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From Kavād to al-Ghazālī

Religion, Law and Political Thought in the Near East, c.600–c.1100

ASHGATE
VARIORUM
shared enjoyment of the here and now (in the right measure) being part of the struggle against evil. Zaradushthiasm could be characterized as Gnostic thought in a life-affirming spirit, and this is so odd a phenomenon that some scholars have trouble accepting it. But whatever else may be said about Zaradushthiasm, run-of-the-mill it was not. The key to its oddity seems to lie in the fact that it was a Zoroastrian answer to Gnosticism.

POSTSCRIPT


p. 455: For some remarkable parallels to the Zaradushth view of property, see N. Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium, London 1970, pp. 182f: "They believe that all things are common, whence they conclude that theft is lawful to them"; the Bishop of Strasbourgh reproved of the adepts of the Free Spirit in 1317; cheating, theft, and robbery with violence were all justified, an adept by the name of John of Pern confirmed. The Spiritual Libertines described by Calvin also held that nobody should possess anything of his own and that each should take whatever he could lay hands on. "Give, give, give, give up your houses, horses, goods, lands, give up, account nothing your own, have all things in common..."; as the seventeenth-century Ranter Abiezr Coppe exclaimed.


See also the postscript to the previous article.

The argument of this paper* is that Byzantine Iconoclasm was a response to the rise of Islam. This is an old-fashioned point of view. First advanced by the Byzantines themselves, the theory of Saracen influence was accepted by older scholarship on the subject, and long remained academically respectable. In the last generation, however, it has fallen out of favour. Contemporary literature on the subject, though far from agreed in other respects, is virtually unanimous that, whatever may have been the causes of Iconoclasm, Islam was not among them. That the military success of the Arabs impressed the Byzantines is not denied; if anything, it is emphasized. But the assumption that the Byzantines paid attention to what the successful Arabs believed is now deemed proven, unnecessary or even incredible.

Yet the case for Islam seems so effortless that the determination to exclude it must strike the outsider as an almost wilful exercise of professional scepticism. A priori, the theory that Iconoclasm was a Byzantine response to Islam is certainly not implausible, and no serious objection has so far been advanced against it. It can, of course, be argued that, inasmuch as hostility to images is endemic in Christianity, what looks like a pattern of Christian-Muslim interaction is to be dismissed as pure coincidence. But it is considerably simpler to assume that it was the role of Islam to make epidemic what had hitherto been merely endemic – particularly as the search for alternative causes has only led to an alarming accumulation of unconvincing theories.¹ All in all, it is hard to avoid the suspicion that if the Byzantines had not themselves been so sure that Iconoclasts and Saracos were somehow related, modern scholars would have been as happy to expend their energies in championing the case for Islam as they currently are to debunk it. But the Byzantines may after all have been right. It is at least worth examining more closely the evidence for the impact of Islam before we persevered in trying to explain it away.

That the evidence for the role of Islam in the genesis of Iconoclasm can, in fact, be refined and extended will be shown in due course. It is, however, helpful to approach the evidence via a more general question: what kind of impact could

* The present paper owes its genesis to the arrival of Dr. Judith Herlin at the Warburg Institute in October 1976. It was written at her instigation for her seminar on Iconoclasm, inspired by her persistent scepticism and greatly improved by the availability of her learning. She is, of course, to be held responsible for the views set forth here. I am also much indebted to Michael Cook for a variety of notions ranging from suggestive ideas to drastic repunctuation.

Islam be expected to have on Byzantium? We may begin to answer this question by spelling out the implications of a single but basic point. The distinctive feature of the Muslim threat to Byzantium was that it was at once conceptual and political: the Christian faith and the Christian polity were under simultaneous attack.

Now the Byzantines were certainly used to attacks on their faith, not just by heretics within Christianity, but also by the Jews outside it; and the Jews were unquestionably a conceptual menace. Unlike mere heretics or pagans, they rejected Christianity in the name of the monotheist tradition which Jews and Christians share; in other words, they denied Christianity in the name of Christian values. But politically, of course, the Jews were powerless. "For 600 years your temple has lain ruined and burnt," "God has dispersed you over the earth," "God is angry with you," and words to similar effect are staple arguments in anti-Jewish polemic.5 From the Jews, the Christian possession of power thus provided some assurance that Christianity was God's own religion.

Equally, the Byzantines were very used to attacks on their polity, not just by rebels within Byzantium, but also by the barbarians outside it; and some of these were certainly a political menace. But conceptually the barbarians were insignificant. The Franks might try to emulate Byzantine civilisation and the Avars to destroy it, but either way they merely confirmed the Byzantines in their values. Barbarian success at most demonstrated that the Byzantines had fallen short of their own values: military defeat, like drought and plague and other misfortunes, was a rod with which God punished his believers for their sins.6 But it was the barbarians, the Christian possession of power demonstrated that Byzantium was God's own empire.

What the Byzantines had never experienced before was a monotheist attack on both their faith and their power.7 The Arabs were, so to speak, Jews who had come back with an army, or conversely, barbarians returning with a prophet: they were not just God's rod, but also claimed to be his mouthpiece, and their tremendous success lent some credence to their claim.8 So far from buttressing Byzantine

values, the Arabs undermined them.9 This time it was not just the traditional Christian sins, but also the traditional Christian values which had to be reviewed.

Just how it felt can be seen in the former Byzantine province of Syria. Syria had a local elite of so-called Melkite Christians, that is Christians who, unlike the dissident Monophysites, adhered to the official definition of orthodoxy, wrote in Greek, ran the provincial bureaucracy and identified closely with the fortunes of the empire. Upon the Arab conquest, this elite was politically and religiously disestablished all but overnight, and — reduced to rubbing shoulders with the Jews and the Monophysites in the ghettos — they soon lost their unthinking confidence in Melkite truth. Already at the time of the conquest in 634, the Jews had widely observed that the Roman empire was suffering diminution,10 and some thirty years later — when it was clear that the diminution was going to be permanent — Melkites were asking the inevitable question: how do we know that Christianity is really superior to other faiths?11 That they did not know is clear from the sudden spate of Melkite polemics against Jews12 and also against Monophysites,13 and from

p. 53) and among the Turks (S. Vryonis, The Decline of Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century, Berkeley 1971, p. 435). Compare also the Spanish argument, that the pagan gods had failed to help the Indians, while the true God had allowed the Spanish to conquer Mexico (R. Ricard, The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico, Berkeley 1966, p. 87). And note how the Byzantines have to remind themselves that the victories of the Muslims were not a proof of the truth of their religion (A.-T. Khoury, Les Théologiens Byzantins et l'Islam, Louvain-Paris 1969, p. 166; similarly their descendants, in Vryonis, loc. cit., and the contemporary Armenians, in Keroudian, loc. cit.).


Pseudo-Athanasius, Quaestiones ad Antiochum Dionem, PGCV XXVIII, col. 634 (question 24). The date of the tract is probably provided by the answer: no Christian emperor has ever been killed by barbarians nor could they destroy his image with the cross on the coinage. This answer can only have been given between Mi'差不多's unsuccessful attempt to strike coins without crosses and Aḥd al-Malik's monetary reform (cf. P. Crone & M. Cameron, Hayyam, The Making of the Islamic World, Cambridge 1977, p. 11; no other barbarians made such attempts). Williams dates it to the 7th century on the grounds that it has no reference to the icon controversy and that it was used by 7th (or 8th) century writers such as the author of the dialogue of Papæus and Philo (Williams, op. cit., pp. 160, 171; cf. below, n. 12), but neither consideration excludes the date proposed here. Despite its Egyptian attribution, it was almost certainly written in Syria: quite apart from the fact that the Egyptians hardly wrote anything in Greek after the Arab conquest, the original is likely to have been in Syria (cf. below, n. 41).

5 See, for example, G. Bardi (ed. and tr.), Les Trophées de Damas in Patrologia Orientalis, XV, Paris 1903, p. 230. Anti-Jewish writings are commonly dated by the number of years God has been angry with the Jews.

6 This belief was not, of course, specific to the 7th century: compare the pagan and Christian reactions to the various barbarian invasions in W.E. Kazig, Byzantium and the Decline of Rome, Princeton 1968; and the European reaction to the advance of the Turks in J.W. Bohstedt, "The Infield Source of God," Transactions of the American Philosophical Society NS 58 (1968), pp. 25ff.

7 Zoroastrian Persia, though in some sense monotheist, was too alien to be a model to which it hurt most.

8 For Muslim arguments from political success to religious truth see Keroudian, Histoire des guerres des Arabes en Armeine (tr. G.V. Chahabazarian), Paris 1856, p. 97; D. Soudail (ed. and tr.), "Un pamphlet musulman anonyme d'ap puzzled scientists against the Christians," Revue des Etudes Islamiques 34 (1966), p. 33 = 26 (where references are given in this form, the first figure refers to the text and the second to the translation); cf. also ibid., pp. 10f. Similar arguments recur in later texts (L. Feith, Islam and Christianity in Mitredia, Breslau 1936,

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they were circumcised of the heart, not of the flesh, and they adhered to the inner, not the literal sense of Mosaic law. But in return, the proselytes accepted the Judaic shell. If they did not become Jews, they still ceased to know themselves as Hellenes, and if they did not live by the law, they still retained the Old Testament as part of their scriptures. Mainstream Christianity is not Jewish Christianity, but equally it is not Marcionism; or, to put it in the words of the Iconoclast Council of 754, Christianity strikes a middle course between paganism and Judaism. What this means is that the nature of Christianity is somewhat ill-defined. Christians can both Hellenize and Judaize: as they can have a renaissance so they can have a reformation. And what they do in practice depends largely on the location of the magnetic field at any given time.

Now what the rise of Islam represented was precisely a shift of the magnetic field. Islam is no middle course between a monotheist faith and a pagan culture. If Christianity is Judaism gone soft, Islam by contrast is Judaism restated as an Arab faith: like Judaism, it is strictly monotheist where Christianity is trinitarian, it is shaped as an all-embracing holy law where Christianity is antinomian, and it finds its social embodiment in a learned laity where Christianity has priests. Hence, what in the eyes of the Byzantines was a time-hallowed alliance between a pagan tradition and a Jewish God, in those of the Muslims was simply a pagan corruption of the true monotheism, a failure on the part of the Byzantines to take their monotheism seriously; and everything indicated that God himself saw it the Muslim way. On the Byzantine side, then, one would expect a cultural shift: if before they had been Hellenizing, now they were likely to start Judaizing: and in fact that is precisely what happened.

From the reign of Leo III onwards, there was a spectacular attack on images, saints, relics, intercessors and what other channels of grace had appeared beside the ecclesiastical sacraments, followed by a no less spectacular onslaught on monks, the social incarnation of the saints; and at the same time a biblical orientation came to the fore in law and learning as such. In religious terms, the Iconoclast movement was a monotheist reformation: the Byzantines now took their Judaic God seriously. And in political terms its analogue was greater integration. As the focus of religious loyalties shifted from parochial saints to the supreme God, so that of political loyalties shifted from provincial cities to the imperial metropolis, and the two

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336 f. Note the use of the popular dialogue form rather than the learned treatise by one of these authors, and the wanderings among the masses of another.

34 A. Mignan (ed. and tr.), Sources syriaques, Leningrad (1907), p. 157 = *76*, cf. Baumstark, Geschichte, p. 369, for the lost apology of one of these converts.

The late 7th century Syrian apocryphal of pseudo-Methodius complains of conversions (E. Sackur, Größliche Texte und Forschungen, Halb 1898, p. 86), but it is not clear whether the apocryphe originated in a Mekite or sectarian environment, though the very fact that it passed into Greek (and Latin) would indicate the former. A Greek anti-Jewish tract also concedes that some Christians have denied their faith, though more Jews are said to have done so without suffering persecution (A.C. McGiffert (ed.), Dialogue Between a Christian and a Jew Entitled Anabibl Tapiusos kai Philinos Joudaides pro monnikous ina, Murburg 1889, *73*, p. 75). The oldest preserved version of this tract was written shortly before the Arab conquest (we are told that the Christians have been preserved for 600 years, that Christianity is triumphant even in Britain, that the Jewish sympathies have become Christian and that the coinage displays the cross, ibid., 79; cf. also the editorial introduction, pp. 42f). But it contains two or three interpolated passages in defence of image worship (41, 13, 150), which must have been added about 670 or 740, since we are now told that the Jews have been deprived of their sanctuary for 600 or 670 years (ibid., pp. 781; on these interpolations we also McGiffert's intro-
duction, p. 38, and Williams, op. cit., p. 173), and it is in one of these interpolations that the refer-
te to apostasy occurs. As far as the Jews are concerned, however, the reference is almost certainly to the biblical past. The case of the Christians is not clear, but the very fact that the interpolator should take up the subject suggests that it was of topical interest, particularly as he doubtless worked in a Muslim province (two MSS hold that the dispute took place in the presence of both Jews and Arabs; the Tophet and Questioners are the two main sources; the latter recension was certainly done in the east; cf. Williams, op. cit., p. 170f, 175). If so, the province must have been Syria (cf. n. 8).

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35 J. Guizzi et al. (ed. and tr.), Chronica Minora (+ CSCO, Scriptores Syri, 3rd series, vol. 11), Louvain 1903–07, p. 38 = 31.
The Byzantine reformation was, above all, an iconoclast one because on the Christian side images had long been a sore point. The scriptorial prohibition of images comes in the one bit of the law that Christians usually considered themselves bound by, the Decalogue, and early Christian writers had certainly taken it seriously.  However, it is true that the brutal Draconian attack on art was directed against idols rather than religiously neutral or Christian art, and that in practice Christian artists were less inhibited than one would have assumed from the literary evidence; but in principle figurative art of any kind was something which Christians would do best to dispense with. If it was not condemned outright, it was denigrated as distracting make-believe; it was to be kept out of the churches or, when it could not be kept out, to be tolerated there as visual aids for the liturgy; later it was even encouraged as such, 12 but the perfect, as they fastened to assure themselves, derived no pleasure from it. 23 Christian art, in short, was granted recognition by a series of concessions. 24 Now had the spokesmen of Christianity been asked to concede no more than that, the outbreak of Iconoclasm would hardly have been so easy to provoke. But by the seventh century it had long been painfully obvious to everyone that representations of holy persons had actually come to be worshipped. 25 That the Christians should thus have relapsed into idolatry is not, of course, entirely accidental. Where the holy law of Judaism or Islam is a concrete feature of everyday reality, divine grace by contrast is a more elusive entity which may have been incarnate in the past and which continues to generate miracles on Sundays, but which stands in need of additional modes of manifestation on Monday mornings: the point about images, saints and relics is precisely that they make the holy and the humdrum meet. 26 But for those who think, it was evidently not a comforting thought that the Christians were engaged in a daily violation of God's will, and bad conscience was never far below the surface. 27 It is just possible that the classical justification of image worship had begun to be elaborated before the Arabs arrived on the scene, though a case can equally be made for placing its beginning after their arrival; 28 and whatever the date of the treatises in question, they only had the classical theory in its embryonic form: long after the Arab conquests, invocations of scriptural precedents for images, appeals to their educational value and demands that they were more than reminders of past grace, 29

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19 Note that Theophanes attributes to Arab influence Leo's hostility not only to images, but also to saints and relics (Thaophanes, Chronographia [ed. C. de Boor], Leipzig 1883–85, p. 406, A.M. 6218).
20 H. Koch, Die alleinrichtende Bildfrage nach den literarischen Quellen, Göttingen 1917, especially p. 86; E. Bevan, Holy Images, London 1940, pp. 84ff.; cf. also N. H. Baynes, "Idolatry and the Early Church," in his Byzantine Studies and Other Essays, London 1935. The early Christians might well have argued that the prohibition was not to be taken literally, as the later Christians were to do (cf. John of Damascus, On the Idolatry of the Mosaic Law, bk. 12, 22f., and if they took so long to reach this conclusion, it was doubtless because there were too many pagan idols around to make it safe; compare the hardening of Jewish attitudes to images when Christian idols in their turn became commonplace (below, n. 39).

21 That much one may grant Sister C. Murray, "Art and the Early Church," Journal of Theological Studies NS 28 (1977); but her argument that all attacks on art referred to idolatrous representations, or did not mean what they said, or else were fabricated, is clearly partisan (for the traditional Catholic and Protestant views on the subject, see Bevan, op. cit., pp. 59ff.).
22 For these positions, see ibid., pp. 85–9, 106–16, 125–7; Baynes, "Idolatry," p. 136.
24 In Islam, by contrast, such concessions to practice were staunchly refused.

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26 That comes across very well in Michael III's description of popular habits, in his letter to Louis the Pious (Migne, Iconoclastic Controversy, p. 30). As far as women were concerned, icons were simply a fancy version of ordinary animals - as Theodore so neatly illustrated when the was caught kissing an icon and pretended it was a doll (ibid., p. 210); the role of women in both idolotrous riots and iconolocust restorations has often been noted.
27 Kiétinger, op. cit., p. 113; cf. also Baynes' observation that the anti-Jewish writings were meant to reassure the Christians rather than to persuade the Jews ("The Icons before Iconoclasm," in his Byzantine Studies and Other Essays, p. 236).
28 As applied to statues of the emperor, the theory that the honour paid to an image is referred to the prototype had become sufficiently familiar for Basil of Caesarea and Athanasius of Alexandria to invoke it in illustration of the relationship between the Father and the Son in the fourth century (Basil, Liber de Spiritu Sancto, MPG XXXI, col. 149; Athanasius, Quaestiones adversus Ariammon, ibid., XVII, col. 332); but as an apology for worship or representations of divinities, it was still considered a pagan argument by John Philopolus in the mid-6th century (Alexander, The Patriarch Niphonius, p. 35), and is first met as a Christian argument in the works of Leontius of Naples and John of Thessalonica in the early 7th (ibid., p. 33).
29 Now, unlike the Arab conquests, the Persian war can hardly explain this sudden need to justify the cult of icons: the antagonism between the Persians and the Jews was very shortlived, and moreover, it was not conceptual. Since Leontius died after 650, he may well have written after the Arab conquests (L. Rydén, Das Leben des heidnischen Symeon von Leontius von Naples, Uppsala 1963, p. 17); and so also may John of Thessalonica. It is true that the prose text of name who wrote the discourses on the Life of St. Demetrius was archbishop between 610 and 649 (and that in the earlier rather than the later part of this period), but the grounds for identifying him with the author of the treatise on images are extremely weak (M. Jüg, "La vie et les oeuvres de Jean de Thessalonique," Echos d'Orient 21 (1922)). The John of Thessalonica who participated in the Council of 680's seems at least as plausible a candidate (ibid., p. 293).
remained the primary method of Christian defense. At the time of the conquest, when the Christian church was still completely exposed. All that was required for the mise-en-scène of Iconoclasm was that it be a phenomenon of the ninth century and it may not be much earlier. But the fear of iconoclasm was a profound expression in Umayyad and early Abbasid art. Animistic beings are represented wherever they could not be interpreted as idolatrous as, for example, in the sacred and usually highly private context of royal palaces, though even here the art is basically aniconic. But they are meticulously avoided whenever the suspicion of idolatry might arise, as in most public places and above all in religious contexts. This is not to say that there were no flagrant exceptions. But

39 So even to Leontius himself (cf. Baynes, "Icon before Iconoclasts," pp. 230 ff.).

40 The defence, as Kitzinger notes, lagged behind the attack ("Cult of Images," p. 87).

41 It is important for the Muslim attitude to images that Islam hired off from Judaism after the permisive attitudes of the Helenistic Jews had been eroded by the rise of the Christian God. This hardening of Jewish views is not well attested in Jewish literature, but that is due to the attestation outside it. On the archaeological side, we have the deliberate destruction of figu-

42 Note also Gerasimos' statement in 724, that the Jews have long abandoned the Christians of idolatry (Epitaphs of Thadmon episcopus Claudius, MGP XVIII, vol. 168), and Abgal's observation a century later in the West that the Jews consider the Christians idolaters and believe Muslims to be the work of devils, not of saints (Epitaphia de judaeis superstitionibus, MPL CIV, col. 88).

43 Christian style arguments for a general relaxation of the prohibition (as opposed to specific dispositions) were not so immediate; but that too the above provocation of the Jewish references to Solomon's statues and Jesus' clay-birds; they are added only to be accused. Christians and Muslims alike held that images had been prohibited because idolatry had once been prevalent, in the days of Moses according to the former, those of Jesus according to the latter. But where the Christians inferred that images were now permitted, the Muslims concluded that the prohibition must still be observed (B. Faris, "Philosophie et jurisprudence illustré par les Arabes la question des images en Islam," in Mélanges Masqueton II, Damascus 1956., pp. 100 ff.).

44 R. Paret, "Textebriefe zur islamischen Bilderverbot," in Das Werk des Künstlers, Studien zur Kunstgeschichte h. Schadé dargestellt, Stuttgart 1960. Note the straight carry-over from rabbinical to Islamic rules of desecration by mutilation or disrespect. An image on a Jewish cup is decratered by water running over it, one on a Muslim church-bird being burnt; the Jews may have animistic representations on mosaics floors, and the Muslims may have them on carpets and cushions; and what has been covered by dirt is inoffensive to both (E. E. Urbach, "The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry in the Second and Third Centuries in the Light of Archaeological and Historical Facts," Israel Exploration Journal 9 (1959), pp. 233, 237n.; J. Neusner, Talmudic Judaism in Second Century Babylonia, Leiden 1976, p. 81; J. T. Arnold, Painting in Islam, Oxford 1928, pp. 7ff.; Paret, "Textebriefe," pp. 40 ff., 45 ff., idem, "Das islamische Bilderverbot," in zum Schauplätzen, Freiburg 1966, pp. 226, 228; 'Abd al-Razzaq b. Hamutan al-Shidqi, al-Muqaddiam (ed. H.-R. al-Ajamī), Beirut 1970–X (p. 359, on the newer ground, which is of more uncertain origin, that they involve a pre- sumptuous attempt to imitate the creative power of God. This second reason is first encountered in the ninth century and may not be much earlier, but the fear of iconoclasm is an eloquent expression in Umayyad and early Abbasid art. Animistic beings are represented wherever they could not be interpreted as idolatrous as, for example, in the sacred and usually highly private context of royal palaces, though even here the art is basically aniconic. But they are meticulously avoided whenever the suspicion of idolatry might arise, as in most public places and above all in religious contexts. This is not to say that there were no flagrant exceptions. But

No. 19489). These were, of course, rigorists in both camps who would have none of such concessions, but note that the Jews made figurative mosaic floors as late as the 6th century, long after the reaction against statues and paintings had set in (Steinke, Ancient Synagogues, p. 65).

45 Paret, "Textebriefe," pp. 43 ff.; compare Clement of Alexandria, Stromata VI, 16, 144, where even animistic representations are condemned on this score. That Clement is here addressing the standard Muslim objection to images was noted by Baynes, who also found a remarkable Talmudic parallel: Joshua b. Levi (ca. AD 250) contrasted the painter's inability to put souls into his pictures with God's power to animate what he shapes, concluding that there is no sculptor like our God (Brakkoth, I 10a; Bevan, Holy Image, pp. 83, 87). The point of the comparison, however, is God's grandeur rather than the iniquity of painters, and though the iconoclasts recur elsewhere, it never seems to be used for a sweeping condemnation of art (cf. Archer, "The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry," p. 237; compare the absence of such condemnations in Korn 59:24, where God is also a manuwn). Clement, moreover, makes a special distinction in favour of representations on signet rings, so do also the Muslims (Pseudoagath. 12, 1; cf. below, n. 36); it is true that here he is concerned with the frivolity of art rather than the prerogatives of God, and his genuine writings are not known to have enjoyed much circulation in the Christian Middle East; but there seems to be no trace in Islam of the complex rabbinic rulings regarding signet-rings (cf. Arakad Zarath, 1:43b). On balance, then, the evidence would suggest a Clementine rather than a rabbinic ancestry for this argument.

46 It was known to Abu Quira (G. ca. 820) and 'Abd al-Razzaq (d. 827), and Becker's conclusion that it was of fairly recent origin is in no way borne out by the fact that it appears, only in the hadiths attributed to the Prophet (the presumably earlier) Companion hadiths give no reason for its hostility to images (Becker, Islamologie, Leipzig 1924–32, 2, p. 447; 'Abd al-Razzaq b. Hamutan, Muqaddiam, pp. 394ff., Nos. 19489f.).


48 O. Grabar, "Islam and Iconoclasm," in Breyer & Herrin, Iconoclast, p. 4; idem, Formation of Islamic Art, p. 93 (note the elegant example of Mshatta, where the mosaic wall is the only one to have no animistic decorations). Grabar's own theory (dated, later, even in Breyer & Herrin, loc. cit., and in his notes appended to M.G.S. Hodgson, "Islam and Image," History of Religions 3 [1963]: 1) that the Arabs rejected images because they could not create a meaningful iconography without becoming like the Christians thus holds good for secular art alone; and even here it is hardly the only explanation. There is indeed a striking example of an unsuccessful effort for an Islamic iconography in 'Abd al-Malik's coinage (O. Grabar, "Islamic Art and Byzantium," Dumbarton Oaks Papers 18 [1964], p. 80), but then 'Abd al-Malik was a Muslim high-priest and the Muslim rabbi's had no doubt that iconic coins might invalidate prayer (Paret, "Das islamische Bilderverbot und die Schim," pp. 225 ff.; compare Arakad Zarath, 5:50a; Prouhix, I, 104a). Given that the concern with iconic coins became largely obsolete with 'Abd al-Malik's monetary reform, these traditions would appear to be a noteworthy example of
it is certainly hard to deny that, their black stone apart, the Muslims were almost completely free of pagan sins. Hence they could assuage the Christians with impunity.

And so indeed they did. Behaviourally, Arab hostility to pictures and other idolatrous objects such as the cross finds expression in the sporadic removal or destruction of both from the time of the early conquests onwards.43 Legally, the hostility is endorsed in the demand that crosses be kept out of public sight 44 and in the permission to break both images and crosses provided that compensation is paid for the raw materials.45 And polemically, the Arabs can be seen to take up the old arguments of the Jews against the Christians from the mid-Umayyad period onwards.46 The Jews had, of course, long been in the habit of reminding the

Shi’ite archaisms). The Companion hadiths in ‘Abd al-Razzāq are hostile to representations of animate beings regardless of context, and even inanimate ones come under attack when they are sculptural (Muqaddam X, pp. 598 ff.; Nov. 1946–9, 194931). Scholarly endorsement of animate representations is in fact extremely rare, though there is a notable example in the case of signet rings (Ibn Sa’d, Kindāt ibn-baqaq [ed. E. Sachau] LEIDEN 1905–40, IV, pp. 96, 146, 210; VII, pt. 1, pp. 1, 5, 71).

47 According to Abū-l-Hajjāj ibn Sahl al-Razzāq al-Wāsiti, Tarikht Wāsit (ed. C. Sawādī; Baghdad 1967, p. 76, the newly built mosque of Wāsit was graced with a Venus whose breasts served as water spouts. Whether ‘Abd Allāh had argued, in the style of R. Gamalīl, that there is a difference between making a mosque for Aphrodite and making an Aphrodite as an adornment for the mosque, is not recorded (cf. Miraḥ, Asadāt Zaraq, 3, 4).

48 One of the Saracens living in the Church of St. Theodore, shortly after the conquest of Syria, shot an arrow at the image of the saint which immediately began to bleed (F. Nas [tr.], Les Récits infidèles du moine Anastase [= Extrait de la Revue de l’Institut Catholique de Paris], Paris, 1903, p. 54; the story is repeated by John of Damascus, Oratio III, col. 1393). Aḥbāb b. ‘Abd al-Ażzaṣvat at an image of the virgin in Egypt, promising to aport the Christians from the land (Sevussus b. al-Muṣafī, History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria [ed. and tr. B. Brevett], in Paraliturgia Orientalis V, p. 52). The Council of Nicaea knew of a Saracen who knocked out the eye of an image, whereupon his own eyes immediately fell out (Martin, Iconolatric Controversy, p. 29). Crowes were removed in various places soon after the conquest of Syria (Michael the Syriac, Chronique IV, pp. 421f. II, pp. 431f; Chronicon ad annum Christi 1224 perp. [ed. J. Chabot and tr. J. H. Chabot & A. Abouna] [= CSCO, Scriptores Syrii, vol. 36–5, 1341, Louvain 1920–74, vol. I, pp. 262f. 209). In Egypt they were destroyed in the 680s (E. Anschutz [ed. and tr.], Histoire du Patriarce Copte Iau [= Publications de l’Ecole des Lettres d’Alger], Paris 1890, p. 43; Severus, Patriarch of Alexandria, p. 25). Muslims promised to break the cross over Leo III’s head in 717 and, after the battle of Bagrawya in 722, the Arabs removed the sacred objects and relics from the church and broke the glorious cross of Christ (Martyrium, lep. 104, 147).


50 Muhammad b. Ḥaddāt al-Shaffī, Kāf aṭ-Ṭāh, Bulaq 1321–25, IV, pp. 131f., with other canonic details.

51 ‘Disparé que took place between an Arab and a monk of the convent of Ivēth Hāla.’ C. Odeh, Dīyāsbeha 55, 5f. 6a–6b (for the date of this work see Crane & Cook, Magazines, p. 163, n. 23; The Arab enquires about the Christian worship of the Abgar image, crosses and bones of saints, and refers to the fact that the Iberiates received a “sentence of capital punishment!” every time they worshiped images made with human hands; the monk adds the brazen serpent, the ark of the covenant and other biblical examples (though not the cherubim) and in

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Christians of their core spot,44 but it was only with Arab backing that the Jewish arguments could really hurt. And hurt they clearly did. On the Syrian side, just about all of the anti-Jewish tracts suddenly deal with images and related objects,45 and on the Byzantine side there is a case for dating the two major pre-Iconoclast treaties in favour of images to the years following the Arab conquests.46

We thus have a situation in which something was very likely to happen on the Christian side. Now in 721 there was a rather unusual outbreak of official iconoclasm among the Arabs, when Yazīd II (720–24) began a systematic destruction of Christian images and crosses, not just in public places, but also in churches and private homes,47 and it was then that something did happen among the Christians. In 724 there was an outbreak of popular iconoclasm in Anatolia and by 726 it had reached Constantinople.48 This extraordinary chronological sequence is not likely familiar with Basil’s idea that “we cover the picture of the king for the sake of the king”); Soudai, “Un pamphlet anonyme,” pp. 29 = 17f; A. Jeffreys (tr.), "Chédevet's Test of the Correspondence between Ḫumar Allah and Leo III," Harvard Theological Review 37 (1944), p. 278; ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. Ahmad al-Hamadānī, Tarikht Wāsit’s addīyat al-mahāwir (ed. A. Lihtham; Beirut: 1964, p. 167 = S.M. Stern, “Abd al-Jabbār’s Account of how Christ’s Religion was Exalted by the Adoption of Roman Customs” Journal of Theological Studies NS 291968), p. 147); cf. Becker, Islamstudies, I, p. 448. For later attacks on the cult of images, crosses, graves and the Virgin, see Frisch, Islam and Christenheit im Mittelalter, pp. 138ff; Vizetton, The decline of Hellenism, p. 434; and note the reappearance in the former work of the old Jewish question why the Christians do not worship asses (Frisch, op.cit., p. 139, compare Bundy, Triomphs de Dames, p. 248). In the Questions, the Christian has heard this question from Jews and pagans (Helbon), and since he had hardly been exposed to genuine pagans, we probably have here a translation of the Syriac hābd, a common term for Muslims (Questions, col. 621f. question xii).

44 Cf. above, n. 30.

45 Thus, the Doxologia iacovi and the Questions (cf. Baynes, “The Icons before Icono-
clasm,” p. 237), the Triomphs de Dames, the Dialogue of Pappus and Philo (assuming that it is indeed Syriac), Jerome of Jerusalem, Stephen of Botra and some Arianathspurans, William, Adversus Judaeos, p. 159ff). Similarly, the Disputation of Siqayt the Stylist, which goes to town about crosses, images and bones of saints alike (pp. 22ff. = 23f).

46 Cf. above, n. 28.

47 A.A. Vasiliev, “The Iconoclastic Edict of the Caliph Yazid II, A.D. 721,” Dumbarton Oaks Papers 9 (1955). The historicity of the decree is not in doubt. It is attested in Greek, Syrian, Egyptian and Armenian sources, and of those both the Syriac and the Egyptian traditions are clearly local (cf. the Syriac recollection that it was Muslima who was responsible for the enforcement of the decree, and Kindt’s detail on the statue in the bath of Zabīn b. ‘Abd al-Ażza; there is excellent archaeological evidence of deliberate excision of animate figures from Christian pictures in Syria and Egypt; and the insistence of the Syriac and Greek traditions that Jews were called in to do the job certainly lends credibility to the accounts compare the use of Jews to remove crosses from churches in Jerusalem as recorded by Michael the Syrian and the chronicle of 1234 (for the references, see n. 38), and to demolish the Church of the Justin for the construction of the Great Mosque of Damascus as attested in the Islamic tradition (Trümm, The Caliphs and their non-Muslim Subjects, p. 95).

48 G. Ostrouhovsky, “Les débuts de la querelle des images,” Milanges C. Diehl I, Paris 1930. Theophanes’ suggestion that Leo began to display his hostility to images already in 724 is not so unlikely: the volcanic eruption in 726 was simply the sign that spurred him into action (cf.}
to be coincidental, and two further points reinforce the suspicion that what we see is a pattern. First, when Constantine of Nicaula, the Phrygian bishop involved in the iconoclast outbreak of 724, argued that pictures were idolatrous and against the law, Germanus, the Patriarch, sent him a letter telling him not to worry: their attacks on the Christians notwithstanding, the Jews are also idolatrous, and so for that matter are the Saracens who worship the black stone. The contemporary Germanus, in other words, had no doubts that the raw nerve of the Phrygians had been hit by Jewish and Arab polemics. Secondly, in Armenia there was a suggestive revival of iconoclasm after the arrival of the Arabs, while in the West there was an isolated outburst of iconoclasm at the hands of a bishop who came from Spain, combined his attack on images with an onslaught on intercession and saints and was, moreover, an Adoptianist, that is, an adherent of a Spanish heresy which had certainly been launched in response to Islam. The Arabs, in other words, appear to have hit raw nerves wherever they went. In sum, we have a general expectation that Islam might provoke iconoclasm, a perfect chronological sequence, explicit contemporaneous testimonia and striking parallels — a cluster of evidence which is all the more impressive for coming from a period for which most of the source material has been lost. To dismiss all this as accidental would require a scepticism verging on the fideist.

Ibid., pp. 240ff.). But whether an edict was actually issued before 730 scarcely matters in this context.

46 Germanus, Epistula, col. 168.


48 Martin, Iconoclastic Controversy, pp. 262 ff. Note that Claudius of Turin also asked the Christians why they did not worship asses (ibid., p. 266).

They would appear to have hit even the Jews: cf. Omenn’s rejection of incense, lamps and prostrations before the shrines of the law in the synagogues (J. Mann, "A Tract by an early Karate Sotter in Jerusalem," Jewish Quarterly Review 12 [1922], p. 277 + 266; cf. N. Wieder, The Jueden Srottoyl and Karateh, London 1962, p. 267); the Generalis embarrassment about mosaic floors in synagogues (Neuensch, Talmudic Judaism, p. 88n.; cf. n. 32); and the sarcastic references of a 10th-century Rabbanite to Christian icons and paintings (J. Mann, "An Early Theologico-Political Work," Hebrew Union College Annual 12—13 [1937—38], p. 417). Christian iconoclasm on the other side of the border by contrast failed to inhibit Jewish speculations about the images on Solomon’s throne (E. Ville-Pattagren, "Une image de Solomon en basilics byzantins," Revue des Etudes Juives 121 [1962], p. 26ff.). And conversely Muslim iconoclasm failed to affect the Christians within the Arab dominions, presumably because unlike the Christians outside and the Jews within, they had to hang on to what they had.

Note also the effect of Christian counter-reconstructions on the Arabs. Germanus having identified the black stone as idolatrous, ‘Umar had qualms about kissing it (Yasilli, "The Iconoclastic Edict of the Caliph Yazid II," p. 27); the black stone is similarly presented as the Muslim equivalent of the cross in K. Volkers (tr.), "Das Religionsgespräch von Jerusalem (um 800 D) aus dem Arabischen übersetzt," Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 29 [1908], pp. 215f., and in Jefferies, "Chevovad’s Text," p. 322f.). Abu Qurra’s charge, that God tells the angels to kiss the Adam in the Koran, is dealt with by Ibn Batin, who presumably found his arguments in earlier sources (Becker, Islamstudien 1, p. 449).

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A similar case can be made for law. That the Christians have no law was a favourite Muslim accusation which is attested already in 64455 and which likewise gave backing to Jewish arguments. The Christian reaction can be followed in Iraq. Already in 676 a preamble to the acts of a Nestorian synod displayed an unusual interest in Christian jurisprudence, and after the transfer of the Muslim capital to Iraq in 750, the Nestorians busied themselves refurbishing the theoretical foundations of Christian law on the one hand and compiling books of substantive law on the other; and the man who perhaps began this activity explicitly referred to the Jewish and Arab polemics which had set him going.56 Now if one turns from 1 Abbasid Iraq to Umayyad Syria, one finds that the Arabs had precisely the same effect on the Christians across the border in Byzantium, where Leo III compiled his Eclogue.

The Eclogue is an unusual document. For one thing, Byzantine emperors did not often compile legal codes: after Justinian only Leo III and Basil I (867-869) did so, and Basil explicitly stated that he did so in order to blot out Leo’s compilation.57 For another, both Justinian and Basil were interested in Roman law, whereas Leo’s concern was Christian: where Basil improved his selection of Roman law codes, Leo improvised a Christian code.

55 F. Nau (ed. and tr.), "Un coloquio del Patriarca Jean avec l’emir des Aghars," Journal Asiatique (11ème serie) 5 (1915), p. 231 + 261 (where the accusation still takes the form of a question: are the Christian laws in the Gospel or not?).

56 They seem in fact to have done more than that. The standard Jewish question before the rise of Islam is why the Christians have abrogated the law of Moses, not why they have no proper replacement; but by the late 8th century it is the second question that both Jews and Muslims ask (for the reference see below, n. 57).

57 J.-B. Chabot (ed. and tr.), Synodicon Orientale ou Recueil de synodes nestoriaux (= Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale XXVIII), Paris 1902, pp. 215ff + 430. Contrast the absence of such preoccupations in the earliet prefaces.

58 Crane and Cook, Babylon, p. 180, n. 16. Compare the preamble to the Syrio-Roman lawbook, which would appear to be the Jacobite answer to the same accusations (K.G. Brosn & F. Schaus [eds. and ins.], Syriach-römisches Rechtbuch, Leipzig 1830, preambles to Fr., P., Ar., Am., A. Vöbbur [ed. and tr.], The Synodicon in the West Syrian Tradition II [CSO, Scriptores Syntax, vols. CLXX-CLXXIII], Louvain 1972-76, pp. 100 f. + 106ff.; cf. also E. Schaus [ed. and tr.], Syrische Rechtsbücher, Berlin 1907-14, 1, pp. 46ff + 47f., for its Nestorian version). The preamble is missing from the 6th-century manuscript of the lawbook, and there is no evidence if interest in Christian jurisprudence in pre-Islamic Syria: even John Bar Qureshy, who does broach the subject, is interested in obedience rather than principles (Vöburr, op. cit. i, pp. 145ff. + 1425). A pre-Islamic date thus seems implausible. But conversely, of course, it may be very late, for e.g. is (still) attested in an 11th century manuscript (Bruns & Schaus, op. cit., p. 159), and as late as the 13th century Christians felt impelled to justify their antimonasticism (M. Steinachweber, Polonische und polemische Literatur in arabischer Sprache zwischen Muslimen, Christen und Juden, Leipzig 1877, p. 33).

59 It is worth noting that the first codifier of Christian law in Armenia is John of Oyan (ca. 730).

60 Schaus, Syrische Rechtsbücher III, p. 20 = 21 (ko'hobokt).

laws in the direction of greater utility, Leo by contrast improved his in the direction of greater philanthropy, a term which, however, it is to be understood, was certainly loaded with Christian connotations. But it is above all Leo's Old Testament orientation which is unusual. It is apparent in the selection of scriptural quotations, in the literal application of the Mosaic principle of retribution, in the selection of Mosaic laws appended to the Eclogue by either Leo himself or one of his Iconoclast successors, and, most strikingly, in the presentation of the Eclogue as scriptural law in Leo's preamble. This orientation is very much in line with the general Iconoclast attachment to the Old Testament and it is of course manifest Judaising.

S. Geno, Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Leo III (+ CSCO, Subsidia, vol. 41), Louvain 1973, pp. 56f.
The appendices to the Eclogue, which consist partly of imperial legislation and partly of Mosaic law, were not found in the manuscripts used by Zacharias von Lingenthal, whose edition is reproduced in Zepos & Zepos, but in a 16th century manuscript which was edited by A.G. Monteferrante, Ecloga Leontii et Constantini, Athens 1889 (this is the edition used by Freshfield for his translation of the Eclogue), and in a Norman manuscript of imperial codes dating from the 12th century (E.H. Freshfield [tr.], A Manual of Later Roman Law, Cambridge 1927, p. 6). There is no doubt that the appendices were added officially. Now, the Norman manuscript includes the Prochorion Nomao and a novel of Basil, but no laws legislation, presumably because the Arabs completed their conquest of Sicily in 878 (ibid., p. 2). So the appendices must have been added before then; and since no Iconoclast ruler (least of all Basil) would wish to augment, as opposed to supersede, the Eclogue, the only question is which Iconoclast emperor did it. 5 A point of subsidiary interest in this context. The concern with scribes, magistrates, Manichaeus and heretics in the appendices might indicate a time when Paulicians and Athanasian were very much in the open, i.e. the second Iconoclast period, and if that is correct, Michael II is an obvious candidate for the authorship.
Leo's preamble may be paraphrased as follows: God gave man a law so that he might be saved; His word endures for ever and He will judge man according to his deeds; therefore I, who have been hidden to feed my flock, will break the bonds of wickedness by drawing up a selection of Roman laws in an imperial language. Leo's Roman laws are thus part of God's enduring words. Contrast the wholly pragmatic attitude of Basil: the law is in a frightful new which is tiresome to students (Zepos & Zepos, op. cit., p. 155 - Freshfield, "Official Manuals," p. 43).

That the Iconoclasts were Judaising was not lost on contemporaries (cf. Geno, Byzantine Iconoclasm, p. 60). But note that in the domain of political authority the Iconoclasts opted, not for a Solomonic restoration in the style of the contemporary Franks, but for a Byzantine caliphate: Leo III's assertion that he was both high-priest and emperor, Leo V's order that the bishops must regard him as the highest ecclesiastical authority, Leo III's and Constantine V's appeal to the latter over the heads of the clergy, and Constantine V's uncanonical election of a Patriarch all recall the Islamic imamate, not the Jewish monarchy (Ostrogoth, "Doubtless,

In view of the Nestorian parallel, this unusual code can plausibly be seen as a response to Islam, and again there are two subsidiary points to reinforce the plausibility. First, it is notable that the Byzantines should opt for scriptural law where the Nestorians, by contrast, chose to base their law with the concept of a Christian oral tradition. To put it rather summarily, these diverse reactions correspond very neatly with the two major stages in the evolution of Muslim jurisprudence. Second, it is notable that Leo should open his preamble by proclaiming that man has been endowed with free will. On the one hand, free will was not a conventional topic of legal preambles, and on the other, it had just become a major issue in Islam so that already John of Damascus thought of determinism as a key Saracen tenet. To someone coming from an Islamic background Leo's statement sounds extremely aggressive, and it is hard to believe that it was not meant as much, particularly as he goes on to state his confidence that, by "breaking the bonds of wickedness" with his law, he may be victorious over his enemies. For Leo, who had risen to the throne shortly before, or during the siege of Constantinople, the Arabs were the enemies. The Eclogue was thus conceived as an instrument of Christian warfare against the Arabs, a rectification of the faith so that God might reign the Byzantines, and this is perhaps the neatest evidence that Byzantine Judaising was a response to the moral and military incursions of the Arabs into the Byzantine world.

Now the Arab-Byzantine interaction might well have taken place directly; there was no lack of direct confrontation, be it military, political, polemical or cultural at the highest level, and the diplomatic warfare that was waged on contemporary coinage was certainly part of such a direct dialogue. There is, nonetheless, a case to be made for an intermediary milieu.

Cote & Cock, Hagia, p. 181, n. 18.
Ibid., pp. 29f., 38.
It is absent from Justinian's Code, Basil's Prochorian Nomao and the Syrian codes.
J. Van Ess, Zwischen Heidnische und Theologie, Berlin - New York 1975, p. 181. Given Van Ess's dating of the controversy, it is not surprising that the topos is still absent from the Nestorian preamble of 676.
Cf. H.A.R. Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate," Damascus Oaks Figure 12 (1938).
Though needless to say, there are those who believe it a mere coincidence that Justinian II (685 - 95, 705 - 11) called himself versus Christ and put images of Christ on his coins, while Abd al-Malik (685 - 705) was experimenting with his mufarrik and umme coins.
The milieu in question is one of Judaeizers who, had, so to speak, gone over the edge to become Judeo-Christians. There was nothing new about the existence of such groups, and Judaeizers who had to a greater or lesser extent gone over the edge are attested, inter alia, in fifth-century Phyrgia and in Syria from the fourth to the thirteenth century, the Syrians in particular being recidivists. But once again Islam made a difference. For one thing, it was always in the Muslim interest to play minorities against the mainstream traditions; and for another, Muslims and Judeo-Christians were natural allies in that both claimed to be representatives of true Christianity. Islam made Judeo-Christians a politically viable position, and accordingly the Judeo-Christians came out of hiding and began to recruit. On the Byzantine side there is some weak evidence of baptized Jews being known as Montanists, presumably in Phyrgia; and it is also in Phyrgia, more precisely in Antiochom, that we find the Athiaganoi who combined Christianity with Mosaic law and Gnostic beliefs; they appear, in fact, to have been Samarian Gnostics, a point which will be taken up later. On the Arab side there is a tenth century attestation of Christians, apparently in the Jazira, who rejected the divinity of Jesus, accepting him only as a good man and more specifically as a good Jew—a point which distinguishes them from the many other Christians in Iraq, Egypt, Armenia and Spain who, on exposure to the Muslims, denied that Jesus was other


59 For the evidence, see S. Kahan, "Isaac of Antioch's Homily against the Jews," Orontis Christianus 97, 99 (1965, 1965), to which Raynaud, Le Discours de Samares te Stylipe, pp. 73 ff. = 721, should now be added. Cf. also B. Blumenkrant, Jus civium dans le monde occidental, Paris 1960, pp. 55ff., for medieval Europe. Most of this pious description appears to have been behavioural rather than doctrinal, a point which distinguishes it from that which was to appear in the Islamic world.

60 For a striking illustration from the time of Me'min, see Michael the Syrian, Chronique IV, p. 517 ff. = III, p. 56; cf. also C. Cohen, "Points de vue sur la révolte de Mabâsidë," Revue historique 230 (1963), p. 299.

61 Leo the Grammarian has it that the Jews baptized by Leo were known as Montanists, and an obstruction formula mentions that the Montanists stand outside the synagogue for unspecified reasons (A. Sharf, *The Jews, the Montanists and the Emperor Leo III,* Byzantinische Zeitschrift 59 (1966), p. 40; Sharf's suggestion that the Montanists, who preferred death to baptism by Leo, were also such Jews is, however, not convincing).


to win over the gentiles, and that the adoption of Christianity by Constantine completed the process of paganism. In short, what the Iconoclast Council defined as a middle course between Judaism and paganism is here taken up for a close and hostile analysis. The Judeo-Christian character of this analysis is unmistakable. It is not, however, very likely that we have here a document going back to the Judeo-Christians of the fourth century, as was suggested by Pines. But equally, it is most unlikely that it was invented by Muslims or Christian converts to Islam, as Stern maintained. If, on the one hand, we have new Judeo-Christian sects and, on the other hand, new Judeo-Christian accounts, it seems natural to put the two together.

The demonstration that they should indeed be put together is a rather lengthy one and has for that reason been relegated to a special section at the end of this paper. Suffice it here to say that if the argument set out there is accepted, there are three conclusions to be drawn. First, there were Judeo-Christian sects in Mesopotamia and Phrygia who broadcast far and wide that Christianity was a corruption of Christ's religion. Second, the Muslims were aware of these sects by the eighth century, and indeed almost certainly before. And third, the Muslims could use their arguments. So could the Jews. That, of course, is precisely why the arguments survived in Muslim and Jewish sources.

We thus have a situation in which Byzantine Christianity is under triple attack: the Arabs on the Byzantine frontier are backing up the Jews inside the Byzantine state and the Judeo-Christians inside the Byzantine church. Now it is these Judeo-Christians who were so eminently well placed to spark off iconoclasm on both sides of the frontier.

If we start on the Arab side, what we are told is this. A Jew promised Yazid II thirty or forty years of rule if he would smash up Christian and other images in his dominions; Yazid's successor killed the Jew, but the Phrygian bishops had got

98 Fritsch noticed it already for the versions preserved in thirteenth-century sources (Islam and Christianity in Mistelbach, p. 50; cf. Stern, op. cit., p. 182).
99 S. Pines, The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries according to a New Source (Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, Proceedings II, 13), Jerusalem 1966. For a discussion of this source (which was by no means as unlikely as Stern would have it), see the section on the Judeo-Christians below.
100 Stern, "Abd al-Jabbar's Account," pp. 184f. For one thing, Pines is certainly right that the original must have been in Syriac (The Jewish Christians, pp. 81f); for another, it was not in the Muslim interest to argue that the Christians ought to be Jews (cf. the neat contrast between Jabbar's and Abd al-Jabbar's handling of the same arguments in S. Pines, "Ishmael, My Firstborn" and the Sonship of Jesus," in Studies in Mysticism and Religion presented to G.G. Scholten, Jerusalem 1967, p. 179f.). But it is, above all, the fact that the author purports to give the inside story which is such striking evidence that he was himself a Judeo-Christian.
101 Thirty years, according to John of Jerusalem's report at the Council of Nicaea in 767 (cf. L.W. Barraclough, The Greek-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy, Leiden 1974, pp. 12ff); forty years, according to Theophanes (Chronographia I, pp. 401f., A.M. 6212) and Tabari, who omits the condition that Yazid should destroy images (To Yarbi al-khulafa wa al-mulk, ed. M. De Goeje et al., Leiden 1897–1901, vol. ii, p. 1463f.).

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the idea; or according to another version, we do not know what happened to this Jew, but Leo got the idea from a Byzantine Christian who had converted to Islam in captivity and subsequently escaped. This convert, Biser, i.e. Bishr, is also known to the Islamic tradition, and there is some ground for identifying him with the Jew. The Jew was known as Tenserparempophy, "forty cubits", which is not a name, but a nickname and clearly a reference to the forty years which, according to Tabari, he had promised Yazid by misleading forty "reeds" as forty years instead of forty weeks. Bishr, the convert, is known to have been a patrician. Now in a late Arabic source we meet a man by the name of "son of forty cubits" who was a patrician in the entourage of Leo III. Presumably, then, the Jew and the convert were identical.

What happened to Bishr? If we go by Theophanes he was killed, not on the death of Yazid II, but in the course of Artavasdas's revolt on the death of Leo III. According to Michael the Syrian, however, he escaped to the Arabs, pretended to be Tiberius and offered them his help. He was, we are told, a former Muslim and now once more a Melkite Christian; yet he was also something of a Jew, for he had the Jews come and sing their incantations for him, and deep down he was a pagan, for he had the head of the Harranian community predict the outcome of his venture. If we put the various testimonies together, what they suggest is, first, that the man was historical and, second, that he was very hard to classify.

The interesting point about his unsatisfiability is that it fits precisely with that of the Judeo-Christians in general and the Athingiotes in particular. The pagans of Harran and the Judeo-Christians appear as common victims of Roman Christi-
anity in 'Abd al-Jabbar, and of the Athinganoi we are explicitly told that they combined their Mosaicism with Gnostic beliefs; moreover, they were feared for their predictive skills. That Buhri was a Phrygian is possible; he that he was a friend of Leo III, a former strategos of the Anatolikon theme based in Amorium, is certain; and if, moreover, he was a Jew, a Christian and a pagan involved above all in the business of prediction, it is impossible not to recognize in him an Athinganoi abroad.

If on the Arab side of the frontier we see the Arabs welcome an Athinganoi abroad, on the Byzantine side we can see them back up the Athinganoi at home. The evidence here comes in the Definition of the Iconoclast Council of 754. This Council took up a moderate position between two extremes. On the one hand, it said, we will not tolerate images, but, on the other hand, we will not reject the cult of saints, nor will we deny the resurrection. Now what, one might say, does Iconoclasm have to do with resurrection? Evidently something, for doubts over the resurrection crop up again in the second Iconoclast period among the followers of Leo V (813-20) and Michael II (820-29), and with Michael there is no longer any doubt where it comes from, for Michael was an Athinganoi or at least acquainted with Athinganoi beliefs.

The Athinganoi were Samaritan Gnostics. The Samaritan component is attested partly in their name, "touch-me-not", a reference to the Samaritan obsession with ritual purity with which the Koran is also familiar, and partly in the Mosaic fundamentalism of Michael II who, like the Samaritans, accepted only the Pentateuch as scripture. Now Pentateuchism was once associated with denial of the resurrection, and had continued to be so either in Samaritanism at large or else in Samaritan heresy. It was, moreover, clearly on Pentateuchal grounds, not for Gnostic motives, that Michael II would have none of the resurrection. The Arab backing consists in the fact that the Arabs had themselves been Mosaic fundamentalists at one stage. That the Arabs once accepted the Pentateuch as their one and only scripture is admittedly not a traditionally scholarly view, but it is attested in a dispute dating from 644. And it was surely because of the statement that Michael II's grandfather was a Jewish convert to Christianity derived from the late early 9th century Chronicle of Dromeas of Tyana (Chronique IV, p. 521 = III, p. 72; the source is explicitly named on p. 520 = 70). Moreover, Theophanes' continuator proceeds to give an account of Michael II's beliefs which is far too coherent to be the product of scrupulous fantasy (pp. 48c). Nor can he be dismissed as merely an elaboration of the equation "Athinganoi = Samaritan" (as do J. Goulliard, "L'Éthiopie dans l'Empire byzantin des origines au xii siècle", Traitements et Mémoires 1 [1965], p. 311). For one thing, this equation is quite unknown to the only sources on the Athinganoi; Germanus does compare their fear of pollution to that of the Samaritans (De haeresibus et synodis [MPG XVI], col. 85), but that is hardly to equate the two, and Theophanes' continuator explicitly describes Athinganai as a new faith (Chronographia, p. 62). For another, such an elaboration would merely have reproduced the Patristic stereotypes on the Samaritans; but just as the continuator's account is not coherent, so also it is not stereotypical.

20:97; note also the Hagarene belief stated in Greek sources that the Samaritans will go to heaven where they will be burying Paradise clear (Khyout, Les Théologiens Byzantins et l'Éthiopie, pp. 184, 198). This obsession with ritual purity was not peculiar to the Docheiaria. Ephipanius notes it for all the Samaritans, and the 6th century Samaritan who burnt straw over the footsteps of the pilgrim from Piacenza and made him throw his coins into water to avoid his polluting touch, was hardly a heretic (Shafii, Byzantine Jewry, pp. 30, 44). For the very similar behavior of the Athinganai, see Timothy of Constantinople, De Receptatione, p. 33 = Bardeau, "Mediations," p. 37.

20:98; Theophanes Continuatus, Chronographia, pp. 48f. He above the Prophets, and denied the existence of the Devil on the ground that Moses does not mention him.

20:98; It was that the Samaritans at large and not the Docheiaria who continued to deny the resurrection has recently been argued by S.J. Lasser, The Docheiariou, Leiden 1976.

20:97; It is mentioned in the same breath as his denial of the Devil. Note that he also found fault with the Christian computation of Easter and toyed with the idea of fasting on the Sabbath, a most unorthodox idea from the Jewish point of view.

20:98; Cross & Cook, Hagarensis, p. 14: Mosaic fundamentalism (reasonably combined with at least partial acceptance of the New Testament; cf. their use of Hebrews 7?) is not attested for the Athinganai before Michael II, so the possibility cannot be excluded that they picked it up from the Arabs. But it is not very likely, for Pentateuchism was not just a Samaritan, but a traditional Judaico-Christian position: it is attested for Ephipanius' Eusebius of隽alontes whose combination of Judaico-Christianity and Gnosticism so recalls that of the Athinganai (A.F.J. Klijn & G.J. Reinkink, Patriarch Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects, Leiden 1973, p. 186). At all events, the general point made here remains unaffected. The Arabs may have suggested this
the Arabs took up this scriptural position that the old question of the resurrection was suddenly revived. Thus Irons has Umar II (717–20) deny the resurrection on Pentecostal grounds, while Leo III refers to a Muslim sect which similarly denied it and which is perhaps also referred to in the Koran, and doubts over the resurrection are also indicated among the Zaydis. It was thus against the background of Muslim interreg in the question that the doubts of the Athinganai could reach Constantinople.

If we put the evidence on the two sides together, the situation is this. On the Arab side, there is an inerorate hostility to Christian pictures, but the Arabs cannot usually be bothered to go and smash them up. On the Greek side, there is an endemic bad conscience about such pictures, but the Greeks do not usually take steps to stop them up. Now if a Phrygian Athinganai should start tinkering with these highly charged wires, the outcome would be precisely what actually occurred: a short anti-Christian blast among the Arabs, and an enormous explosion burning up the accumulated qualms of the Greeks. It is not that all Iconoclasts were Athinganai; but it is precisely because they detonated the explosion that some of their shrapnel was likely to fall in the capital.

It is worth concluding this argument with a brief discussion of the very different outcomes of hostility to images in Byzantium and Islam. Evidently, Byzantine Iconoclasm was a failure and, insofar as this is a fact about Byzantine history, it is not a very interesting one. Unlike the European Reformation, that of the Byzantines was a conspiracy between a ruling elite and a religious minority which, in the absence of long-entrenched social or political upheavals, could not possibly issue in a religious revolution. No wonder then that in the last resort the Byzantines opted for John of Damascene’s justification of image worship and sealed the question once and for all by making the cult of images part of their faith. Already by the second Iconoclast period, everyone was sick and tired of the whole question, and it was resumed largely because it was held to bring military success. The

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The success failed to materialize, and when the Arabs finally took Amorion in 838, it was the Iconoclasts, not the icons, that got the blame. As a fact about Christian history, however, the failure is an illuminating one. The pagan component of Christianity is intrinsic in respect of both faith and culture. In respect of the faith it has generated the trinity, and there is thus a limit to the extent to which Christians can afford to be monothelists. Constantine V (741–75) might well reject the saints, but he could not very well reject Christ, the intercessor par excellence; so it is hardly surprising that he was haunted by worries about Christology. The Christians across the border also worried. “If, on the one hand, we worship one God,” as a puzzled Syrian in a seventh century treatise put it, “it is plain that, being monarchians, we are practising Judaism; but if, on the other hand, we worship three gods, it is clear that we are practising paganism.” Constantine is accused now of having played up the divinity of Christ and now of having played it down, and he is likely enough to have tried both expedients; it was precisely because the Iconoclasts wished to be monothelists that they had to choose, as Theodore the Studite so rightly saw, between the error of Mani, who held that Jesus was wholly divine, and that of Paul of Samosata, who considered him wholly human. Within the middle course which constituted orthodox Christianity, their problem was not amenable to solution.

In respect of culture, the pagan component of Christianity was to leave room for secularism. Because Christianity is only a faith, the culture must of necessity come from elsewhere. This extraneous culture can be sanctified by a profusion of saints—what Peter Brown calls a “hymnography of the divine.” It can be sanctified in the name of the one God; but just as it cannot become intrinsically holy, so also, having no Christian alternative, it cannot be totally

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himsself a soldier (Martin, op. cit., pp. 166, 168, 170, cf. above, n. 106), and it was also soldiers who rushed to Constantine’s grave in the face of the Bulgarian threat in 813, telling him to get up and save his city (Theophanes, Chronographia 1, p. 504, A.M. 6305).


111 Quaterniones, col. 597, question 1 (Habidaiosmos...Hellenizesmos). The answer characteristically is to stop thinking.

112 G. Ostrogorski, Studien zur Geschichte der byzantinischen Bildnerkunst, Berlin 1929, pp. 247 ff. For a different view see S. Brock in Byer and Herrin, Iconoclastm, pp. 53 ff. Michael the Syrian’s belief that Constantine V was “orthodox” (via a Monophysite) is however unlikely to derive entirely from his personal reinterpretation of John of Damascus’ condemnation, for when he later describes Leo IV as “orthodox,” he states that he has this information from a Melkite writer (Chronique IV, pp. 473, 479 = II, p. 521; III, p. 2). But Brock is evidently right that Monophysitism had nothing to do with the outbreak of Iconoclasm.

113 He asked the Patriarch if one could call Mary the mother of Christ (rather than the mother of God), which the Patriarch thought Nesterian, and on another occasion he denied that Christ was more than a mere man (Theophanes, Chronographia 1, p. 415, 425, A.M. 6233, 6255; George the Monk, Chronographia II (ed. C. de Boor), Leipzig 1904, p. 756). Just how much of this is true is of course hard to tell, but that he worried is equally hard to deny.

114 Theodore the Studite, Quaterniones Iconomachiae Proposis, (MCP XCC), col. 480f. 

rejected. Christian fundamentalism thus has no foundations, and it is precisely this point which the Iconoclasts illustrate by their setting out as Judaizers and their ending up as Hellenizers.

In the domain of art, both the Muslims and the Iconoclasts were up against an unholy alliance between monothelitism and a pagan craft — unholy in that God did not want pictures and the pagans did not want God. But whereas in Islam the dissolution of this alliance eventually led to the virtual occlusion of the pagan craft,134 in Byzantium the outcome was rather an artistic renovation. Leo III, it is true, would have nothing but the cross — at the same time aniconic and anti-Islamic. But Constantine V proceeded to fill the churches and palaces with secular pictures, possibly, though this is largely guesswork, in the illusionist style which ultimately went back to the Hellenistic world;135 and Theophanes (827-42) was bent on wholesale imitation of the courtly art of Baghdad.136 Neither, in other words, suppressed the pagan craft; they could only render it religiously inert.

Similarly, in the domain of learning the Iconoclasts were up against an unholy alliance between scripture and philosophy. What, in the words of 'Abd al-Jabbar, did Aristotle know of God?137 But again, where in Islam the dissolution of this alliance eventually led to the virtual occlusion of philosophy,138 in Byzantium the outcome was rather a cultural renovation. Leo once more set out as a fundamentalist: he is credited with an attack on higher learning, presumably secular.139 Michael the Amorian is similarly described as hostile to Hellenic learning,140 and at the same time there appears to have been a significant shift from

135 The long history of this period is certainly an interesting one, but its proximate nature does not invalidate the point. The misfortune of the Muslim rabbi was that 'Abbadid piety having worn off, the east fell to Yazid and the west to Isma'ilis (for the slightly more favourable attitude to images among Shi'ites see Pirenne, "The Islamicische Bilderverbot und die Schütze," note the typical instance of priestly discretion by Ma'ṣṣṣar on p. 230). The Seljuqs did indeed restore Sunnism, but what with Turkish ethnicity, Persian culture, political dissolution and Christian secrecy, pictures inevitably came back; witness the neo-Hellenistic coinage of the Artuqids, the Christian scribes of the Arabic Dicodrostes, and the general renaissance of Byzantine art in Islamic books. But the thirteenth century was a turning point, for if the Mongol conquest provided the background for the flowering of Persian miniatures, in the west the 'ulama came back for ever.
136 C. R. Cornack, "The Arts during the Age of Iconoclasm" in Byrĩ and Êrên, Iconoclasms, pp. 28, 42f.
137 C. Diehl, Manuel d'art byzantin I, Paris 1925, pp. 369ff., 377. Compare the large-scale adoption of Islamic law by the Syriac-speaking Christians (H. Käufhold, Syrische Texte zum islamischen Recht, Munich 1911, p. 326f.).
139 This also took some time, but again the moral is clear.
140 Theophanes Continuatus, Chronicographia, p. 49. The fact that Michael II himself had no education does not of course mean that he could have no views on the matter.
made concerns the Athinganoi. J. Starr, the one person to have worked on them in the past, tried to explain away their Judaisms as to make them a purely Gnostic sect along Paulician lines. This is certainly arbitrary. But it is worth adding some evidence from the Syrian side in corroborative of the Byzantine sources.

In the catalogue of heresies compiled by Măråb̃ (d. before 420), there is a description of heretics known as Sabattians. Their heresy consisted in belief that the Gospel did not abrogate the Old Testament, that the Mosaic law was still valid, that circumcision should be retained, and that the eucharist should be taken on the Sabbath; it was, according to Măråb̃, these heretics Paul had in mind when he spoke of circumcision. This is plainly a description of Judeo-Christians, not of the Novatian schismatics similarly known as Sabattians who cannot even have been misrepresented here: we may take it that in the fifth century Middle East there were Judeo-Christians of that name. Now three centuries later we learn from Jacob of Edessa (d. ca. 715) that two kinds of heretics were known as Sabattians, the first being the Novatian schismatics and the second a sect which, like Măråb̃'s, is said to date from the time of the Apostles. The natural assumption that he is referring to Măråb̃'s sect is reinforced by his observation that they derived their name from their observance of both Sabbath and Sunday, which is not, of course, true of the Novatian offshoot, and by his view that literalist exegesis is a "Jewish and Sabattian" feature. The importance of this lies in the fact that, according to Jacob, the Sabattians are still observing both Sabbath and Sunday in Galatia and Phrygia. This is a reference to the Athinganoi is hardly in doubt. It is true that he goes on to say that the Novatian offshoot (also?) survives in Galatia, but that is likely to have been correct, and unless he is simply muddle-

139 Starr, "An Eastern Christiant Sect.
142 Mārab̃ does not say so, and Jacob clearly did not own his knowledge of the sect to himself.
144 Wright, loc. cit. = Nas, loc. cit.
145 The far older sect of the Quartodecimans (Tetraditici) has a continuous history in Asia Minor until the 9th century. Like the Novatian offshoot they held Jewish views regarding the date of Easter, and by the time of Theodoret they had also come to agree with the Novatians on the inefficacy of penance. In short, they had fused with the Sabattians (C. Mango, The Homilies of Phoebus Patriarch of Constantinople, Cambridge [Mass.] 1958, pp. 297f.). Timothy of Constantinople could thus identify the Quartodecimans with the Sabattians (ibid., p. 281); and it was very likely the same sect that Jacob had in mind.
having lost his spells in an air-battle with Judas. This story dates from the early centuries of Christianity. It was known to Celcus118 and Tertullian,119 and almost all of it is attested in the Talmud.120 The second consists of stories of Paul, Peter and Nestorius, all presented as Jewish heroes or Judaisers: Paul (or Peter) was a crypto-Jew who completed the split between Judaism and Christianity by making up pseudo-laws so that the Jews might be rid of the Christian trouble-makers. Peter continued to send synagogal poetry to the Jews after his apparent conversion; Nestorius, under some of Paul’s work, though he also prohibited polygamy and divorce, a pseudo-law attributed to Paul in ‘Abd al-Jabār. These stories have no intrinsic connection with the biography of Jesus, they were not known to Celcus, Tertullian or even Agobard, who knew the rest of the Toledoth,114 and they are not found in all the MSS of the Toledoth; all coexisted in a Syrian-speaking environment, none are earlier than the fifth century,121 and the hostile reference to the rise of the Ishmaelites in the story of Paul leaves no doubt that this story at least was composed after the Arab conquest.122 How then do we account for the addition of these stories to the Toledoth? That they are closely related to narratives of Mešāmmat123 ‘Abd al-Jabār is evident. There is however no question of the additions to the Toledoth being the source of the Arabic accounts,124 for where the Arabic accounts have historical focus and details, the Toledoth by contrast envelops the events in a characteristic rabbinical haze. Nor are the stories in the Toledoth directly derived from the Arabic accounts: what we have are clearly Jewish and Muslim adaptations of the same Judeo-Christian polemic against Christianity.125 The Judeo-Christian possessed a knowledge of Christianity which the

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119 Kevat, op. cit., p. 3.
120 Travels Herford, Christianity in Talmud and Midrash, pp. 33, 48ff., 54, 62, 75f., 79f.
121 H. Strack, Jesus der Herrscher und die Christen, Leipzig 1910.
122 agobard, Epistula, cols. 77-100.
124 Kevat, loc. cit.; there are no references to Islam in the other stories, and Jesus may be right in dating the fixation of the Nestorius legend to the second half of the 5th or the beginning of the 7th century (op. cit., p. 170). The reference to the Sassanian empire, however, in no way implies that it was still in existence when the story was composed, only that it existed at the time of Nestorius, and the legend is so inconsistent that its various stages and dates can hardly be sorted out (Benjamin is a Judaischer, yet he prohibits polygamy and divorce; women like his pseudo-laws, yet he is killed by women).
125 As suggested by Stern, “‘Abd al-Jabār’s Account,” p. 179f., but Stern’s view was clearly dictated by his extraordinary reluctance to concede that the Arabic accounts are Judeo-Christian in character.
126 These views that the stories in the Toledoth were composed as an answer to the Judeo-Christian argument seems a little excessive: Jews and Jewish Christians alike were concerned to refute the Christians, not each other (cf. Pines, The Jewish Christians, p. 42).
over, there is an anonymous author who combined the usual Judeo-Christian argument that Jesus was a Jew with an unusual insistence on the contention that Jesus endorsed retaliation.\textsuperscript{20} It was constructed on the basis of the example and teachings of Jesus himself. The principle of retribution, while a familiar one in Christian circles, was also found in Islamic thought, where the idea of an eye for an eye (al-adl al-arz) was well-known to Muslims.\textsuperscript{21} Finally, ‘Abd al-Jabbār actually quotes the philo-Christian Kariotes in the course of his discussion of Christianity, and what they say is that Jesus was a good and learned Jew who disclaimed messianic status, and that all the stories of his miracles were made up by the Christians, in particular by Paul, a well-known liar.\textsuperscript{22} This is, of course, very much in line with the general argument of both Muqannabī and ‘Abd al-Jabbār;\textsuperscript{23} what they offer is precisely accounts of how Paul made them up. We are thus unlikely to be far wrong in tracing both Muqannabī and other authors to such philo-Christian Kariotes circles.

The philo-Christian Kariotes were, however, not the only locus of such authors. The second milieu of relevance is that of the Christians mentioned by ‘Abd al-Jabbār, who held that ‘his lord was a Jew, his father a Jew, his mother a Jewess, and his mother the wife of his father.’\textsuperscript{24} It was Christians of this kind who were the source of Shahrastānī’s short notice of how Paul ousted Peter from the leadership of the Christians and perverted Christianity by introducing philosophy and Jewish opinions.\textsuperscript{25} And it must similarly have been from such Christians that ‘Abd al-Jabbār got his apocryphal Gospel citations.\textsuperscript{26} But whereas Shahrastānī’s Christians clearly held views precisely opposite to those of the Armeno-Mesopotamian Gnostic who ‘execrated Peter and loved Paul’\textsuperscript{27} those of ‘Abd al-Jabbār were both Judaeizers and Gnosticizers: Jesus is presented as a mere man and moreover an observant Jew,\textsuperscript{28} but the long account of the passion is doctric.\textsuperscript{29} And this doctrinal combination shows that we have now arrived at circles closely related to the Athingamal of the Byzantine sources.\textsuperscript{30}

The exact relationship between the Jewish Christians and the Christian Jews is a hard one;\textsuperscript{31} we doubtless have to envisage a plurality of loosely related sects on both sides.\textsuperscript{32} But it is manifest that for all their diversity these sects were part and parcel of the same phenomenon. Geographically, these sects can be located in the first instance in Mesopotamia. In ‘Abd al-Jabbār, the faithful flee to Mousli and Mesopotamia,\textsuperscript{33} while in

\textsuperscript{20} Shahrastānī, Mīḥāl, pp. 173f.; compare the relationship between Peter and Paul (Simon Magnum) in the Pseudo-Clementines. Shahrastānī’s tradition is independent of Muqannabī and ‘Abd al-Jabbār alike, the former being hostile to Peter and the latter having little to say about him, and it came from Christians who accepted both the crucifixion and the resurrection with- out recourse to doceticism.

\textsuperscript{21} Most, though not all of those are discussed in Stern, “Apocryphal Gospels” and Pines, The Jewish Christians, p. 31f.

\textsuperscript{22} Gregory Magistrates, in F.G. Cosyns (ed.), The Key of Truth, Oxford 1809, p. 148.

\textsuperscript{23} Stern, op. cit., p. 51; Pines, op. cit., pp. 63f.; and ‘Abd al-Jabbār, Taḥkhir, p. 144, where John 4:59 is twisted into so as to make Jesus show his Jewishness.

\textsuperscript{24} This is surely the case not just of the passages in Pines, op. cit., p. 58, but also of the long account in ‘Abd al-Jabbār, op. cit., p. 137f.; Stern, op. cit., p. 42ff. Here the Romans and the Jews alike admit that they do not know Jesus, the person taken is scared out of his wits, he is a great disappointment to Plate who had expected a man of wisdom, and he is laboriously left unnamed: Judas has clearly tricked the Romans into taking the wrong man. Note also the passage in which Jesus (here somewhat inconsistently hanging from the cross) disowns his mother and brothers very much as he did in the Eclesiast Gospel as quoted by Eusebius (‘Abd al-Jabbār, op. cit., p. 201 = Stener, op. cit., p. 52 and Pines, op. cit., p. 61; Kiius and Reinak, Parthic Evidence, p. 181), presumably to make the point that he had become wholly divine on his baptism.

\textsuperscript{25} No alThratic views of the passion have been recorded, but compare the evaluation of Judas by Michael II the Athingamal (Theophanes Continuatus, Chronographia, p. 49). Doceticism was commonplace among the Paulicians.

\textsuperscript{26} But the Gnostic beliefs of the Christian Judaeizers have no Judaic counterpart: despite ‘Anan’s alleged belief in metempsychosis and Nihawand’s denigration, Gnosticism does not appear to have infected Karaitite Christianity.

\textsuperscript{27} Note how ‘Abd al-Jabbār, Taḥkhir, p. 194, twists Matthew 25:30ff. so as to have Jesus bless the Christian slave if against the Christian majority who use his name, but do not bear witness to him in truth.

an earlier version they flee to the north where they are received by the Jews.176
Moslul did indeed have a Jewish population, but a more famous Jewish centre in
Mesopotamia was Nisibis, and it was precisely in Nisibis that Muqaddima picked
up his story. They can, however, also be located further afield. In Ibn Ishâq's
biography of the Prophet, there is a description of a pre-Islamic search for the true
monotheism. A conversion to Christianity by the name of Salâm is told by his dying
mentor that "men have died and either altered or abandoned most of the true
religion, except for a man in Mosul, so join yourself unto him."177 Salâm according-
ly goes off to Mosul, where the story is repeated, the mentor dies and Salâm goes
on to find the last surviving representative of true Christianity who, this time,
was found in Nisibis. And here, too, the same thing happens whereupon Salâm sets
off to find the last true Christian in Amuriam.178 Salâm, in other words, retraces
the steps of the Judeo-Christians to end up among the Athinganu in Phrygia.179
Chronologically, these sects are best attested in the tenth century, to which
both 'Abd al-Jabbâr and Qunqûjân belong, and there is no doubt that many of the
Christians who denied the divinity of Christ were heretics of recent growth.180
But the phenomenon itself is considerably older. Muqaddima flourished in the later
ninth century. Christians who argue for a purely spiritual interpretation of Jesus' sonship are mentioned in Muslim sources in the mid-ninth century,181 and
the Athinganu are first mentioned by Byzantine chroniclers under the year 811.182
The direct evidence in this takes us to the beginning of the eighth century; for
the Athinganu were known to Byzantine theologians by about 730 at latest;183 Ibn

178 From here, of course, he goes to Mecca.
179 A marginal note to the exegesis identifies Salâm as a descendant of the fugitives
from Paul (Wissenedt, op. cit. II, p. 45, cf. Stern, "'Abd al-Jabbar's Account," pp. 180ff.). His Persian descent does not, of course, go very well with this story, but then it is likely to be a
secondary feature, for his Semitic name is perfectly at home in Phrygia (A. Reimann, "Not
Sangaria, Étude sur le débauch et Phrygie et le syncretisme Judéo-Phrygien," Revue des Études
Árabes 65 [1913], pp. 216, 221), and his Iranian name, insofar as it is known at all, has no
connection in the Islamic tradition.
180 Sanda says no explicitly of the sect he knew (for the reference see n. 82). But then there
is no evidence to show that his heretics (or any of the others in n. 82) were concerned to stress
that the human Christ had been a Jew.
181 Pines, "Israel, My Firstborn?", p. 182. The Cop who declared belief in the divinity of
Christ to be polytheism also lived towards the middle of the ninth century (Madelung, Qism, p. 89).
pp. 93ff.
183 Germanus, who knew both the Athingana and the Samaritans as "touch-me-not", died in
735. Timothy of Constantinople's description of the Athingana probably dates from this same
time. Timothy himself is assumed to have lived before 622, but Staur has a point in thinking
the relevant section an interpolation. It seems, however, to have formed part of the treatise by
the same Theodore the Studite, who died in 856 (Guilland, "I'ushâ", pp. 304ff., 307ff.).

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Jabbi, who sent Salâm to Amuriam, died in 767;184 another account of Paul's
conversion of Christianity is attributed to Khalî, who died in 763,185 and Jacob of
Edessa died about 715. Jacob, moreover, knew not just of Sabbath-observers in
Phrygia, but also of writings by a Judaising Gnostic which had fallen into the hands
of the faithful at home.186 But if we want to go beyond this date, the evidence
becomes circumstantial. Evidence there nonetheless is. First, the Judeo-Christian
argument was put to polemical use by both Muslims,187 and Jews,188 and that at
least the Jews, but probably also the Muslims, must have made use of it already
in the second half of the seventh century is clear from the Christian treatises
against the Jews, in which the authors display a painful awareness of the fact
that Christian customs fail to conform entirely with those of Christ. "If, as you say,
your Christ has come . . . and was one of ours, why aren't you circumcised? . . .
why do you pray east if not to adore the sun?", asks the Jew in a tract composed in
681.189 "If Christ was circumcised, why aren't we? . . . why do we Christians pray
towards east and the Jews towards south?" echoes the bewilderment Christian.190
Second, it is worth noting that the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, a Christian story
of the resurrection, gets into the Koran via people who wrote in Aramaic and had
and it was certainly known to the author of the treatise on the Melchisedekites and the
abomination formula which it contains, doubtless dating from the ninth century in which
attempts were made to eradicate the heresy. Note that according to this formula the heresy had
been around for a long time: the convert has to anathematize the teachers of the Athinganu who
have appeared "generation upon generation until now" (Qasari, "Kirchhistoriske Rejsetur"),
p. 311 = 316).
184 Or earlier (cf. Encyclopedia Islam, s.v.).
186 One of his letters answers the queries of John, a styliste in the vicinity of Aleppo, who
had six hold of some homilies attributed to Jacob of Sarug and wanted further
information. Amloudus said, they contained many un-Christian notions and could not possibly have
been written by the man celebrated by the Syrians as the "Flute of the Holy Spirit". They appear to
have been primarily cosmological, describing the pneuma of various powers, but the author also
boasted of following Moses' word and explained everything literally in the Jewish and
Sabbataian fashion (Schröder, "Enter Brief Jacob"). Jacob did not suggest that the author
might be a Sabattian: he thought him a minor rhetor. In other words, he did not know of sects that
might be producing this kind of literature at home.
187 In the accounts of Kalî and Qariyy Jewish Christianity is Islam (Stern, "'Abd al-Jabbar's
Account," pp. 178, 180). In that of Ibn Ishâq Amuriam, which is nowhere on the religious map
of classical Islam, lies on the road to Mecca. By the end of the eighth century the Muslims were
asking the Christians why they were not circumcised and why they prayed east (ibid., pp. 155n,
157n). And the spiritual interpretation of Jesus' sonship became a standard topic of Muslim
polemics (Pines, "Israel, My Firstborn?", p. 183).
188 Cf. the spiritual interpretation of Jesus' sonship in the anti-Christian work of a tenth-
190 Baudy, Trophées de Damar, pp. 253, 254.
191 Questions, cols. 617, 620, questions xxxvii f. (this treatise is likely to be the earlier;
cf. n. 8). Jacob of Edessa was also confronted with the question of prayer direction: it was
in answer to it that he wrote his exposition of how the Jews and the Magusenes do not in fact
pray towards the south (Courte & Couët, Hagarean, p. 173, n. 30).
rules of kosher food.

Equally, the Samaritans, the Samaritan magician who cries "touch me not!" in the Koran, was perhaps not an ordinary Samaritan as much as an Ashkenazi.

There was at all events no lack of contacts between the Arabs and Amorium from as early as 644 onwards and there are oddities to suggest that Amorium was more than just another Anatolian city to the Arabs at the time. All in all, the evidence certainly suggests that Judeo-Christian ideas had reached the Arab world already before the end of the seventh century.

As far as the role of the Judeo-Christians in the outbreak of the Iconoclastic movement is concerned, it is of no importance whether the Judeo-Christian sects were any older. By way of concluding, however, we may briefly look at Pins's suggestion that these sectarians not only subscribed to the same doctrines as, but also preserved the very tradition of the Jewish Christians of the early Christian centuries. A priori, it is by no means impossible. Jewish Christians could not of, course, survive in Palestine, nor do we hear of them there; but in the mountains and across the Roman border in Persia, where the Christian church lacked the coercive apparatus of the state, Judeo-Christians could certainly have found a refuge: that is precisely what the Gnostics did. Amorium, however, was not located in inaccessible mountains and it was very close to Constantinople, a point which explains how Samaritans could get there, but which virtually rules out heretical survival there. If the Jewish Christians did survive, they are more likely to have done so elsewhere. That brings us to Māriūth’s Sabellians. Now Māriūth gives no indication of where they flourished, and he himself was a much travelled man, but he was bishop of Mayrberapa on the border of Persia, Armenia and Byzantium, and since Jacob of Edessa states that there had been a church of Sabbath-observing Sabellians in Edessa in the past, they are likely to have been a Mesopotamian document.


Huber, op. cit., p. 226.

Note that just as the American Saladin acquired a Persian genealogy, so did the Kercanic Samar (Ibn 'Abbas, Kithal 'al-lā, 1 ed. T. Köprülü & I. Cerahölüt, Ankara 1953, vol. I, p. 251, no. 1855)


For one thing, the Arabs write Amorium with an 'aun, though there was none in the Syriac transcription (as Greek original, of course), from what Semitic population did they get this spelling of the name? For another, the "ancient historical books" of the Arabs prophesied that their kingdom would fall if they ever conquered the city, whereas the reluctance of many Arabs to participate in Mu'tam's campaign in 838 (Chronicon ad 1234 II, p. 34–24; Michael the Syrian, Chronique, IV, p. 538 = III, p. 100); from what predictive specialists did they get this idea?

For Samaritans in Constantinople in the days of Justinian see Shaf, Byzantine Jewry, p. 50. Note that confusion of aleph and 'ain is commonplace in Samaritan Amatical.

If Baumstark, Geschichte, pp. 53f.


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phenomenon. In the Mayrberapa area they might well have survived together with their Gnostic enemies; the Armeno-Mesopotamian border certainly plays a notable part in the history of the Judeo-Christians and Paulicians in whom the two heresies have been mixed up, and the faint suggestions of Judeo-Christians in north-western Persia would also support the hypothesis that it was in this border area that they had entrenched themselves. But two problems remain. First, even if we assume that Māriūth's heretics survived in northern Mesopotamia, it is, pace Jacob of Edessa, not obvious that it is they who reappear in Amorium. It might be, for the Sabellian label reappeared on the Byzantine side where it was not understood, and the Paulicians likewise got there. But the Paulicians were militant adventurers, and they only got there late, whereas the Judeo-Christians are not known to have roamed, and the Amorium of which Salmán went in search was presumably there before the Arabs made their impact felt. Secondly, even if we assume that all the Judeo-Christians of the seventh century and beyond are ultimately related to Māriūth's heretics, it is, pace both Māriūth and Jacob of Edessa, not obvious that these heretics in their turn have anything to do with the Jewish Christians of Palestine referred to in the New Testament and Patriarchal literature. That Jesus was a Jew and Paul ceased to be one can be read in the Christian scripture, and Jewish Christianity can, to that extent, appear wherever Christianity exists, particularly where it coexists with Judaism. The original Jewish Christians were Jewish converts to Christianity, as was also at least one of the Aethiogari in Amorium, where a large Jewish (and presumably also Judeo-Christian community may have existed, as has been argued by Pins.

The Judeo-Christian argument that Jesus did not abrogate the law of Moses unexpectedly turns up among the Gnostic Isma'ilis, where it was clearly controversial. (H. Halm, Kosmologie und Weltmärchen der frühen Dm'üya, Wiesbaden 1974, p. 111; that Jesus abrogated his law of its predecessor like other nöyaq was a key Isma'ilit doctrine. And the Isma'ilit who picked up this piece of Judeo-Christianism was Abū 'Umar al-Ra'isi (d. ca. 934), a native and dā'i of Māriūth. It seems most likely that he picked it up Jewishly. Inasmuch as Abū al-Jabbār was a native of Asadābdh and qadd of Rayy, one wonders if he did the same, but that seems unlikely. That his account comes from a Nestorian mission on the Persian side of the old imperial frontier is clear, indirectly from the inclusion of a story about Nestorius in the Toleleth, directly from the comparison of Constantine and Ardashir in the Judeo-Christian account (Taktīh, pp. 163f = Stere, "Ab el-Jabbār's Account," p. 145), the comparison of conversion to Christianity and Zoroastrianism (below, p. 205), and the stories of Christian miracle-makers involving the māsun of Khurāsān, the fāzbak of Iraq, St. George, the martyr of Mosul (of Taktīh, Taktīh, etc. I, pp. 795ff.), and the unknown Abū Marjā (Taktīh, pp. 202ff.). It could be argued that neither the discussion of conversion nor the stories of the miracle-makers are part of the Judeo-Christian account, but the fact that St. George and Abū Marjā who figure in both, are also denounced as miracle-makers by the philo-Christian Karaites would suggest that they were (above, n. 164). Even so, however, there is nothing to suggest that the melia was located for east as Rayy: Nestorian Mesopotamia would seem a more likely location, especially as the Christian terminology is given in Syriac (Taktīh, pp. 204f.).

Iacob's statement that Sabellians survive in Phrygia and Galatia is not necessarily to be taken literally, of course. Christian churchmen would see contemporary Aethiogari as Sabellians just as Greek literateurs would see contemporary Turks as Scythians.

Cf. above, n. 146.

Cf. Michael the Prophet (above, n. 107).
Samarian) population lived in symbiosis with the Christians. It is precisely to the interaction of Jews and Christians that Theophanes' continuator attributes the genesis of the Arianism faith, and Manichaean heretics may well have come into existence in the same way.

The case for the survival of the Judeo-Christian tradition rests entirely on the Judeo-Christian writings, in particular the account preserved by 'Abd al-Jabbar. Now 'Abd al-Jabbar's account models Constantine's persecution of Judeo-Christians and pagans on Justinian's and has references to the conversion of the Khazars. As we have it, the account is therefore not particularly Old Testament and current history books and, on the other hand, the apocryphal Gospel citations fail to correspond with those recorded in Patristic literature. Admittedly, one

139. 'Abd al-Jabbar, Tahzib, p. 186. To what extent this was part of the Judeo-Christian account is not entirely clear. It comes in the course of a long argument against the Christian claim to have spread the faith without the use of force, the first objection being that the claim is untrue, and the second that even if it were true, other religions have spread in the same way (ibid., pp. 173, 182f.). On the one hand it could be argued that a Muslim would be more concerned than a Jewish Christian to dispose of this claim and that it was 'Abd al-Jabbar himself who supplied the evidence. But on the other hand the insistence that the many may go wrong against the few (p. 173), the account of Zoroastrian attitudes to conversion and of Persian tolerance (p. 161), the sympathetic attitude towards the Khazar convert, and the role of Paul, St. George and Abba Musa in the discussion (p. 182; cf. above, n. 159), would all suggest that the debate discussion goes back to a Judeo-Christian and was simply adapted by 'Abd al-Jabbar. Pines suggested that the reference to the Khazars was added by a Judeo-Christian to an earlier account (The Jewish Christians, p. 49). It is possible that the Judeo-Christian account has no references to the rise of Islam is perhaps not decisive, but the account of Persian grandeur and above all that of Zoroastrian attitudes to conversion certainly does seem to have the existence of the Sasanian empire for granted. The identification of Ilyas Byzantine and early Christian figures in 'Abd al-Jabbar and the Telofth (Christian/Constantine, Simon Stylites, Peter, Bar Koseyf/Nestorius/Paul) would also suggest that, whatever the date of the writings as we have them, it was in the century before the Arab conquest that the sect's account of Christian history was shaped.

140. According to Pines, The Jewish Christians, p. 35n., the account also speaks of the Nicene council as having taken place some 500 years after Christ. But the published work gives the date as about 300 years after Christ ('Abd al-Jabbar, Tahzib, p. 93 [corresponding to f. 43h according to the edition, but 44v according to Pines]).
141. The one exception is the detailed knowledge of the origins of Christianity (Stern, "'Abd al-Jabbar's Account," p. 158). But it is hard to imagine that this is what Judeo-Christians were seeking in the backlands who would choose to remember.

143. Cf. above, n. 165.
144. Note that Gnosticizing Gnostic citations also circulated among the Nestorians (Salvi, op. cit., p. 113).
145. H.J. Schoeps, Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums, Tübingen 1949, p. 34 (also noted by Pines).
146. If it was in the century preceding the Arab conquest that the sect's account of Christian history was shaped (cf. n. 205), the possibility is of course virtually ruled out.
POSTSCRIPT

Though I decided to leave this article as it stood, as expressed in the preface, I must confess my youthful misconception, noticed in the course of indexing, that there were Zaydis who had doubts about the resurrection (p. 80): the passage in question is about ḫimṣ (on which, see 217, s.v.).

For an up-to-date survey of the field of Byzantine iconoclasm, the best place to start is probably J. Halden and L. Brubaker, Byzantium in the Iconoclastic Era (c. 680-850): the Sources, an Annotated Survey, Aldershot 2001.

For the most recent statement on Jewish Christianity, see A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reis (eds.), The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, Tubingen 2003, especially the article by J. G. Gager, ‘Did Jewish Christians See the Rise of Islam?’

p. 90, note 183:

JĀHILI AND JEWISH LAW: THE QASĀMA

How much, and in what way, did the customary law of the pre-Islamic Arabs contribute to Islamic law? The consensus would appear to be that it contributed decisively for the simple reason that it continued to be practiced. The legislation of the Koran, so the argument runs, was both intended and understood as a supplement to, rather than a substitute for, the ancestral law of the Arabs; and since moreover this legislation raised more questions than it answered, it had itself to be interpreted in the light of customary law.1 Evidently, political and social change, Umayyad regulations, foreign influence, local conditions and the like all served to modify and amplify traditional law and customs, and such modifications are particularly noticeable in the Hadīth law, which reflects the metropolitan society of late Umayyad Kufa.2 But even so, Arab law, and above all the customary law of the Hijāz, may still be said to be the single most important source of the substantive law of the Sharī‘a.3 Its influence is manifest in all the schools, but especially in that of the Mālikīs which,

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