THE INFLUENCE OF PARSISM ON ISLAM.

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For long we have been content with the convenient assertion: Islam has sprung up all of a sudden full into broad daylight.

The more we proceed with critical examination of the oldest documents of Islam, the more we are convinced that the Musalman tradition, *hadith*, which chronologically is, after the Qoran, the most ancient source of our information, does not carry us up to the early infancy of Islam except in a very feeble way.[2] It often rather presents us with conflicting tendencies.

In utilising the rich material of this tradition in which the Moslems find documents corroborating their sacred book we must go far beyond the critical method which the Musalman school has practised in a rational manner since the second century of the *hijira*.

We have become more strict and more circumspect with regard to this literature. No one who is seriously engaged in Islamic studies would venture to borrow at hazard from this source the maxims attributed to Muhammad and his companions for the purpose of drawing a picture of the ancient state of affairs and the primitive doctrines of Islam. The modern historical critic puts us on our guard against this antedeluvian fashion. The struggles of the political and religious parties make these documents intelligible to us — the aspirations which this or that saying of Muhammad or this or that information regarding a companion of the Prophet must have served to support or combat.

While we occupy ourselves with the evolution of Islam due to internal forces we have at the same time to direct our attention to the foreign influences which had a determining importance on the formation and development of Islam.

Every elementary manual of the history of the middle ages teaches us that from its first beginning Islam was subject to 1 Jewish and Christian influences and that Muhammad himself worked upon the data of the Jews and Christians. These influences continued to assert themselves in a positive or negative manner even during the first generations which came after the death of the Prophet. The intervention

1 From *I. Goldziher,* "Islamisme et Parisme" in Actes du 1er Congrès International d'Histoire des Religions (Paris, 1900), pp. 119–147; repr. in idem, Gesammelte Schriften IV, ed. J. Desomogyi (Hildesheim, 1970), pp. 232–260. Translated by G. K. Nariman with an afterword as "The Influence of Parsism on Islam" in C.P. Tiele, *The Religion of the Iranian Peoples, part I*. Bombay, 1912.

2 Snouck Hurgronje in *Litteraturblatt für Orientalische Philologe* 1884.

of Jewish and Christian elements have always been admitted in Islam without acknowledgment.[3] Yet the usages of the Jews and Christians were repudiated. They were discarded and reaction set up against them. The common formula of the time is *Khāli-fuhum*, — "distinguish yourselves from them." This reaction itself must be considered as a symptom of the spiritual relationship and of intimate influence.

Upto now little attention has been directed to one of the most important elements in the religious development of Islam, the Persian element. It has exercised under the dual form of loan and reaction a determining influence on the formation of the character of Islam. The influence of Parsism on Islam is one of the first questions which will suggest itself to any one occupied with our subject of study. To be adequately treated it requires a knowledge equally profound of the Persian and the Musalman religions. M. Blochet is the only one who upto now has broached the question in some of the articles published in the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* and who has furnished important materials for the solution of the problem.[4] I take the liberty to single out in particular from the standpoint of philology, quite as much as that of the science of religions, the excellent study in which he has shown the Persian origin of the Musalman conception of Borak, the winged horse on which the Prophet has been supposed to have accomplished his ascension.[5]

One of the most fascinating chapters of the history of civilization consists in investigating the varied influences which the Sasanian civilization has exercised on different sections of humanity geographically separated from one another. Even in the language and the artistic monument of the nation to which I belong we may observe remarkable traces of this influence. Since the times of the migrations of the ancient Hungarians before they penetrated into the regions limited by the Karpathian mountains we have continued to employ upto this day, to confine myself to religious nomenclature, words borrowed from Persia to designate God, namely Isten, Persian Izadan; the devil or dog, Persian druj; and in profane usage devaj, wanton, is a remnant of daeva. Our archaeologists and the historians of our art discover from time to time fresh vestiges of Persian elements in the ancient monuments of our art.

A similar influence on Arabism lies on the surface. It was the immediate and permanent contact with Sasanian culture which gave to the Arabs, who were solely confined to poetry, the first impulse which permitted the expansion of a deeper intellectual life. I adhere for

3 *Muhammedanische Studien* 11, 382-400: *Hadith und Neues Testament*.

4 *Revue des Etudes Juives*, XXVIII, 75 f.

5 V. XXXVIII and XL of the Revue.

instance to my thesis which has been accepted by Professor Brockelmann in his History of Arab Literature that the writing of history on part of the Arabs has its roots in the literature of the royal annals of the Persians, that there would be no Arab historians if the first impulse had not been received by Arab litterateurs from Persia, and that it was this impulse which led them to make researches and preserve the historic memory of their own nation.[6] The ante-Islamian Arabs were devoid of all sense of history. Their memory of the most ancient events does not go beyond the sixth Christian century, save for the traditions regarding the migrations of the southern tribes of Arabia towards the north. The events of the nearest past were veiled to them and floated in the clouds of myths.

It was contact with Persian culture, contact which goes back to the remotest period of Islam, which decided the direction and the end of the development of the intellectual life of the Arabs.[7]

The action of the Persian element on the religious formation was very far-reaching as soon as Islam had established itself in the geographical regions of ancient Parsism and had carried to the worshippers of Zoroaster, with the aid of the sword, the faith of the Prophet of Mecca and Medina. The occupation of Irak by the Musalmans constitutes one of the most decisive factors in the religious formation of Islam.

Persian theologians introduced into the religion lately adopted their traditional points of view. The conquerors enriched the poverty of their own fundamentals by elements procured for them by the experience of a profoundly religious way of life, the way of the Persians whom they bad defeated. That is why we cannot attach too much importance for the formation of Islam to the intellectual movement which was born in Irak and which was connected with the schools of Basra and Kufa. There is no room for surprise if this local development carried in its current many a Persian element.[8]

These influences attained to their complete extent of development when the Musalman state underwent the great revolution about the year 128 of its era and the house of the Umayyads fell from power to give place to the Abbasides. It was not merely the political overthrow of a dynasty. It was a religious revolution. It was a momentous religious upheaval. In place of the mundane government of the Umayyads who

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6 Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* I, 1898, p. 134.

7 Khalif Usman invited at his Court the Christian Abu Zubeid Harmala ibn Mundbir who had, before the appearance of the Prophet, "visited the Kings of Persia and new their manners," *min zuwwar al muluk wa khassatan muluk al ajam wa kana aljman bi siyarihim*." Aghani xi p.. 24.

8 Cp. Blochet, R. H. R. xxxviii, p. 447.

had conserved the Arab traditions in their residence at Damascus on the borders oF the desert, the theocratic regime of the Abbasides founded a power on principles at once political and ecclesiastical. They fixed their residence at Anbar and at Bagdad, the centre of the Sasanide kingdom which Islam had subverted. They adopted the traditions of the Sasanides. Their title was no longer that of an Arab Shaikh; it was that of king of Persia. They based their authority on the principle of legitimacy as "children of the Prophet" exactly as in the Sasanian times the Persian power was reared on legitimacy. Like the Sasanides, the Abbasides set themselves to restore the religion fallen into ruins under their predecessors. Their kingdom was an ecclesiastical state. They themselves were not secular chieftains but religious heads. They considered themselves, so to say, Baghi, divine, like the Sasanides; for the latter represented themselves as such on their coins.[9]

In their entourage, there was a perfect consciousness of the relation between the new institution of the Khalifs and the conception of Persian kingship. While the Abbaside Khalif Abdul Malek censured the poet at his court for employing the attributes of a Persian king in glorifying him —it was only a matter of the term diadem, taj,[10] — an Abbaside prince and poet thus celebrates the Khalif in a historic poem dedicated to him: "He resembles the Persian Ardeshir when he restored a destroyed kingdom."[11] This restoration was linked from the first with the idea now formed of the dignity of Khalif. Not only their Court, their administrative organisation, the system of the offices of state and the etiquette were in conformity with the model of the Persian Empire, the intrinsic signification of khalifat came to be formulated after the Persian ideal: they were the guardians of divine economy, the state turned into a religious institution, a universal church at the head of which the legitimate successor of the Prophet, the "Khalif Allah" found himself. Highest consideration was secured for the church by the state. A government truly worthy of the name must be in accord with religion; government is related to religion, thanks to the perfect union with it; hence one may say that government and religion are identical and that religion is the government of the people.[12] These are entirely Musalman

9 Journal Asiatique 1895, 1, p. 167 ; Zeitschrift der d. Morhenl. Ges xxi (1867), p. 429, 458, J. Darmesteter *Coup d'oeil sur l'histoire de la Perse*,* (Paris 1885), p. 40, Sacred Books of the East, XXIV, p. 171. *See p. 180 of this book, Tr.

10 Aghani iv, 158. Cp Bratke *Religions gesprach am Hohe der Sassaniden* 193, note 1, in the eyes of the Arabs the taj was the characteristic attribute of the Persian royal dignity, cp Noeldeke *Funf Mullakat* 1, 36, about Anr Ibn Kulthum Legends were composed about the taj of Khushru .(Ibn Hisham, p. 42, 4).

11 Diwan or Abdullah al-Mutazz I, p. 128. 15. This poem was published separately by M. Lang in Z. D. M. G. for 1886, p. 563.

12 Justi, *Geschite des alten Persiens* (Berlin 1879). As regards Persian political doctrines, cp. Wilhelm, *Konigthum und Priesterthum iin alten Eran*, Z.D.M.G., 1886,

maxims. And the book from which they are extracted is not by a Musalman legislator but is a Pahlavi book, the *Dinkard*, dating from the last days of productive Parsism.

The Moslem idea of theocracy was born in Persian atmosphere and in its application and practical effect, it breathed the spirit of Persian tradition. In place of confessional indifference which dominated the Umayyads, it was confessionalism which became the guiding principle of government under the Abbasides. The Umayyads treated with sovereign contempt the theologians who attempted to thwart[13] them; the Abbasides made the dogma their special care. They inaugurated their rule by enforcing and preserving the *sunna* in government and they ended by persecuting the heretics and those who differed from them in thought. I will content myself with the mention of their persecution of the Zendiks,[14] as the heretics were called after the Persian vogue, and who soon after the accession of the Abbasides to power became victims of a kind of Moslem inquisition.[15]

"God has girded the Abbasides with two swords, one for the defence and extension of the frontiers of the state, the other for the assertion of the faith in its dogmatic aspect and to chastise infidelity and heresy.[16] The Persian distinction of *beh-din*[17] and *bad-din*, good creed and bad creed, became a vital principle of Islam. It did not appertain to the original Arab movement which found its continuance in the confessional indifferentism of the Umayyads.

If the Persian influence manifested itself in the transformation of the entire public spirit of Islam it has also left vestiges in certain matters of legal detail.

Without going so far as to maintain with the great master of Persian philology, Frederic Spiegel,[18] that the. very roots of Moslem tradition, the fundamental form of its religious precepts, plunge into Parsism, we cannot but recognise in our study of the Hadith the Persian ingredient in several peculiarities of its contents.

It does not suffice for us to weigh the importance which Irak the classic land of ancient Persian culture enjoyed. We have equally to consider the part taken by the populace of this country in the development of the spirit of Islam, — their fathers were still faithful

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p. 102.

13 *Muhammedanischen Studien* 11, p. 132.

14 *Actes du XI Congress des Orientalistes*, third section, p. 70, note 3.* * See p. 135 Tr.

15 Transactions of the 11th Congress of Orientalists.

16 *Wiener Zeitschrift für die kunde des Morgen lxiii*, 1899 p. 325, note 3.

17 Spiegel *Die Traditionelle Litterateur der Parsenii*, p. 78.

18 Loc. cit, p. 174.

followers of the religion of Zoroaster and they introduced into the new confession all the piety of Parsism.

It may not interest the general reader to have the details of a series of analogies between the religious and ritualistic peculiarities of the Moslem traditional literature and the prescriptions of the Persian religion. The chapter concerning purity and impurity from the point of view of ritual, in so far as it did not concern the ancient pagan *taboos* which survived in Islam, saw the light of day under the influence of the religious notions of Persia.

The Persian idea, which is likewise found in Judaism, of the defilement attaching to the dead body is well known. I will simply cite the following passage as an instance of Moslem reaction, from the *Hadith*.

> A client of the Ansarian, Abu Wahwah relates: We had washed a corpse. Then we wanted to purify ourselves by a bath. But Abu Wahwah came forward and said, by God, we are not defiled, neither as living nor as dead.[19]

This is an illustration of the opposition to the infiltration of Persian usages among the Arabs. We will now produce some instances of the abiding Parsi influence on Islam at a period subsequent to Muhammad's.

From very remote times in Islam only the reciting of the sacred texts, particularly the Qoran. passed for an act of religious merit. There is no question of prayers or religious formulae. It is the reading personal or by others of the Revealed Book or large portions from it that are necessary. Now those who are acquainted with Musalman literature must have often read at the close of the commentary on each *surat*, notes on the merits and the reward earned by reciting a separate chapter or the whole of the Qoran.[20] This idea of the merit acquired by the reading of the text is an echo of the Persian belief in the merit of reciting the Vendidad. "A short Yasna as well as the long Vendidad-sadeh serves for being read in the interests of any individual either dead, who by it secures the remission of his sins, or alive, for whom it serves the same end. For as it is not possible for a man to live on the earth without committing a sin, it is necessary to have read the Vendidad from time to time to be relieved of the demerits."[21] And now the recital of his sacred Book would secure for the Musalman the same results for the salvation of his soul. Just like the Parsis, the reading of the holy Book is practised by the Musalmans for several days after the

19 *Usd al ghaiba* v. p. 320.

20 *Muhammedanischen Studien* ii, 156.

21 Spiegel, *Eranische Alterthumskunde* 111, 577.

death of the member of a family. In our own days we observe this custom of *kiraye* in Musalman families at a condolence visit. The Persian origin of the practice will be confirmed by reference to M. Soderblom's work on the Fravashis in connection with the Parsi feast the dead.[22]

I have on another occasion shown how severely Musalman ethics condemn expressions of mourning for the dead. I will not reproduce the sentences of the Prophet in which this idea is indicated. I will call attention to the striking resemblance offered by Parsism on this point.

The eschtological doctrine of the *mizan* or balance among the Moslems for the purpose of weighing the good and bad actions of a man after bis death is borrowed from Parsism (Prof. William Jackson has shown the Aryan origin of this idea)[23]. Just as in the sacred books of the Parsis,[24] the value of the good and bad deeds is calculated in Islam[25] as so many units in weight. "One *kintar* of good deeds shall be counted to his credit who reads a thousand verses of the Qoran in a night."[26] The Prophet says: "Whoever says a prayer (salat al-janaza) over the bier of the dead earns a *kirat* but whoso is present at the ceremony till the body is interred merits two kirats of which one is as heavy as the Mount Chod."[27] "The lesser purification *wudu* (such as one performs before saying the prayers) is equivalent to a *mudd*, the complete purification, ghusl, is valued at a *Sa*."[28] The prayer in congregation has twenty-five times higher value than individual prayer." And so al-Muzani, a distinguished pupil of the Imam al-Shafi, one of the principal authorities of the second century, used to say twenty-five individual prayers whenever he chanced not to join us in the common devotions.[29] When a pious soul emigrates from Mecca to Jerusalem, he is aware that be loses three quarters of the value of his prayers; a prayer at Mecca being equal to 10,000 ordinary ones, while one said at Jerusalem was worth only 25,000 times more.[30] Similarly, one is liable to lose the quantity of merit acquired. "Whoever has a dog in his house, if jt be not

22 R. H. R. xxix, 241.

23 Actes du xth Congressa des Orientalistes. Second part, p. 67.

24 Spiegel Traditionelle Literateur der Parsenii, p. 87.

25 Blochet in R. H. R. xl, 232, note 2.

26 Al Darimi, Sunan p. 440. A1 Shaibani, disciple of Abu Hanifa relates (Athar ed. Lahore p. 93) that the reading of each word of the Qoran is equivalent to six good works. The formula ALM of which each letter has a separate value counts alone for thirty.

27 Usd al ghaiba, l, p. 172.

28 Ibid. v. 586.

29 Ibn Khallikan led. Wustenfeid No. 92.

30 Mujir al-din, al-Ins al jalil, p. 263.

a shepherd dog, has his *bona opera* diminished each day by two kirat."[31] We find here without difficulty the Parsi calculation of good and evil acts by weight and measure. "Each step taken in going along with a dead body is a good deed of the value of 300 *stir*: each *stir* is worth 4 *dirhem* so that the 300 *stir* are equal in value to 1,200 dirhem,"[32] "To walk one step without the sacred girdle is an offence, amounting to a *farman*, four steps to a *tanavar*."[33] (A *tanavar* is equal to 1,200 dirhem).

The figure 33 plays an important part in Parsi ritual as has been shown by Darmesteter[34] Compare a parallel position in the Musalman tradition. I purposely refer but to the most ancient hadith. Thirty-three, angels carry the praise of man to heaven. Whenever sacred, litanies are referred to we find the mention of 33 *tasbih*, 33 *tahmid*, 33 *takbir* and so on[35] — a number which is still to be met with in the litanies of certain mystical Moslem communities.[36] The faith has 333 paths[37] and when the faithful makes his genuflection at prayers, 333 bones and 333 nerves exalt the Deity.[38]

I will now proceed to two instances, one of the greatest importance the other of perhaps the least significance, from the standpoint of religion, of Iranian influence on Islam.

The first is the Musalman institution of prayer, the homage which the slave of God renders in prostrating himself in dust before the *rabb-al-alamin*, the Lord of all the worlds. 'The number of the daily devotional repetitions, which have their germs in Judo-Christian influence, certainly goes back to a Persian origin. Prayer as instituted by Muhammad himself was originally fixed for two parts in the day. Latterly a third was added (still in the Qoran), for a third portion of the day which Muhammad himself called the middle (al-wusta). Thus the morning prayer, the evening prayer, and the middle one corresponded to the shakharith, minkhah and arbith of Judaism.

But when the religious institutions of the Parsis penetrated more and-more into the circle of the founders of the Musalman rites this was no more sufficient. The Moslem would not remain behind time in comparison with the adepts of Parsism. The five gahs of the Persians, their five times of prayers, were borrowed, as Darmesteter has already

31 Al Damiri Hay at al haywanii, 101.

32 Sad-der, xii, 8.

33 Ibid lxxxii, 2.

34 *Le Zend Avesta*, 1, p. 13, note 36.

35 Muwatta, i. p. 81 ; Al Bukhari Fadail ul ashab No. 10.

36 Dupont et Coppolani, Les Confreries religieuses musulmanes (Algiers 1897), p. 323.

37 Kut al kulub, l, p. 83.

38 Al Darakutni apud al Balawi, Alif-Ba, l, p, 371.

seen,[39] by the followers of the Prophet, and henceforth the Moslem prayers were not three but five in a day.[40]

The second point is as I said insignificant from the standpoint of religion but is important as being a direct loan from Persia. It is the tooth-brush. One would hardly believe the amount of religious virtue attributed to this object by Musalman tradition. The pious pilgrims are recommended to bring back with them these sanctifying tooth-sticks from the holy places of the Islam.[41] The quantity of ancient passages denoting the great value attached by primitive Islam to the *miswak* offers a bewildering choice.

The use of the miswak is like the canonical *adhan* a preliminary preparation to prayer, it belongs to the *sunan-almursalin'* that is, to the practices of the prophets who preceded even Muhammad.[42] And the Prophet says:

"One prayer after the use of the miswak is worth 76 ordinary prayers X." "If it would not prove too heavy an obligation on my believers I would have prescribed the miswak to precede every prayer."[43] And the old tradition placed the employment of the tooth-stick so high that it puts the following words into the mouth of the Prophet. "God has ordered me the *siwak* with such insistance that I am almost afraid that he has commanded it as a revealed law."[44] In a humorous way it is said that the angel Gabriel so frequently enjoined the siwak upon the obedient Prophet that the latter feared the loss of his teeth by too frequent rubbing. One of the ten effects of the siwak is to excite the anger of Satan; and this is agreeable to Allah (*mardat-lil-rabb, mushita lil shaytan*[45])." One special virtue of the tooth-stick consists in this, that it facilitates for the dying in his last moments his profession of faith and shortens his agony.[46] In his last hour the Prophet had the miswak given to him and one of those present relates that he had never made so serious a use of it in his life as in these his last moments.[47] The poetic literature of the Musalmans has also taken possession of this sacred object. There is quite a branch of poetic literature devoted to the

39 Chantes populaires des Afghans, p, 261.

40 See my remarks on 'Mahometisme' of M. Carra de Vaux (Z.D.M.G. liii p. 385).

41 For details regarding the wood for tooth-stick see al-Jabiz, Bayan ii, 32.

42 Al Yakubi, Annales ed. Houtsma ii, 121.

43 Buchari Tamanni, No, 9; Musnad Ahmed, lx, 116 ; Al Shaibani, Athar, p. 20.

44 Musnad Ahmed, 1, 339 (sa yunzal aleyya fihi) ibid, iii, 490 (an yuktaba aleyya).

45 Ibid l, 3.

46 Al Mustatraf, l, p. 10; al Balawi, Alif-ba, l, 137-8. According to a dictum reported by al-Shafi, the use of the miswak is also effective in strengthening the intellect; al-Damiri 11, 145 s. v. usfur.

47 Buch. Maghazi, No. 85.

miswak. According to the testimony of the learned Shia Abul Kasim Murtadha Alam al Huda the most beautiful poem on this subject is from the pen of the poet Anu Haj al-Numeyri (belonging to the transitional period between the Umayyads and the Abbasides[48]).

Now, the high value attributed to the miswak is hardly explicable from the religious data of Islam. It takes us back to the Persian dominion and to the religious uses of the Parsis.[49] It received a liberal development in Musalman aphorisms some of which are known to us as the dicta of the prophet.[50]

We have next to consider the reverse of the model. From time to time there were manifest symptoms of opposition of a reaction of Islam against Persian ideas. As a proof nothing is more typical than the change produced in the sentiments of the Musalmans regarding the dog, the most faithful of our domestic animals. It is a well known fact that from the beginnings of Islam, the dog has been looked upon as a despised animal. "The angels never enter a house where there is a dog or an idol." The Prophet had given orders, we are told, that all the dogs in Medina be put to death especially those of a certain unusual colour.[51] And the theologians of Islam are puzzled to account for the measure. It is related that the Khalif Abu Jafar al Mansur — this hadith is by Ibu Kataiba — being instructed on this point could be furnished with no further explanation by a celebrated scholar of his time, Amribn Ubaid, except, "This is what the hadith says; I do not know its reason." "Because," the Khalif explained, "the dog barks at publicans, and frightens the beggars."[52] It is a matter of doubt whether the Prophet actually took such a measure. For in the Prophet's generation the canine race had not yet come to be hated. It is a fact that at the time of the Prophet dogs were found about mosques and their presence in them in no way was regarded as a profanation of the sanctuaries.[53] Even later we notice from the sentences preserved to us the amicable disposition of the Musalman towards this animal whose touch, however, from the standpoint of ceremonial law was a most serious pollution. The dog according to a hadith sees things which are invisible to us, i.e., demons.

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48 Al gurar wal durar (lithgr. Teheran) p. 179.

49 Shayast la-shayast x, 20 xii, 13 ; Dadistani dini, xl, 8.

50 The "companion" Abdullah ibn Masud was given tbe epithet of sahib al siwak, the reason for this title, which in any case was an honorific distinction, does not seem to have been recognised; and in place of al-siwak, we find variants like al-sawad and al-sirar which show that the true sense of the epithet was soon forgotten.

51 Quite a collection of traditions on this subject is found in the Alif-ba of al-Balawi, l, p. 378.

52 Ibn al Abbar, Takmila (Madrid ed. Bibl. arah, hisp.) p. 533.

53 Musnad Ahmed ii, 71.

If you find your dog barking at night ask for God's help against Satan.[54] This is altogether a Persian mode of thought, the dog shares this property in common with the cock[55] which also the Musalman tradition makes Muhammad regard as an enemy of Satan and which by its crow indicates its having beheld an angel.[56]

In a sentence attributed to Hasan[57] al Basari (died 728 A.D.) which has passed with certain variants in modern Persian poetry[58] the practical Sufi or Fakir is comparable to the dog in a manner which at once reminds us of the well-known description of the dog — in the Avesta "The dog has ten qualities worthy of eulogy all of which ought to be found in a fakir."[59]

How does it then come about that an animal supported in the times of Muhammad even in mosques and which subsequently was found worthy by its qualities to be compared to holy men all of a sudden inspires horror irreconcilable with the gentle conduct prescribed by Islam towards domestic animals? The reply is at once found when we consider the estimate which the animal enjoyed among the Parsis in whose midst the Musalmans established themselves. For them it is the animal that drives away evil spirits.[60] The dead body of the Parsi must have its glance before it is conveyed to the dakhma. In ancient times there were pious establishments for the maintenance of the animal to secure its assistance in crossing over the Cinvat bridge, an act the success or failure of which decided the eternal felicity or eternal damnation of the dead.

Musalman tradition desiring to oppose the religious esteem in which the animal was held by the Persians ascribed to the Prophet the steps for exterminating the dog and made contemptible for religious motives a domestic animal cherished in former times.[61]

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54 Apud al-Damiri ii, 334 and 1, 198.

55 Bundahish xiv, 28; xix, 3; Sad-der xxxi, 8.

56 Al Damiril, p, 328 Cp. E. Stave Uber den Einfluss des Parsismus and das Judenthum p. 131.

57 Al Makkari, Geyden ed. l, p. 393.

58 Chardin, *Voyages en Perse* ed. Langles, IX, p. 205.

59 Vendidad, Frag xiii 44-48.

60 The Bulgarians on the banks of the Volga consider the barking of a dog good omen (yatabarrakuna bi uwa al kalb), Ibn Fadlan apud Yakut l, 769, 13.

61 I am not the first to pronounce this view, see, e.g. Jacob Altarabisches Beduinenleben, 2nd ed. p. 84, which refers to Geiger Ostiranische Cultur p. 370, Ed Hahn, Die Hausthiere und ihre Beziehung zur Wirthscaft des Menschen p. 65, " the exaggerated esteem in which the Zend religion of the Parsis held it (i.e. the dog) has certainly contributed to the contempt of which it has become the object since the triumph of Islam; but it has not been possible, naturally, to dislodge it completely from the position which it had acquired".

Perhaps we can go up much further in the history of Islam to come across the effect of the Parsi elements on the formation of the ideas of Muhammad. This leads me to a hypothesis to which I would invite the attention of those who are interested in the historical research of the principles which have exercised an influence not only on the development but on the origin itself of the book of Muhammad.

Up to now Judaism and Christianity have been considered as the sources of the information of the Qoran. Abraham Geiger's book in 1833 opened the path to investigations which since have been carried out in all manner of detail. The apocryphal literature of the Jews and Christians has also been studied with a view to its traces in the formation of the Qoran, The work of Rene Basset has furnished many useful indications which would stimulate the historian of primitive Islam to advance his studies beyond this sphere[62]. We find that the idea of the well guarded tablet, the *lauh-almahfuz*, on which is recorded the prototype of divine revelation as well as the destinies of humanity, has its source in a Hebrew work, and that the portrayal of the last judgment such as we find in the Qoran has its prototype in the book of Enoch.[63] His relations with the Ethiopian Christians among whom the apocrypha enjoyed an important role are the cause of the penetration of these ideas into the horizon of the Arab Prophet.

Similarly it is not impossible that he had at his disposal Persian notions. It is not for the first time that the subject is mentioned and by us. It is generally recognised that the eschatological elements of the Qoran represents some loans taken directly from Persia over and above the Persian ideas whicM were spread abroad through Judaism and Christianity. The| places at which and the occasions when Persian notions could enter Arabia were numerous in Muhammad's time.

Persian culture was at the door of the inhabitants of central Arabia at the period before the rise of Muhammad. The commerce of the merchants of Mecca which extended into Persian territory[64] as well as the voyages of itinerant poets brought them in contact with the civilization of Persia. Al-asha was not the only poet who tried to make excursions into the Sasanian empire. He was only one of many. And Hira frequented by the poets and the people of Arabia offers in spite of its Arab Court a; veritable picture of Persian life. We meet with a large number; of Persian words and expressions in the ancient Arabic language.

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62 Les Apocryphes ethiopiens, by Rene Basset, lx, p. 12 and 22.

63 The Book of Enoch 1, 6, 8.

64 Agbani V1, p. 93,12 Abu Sufyaa sent his caravans with merchandise of the Kureshites ila ard al Ajam as far as the land of the Persians. As regards the predatory incursions into the Persian territory see Ibn Hisham, p. 938, 2.

The old poets before Islam abound in allusions to Persian life and to Persian manners which they naturally avoided with a genuine Arab haughtiness but which at the same time afford reliable evidence of the knowledge which the Arabs had regarding the foreigners.[65] Aus ibn Hajar, a pre-Islamic poet, to stigmatise the family life of his enemy, brands it with the expression *farisiyya*. From the beginning of the Christian era, Persians were exploiting gold mines in Arabia.[66] As for the influence which these Persians could exercise on the Arab population, we may judge of it by the fact that a portion of an Arab tribe settled in Bahrin, the Banu Ijl[67], became completely nationalised Persians. At the time of the rise of Muhammad. Yemen was specially under the Sasanide influence. We know by their names the Persian officials who exercised authority in the name of the Sasanides in south Arabia in the Prophet's epoch. We are justified in holding that the commerce between the north and south Arabia was not confined to the fine stuffs woven[68] in the south. It was not confined to the wine imported from Yemen and Hadramaut rich in[69] grapes and the celebrated vineyards of which are so frequently mentioned by the poets. There was no want of opportunity for the religion of Persia to act upon the thought of the founder of Islam. In fact the Prophet knew the *majus* and places them on the same line with the Jews, Sabians and Christians, as opposed to those who practised idolatry (Surat xxi, 17). The *majus* were assuredly not so numerous around him to enable him to observe their religious system as well as that of the Jews and Christians about whom their ministers, Habr and Ruhban, supplied the Prophet with direct information. For him who was dominated by the idea of absolute monotheism, the idea of God restricted by the magian dualism could not prove a source of religious thought. Such sources there were in the other religious systems by which he was surrounded and which he held to he degenerate forms of the original *din-Ibrahim*, the creed of Abraham.[70]

The persecutions which were later set on foot against unbelievers and heretics under the Abbasides with Persian influence may be traced to the words of the Qoran. The kafir of the Qoran is not a copy of the unbeliever and the heretic as they are presented in Judaism and

65 Mohammed. Studied 1, p. 102.

66 Cp. Glaser, Skizze der Geschite und Geographic Arabiens ii, p.193.

67 The passages quoted in Muham, Stud. 1, p. 103 note 4.

68 Masudi, Tanbih ed. de Goeje p. 281, 16.

69 Muller-Mordtmann, Sudarabische Denkmaler p. 87; Halvey Journal Asiat, 1872, 1. p. 524.

70 The Persians also consider the true religion to have been from very remote antiquity. They call the religion paoiryo-tkaesha which was primitive and existed long before the advent of Zarathushtra who only reestablished it (*Sacred Books* xxiv p, 87). The same conception appears in Firdausi's din-i-kuhen.

Christianity. Muhammad has here introduced the idea of *material impurity*. This is the Parsi spirit: “A wicked biped, for example, an impious *Ashemaogha* defiles the creations of the God Spirit by direct contact, defiles them by in direct contact.”[71] A conception of this kind must have hovered over the cradle of the Qoranic dictum *Inna ma-l-mushrikina najisun*, verily the polytheists are *impure*. This maxim was originally taken literally only in theory and the old exegesis — Ibn Abbas is the authority — comments word for word on the sentence of the Qoran (Surat ix, 28), “the substance of the unbelievers is impure” and adds “ one must perform ritual purification after having touched them.”[72] It must be stated in fairness, that the Sunni law has rejected from the text of the Qoran by a scholastic interpretation this hardly human idea and has explained in a moral sense “the impurity of the infidels (najas).”[73] But in the Shiite circles where Persian traditions had not ceased to exercise more pronounced influence the literal sense has been preserved in all its rigour and in every Shiite code we find kafir cited as one of the ten causes of ritualistic impurity (deh najasat).[74]

We will not yield to the temptation of looking for the prototype of *zalim* in the Persian *sastaran*, oppressor, but I will proceed to give an example of what I have called latent Persian influence. The Friday of the Musalmans is an imitation of the Biblical sabbath, It is, however, distinguished on an essential point from the Biblical institution. The latter is intended to recall continually, the divine work of creation, as completed in six days. It is a day of repose for man and no work must be done on that day because the work of creation of the world was achieved on that day.

Muhammad likewise wanted to maintain among his faithful a belief in the work of the creation in six days; but his Friday is not the day commemorative of it. It is neither the sabbath, the day of repose, nor a day of preparation for the sabbath. It is a day of assemblage for a weekly celebration of the cult. From the commencement it has never been considered a day of repose. “O believers,” says Muhammad in the Qoran (lxii, 9-10) “when you are called to prayer on the day of meeting hasten to occupy yourself with God and give up sloth; when the prayer is finished go where you like and look for the gifts of divine favour.” The Prophet absolutely repudiates the idea that God rested from his work of creation. This notion is so deeply rooted in the Musalman conscience that he has always considered as a direct polemic against the Jews these words of the Qoran, "We have created heaven and earth and whatever is

71 *Vendidad,* fargard v. 37.

72 See the old exegetical views cited in the Kasshaf ad locum.

73 For ampler information cp. my Zahiriten p. 61-63.

74 Droit Musalman l. p. 17 art 267 et seq.

between them in six days and fatigue has not come over us, *wa ma massana min lughubin* (L. 37).

Now according to the Parsi doctrine the universe was created in six periods[75] and festivals were instituted in remembrance of each of the six periods of creation but not one of them to celebrate the creation of the whole world; so that there is no holy day resembling the sabbath of the Jews. The Parsi theologians combated the Jewish conception of sabbath and especially the idea that God took repose after the work of creation.

The pazand document which is made known to us by Darmesteter[76] and in which the polemic of the Parsis against the institution of the sabbath has become the expression of a dogma dates in fact from the 9th century, but it is probable that it is but a reflex of older theological discussions.

This opposition to the biblical story of the creation does net seem to have escaped the knowledge of the Arabian Prophet. His spirit was strongly permeated with the idea of the omnipotence of God. This was the *idee mere* which filled his soul, Hence he enthusiastically seized the occasion in adopting the institution of the sabbath to differentiate it by energetic protest against the notion of a god who *takes repose*.

75 Le Zend-avesta translated by J. Darmesteter 1. p. 37; 111. p. 57.

76 Revue des Etudes juives xviii p. 9 No. 102.