

Judo-Christian Non-Canonical Scriptures As Sources Of Qur'anic Stories: Historical Investigation

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Abstract:

Judeo-Christian Apocryphal materials are different from the biblical scriptures. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Western scholars of Qur'an & Islam applied the historical-critical method to examine Judeo-Christian non-biblical textual elements in the Qur'anic text specially in the Quranic legends and stories what are figures known from the Bible. The most common Judeo-Christian sources that figures in the so-called copying are the Mishna, Babylonian Talmud, Midrash Pirke de-Rabbi Eli'ezer, Midrash Tanhuma, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, The Protevangelium of James, The Infancy Gospel of Thomas, The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and Arabic Gospel of Infancy. The earliest person who popularized the theory of origin/original sources of the Qur'anic accounts from these Judeo-Christian data into the Qur'an was Abraham Geiger in his book "Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen?" and on same methodology, Rev. W. St. Clair Tisdall designed Christian apocryphal literature as original sources of Qur'anic Christology and Mariology. Later on, apologists, Christian missionaries particularly orientalist adopted this assumption that the Qur'an material are drew from above mentioned scriptures. The key object of this paper is twofold. On the one hand it analyses the sources of Qur'anic stories what have no parallels in the Bible are plagiarized from Judeo-Christian non-biblical data, on the other hand it examines those Judeo-Christian non-biblical scriptures were developed before the time of revelation of Qur'an or not.

Keywords: Apocryphal materials, Marry & Jesus, Abraham Geiger, Infancy literature

I. INTRODUCTION:

It is logical to assume that the stories of the earlier prophets and other key-persons who are referenced inside the Bible especially in OT and Christological Qur'anic aspects make up around a quarter of the Qur'an. Furthermore, it is generally known that, in contrast to the Bible, which tends to elaborate, the Quranic narratives are succinct,

to the point, and tend not to go into great depth on chronological, historical, and environmental elements. Muslims recognize its divine origin from the first revelation. Muslims believed that the Qur'an, which is preserved in highly protected Tablets¹ is the unaltered, eternal, and unchangeable Word of God. Additionally, the Book's history is closely related to the

development of an earthly society. And the other hand, the early modern Western scholarship on the Qur'an focuses mostly on two aspects. The first aspect is about to identify how Jewish and Christian concepts may have influenced the Qur'an, whereas the second focuses to reconstruct the Qur'an's chronological order. According to first aspect of western scholarship, the Qur'an as a Book that is nothing more than an echo of Judaism (or Christianity), tend to exaggerate the significance of their methods and to attempt to show that Quran is manmade book and the Prophet of Islam Muhammad produced the Qur'an under the supervisor of one or more Jewish and Christian mentors of the time. The first polemicists John of Damascus² positions Islam as the first heretical religion in his section on heresies in his book Sources of Knowledge, which he believes to be a religion that developed from Christianity. John thinks the prophet's familiarity with the Old and New Testaments came about as a result of his close friendship with an Arian monk. Another Christian monk Abdul Masih ibn Ishac Al-Kindi³ expands on John's theory that a Christian monk inspired the prophet. He claims that a Nestorian monk and two Jews, Abdallah and K'ab, taught him many of the stories recorded in the Qur'an.⁴ Peter the Venerable⁵, Ricoldo of Montecroce⁶, John of Segovia, and Nicholas of Cusa are the primary persons who have reproduced the narratives of Jon and Al-Kindi.

Especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Several Writings build a new discourse and tried to show that the several portions of Qur'an originated from a Jewish rabbinical or Christian apocryphal text. Furthermore, it has been noted that several Jewish and Christian academics have nominated parallel passages for Jewish sources. Abraham Geiger, a pioneer Jewish scholar, developed that discourse and wrote a book titled Was hat Mohammed aus dem Judenthume aufgenommen? He used approach about the passages of biblical legends

specifically prophets mentioned in the Qur'ān from Jewish Midrashic, Talmudic and rabbinical literature and also presented parallels indicates borrowing. After Geiger, this methodology was used by Rev. W. St. Clair Tisdall wrote a book, on Geiger's patron, called "The Original Sources of The Qur'ān" in 1905, that was published by the society of 'For the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London'. He claimed the Quranic Christ and Mary and their infancy passages presented in the Qur'ān derived from a Christian apocryphal literature. Following Geiger and Tisdall, more recent orientalist, missionaries and western scholar of origins of Qur'an since nineteenth century to till date are claiming that Qur'anic text about prophets and traditional stories are borrowed from Judeo-Christian scriptural literature. A consideration of the later development of Qur'anic studies in the West follows this analysis. This investigation is not exhaustive. Instead, a select group of influential academics—including, Andrew Rippon⁷, Gabriel Said Reynolds⁸ etc looked at the question of the relationship between the Qur'anic textual relevant portions and the Judeo-Christian scriptural tradition;—receive much attention.

To confirm precisely what was borrowed, these authors, however, almost never reference the whole picture in the Judo- Christian Non-canonical sources, and they also show far less knowledge with the other text evidence and associated text-dating concerns. Here are two major issues to reevaluate the issue:

1. Jewish non-canonical scriptures as sources of Qur'anic Stories
2. Christian non-canonical scriptures as sources of Qur'anic Stories
3. Dating of Judeo-Christian Scriptures: A Chronological Investigation

2. Jewish non-canonical scriptures as sources of Qur'anic Stories

At best, western scholarship on the supposed Jewish Scriptural roots of the Qur'anic

text that Some of the stories in the Qur'an match those in the Bible, therefore according to their assertions, the former has been taken from the latter. The western scholars have made two-sided statements as a result of this hypothesis. In one side, they alleged Judeo-Christian traditional Influence and spread it in their writings including books, articles and encyclopedias. According to Theodor Noldeke:

" The principal source of the revelations was undoubtedly Jewish scripture.....It would be superfluous to explain here that not only most of the histories of the prophets in the Koran but also many of the dogmas and laws are of Jewish origin."⁹

Quran has similarites and close correpondance in words, expressions and passegas with Bible, William Muir wrote in his well-known book "The Coran":

" Such narratives show very frequently a close correspondence, sometimes even in the words and the cast and turn of expression, with corresponding passages in the Bible. Many instances of this similarity will be found in the accounts of the fall of Adam and Eve; in the narratives of Noah and the Deluge; of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac; of Lot, and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; in the histories of Moses and of Joseph; of Zacharias, and of John the Baptist; and of Jesus Christ, including his annunciation, his conception by the Virgin Mary, and his birth. From such correspondence an argument

might have been drawn to show at how many points the Bible is supported by the Corân."¹⁰

Richard Bell also repeat this Judeo-Christian screptural influence nerrative nerrative on qur'an, he writes:

" From the Qur'an we should infer (as has been seen) that the Jewish and Christian systems and scriptures were wholly unknown to his fellow-citizens; indeed this is expressly stated: if we do not accept its assertion that these were communicated to Mohammed by special revelation, we can only suppose that he became acquainted with them on his travels. And the forms assumed by Biblical names and Jewish and Christian technicalities in the Qur'an indicate numerous sources. Thus the forms Yunus for Jonah and Elias for Elijah clearly get theirs from some Greek source or version made from the Greek."¹¹

It is very possible that Judeo-Christian scriptures in the Qur'an were invented and presented in a new way so that no claim of quotation and derivation could be made. Kenneth Cragg says:

"The biblical narratives reproduced in the Qur'an differ considerably and suggest oral, not direct acquaintance. There is almost complete absence of what claimed as direct quotation from the Bible."¹²

The trends of the aforementioned Western scholars made it clear that the source of the Quranic text are unmistakably Judeo-Christian scriptures because of similerities. On the second side, the opinion of scholars is that Prophet of Islam collected all of his information from the

Apocrypha, Haggada, Talmudic and Midrashic literature. According to the earliest person to popularized the new hypothesis of borrowing from Abraham Giger and other scholars, the following Qur'anic stories are borrowed from Jewish non-canonical texts:

1. Cain and Abel
2. Noah's conversation during building ark
3. Abraham And Idols
4. Qur'anic Surah of Joseph
5. The golden calf
6. Moses "leprous" hand
7. Pharaoh's repentance
8. Solomon's understanding of the languages of birds

2.1: Story of Abel and Cain:

Scholars have offered four different perspectives for how this Abel and Cain story first appeared in the Quran:

2.1.1: First Perspective: Targum of Jerusalem

Abraham Gieger alleged that this story from the Targum of Jerusalem appears in the Qur'anic Cain and Abel account. Abraham Geiger writes:

" The one event mentioned is their sacrifice and the murder which lead to it. Muhammad makes them hold conversation before the murder, and one is likewise given in the Jerusalem targum on the strength of the words in Genesis " Cain said unto Abel his brother." Still, the matter of conversation is given so differently in each case that we do not consider it worthwhile to compare the two passages more closely. After the murder, according to the Qur'an, God sent a raven which scratched the earth to shew Cain how to bury Abel. what is here attributed to ascribed by the Jews to his parents."¹³

2.1.2: Second Perspective: Midrash Pirqey Rabbi Eli'ezer, Targum of Jonathan and Targum of Jerusalem

Second perspective about the original sources of this quranic story are Midrash Pirqey Rabbi Eli'ezer, Targum of Jonathan and Targum of Jerusalem. Following on the tracks of A. Geiger, Similar claim was made in Tisdall's book "The Original Sources of The Qur'an":

"A conversation, or rather argument, between Cain and Abel is mentioned in Jewish legend both in the Targum of Jonathan and in the Targum of Jerusalem. Cain, we are told, said, "There is no punishment for sin, nor is there any reward for good conduct." In reply to this, Abel asserted that good was rewarded by God and evil punished. Angered at this, Cain took up a stone and with it smote his brother and slew him. The resemblance between this narrative and that given in the beginning of the foregoing quotation from the Qur'an is not striking. But the source of the rest of the Qur'anic account of the murder is the legend related in the Pirqey Rabbi Eli'ezer."¹⁴

2.1.3: Third Perspective: Midrash Tanhuma

The initiator of this claim was Norman Stillman that this story traced in Midrash Tanhuma, He says:

" Sidersky has rightly pointed out the Qur'anic version should be traced to Midrash Tanhuma which reads:

" When Cain killed Abel, the latter's lay cast aside for Cain did not know what to do. Then

the Holy one (Blessed be he) sent him two pure birds, and one of them killed the other. Then the he Dug with his claws and buried him, and from him Cain learned. So he dug and buried Abel."

The Qur'anic version is merely an epitome of the above midrash."¹⁵

2.1.4: Forth Perspective: The Jerusalem Targum, and The Bible

According to Ibn Warraq, slightly the Mishnah Sanhedrin, the Jerusalem Targum, and the Bible all three sources contributed to the making of this Qur'anic story. He writes:

"The murder of Abel in Koran is borrowed from the Bible, But the conversation with Abel before Cain kills him is taken from Targum of Jerusalem, generally known as pseudo-Jonathan. In the Koran after the murder God sent a raven that Scratched the earth to show Cain how to bury Abel... They only become clear if we look at Mishnah Sanhedrin 4.5. The murder of Abel in the Koran is borrowed from the Bible, but the conversation of Cain with Abel before Cain kills him is taken from the Targum of Jerusalem, generally known as pseudo-Jonathan. In the Koran , after the murder God sent a raven that scratched the earth to show Cain how to bury Abel:

And God sent a raven which scratched the earth to show him how he should hide his brother's body. He said, "Woe is me! I am not able to be like this raven;"and he became one of those that

repent. For this cause we wrote unto the children of Israel that we who slayeth a soul—without having slain a soul or committed wickedness in the earth—shall be as if he had slain all mankind; and whosoever saveth a soul alive shall be as if he had saved all mankind, (sura 5.30 35)"¹⁶

Other Islamist such as W. Goldsack, Anis Shorrosh, L. Beven Jones, Robert Morey, N. A. Newman, Mateen Ellass, and Joseph Smith supported the claim that different parts of the Qur'anic story of Cain and Abel were borrowed from the above-mentioned Jewish sources.

2.2: Noah's conversation during building ark:

Ibn Warraq has claimed that the Qur'anic narrative mentioning Noah's conversation during building ark is from rabbinical sources:

"A part of the story of Noah in the Koran obviously comes from Genesis, but an account of Noah's character is drawn from rabbinical sources (suras 7.57 ; ,22.43 ;10.72etc.). The conversations Noah has with the people while he is building the ark are the same as those found in Sanhedrin 108; and both the Koran and the rabbinical scriptures declare that the generation of the Flood was punished with boiling water (Rosh Hashanah 16.2 and Sanhedrin 108; suras 11.42, 33.27)."¹⁷

2:3 Abraham And Idols

Abraham Geiger was the first to allege that the story of Abraham and the idols in Sura 6:74 was derived from a source known as the Midrash Genesis Rabbah. He says:

“A special instance of this was when he destroyed the idols, and, putting the staff into the hand of the largest, attributed the action to him. He sought thus to convince the people, who quite perceived the impossibility of the idols having done it, since they could not move, but they were not thereby persuaded. Abraham is represented as praying in vain that his father might be released from the punishment of hell. We are told too that the people, embittered by Abraham's conduct towards the idols, wanted to have him burnt alive, but that he was rescued from that fate by divine intervention. The whole story is taken from the Rabbinical writings, where we read as follows.”¹⁸

2:4 Qur'anic Surah of Joseph

Western academics debated the Qur'anic Joseph narrative as well. They contend that key sections of the Qur'anic narrative may only be "comprehended" in light of Jewish midrashic literature, particularly the Midrash Yalkut, Tanhuma, Midrash Ha-Gadol¹⁹, Midrash Genesis Rabbah²⁰, and, Sefer Ha-Yashar²¹ and Midrash Yalkut²².

2.5: The golden calf

Cliar Tisdall stated toward this Qura'nic story in his famous writing:

" This legend also comes from the Jews, as is evident from the following extract which we translate from Piry Rabbi Eli`ezer, § 45, "And this calf came out lowing [the sound uttered by cattle; moo], and the

Israelites saw it. Rabbi Yehûdah says that Sammaël was hidden in its interior, and was lowing in order that he might deceive Israel." The idea that the calf was able to low must come from the supposition that, though made of gold (Exodus 32. 4), it was alive, since it "came out" (5. 24) of the fire. Here, again, we see that the figurative expression, when taken literally, led to the growth of a myth to explain it."²³

This controversy copied from Gieger's work. He writes:

" Muhammad says that the calf lowed as it come forth. With this is to be compared the Rabbinical statement: "There came forth this calf lowing and the Israelites saw it. Rabbi Jehuda says that Samael entered into it and lowed in order to mislead Israel." In the Qur'an it is said that among the people of Moses there was a tribe which kept the truth. This seems to refer to the tribe of Levi and especially to their behavior about the calf, although possibly it may refer also to their belief in Moses' mission to Pharaoh of which we have spoken before. In the biblical accounts a statement is made, which is explained by the Rabbis as follows: "From Exodus 32. 26, it is clear that the tribe of Levi was not implicated in the matter of the golden calf."²⁴

2.6 Moses "leprous" hand:

The miracle of Moses (peace be upon him) in the Qur'an to the Midrash Rabbi Eliezer's "leprous hand." Abrham Gieger Claimed:

" Further Moses is supposed to have shewn the sign of his before Pharaoh 'which is not mentioned in Scripture, but which agrees with the following statement in the Rabbinical writings: " He put his hand into his bosom, and drew it out as white as snow from leprosy ; they also put their hands into their bosoms and drew them out as white as snow from leprosy."²⁵

2.7 Pharaoh's repentance:

"Pharaoh's belief in the Lord of the Moses and Aaron is stated in the Holy Qur'an. The verses from the Quran are similar to the Midrash Rabbi Eliezer account is as follows:

" Rabbi Nechunia, son of Hakkanah, said: know thou the power of repentance. Come and see from Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who rebelled most grievously against the Rock, the Most High, as it is said, "Who is the Lord, that I should hearken unto his voice?" (Ex. v. 2). In the same terms of speech in which he sinned, he repented, as it is said "Who is like thee, O Lord, among the mighty?"... The Holy One, blessed be He, delivered him from amongst the dead. Whence (do we know) that he died? Because it is said, "For now I had put forth my hand, and smitten thee"... He went and ruled Nineveh."²⁶

2.8: Solomon's understanding of the language of birds:

Geiger states the following in reference to the Qur'anic account Q 27.20 of Solomon's speaking

with bird and understanding the language of birds in Q 27.16:

"The life of Solomon is in itself unimportant, and it is only the wisdom for which he is famed in the Bible which makes him the hero of the whole East, one might therefore expect to find much more about him in the Quran than really exists there. Muhammad speaks of his [i.e., Solomon's] wisdom and especially brings forward the fact that Solomon understood the language of the birds. This is also asserted by the Rabbis, and is found in the Biblical statement: "He spake of trees and birds." The winds also performed his will, and the Genii were also found in his following; this is also related, e.g., in the Second Targum on the Book of Esther, thus: "To him were obedient demons of the most diverse sorts, and the evil spirits were given into his hand."²⁷

3. Christian non-canonical scriptures as sources of Qur'anic Stories

According to Clair Tindall's assumption of original sources of Qur'anic Jesus and Mary's passages are contained from apocryphal scriptures. He says:

" From the careful examination of the whole subject dealt with in this chapter (i.e., The influence of Christianity and Christian Apocryphal books) we therefore conclude that the influence of true and genuine Christian teaching upon the Quran and upon Islam is general has been very slight indeed, while on the other hand apocryphal traditions

and certain respects heretical doctrines have a claim to be considered as forming one of the original sources of Muhammadan faith."²⁸

Rev. John C. Blair offers a similar conclusion:

"Much of Muhammad's teaching about the Person of Jesus was evidently taken from apocryphal sources."²⁹

The following Qur'anic stories are borrowed from Christian non-canonical apocryphal texts:

1. Mary's child life and her services for temple
2. Jesus's birth beneath Palm Tree
3. Infant Jesus's speaking in cradle
4. Clay birds

3.1 Mary's child life and her services for temple

This Qur'anic story is derived from apocryphal scripture called "Protevangelium". Tisdall writes that:

"In an Arabic apocryphal book, called the History of our holy Father the Aged, the Carpenter (Joseph), there is given the following account of Mary as a child. Her parents took her to the Temple when three years old, and she remained there nine years. Then when the Priests saw that the Holy Virgin had grown up, they spoke among themselves, — Let us call a righteous man, one that fears the Lord, to take charge of Mary till the time of her marriage, that she may not remain in the Temple. But before that time when her parents brought her, a new occasion had arisen, of which we read as follows in the Protevangelium."³⁰

3.1 Jesus's Birth Beneath Palm Tree

Rev. Clair Tisdell assumed that this story from "History of the Nativity of Mary and the Saviour's Infancy"³¹ appears in the Qur'anic account of Jesus birth. He quoted as following:

Mary, the Palm-tree, etc., we give an extract from an apocryphal book called the History of the Nativity of Mary and the Saviour's Infancy: — Now on the third day after she had set out, Mary was wearied in the desert by the heat, and asked Joseph to rest for a little under the shade of a palm-tree. So he made haste and made her sit down beneath it. Then Mary looking up and seeing its branches laden with fruit, said, — I desire if it were possible to have some of that fruit. Joseph answered: — I wonder at what thou sayest, since thou must see how lofty the branches of the palm-tree are; and besides, I am anxious to get water, for all in my vessel is done, and there is none anywhere about to fill it with. Just then the child Jesus, looking up with a cheerful smile from his mother's bosom, said to the palm-tree: — Send down thy branches here below, that my Mother may eat fresh fruit of thee. Forthwith it bent itself at Mary's feet, and so they all ate of its fruit. When they had gathered all the fruit, it still remained bent, waiting for orders to arise. Then Jesus said:— O palm-tree, arise with cheerfulness, be one of my Father's trees in Paradise; but

with thy roots open the fountain beneath thee; and bring me here for my refreshment some of the water flowing from that fount. At once the tree became erect, and began to pour from its roots water beautifully clear and sweet before them. So when they saw the water, they were all filled with delight, and drank of it with their cattle and servants, till they were satisfied and praised the Lord. Between this story, as told here and in the Qur'an, there is just this divergence, that with the latter the Palm-tree appears at the time of the Messiah's birth, whereas this ancient Christian tale belongs to a somewhat later period, namely, after the journey of Joseph and Mary into Egypt."³²

3.3 Infant Jesus's Speaking in Cradle

"The Arabic Gospel of the Infancy" is original source of parallel Qur'anic story.

" The origin of this legend is not far to seek. We have already seen that one of the apocryphal Gospels represents Christ, when on His journey to Egypt in His infancy, as addressing the palm-tree and bidding it bow down and permit His Mother to pluck its fruit. But probably the source from which Muhammad borrowed the incident is Injilu't Tufuliyah, better known as the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy."³³

C. Tisdall also claims:

" This book of the Childhood was translated into Arabic from the Coptic original, and must

have been known to the Prophet's Coptic hand-maiden, Mary. From her he must have heard the tale, and believing it to have come from the Gospel, adopted it with some little change, and so entered it in the Qur'an."³⁴

3.4 Clay Birds

This Quranic story is derived from "The Gospel of Thomas the Israelite". According to author of "The Sources of Islam"³⁵:

"Such as these have nothing to do with the Gospel, but like those before of the cradle, palm-tree, etc., have been taken from imaginary and fabulous Christian writings, such as the following from a Greek story-book called The Gospel of Thomas the Israelite: — The child Jesus, when five years of age, was playing on the road by a dirty stream of running water; and having brought it all together into ditches, immediately made it pure and clean; and all this by a single word. Then having moistened some earth, he made of it twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath day when he did these things. There were many other children playing with him. Now a Jew, seeing what Jesus did, that he was playing on the Sabbath day, forthwith went his way to his father Joseph; Behold, he said, thy son is at the stream of dirty water, and having taken up some mud, hath made of it twelve sparrows, and hath thus desecrated the Sabbath. On this Joseph went to the spot, and

cried out:— Why dost thou do these things on the Sabbath day which it is not lawful to do? Whereupon Jesus, clapping his hands at the sparrows, cried aloud to them, — Go off! So they, clucking, flew away. The Jews seeing it, were astonished, and went and told their Rulers what they had seen Jesus do."³⁶

In Conclusion, the main focus of western study on the investigation of the original sources of Qur'anic stories was the identification of the various obvious connections between Quranic stories and the narratives of the midrash, rabbinic exegesis of the Hebrew Bible, and Christian apocryphal texts. In essence, western academics stated the apparent differences between the patriarchal and prophetic narratives in the Quran and the canonical Bible as being primarily the result of the Quranic narratives' derivation from what they assumed must be Jewish and Christian prototypes of those narratives found in the non-canonical texts.

4. Dating of Judeo-Christian Non-Canonical Scriptures: A Chronological Investigation

Judeo-Christian non-canonical scriptures, have all been cited as the original sources of several Qur'anic parallel stories about legends, prophets of Old Testament, Jesus and Mary's account of infancy. These western academics have more or less implied that these significant non-canonical scriptures are pre-dates Islam. Here, we'll examine their dates of available manuscripts.

4.1 Dating The Jewish Non-Canonical Scriptures

The cited Jewish textual sources are as follows:

1. Targum of Jerusalem/Targum of Jonathan
2. Midrash Pirqey Rabbi Eli'ezer
3. Midrash Tanhuma

4. Midrash Ha-Gadol
5. Midrash Genesis Rabbah
6. Sefer Ha-Yashar
7. Midrash Yalkut
8. Second Targum on the Book of Esther

4.1.1 Targum of Jerusalem

TARGUM. The Hebrew root word *tirgem* has the dual meanings of "to explain" and "to interpret" in verb form. Translation is the meaning of the noun form. Although it theoretically refers to translation into and out of any language, the phrase is almost exclusively used in rabbinical literature to refer to the Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Bible.

This is known as the Targum of Jonathan or the Pseudo-Jonathan because it is referenced under the name Jonathan ben Uzziel in the first printed version (Venice, 1591). About the second name of this targum, Per A. Bengtsson writes:

" Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is an almost complete Targum of the Pentateuch from which no more than a few verses or parts of verses are omitted. The name Pseudo-Jonathan comes from a misinterpretation which was long preserved by tradition."³⁷

There are two opinions regarding the compilation of this Targum. The first opinion is of the second century AD and the second is of the era of Islamic conquests, the era of Crusades. Bengtsson also says about its compilation:

".....the bulk of haggadic material in Ps-J as dating to the 2nd century CE. Hayward claims that Ps-J is prior to PRE, but does not suggest a precise date. Many Targumists, however, date the final redaction of Ps-J to a period after the Islamic conquest. Rieder dates it to the age of the Crusaders. Le Deaut confirms that the final redaction of Ps-J

could not be dated earlier than the eight century CE. From the great affinity of Ps-J to PRE (7th-9th c.), Shinan dates the Targum to the 7th or 8th centuries."³⁸

Michal Mehar writes:

" Although Ps.-J. certainly contains ancient traditions, many recent authors argue that this Targum received its final form after the Arab conquest of the Middle East. D. M. Splansky believes that Ps.-J. dates from the ninth or tenth century. His main arguments may be summarized as follows: The reference of Aisha and Fatima in Ps.-J. Gen. 21:21 should not be seen as an insertion. The source of the midrash could not have originated before 633 CE at the earliest. Ps.-J. makes use of PRE [i.e., Pirke De-Rabbi Eli'ezer] and both Tanhumas, a fact which points to the ninth or tenth century as the time of Ps.-J.'s compilation."³⁹

4.1.2 Midrash Pirqey Rabbi Eli'ezer

MIDRASH (plural, Midrashim) is collections of stories, folklore, legends, interpretations, and sermonic teachings about the Hebrew Bible.⁴⁰ There are two categories of Midrashim: First one is "Midrash Halachah" refers to teachings and stories that are based on and illustrate Jewish law. Second is Midrash Aggadah — Legends and lore are lessons and tales based on the narrative and moral portions of the Bible. The purpose of midrashim is to "flesh out" the Bible, make it more comprehensible, and give its characters a more human quality.⁴¹ Gerald Friendlander, the English translator of this Midrash, mentions in his

introduction that the authorship of this Midrash towards Rabbi Eliezer is assumed, He says:

" The name of the writer of the book is unknown. The putative author is Rabbi Eliezer, son of Hyrkanos, who lived in the latter half of the first century C.E. and in the first decades of the second century."⁴²

According to Encyclopedia Judaica, Midrash Pirqey Rabbi Eli'ezer is compiled in 8th century:

" Among the aggadic works the most important are: Seder Eliyahu Rabbah and Seder Eliyahu Zuta; Pirkei de-R. Eliezer (compiled apparently close to 750)." ⁴³

4.1.3 Midrash Tanhuma

Tanhuma is a Torah exegetical Midrash. Another name for it is Yelammedenu. Midrash Tanhuma covers the entirety of the Pentateuch, as well as significant portions of Exodus Rabbah, Numbers Rabbah, Deuteronomy Rabbah, and Pesiqta Rabbati. Marc Bregman stated its

compilation in 5–7th century C.E, writes:

"Later research tends rather to distinguish relatively early traditions and sources within early, middle, and late redactional strata running through the various works. Tanhuma-Yelammedenu literature is best regarded as a particular midrashic genre which began to crystallize toward the end of the Byzantine period in Palestine (5–7th century C.E.), but continued to evolve and spread throughout the Diaspora well into the middle ages, sometimes developing different recensions of a common text."⁴⁴

In above quotation, This Midrash contains also the content of the middle and late period of the Midrashic text (640 -1200 AD):

“Middle Period: the period from the Muslim conquest (c. 640 C.E.) to the end of the tenth century belong many variegated midrashic and aggadic works. In addition to the exegetical and homiletical types of Midrash, the above-mentioned composition by a single person belongs to this period..... The Late Period: To the period of the 11th and 12th centuries belong the very latest Midrashim.”⁴⁵

4.1.4 Midrash Ha-Gadol

This Midrashic work is about to the Pentateuch, scrolls and various biblical books. Solomon Fisch argues that The text of the Midrash Ha-Gadol was probably originally composed in the 13th century:

”Midrash ha-Gadol, 13th century rabbinic work on the Pentateuch, emanating from Yemen and consisting mainly of excerpts of older rabbinic texts of the Talmudic period.”⁴⁶

In the nineteenth century, European scholars became aware of the Midrash Ha-Gadol for the first time. He writes:

“The Midrash ha-Gadol first came to the notice of European scholars in the 19th century. The text was brought to Europe in manuscript in 1878 and sold to the Royal Library in Berlin by M.W. Shapira, whose name is associated with the alleged forgery known as the *Shapira fragments. Since then, other manuscripts have been

acquired by the major libraries in the western world.”⁴⁷

4.1.5 Midrash Genesis Rabbah

This Midrashic work is composed in 12th century. Hans-Jürgen Becker wrote:

“The Genesis Rabbah text of Theodor and Albeck (1929), which is today widely used for research, is based upon the London manuscript of Genesis Rabbah and Leviticus Rabbah (probably twelfth century). This text was emended ("corrected") by the editors based on manuscripts and was supplemented according to MS Vatican 30. The end-product is a Genesis Rabbah text which never before existed.”⁴⁸

4.1.6 Sefer Ha-Yashar

Sefer Ha-Yashar also called “Book of Jashar” a late aggadic work corresponding to the narrative parts of the Pentateuch in particular Gen. and Ex. 1:1–2:21, Joshua, and Judges 1:1–2:10. Moshe David Herr places its composing date:

“Hence the work was written apparently at the end of the 11th century, perhaps in southern Spain. First published in Venice in 1625, it has since been republished many times.”⁴⁹

4.1.7 Midrash Yalkot Shimoni

Usually referred to as “the Yalkut” of Simeon of Frankfurt. This Midrash is best known and most comprehensive midrashic anthology, covering the whole Bible. Author of this Midrashic work is ambiguous person. Scholars have different opinions towards Midrash Yalkot’s author. Jacob Elbaum indicate their claims:

“Some scholars (S.J. Rapoport, etc.) claimed that its author and compiler was Simeon Kara, the father of Joseph Kara and a contemporary of Rashi, but A. Epstein showed that there is no basis for this view. He proved that the Simeon mentioned by Rashi is not the compiler of the Yalkut and attributed it to a Simeon ha-Darshan, who lived in the 13th century. Nothing is known of this Simeon, except for a reference by M. Prinz to a “Rabbenu Simeon, chief of the preachers of Frankfurt.” The copyist of the Oxford manuscript of 1308, as well as the publishers in Salonika, simply refer to him as ha-darshan (“the preacher”), but Prinz’s view that he came from Frankfurt is supported by the traditions of the Jews of that town. Zunz dated the Midrash to the 13th century based on the facts that Nathan b. Jehiel of Rome, Rashi, and other 12th century scholars did not know the Yalkut, its use of sources which date at the earliest from the end of the 11th century (according to Zunz – including Exodus Rabbah, Numbers Rabbah, Midrash Avkir, Divrei ha-Yamim ha-Arokh, etc.) as well as the fact that Azariah dei *Rossi had a manuscript of it written in 1310. Not all of Zunz’s arguments are valid. For example, Rapoport has shown that the Yalkut does not utilize Exodus Rabbah and Numbers Rabbah, but Zunz’s view as to its date prevails, despite Gaster’s

claim that it was compiled in Spain in the 14th century. The attempt of Aptowitz to predate it to the middle of the 12th century is not convincing.”⁵⁰

Regarding the period of completion of this midrashic work, we may deduce from Jacob Elbaum’ above mentioned quotation that the earliest copy of this work was produced in the late twelfth or

the thirteenth century.

4.1.8 Second Targum on the Book of Esther

The First Targum and the Second Targum, respectively, are known by the titles Targum Rishon and Targum Sheni. In comparison to Targum Sheni, Targum Rishon contains less aggadic additions. The numerous Targum Esther quotations in rabbinic writings and mediaeval commentaries, which neither represent Targum Rishon nor Targum Sheni, provide as more evidence of the great range of targumic traditions. The Targum Esther does not appear to have undergone a stringent standardization procedure that produced a single, canonical edition.⁵¹ The date of The First Targum to Esther, also known Targum Rishon, is sixth century- eighth century. Alinda Damsma writes:

“Targum Rishon is approximately dated between 500 and 700 ce and probably has a Palestinian provenance. This tradition alternates between faithful, word-for-word renderings of the Hebrew and complete ‘rewritings’ of the Biblical tale.”⁵²

The Second Targum to the Esther, also known Targum Sheni, composed in seventh century – ninth century. She also argues that surviving scripts are dated much later:

“This work is tentatively dated to the end of the seventh or beginning of the eighth centuries

ce and, like Targum Rishon, probably has a Palestinian provenance. However, the surviving manuscripts are dated much later, ranging from the late twelfth to fifteenth centuries, and are from central Europe, Italy and Yemen."⁵³

4.2 Dating the Christian Non-Canonical Scriptures

The following apocryphal writings are said to be the origins of the Qur'anic verses about Jesus and Mary:

1. Protoevangelium of James
2. Gospel of Thomas
3. Arabic Gospel of Infancy
4. Gospel of Ps.-Matthew

4.2.1 Protoevangelium of James

The text of the Protevangelium, the Protoevangelium of James, sometimes referred to as the Infancy Gospel of James⁵⁴, which was claimed by Christian scholars that this work probably originally composed in the second century. Most scholars now date the first manuscript of PJ in the second century but oldest survived manuscript composed or Syriac translation in fifth century. Wilhelm Schneemelcher describes its date and situation:

"The Syriac translation, of which we have four manuscripts (in part, however, fragmentary), probably originated in the 5th century. It can claim a great significance, alongside PBodmer. since here we have a text older than the 6th century, even if the quality of the text is not so good as that of PBodmer 5."⁵⁵

The usable manuscripts are Greek and are not later than the tenth century AD. J.K. Elliott dates them:

" Most surviving Greek manuscripts of PJ are later than the tenth century."⁵⁶

J.K. Elliott shows its historical status of stories:

"The historical value of the stories in PJ is insignificant. The names of Mary's parents, the names of Reuben, Zacharias, and Samuel are all fictitious. Zacharias is wrongly identified with Zacharias of Matt. 23: 35. Simeon was not a high-priest. The water of jealousy was not administered to men. The oracular plate on the forehead is not known outside PJ. Other peculiar details include the contradiction of the angelic annunciation (12. 2, cf. u) and the warning given to the Magi not to go to Judea when they were already there (21. 4).² Such details do not necessarily indicate the author's use of variant sources; they may result from his own lack of interest in, or awareness of, such apparent inconsistencies."⁵⁷

This Christian Scripture was not acceptable in Church. J.K. Elliott states about its teaching as wrong:

" Subsequent church opinion in the West found such teaching unacceptable: Jerome was instrumental in condemning this teaching in PJ as wrong, and he argued that Jesus' siblings were his cousins. Jerome's explanations met with papal approval and were responsible for the decline in the use of PJ in the West."⁵⁸

4.2.2 Gospel of Thomas

Thomas, a well-known Israelite philosopher, was chosen as the author; this decision may have something to do with Thomas's apostolic legacy in India. The commonly used title is a misnomer. Most of the manuscripts do not claim that it was written by Thomas, nor does this "Gospel" tell of Jesus' infancy.⁵⁹ It is incorrect to refer to this work as the Gospel of Thomas because the majority of the manuscripts do not make any claims to Thomas' authorship and do not detail Jesus' early life.⁶⁰ Although the Syriac version of Infancy Thomas appears to be the earliest, the tradition appears to have its roots in Greek culture because one of the stories features the Greek letter.⁶¹ Edited by Tischendorf were two Greek texts. Greek A was edited in the fifteenth century, with copies found at Dresden I 187) and Bologna (Univ. 2702), whereas Greek B was found in a manuscript from the fourteenth to the fifteenth century after being found on Mount Sinai."⁶² The original manuscript has never been discovered.

"The version of the 2nd century, is not yet possible. ' A final critical edition is still awaited. But even if such an edition should succeed in reconstructing a text underlying the later manuscripts and translations, the question still remains whether the original infancy gospel can be reconstructed at all. and whether any statements about the date of composition will be possible."⁶³

4.2.3 Arabic Gospel of Infancy

The Protoevangelium of James, also known as the Infancy Gospel of James, and the Infancy Gospel of Thomas are at least two additional earlier apocryphal manuscripts that have stories that are reworked in the "Arabic Infancy Gospel". Rev. Clair Tisdall refused its copy at the time of revelation of Qur'anic Text. He criticized:

"The style of the Arabic of this apocryphal Gospel, (**Gospel of The Infancy**) however, is so bad that it is hardly possible to believe that it dates from Muhammad's time."⁶⁴

4.2.4 Gospel of Ps.-Matthew

This scripture dated eighth or ninth century is rework of earlier scripture "Protevangelium". J. Stephen Shoemaker writes:

"The Gospel of Ps.-Matthew is primarily a reworking of the Protevangelium of James, to which Ps.-Matthew adds some "unique" material, including in particular the story of Mary's encounter with the date palm during the flight into Egypt. It was long thought that the Gospel of Ps.-Matthew was quite late, having been composed only in the eighth or ninth century."⁶⁵

5. Conclusion

The majority of western academics, including Christian missionaries, Jewish apologists, and orientalist, hold the view that the Quranic stories were composed using non-canonical Jewish and Christian sources. Following the methodology outlined in Gieger and Tisdall's work, western scholars tried to describe the stories in the Qur'an from their "original" counterparts found in the Jewish and Christian sources in order to utilize Muhammad's authorship. The results of in-depth contemporary examinations into the historicity of Rabbinical, Midrashic, Haggadic and Apocryphal scriptures indicate that were written no earlier than seventh century CE. Many scholars acknowledged the effect of Islam on non-canonical Jewish

and Christian religious literature. Michael E. Pregill says:

“Careful analysis of particular narratives may show that, in contrast to the assertions of previous generations of scholars, the Quran simply does not consistently reflect the direct derivation of biblical data from Jews or a straightforward assimilation of rabbinic midrash. Rather, the opposite may be the case, namely, that Jews quite likely ‘borrowed’ from the Quran, or even from later Islamic literature.”⁶⁶

1 Qur’an, 85:21-22

2 An eminent theologian of the Eastern Church, John of Damascus (Johannes Damascenus) takes his last name from Damascus, where he was born before the end of the seventh century. His Arabic name was al-Riḥānī (the victor), and because of his eloquence, he was given the nickname Chrysorrhōas (gold-pouring). He died about 752 AD probably. John W. Voorhis, John of Damascus on the Moslem Heresy, *The Moslem World*, 1934, v.24, pp.392

3 William Muir, *The Apology of Al Kindy. An Essay on Its Age and Authorship*, *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, New Series, 1882, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 1-18

4 James Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press 1964, 129

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Additionally, it was noted that the claims of alleged "borrowing" were almost always revived on the superficial reading of material edited at least 200 years after the arrival of Islam, and the borrowing may have actually been quite the opposite. This is an important point that western scholarship seems to have overlooked. In conclusion, it could be said that anyone who has sincerely studied the Qur'anic stories and the rabbinical, haggadic, and midrashic manuscripts and their dating should be able to see that his sincerity negates borrowing or plagiarizing of Judeo-Christian influences on Quranic narratives.

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