"FOR THEY ASCEND TO THREE *MAḎĀHIB* AS THEIR ROOTS": AN ARABIC MEDIEVAL TREATISE ON DENOMINATIONS OF SYRIAN CHRISTIANITY

(*Nikolai N. Seleznyov*)

Книга общности веры (*Kitāb iğtimāʿ al-amāna*) представляет собой экуменический трактат, имеющий своей целью примирение трех основных конфессий восточного христианства: «несториан», «мелькитов» и «яковитов». Это произведение известно в двух редакциях, в одной из которых оно приписано Илие ал-Джаухарӣ, тогда как в другой, отражающей, по-видимому, оригинальную атрибуцию, его автором назван ʿАлӣ ибн Дāвӯд ал-Арфāдӣ. Русские исследователи церковной истории ссылались на раздел этого трактата, содержащий свидетельство о двуперстии при совершении крестного знамения у мелькитов, указывая автора сочинения как «Илия Гевери, несторианский митрополит Дамаска». В статье предлагается исследование этого источника, свидетельствующего о бытовании экуменических взглядов в среде христиан, живших в эпоху средневековья на арабском Востоке, отмечается использование концепции «корней и ветвей», характерной для арабской мысли.

By the time of the Muslim conquests of the Middle East, Eastern Christianity had experienced numerous divisions caused by ideological and political confrontations. Controversies over the union of the divinity and the humanity of Christ, perceived as an essential point of Christian doctrine, as well as the Byzantine imperial policy, aiming at strengthening Byzantium's influence in Syria, Arabia, the Caucasus, and Egypt, had resulted in the separation of the ethno-religious communities of these provinces from Byzantium. The controversies remained unsettled, and the divisions, created by them, continued. To a Muslim observer, Eastern Christianity looked as a hodgepodge of various denominations among which the following three were the most influential: the Syro-Persian Christianity, the Graeco-Roman Orthodoxy, and the anti-Chalcedonian faction, insisting on "one nature" of Christ. The Muslim jurist and

doxographer Muḥammad aš-Šahrastānī (1076—1153) summarized this as follows in his celebrated *Book of Religions and Sects* (*Kitāb al-milal wa-n-niḥal*): "Then Christians split up into seventy two sects[1], the three big divisions among them being: the Melkites, the Nestorians, and the Jacobites"[2]. A similar view of the Christian divisions, differentiating between three main communities, is also found in the Christian Syrian author's *The Book of the Concordance of Faith*, obviously influenced by the Islamic doxographical tradition[3].

Uṣūl wa-furūʿ ('roots and branches') is one of the basic concepts of the Arabic thought that was developed in grammar, religious and philosophical discourses (*Uṣūl ad-Dīn*, *Uṣūl al-Ḥadīṯ*), and the Muslim law (*Uṣūl al-Fiqh*)[4]. It was also used in the traditional Arabic Muslim religious studies concerning the origins of various Christian denominations. For example, Šihāb ad-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn Idrīs aṣ-Ṣanhāǧī called al-Qarāfī (1228—1285), a Mālikī jurist of Berber origin who lived in Ayyūbid and Mamlūk Egypt, while discussing Christian divisions in his work *Superb answers to shameful questions in refutation of the unbelieving religion* (*al-Aǧwiba al-fāḫira ʿan al-asʾila al-fāǧira fī-r-radd ʿalā-l-milla al-kāfira*)[5], formulates his polemical remark as follows: "Each of them wants a right denomination to branch out from an impossible root, but there is no branch, if the root is spoiled (*kullan minhum yurīd tafrīʿ maḏhab ṣaḥīḥ ʿalā aṣl mustaḥīl, wa-lā farʿ iḏā fasad al-aṣl*)".

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[1] The notion that the Christians were divided into seventy two groups was probably influenced by Muslim *Ḥadīṯ*s: see Gautier H. A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 437, 458.

[2] William Cureton, *Muhammad al-Shahrastáni, Kitāb al-milal wa-n-niḥal. Book of Religious and Philosophical Sects* (London: Soc. for publication of Oriental texts, 1842), Part 1, 173. The division of Christianity in 'three main denominations' is evidenced in the writings of many Medieval Muslim authors.

[3] See the discussion in Н. Н. Селезнёв [Nikolai N. Seleznyov], Средневековый восточнохристианский экуменизм как следствие исламского универсализма [Medieval Eastern Christian ecumenism as a result of Islamic universalism], *Философский журнал* 1 (8) (2012), p. 77—85.

[4] M. G. Carter, Uṣūl, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New edition, vol. X (Leiden: Brill, 2000), p. 928:2—930:2; N. Calder, Uṣūl al-Dīn, Ibid., p. 930:2—934:1; E. Dickinson, Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth, Ibid., p. 934:1—935:1; A. J. Newman, J. J. G. Jansen, Uṣūliyya, Ibid., p. 935:1—938:1.

[5] *al-Aǧwiba al-fāḫira ʿan al-asʾila al-fāǧira fī-r-radd ʿalā-l-milla al-kāfira* / Maǧdī Muḥammad aš-Šaḥāwī. Bayrūt: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1426/2005, p. 127; Thomas, D., Mallett, A. (eds), *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*. Vol. 4 (1200—1350). (Leiden; Boston, 2012), p. 582—587.

Along with the division of Christianity in 'three main denominations', the concept of the 'roots and branches' is also present in the survey of Christian divisions in the aforementioned *Book of the Concordance of Faith*. Its author says: "They [i. e. Christians] split into many divisions of which one could speak for long. But even if they do, all their multiplicity aside, agree in opinions and differ from each other in passions, they are reducible to three divisions (*firaq*), for they ascend to three denominations (*maḏāhib*) as their roots, namely the division of the Nestorians, the division of the Melkites, and the division of the Jacobites; everything that exists apart from these three communities (*al-milal*) are [in fact] divisions which originate from them and are reducible to them"[6].

The Book of the Concordance of Faith (*Kitāb iğtimāʿ al-amāna*) is extant in the following two recensions: **(1)** the recension of the Bodleian Library manuscript (16th c.; MS Ar. Uri 38 / Huntington 240; fol. 119v—124v), which was published by Gérard Troupeau in 1969[7]. It was written, as the editor remarks, in an oriental Egyptian Arabic script ("écriture orientale (Égypte)")[8]; **(2)** the recension of the Vatican Library manuscript, dating to AD 1692 (1103 Anno Hegirae, 2003 Anno Graecorum) — Vat. ar. 657, fol. 4v—15r[9]. This second recension was described and presented in excerpts by Assemani in his *Bibliotheca orientalis*[10]. The Vatican manuscript contains the text of *The Book of the Concordance of Faith* written in Garshūnī, i. e. in Arabic transcribed into Syriac script (Eastern Syriac

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[6] *Kitāb iğtimāʿ al-amāna*, Introduction, § 1; see the annex below. The concept 'roots of the religion' (*Uṣūl ad-Dīn*) was used in the Arabic Christian tradition as well: the apology *Kitāb uṣūl ad-Dīn* by Elias ibn al-Muqlī, the catechism with the same title by ʾAḇdīšōʿ of Nisibis, and the theological 'Summa' entitled *Mağmūʿ uṣūl ad-dīn wa-masmūʿ maḥṣūl al-yaqīn* by al-Muʾtaman Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-ʿAssāl are the examples.

[7] Gérard Troupeau, "Le livre de l'unanimité de la foi de ʿAlī ibn Dāwud al-Arfādī", *Melto* 5:2 (1969) 197—219; repr. in: Gérard Troupeau, *Études sur le christianisme arabe au Moyen Âge* (Aldershot; Brookfield: Ashgate, 1995) (Variorum Collected Studies Series, CS515), Essay XIII, 201—219.

[8] Troupeau, 1969, 197, n. 1.

[9] For a description of the manuscript see: Angelo Mai, *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio e Vaticanis codicibus edita*, vols. 1—10 (Romae: Typis Vaticanis, 1825—1838), vol. 4 (1831), 583 (No. DCLVII / A.53).

[10] Joseph Simon Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticana*, vols. 1—3 (Romae, 1719—1728), vol. 3:1 (1725), 513—516.

script, in this case)[11]. The present author has recently published a critical edition of the Garshūnī recension[12].

The first part of the third volume of the *Bibliotheca orientalis* ("De Scriptoribus Syris Nestorianis") presents *The Book of the Concordance of Faith* as a treatise by "Elias the Nestorian metropolitan of Jerusalem and Damascus", ("Elias Hierosolymæ & Damasci Nestorianorum Metropolita"). In this section, Assemani presented some excerpts from the treatise[13] re-transcribed into the Arabic script. While doing the reversed transcription, he introduced some changes in the text. One can assume that these changes were triggered by his discomfort with the East-Syriac script of the manuscript as well as with some elements of the Iraqi dialect[14] which had crept into the text. Both were equally unfamiliar to the Maronite author whose own dialect was Lebanese, and whose usual Syriac script was the West-Syriac *serṭō*. The Vatican manuscript has a note in the introduction (fol. 4[v]:2), saying that *Elias al-Ǧawharī*, the metropolitan of Jerusalem, re-wrote or copied (*nasaḫa-hu*) the treatise that follows. Assemani latinized "al-Ǧawharī" (i. e. "the Jeweller", probably a reference

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[11] Д. А. Морозов [D. A. Morozov] Каршӯнӣ: сирийская письменность в арабо-христианских текстах [Karšūnī: Syriac script in Christian Arabic texts] in: *Пятые чтения памяти профессора Николая Федоровича Каптерева. Россия и православный Восток: новые исследования по материалам из архивов и музейных собраний. (Москва, 30—31 октября 2007 г.). Материалы.* (Москва, 2007) 70—72, See also his important article "Каршуни" (*Karšūnī*) in Православная Энциклопедия [The Orthodox Encyclopaedia], vol. 31. Moscow: The Orthodox Encyclopaedia Publishers, 2013, p. 463—465; Alphonse Mingana, "Garshūni or Karshūni?", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1928) 891—893; Françoise Briquel-Chatonnet, "De l'intérêt de l'étude du garshouni et des manuscrits écrits selon ce système", in *L'Orient chrétien dans l'empire musulman: Hommage au professeur Gérard Troupeau* (Versailles: Éditions de Paris, 2005) (Studia arabica III) 463—475. For specific characteristics of the Eastern ("Chaldean") Garshūnī see: Hersch Ram, *Qiṣṣat Mâr Êlîyâ (Die Legende vom Hl. Elias). Als Beitrag zur Kenntnis der arabischen Vulgär-Dialekte Mesopotamiens nach der Handschrift Kod. Sachau 15 der Königl. Bibliothek zu Berlin herausgegeben, übersetzt und mit einer Schriftlehre versehen.* Inaugural-Dissertation (Leipzig: J. S. Hinrichs, 1906).

[12] Н. Н. Селезнёв [Nikolai N. Seleznyov], Западносирийский книжник из Арфāда и иерусалимский митрополит Церкви Востока. «Книга общности веры» и ее рукописная редакция на каршуни [A West-Syrian Clerk from Arfād and the East-Syriac Metropolitan of Jerusalem. "The Book of the Concordance of Faith" and Its Manuscript Recension in Garshūnī], *Символ* 58: *Syriaca & Arabica* (Париж; Москва, 2010) 34—87, 45—72 (text in Garshūnī), 73—87 (Russian translation).

[13] fol. 4v:4, fol. 4v:10, fol. 7r:17—7v:12, fol. 13v:11—14r:2, fol. 10v:4—10v:10, fol. 10v:10—11r:16, fol. 11r:16—12r:5, fol. 12v:2—12v:17.

[14] E. g., fol. [4]v:4 and fol. 12v:13—15.

to the family business) as *Geveri*, a possible Italian transcription of the name. Neither Assemani nor later scholars discussing the subject took notice of the Garshūnī version's indication that it was merely *copied* (rather than composed) by Elias al-Ğawharī.

In the text of the Bodleian Library the treatise is attributed to ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Arfādī. It is worth mentioning that in his catalogue of the Bodleian Library, Joannes Uri (1726—1796) omitted the reference to the *Book of the Concordance of Faith* as part of the manuscript Ar. Uri 38 / Huntington 240[15]. Presumably because of this, neither did Georg Graf (1875—1955) mention ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Arfādī as the author of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith* in his monumental *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, but, following Assemani, placed the treatise in the section on "Elias (Ilīyā) al-Ğawharī von Jerusalem und Elias von Damaskus"[16].

An Arabic-speaking medieval Coptic author Muʾtaman (ad-Dawla) ibn al-ʿAssāl (13th c.)[17] prepared a synopsis of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith* in the eighth chapter of his *Summa of the Foundations of Religion and of the Traditions (lit. What was Heard) of Reliable Knowledge* (*Mağmūʿ uṣūl ad-dīn wa-masmūʿ maḥṣūl al-yaqīn*). In the subtitle he gave to the section, he indicates that he reproduces a treatise of "Elias, the metropolitan of Jerusalem, on the same subject, entitled *[The Book] of the Concordance of Faith and the Brief Exposition of Religion*, and it is [also] said that this [treatise] is [by] ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd."[18] Ibn al-ʿAssāl, evidently, was aware of both attributions, and he duly provides both in mentioning the author of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith*. While exploring the *Summa of the Foundations of Religion* in the Vatican and Paris manuscripts (Vat. ar. 103, fol. 91v—94 and Paris, BNF ar. 200, fol. 63—65v), Gérard Troupeau misinterpreted this double ascription as a claim that Elias of Jerusalem was

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[15] Johannes Uri, *Bibliothecæ Bodleianæ codicum manuscriptorum orientalium, videlicet Hebraicorum, Chaldaicorum, Syriacorum, Æthiopicorum, Arabicorum, Persicorum, Turcicorum, Copticorumque catalogus*. Pars prima (Oxonium: Clarendon, 1787), [Ar. Chr.] 34.

[16] Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vols 1—5 (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944—1953), vol. 2 (Studi e testi 133) 132—133.

[17] See about him: Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 2, 407—414.

[18] Abullif Wadi, Bartolomeo Pirone, *al-Muʾtaman Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm Ibn al-ʿAssāl, Mağmūʿ uṣūl ad-dīn wa-masmūʿ maḥṣūl al-yaqīn. Summa dei principi della Religione* (Cairo; Jerusalem: Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 1998) (Studia Orientalia Christiana; Monographiae, 6a—9), Vol. 1/SOCh 6a, 187—192.

indentical with ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd and remarked that he found this alleged identification (in actual fact, never made by Ibn al-ʿAssāl) rather improbable[19].

Concerning ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Arfādī, Troupeau indicates that he is "completely unknown in the history of Christian Arabic literature" ("totalement inconnu dans l'histoire de la littérature arabe chrétienne") and surmises that he was a Syrian, since the village Arfād which provided ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd with his *nisba* (a name indicating the place of origin) was located, according to the geographical dictionary of Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1179—1229), near ʿAzāz north of Aleppo[20]. Sidney H. Griffith could not find any definite information about al-Arfādī, either, and consequently characterized the author as "the shadowy ʿAlī ibn Dāwud al-Arfādī, of uncertain date and denomination"[21]. Troupeau suggests that the author of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith* belonged to the West-Syriac ("Jacobite") community on the ground of his analysis of the contents of the treatise: al-Arfādī's accounts of the "Nestorians" and the "Melkites" are rather brief, whereas his descriptions of the views of the "Jacobites" are more detailed and are placed at the end of each comparative section. Moreover, he characteristically emphasizes the significance of the "oneness of Christ"[22]. Troupeau also argued for the eleventh century as the probable period of al-Arfādī's life and *floruit*, but did not furnish any substantial evidence in support of this suggestion. He further remarks that al-Arfādī was probably the author of another treatise — *On the Verity of the Gospel* (*Kitāb fī ṣiḥḥat al-Inǧīl*) — referenced by the author himself in the section of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith* discussing the Gospels[23].

Assemani suggested to identify Elias al-Ǧawharī with Elias ibn ʿUbayd who first occupied the episcopal see of the Church of the East in Jerusalem and was then elevated to the metropolitan see of the same Church in Damascus.[24] This identification was based on ʿAmr ibn Mattā's report about the patriarch of the Church of the East John (*Yuwānīs*) who "in the middle of Tammūz [July] of the year 280 of the Hiǧra, i. e. the year 1204 of the Seleucid era [AD 893] ⟨...⟩ on the day of his own ordination,

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[19] Troupeau, 1969, 198.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Sidney Harrison Griffith*, Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton; Oxford, 2008), 142.

[22] Troupeau, 1969, 199.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, vol. 3:1, 513; See also: Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 2, 132.

ordained Elias ibn ʿUbayd, the bishop of Jerusalem, as the metropolitan of Damascus"[25]. The suggested identification would become impossible if we assume that al-Arfādī lived in the eleventh century, as suggested by Troupeau, along with the additional witness of the Vat. ar. 657, according to which Elias al-Ǧawharī only "copied" the *Book of the Concordance of Faith*. It should also be noted that Troupeau's suggestion was based on his evaluation of the Bodleian Library text, which had undoubtedly undergone a later editing; hence, Troupeau's conclusion can be subject to revision. It may be added to our survey that "Elias, the bishop of Jerusalem" is also known as the author of the *Book of Casting Away the Sorrows* (*Kitāb fī tasliyat al-aḥzān*) published by the Italian orientalist Giorgio della Vida (1886—1967)[26], and that Assemani also attributed a *Nomocanon Arabicus* to "Elias Geveri"[27].

Troupeau characterized the Vatican recension as being an abridged one ("une recension abrégée")[28], but in actuality the problem of the relationship between the two manuscripts containing the treatise in question is more complex. First of all, the Vat. ar. 657 witnesses to evident omissions in the text of the Bodleian Library manuscript, despite the fact that the latter recension was characterized by Troupeau as "complete" ("une recension complète")[29] — for example Vat. ar. 657, fol. 8v:13—15 and Vat. ar. 657, fol. 9r:1 are lacking in the Bodleian Library manuscript. Second, it is

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[25] Henricus Gismondi, *Maris, Amri et Slibae de patriarchis Nestorianorum commentaria* / Ex codicibus Vaticanis edidit ac latine reddidit Henricus Gismondi (Romae: Excudebat C. de Luigi, 1896—1899), Pars II, 80—81 (Ar. text), 46—47 (Lat. tr.); В. В. Болотовъ [Vasilij V. Bolotov], *Изъ исторіи Церкви сиро-персидской* [*[Chapters] From the History of the Syro-Persian Church*] (Saint Petersburg, 1901) 120/1190.

[26] Gérard Troupeau, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes*. Première partie: manuscrits chrétiens. Vols. 1—2 (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1972—1974), vol. I, 176 (№ 206:1); Giorgio Levi della Vida, "Il conforto delle tristezze di Elia al-Ǧawhari (Vat. ar. 1492)", In: *Mélanges Eugène Tisserant* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1964) (Studi e testi, 232), vol. 2: Orient chrétien, pt. 1, 345—397.

[27] Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, vol. 3:1, 513—514; Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 2, 133—134. See also: Bo Holmberg, *A Treatise on the Unity and Trinity of God by Israel of Kashkar (d. 872).* (Lund Studies in African and Asian Religions, 3). Lund: Plus Ultra, 1989 (passim); Gianfranco Fiaccadori, "On the Dating of Īliyā al-Ǧawharī's *Collectio canonica*", *Oriens Christianus* 68 (1984), 213—214; Hubert Kaufhold, "Nochmals zur Datierung der Kanonessammlung des Elias von Damaskus", *Oriens Christianus* 68 (1984), 214—217; Gianfranco Fiaccadori, "Īliyā al-Ǧawharī, Īliyā of Damascus", *Oriens Christianus* 70 (1986), 192—193.

[28] Troupeau, 1969, 198.

[29] Ibid., 197.

obvious that the Bodleian library text, in comparison to that of the Vatican, looks stylistically edited. Thus, the literary particle *qad* is more frequently used in the Bodleian Library text than in the Vatican text[30]. Since one can hardly imagine that these particles would be systematically removed for the sake of "abridgement", it stands to reason that the Bodleian Library text *added* the particles to improve the style. It should be noted that a very similar sort of editing is evident in yet another treatise that the same Bodleian Library manuscript contains: *The Treatise on the Union* by Ibn aṭ-Ṭayyib (fol. 104r—105r), when it is compared with the other recension of the work (Vat. ar. 145, fol. 67v—71v)[31].

When compared with the two manuscripts mentioned above, the synopsis made by Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl presents readings characteristic of the same branch of the manuscript tradition of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith* to which the text of the Bodleian Library belongs. It is curious, however, that the Coptic encyclopedist omitted the paragraph devoted to the various ways of making the sign of the cross. Only towards the end of his synopsis, Ibn al-ʿAssāl remarks that "the Jacobites made the sign of the cross from the left side to the right, and the others made it in the opposite way". He explains that he "did not indicate this because it was widely known and because both ways were equally acceptable, and the subject was trivial"[32].

The cultural heritage of Middle-Eastern Christianity was so influential in the rest of the Christian world that it frequently attracted the attention of scholars studying particular church traditions. It is not surprising, therefore, that Middle-Eastern Christian practices became an intriguing subject for historians of the origins of the Russian "Old Believers", a movement which itself frequently referred to some Middle-Eastern Christian practices as proofs of the truthfulness of its own tradition.

In 1847, in the *Colloquia of the Imperial Society for Russian History and Antiquities* at the University of Moscow, Philaret Gumilevskiy (1805—1866), who was then the bishop of Riga, published his study

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[30] Cf. Vat. ar. 657, fol. 5r:15, fol. 7v:16—17, fol. 8v:1, fol. 10r:11, fol. 13r:5.

[31] See various readings indicated in: Gérard Troupeau, "Le traité sur l'Union de 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Ṭayyib", *Parole de l'Orient* 8 (1977—1978) 141—150; repr. in: Gérard Troupeau, *Études sur le christianisme arabe au Moyen Âge*, Essay VII. The Vatican version of this text was also alleged to have numerous omissions, but in actuality has no evident textual defect.

[32] Wadi, Pirone, *Maǧmūʿ uṣūl ad-dīn wa-masmūʿ maḥṣūl al-yaqīn*, Vol. 1/SOCh 6a, 192.

The Worship of the Russian Church in the Pre-Mongolian Period[33].
Concerning the various ways of making the sign of the cross, bishop
Philaret cited a Middle-Eastern Christian author who had touched on the
subject in his treatise: "The Nestorian author Elias of Damascus who lived
in the late ninth century, intending to reconcile the Syrian Monophysites
with the Orthodox and the Nestorians, wrote as follows: 'As to the fact
that they do not agree with each other in making the sign of the cross,
this is not an obstacle at all. Some of them, for instance, make the sign
of the cross with *one finger* and move the hand from the left side of the
body to the right. Others do it with *two fingers*, and do so from the right
side to the left… Jacobites sign themselves with *one finger*. By making
the sign of the cross with *two fingers*, from right to left, Nestorians and
Melkites (Orthodox) confess the faith that the divinity and the humanity
[of Christ] were united while on the cross' (Assemani Bibl. Orient. T. 3.
P. 2. p. 383)"[34]. This testimony was taken, as the author clearly indicated,
from the famous encyclopedic work of the Maronite scholar Joseph Simon
Assemani (1687—1768), the *Bibliotheca orientalis*, even though the refe-
rence provided was imprecise, and the other part of the *Bibliotheca orien-
talis* where Assemani had discussed this passage in more detail along with
the parallel Arabic quotations, was not referenced at all[35].

This testimony, introduced by bishop Philaret into Russian studies of
Church history, drew both criticism and lively interest[36]. In 1870, archiman-
drite Nikanor (Brovkovich) (1826/7—1890/1), subsequently archbishop of
Kherson and Odessa, published his study, entitled *The Church of St. Sophia
in Constantinople: A Witness to the Ancient Orthodox Sign of the Cross*.
Being an expert in Latin and a polemicist, he enthusiastically translated
and commented on the quotations from the treatise *De concordia Fidei*
"by Elias of Damascus, Metropolitan of the Nestorian community," found
in Assemani's *Bibliotheca orientalis*[37]. Following Assemani's account,

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[33] Филаретъ (Гумилевскій), еп. Рижскій, Богослуженіе Русской Церкви
до монгольскаго времени, *Чтенія въ Императорскомъ обществѣ исторіи и древ-
ностей Россійскихъ* 7 (1847) 1—42.

[34] *Ibid.*, 31, n. 2. Italics in the original.

[35] The correct reference is: vol. 3, pt. 2, 388 and vol. 3, pt. 1, 513—516.

[36] The critics regarded the testimony as an argument in favour of the Old Believers.
See Letter 84 (especially its postscript) in: *Письма Филарета, Архіепископа
Черниговскаго, къ А. В. Горскому* (Москва, 1885) 216—217; Е. Голубинскій,
Къ нашей полемикѣ съ старообрядцами, *Чтенія въ Императорскомъ обществѣ
исторіи и древностей Россійскихъ* 3/214 (1905) 246.

[37] Никаноръ [Бровковичъ], архим., Цареградская церковь святой Софіи—
свидѣтельница древле-православнаго перстосложенія, *Православный собесѣд-*

Nikanor wrote: "Who was this Elias of Damascus? … Elias ... nicknamed *Geveri* (*Гевери*), the Nestorian bishop of Jerusalem, was ordained metropolitan of Damascus by the patriarch John on the 15th of July of the year 1204 of the Greek era (i.e. since Alexander the Great), [corresponding to the year] 893 of the Christian era..."[38] Thus, owing to archimandrite Nikanor, "Elias Geveri" (*Илія Гевери*) became a reality in Russian studies of Church history[39].

The following introduction of the *Book of the Concordance of Faith*, which also provides a useful summary of the treatise, and the chapter discussing the various ways of making the sign of the cross are presented below in an English translation prepared by Nikolai N. Seleznyov in consultation with Dmitry A. Morozov.

The Book of the Concordance of Faith

Introduction
(Vat. ar. 657, fol. 4v:1—6v:7)

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate, from Whom we seek help. We [begin] transcribing the book which was copied by the learned, respectable holy father, pure, worthy, spiritual Mār Elias of the Lord, al-Ǧawharī, the metropolitan of the noble Jerusalem (*al-Quds*), the earthly throne of God, pastor of pastors of Christians and leader of those washed clean with the water of baptism, may his prayer embrace us and all the faithful. Amen.

This[40] book is about the concordance of faith, the origin of religion, and the pride of orthodoxy[41] (of the Syrians named Nestorians, Melkites, and Jacobites; a treatise of saint Mār Elias, may God sanctify his pure spirit and have mercy upon us according to his prayer. Amen.)[42]

никъ, издаваемый при Казанской Духовной Академіи 3 (1870) 189—202. Nikanor's reference, like that of bp. Philaret, is to the second part of the third volume of the *Bibliotheca orientalis*, but he adds another reference — to the more detailed description of the treatise in the first part of the third volume of the *B. O.*

[38] Ibid., 190. Italics in the original.

[39] Archimandrite Nikanor's study was reprinted as part of his book *О перстосложеніи для крестнаго знаменія и благословенія* [Concerning the arrangement of fingers for making sign of the cross and blessing; in Russian]. *Бесѣда Никанора, Архіепископа Херсонскаго и Одесскаго* (Saint Petersburg, 1890).

[40] Absent (*abs.*) in Troupeau's edition (T).

[41] T added (*add.*): glorious.

[42] T: *abs.*

(Mār Elias)[43] said: **1**[44]**.** When I looked at the magnificence of the Christian faith[45] [from the point of view of] the truthfulness of the faith in God — Who is Great and Glorious! — [46] the appropriately celebrated services[47] to the Creator of (heaven)[48] and earth, and of what is upon (it)[49, 50], according to the law of guidance commanded by the Merciful Creator[51], propagated[52] throughout the Orients of the earth and its Occidents[53], among the peoples and nationalities scattered over remote countries and all the lands, [while] every nation among them is proud of what it has of the Christian religion[54], common for all (upon the earth)[55], and of [its own] confession[56]; then I saw that a situation inspired by the devil[57] overtook some [of] these peoples, and consequently, there happened a divergence[58] of some of them from the others following the way of passion (opposed to the mind)[59], and so they split into many divisions of which one could speak for long. But even if they do, all their multiplicity aside, agree[60] in opinions and differ from each other in passions, they are reducible to three divisions (*firaq*), for they ascend to three denominations (*maḏāhib*) as their roots[61], namely (the division of the Nestorians, the division of the Melkites, and the division of the Jacobites); everything that exists apart from these three communities

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[43] T: ʿAlī ibn Dāwūd al-Arfādī, prosperous in God and a slave of obedience to Him.

[44] Paragraph numbers follow Troupeau's edition.

[45] T *add.*: and found it brilliant.

[46] T *add.*: pure faith.

[47] T *add.*: proper.

[48] T: heavens.

[49] In the MS used by Troupeau: in them [i. e. in the heavens].

[50] T *add.*: ornated with beloved knowledge.

[51] T *add.*: rich.

[52] T: being spread.

[53] T *add.*: and its remotest, and its nearest, manifestly, abundantly.

[54] T *add.*: and rejoice at what it has.

[55] T *abs.*

[56] T *add.*: in the truthful Gospel which is the principle of religion, and a part of faith, and the light of truth; In the synopsis of Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl: in the Gospel, the truthfulness of which is strong.

[57] T *add.*: cursed.

[58] T *add.*: and mutual disagreement.

[59] T: which passes [limits] the minds / which infects minds.

[60] T: mutually part with [each other]; Troupeau translates in French: elles s'écartent.

[61] T *add.*: and they are an offshoot of them.

(*al-milal*)[62] are [in fact] divisions which (originate)[63] from them and are reducible to them, as are the Maronites, the Isaacians, and the Paulinians[64], and other [divisions] of the Christian religion apart from them. I found that every one of these three aforementioned communities has [its own] ignoramuses, and every [community] has its own troublemakers and squabblers, and that every community[65] defames those who contradicts it[s position], accusing them of disbelief, impiety, and departure from the faith, and they curse the [supposed] disbelief of each other.

When I thoroughly considered this and examined it as it should be examined[66], I found no difference between them which would entail contradictions in what concerns the religion and the faith and saw no [situation] among them where someone's faith would refute someone else's, and someone's views would deny another's views, **2.** (but they all)[67] come together in their faith and in the principles of their preaching to the (pure Gospel)[68], which (God sent down)[69] and which the leaders of the truthful way — the righteous apostles, i.e. the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ — passed on to them. (I found no one who would disagree with anyone else in his testimony to the truthful Gospel, [for there is] no one)[70] who adds [anything to it] or takes anything away [from it], but they all read (the Holy Gospel, the Epistles[71] of Paul)[72], our Lord's and (Saviour's)[73] apostle, which are fourteen epistles that prove the Gospel, (and also the Book of Acts)[74],

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[62] T *add.*: besides these.

[63] T: because they take/originate from them.

[64] This is the reading of T; the Garshūnī text reads: *al-qawlāniyya*.

[65] In the MS used by Troupeau: people.

[66] T: *metathesis* looked through the pages as it should be looked through the pages.

[67] T: because they.

[68] T: the truthful Gospel of God.

[69] T *abs*.

[70] T: When looked through the pages of what these three communities had from the Gospel, I did not find in what they have anything concerning which anyone would disagree with any other.

[71] T *abs*.

[72] In the synopsis of Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl: the Gospel and the apostles' sayings.

[73] T *abs*.

[74] T: When I considered this, I found in it no disagreement with any other community, either [by way of] addition, or [by way of] taking away. I also examined the Book of Acts and that of the epistle [of Paul] and the catholic [epistles] of the disciples of Christ our Lord, and while comparing them with each other I found neither any addition to what others have, nor any taking away from it.

and they all agree in accepting this and assert[75] the truthfulness of this. And since the Gospel is the principle of religion, and [the Book of the Epistles of] Paul is its proof, and the [Book of the] Acts is a witness to it, then there is no[76] difference between them, nor any contradiction, for their faith is right in [what is considered to be right in] religion.

On the Sign of the Cross
(Vat. ar. 657, fol. 10v:10b—11r:16a)

7. Concerning their divergence in making [the sign of] the cross[77], some of them make [the sign of] the cross with (one finger)[78], beginning from (the left side [and going] to the right, while others do it with two fingers, beginning from the right side [and going] to the left)[79]. This circumstance does not[80] imply any division, but is of the same kind[81] as what I wrote on [the subject of] one nature versus two natures, because the Jacobites make [the sign of] the cross with one finger, beginning from the left side [and going] to the right, thus pointing to (the faith in the one Christ who, while on)[82] the Cross, saved them by his crucifixion [and led them] from the left side, which is the [side of] sin, to the right side, which is the [side of] forgiveness. Then, when the Nestorians and the Melkites make [the sign of the cross] with two fingers, beginning from the right side [and going] to the left, they mean[83] that the divinity and the humanity [of Christ] were together on the Cross, ⸢because the salvation [was achieved] through this, and [consequently] there appeared⸣[84] faith from the right side[85],

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[75] T: obey.

[76] T: I did not find.

[77] T: sign (*išāra*) of the cross; in the synopsis of Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl: sign (*rašm*) of the cross.

[78] T: two fingers.

[79] T: the right side [and goes] to the left side, and someone from them does it with one finger and begins from the left side [and goes] to the right side.

[80] T: contradiction.

[81] Following the reading of Troupeau's edition.

[82] These words are absent from the manuscript on which Troupeau's editionis based, but are present in his edition. Most likely, they were lifted from the fragment of the Vatican text reproduced in Assemani's *Bibliotheca orientalis*, though Troupeau makes no reference to it.

[83] In the Garshūnī manuscript: faith [then crossed out:] thus from the right side.

[84] T: without division, and that the salvation was manifested.

[85] T *add.*: which is the right way.

and disbelief was banished from the left side[86], which is delusion. This is a subject in which there is no difference that would necessarily make a violator[87] [of any particular custom] impious, because the meaning[88] of the faith is one.

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[86] T: to the side.

[87] T: contradicting him.

[88] The reading of Troupeau's edition.

ФИЛОСОФСКАЯ МЫСЛЬ ИСЛАМСКОГО МИРА

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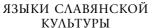*член-корреспондент РАН*
А. В. Смирнов

Исследования

Том 7

«РАССЫПАННОЕ» И «СОБРАННОЕ»: СТРАТЕГИИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ СМЫСЛОВОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА В АРАБО-МУСУЛЬМАНСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЕ

Коллективная монография

ЯСК

ЯЗЫКИ СЛАВЯНСКОЙ
КУЛЬТУРЫ

ООО «САДРА»

Москва 2015

16+

Утверждено к печати решением
Ученого совета Института философии РАН

Издание осуществлено при поддержке
Фонда исследований исламской культуры

Р е ц е н з е н т ы :
д. ф. н., проф. М. Л. Рейснер,
доцент Л. Г. Лахути

В книге исследованы основополагающие модели, сформировавшие теоретическое мышление арабо-мусульманской культуры: *асл–фар‘* (основа–ветвь), *захир–батин* (явное–скрытое) и другие, — на примере их функционирования при построении философского, филологического, доктринального, исторического знания. Раскрыта роль субстанциально-ориентированной и процессуально-ориентированной логик в осмыслении соотношения части и целого, единства и множественности в вербальной и невербальной сферах. Представлено концептуальное осмысление динамики исламской культуры. Публикуются новые переводы и исследования по суфизму.

ББК 71.0 + 86.38

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