then the rulers of the Romans (will) blaspheme saying: "Woe, woe, neither in heaven do we have an emperor, nor on the earth." And with this word the Lord will incline His mercy upon the Romans and He will (also) avenge them and He will repay justly His enemies. 3 There will be a mighty sound from heaven, and a terrifying earthquake on the earth, and a voice of the angels from heaven. 4 And the Lord will incline His head, and He will release His wrath upon the sons of Agar and upon the belligerent race of Ishmael, and the Lord will lift (away) the cowardice of the Romans and will cast it into the hearts of Ishmael, and the courage of the Ishmaelites into the heart of the Romans. 5 And the Lord will rouse up an emperor of the Romans, (whom people say was probably dead, and useful for nothing) whom people think he died many years ago. 6 For (this reason) the Lord preserves (him) within the land of the people of Persia and the Syrian nations, 7 whose name (begins with) the letter K of the alphabet. 8 This one will appear in the Seven-hilled (city) toward the Friday evening. 9 And he will be ready against his enemies. 10 On Saturday morning at dawn he will initiate a great war against Ishmael and the sons of Agar, he himself with (the support of) his two small boys. 11 And the rulers and the nobles of the Seven-hilled (city) will be gathered with him. 12 Even Priests and Bishops of the Churches will bear weapons of war. 13 and then that emperor along with his two small boys will join in a mighty war against the nation of the sons of Agar. 14 And he will cut them down in pieces like (the) grass consumed by fire. 15 And their blood will choke a three-year-old bull. 16 And the emperor alone will drive

away a thousand and the two small boys will drive away myriads. 17 And Ishmael will be defeated (and lament) with the sons of Agar until the end.

6- 1 And there will be war and great bloodshed such as has not happened from the foundation of the world. 2 For the blood will be mixed with the sea up to a distance of twelve stades. 3 And on the streets of the city horses will be suffocated with blood. 4 And there will remain from that nation and Ishmael (anything) excepting their three tents. 5 They will serve the donkey-drivers of the Seven-hilled (city) for thirty years. 6 And the race of the Romans will desire to see the footprint of Ishmael but will not find it. 7 For the prophetic word will be fulfilled that (says) 8 "how one alone shall drive off a thousand and the two expel the myriads unless God rejects them and the Lord hands them over?" 9 And that emperor will subjugate all the enemies and crush them under his feet. 10 And the scepter of that emperor will be long-lived, likewise also that of the two small boys. 11 And his fame will spread from the rising sun so far as the west, and from south to north. 12 And he will erect his sword to the east and cast his bow into the northern side and (the) Bear. 13 No-one will withstand his right hand, because this man has come from God. 14 And he will bring about a great peace. 15 And cities and fortresses and churches will be built. 16 And there will be many sanctuaries throughout the inhabited world. 17 Buildings will stand even on Islands. 18 And wheat, wine and oil will increase. 19 And that scepter will bring to an end all war on the earth. 20 And during his reign the equipment of war will be turned into sickles, and shears and scythes. 21 And the rulers of the Romans will desire to conduct wars but will not find them. 22 And that emperor will be called by the name of a wild beast. 23 And the whole world will fear him. 24 And that emperor will glorify the God of heaven, because during his kingship God will give him the good things, which since the foundation of the world until that time he did not give. 25 This one will be laid to rest in peace, he himself along with his two small boys, after his kingship (has lasted) thirty-three years.

7- 1 And after him a scepter will arise from the north, committing extreme unlawful cruelties against God and his saints. 2 And he will accomplish many injustices and commit great transgressions. 3 And he will couple son with mother and father with daughter. 4 And the abomination of desolation will be

fulfilled, and at his instigation people will be made to commit debauchery and perverting incest. 5 And the sacrifices will cease with (also) the praises of God. 6 And then God will command (the fire) and he (the emperor) will be shaken by heavenly fire.

8-1 And after him a man will arise, foreign and of the race of the giants from the direction of the South. 2 And he will reign in the seven-hilled (city). 3 And after him a woman will reign over the seven-hilled (city), fool and foreigner. 4 And she will be seated in the direction of the South of the seven-hilled (city).

9- 1 And therefore Woe to you Babylon the seven-hilled (city), because your wealth and glory will be made to fall with your boasting which you spoke out, 2 that "I have clothed myself with gold, and Jacinth, and pearl, and scarlet garment, and purple, and silver, and alloy and it is not by my hand, for in me kings will reign and powerful men will come in and go out and the great rulers will dwell within me." 3 Woe to you miserable Babylon, the mother of all cities, because God will incline his anger full of fire. 4 And your high wall will be drowned. 5 And nothing in you will remain except one pillar of the scepter of Byzantium of Constantine the great, so that many will mourn at the sea. 6 The imperial sway will be taken from you. 7 Your traders will run away from you and vanish. 8 And every city and district will mourn upon you the mother of cities. 9 For at that time the imperial sway will be taken from Byzantium and be given to Rome.

10- 1 And a scepter will arise from Judea, 2 whose name (is) *Dan*. 3 And he will reign in Jerusalem. 4 And those of the race of the Jews who had been scattered from Judea will be gathered together there from all city and region, 5 and will come in Jerusalem toward their king, 6 and they will afflict the race of the Christians in all the earth, 7 and they will confine in a narrow space the Romans unto death.

11- 1 During the reign of *Dan* the antichrist will come forth from under the subterranean places of the Abyss below the Hades and the earth's depth. 2 And he will become like a small *muridon* fish. 2 And he will come in the form of a small garidon fish. 3 And he will go up on the spacious sea. 4 (and he will grow big), and he will be caught by twelve fishermen. 5 And the fishermen will become enraged against each other. 6 and one of them will boast around, whose

name (is) Judas. 7 And taking a fish as his inheritance, he comes in the district called *Gouzeth* (where) he will sell the fish for thirty pieces of silver. 8 And a virgin girl will buy the fish, 9 whose name (is) Injustice, because the son of injustice is about to be born from her. 10 But her sobriquet will be Destruction. 11 For having touched the head of the fish she will find herself pregnant. 12 And the antichrist will be born from her. 13 He will be born (after) three months. 14 And he will suck from her during five months. 15 And he come to Jerusalem and become a teacher for children. 16 And he will appear peaceful, downcast and amiable and prosecuting transgressions. 17 The height of his stature will be of 10 cubits, 18 and the hair of his head will reach his feet. 19 He will be covered with hair. 20 The track of his feet will be three cubits. 21 His eyes (will be) like (the) rising morning star. 22 And the upper part of his teeth (are) of iron. 23 the lower (part of his) jaw in diamond. 24 His right arm (is made of) iron and his left (arm is made of) bronze. 25 His left hand is three cubits (large), his right hand four cubits (large). 26 Long-faced, long-nosed. 27 On his forehead are written three letters A. T. K. that is to say Antichrist. A. K. T. and the A standing for I clearly deny (*arnoūmai*), the K for I utterly deny (*eXarnoūmai*), the T for the defiled dragon (*miasmenon Drakonta*). 28 And when the scepter of *Dan* comes to an end, the Antichrist will teach and being taught, testing and being tested. 29 And there will be a good harvest of wheat and wine and olive such as has not happened since the foundation of the world. 30 For three years they will be harvesting the good things of the world. 31 For in those times an ear of wheat will yield half a measure of grain. 32 And a branch of grape will produce a hundredfold bunches of grapes. 33 And a bunch will produce ten thousands and it will distillate wine up to two measures. 34 And the seed of the olive will spread over an entire forest without any extraneous matter. 35 And much abundance of all things will blossom, that is to say, by all sorts of fruitfulness. 36 And the fruit bearing earth will break out its fruits a hundredfold. 37 And there will be much fruitfulness such as has not happened since the foundation of the world until those days have come.

12-1 And the nation of the Jews with the Jerusalemites will make plan saying: 2 "Let us make king this gracious and admirable man who has the three letters upon his forehead." 3 "For it is proper that he become king." 4 And they crowed

him in the third day. 5 And he will reign three years. 6 And during the third year of his kingship all fruit upon the face of the earth will be eradicated. 7 And in the whole universe nothing will be found but one half-measure of wheat and a jar of wine and oil. 8 No other fruit will be found. 9 And there will be a great famine upon the face of the earth such as has not happened since the foundation of the world. 9 Then there will be a terrible plague and those (living) on mainland will take refuge in the Island and those in the Islands (will take refuge) in the mainland and there will be sickness all over the earth of such a magnitude and of such kind of epidemic that has never occurred until that age. 9 There will be a plague such as have never happened in ages. 10 And the land will be ruined by the coming plague and the faces of men will be deadened. 11 And if the righteous is scarcely saved, how the sinner will be recognised? 12 And then unclean spirits and demons will come out. 13 (Those) who are there in the Abyss, in the clefts, in the subterranean places, in the caves, in the lakes, in the springs, in the pools and in the air. 14 They will come out (numerous) like the sand of the seashore and they will be fastened to the antichrist. 15 And they will be testing men and they will be destroying foetuses of women and they will suck the milk of breast-feeding women. 16 And then there will be men calling on death and opening the tombs they will praise the dead saying: *17 "blessed are you and thrice-blessed (are) you who have already died, for you did not reach these last days (which are) hard and painful." 18 Begging, they will beseech the mountains saying: "cover us mountains !," 19 and to the sea saying: "let the fury of your waves swallow us, O holy sea."* 20 Woe to the (women) nursing and those who are pregnant in those most evil days. 21 Then each flesh of the Romans will lament, and the joy and exultation of the Jews will be great. There will be tribulation of the Christians and distress caused by the compulsion of evil spirits and by the coming plague. 22 Because the earth will be grounded down and become like copper sand. 23 And (every green grass and) every plant and every tree will dry out, and every leaf of flower of the land will leave out. 24 And the lakes will dry out and rivers and wells and moisture of waters will evaporate. 25 And the faces of men will become deadened because of the coming plague.

Appendix 1: Translation of The Fourteenth Vision of Daniel.

13- 1 And then the antichrist will lift up a stone with his barren hands saying: 2 "believe (in) me and I will turn stones (into) bread." 3 And then the Jews will worship him saying: 4 "you are the Christ whom we have expected and because of Thee the race of the Christians grieved us." 5 And then the Jews will be in great joy speaking with help of the antichrist. 6 And then the antichrist will boast saying to the Jews: 7 "do not grieve so much, in a while and the race of the Christian will see who I am." 8 For the day will try you and I will test you. 9 Then the antichrist will lift up his voice towards the flinty Rock saying: *10* "I have made the heaven and earth." 11 I command you flinty Rock: "become bread in front of the Jews!" 12 And having disobeyed him the stone will become a dragon. And the dragon will lift up a voice toward the antichrist shouting: V: and (the Jews) will say to the antichrist: 13 "O you who accomplish of all works of iniquity and all injustice, why do you pretend to do what you are not capable of?" 14 And the dragon will put him to shame in front of the Jews.

14- 1 And then three men will go forth to expose him (and will condemn him as liar and deceiver), two (of them are) from the clouds of heaven and one from the earth. 2 And they will go on before the antichrist himself abusing him saying: 3 "Woe to you lawless, worker of injustice and inheritor of eternal darkness." 4 And they will proclaim all (over) the earth shouting and saying to the afflicted Christians: 5 "listen you sons of men, do not worship him." 6 "(For) he is not the Christ nor the God-fearing man, but he is the antichrist. 7 And many Christians will run at the feet of the saints saying: 8 " what shall we do, O saints, where we Christians shall hide ourselves?" 9 And at the their word many Christians will hide themselves in the mountains, and caves, and the holes of the earth, and will be saved, so that the treacherous Samuel may not capture them. 10 And when the antichrist finds these three preaching in the midst of the Altar, he will kill them by the sword. 11 And (the word that was) spoken by the prophet David will be fulfilled: 12 " then they will offer up calves on your altar." 13 With the antichrist reigning, and by the demonic indiscipline and torment the Jews will deliberate vainly against the Christians. (After these things) the great day of the Lord will draw near, there will be judgment and recompense. 14 And the deception of Satan will fall, and the light of the world,

the Christ our God and King of glory, will blossom, 15 (He) to whom is due all the glory and honour and power for eternity. Amen.

Appendix 2: Translation of The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.

(fol. 20r.) The Speech of Samuel head of the monastery of Qalamūn.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, glory to the (only) One God.

We are prompted by the Lord's grace, praise be to Him, to put in writing the discourse of our father, the holy Anbā *Samuel*, leader of the monastery of Qalamun. May his intercessory prayers remain with us, Amen!

He spoke in his declaration about the matter(s) of the presence of Arabs, who prevail in the land of Egypt, and with respect to the era of Hijra. (Among those who) were present during this discourse was *Gregorius*, Bishop of Qays, who came to remedy to a certain disease he had, that means the Bishop. So *Apollos*, disciple of the father was also present. This discourse of the saint Anbā *Samuel* pledges protection and strength (to anyone) upon reading in, and observing it, and acting according to what is written in it. It came to pass that when the immigrant Arabs overrun the land of Egypt, (despite) being few (in numbers), yet they became extremely successful over against the Christian people. At that time his companions, the priests, gathered and started to discuss with the father Anbā *Samuel* about them, and they enquired if the period of their rule over the land of Egypt would last long or not. However, the holy man sighed from the bottom of his heart, in the presence of the Bishop. And he said: "Blessed be God, He who fixes the times and alerts the mind of his humble people and exalts his people, He who overthrows kings and raises other kings who believe in His beloved Son, by whom this people honours God. He supports them for this peace of the land of Egypt, in spite that God's wisdom is beyond human investigation. And it does not belong to the mankind to discern the natural deeds. When adverse times worsen, and stir the entire world, O! Children of mine, think at once of the great evils of the heretics in the Orthodox Church

during the time of the father *Dioscorus* until now. Remind yourselves also about the great evils to our fathers along with *Dioscorus*, (what) happened to them (when) he was expelled to a remote Island.

(fol. 20v.) *Ieroutarius* sat on his seat, and this *Ieroutarius* caused great evils to the Christian faith. Several were driven away without shelter, the orthodox ones were killed, and the buildings were destroyed. As to *Oukialinos* the owner of the false cap, however, let me remain silent concerning him. But who can speak more clearly than I would. He performed evil acts when they set up to Jerusalem. He killed the orthodox, causing the sort of desolation that nothing is more sorrowful so that we would remember his name (as) *Kubiros* the *Mukakos*, a filthy man. In his enterprise, he restricted so much the Orthodox, and he banished them from place to place. In his oppressive strife (against) father *Benyamin*, he then levied everything. He gnashed his teeth over him and said: "(Oh!) If only I could find the big bearded (man)..." But He (God) sent against them this nation that only seeks gold, not godliness according to their vow in prayer.

As for me, I prefer to remain silent, O! My beloved children, because I want to reveal to you what would happen to the Christians from the nation of the immigrant Arabs during their reign. If only you would manage not to mention them in our midst today. Because they are an implacable nation, whose strength went unnoticed among the communities of the saints. O! What is the meaning of this Hijra and the their domination contrary to our Laws? And tyrannical rulers will arise in their days, who will increase the miseries of those who will live during the next generations. Because of them, they will imitate their manners.

Appendix 2: Translation of The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.

O! My children, already the angels of the Lord have reported to me the hardship concerning (such) times, and the numerous exactions that will afflict the sons of men from this tyrannical nation. **(fol. 21r.)** I do not want to talk on this account of the Arabs and their harsh dominion, nor of the end of time, according to what is written that it is not for you to know the time and the seasons unless the Father puts that under his own authority. However, I shall disclose a little while for your benefit to the profit of your soul. And I will declare what shall no doubt come to pass in the future times, when they will abandon the commitment to God's sheltering commandments. (But) for him whose heart remains vigilant will be preserved from imitating the actions of the hijra, so that his soul will be saved.

O! My children, do you see this small nation by reason of its number? No doubt, they will increase, and become immensely strong, many people will mix with them, and they will expand like the sand of the sea, and like the locusts, their rule will become forceful. They will rule a huge territory, from the East to the West. They will rule Jerusalem many times, and a multitude of peoples will associate with them: Georgians, Hebrews, Greeks, Edessenes, those from Amida and those from abroad, Chaldeans, Persians, the Berbers, the Sindi, and Hindi. They will indulge in their conquest to exalt themselves. For a little while, they will live in peace with the Christians. But after that, the Christians will lust after them, with regard to their achievement. They will eat and drink with them, and become frivolous like them, vain, fornicators like them, they will subject for themselves concubines like them, and they will defile their bodies in relationship with the women of the hijra, (who are) unnatural and unclean. Men will have intercourse with men like them. They will practice extortion, and

(own) inquiry, about the portion of the reading, that in turn they read in their own corner. Consequently, they will generate (another) confidant of their soul.

(fol. 22 r.) Woe, again woe O! My beloved children, what can I say about that time, and about this power of laziness, which will afflict the Christians? For in that time, they will very much decline from uprightness. They will imitate their indecent actions. They will even call their children by their names, renouncing the names of angels, prophets, messengers, and martyrs. They will also perpetrate an even more (evil) action than I could report to you, which your heart will hurt so much, for they will give up the lovely language of the Coptic from which the Holy Spirit very often spoke to our spiritual fathers. But, their children will learn it from their youth because they will speak in Arabic language and boast of it, so that the priests and Monks will dare them in turn, for they will speak in Arabic language and boast of it and so within the Temple. Woe, then, O! My beloved children, what can I say? In that period there will be readers in the Temple who will not understand what they will recite, nor what they speak (about). Because they have forgotten their language, how terribly tearful it will be for the Christian world, because they have forgotten their tongue, and spoke horribly in the tongue of the hijra.

Woe, to every Christian who will teach his son the language of the hijra from his youth, and cause him to forget the tongue of his fathers. Because of that, he will be deceived in his mistake as it is written that: " The fathers will cause their sons to be afflicted." By this, I am saying that indeed this weakness will occur among the Christians. They will eat and drink inside the Temple without fear, and they will forget the respect of the Temple. The Temple will become so ordinary to them that not even anything from the doors of the Temple will remain. It will be

swear like them. They will oppress and hate one another, and they will hand over some of them to the nations without act of mercy. It will come from their mouths all sorts of futile chatters unworthy to say.

(fol. 21 v.) They will set up out of the human shape an image of God in many ways. Some of them will invoke boars, dogs, and donkeys. Likewise, even some of the Christian women will neglect the good manners about female dignity, and they will become blasphemous, vain, purposely adopting dresses of impudent behaviour. They will as well speak words of blasphemy, and it will come from their mouth words never heard that these should (not) be reproduced, because they will blaspheme against God, until they will dare to say without fear: "*I myself will act upon God who created me*."

Woe, again Woe. What then can I say about such action, by which the wrath of God is consummated. Even if God had pity, and held back because of his Spirit, why should he restrict the knowledge of the truth to Christians who imitate the evil of this time? They have become negligent concerning the essence of God. Their inclination is in fornication. They will become in that time lovers of eating and drinking, loving carnality more that the love of God. They will pursue the sites of eating and drinking more than the place of celebration of God. They will sit on the streets of the market places, in more wander of the worldly things, and with scarce deference to the Temple. Despite the peril in their heart, they will pass by when the Gospel verses are being read while they are not listening. Furthermore, they will be present to the Church only at the closing of the service. Moreover, some of them will not act properly, since they are preoccupied by their business, so that (the reading of) the verses will passed them by. Then, they settle down into the Church, subjecting the Gospel to their

decrees of our holy fathers. And so, they will replace the decreed and acknowledged fasting. Those of them who will fast will not complete their necessary fasting because of their gluttony. **(fol. 23 v.)** They will force other men to break the fast with them. For all and every one of them will device for his soul a regulation (plan how to divide), but some others (will be) hostile on the account of subordination. Likewise, they will break the fast from the prescribed duration, and the scale of shadow regarding each monthly measurement. And you will find them standing in the Temple, impotent and indolent, chatting with one another about futile activities, which belong to the world. And they definitely will not remember, neither shall they consider even the body of God, which is in the sacred vase, and the blood that is in the chalice upon the altar. On the contrary, that mystery will become dreadful for them like craftiness. And if anyone of them is overwhelmed by the zeal of God so as to utter the word of instruction from the canon, because of their submission they will be assailed, and like the lion they will open their mouth against him.

And so women will become ensnared in the Church by much chatting, and dilapidation, and without someone to refute them. But the word of Paul says that women must keep silent in the Church, and their head to be immersed. And even the priests will fall into degeneration and dissolution, incapable to obey the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. And if any one of the priests (was) to utter a word of instruction such a person, he will say it by irritation without a burning desire over the people. And this will anger God against them, because they have departed from the canons of the Church and the teachings of our spiritual fathers. Therefore, He will impose on them the hijra of the Arabs and their hatred for them. And so, they will incur destruction on them (with) many losses.

standard and know the Coptic language, and they shall speak in it. It will cause them to be abused, and they will tremble **(fol. 23 r.)** because of their brothers the Christians who will be speaking in the Arabic language.

Woe, again woe! What an extreme sorrow! And how outstanding in that time the actions of the Christians that will be exerted against it. My distraught heart was really in great pain as I outlined to you this message, and my eyes were tearful, and my body was feeling an immense weakness. Do you believe that there might be another pain of heart higher than this? The Christians will come to abandon their sweet tongue and boast in the language of the Arabs and their names. O! My children, I say to you the truth. Indeed those who will forget the name of the saints and name their children by those foreign names will act like he who is banished away from the blessings of the saints. And those who dare even speaking inside the Temple in the tongue of the hijra would depart from the commandment of our saint fathers. In that time, men will commit grave offences, and no one will care to instruct them from those (offences). And no one will commit their heart on their behalf because all of them will fail, their elders and learned ones. And the father will learn about the sin of his son and will not rebuke him. And a woman will approve the destruction of her daughter and will not rebuke her. Instead, she will give in with her to sin because sin will not cause them any remorse. Rather, for them it is allowed because they will go without any woman instructor. For that, they will multiply offences upon their offences, and there will be no one to instruct and rebuke them. But much harder than these, the priests will learn such things without rebuking the offender. And the notables will not instruct the small ones, and the small ones will not obey the notables, because they will neglect the rules (canons) of the Church and the

so neglected that not even half a service would be completed, because (**fol. 22 v.**) they will neglect the seven rituals of the Church, which they will not complete. Young men of that time will seek for status of priesthood, but they will turn out to be far from true to read the sermon before the people. Yet many books from the Temple will become meaningless, because none of them will be preoccupied with the books, for their heart will tend toward foreign books. They will forget many of the martyrs in that time, for their history will no longer exist, and will not be found anymore. The ones found besides the biographies of the life (of the saints), when read will be found by many of the people not understandable, as there is no acquaintance of their language. Many churches will disintegrate in that time, deserted on the night of the Feast, and also on the Sunday night. They will not find one who will read among them writings on noblemen, even any of the 40 saints (*muqaddasāt*) for our salvation. You will not find anyone who reads to the people, neither preaches to him, because they will forget the language, they will be unable to understand what they are reading, and they would even not realise it. Thus, the readers also will not understand. Furthermore, they will not be shaken (for) the great city, which is the place of shade with all its borders, where the revelations of the good Messiah are concealed in their books. (They were) mighty in the knowledge of God, whose Coptic language (was so) lovely in their mouth like sweet honey, exhaling among them like a spirit of delight, because of their elegantly elaborate speech in Coptic. But all of them in that time will neglect it completely. They will speak in the Arabic language, and boast about it so that they will indeed not be known as Christians. Rather, one will presume concerning them that they are Berbers. However, the remnant (*Asa'id* = Sahidic) who shall keep up the

accomplished. Indeed, the source of their deeds that you observe is from the sins, which my people have committed, while they were rejecting my decrees and commandments. And they are imitating this nation. Because of that, they will lord over them until the completion of their time."

But the holy martyrs will refrain for a while from theirs supplications until when the time of the hijra should be completed, I tell you, O! My beloved children, **(fol. 24 v.)** then this people would have committed much more iniquities, and injustices on the land of Egypt. And their rule will become extremely strong, and their yoke harder like iron. And their population will grow like the locusts, and they will conquer many countries. Under their dominion, their iniquity will increase dramatically in the land of Egypt until the land will be destroyed because of many iniquities. And they will eat, and drink, and parodying, and having dressed like husbands' clothing, and they will boast greatly saying: "There will be ever no other nation that will conquer us." And they will survey the land in records, and they will subject it to tax, and there will be a great thirst upon the land, and many people will die of starvation. And there will lay bodies that have not been buried in their tombs. And people will wake up from their night sleep to find at each one's door that three indecent officers will request each a different tax decree. As a result, it will destroy great cities, and towns, and villages, and ports. And this land of Egypt, which abounds with trees, and beautiful garden places, and forests, and pomposity, because of such many taxes imposed upon the land, because of the arrogant people of little mercy. And their yoke will become heavy like iron, and they will besiege men, and depriving them in gold. And they will count down the great men and the small ones, and they will record their names in their official registers. And they will extort from

hold in check their soul to the end. And do not let a Christian speak in Arabic in these sites, because that would be the most terrible religious confession. For many will dare to speak within the Sanctuary in the language of the hijra in that time. Woe, again woe for those ones who do likewise. As I had myself heard from an old devotee of God, endowed with the Spirit, full of holiness. And he spoke to me when I inquired about the future of the rulers of the hijra, saying to me: "O! My son Samuel, perceive and understand what I declare to you. It that time **(fol. 25 v.)** when the Christians will endeavour to speak within the Sanctuary in the tongue of the hijra, in which they will blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Trinity, distress after distress will increase a sevenfold for the Christians at that time."

And if I start, O! My children, to elucidate for you the discourse which the holy old man, the words would last long, and I would express away incorrectly the secret from this word, because what has been said is enough. Let him understand them whose heart understands. He who keeps away from the deeds of the Arabs without imitating them will therefore retain the salvation of his soul.

So, when the holy old man explained this discourse to Anbā Samuel, he turn around to Anbā Apollos and all his brothers. And said to us what you have heard with your own ears, the extent of troubles which the future generations will endure for encouraging to alter the holy canons and these pure teaching of our fathers. And I made known to you the magnitude of miseries that will take place. As for you also, O! My beloved children keep yourselves and wake up, because the beatitudes and blessings are for those who keep themselves, and are watchful. But now, O! My beloved children be vigilant, for the beatitudes and blessings are for those who work according to the commandments of the

indulgence to the flesh, for the indulgence to the flesh leads it into weeding. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children from being restricted, for confinement kills many (people) and throw them into the bottom (less pit) and these ones who went down in the darkness to their ruin will not come back. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children from believing in the *Sabbeans* and to live at the expense of others, and do enter the place where is a woman, because indeed the stone causes with the firestone to project fire and will burn many motes. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children, and flee from all the actions of the wicked ones who let down the man to Hell, and deliver him to the torments. Do work for the good deeds heading to the heavenly kingdom. And it is purity, prodigality, prayer, abstinence, asceticism, endurance, patience of spirit, charity, guilelessness, grace, brotherhood, acceptance of burdens, humility, lowliness. **(fol. 26 v.)** Reject away from you all laziness, and all lust, and all rage, and all weakness of heart, for thus our fathers did achieve their course in great humility, hunger, thirst, keep away from drinking alcohol or anything at all. Because every excitement fills with lust the incisive members of the body from much drinking alcohol. However, alcohol enflames the lust and turns it indecent, and it tears apart the flesh of the body into pieces. Therefore, the excess of wine grieves the Holy Spirit, and from the beginning, our parents have known many of the afflictions that come from wine. So, keep away from it, except for the use of it in small quantity for recovery from sickness, just as when the glorious devotee Timothy was authorised to drink a little of wine for the disease in his stomach and his many sicknesses. What then shall I do for those who are in the passions of adolescence, which forceful pains recur against them? Therefore, O! My beloved children, it is perfect to keep up in every commandment, and it is

them the tax upon their soul, so that they will sell their clothing and belonging, to clear their taxes. And they will acquire every thing belonging to the people for motives they will estimate for themselves. And they will harass them over it, and the people will be moved from city to city, from country to country, seeking air without finding it. While the difficulties will go on about, this will remain far away from their heart not realising the discipline of the Lord for them. And they will not repent, and they will not look for the instructions **(fol. 25 r.)** of the Church. Instead, they will increase the number of their sin, for prestige will become stronger among Christians in those days. And some of them will rise up against the others, and wrong one another, and they will ridicule the words of the Holy Book, which is from the Spirit of God. Even the priests, and monks, and officers of the Holy Sanctuary too will practice such deeds. And they will boast and declare: "I am higher than our fathers." And they will discard the scripture which (says that) the boast in the man is depravity before God. Indeed, while they will practice such deeds, at that very time will this people have dominion over them. And they will afflict them harshly, as it is written: "If then they sully my reputation, and do not keep my commandment, then I will examine their sin with a rod, and their shame with a whip." O! My beloved children, do pray that the writing in the Psalms be not fulfilled against us. And beseech God not to forsake his people entirely, but may He turn His anger into affection, and His punishment into His favour. May He remember His bride the Church, and may He send to them assistance of heavens. And may He not go along with them according to their sins, and may not He repay them according to their injustice. Therefore, as for me, O! My beloved children, I beseech you, and I request humbly to commit those who come after you at the end of time to

her with my ears saying that: "*This is my own dwelling, I abide in it because I have loved it with my servant Samuel, and with all his loyal children who follow his communion.*"

This is imposed upon you, O! my beloved children to fulfil perfectly all the commandments and its monastic constitution. For if you observe it you will deserve to see the Mother of God, the Holy Virgin Mary our Lady as I saw her myself. And she will pledge with honours many of those who will inhabit this desert, and those who will visit it will be blessed by it, and they will pull out of it the pardon of their sins.

Blessing on to you O! My beloved children, for you have deserved to dwell in the monastery of the Virgin, our pure Lady Mary, singing and praising God in this Sanctuary, which the Mother of God has dug out (**fol. 27 v.**) for her a dwelling. (It is) a blessing for he who will proceed resolutely to this Sanctuary in good faith. I say to you O! My beloved children, that the Mother of God, our Lady Mary will implore her beloved Son, he will consent to discard and forgive entirely his sins. Blessedness is to those who will come to offer a sacrifice in this holy house. I say to you that the Mother of God will intervene for him to God to accept his sacrifice in the Jerusalem of heaven. And he who will dedicate a vow for this holy Sanctuary, and fervent to make amends in it, I say to you that the Virgin our Lady Mary will receive his vow and fulfil his (prayer) request promptly. Whosoever will write down this holy declaration, and put it in the House to be read for the benefit of all souls who listen and keep it up and act according to what is recorded inside and keep away from their twisted ways, then their souls would be purified. I say to you that the Virgin our Lady Mary will implore her beloved Son about it to tear the bondage of his sins and he will

Appendix 2: Translation of The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.

And the land tax will be so much heavy (that) they will not be able to overcome it. And they will become poor, and the hijra will corrupt the entire work that is on the field. Because of their harsh repression they will acquire from the widows and the children (will suffer) **(fol. 24 r.)** many deprivations. They will abuse the elders and they will confine the virgins and restrain them into their houses against their will. They will nod at the Christian faith, and they will become hostile to the priests, and the humble monks. And they will eat, and drink, and have fun inside the Temple. And they will sleep with women in front of the Sanctuary without fear. And they will transform the Church of God like stables of horses, and they will bridle their horses and livestock in it. And the supporting guardians will depart and climb to the heavens when they see the wicked actions that this nation will commit within the Churches. And they will ruin many Temples and they will raze them to the ground. And they will remove their timbers, and their bricks, and their precious stones, and from which they will build for themselves lofty and splendid houses. And they will take away the Crosses from over the Churches, and they will convert many Churches, and turn them for their libraries, out of their great arrogance and disdain for the Christians. But the holy martyrs will pay attention to the actions being committed in the places of their martyrdom, and they will raise their complaint to God. And they will say their petition to God: "You who judge impartially, Judge between us and this nation which keeps committing such actions in Churches. Certainly, God of righteousness, pronounce a judgement against them, and pay them back according to their deeds." On that day, Jesus the Messiah, Word of the Father, and being the Son will gratify their heart, and He will encourage them saying: "O! My dear Lords, Be patient until their time is

apostles. Therefore, O! My beloved children, strive in every endeavour to keep away from the suggestions of Satan, and do not follow the tendencies of our heart and flesh, for Satan will mislead the heart, and he will throw in it his ideas and intentions. So flee from our inclinations and the Messiah will pour out blessings upon us with compassion in his eternal kingdom.

(fol. 26 r.) This is a warning, O! My beloved children! do keep yourselves from neglect because negligence is the root of all sorrows and it sprouts all sort of weeds. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children, and flee from carnal passions, for carnal passions causes the mind to grow dark, and does not let the man to understand the precepts of God. And it causes him to go astray from the Holy Spirit, and does not let the man to wake up to the knowledge of God.

O! My beloved children keep yourselves away from worries, because it causes man to estrange himself from the benefices of Paradise. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children keep from impurity, because it causes God's anger, and (that of) his angels. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children from haughtiness, because it is the source of all disasters, and it distances the man from God. Keep yourselves O! My beloved children from futile splendour and the lore of leadership, for either of these burdens will pervert men and they will loose God's purpose. For idleness causes fear concerning moral excellence, because the fearful, weaken hearted surrenders to laziness, and he gives way to it because he is filled with all sorts of sins and arguments. Indeed (you become) idle when you are coward, and you become weak hearted, neglecting your canons. And you become lazy toward the prayers and trials.

But when you bear upon the confidence of God, you become divinely hearted. And reject away from you all ideas that come upon you. And flee from all

great measure of meekness, because he who subdues his soul in weakness will save it. And he will attach it to the anchorage of redemption, and he will be full from the heavenly blessings of Jerusalem. I therefore urge you for all restraint and countenance, to hold fast and to use with all attachment that I entrust on you, and the canons we have delivered to you. And your children should urge those who will come after them at the last time to be watchful and to observe the monastic practices so that they may be entitled to the inheritances of the kingdom of heaven. For there will be times when many monks will revel, and ridicule the monasteries because of their insults. And they will throw away from them the canons and religious duties... (which are in) upholding of the true light of discernment of the land of the Great Egypt. In truth, the great *Antonios* who is endowed with the Holy Spirit, **(fol. 27 r.)** and Father *Macarius*, Anbā *Pachomius*, and Father *Shelūdha*, these people whose petitions would make the land of Egypt prosper. They are those who laid down for us the canons and imposed it upon the monks, and until our death we completed their good work, and paid attention to their holy instructions and practised it. So you O! my beloved children, do keep up with all that I say to you today, and all the monastic constitution which our spiritual Fathers laid down for you, and urge the future generations until the century of centuries to keep up with the word I said to you today according to the word of the Apostle Paul: "*Imitate me as I myself have imitated the Messiah.*" As for yourselves, O! My beloved children, imitate me and follow my tradition as I followed my holy fathers' traditions. Whoever holds fast in what I lay down to you, then the Mother of God will implore her beloved Son for you, because you are living in her land. As I have seen it often times, and I saw it with my own eyes in this church. And I heard

brothers could not cry and grieve upon them. Rather, they will take pride on them and they will eat and drink with them. And after that they will envy them and imitate them. And they will renounce the Messiah like them. Woe to those who (act) in this manner because their place in hell will become bottomless for eternity. Then the father *Gregorios* said to him: "O! My holy father, will such matter last, linger, and how long will this hardship persist, and the dominion of this tribe upon the land of Egypt?" So, the holy Anbā Samuel said to me: "O! My son Anbā *Gregorios*, no one is capable of knowing the works of time and its changes, the natural dispositions and its impetuosity, except the Creator. But the Christians and those who turn their back to their wicked deeds and carry out the canons of the Church, and follow it with zeal, keeping up and standing upright before God, then God will lift up from them this pain. But if they do not repent, then it will persist upon the land until the consummation of the dominion of the hijra, and the last kings of the hijra. And the name of the last king who will stand from the (period of the) hijra is *Lasmarini*. And the number of his name will make 666. He who has a heart to understand, let him (understand). And he will be born from two nations and the land will be troubled in the days of his reign. And the colour of his dress is gold, and he is courageous in his soul and he will sacrifice a man to death for a *Dinar*. And there will not be rest in his days and there will be no fear of God in his intention and he will forget (**fol. 29 r.**) what it is. And he will not behave in keeping with his father because he is Ishmaelite, nor in his mother's belief because she is European. And he will be a great drunkard for he will shed blood. And on his days, men will suffer greatly and he will kill many people suddenly and there will be terrible calamities in those days. And they will expect God's mercy because of the many calamities,

Appendix 2: Translation of The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.

After he had pronounced this discourse, we mean, our father the holy Anbā Samuel, with the attendants listening him and then the father the bishop Anbā *Gregorios* cried with bitter tears until he wetted his garment with his tears for the sake of the forthcoming events. Then, the father Anbā Samuel said to him: "O! My son, this is the start of the discipline God will administer to the people of that generation. For a vengeance is coming upon them because of their sins they committed against him." Who could hold on as it is written: "If we persist in sinning, O! Lord, O! Lord, who will resist before you?" just as it is said: "It is better for me that you humiliate me, because of you, I kept up your truth and accepted what the commandment says." "The Lord has punished me, but not to death. For that reason he will deliver me." Therefore, he who receives the punishment of the Lord with gratitude and so confesses to admit his sins, and does not revert to it anymore, then he will be redeemed entirely. He who receives the punishment of the Lord with gratitude and perseverance, when it befalls him, although it is bestowed by the Messiah, will then be redeemed as it is written in the Holy Gospel: " Whoever perseveres to death, will be redeemed. But whoever is exasperated and doubts, woe to him forever." For many Christians will renounce the Messiah in that time, on account of the time of wandering to come. Some of them will deny the Messiah because of the hardship that will happen to them. **(fol. 28 v.)** No one will seriously teach them and comfort them in their pain, for they will be deprived of teaching assistance and they will break away, and because of the extent of these things many have would have been assigned in confinement without anyone to rebuke them. A few will break away just for the pleasure of eating and drinking. A few will break away for the comfort of the flesh and the error of sins, so that their

write his name in the book of life. Therefore, O! My beloved children, if then you keep up into what I urge you, then the Virgin our Lady Mary will intercede for you unto her beloved Son. And he will subdue your enemies under your feet, and you will tread under (your) feet the head of the sea monster, and you will break all powers of the archenemy. So if you keep up into what I have entrusted you, then dominions and powers will grant you presents, and the rulers will confer to you the honour, and the Berbers will submit to you. Therefore, do strive with all your strength O! My beloved children do carry out with zeal you prayers at the required time of the day, and convene to the night prayers. Restrain from changing the constitution that I have laid down for you, otherwise you will be under a terrible judgement. Keep up with all reservation O! My beloved children in the words I laid down so that you will become sons of the kingdom of heaven.

Keep away from chatting during the Mass, for this is a terrible sin when it happens during the worship of hymns, **(fol. 28 r.)** which is intended for admonishing for the salvation of souls, but some men are chatting. All should be aware that whoever talks in the Temple becomes depraved against God and his angels, and the Mother of God will become irritated against him, and his prayer will be rejected, and himself will be liable to answer over his violation. Let not anyone act independently in the Assembly as preacher over it. Do urge your children to urge those who will follow them to the end of future centuries not to speak within the Sanctuary in the tongue of the hijra, because he who act likewise will deserve the curse. Hence, I have said, O! My beloved children, that he who listens and holds fast, will so attain salvation.

which the children of Ishmael will inflict on them. But after this, the Lord will remember his people whom he has greatly humiliated. Then, he will send upon them a king of the Romans from the sea in anger against them. For the Archangel Michael will appear to him in a dream and say to him: "Get up and take back the captive, for God had made you ruler over all his land." Thus, he will reign over all his land. But the king of *Abyssinia* will commit great wickedness in the land of their fathers from the East. And the hijra will flee into the deserts, which belong to her. First, they will flee from the king of Abyssinia of the East and the king of the Romans will descend upon the sons of Ishmael, and will surround them in the valley of ambush, the dwelling of their fathers. And he will destroy them from the East and will terrify them with great fear. And a great dismay will fall upon the sons of Ishmael and everyone who takes refuge in them. And God will deliver them to the king of the Romans. For he will destroy them by the edge of the sword and will take them captives because they wiped out the land. For that reason, God will rightly deliver them to the king of the Romans and he will become 100 times as hard on them as they were hard. And they will become miserable, depressed, weary, and under the sword. And the king will arrive to the land of Egypt and will set on fire the city of Egypt called *Papolonia* because the sons of Ishmael had committed their impurities there. And he will demolish the land of the North and will afflict the sons of *Ishmael* into servitude.

(fol. 29 v.) And some of them will endure many pains and will flee to the wasteland of their fathers. But the king of *Abyssinia* will marry the daughter of the king of the Romans, and there will peace for a time of reconciliation. And there will be a revival in the confines of the earth for 40 years, such as there has

Appendix 2: Translation of The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn.

our father Anbā Samuel has urged me not to write down in this spiritual counsel. But these also I do not want to write them because most of the brothers knew them and had heard them from the mouth of our father Anbā Samuel. But I write them for the future generations as the father Anbā Samuel has urge me. Therefore, he who hears and acts consequently will be saved. But he who disproves will obtain the full amount he deserves and will be sanctioned according to his disobedience.

Therefore, O! My brothers, let us act in what is praiseworthy, so as to get mercy, and he will bring a modest charge on the day of just judgement, by which God will recompense all, either excellence for the one who was restrained in his acts, or evil. And the merciful God will make us worthy to obtain mercy and he will forgive our sins through the prayers of our holy Father Anbā Samuel, and the intercessions of the Mother of God the all time Virgin. To the Father and the Son and the true Holy Spirit be glory forever and ever Amen, Amen, Amen.

It is the word of exhortation of peace from the Lord. Amen.

never been on earth. And there will be a time of happiness for the Christians. And they will boldly open the doors of their churches, and rebuild houses, and plant vineyards, rebuild palaces because of their delight in the Lord their God. Woe, for those who will appeal to the hijra in those days!

After 40 years, such will be the manifestations of the untamed wild king: the sources of waters and rivers will turn into blood for one hour, and their blood will embitter the waters. Second sign: babies will start speaking at less than 3 months old. Third sign: whenever the harvest of the field is ripe, blood will appear from the soil. On that day, the wise men will flee to the mountains. For after that, the people who were restrained in the predicament of the land of the Arabs will come out, which are the troops of the Gog and Magog.

The earth will tremble before them and people will flee to the mountains, caves, and graves. And they will die from starvation and thirst, and this people will corrupt the earth in 5 months. And after that, God will send his angel to destroy them in an hour. And the king of the Romans will rule over the earth during a year and 6 months, and his palace will be in Jerusalem. And after that, God will abolish his reign over the earth. And the monster will appear, that is the false Messiah, and he will perform many signs and wonders of heroism to the point of deluding the elect, according to the scriptures. **(fol. 30 r.)** And he will manage to draw 10 of the rulers of the Romans' king with his government, and they will hand over to him alone the kingship. Blessed is he who will fight and conquer him, for he will reign eternally with the Messiah.

This is all that I heard from the mouth of the holy Anbā Samuel. I Apollos his disciple, have reported to you, O! My beloved brothers. And what has been said secretly between him and the Bishop Anbā Gregorios I have not written because

Appendix 3: Translation of The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

Prophecy of and Dream of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel

(This is) The word that came to *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel* the Governor of Judah on the 24th of the seventh month. This is the vision that the Lord showed me.

I was petitioning before the Lord, my God by the river *Kebar* when I saw the vision. As I was saying: "Blessed art Thou O God, who quickens the dead," my heart wailed within me to say: "(What) will be the plan of the eternal Temple?" Then a voice answered me from the doors of heavens and said to me: "Are you *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel* Governor of Judah?" And I replied: "I am your servant." And it answered me, speaking to me as one speaks to his friend. I heard a voice, but I did not distinguish his appearance. I remained praying like in the beginning. When I finished my prayer I entered my house.

On the 11th of the month *Adar*, a word came to me again saying: "Are you my servant *Zerubbabel*?" Then I said: "I am your servant." And he said to me: "Draw near me. Ask (of me) and I will tell you." And I replied: "What shall I ask, since my end is short and my days are full?" He said to me: "I will make you live." As he said: "be alive!" then the Spirit carried me, lifting me between heaven and earth, and subdued me in *Nineveh* the Great, the city of slaughter. And I said: "Woe to me, for I am cast away." For my soul within me was so extremely distressed that I pressed forward to intercede and invoke the Lord's name, God of Israel, I myself confessing my own shortcomings and sins. I said: "O Lord, I am ruined, I have committed sins, transgressions and iniquities. "Thou art the Lord, God who created the whole universe by the word of your mouth, and by the word of your lips the dead will live." Then he said to me: "Go to the *winter- house*, to the place of harlotry." And I went as he commanded me. And he said to me: "Turn further." and as I turned I saw a despicable man, bruised and in pain. And this dishonoured man said to me: "*Zerubbabel* what are you doing in here, and who brought you here?" I answered: "The Spirit of God has carried me away and expelled me here in this place." And he said to me: "Do not be afraid of me, for it is on purpose that you would see, that you have come here." And when I heard his words, I was reassured and my mind was eased inside me and was so high-spirited that I (even) made my request to him: "My Lord, what is the name of this place?" And he said to me: "This is *Rome the Great* in which I live captive." I

replied to him saying: "Who are you and what is your name. What are you waiting for here and what is going on in this place?" And he said to me: "I myself am the *Messiah* of God, son of *Hezechiah*. I am kept captive into prison until the time of End."

When I heard this I became silent and hid my face from him. I turned aside in my distress and looked around, (for I was) troubled. But he said to me: "Come closer to me." As he said this to me my terror of him soared even more. Then he stretched out his hand and strengthened me and encouraged me not to fear: "Let not your heart be afraid." In addition, he asked: "For what reason have you become silent?" Why did you hide your face from me?" I said to him: Because of what you declared that you are the servant of God, and his *Messiah*, saying: "I am the light of Israel." Then he slipped away in the likeness of a young male in white (garment), strong and handsome. But I said to him (at once): "When will come the light of Israel?" As I was talking to him, all of a sudden, a man with two wings came near me and said to me: "*Zerubbabel*, how dare you ask a question to the *Messiah* of God?" I replied saying to him (that): "I was asking: "when will the deliverance come?" And he said: "Ask of me and I will answer you." Again I said to him: "Who are you my Lord?" In reply he said: "I am *Michael* who gave news to Sarah; I am the commander of the Lord's army, the God of Israel; I am he who fought against *Sennacherib*; he who prevailed against 180 000 men; I am he who led Israel in the battles against the kings of *Canaan*; And I will execute the divine war with this *Messiah* of God who is seated before you, against the fiery-faced king, and against *Armelius* son of Satan, he who is born from the *Idol of Stone*. God has established me over His people and upon His beloved as commander to fight against the princes of the nations. And so *Michael* (declared this) on account of *Metatron*. Then he said to me: "I am the angel who guided *Abraham* in all the land of *Canaan*, and I blessed him in God's name. I am he who rescued *Isaac* and lifted up a lament over him, and I am the one who wrestled with *Jacob* across the *Yabbok*. I am he who guided Israel in the desert for 40 years in God's name. I am he who appeared to *Joshua* at *Guilgal*. I am he who poured out brimstone and fire over *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*. He (God?) has breathed his name in my heart (*Metatron* for the Gentiles is *Shaddai*). So you *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel*

whose name is *Yeconiah*, ask of me and I will disclose to your people what will happen at the End of days."

And he said to me: "The *Messiah* of God will stay hidden in this place until the Endtime. But this *Messiah* (is) son of *David* and whose name is *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*. And this one was born in the days of David the king of Israel. He was saved by the Spirit and was hidden in this place until the advent of the Endtime.

As I *Zerubbabel* requested of *Metatron* chief of the army of God, he said to me: "God will give the scepter of salvation to *Hephzi-Bah*, mother of *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*, And a great star will shine before her and all the stars will deviate from their orbits, and *Hephzi-Bah*, mother of *Menahem*, son of *Ammiel* will go out and kill the two pervert-hearted kings. One of the two kings is *Nof*, king of Yemen who will shake his hand over Jerusalem. The second one is *Esyrnan* king of Antioch. That battle and its signs will be confirmed (covenanted) during the seventh feast, on the third month.

And the word is true that 420 years after the rebuilding of the city and the sanctuary it will be destroyed a second time. And 20 years after the building of the city of Rome, 70 kings will reign in it, according to the number of the 70 nations. At the end of the 10 kings will come a tenth king who will destroy the Temple and will cause the perpetual (sacrifice) to cease. And the people of the saints will be scattered. They will be put to the sword, to the spoil and to confusion. And a great number of them will deny the Law and forsake the *Torah* of God, and will pass to the worship of Idols. In their fall they will receive a little help. But from the day of cessation of the perpetual (sacrifice), the desolation of the wickedness will bring abomination in the Temple. At the end of the year 990, when the power of the people of the saints will be worn out, the help of God will be (manifest), to deliver them, and the hand of the *Messiah* of God will be over them to gather them.

The *rod* that God will give to *Hephzi-Bah*, mother of *Menahem* son of *Ammiel* will come from the Almond-tree. It is stored up in *Rakkah* the city of *Nephtali*. It is the *rod*, which God gave to *Adam*, to *Moses*, to *Aaron*, to *Joshua*, to king *David*. It is the *rod* that sprout and blossomed in the tent of *Aaron*. Moreover, *Elijah* son of *Eleazar* is hidden in *Rakkah*, the city of *Nephtali*, which is Tiberias.

Appendix 3: Translation of The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

A man whose name is *Nehemiah*, son of *Hoshiel*, son of *Ephraim*, son of *Joseph*, is also hidden there.

Zerubbabel replied to *Metatron* and to Michael the prince saying: "Lord, "I will be pleased if you declare to me when will come the *Messiah* of God, what will happen afterward?" And he said to me: "The *Messiah* of God is *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel*. He will come five years after *Hephzi-Bah*, and he will gather all Israel like one man. Together they will stand 40 years at Jerusalem and the sons of Israel will draw near and offer sacrifices pleasing to the Lord. Every Israelite will be recorded according to his genealogy.

And on the fifth year of *Nehemiah* after the gathering of the saints, the king *Shiroui* of Persia will rise against *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel*, and there will be great lamentation over Israel. *Hephzi-Bah*, the wife of *Nathan* the prophet, mother of *Menahem* son of *Ammiel* will go out in Israel with the *rod* which the Lord, God of Israel will give her. The Lord will incur them with a spirit of confusion, they will kill one another, and the wicked one will be killed there.

When I heard this I bowed down on my face and said: "O Lord explain to me what was then the word of *Isaiah* the prophet: "A calf will pasture and lay down there and consume the tender branches." He said to me: "This calf is *Nineveh* the city of bloodshed, it is Rome *the Great*."

Then I added a request about the prince of the holy covenant. He cleaved to me and brought me over the house of corruption, of weariness. He showed me there one stone that was in the shape of a *virgin woman*, and her appearance and form became extremely beautiful to contemplate. He said to me: "This stone is the wife of *Belial* who is Satan. This one will have intercourse with her and a son whose name is Armelius will come out from her, and he will destroy the people, in Hebrew (tongue) he is the *ruler of the universe*. His dominion will spread from one end of the earth to the other. He will bear ten signs and worship idols of foreign gods, and to offer praise he will say: "Nothing will stand before me." In addition, all those who will not be faithful to him, he will destroy by the sword. And many will die in this way. Then he will assault the saints of the Most High with the help of ten kings and the might of a great army. And he will wage war against the saints and have them slaughtered. And he will kill the *Messiah* son of Joseph, who is the son of *Nehemiah*, son of *Hoshiel* along with 16 righteous men.

He will slay their community and the Israelites will go into exile in the desert in three scattered bands. *Hephzi-Bah* mother of *Menahem*, son of *Ammiel* will stand at the Eastern gate, and no wicked will (be able to) come there. (Thus) to confirm what will happen according to the following verse: "*And the people will not be caused to go about and be cut off from the city.*"

Moreover, this battle will happen on the month of *Ab*, and there will be distress in Israel such as pestilence, which never happened in Israel. And they will flee in holes of mountains, in caves, and they will not be able to escape from him, and all the heathen (pagan) nations of the earth will be led astray after him, only Israelites will not believe in him.

And all Israel will mourn *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel* for 41 days in bewilderment, and his dead body will be cast down before the gates of Jerusalem. Neither sacrificial animals, nor birds, nor wild beasts will touch him. And the sons of Israel will call out to God because of the multitude of oppression and from their great distress God will answer them.

When I heard God's word of prophecy, I was so overwhelmed that I rose and went to the river where I cried before the Lord, God of Israel, and the Lord of all flesh. The Lord sent out his angel to me as I kept myself prostrated in my unquenchable petition. I watched and recognised him as the angel that the Lord sent to me, who spoke to me beforehand concerning all (these) words. I bent down and prostrated myself before him. Again he touched me like before and said to me: "What's (wrong) with you *Zerubbabel*?" I said to him: "My lord, my belly is filled with the pains of my spirit" He who is *Metatron* replied: "Ask of me and I will reveal it to you before I depart from you." Then I put (the question) a second time to him and said: "Lord *Metatron*, When will come the light of Israel?" In reply he said to me: "By the living God who sent me and appointed me as prince of Israel, I will declare to you what God will do. For the Holy One and Most High talked to me concerning you saying: "*Zerubbabel* is my servant to whom I shall grant (whatever) I say to him."

And *Menahem* who is Metetron said to me: "Come closer to me, and lend your heart to all my unfathomable word. For accurate is the Word that I am saying on account of the living God." Then he said to me: "*Menahem* son of *Ammiel* will come in suddenly on the first month, which is on the 14th of the month of *Nissan*,

and he will stand on the *valley of Arbel* which (belongs) to *Joshua* son of *Josadak* the High Priest. And all the wise men of the remnants of Israel will come to him. For (only) a few will survive from the massacre and the plunder of *Gog* and *Armilius*, and from prodigious horsemen who will plunder them.

And *Menahem* son of *Ammiel* will say to the elders and the wise men: "I am the *Messiah* of the Lord whom God sent to bring good news and deliver your people from the hand of their dreadful enemies. But the elders will look at him and will be outrageous towards him because they will consider him as a man, despicable, clothed in shabby garment. They will despise him just as yourself who contributed in mocking him. Then he will burn with wrath, will wear the garment of vengeance, and will cover himself with the robe of jealousy. After that he will proceed towards the gates of Jerusalem. Then will come *Hephzi-Bah*, his mother, and she will give over to him the miracle-working *rod*. After (these events) all the elders of Israel will go after him. Having witnessed the resurrection of *Nehemiah*, who will remain standing, they will believe in the *Messiah* immediately.

Metatron commander God's army confirmed to me in accordance with this Word of God that there will be peace treaty between them, according to the prophecy of *Isaiah* (saying): "*Ephraim will not envy Judah, and Judah will not besiege Ephraim.*"

On the 21st day of the first month since the completion of Jerusalem to the destruction there will be 990 years. Then will come the fracas of the Lord's footstep. *Menahem* son of *Ammiel* and *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel* and *Elijah* the prophet will stand over the great river and they will invoke God's Word of prophecy, and all the human bodies of Israel will fly away from the sea where they threw themselves, in order to escape the anger of their oppressors. They will ascend from the bottom of the sea, and the waves will hit them and cast them off out in the *valley of Josaphat* near the *torrent of Shittim*. For it will be the signal of Judgement over the heathen nations.

In the 2nd year of his reign, on the month of *Iyar* the family of *Korah* will go up into the plain of Jericho near the *torrent of Shittim*. And they will draw near to *Moses* and he will join the banner of the *Korahites*.

On the 18th year of his reign mountains and hills will be shaken, and the earth (continent) with all that is in it, and the sea with all that is in it will be terrified.

Appendix 3: Translation of The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

On the 1st day of the third month the dead of the desert will live anew. And they will come into their home near the *torrent of Shittim*.

And in the 18th of that month of *Sivan*, there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.

On the 4th month, which is *Tammuz*, the Lord, God of Israel will appear (in his glory) on the Mount of Olives. And the Mount Olives will break forth at his rebuke. And he will blow the great ***shophar*** and all the false gods and sanctuaries of the earth will fall down. And all ramparts and fortresses will fall down to earth. And the Lord will slaughter all their horsemen and He will consume the nations of the pagans, like a zealous warrior, He will awake. And the *Messiah* of the Lord will come, (who is) himself *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*. And He will breathe in the nostrils of *Armilius* and make him perish. The Lord will make each one ruin and break the neck of the other by a sword and their bodies will fall down dead. The people of the Saints will rise up to see the deliverance of the Lord. All Israel will see Him (God) with their own eyes like a Warrior with the helmet of deliverance upon His head, and He is dressed in a suit of armor. And He will wage war against *Gog* (and) *Magog* and He will terrify *Armilius*. And they will all fall in the *valley of Arbel*. And all Israel will rise up and will dry up the captive people and they will plunder their plunderers a seven months more. From this multitude (of *Armilius*' army) only a few will escape and they will gather together at *Tsela-Haelef* 500 men strong, and 100000 men dressed in a suit of armor, and from Israel 500 men with *Nehemiah*, *Elijah* and yourself *Zerubbabel* their leader. And you will kill them all. And then one (single) man will drive away a thousand.

And this will take place during the third war. There will be three wars on the land of Israel: One which *Hephzi-Bah* will wage against *Shiroui* the king of Persia; One which the Lord God of Israel will wage with *Menahem* son of *Ammiel* against *Armilius* and the 10 kings who are associated with *Gog* and *Magog*; The third one which will take place at *Tsela-Haelef*, will be carried out on the month *Ab* by *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel* and *Zerubbabel*.

After all this, will come *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*, and *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel*, and all the Israelite people. The dead will resuscitate. They will join *Elijah* the prophet, and together they will go up to Jerusalem.

Appendix 3: Translation of The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

On the month of *Ab* in which they lamented over *Nehemiah*, in which Jerusalem was destroyed, there will be great rejoicing for Israel. They will bring to the Lord sacrifices, and the Lord will be propitious to them. And the Lord will be delighted with his people of Israel like before in the early days. And the Lord will pour out a Spirit of delight upon his people Israel and the Lord will be extremely exalted, and the Lord will send down on earth the Temple built from on high, and there will stand a fire, and cloud of burning incense will go up to heaven. The *Messiah* and all the people of Israel behind him will walk on foot to the gates of Jerusalem. And the Holy One will stand on the Mount of Olives, and his terror will get renowned over the heavens and the heavens of heavens, and all the earth, and the underground, and all the rampart, and buildings above (up to) their foundations. No breath will be heard, for the Lord God will appear before everybody on the Mount of Olives. And the Mount of Olives will be rent open beneath him. The deportees of Jerusalem will be of use for the Mount of Olives. Upon their sight *Zion* and Jerusalem will cry out: Who brought forth to us these ones and there will be a multitude as a consequence. *Nehemiah* and *Zerubbabel* will go up to Jerusalem, and they will say to him: they are your children who were born but who went into exile away from you. Exult exceedingly O daughter of *Zion*.

Thereafter, I continued to demand to *Metatron*, chief of the Lord's army: "Master, show me how long and how wide is Jerusalem and its structures." And he showed me the walls of Jerusalem besieged by fire. From the great desert to the western sea up to the river Euphrates. In addition, he showed me the Temple buildings, and the Temple was built on the top of five mountains, which the Lord had consecrated to erect his sanctuary, these are the Mount Lebanon, the mount Moriah, the mount Tabor, the mount Carmel, and the mount Hermon.

In addition Michael said to me: "I have appointed 990 years from the destruction of the Temple for the salvation of Israel to come." Thereafter, he disclosed distinctly to me the word and vision, saying to me after: "If they want (to be saved), at first they must repent, then the *Messiah* will appear in the seventh (year)."

And *Nehemiah* son of *Hoshiel* will come and gather all Israel in the fifth of the seven years. On the sixth of the Seven years *Hephzi-bah* will appear, the wife of *Nathan* the prophet, born in Hebron. She will kill the two kings *Nof* and *Esrynan*.

Appendix 3: Translation of The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

In that year the root of Jesse will blossom, (that is) *Menahem* son of *Ammiel*. And the 10 kings from the nations will be appointed, but they will not approach a year of rulership, and these 10 kings will be established over the nations for seven years.

These are their names associated with their cities and domains: the first king will be *Seleucus* of the land called Sepharad, capital (tnydm) of which is *Aspamia* on the sea-district; the second king will be *Artemi (o)s* of the land called Gitania; the third king will be *Flavius* of the land of Flaves; the fourth king will be *Galvas* of the land of Gallia; the fifth king will be *Ramushdis* of the land Mudithica; the sixth king will be *Mercurius* of the land of Italy; the seventh king will be *Ochtinus* of the land of Durmi(o)s; the eighth king will be *Aplostos* from the Aramean rivers; the ninth king will be *Shiroui* ruler of Persia; the tenth king will be *Armilius* son of Satan, who came out from the *Idol of stone*. He is the one who will rule over all people, and he will come and wage war in the *valley of Arbel* against the kings of *Kedar*, and the easterners. But they will be cast off from dominion. And he will take advantage of their despair and tread down all their forefathers territories, and from there (he will carry on) to *Riblah*, that is Antioch. He is the one who will begin to erect all the strongholds of the heathen, and to worship all over the earth the gods that the Lord hates. And in those days human beings and animals will complain of thirst, yet he will erect 4 altars and because of his evil intentions he will irritate the Lord. There will come a great and terrible starvation all over the country for 40 days. Bread will be made from salted lentil. Even the tree shoots and shrubs will be plucked for provision. On that day a fountainhead will spring forth from the Temple of the Lord and will level the *valley of Shittim*.

This *Armilius* will bring forth from the *winter-house*, the temple of the scoffers his mother whom he has raised as a monument. From every place the heathen nations will come and worship that statue. And they will burn incense and pour libations on it. And no one could look at her radiant face. And whoever does not bow down before it would die in everlasting pestilent torment.

This is the outlook of *Armilius*: he is fair-haired; he is green (from top) to his feet; the width of his face is half a cubit; with abysmal eyes; (he has) two horns.

He will rise up and reign in the city of *Emmaus*, with Satan, father of *Belial*. And everyone who sees him will tremble before him.

Appendix 3: Translation of The Apocalypse of Zerubbabel.

But *Menahem* will rise up from the *valley of Shittim* and he will blow on his face and will kill him, as it is (said) before*: "By the breath of his mouth, he will kill the wicked one*." And dominion will come for Israel and the Most High saints will receive the kingdom.

Metatron said these words to *Zerubbabel* son of *Shealtiel*, governor of Judea, in exile during the time of the Persian Empire. They were recorded unaltered by *Zechariah* son of *Anan* and *Elijah* while in exile.

PRIFYSGOL CARDYDD